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BECAUSE HE HAS SPOKEN TO US: JOSEPH RATZINGER, THE REVELATION OF THE
LOGOS IN JESUS CHRIST, AND A FUNDAMENTAL PATTERN FOR EVANGELIZATION

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ABSTRACT

In a 1983 lecture, Joseph Ratzinger noted that one need not demonstrate at great length the apparent difficulties within the epoch's catechetical efforts, even going so far as to declare the situation a state of crisis. He argues that the reversal of roles between content and method – with content now serving method – served as a significant source of the purported crisis.[1] The bulk of Ratzinger's expansive theological work is a response to various crises within the understanding of the contents themselves, with a willing admission on his part that he did not have responsibility for catechetical methods.[2] However, following his election to the papacy and with the arrival of the New Evangelization, Pope Benedict XVI began to broach the methodological question more directly, asking, for example, ""How can we talk about God in our time? How can we communicate the Gospel so as to open roads to his saving truth in our contemporaries' hearts…?"[3] This dissertation will attempt to fill the lacuna in Ratzinger's theology pertaining to method, and to sketch an appropriate praxis for evangelization and catechesis in the wake of the catechetical outworking still underway and in flux following Vatican II. Starting with Ratzinger's fundamental theology, the present dissertation seeks to provide a theological framework in order to engage the methodological question. In short, the dissertation attempts to answer the following: How does the revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ shape Ratzinger's vision for evangelization? The paper will argue that for Ratzinger, the personal nature of the revelation of the *Logos* of God in Jesus Christ establishes an anthropological pattern, a series of guiding principles, according to which the body of Christ, the Church, evangelizes.

This study opens by considering the catechetical landscape following Vatican II, insofar as the landscape has been shaped by what Aidan Nichols calls "vulgarized Rahnerianism." Next, the paper highlights Ratzinger's fundamental theology, which begins with the *Logos* insofar as the *Logos* has revealed itself in Jesus Christ, the Son -- a revelation accessible today through the

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[1] Joseph Ratzinger, *Handing on the Faith in an Age of Disbelief,* trans. Michael Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 13-23.

[2] Joseph Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church: Current Problems in Theology and Consequences for Catechesis," in *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 42.

[3] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," in *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013), 42.

Church and reified in the act of faith. Chapter 3 follows the logic established by the *Logos*, and traces the mainlines of Ratzinger's theological anthropology. Chapter 4 follows the anthropological framework established in Ch. 3 in order to provide a methodological framework according to the revelation of the *Logos*. The dissertation ultimately concludes that Ratzinger's vision for evangelization and catechesis according to the *Logos,* as developed along the lines of his theological anthropology, presents a possible solution for the dissonance that has resulted in evangelization and catechesis since Vatican II.

STATEMENT OF INTEGRITY

The work contained within this thesis is my own work. It contains no material that has been used to pursue or receive any other degree or diploma at The University of Notre Dame Australia or elsewhere. To the best of my knowledge, this thesis contains no material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference is made in the text of the thesis.

Bradley D. Bursa

August 31, 2018

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to Our Lady of Consolation.

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Introduction

  Joseph Ratzinger[1] opens his 1968 classic *Introduction to Christianity* by noting that, recently, an American theologian, Harvey Cox, had taken up Søren Kierkegaard's tale of a clown. Kierkegaard's tale proceeds as follows: A circus that had arrived outside of town caught fire, so a clown, already made-up for the performance, is sent into the town to both ask for help and to warn the townspeople of possible danger. Thinking it is all a farce and a foolish attempt to attract people to the circus, the people dismiss the clown with laughter. Not long after, however, flames engulf the town.[2]

  Ratzinger, like Cox, sees something of the present situation regarding evangelization in this tale. Christians attempting to proclaim the Gospel in a post-Enlightenment, post-Christian era often appear antiquated, foolish, and easily dismissible. Ratzinger admits, "It is certainly true that anyone who tries to preach the faith amid people involved in modern life and thought can really feel like a clown, or rather, perhaps like someone who, rising from an ancient sarcophagus, walks into the midst of the world of today dressed and thinking in the ancient fashion and can neither understand nor be understood by this world of ours."[3] Acknowledging this difficulty for the one "who seeks to preach the faith," Ratzinger challenges the attitude that claims one must simply "modernize" his approach in order to make the faith intelligible again. Instead, Ratzinger presses into the analogy, calling for the theologian and evangelist of today to engage in a self-criticism that will reveal the question at hand is not fundamentally one about form (i.e. method), but of the insecurity of his own faith.[4] With this, Ratzinger pushes past any question of method and seeks to get to the heart of the matter -- whether or not Christians of today are terribly different from their non-believing fellow men. Is it not the case that Christians hold faith in their

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[1] Authorial references to Joseph Ratzinger will be made according to his title at the time in which the piece being referred to was written. In other words, the paper will attempt to be consistent in referring to the author as Joseph Ratzinger prior to his election to the papacy in April 2005. Any works published following his election to the Chair of Peter will refer to him as Benedict XVI. That said, when speaking about the author and his work in general, the paper will refer to him as Ratzinger in interest of the ease of the reader. As a way of further narrowing the scope of the present study, and keeping in mind Benedict XVI's own statement that he did not write any of the documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (see Benedict XVI, *Last Testament,* trans. Jacob Williams (New York: Bloomsbury, 2016), 172.), documents from the Congregation have not been taken into account as part of Ratzinger's corpus within this paper. However, works from his papacy, penned in his name, have been.

[2] See Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* trans. J.R. Foster (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 39-40.

[3] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 41.

[4] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity* 41.

hands almost like water, which could evaporate or slip out of their grasp at any moment? Confronted with the problem of faith, he spends the rest of the book addressing this second, more pressing question: Can one actually, reasonably believe today? In a sense, he addresses Dostoyevsky's famous question: "Can one believe while being civilized, i.e. a European, believe without reservation in the divine nature of Jesus Christ, the Son of God?"[5] Elsewhere, Ratzinger states the question this way: "Why, in brief, does the faith still have a chance?"[6] To be sure, the bulk of Ratzinger's theological enterprise addresses this question: For the "civilized" person (in the West), no longer living within the confines of modernity, but in the openness of postmodernity, how can this person believe in Jesus Christ? For Ratzinger, the Catholic faith still has a chance "Because [the faith] is in harmony with what man is…In man there is an inextinguishable yearning for the infinite. None of the answers attempted are sufficient. Only the God himself who became finite in order to open our finiteness and lead us to the breadth of his infiniteness responds to the question of our being. For this reason, the Christian faith finds man today too."[7]

Ratzinger's theological expertise and the nature of his ecclesiastical appointments rarely afforded him the opportunity to engage directly with the initial, more practical, more methodological question encountered in Cox's interpretation of the clown allegory. However, late in his pontificate, as he engaged more and more with the new evangelization, the methodological question rose again quite explicitly to the forefront of his thought: "How can we talk about God in our time? How can we communicate the Gospel so as to open roads to his saving truth in our contemporaries' hearts — that are all too often closed — and minds — that are at times distracted by the many dazzling lights of society?"[8] If the catechetical theorists following Vatican II are right, that catechetical content should only be supplied when there is a sufficient demand, then, it seems, the demand has all but dried up leaving catechesis with little to

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[5] Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Notebooks for "The Possessed,"* ed. Edward Wasiolek (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1968), 237. As quoted in Julián Carrón, *Disarming Beauty* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2017), 53.
[6] Joseph Ratzinger, "Relativism: The Central Problem for Faith Today," *EWTN*, May 1996, https://www.ewtn.com/library/CURIA/RATZRELA.HTM.
[7] Ratzinger, "Relativism: The Central Problem for Faith Today."
[8] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," in *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013), 42.

do. Evangelization, referring both to the initial proclamation of the *kerygma* and the entire process of conversion (of which catechesis is an essential "moment"), for its part, seems outmoded.[9] Ratzinger admits, "The path from dogma to preaching has become very difficult. There are no longer any patterns of thought and assumptions that carry the content of dogma into everyday life."[10] Why, in a world marked by self-sufficiency and autonomy, is the Gospel necessary? Why, in a world that has seemingly moved beyond the problem of sin and has distracted itself away from the problem of death and the afterlife, is evangelization even still a topic worth considering? Evangelization is this process of the faith "finding" man in the here-and-now, and man finding himself in the faith. At this point we have already encountered three pressing questions for evangelization today: Why?, Who?, and How? Why is the faith still necessary today? What is its enduring value? Who is Jesus Christ after all? How can Jesus Christ be encountered today? This dissertation essentially picks Benedict XVI's questioning up at this point and carries it forward. The central question then becomes clear: *How does the revelation of the Logos in Jesus Christ shape Ratzinger's vision for evangelization?* How does the theological trajectory of Ratzinger's answer to questions regarding fundamental theology establish a foundation and hint at an appropriate answer to the question of method? This dissertation will attempt to fill the lacuna in Ratzinger's theology and sketch an appropriate praxis for evangelization and catechesis.

In a certain sense, the paper follows the trajectory Benedict XVI clearly identifies when he asks, "How can we talk about God today? The first answer is that we can talk about God

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[9] Recent Magisterial documents, such as Paul VI's *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae*, clearly note the tendency to call one aspect of evangelization the whole of it. For example. Paul VI notes that catechesis is a particular ministry carried out within the Church's evangelizing mission, but it is not evangelization itself (see *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975), §17, 22, 45). John Paul II calls catechesis an essential "moment" within evangelization (see *Catechesi Tradendae* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana,1979), §18). At the same time, he notes that catechesis must often assume the function of calling for initial conversion through the primary proclamation of the Gospel (cf. *Catechesi Tradendae*, 19). In other words, catechesis must be *kerygmatic* (cf. Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), §62). Given this relationship between evangelization (understood both as the entire process of journeying with a person into communion with the Father and as the initial proclamation of the Gospel) and catechesis, and, in particular, catechesis' evangelizing function, this paper will frequently refer to evangelization writ large. This is not to discount catechesis in any manner, but to understand it as an essential moment within the broader process of evangelization.

[10] Joseph Ratzinger, "Forward," *Dogma and Preaching: Applying Christian Doctrine to Daily Life,* trans. Michael J. Miller and Matthew J. O'Connell (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 7.

because he has talked to us; so the first condition for speaking of God is listening to all that God himself has said."[11] Following this trajectory, the present study will attempt to argue that Ratzinger's answer to the more fundamental question about revelation and faith provides the guideposts for approaching the problem of evangelization today and establishes the contours of what would amount to Ratzinger's vision for evangelization. For Ratzinger, the revelation of the *Logos* "does not reveal something, nor does it reveal various kinds of things, but in the man Jesus, in the man who is God, we are able to understand the whole nature of man."[12] Evangelization essentially refers to the Church's setting out with Christ in order to put men in touch with this revelation, to transform poverty of every kind,[13] and to show the path for living life[14] — inviting others into discipleship, that process of understanding the whole nature of man and of healing. **The personal nature of the revelation of the *Logos* of God in Jesus Christ, establishes an anthropological pattern, a series of guiding principles, by which evangelization can proceed in accord with the *Logos*. In short, the "who" (i.e. who Jesus Christ is and who He reveals God to be) reveals and determines the "how to," or, more succinctly, the "who" is the "how."** Evangelization does not only consist of communicating the *truth* about God, the human person, and salvation (i.e. *Logos* as revealing a theological anthropology of being-from, being-with, and being-for and God's response to man's breaking away from this pattern) for the *life* of the disciple (i.e. the discovery of, healing by, and living as a being from, with, and for), but of the act of evangelizing itself proceeding according to the *way* of being-from, being-for, and being-with.

Ratzinger, at first glance, may seem like an odd, even unhelpful aid when it comes to the "how to" of evangelization, given the minimal amount of time he spent in direct pastoral work – work that spanned a mere two years.[15] Ratzinger even willingly admits a lack of responsibility

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[11] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 42.

[12] Joseph Ratzinger, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Origin and Background," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. III, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 176.

[13] Joseph Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," in *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism: Sidelights on the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997). 44.

[14] Joseph Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers," *EWTN,* December 12, 2000, https://www.ewtn.com/new_evangelization/ratzinger.htm.

[15] For more on his rather fruitful time spent in parish life, a time that produced the insight at the core of "The New Pagans and the Church," see Joseph Ratzinger, *Milestones: Memoirs 1927-1977,* trans. Erasmo Leiva-Marikakis

for developing catechetical methods.[16] To be sure, his rather subdued personality,[17] and the primary emphases of his theological study may not initially seem like the most intuitive place from which to build a vision for evangelization and catechesis for the 21st century. In the face of such natural criticism, one could argue that Ratzinger's is worthy of consideration with regard to evangelization for at least three reasons. First, while it is the case that relatively few of his works cover the areas of evangelization and catechesis directly,[18] it is also the case that much more of his work speaks to these topics than originally meets the eye. As will be seen throughout this study, the whole of Ratzinger's corpus, — so distinguished by a Christocentrism — in a certain sense, is marked by mission. Second, if one takes seriously Vatican II's role in shaping the Church and evangelization, then, given Ratzinger's key contributions to the Council and its immediate implementation as a theologian, bishop, Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (overseeing the publishing of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*), and Pope (who

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(San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1998), 100-02; Joseph Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth: The Church at the End of the Millennium,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997), 63-64; Benedict XVI, *Last Testament,* 88.

[16] Joseph Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church: Current Problems in Theology and Consequences for Catechesis," in *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 42.

[17] See Emery de Gaál, *The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI: The Christocentric Shift* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 13-20; Peter Seewald, *Benedict XVI: An Intimate Portrait,* trans. Henry Taylor and Anne Englund Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), 55-56. Others have noted the difference in charisma between Benedict XVI and his predecessor John Paul II. For example, see David Gibson, *The Rule of Benedict* (New York: HarperSanFrancisco, 2006), 14.

[18] Ratzinger's most comprehensive work on evangelization, catechesis, and the Catechism of the Catholic Church is his *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism: Sidelights on the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997). With regard to mission and evangelization see: "Eucharist and Mission," in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005);"Communion: Eucharist — Fellowship — Mission," in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005); Joseph Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers," (December 12, 2000), https://www.ewtn.com/new_evangelization/ratzinger.htm; *Dogma and Preaching: Applying Christian Doctrine to Daily Life,* trans. Michael J. Miller and Matthew J. O'Connell (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011); Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation," *XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012); Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," in *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013); *Sacramentum Caritatis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), §78, 84-85. With regard to catechesis, see: *Handing on the Faith in an Age of Disbelief,* trans. Michael Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006); "Christ and the Church: Current Problems in Theology and Consequences for Catechesis," in *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996). With regard to the *Catechism,* see: *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1994); "Current Doctrinal Relevance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Oct. 9, 2002); Benedict XVI, "Introduction," in *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), xv-xvii; Benedict XVI, "*Motu Proprio* for the approval and publication of the *Compendium of the Catechism of the Catholic Church*" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005); Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010), §73-74, 90-98.

established the Pontifical Council for Promoting New Evangelization), his thought on the matter is worth serious consideration. While opinions about his initiatives may vary, no one could argue against the fact that he has played a significant role in the Church since Vatican II. Finally, within the vast amounts of scholarship pertaining to Ratzinger, relatively little touches on his vision for evangelization and catechesis. It is worth further unpacking these latter two reasons for undertaking a study on Ratzinger in this arena in order to understand why pursuing Ratzinger's thought is valuable and might provide something of a "key" for approaching evangelization today.

1.   Why Ratzinger?

1.1   Vatican II and Evangelization

Vatican II can rightly be called a "catechetical council." St. John XXIII's opening address clearly states this as the primary objective of the Council: "that the sacred deposit of Christian doctrine should be more effectively defended and presented."[19] The Council did not aim to discuss doctrine. Rather, as John XXIII notes:

> What instead is necessary today is that the whole of Christian doctrine, with no part of it lost, be received in our times by all with a new fervor, in serenity and peace, in that traditional and precise conceptuality and expression which is especially displayed in the acts of the Councils of Trent and Vatican I…For the deposit of faith, the truths contained in our venerable doctrine, are one thing; the fashion in which they are expressed, but with the same meaning and the same judgement, is another thing.[20]

Pope Paul VI, who was elected following John XXIII's untimely death in the midst of the Council, describes the objectives of Vatican II as capable of being "definitively summed up in this single one: to make the Church of the twentieth century ever better fitted for proclaiming the

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[19] John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia,* trans. Joseph A. Komonchak, accessed June 29, 2018, (accessed via: https://jakomonchak.files.wordpress.com/2012/10/john-xxiii-opening-speech.pdf).
[20] John XXIII, *Gaudet Mater Ecclesia*.

Gospel to the people of the twentieth century."[21] Petroc Willey, in an October 2017 keynote address, calls Vatican II "a *uniquely* catechetical Council of the Church, one whose attention is focused upon the *transmission* of the Gospel of Christ."[22] Though the Council did not formally call for the drafting of a universal catechism in its documents, at the very least, there were intimations within the discussions held by the Council fathers. During the final session of the Council, Cardinal Jäger, as noted by Ratzinger, "proposed the commissioning of such a book in order to give concrete form to the work of *aggiornamento* in the area of doctrine."[23] Even without a universal catechism in its immediate wake, Vatican II renewed the vigor surrounding catechetical ministry and called for the composition of a directory "concerning the catechetical instruction of the Christian people,"[24] which came to life in 1971 in the Congregation for the Clergy's *General Catechetical Directory*. Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, also following the trajectory of the Council, produced *Evangelii Nuntiandi* and *Catechesi Tradendae* respectively. These gave further shape to evangelization and contextualized catechesis therein. All of this, amongst other developments, with the 1985 Synod of Bishops being particularly noteworthy, prepared the way for the development of the new evangelization and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. While it falls outside the scope of this paper to provide a thorough treatment on Vatican II,[25] the simple point must be made clear: that Vatican II, in both its spirit[26] and in its letter,[27] was concerned about proclaiming the Gospel afresh in the 20th century and beyond.

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[21] Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, §2.

[22] Petroc Willey, "The Catechism Enshrines the Pedagogy of God" (conference paper, Speaking the Truth in Love Conference, Steubenville, OH, October 2017).

[23] Joseph Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 11.

[24] Second Vatican Council, *Christus Dominus* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), §44.

[25] There is no shortage of scholarship on Vatican II. For example, see John W. O'Malley's balanced historical treatment *What Happened at Vatican II* (London: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2008), and for commentary on individual conciliar documents, see *Vatican II: Renewal within Tradition,* eds. Matthew L. Lamb and Matthew Levering (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[26] See Ratzinger, *Milestones,* 121-22.

[27] For example, see the following from the Second Vatican Council: *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1963), §10; *Inter Mirifica* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1963), §2-3; *Lumen Gentium,* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964), §1-17; *Christus Dominus* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1964), §11-20; *Optatam Totius* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), §19-20; *Gravissimum Educationis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965); *Nostra Aetate* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965); *Dei Verbum* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), §1-10, 24-25; *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965); *Dignitatis Humanae* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965); *Ad Gentes* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965); *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1963), §1-5, 9, 19; *Gaudium et Spes* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965).

1.2   Ratzinger's Role in Vatican II

For his part, Ratzinger argues that Vatican II must be known as neither "progressive" nor "conservative," but "missionary."[28] Ratzinger participated in the Council as a *peritus* and was instrumental in the drafting of *Dei Verbum, Lumen Gentium, Gaudium et Spes,* and *Ad Gentes*.[29] Heinrich Heim opens his notable work on Ratzinger's ecclesiology by highlighting the Council's effect on Ratzinger, and vice versa. He goes on to note the importance of this connection, specifically with regard to ecclesiology, and in the areas of revelation and mission as well. Heim states, "Ratzinger must be understood not only as an expert in the conciliar ecclesiology, as one of those who helped to shape it, but at the same time also as one of its most resolute defenders and as someone who continues to interpret and apply it concretely in his writings."[30] During his first Christmas address to Curia as Pope, this interpretation and application was on display, as Benedict XVI spoke of a conflicting hermeneutics with regard to the Council:

On the one hand, there is an interpretation that I would call "a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rupture"; it has frequently availed itself of the sympathies of the mass media, and also one trend of modern theology. On the other, there is the "hermeneutic of reform", of renewal in the continuity of the one subject-Church which the Lord has given

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[28] Joseph Ratzinger and Vittorio Messori, *The Ratzinger Report*, trans. Salvator Attanasio and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1985), 13.

[29] There are numerous commentaries on Ratzinger's role in the Council, including his own. For example, see: Ratzinger, *Milestones,* 120-39; Jared Wicks, "Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as *peritus* before and during Vatican Council II," *Gregorianum* 89, no. 2 (2008); Joseph Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II* (New York: Paulist Press, 1966); Joseph Ratzinger's numerous commentaries in Vorgrimler's multi-volume commentary entitled *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler, trans. Lalit Adolphus, et al. (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 171; Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Report,* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1985), 27-44; Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 71-80; Benedict XVI, *Last Testament,* 119-42; Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticano, 2005). For other commentaries on Ratzinger's role in the Council, see Gibson, *The Rule of Benedict*, 147-78; Greg Tobin, *Holy Father: Pope Benedict XVI* (New York: Sterling Publishing, 2005), 95-106; Aidan Nichols, *The Thought of Pope Benedict XVI* (London: Burns&Oates, 2007), 53-72; Maximilian Heinrich Heim, *Life in the Church and Living Theology,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007).

[30] Heim, *Joseph Ratzinger: Life in the Church and Living Theology,* 11.

to us. She is a subject which increases in time and develops, yet always remaining the same, the one subject of the journeying People of God.[31]

Following Ratzinger's lead when it comes to understanding the Council from the inside out, and applying this understanding to an approach to mission, may prove to be increasingly important as the Church moves away from that time immediately following the Council and enters more deeply, and with greater clarity, into the abiding aims of the Council. In fact, Ratzinger, reflecting on the nature of councils (in light of reflections by Sts. Basil and Gregory Nazianzus), says, "From close by, nearly all councils have seemed to destroy equilibrium, create crisis."[32] While viewed macroscopically, over the course of hundreds of years, the councils of which Basil and Gregory speak, "have become beacons for the Church," and "assured the unity of faith in the passage of time."[33] While hundreds of years have not transpired since the close of Vatican II and the "fog" of crisis still exists in various corners, and while the Church still finds herself infected to varying degrees by the growing secularism of the epoch, one does sense, especially with the growing enthusiasm around the new evangelization, that the Church is approaching a frontier. And, Ratzinger's influence in guiding her to this point cannot be easily dismissed.

1.3   Scholarship Pertaining to Ratzinger's Vision for Evangelization and Catechesis - Literature Review

Given the significant role Ratzinger played in the "evangelical" Council itself, and the central role he has played in its implementation, there is relatively little scholarship on his thought pertaining to evangelization and catechesis and his vision for evangelization on the whole. Pablo Blanco's "The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger: *Nuclear Ideas*" provides a synthesis of Ratzinger's fundamental theological principles that are deeply impacted by the experience of the Council. Blanco argues that for Ratzinger, theology and catechesis (which is likely a

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[31] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings," (2005).
[32] Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology: Building Stones for a Fundamental Theology*, trans. Mary Frances McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1987), 369.
[33] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 369.

reference to doctrine) must be taken into account for evangelization.[34] Louis Rouleau traces Benedict XVI's general audiences for several years and concludes that, for Benedict XVI, the faith of the saints throughout the Church's history stands as a testimony for the world, and the holiness is the basis of renewal within the Church.[35] Matthew Ramage treats the theological issue of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* with regard to Benedict XVI's understanding of the hermeneutics of continuity and discontinuity.[36] Lieven Boeve and Gerard Mannion provide commentary on various excerpts from Ratzinger on the topics of new evangelization and catechesis in *The Ratzinger Reader*.[37] Perhaps the most direct scholarship developed which touches on evangelization can be found in works that discuss pro-existence. Christopher Ruddy's "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," explores the nature of pro-existence within Ratzinger's theology and argues that pro-existence stands at the heart of Ratzinger's theological vision on the whole, which comes to bear more specifically in Christology and ecclesiology. Pro-existence necessarily has implications for evangelization.[38] Ruddy's "Smaller But Purer?" advances his thesis regarding Ratzinger's theology of pro-existence and attempts to vindicate Ratzinger from the critics who claim that Ratzinger prefers a smaller and purer Church, one that is closed-off from the culture.[39] Anne Devlin offers a penetrating dissertation on Ratzinger's theology of human personhood, including a treatment on the human person's participation in Jesus Christ's prayer, i.e., in his mission of being "for the many."[40] On the topic of catechesis, Enrique García Ahumada provides a thorough overview of the catechetical themes and the close ties between Scripture and catechesis as highlighted by Benedict XVI in *Verbum Domini*. However, Ahumada strays little outside of *Verbum Domini* in

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[34] Pablo Blanco, "The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger: *Nuclear Ideas," Theology Today* 68, no. 2 (2011): 153-73.

[35] Louis J. Rouleau, "Holiness and the History of the Church in Benedict XVI's General Audiences," *Logos* 17, no. 3 (2014): 158-73.

[36] Matthew Ramage, "*Extra Ecclesiam Nulla Salus* and the Substance of Catholic Doctrine: Towards a Realization of Benedict XVI's 'Hermeneutic of Reform,'" *Nova et vetera* 14, no. 1 (2016): 295-330.

[37] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Reader,* eds. Lieven Boeve and Gerard Mannion (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 225-56. For more on the new evangelization, see Rymarz, R. M. "The New Evangelization: A Look at the Growing Range of Reference," *Compass* 44, no. 2 (2010): 24-27.

[38] Christopher Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," *Theological Studies* 75, no. 3 (2014): 564-84.

[39] Christopher Ruddy, "'Smaller But Purer'?: Joseph Ratzinger on the 'Little Flock' and Vicarious Representation," *Nova et Vetera* 13, no. 3 (2015): 713-741.

[40] Anne Devlin, "The Theology of Human Personhood According to Joseph Ratzinger" (PhD thesis, The Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family at the Catholic University of America, 2011).

his article.[41] Blanco traces Ratzinger's thought on the catechetical "crisis" that developed after the Council and the manner in which the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and its *Compendium* are responses to the crisis, in "Joseph Ratzinger y la Catequesis."[42] Andreas Wollbold's "Benedikt XVI und die Katechese," claims that while Ratzinger may not consider himself a practical theologian, his theological inquiry has sparked discussion in fields of practical theology pertaining to liturgy, a theological analysis of contemporary society, and catechesis.[43] Wollbold goes on to provide a chronological overview of Ratzinger's dealings within the realm of catechesis, and calls for a catechesis capable of reaching people today, a corresponding draft of which "is not yet written."[44] In "Catechetical Mystagogy: Pope Benedict XVI on 'Mystagogical Catechesis," James Pauley treats Benedict XVI's paragraph on "mystagogical catechesis" from *Sacramentum Caritatis*.[45] And, there is no shortage of articles engaging with Ratzinger's position regarding the *Catechism* and the *Catechism* itself.[46] In conducting this literature review it becomes clear that just as Ratzinger has few works dedicated to solely engaging the topics of evangelization and catechesis, so too, there are relatively few scholarly works within the field of Ratzinger studies that engage the whole of his vision for evangelization following the Council.

In light of the problem of communicating the Gospel today, coupled with Ratzinger's influence at Vatican II (and in the years that followed) and the relative dearth of scholarship on this theme of evangelization and catechesis within Ratzinger studies, the primary question the present study will attempt to answer could be stated as follows: How does the revelation of the *logos* in the person of Jesus Christ shape Ratzinger's vision for evangelization following Vatican II? Before addressing the structure by which the argument will proceed, defining the terms

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[41] See Enrique Ahumada, "Catechetic Implications of *Verbum Domini," Revisita Académica* 43, (2012): 9-25.

[42] Pablo Blanco, "Joseph Ratzinger y la Catequesis," *La transmisión de la fe en la sociedad contemporánea,* eds. Ramiro Pellitero and Javier Sesé (Pamplona: EUNSA, 2008), 237-51.

[43] Andreas Wollbold, "Benedikt XVI und die Katechese," *Münchener Theologische Zeitschrift* 56, no. 5 (2005), 485.

[44] Wollbold, "Benedikt XVI und die Katechese," 497.

[45] James Pauley, "Catechetical Mystagogy: Pope Benedict XVI on 'Mystagogical Catechesis," *The Sower* 29, no. 1 (2008), 14-15.

[46] For example, see: Avery Dulles, "The Challenge of the Catechism," *First Things,* January 1995, https://www.firstthings.com/article/1995/01/the-challenge-of-the-catechism; Brian Pedraza, "Catholic Disagreements and the Catechism's 25th Anniversary," *Church Life Journal*, October 24, 2017, https://churchlife.nd.edu/2017/10/24/catholic-disagreements-and-the-catechisms-25th-anniversary/. Matthew Kuhner, "Catechesis at the Service of Encounter: The Christocentricity of the Second Vatican Council and the Shape of Postconciliar Catechesis" (conference paper, Speaking the Truth in Love Conference, Steubenville, OH, October 2017).

"evangelization" and "catechesis" will serve as a necessary and foundational starting point for what follows.

2.   Defining Terms

2.1   Defining Evangelization

The history of the word "evangelization" (*evangelium* in Latin, and *euangelisasthai* in Greek) provides tremendous insight into the reality it conveys. The word "evangelization" etymologically breaks down to "the making/sharing of good news" (*evangel* = "good news/glad tidings" and the root of the word "gospel;" *–ization* = "making or doing").[47] Homer utilizes the word as an announcement of victory, "and therefore the announcement of good, joy and happiness."[48] The prophet Isaiah uses the word (see Is. 40:9) in reference to a voice that "announces joy from God, a voice that makes it clear that God has not forgotten his people, that God, who apparently had almost withdrawn from history, it is here, he is present."[49] In the Roman Empire, Augustus would take up the word as a message that comes from the Emperor, and as such, it is a message that brings good, renewal to the world, salvation, imperial strength, and power.[50] The pre-Christian history of the word "evangelization" reveals that this word bears significant weight, that it comes from an authority, that it announces that which is to be good for all, and, therefore, that which brings joy. It has a *gravitas* that is more substantial than sharing about a good hamburger or a new Netflix original, even if those are ordinary examples of sharing good news. The history of the word shows us that both the *source* of the message and its *content* matter - both the *source* and the *content* are significant. At this point one can begin to feel the weight of the Christian *evangelium*. Pope Benedict XVI notes:

> The New Testament accepts this situation [that of the word's usage in imperial Rome]. St Luke explicitly compares the Emperor Augustus with the Child born in Bethlehem:

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[47] Cf. "εὐαγγέλιον," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. II, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), 707-37.

[48] Benedict XVI, "Meditation During the First General Congregation."

[49] Benedict XVI, "Meditation During the First General Congregation."

[50] Benedict XVI, "Meditation During the First General Congregation."

"Evangelium" — he says — yes, it is the Emperor's word, the true Emperor of the world. The true Emperor of the world has made himself heard, he speaks to us. And this fact, in itself, is redemption because the great suffering of man — then, as now — is this: behind the silence of the universe, behind the clouds of history, is or isn't there a God? And, if this God is there, does he know us, does he have anything to do with us? Is this God good, then does the reality of good have any power in the world or not? This question is as relevant today as it was then. Many people wonder: is God just a hypothesis or not? Is he a reality or not? Why do we not hear him? 'Gospel' means: God has broken his silence, God has spoken, God exists. This fact in itself is salvation: God knows us, God loves us, he has entered into history. Jesus is his Word, God with us, God showing us that he loves us, that he suffers with us until death and rises again. This is the Gospel. God has spoken, he is no longer the great unknown, but has shown himself and this is salvation.[51]

"Gospel" is neither the sharing of some sort of vapid, irrelevant, or generic "good news," nor is reducible to humanistic values. The Christian claim, the Christian event, the Christian *glad tidings* only make sense when the gravity of the situation, the full extent of the "bad news," as will be examined in greater detail in the treatment on *Shéol* in the study that follows.[52]

In addition to his treatment on Jesus' Gospel, Ratzinger provides two more insights regarding the historical development of the *evangelium*. First, Ratzinger considers the Gospel in the Gospels. These Gospels are not merely books, but are "the written record of a proclamation."[53] The Gospels proclaim the content of Jesus' gospel. Ratzinger argues that it is not the case that a discontinuity exists between Jesus' pre-Easter message and that of the disciples after Pentecost. Rather:

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[51] Benedict XVI, "Meditation During the First General Congregation."
[52] Cf. Catechism of the Catholic Church (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), §309. This paragraph reads, "There is not a single aspect of the Christian message that is not in part an answer to the question of evil." *CCC* 389 notes, "The doctrine of original sin is, so to speak, the 'reverse side' of the Good News that Jesus is the Savior of all men, that all need salvation, and that salvation is offered to all through Christ." Nb. Hereafter, *Catechism* will be abbreviated *CCC*.
[53] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 51.

Only in the light of Easter, in the light of the Holy Spirit, did believers gradually come to understand that Moses and the prophets had in fact spoken of Jesus…We could thus say — and this is our second layer — that to evangelize means to acquaint men with Jesus as we come to know him through the Gospels. To evangelize is to introduce men into a communion of life with him as well as into the fellowship of disciples, the community that journeys with him.[54]

Second, Ratzinger treats Paul's Gospel, by noting that Paul speaks of "'my gospel,' whereby he expresses the special insight given to him in his encounter with the risen Christ on the road to Damascus, namely, that man is not justified before God by the works of the law but by faith."[55] This marks a significant development. One need not become Jewish in order to become Christian — one need not accept the yoke of the commandments and the Torah in order to enter the kingdom of God, but "when I am in communion with Jesus, I live in the kingdom of God."[56] Paul is freed, in Christ, from cultural pressures. The Gospel transcends culture. Paul's experience becomes something of a model for everyone: "I must have met God in Christ in such a living way that I can 'count as dust' (Phil. 3:7) my own cultural provenance, indeed, everything that was important to me in my own history. No studies, however subtle, will produce new cultural forms of Christianity unless they proceed from the liberating power of encounter with Christ."[57]

Based upon this historical survey and the Church's own understanding of her mission, Ratzinger concludes that "evangelization means to set out with Christ in order to pass on the gift we have received, to transform poverty of every kind."[58] He says:

At the beginning of his public life Jesus says: I have come to evangelize the poor (Luke 4:18); this means: I have the response to your fundamental question; I will show you the path of life, the path toward happiness—rather: I am that path. The deepest poverty is the inability of joy, the tediousness of a life considered absurd and contradictory. This

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[54] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 53.
[55] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 53.
[56] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 54.
[57] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 54.
[58] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 44.

poverty is widespread today, in very different forms in the materially rich as well as the poor countries. The inability of joy presupposes and produces the inability to love, produces jealousy, avarice—all defects that devastate the life of individuals and of the world.[59]

The revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ, both reveals and has the capacity to heal the whole nature of man. Jesus Christ reveals the truth about God as a personal reality, a *communio,* and therefore, reveals the truth about what it means to be *person*. In short, to *be person* is to be in-relation, and to *be person* in the "image and likeness" of God is to *be person* according to the Trinitarian pattern of being-from, being-for, and being-with. When men and women live this pattern as a way of life, they experience freedom in the truth. Stepping outside of the pattern results in the bondage of sin and a dehumanization — the inability of joy. In the Incarnation and Paschal Mystery, God has said "yes" to man despite man's intentional attempts at breaking free from the pattern through personal sin, or his unintentional being broken from the pattern as the result of the sins of others. God has said "yes, it is good that you exist" to every man and woman, personally and individually, an acceptance that brings joy and restores joy and draws humanity back into one. Evangelization means the Church sets out with Christ to share or to make "glad tidings" by introducing persons to Jesus Christ. Evangelization means the Church participates in Jesus' mission, and therefore, the Church evangelizes according to *who He is*.[60] The Church evangelizes according to the *Logos* — with the *Logos* and in the *Logos*. The kingdom of God is here, the kingdom is present in Jesus Christ. God has spoken and God is here, and this God can be encountered today in just the same way as He encountered those described in the Gospels. He can be encountered today in the Church who bears witness to Him, and who invites one into this encounter with Christ that is not contingent upon one's culture, but which cuts through and invites one beyond his or her culture. Evangelization is not a dry indoctrination, nor is it moralistic and reductive of the person. Instead, evangelization means showing the path — teaching the art of living. Evangelization is the proclamation of the Gospel in such a way that it

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[59] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."
[60] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 226.

invites a person into a new way of life — into the life of discipleship. The Gospel is a way of life — it is the art of living according to the *Logos*.

2.2   *Defining Catechesis*

Catechesis (from the Greek κατηχέω means "to sound from above," "to recount something to someone," "to inform," "to teach," "to instruct someone," and in Paul, he uses the word exclusively in the sense of "to give instruction concerning the content of faith"[61]) is a form of the ministry of the word and an "essential moment" within the process of evangelization.[62] It is the activity which can simply be "understood as promoting communion with Jesus Christ."[63] While catechesis remains a distinct moment within evangelization, there should be no bifurcation between evangelization and catechesis, as if catechesis is that which dries up the vivacity of the *kerygma* (i.e. the basic Gospel message). Emphasizing the need for a unified understanding of catechesis and the proclamation of the Gospel, John Paul II adds:

> Through catechesis the Gospel kerygma (the initial ardent proclamation by which a person is one day overwhelmed and brought to the decision to entrust himself to Jesus Christ by faith) is gradually deepened, developed in its implicit consequences, explained in language that includes an appeal to reason, and channelled towards Christian practice in the Church and the world. All this is no less evangelical than the kerygma, in spite of what is said by certain people who consider that catechesis necessarily rationalizes, dries up and eventually kills all that is living, spontaneous and vibrant in the kerygma. The truths studied in catechesis are the same truths that touched the person's heart when he

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[61] "κατηχέω," *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* Vol. III, ed. Gerhard Kittel (Grand Rapids, MI: Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1965), 638.

[62] John Paul II calls catechesis an "essential moment" within evangelization, making reference to the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy's *General Catechetical Directory* (Citta del Vaticano: Editrice Libreria Vaticana, 1971), §17-18; and Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi,* §17-24, 45. John Paul II notes that "there is no separation or opposition between catechesis and evangelization. Nor can the two be simply identified with each other." See John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, §18.

[63] *General Directory for Catechesis,* §80.

heard them for the first time. Far from blunting or exhausting them, the fact of knowing

them better should make them even more challenging and decisive for one's life.[64]

The primary proclamation of the Gospel is a ministry of the word that addresses itself to

"nonbelievers and those living in religious indifference," and "its functions are to proclaim the

Gospel and to call to conversion."[65] Catechesis builds upon this primary proclamation and

"presupposes a global adherence to Christ's Gospel as presented by the Church."[66] It "promotes

and matures initial conversion" and "educates the convert in the faith and incorporates him into

the Christian community."[67] Situated within the process of evangelization carried out by the

ministry of the word, a ministry that arouses faith and inspires initial conversion, catechesis

"promotes" and "matures" initial faith via "education" for the sake of full "incorporation" into

the Trinity through initiation into the Christian community:

> Catechesis is that particular form of the ministry of the word which matures initial
>
> conversion to make it into a living, explicit and fruitful confession of faith: 'Catechesis
>
> has its origin in the confession of faith and leads to confession of faith.'…Catechesis
>
> should unite well the confession of christological faith, 'Jesus is Lord,' with the
>
> trinitarian confession, 'I believe in the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit,' in such a
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> way that there are not two modes of expressing the Christian faith. He who is converted
>
> to Jesus Christ and recognizes him as Lord through the primary proclamation of the

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[64] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae,* §25.

[65] *General Directory for Catechesis,* §61.

[66] *General Catechetical Directory*, §18. While this is true by way of proper definition for catechesis, in reality it is quite often the case that many participants in catechetical programs within the Church have not yet given personal adherence to Jesus Christ. In light of this, the *General Catechetical Directory* notes that evangelization can both "precede or accompany the work of catechesis proper," and that "in any case…one must keep in mind that the element of conversion is always present in the dynamism of the faith, and for that reason any form of catechesis must also perform the role of evangelization." Other magisterial documents attuned to the present cultural situation and the often "blurry" lines between the moments of primary proclamation and catechesis, call for a "new evangelization," characterized by "kerygmatic catechesis" or "pre-catechesis." The *General Directory for Catechesis,* §62 notes, "Only by starting with conversion, and therefore by making allowance for the interior disposition of 'whoever believes,' can catechesis, strictly speaking, fulfill its proper task of education in the faith." The *National Directory for Catechesis,* §19.A states, "In many situations…catechesis must also be concerned with arousing initial faith and sustaining the gradual conversion to complete adherence to Jesus Christ." See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, *National Directory for Catechesis* (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2005). See also John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae,* §19.

[67] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §61.

Gospel begins a process which, aided by catechesis, necessarily leads to explicit confession of the Trinity.[68]

John Paul II defines the nature of catechesis as the "teaching and maturation stage," that "endeavors to know better this Jesus to whom he has entrusted himself."[69] With greater emphasis, John Paul II says, "the definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."[70] Catechesis promotes intimate communion through knowing and loving more profoundly this Jesus Christ, through whom one comes to the Father in the Holy Spirit. Catechesis leads people into intimate communion with Christ by "maturing the initial faith and of educating the true disciple of Christ by means of a deeper and more systematic knowledge of the person and the message of our Lord Jesus Christ."[71]

Ratzinger, in typical *ressourcement* fashion, traces the biblical-historical evidence of the word "catechize" and notes that it does not occur at all in the Septuagint. Paul is the first to give the word permanent significance for the Church.[72] Catechesis results from his apostolic activity, with the most significant passage appearing in Gal. 6:6 with reference of the catechumen and the catechist, "the active and passive side of the process."[73] Luke-Acts also uses the word to describe Apollos, a man who is "'catechized' in the way of the Lord" (Acts 18:25).[74] Luke also writes his Gospel to Theophilus, "in order that the latter might come to know the trustworthiness of the words and realities (*logōn*) in which he has been catechized."[75] Yet it is the case that the "term 'catechesis' takes second place to 'gospel,' which remains the basic word."[76] Echoing Paul VI and John Paul II, Ratzinger holds that catechesis becomes necessary within the process of

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[68] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §82.

[69] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae,* §20. Here, he also says, "It is true that being a Christian means saying 'yes' to Jesus Christ, but let us remember that this 'yes' has two levels: It consists in surrendering to the word of God and relying on it, but it also means, at a later stage, endeavoring to know better - and better the profound meaning of this word."

[70] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, §5.

[71] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae,* §19.

[72] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 38.

[73] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 56.

[74] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 56.

[75] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 56.

[76] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 55.

evangelization, and that evangelization moves into catechesis, which "aims at coming to know Jesus concretely. It is theoretical and practical initiation into the will of God as revealed in Jesus and lived by the community of the Lord's disciples, the family of God."[77] Naturally, then, catechesis implies instruction — flowing from the intellectual dimension of the Gospel, which appeals to man's reason. But, the Gospel does not solely appeal to the intellect, but is a way of life. Therefore, "the actual living out of this doctrine [taught through instruction] is an essential component of [catechesis], and man's intellect sees properly only when the heart is integrated into the mind. Consequently, catechetical instruction also includes a pilgrim fellowship, a gradual familiarization with the new life-style of Christianity."[78] Catechesis does not only consist of instruction, but community, fellowship, conversation, prayer, shared-living, and journey as well. For Ratzinger, then, evangelization is a reference both to the whole process of both initial conversion brought about through a primary proclamation of the *kerygma*, and of ongoing conversion and being brought more and more deeply into the *communio* of God through the *communio* of the Church. Catechesis is "secondary," not in a sense of being less essential, but in terms of the movement of deepening communion from initial conversion to ongoing conversion. In any case, both evangelization and catechesis are not reducible to the handing on of extrinsic truths which are ratified by faith, but of fostering an initial and ongoing encounter with the Truth Jesus Christ and entry into the Way of life that is marked by the Gospel.[79]

3.   The Structure of the Argument

This study will pursue a relatively straightforward line in attempting to answer how the revelation of the *Logos* in the person of Jesus Christ shapes Ratzinger's vision for evangelization according to Vatican II. Chapter 1 aims to explore the basic contours of a Rahnerian thought-trajectory in the wake of Vatican II. This survey does not aim at providing a comprehensive treatment of Rahnerian theology and its implications in the areas of evangelization and catechesis, but serves to provide historical context and to bring Ratzinger's position into striking relief. In order to bring a sharper focus into play, Ch. 1 largely engages with theologians of a

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[77] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 56.
[78] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 56-57.
[79] For more on Christianity as "Way," see Joseph Ratzinger, "Christian faith as 'the Way': An introduction to *Veritatis Splendor*," *Communio* 21, no. 2 (1994), 199-200.

Rahnerian ilk who have had, or are presently having, a significant impact within the field of catechetics: American catechetical theorists Gabriel Moran and Thomas Groome, and Belgian theologian Lieven Boeve. This study, albeit cursory, attempts to faithfully reproduce the positions of these theologians and to show the direct connection between fundamental theology and evangelization and catechesis. The relationship between the Church (and her Tradition) and revelation will largely come into question in the face of the "Heideggerian problematic," the question of the relationship between being and time. As will be seen, the Rahnerian trajectory risks a certain subjectivizing of the faith that ends in, at worst, a nearly compete dismantling of, or, at best, a complete redefinition of, the Church's mission to evangelize and catechize.

Given that Ch. 1 opens with treatments of several theologians' approaches to fundamental theology in order to see the implications in the areas of evangelization and catechetics, Ch. 2 will attempt to lay the foundation for approaching the Ratzingerian position in the same fashion. In other words, Ch. 2 engages what one might call Ratzinger's theological "starting points." The chapter opens with a treatment on revelation, including the nature of the revelation of the Son in Jesus Christ as a personal revelation. God reveals the nature of person in the Son who reveals the personal, Trinitarian nature of God. For Ratzinger, the personal revelation of the Son becomes the foundation for his theological anthropology and for his understanding of faith/encounter, discipleship, and the Church's vision for evangelization and catechesis. Next, Ch. 2 explores the act of faith, which must occur in response to the initiative taken by God in revealing, or else there is no true revelation — a receiving subject is necessary in order for revelation to occur. The faith of the Church kept alive in her *memoria* as a gift of the Holy Spirit, therefore, becomes central to Ratzinger's understanding of fundamental theology, as it is the faith of the Church that makes accessible the person of Jesus Christ and guarantees the continuity between Jesus Christ yesterday, today, and tomorrow. Said another way, the Church is the guarantor that the Jesus of today is the same as the Jesus of yesterday, and helps to provide guideposts on the journey toward the Jesus of tomorrow who is coming to meet her. Therefore, the faith of the Church plays a significant role in Ratzinger's approach — indeed, it is the mode in which he operates at all times — to fundamental theology, and neither an optional "extra," nor is it a hermeneutic that clouds or frustrates the unthematic (i.e. nonconceptualized) religious experience. Instead, the testimony of centuries of faith that comes to the person today provides a

unique access point for Jesus Christ who continues to reveal himself and to awaken faith today. Therefore, the final two chapters engage Ratzinger's understanding of the role the Church plays in bringing about faith today.

Before providing any consideration for *how* the Church (or the individual evangelist) should approach the task of evangelization (of which catechesis is an "essential moment"), the present study first explores Ratzinger's position on the *what* and the *why* of evangelization. For Ratzinger, the content of faith, i.e. the *what* that is revealed with due consideration for the *why*, takes precedence over and determines the method. In the case of Christian revelation, the *what* is actually a *who,* a person, Jesus Christ, the *Logos* incarnate. Therefore, Ch. 3 opens with a treatment on theological anthropology according to the *Logos* of God and the understanding of person discussed in Ch. 2. Ratzinger takes the Son as the starting point, not the exception, for anthropology, and from the revelation of the *Logos* in the Son, moves into an understanding of the Father and the Holy Spirit as well. He characterizes each person of the Trinity with the following expressions: being-from (Son), being-for (Father), and being-with (Holy Spirit). This Trinitarian "pattern" provides the basis for Ratzinger's understanding of theological anthropology and is foundational for understanding the *why* of evangelization — a point which is particularly significant in a postmodern age that is both radically aware of relationality, yet also marked deeply by an individualistic pursuit of difference and a radical subjectivism. Ratzinger's personalism, then, lays the foundation for precisely why the faith is still in harmony with what man is, and why the faith corresponds to his deepest need that results from sin which "breaks" the Trinitarian pattern that is the fabric of the person's being. In other words, Ratzinger's theological anthropology is central to understanding why he takes sin and death so seriously, while also being central to his theological understanding of exactly what is happening theologically and anthropologically in the act of faith — i.e. what might be called a "theology of encounter." *Who* Jesus Christ is reveals *who* the human person was made to be, and *Who* (capital "W") simultaneously reveals *why* the human person stands in dire need of salvation, *why* the human person needs the encounter with Jesus Christ that comes about in the Church as revelation—faith. The chapter concludes by considering Ratzinger's treatment on discipleship as the process by which, following encounter, one enters on the path to redemption and healing

according to the pattern marked out by the Trinity as theological anthropology. Discipleship reconstitutes the person as a bring-from, being-with, and being-for.

Finally, one comes to the problem of *how* the Church evangelizes and catechizes. Ratzinger's works provide very little in the way of a concrete methodology or a practical program by which one can "make disciples." Instead, his thoughts pertaining to method provide something of boundary lines within which evangelization and catechesis can fruitfully occur. Given the personal nature of the content that is to be proclaimed and handed on, and given the "personalizing" goal of the faith (i.e. reconstituting the person according to the pattern discovered in theological anthropology), Ratzinger "personalizes" methodology as well. In other words, if method is to serve and faithfully express the content of the faith, and the content of the faith is deeply personal, then the method, in order to serve and faithfully express the content, must be personal. Evangelization must proceed anthropologically. Said another way, the personal nature of the revelation of the *Logos* of God in Jesus Christ, lays the foundation for an approach to evangelization according to and deeply shaped by a fundamental anthropological pattern. Particular methods, however they are established or developed in particular geographical locales or cultural situations, can find in this fundamental anthropological pattern guiding principles for evangelization according to the *Logos*. Chapter 4 argues that the Church evangelizes in the mode of theological anthropology: being-from, being-for, and being-with. Remaining faithful to, or abiding in, her nature as a being-from, the Church faithfully renews herself by keeping her eyes fixed on Christ. This allows her to faithfully hand on that which she has received and nothing that she has made for herself. The Church fosters the encounter between Jesus Christ and the person by participating in the Father's being-for, insofar as this being-for (pro-existence) is manifest in Jesus Christ's vicarious suffering. The Church sets out along this path by way of her missionary preaching, *agape,* and suffering in the face of rejection. In this way, the Church, operating in and through the Holy Spirit, provides the opportunity for God's "Yes" to mankind, to the individual person, to be heard and for joy to arise. This encounter between God's "Yes" and the person's receptivity as a "yes" in response, marks the beginning of the Church's disciple-making efforts. On the part of the Church, discipleship demands being-with those who have now begun traversing the path that is the Way of the Lord. The Church is a being-with these pilgrims, providing them with *communio* and catechetical instruction. This final chapter, then, explores the

ways in which, according to Ratzinger, methods pertaining to evangelization and catechesis must proceed according to the Trinitarian pattern. Ratzinger's vision for evangelization proceeds in a Trinitarian fashion manifest in a theological anthropology according to the revelation of the *logos* in the person of Jesus Christ. Therefore, methods of evangelization and catechesis must follow the Trinitarian pattern of being-from, being-with, and being-for in order to faithfully serve and transmit the content of her mission according to the nature of the disciple. Evangelization seeks to communicate the *Logos* of God in the person of Jesus Christ as "glad tidings" and to "logify" human persons, and it does so according to the logic inscribed in theological anthropology. Ratzinger's approach to evangelization is marked by Trinitarian personalism and serves as a guide for how the Church can faithfully communicate the Gospel today.

Chapter 1 — Theological and Catechetical Backdrop: Modern and Postmodern Trends since Vatican II

In order to attempt to grasp the theological underpinnings for, and to define the contours of Benedict XVI's vision for evangelization, it will be helpful to consider the theological and catechetical milieu in which his thought arises and is presently situated. In this way, the paper will attempt to be true to Ratzinger's own method. Vincent Twomey, one of Ratzinger's former doctoral students, describes Ratzinger's theological methodology as follows:

> His methodology is to take as his starting point contemporary developments in society and culture, then he listens to the solutions offered my his fellow theologians before returning to a critical examination of Scripture and Tradition for pointers to a solution. He is not satisfied to analyze a topic, but, having dissected the issue, he then attempts a systematic answer by seeing the topic in the context of theology as a whole.[1]

As a result, Ratzinger never presents a complete and original theological synthesis, "but rather a series of seminal interventions in theological debates thrown up by pastoral crises."[2] As will be seen, for Ratzinger, the present situation in catechetics amounts to one of these crises, and his response to the crisis will involve returning to Scripture and Tradition as a way of listening for a solution. Hence, in pursuing Ratzinger's vision for evangelization vis-á-vis the contemporary situation, one encounters the beating heart of the faith tradition as it has been understood more fully over time. For, as Ratzinger himself says about his theological position, "the aim is not an isolated theology that I draw out of myself but one that opens as widely as possible into the common intellectual pathways of the faith."[3] Given the central focus of the present study, it is not within this paper's purview to provide a comprehensive survey of catechetics since Vatican II. Instead, the paper will aim to draw Ratzinger's position into relief by considering how Karl

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[1] C.E. Olsen, "The Theological Genius of Joseph Ratzinger: An Interview with Fr. D. Vincent Twomey," *Ignatius Insight* (June 2007), http://ignatiusinsight.com/features2007/vtwomey_interview_jun07.asp. Also cited in Tracey Rowland, *Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed* (London: T&T Clark, 2010), 1.

[2] Rowland, *Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 1. For more on those with whom Ratzinger frequently dialogues, see Tracey Rowland, "Joseph Ratzinger in the Era of Vatican II: A very German Conversation in the European World of Letters," *The Newman Rambler: Vatican II and Its Legacy - Pt. 1* 10, no. 1 (2013), 30-35.

[3] Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 66.

Rahner's contribution in the area of fundamental theology became a foundation for a number of contemporary theologians and catechetical theorists. In short, this chapter will aim to answer the following question: How has a Rahnerian approach to fundamental theology shaped evangelization and catechesis since Vatican II? The paper will then proceed to consider Ratzinger's position as a response to the Rahnerian trajectory.

Aidan Nichols argues that the theologians and catechists who follow Rahner's theological trajectory often do so in a "vulgarised" fashion, without the level of clarification and nuance that Rahner employs. This study, therefore, will attempt to track some characteristics of what Nichols calls "vulgarised Rahnerianism" as they appear in the thought of Gabriel Moran, Thomas Groome, and Lieven Boeve. Following Rahner's openness toward modernity, Moran and Groome will develop increasingly subjective and humanistic approaches toward catechetics, while mitigating the objective contents of the faith. As modern trends within theology gradually cooled, postmodern theologians, such as Lieven Boeve, have stepped into the fray, offering new theological considerations in light of a recontextualized approach to theology (i.e. a correlation strategy not pertaining to modernity, but to postmodernity). Boeve's postmodern theology will call tradition and mission more deeply into question. Ultimately, as will become clear, being will become more and more akin to time, the particular will oust the universal, and truth will be cast aside for freedom. The Rahnerian trajectory marks a movement away from the rigidity of Neo-scholasticism, opting instead for an anthropological starting point. As a result, however, the place of the Church — and her tradition — with regard to revelation and faith is relegated to a secondary role.

Prior to exploring the respective positions of Moran, Groome, and Boeve, this study will briefly consider the main lines of philosophical and theological thought that established the historical-theological context in which Vatican II was nestled, a context that radically shaped the decades immediately following the Council. As will be illustrated, central to these developments lies questions pertaining to the relationship between being and time, and between truth and freedom.

1.   Historical-Theological Context: On the Problem of Being in Time

1.1   Modernity and Neo-scholasticism

As a young theologian, Joseph Ratzinger, frustrated by a neo-scholastic theological tenor marked by a Kantian emphasis on "pure reason" and "pure nature,"[4] described Neo-scholasticism as containing an academic fear that would not confront the "Heideggerian problematic,"[5] that is, "the problem of the relationship of history and ontology, of the mediation of history in the realm of ontology."[6] He was referring to neo-scholastic attitudes within academia that Fergus Kerr calls a "straightjacket" — one which all the greatest theologians were rebelling against at Vatican II and in the years that followed.[7] Susan Baumert, looking specifically at a theology of revelation, notes that prior to the Council, many theologians, educators, and biblical scholars were unsatisfied with the traditional interpretation of divine revelation as "the communication of a system of ideas rather than a manifestation and self-giving of a Person [Jesus Christ] who is Truth."[8] The intellectual "star wars" of the mid-twentieth century largely centered around Neo-scholasticism and the position in which one took in relation to this way of thinking.[9] In order to better understand this historical context and how it pertains to evangelization, this study will briefly treat the development of Neo-scholasticism, and the emergence of the "Heideggerian problematic." Conor Sweeney's *Sacramental Presence after Heidegger* will serve as the primary vehicle by which to access these developments.

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[4] See Tracey Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008), 5.

[5] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 5.

[6] Joseph Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 158.

[7] See Tracey Rowland, "Catholic Theology in the Twentieth Century," *Key Theological Thinkers: From Modern to Postmodern*, eds. Stalle Johannes Kristiansen and Svein Rise (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 55.

[8] Susan Baumert, "Instruments of Change: The Christian Brothers' Catechetical Texts, 1943-1969," *U.S. Catholic Historian* 32, no. 4 (2014): 63.

[9] For an overview of the "star wars," see Joshua R. Brotherton's "Development(s) in the Theology of Revelation: From Francisco Marin-Sola to Joseph Ratzinger," *New Blackfriars* 97, no. 1072 (November 2016): 661-676. Brotherton traces the rise of Neo-scholasticism and points to Dominican Marin-Sola as the early 20th century challenger of Garrigou-Legrange's Strict Observance Thomism. See also Rowland, "Catholic Theology in the Twentieth Century," 37-ff.

Sweeney's work provides a genealogy of Neo-scholasticism beginning with the classical "analogical imagination" marked by participation. Describing the "analogical imagination," he says:

> The world…"participates" in God but it does so according to a structure of analogy: while the world cannot claim a univocal "identity" with the divine, it can nevertheless claim an analogical similarity, on the basis that all that *is* is derived from God and therefore in some way bears his trace and image….The particular being, while participating in universal Being (as noun), is in fact the only way in which Being-as-noun is actualised, that is, through being-as-verb—to be. This allows a clear first affirmation that the world itself is not God and neither is it an extension of God.[10]

From here, Sweeney traces what he calls the "Nominalist Turn" from Scotus, to Ockham, and finally to Suárez.[11] Generally speaking, and with due caution against oversimplification, Sweeney describes nominalism as "the loss of an analogical imagination," and a process that "begins with Scotus, Ockham, and Suárez's cutting loose of the particular from the mediation of the universal, and thereby collapsing the analogical distinction between God and man into univocity."[12] Sweeney goes on to say, "According to von Balthasar, Scotus [1265-1308] conceives being as a formal concept rather than a reality," before citing Boersma, who claims that "what Scotus did is make the created order independent of God."[13] Ockham (1285-1387) applies Scotus' line of thought and conceives of "the relationship between grace and nature as extrinsic, asserting the absolute freedom of God, eliminating any natural desire for the supernatural, and therefore rendering theology non-contemplative, fideistic, and purely practical."[14] Suárez (1548-1617) systematizes this position and, as a result, is accused of "instantiating a purely natural metaphysics that asserts a purely natural end for the human being, and thereby makes Revelation extrinsic."[15] Tracey Rowland follows the *Communio* scholars and

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[10] Conor Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence after Heidegger* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2015), 26-27.

[11] See also Gerard O'Shea, "Nature and Grace and the Appearance of Insincerity. Silencing the Catholic Voice," *Solidarity: The Journal of Catholic Social Thought and Secular Ethics* 2, no. 1 (2012): pgs. 3-4. https://researchonline.nd.edu.au/solidarity/vol2/iss1/6.

[12] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 30.

[13] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 30.

[14] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 30.

[15] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 30.

their claim that the collapse of the analogical imagination and the rise of Neo-scholasticism ushered in modernism. Rowland cites +Javier Martinez, who says:

> Once the analogy of being and the idea of being as participation in being was rejected by Duns Scotus in the thirteenth century and was substituted by the idea of the univocity of being, God had necessarily to be "separated" from the world, and at the same time, he had to be reduced to "a being" among others…This move was accompanied by other intellectual changes needed or provoked by it, all of which were loaded with consequences: human beings began to understand themselves and their relationship to the world as a "copy" of this infinitely intelligent, powerful, and capricious being that usurped the name of the Christian God.[16]

Following Martinez, Rowland points out that with the loss of the analogical imagination, the relationship between persons, or between egos, is dominated by use because the ego is absolutized — as the ultimate arbiter. Consequently, nature is no longer seen as a sign pointing beyond itself (*analogia entis*), but is now viewed as an artifact, a commodity to be used, or even as that which must be overcome in order for man to be free.[17]

The 19th century followers of Suárez aimed to find common ground between Catholic and non-Catholics by anachronistically and historically reading Aquinas as an interlocutor amid the strains of Cartesian and Kantian rationalism that dominated the intellectual and cultural landscape. Their position has become known as Neo-scholasticism. Alasdair MacIntyre criticizes such Leonine Thomists (Thomists at the time of Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903) who had adopted Suarez's Neo-scholasticism) for "deforming central Christian positions for apologetic purposes"[18] and for, as Rowland notes, "reworking Thomistic themes in Kantian terms."[19]

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[16] Tracey Rowland, *Catholic Theology* (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 96.

[17] Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 96-97.

[18] Alasdair MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry* (London: Routledge, 1999), 70. Quoted in Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 19.

[19] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 19. To be clear, the critique of Neo-scholasticism presented here is not a criticism aimed at Aquinas' thought, rather, it is a criticism of an anachronistic application of Aquinas' thought without due consideration for the historical context in which Aquinas was writing.

Rowland explains, "The idea was that Catholics and non-Catholics could find common ground on the territory of 'pure nature' [or pure reason], while the more socially contentious supernatural beliefs and aspirations of Catholics could be relegated to the privacy of the individual soul."[20] This "two-tier" theory of nature and grace was originally developed by Cajetan (1469-1534) who, as described by Gerard O'Shea, speculated "that a *Duplex Ordo* theory was taught by St. Thomas Aquinas, with antecedents in Aristotelian philosophy. In explaining this thesis, Cajetan needed to raise the question of whether it was possible for human beings to have a natural desire for God. His answer was no. (Herein lies the root of the Catholic acceptance of arguing only from natural premises when dealing with 'natural' human beings.)."[21] Ruard Tapper (1487-1559) and Luis de Molina (1535-1600) advanced Cajetan's thesis by developing the idea of a *finis naturalis* — "a natural end for a natural order."[22] Suárez inherited these positions, and proposed the theory of "pure nature," which O'Shea describes as "a human nature that was completely devoid of any natural orientation to the grace of God, thus taking Cajetan's speculations into the mainstream of theology."[23] Against this position prior to Vatican II, the *Ressourcement* scholars of the 20th century argued that "the Thomism which had flourished since the publication of [Leo XIII's] *Aeterni Patris* not only represented a distortion of classical Thomism, but that it had unwittingly fostered the secularization of western culture with its 'two-tier' theory of the relationship between nature and grace."[24] MacIntyre, speaking of Suárez, concludes, "Both in his preoccupations and in his methods, [Suárez] was already a distinctively modern thinker, perhaps more authentically than Descartes the founder of modern philosophy."[25]

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[20] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith*, 20.

[21] O'Shea, "Silencing the Catholic Voice," 4.

[22] O'Shea, "Silencing the Catholic Voice," 4.

[23] O'Shea, "Silencing the Catholic Voice," 4. See also Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 33.

[24] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith,* 19-20. Elsewhere, Rowland notes that in Leo XIII's *Aeterni Patris*, "the 'perennial philosophy' of St. Thomas was promoted as the antidote to varieties of scepticism, agnosticism and relativism. This project may be characterized as an attempt to answer the Enlightenment charge that the Catholic faith was irrational by the promotion of a hyper-rational Neo-scholasticism." See Rowland, "Catholic Theology in the Twentieth Century," 38. See also Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 34.

[25] MacIntyre, *Three Rival Versions*, 73. Quoted in John Montag's "The False Legacy of Suárez," in *Radical Orthodoxy,* eds. John Milbank, Catherine Pickstock and Graham Ward (London: Rutledge, 1999), 41.

Neo-scholasticism does not see faith as a response to God's act of self-revealing, but as the ratification of revealed truths. Faith now ratifies propositions — it becomes a theoretical matter that may or may not touch the everyday realities of life. Rowland explains that "For Suárez, revelation does not disclose God himself, rather it concerns pieces of information which God has decided to disclose and whereas for St. Thomas, things revealed led to faith, for Suárez faith confirms what is revealed."[26] Rowland adds, "Suárez fostered a propositional account of Revelation by which Revelation does not disclose God himself so much as pieces of information about God."[27] Suárez does not found his systematic organization on the life of faith as Thomas did. Instead, John Montag notes, Suárez:

> Set as his foundation the life of reason, separating philosophy and theology as he had learned to do from Duns Scotus…Metaphysics further serves as the proper foundation of theology for Suárez…Suárez sees theology as standing on the structure provided by philosophy, specifically an ontologically univocal metaphysics. In order to speak well about God, one must begin with the clear foundation provided not by *sacra dotrina*, but the metaphysical structure of Being, which rises up to meet what is revealed.[28]

In Suárez's view, revelation takes on an impersonal nature as something that occurs "'on its own,' as if it were a thing apart, before becoming part of human thought and experience."[29] Speaking of the "reversal" that takes place in Suárez, that transition from revelation as self-manifestation (the interpersonal act of removing the veil) to propositions God hands over as "things to be believed" and the transposition of metaphysics over theology, Milbank, Ward, and Pickstock say:

> [The Suárezian reversal] assumes the loss in the late Middle Ages of the metaphysical framework of participation, and the concomitant loss of an intrinsic link between sign and the thing signified. As a result, the content and the authorization of revelation are prised apart, and both aspects are thought of as isolated occurrences grounded in the will rather

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[26] Rowland, *Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 49.
[27] Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 48. See also Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith,* 48.
[28] Montag, "The False Legacy of Suárez," 53-54.
[29] Montag, "The False Legacy of Suárez," 57.

than a necessity intrinsic to the real. Revelation is now something positive in addition to reason, precisely because a rational metaphysics, claiming to comprehend being without primary reference to God, frames all discourse, including the theological. Ironically, revealed truth becomes something ineffably arbitrary, precisely because this is the only way it can be construed by an already intrinsically godless reason.[30]

Revelation is no longer truly necessary because metaphysics can comprehend being without primary reference to God. This Kantian conception of "religion within the realm of reason" alone renders faith somewhat superfluous, perhaps even divisive, in the face of the pure reason accessible by all.[31] For the naturally autonomous "pure nature," faith is not a relationship with God (i.e. a participation in the very life of God through the theological virtue of faith), but instead the "knowability" and "believability" of an object.[32] Furthering this point, Rowland adds, "Whereas Aquinas looked at faith from the 'inside' and focused on the change that faith brings about in the human being, Suárez looked at faith 'from the outside' and described the way we can see it working."[33]

1.2   Nietzsche, Heidegger, and the Shift Toward Postmodernism

Nietzsche's philosophy initiates the shift from Enlightenment rationalism to what has become the postmodern "condition." Nietzschean nihilism is the response to what Balthasar calls

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[30] John Milbank, Graham Ward, and Catherine Pickstock, *Radical Orthodoxy,* 5. Quoted in Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 48-49.

[31] See Immanuel Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1960). Kant concerns himself with the Enlightenment ideal of a universal brotherhood, which he believes cannot be conceived on the basis of revelation or ecclesiastical faith. He adds that, in the face of the Enlightenment, new revelation with new miracles seems unlikely. Therefore, Scripture might be able to provide instruction for those who are already Christian, but it should not stand as a prerequisite for salvation. Instead, the moral norm of the categorical imperative is the standard by which men attain salvation through reason alone (148-ff). Kant says, "It must be inculcated painstakingly and repeatedly that true religion is to consist not in the knowing or considering of what God does or has done for our salvation but in what we must do to become worthy of it. This last can never be anything but what possesses in itself undoubted and *unconditional* worth, what therefore can alone make us well-pleasing to God, and of whose necessity every man can become wholly certain without any Scriptural learning whatsoever," 123.

[32] Gerard O'Shea, "Historical Discontinuity in Contemporary Views on Revelation," PhD thesis, John Paul II Institute for Marriage and Family, Melbourne, 2007.

[33] Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith,* 48.

a mystical "identity" metaphysics "wherein reason inexorably comes to claim more and more for itself the status of God" in the likes of Descartes (whose thought ruptures the relationship between being and knowing) and Kant (whose categorical imperative attempts to place religion within the limits of reason alone).[34] Quoting MacIntyre, Sweeney holds that Nietzsche "codifies the nihilist-esque position that 'there is no such thing as truth-as-such, but only truth-from-one-or-another-point-of-view.'"[35] Nietzsche (1844-1900) signals the shift "away from the Cartesian, Kantian, and neo-scholastic conditions of rational thought," and opens the door for Husserl's phenomenology, which, generally speaking, "sets the conditions for Heidegger's key ideas," namely that "rational thought cannot simply ignore the contextual conditions of its genesis."[36] Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) criticized Husserl (1859-1938) for remaining "too much within the realm of consciousness" and failing to exorcise the ghost of Descartes. He breaks away from Husserl in a more historical and hermeneutical direction.[37] Heidegger claims that Being "today has been forgotten,"[38] an indictment he levels against western metaphysics dating back to Plato. According to Sweeney, Heidegger:

> Argues that ever since Plato (and Aristotle for that matter) Western thought has reified a counterfeit, objectified version of Being, something described in the lowercase, *being*. … [According to Ian Thomson] Heidegger [first] reads the history of Western philosophy as an attempt to answer the question about the "*whatness*" of Being. This he calls ontology (the "onto" in onto-theology), and Thomson explains that the mark of this study is that "it looks for what all beings share in common;" it looks for the rational "ground" of beings…Second, the question "what is being?" is simultaneously approached from the perspective of the highest or Supreme Being (the "theo" in onto-theology). Heidegger

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[34] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 31. Henri de Lubac claims that Nietzsche's "death of God" expresses a choice — not a statement of fact, a lament, or a bit of sarcasm. God, who Nietzsche describes as the mirror of man, an illusion, passing away, opens the way for man's producing out of his very self the revelation of his own divinity by his own show of endurance in bringing it about. "God is dead, long live the Overman!" See Henri de Lubac, *The Drama of Atheist Humanism,* trans. Edith M. Riley and Anne England Nash (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 42-58, quote from 56.

[35] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 31-32.

[36] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 35.

[37] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 36.

[38] Martin Heidegger, *Being and Time* (New York: Harper and Row, 1962), 2.

calls this the theological dimension. Metaphysics becomes theology when it attempts to explain "whatness" via Supreme Being.[39]

Further defining onto-theology, Sweeney quotes Thomson, saying, "The metaphysical tradition establishes the foundations for every epoch of intelligibility by ontologically grounding and theologically legitimating our changing historical sense of what is." Sweeney goes on to explain:

> In other words, metaphysics as onto-theology is accused of imposing an a priori interpretive grid over top of temporality and historicity, and thereby determining in advance the interpretation of Being in time. In essence, Being is no longer able to reveal itself as Being in any given historical epoch because it's [sic] meaning has already been artificially established in advance.…Onto-theology conceives of entities in terms of their essence, their *whatness*, of their timeless self-identity.[40]

The "Heideggerian problematic," to use Rowland's expression, now comes into focus. Heidegger shifts from onto-theology's metaphysical "grid" that is superimposed upon being as a "timeless," "bird's eye view," to what he calls *Dasein* (literally, in German, *da* = there, *sein* = be; there-be, being-there, existence, presence). *Dasein* is foundational to Heidegger's project, and according to Wheeler, "we might conceive of it as Heidegger's term for the distinctive kind of *entity* that human beings as such are."[41] Wheeler points out that "entity," in this case, is not in reference to biological make-up, but two *ways* in which human beings engage in life — two ways of understanding *Dasein*. First, human beings alone are capable of encountering the question of what it means "to be," by operating with some understanding of Being, however pre-ontological, implicit, or vague, and to reflect back upon it.[42] The second understanding of *Dasein* results from interpreting the *da* of *Da-sein* as "open." In this case, Wheeler defines *Dasein* as "*the having-to-be-open*. In other words, *Dasein* (and so human beings as such) cannot but be open: it is a necessary characteristic of human beings (an a priori structure of our existential constitution, not

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[39] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 36-37.
[40] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 37.
[41] Michael Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger," in *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Stanford University, Fall 2017 Edition), https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2017/entries/heidegger/.
[42] Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger," 2.2.1.

an exercise of our wills) that we operate with the sense-making capacity to take-other-beings-as."[43] Similarly, Hemming defines *Dasein* as "'the standing open of humans to whatever is, *ek-stasis*,' where historicity takes precedence."[44] Wheeler, concludes by noting that the two interpretive paths are not necessarily in conflict as both pertain to "standing out," "standing back," or "standing open." On the one hand, *Dasein* can stand back or outside of itself and reflect back upon itself, and on the other hand, *Dasein* "stands out in an openness to and an opening of Being."[45] Heidegger calls for a "pre-ontological understanding of Being"[46] that is free of "the errors of the onto-theological tradition," a turn to temporality which "carries with [sic] a transformation of truth as disclosure (*aletheia*) and an attendant condemnation of propositional theories of truth. Truth is most perfectly conceived in terms of a primordial encounter with Being-as-*Dasein* within time."[47] With this, Heidegger lays the groundwork for the dismantling of onto-theology, and with it, the rationalism of the modern project. Sweeney labels this shift the "phenomenological turn," which intimates what will come in a post-onto-theological, post-Enlightenment, postmodern age that "attempts to reconstruct human thought and society according to a non-metaphysical vision."[48] In so doing, Heidegger lays the philosophical and hermeneutical groundwork for a re-imagining the theology of revelation, and concomitantly, the entire catechetical enterprise.

Following Sweeney, this section has attempted to trace the philosophical vicissitudes from the "analogical imagination" to Heidegger's critique of onto-theology. Such a cursory overview serves to provide a rough sketch of the historical context which a study of Ratzinger's catechetical vision must take into account. This context is marked by the secularization in the West, which, as has been argued, was accomplished in part through the collapse of the analogical imagination and the rise of the univocity of being that produced the concept of "pure nature" — with its emphasis on a purely natural end and an onto-theological manner of approaching Being.

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[43] Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger," 2.2.1. Vandervelde notes that Karl Rahner defines human person along the lines of Heidegger's *dasein*. Vandervelde says that Rahner defines person as "'openness,' even boundless directedness, towards the infinite mystery of fulness, or simply as emptiness." See George Vandervelde, "The Grammar of Grace: Karl Rahner as a Watershed in Contemporary Theology," *Theological Studies* 49, no. 3 (1988), 455.

[44] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 38.

[45] Wheeler, "Martin Heidegger," 2.2.1.

[46] Heidegger, *Being and Time*, 35.

[47] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 39.

[48] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 41.

As Boeve will point out, in some ways, the secularization of the West has not materialized. The result — or fallout — of this project is not a universal secular state, but the interruption of difference within the postmodern "condition." Consequently, in what follows after Heidegger, the "metaphysical straightjacket" of onto-theology will be cast aside and history will take its place as the way in which Being reveals itself. Human beings must stand open before Being. For the purposes of the present study, the cursory history of philosophy provided above will suffice to provide enough context for the theological and catechetical treatment that will follow. This treatment will first explore several of Karl Rahner's theological insights that will be advanced in what Nichols calls a "vulgarized" form without the level of nuance that Rahner himself provides. The present study will then proceed to consider modernistic and correlational strategies in catechetics in the work of Gabriel Moran and Thomas Groome, before considering the postmodern condition insofar it impacts catechetics via Lieven Boeve's recontextualization project that engages a theology of interruption.

2.   The Genesis of "Vulgarized Rahnerianism": A Theological Response to Being in Time and Implications for Catechesis

2.1   Rahner and Revelation

One could argue that Karl Rahner (1904-84), Heidegger's student while studying philosophy in Freiburg im Breisgau, and his Transcendental Thomism, exercised some of the greatest influence over theology's response to Neo-scholasticism. According to Svein Rise:

Rahner's theology can be understood as a response to the crisis of faith that had been brewing for a long time in the Catholic church. The challenge he faced was to make faith once again acceptable as a basis for the human person's understanding of life. A central theme in all his writings is thus how historical events of two thousand years ago can be recognized as obligating truths *today*. Accordingly, we may rightly say that Rahner seeks an intelligently obligating *justification* of faith that, at the same time, makes faith an

existential truth that can be experienced. His writings are characterized by the combination of theory and praxis.[49]

Rahner's Transcendental Thomism does not begin with metaphysical properties, as is the case in neo-scholastic thought, but with an epistemological principle. Alan Vincelette defines this principle as saying that "what allows for knowledge is that to some degree humans have an a priori *apprehension* of God as Absolute Being (by the light of the agent intellect). The world is intelligent then to Transcendental Thomists because we either seek to, or actually ascend to God (perfectly intelligible being) in every act of knowing."[50] Rowland notes that another way to explain the difference is that whereas Thomists of a neo-scholastic bent "are renowned for their interest in discursive reasoning (*ratio*) 'characterised by a primacy of static definitions and deductive reasoning' the Transcendental Thomists give a higher status to the work of *intellectus* (intuition). The Transcendental Thomists, especially Rahner, were also highly conscious of the historical embeddedness of concepts."[51] In a similar vein, Aidan Nichols notes that "Rahner was convinced that in a civilization dominated by humanism the only possible starting point for Christian theology is anthropological — one that can show how God is necessary to man. The only kind of anthropology that will serve theology's turn, however, is a transcendental one — one, that is, which shows God as already somehow implicated in lived humanity, enabling its very possibility."[52]

While Rahner's anthropological starting point vis-á-vis that of neo-scholastic metaphysics can be grasped easily enough, his work is notoriously "ambivalent" and "dense," which "gives a lot of interpretive power to anyone offering a more user-friendly, popularist

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[49] Svein Rise, "Karl Rahner," *Key Theological Thinkers: From Modern to Postmodern*, eds. Stalle Johannes Kristiansen and Svein Rise (Burlington, VT: Ashgate, 2013), 225.

[50] Alan Vincelette, *Recent Catholic Philosophy: The Twentieth Century* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2011), 82. Quoted in Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 61.

[51] Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 62.

[52] Aidan Nichols, "Rahner and Balthasar: 'Anonymous Christianity' in Question," *Beyond the Blue Glass: Catholic Essays on Faith and Culture*, Vol. 1 (London, St. Austin Press, 2002), 113. As an example of this anthropological starting point, see Paul Crowley's "Mystagogy and Mission: The Challenge of Nonbelief and the Task of Theology," *Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2015): 7-28. Here, Crowley takes Rahner's anthropological starting point as a starting point for mystagogy in mission.

version."[53] Nichols, following Balthasar's insights, calls this popularized form of Rahnerian thought "vulgarised Rahnerianism." This "vulgarised" form could be defined as "an attitude of mind among theological literate, or at least religiously articulate, Catholics which owed much, certainly, to Rahner but on the way had shed much too in the way of nuance and qualification."[54] Summarizing Balthasar's difficulties with Rahner's theological position, Nichols says:

> In fundamental theology, the belief that a transcendental philosophy can anticipate the distinctive content of Christian revelation; in soteriology, the idea that the life, death and resurrection of Christ are exemplary rather than efficacious; in theological ethics the notion that love of neighbor can be surrogate for the love of God and Christological confession no longer necessary for Christian existence; in the theology of religions the idea that other faiths are ordinary means of salvation alongside the Christian way; in ecclesiology the idea that the Church becomes some *Gnadenerfahrung,* "the experience of grace," even without any further intervention of the redeeming God in the special history of revelation.[55]

Rather than an in-depth treatment of Rahner's theological vision, the present study will focus more upon the "vulgarised" form, as the "vulgarised" form appears to manifest itself profoundly in catechetical movements during the latter part of the 20th century and into the 21st. That said, the present study will briefly explore Ratzinger's understanding of Rahner's treatment of revelation.

In *Principles of Catholic Theology,* Ratzinger traces the main lines of Rahner's thought regarding the problem of being and history, "the dichotomy between the particularity of Christian history and its claim to the whole being *man*."[56] Ratzinger notes two stages of development in Rahner's answer to this problem. In the first stage, Rahner describes man as a

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[53] Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 63. Gerard O'Shea also engages this topic in "Vulgarised Rahnerianism and Post-Critical Recontextualisation: Solvents of Catholic Identity in Contemporary Catechesis," *Studia Ełckie* 16, no. 3 (2014), 341-73.

[54] Nichols, "Rahner and Balthasar," 113.

[55] Nichols, "Rahner and Balthasar," 112.

[56] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 163.

hearer of the word, who from his very nature "waits for something that comes to him from without, for the word spoken in history, for revelation."[57] This sense of "standing open" is akin to *dasein,* and could be another way to describe what Luigi Giussani calls "the religious sense,"[58] or the *Catechism*'s delineation of man as a "religious being."[59] According to Ratzinger, it is the second stage of Rahner's work that becomes problematic. Here, Ratzinger points out that Rahner argues that "If revelation history is not to be understood as categorically extrinsic but refers, rather, to the human race as a whole…then it must also be present in the human race as a whole."[60] Looking at this more closely, Ratzinger notes that for Rahner, "man's being itself is historical in character," an insight, that Ratzinger points out, refers "only to this historical character in general….the role of history in the shaping of man's being is shown to be necessary in a universal sense."[61] Following along the lines of Heidegger, Rahner's position takes history seriously, and absolutizes it. The problem, underscored by Ratzinger, lies in the fact that Christianity claims "universality for a *particular* history,"[62] not the universality of history on the whole. Rahner attempts to solve the problem of Christianity's particularity claiming universality by subsuming salvation history into human history. The historical character of Christianity is "subsumed in the universal;"[63] it is incorporated into human history as a whole. Ratzinger says, "Rahner has quite obviously drawn this conclusion when he says that 'salvation history is coexistent with the totality of human history.' 'By world history, then, we mean salvation history.' Or again: 'Revelation history' is 'coextensive with the totality of world and salvation history.'"[64] In order to avoid reducing theology into a philosophy of history, Rahner proffers two thoughts. "The first," notes Ratzinger, "consists in designating Christianity as a particularly successful apprehension of what is always more or less consciously acknowledged."[65] Here, in

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[57] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 163.
[58] See Luigi Giussani, *The Religious Sense,* trans. John Zucchi (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997), 45, where he defines the religious sense as "the radical engagement of the self with life, an involvement which exemplifies itself in these questions [What is the ultimate meaning of existence? Why pain? Why death? Why is life worth living? What does reality consist of? Why does reality exist?]." On 47, Giussani defines the self as "the level of nature where the meaning of everything is affirmed." The religious sense is, therefore, the engagement one's nature with the ultimate questions in order to affirm, in order to say "yes," to reality, to being, and to Being.
[59] *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* 2nd. ed. (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 2000), §28.
[60] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 163.
[61] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 163-64.
[62] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 164.
[63] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 164.
[64] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 164.
[65] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 164.

speaking of Christendom, Rahner affirms a superiority of Christian history, but one that does not lie on the level of event, but rather, on that of apprehension, of consciousness. Rahner's second thought looks into the distinctiveness of Christ in light of man's "self-transcendent being":

> For Rahner, man is, in fact, self-transcendent being; hence the God-man can be deduced as the true Savior of mankind in terms of man's own being: the Incarnation of God is the highest instance of the ontological fulfillment of human reality, the successful, perfect transcendence. As the successful form of human self-transcendence, or, in other words, as the utterance of God in a finite subject, Christ, the Redeemer, is the expression and realization of the human universal…. "The relationship to Jesus Christ, in which an individual…makes Jesus, present within him, the mediator of his direct relationship to God: is such "that man in his existence…is always already within this…relationship whether he is explicitly aware of it or not. From this, Rahner develops his basic formula of Christian existence, in which he seeks to express its simplicity and greatness, its full universality as present in its apparent particularity: "He who…accepts his existence…says…Yes to Christ.: To be a Christian is to accept one's existence in its unconditionality…In the last analysis, this means "that the Christian is not so much an exception among men as simply man as he is."[66]

According to Ratzinger, Rahner's attempt at reconciling the particular and universal, history and being, "has something dazzling, something stupendous about it."[67] "The uniqueness of Christianity and the universality of man's being coincide."[68] The relationship with Christ is always already present in the unthematic embrace of reality. Embracing reality and accepting unconditionally one's existence is Christianity — whether or not one has ever heard of Jesus Christ, made an explicit act of faith, or participated in the life of the Church. This notion is known as "Anonymous Christianity," and means that "a person lives in the grace of God and attains salvation outside of explicitly constituted Christianity."[69] Benedict XVI would go on to

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[66] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 165-66. See also Gerard O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism," 346-ff.
[67] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 166.
[68] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 166.
[69] Karl Rahner, *Karl Rahner in Dialogue: Conversations and Interviews, 1965–1982,* eds. Paul Imbof and Hubert Biallowons, trans. Harvey Egan (New York: Crossroad, 1986), 207. See also Svein Rise's "Karl Rahner," 232-33.

call this notion of being a Christian a result of a "lofty idea"[70] - an experience of transcendence and its abstraction. Adam Cooper echoes Ratzinger's analysis, saying with regard to bodily, communal, and sacramental events:

> They have as their aim the stimulation of a psychological state of awareness, the elicitation of a primarily *gnoseological* orientation. Or, put another way, they have as their aim the making explicit of what hitherto was already present, given, and real at the level of the "unthematic." For every categorical, thematic "yes" or "no" to God in Christ corresponds to an already-existing transcendental, unthematic "yes" or "no" to the absolute. "In this sense," Rahner explains, "we encounter God in a radical way everywhere as a question to our freedom, we encounter him unexpressed, unthematic, unobjectified and unspoken in all of the things of the world…This does not preclude the necessity of making this thematic. But this latter does not not give us our original relationship to God in our freedom, but rather it makes thematic and objectifies the relationship of our freedom to God which is given with and in the original and essential being of the subject as such."[71]

Here, Cooper illustrates what will be the "jumping off" point for catechetics within "vulgarised Rahnerianism": the "unexpressed, unthematic, unobjectified and unspoken" experience of religiosity within man come to be considered the preeminent religious experience, often at the expense of liturgical or doctrinal expressions. This position seems to run the risk of precluding tradition (i.e. the thematic and objectified) from leading to an authentic encounter, or an original relationship with God. Here, revelation necessarily happens outside of tradition, with tradition serving either as the celebration of what happened outside or as confirmation of its validity.[72] With this brief overview of Rahner's developments in the realm of revelation serving as

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"Anonymous Christianity" follows a similar path as Kant's claim that the Christian religion is a natural religion insofar as he reduces religion to morality. See Kant, *Religion Within the Limits of Reason Alone*, 145-ff.

[70] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), §1, http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_ben-xvi_enc_20051225_deus-caritas-est.html.

[71] Adam Cooper, *Naturally Human, Supernaturally God* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2014), 113-14. As an example of the position identified here by Cooper, see Kathleen Hughes, *Becoming the Sign: Sacramental Living in a Post-Conciliar Church* (New York: Paulist Press, 2013).

[72] For example, see Hughes, *Becoming the Sign,* 36-ff.

something of a foundation, the present study will next explore the implications of Rahner's thought in the realm of catechetics. As will be seen, in the realm of catechetics, Rahner's position seems to open the door for a "vulgarised" subjectivizing of revelation via the reduction of the role of tradition.

2.2   "Vulgarised Rahnerianism" and Gabriel Moran's "Ongoing Revelation"

Gerard O'Shea traces the implications of "vulgarised Rahnerianism" in the realm of catechesis in his article "Vulgarised Rahnerianism and Post-Critical Recontextualization: Solvents of Catholic Identity in Contemporary Catechesis." According to O'Shea, the litany of difficulties with Rahnerian thought as identified by Balthasar (and summarized above by Nichols) has as its one foundation the manner in which "Divine Revelation is understood and translated."[73] For Rahner, the transcendental experience of every human being comes to bear heavily in the area of divine revelation. Here, in following Rahner's thought, O'Shea claims that in its "vulgarised" form:

> The general experience of transcendence — the natural interior impression shared by all human beings of *something more than meets the eye* and a yearning for the infinite — is elevated to a level that can seem at least equivalent in importance to the public revelation of God in Christ. Some began to interpret these speculations as an endorsement of the principle of *ongoing revelation*, which tended to diminish the unique role of Christ — something that Rahner himself had not done.[74]

In the English-speaking world, Gabriel Moran became a leader in the catechetical movement immediately following Vatican II, and significant in developing the concept of ongoing revelation. Moran, born in 1935, joined the Christian Brothers and studied philosophy and theology at Catholic University of America under Rev. Gerard Sloyan. Moran left the Christian Brothers following Vatican II and eventually married former Sister of St. Joseph and a fellow

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[73] O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism," 345.
[74] O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism," 347. See also Rise's "Karl Rahner," 230-33, where Rise argues for Rahner's insistence on the unique role of Jesus Christ in salvation.

educator, Maria Harris. He spent the remainder of his career in higher education.[75] To be sure, Moran's thought did not simply burst onto the catechetical scene unannounced in the late 1960s. Catechetics had been in a process of reform that had begun decades before with the introduction of the Munich method,[76] the Personalist approach, and the Kerygmatic approach championed by Jungmann and Hofinger, all of which offered their own contribution in response to the aridity of neo-scholastic catechesis and its tendency to "materialize" revelation into propositional truths that could be systematically, and almost transactionally, provided in catechesis.[77]

In the wake of Vatican II's discussion surrounding divine revelation and the promulgation of *Dei Verbum*, Moran would take up the "being and time" debate as it pertained to the nature of revelation, and he demands an answer from Catholic theology. He says, "Catholic doctrine…with its insistence upon the closing of revelation, seems committed to the past over the present and exposed to the charge of not taking history seriously."[78] He frames the dilemma as follows:

> Either revelation is constituted by events in the experience of men in the past and is no longer with us because their experience has ceased; or revelation consists of truths not irrevocably tied to temporal events but communicable through propositions from one generation to another. The first of these positions would, of course, be directly opposed to the nature of the Church which claims to be protector and teacher of a revelation, one which has a knowledge and a truth character. The latter position is what is opposed in Catholic and well as non-Catholic writing today because it reduces faith to the acceptance of propositional truths coming to man from without…How can revelation be anything other than truths or objects if it is handed down from one generation to another; or,

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[75] See Johanna Paruch, "A Study of the Direct Ramifications of Vatican Council II on Catechetics, Including the Impact of Conciliar and Post-Conciliar Catechetical Documents on the Content and Method of Catechesis" (PhD thesis, Maryvale Institute, 2007), 231-ff. In her dissertation, Paruch provides a thorough treatment on the development of Moran's thought throughout his career.

[76] See Thomas Groome, "Handing on the Faith: The Need for Total Catechetical Education," *Handing on the Faith* (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2006), 173.

[77] Baumert, "Instruments of Change," 56-57.

[78] Gabriel Moran, *Theology of Revelation* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 54.

reversing the question, how can a revelation consisting of personal events in the past ever be a present revelation?[79]

Here, Moran confronts both the ahistorical and propositional position of the neo-scholastics, along with the historical position rooted in experience he perceives in the Kerygmatic movement of Jungmann and Hofinger.[80] Moran pushes through the apparent dilemma by calling the two positions propositional,[81] and asserting that if revelation could no longer be conceived as propositions or truth-statements, then it must be ongoing, interpersonal communion,[82] "it must be an event."[83] He claims, "the key to a personal revelation in the twentieth century lies in the emergence of a human consciousness that is entirely receptive to God revealing and that remains among men to continue that revelation."[84] In short, the answer to the need for ongoing revelation must be found in Christ, or better said, in the man Jesus Christ's consciousness.

Moran's position rests upon his argument that Jesus Christ is first and foremost the *recipient* of God's revelation, before he is the *manifestation* of the fullness of God's revelation to mankind. He says, the "man Jesus was the recipient of God's revelation and fulfilled the vocation of the man of faith."[85] For Moran, then, revelation does not consist of propositions, contents or things in a closed "deposit" that must be preserved and handed on, but is the "intercommunion of God and man" which has its highest expression in the "covenant bond and dialogue *in* the Lord Jesus," as "the highest union of God and man is not that between Christ and his apostles; the one perfect union is in the Word which comes from the Father and is united to the humanity of Christ."[86] Moran, attempting to take Jesus Christ's human nature seriously,[87] argues that "the humanity of Jesus Christ is not just an instrument or a visual aid through which God communicates his truths. Jesus is the main recipient of God's self-gift, and it is in the

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[79] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 55-56.
[80] See Gabriel Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1966), 43-ff.
[81] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation*, 46.
[82] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 50-51.
[83] Baumert, "Instruments of Change," 66.
[84] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 56.
[85] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 64. See also Gabriel Moran, *Believing in a Revealing God: The Basics of the Christian Life* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2009), 56.
[86] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 64-65.
[87] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 64.

consciousness of Jesus that God is most perfectly known. In his life, and definitively in his death-resurrection, revelation reaches a high point never to be diminished. With the resurrection of Christ and the sending of the Spirit, revelation *begins* in fullness."[88]

Moran's emphasis on Jesus as the recipient of God's revelation aligns with Rahnerian thought. Svein Rise calls Rahner's position a "Christology in the light of anthropology…based ultimately in the de facto experience of the God-man Jesus Christ."[89] Rahner's approach, like Moran's, is grounded in the historical Jesus' experience of unity with God, a unity which is present "as an inherent *possibility* in every human person," and *realized* and made visible in Jesus Christ.[90] Rahner posits his Christology as both "from above" in that God addresses the human person, and "from below" in light of Jesus Christ's free obedience, total receptivity, and complete gift of self. For Rahner, the real historical events of Jesus' life cannot be overlooked. However, Rise admits that a tension remains in Rahner's thinking "between the unique, historical Christ-event" and his transcendental Christology.[91] One could argue that Moran bursts this tension with his transcendental approach to ongoing revelation as accessed in the resurrected Christ operative in the Church. Moran grounds revelation in the resurrected Christ's consciousness.[92] Because of the resurrection, revelation cannot be relegated to the past, but must be accessible even now through the Holy Spirit who "penetrates human existence at its highest point, thus affecting 'the *a priori* "mental horizon" which we are conscious of in being conscious of ourselves.'"[93] Here, following a typically Rahnerian trajectory, revelation, for Moran, exists as a transcendent form of "knowing" that ought not depreciate "knowing" to mere rationalism, or revelation to a mere collection of "facts, ideas, and concepts."[94]

According to Moran, revelation takes place at the level of reflexive consciousness. He says, "the dynamism of man's intellect leads to a 'lived knowledge,' a unity of knower and

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[88] Gabriel Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation*, 13-14. See also Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 75 and 115.
[89] Rise, "Karl Rahner," 231.
[90] Rise, "Karl Rahner," 231.
[91] Rise, "Karl Rahner," 232.
[92] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 74. See also 75 and 79.
[93] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 150.
[94] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 82-83.

known brought to full reflexive consciousness only by progressive conceptual expression and dialogue."[95] Moran explains:

> To be a spiritual being is to be a conscious being; to be a supernatural being is to be a supernaturally conscious being with a consciousness that wells up out of life culminating and directing that life…God works with man's person in an organic way since it is man in his entirety and integrity that God desires. He does not intermittently offer "truths" for man's mind. Instead, he begins by knowing and loving man with a love that is transforming. When that divine activity in man's life emerges into conscious experience, man comes to know the one who is closer to him than he is to himself.[96]

Furthermore, he adds:

> Christian revelation is a personal communion of knowledge, an interrelationship of God and the individual within a believing community. God's bestowal and man's acceptance are both indispensable to the process. The human partner is not the recipient of "something" called revelation…revelation is not a "thing" at all but exists only in present, continuing, conscious experience of people, that is, in the relation of God and his people.[97]

Conscious reflection opens the possibility of revelation. Rather, conscious self-reflection, the reflection of one's consciousness back upon itself (i.e. reflexive, becoming aware of itself), is revelation — the self becoming aware of itself as known and loved by God. Revelation is this conscious becoming aware of oneself. In this way, the self-communication of God to man does not end with the apostles, but continues in history in the community of the Church.[98] In Moran's thesis, revelation is not a "thing" or an "object," but a personal reality that is "closed" only in the sense that a high point is reached in the self-consciousness of Christ, where this revelation

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[95] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 84-85.
[96] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 150.
[97] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation*, 13.
[98] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 120. See also *Catechesis of Revelation*, 13-14.

continues in fullness and is capable of being participated in due to the resurrection. Revelation continues to take place in the Church "in the conscious experience of the people."[99]

The fusion of ongoing revelation, salvation history, and human history, marked a significant transition in religious education by merging with the practical emphasis of humanism. Baumert traces the development, here, within the Christian Brothers' religion textbooks, where revelation is defined as "personal encounter in which meanings and values are recognized."[100] The 1968 catechetical study week in Medellín fused salvation history and human history, in a manner quite similar to Rahner's thesis, on "one continuum."[101] According to Baumert, "the participants at Medellín viewed humanity not just as the *subject* of revelation, but also its *content*."[102] Ratzinger highlights the implications of this development. In the years following Vatican II, people saw that Christianity once again had the power to shape history as it erupted from the private realm to which it had been banished in the 19th century and followed the spirit of the age in fusing "the Christian impulse with secular and political action."[103] Ratzinger notes that in making Marxism the philosophical backdrop for theology (i.e. the hermeneutic for interpreting history-as-revelation), one adopts "the primacy of politics and economics" as "the real powers that can bring about salvation." The primacy of praxis ultimately results in no need for God, who is not "practical." Instead, "the 'reality' in which one had to get involved now was solely the material reality of given historical circumstances, which were to be viewed critically and reformed."[104] A second result becomes clear when considering the liturgy. In her conscious awareness of herself as Body of Christ, the Church continues to enter into Jesus Christ's fullness of revelation, and in her performance of "activities that symbolize her life" (i.e. the liturgy), she expresses what she is and has become.[105] Liturgy shifts from the Church's participation in the work of God,[106] to the Church's work of self-expression as verification and reflexive consciousness — a revelation.

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[99] Moran, *Theology of Revelation,* 120.
[100] Baumert, "Instruments of Change," 67.
[101] Baumert, "Instruments of Change," 69.
[102] Baumert, "Instruments of Change," 69.
[103] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 13-14.
[104] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 15.
[105] Moran, *Theology of Revelation,* 121.
[106] *CCC*, §1069.

One begins to see, therefore, that Moran, in his reaction to neo-scholastic and salvation historical approaches to revelation, diminishes the role of the Church, Tradition, and Scripture. Rather than providing an entry into the divine Mystery, an antecedent that provides a criterion, foundation, and opening to God's revelation, tradition, in Moran's view, is a subsequent consideration necessary when revelation remains in an inchoate state in one's consciousness:

> As Aubert points out, "the voice of God is most often a murmur which requires sustained attention in order to be heard." This attention is often more than man is capable of…If God were to give no further help to man's understanding, revelation might remain on an inchoate and unexplicated level. Therefore, God completes the revelational process by speaking words of human love…The revelatory experience for the individual is thus made complete by the word drawing grace into the conscious experience of faith. This is the Church's intention in her mission of preaching, teaching, and interpreting holy Scripture. God's inspired words bring to conscious and reflexive awareness the meaning of revelation. In this way holy Scripture as it exists within the Church becomes the interpretive norm for man's religious experience.[107]

Moran emphasizes the immediate (i.e. unmediated) subjective experience of participating in Christ's consciousness that is made possible by the Holy Spirit, and deemphasizes the unique role of the hierarchy within the Church[108] and the traditional understanding of authority. The Church does not make ongoing revelation possible, but now completes the process by rendering the reflexive awareness meaningful through offering the individual interpretive "norms" for his/her religious experience. Moran also deemphasizes the role of tradition. That which is "handed on," the tradition, and the tradition-in-writing that is Scripture, do not provide a way to access revelation, but follow after revelation has taken place as a way of interpreting revelation. Lieven Boeve comments on this method, saying, "in as far as secular reason reaches truth, Christian faith cannot but comply with it. Faith thus adds to, or qualifies, what human beings

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[107] Moran, *Theology of Revelation,* 150-51.
[108] Moran, *Theology of Revelation,* 140. See also Moran, *Believing in a Revealing God,* 62-73; and Thomas Groome, *Christian Religious Education* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1980), 200.

know by secular reason alone."[109] In terms of catechetics, as Moran himself noted, Moran's theology of revelation could not fail to have profound effects.[110]

According to Moran's theology of revelation, catechesis should neither be seen as merely "handing on truths" in a dry, intellectualized fashion, nor should it be presented in terms of "salvation history" — "a collection of events in the remote past with interpretations supplied by some extraordinary men of the past, and all of this unrecognized except by a small group claiming to have a special perceptiveness."[111] Here, Moran lays the foundation for the subjectivizing of catechesis:

> Man is the being who makes history and history is man's self-understanding in time. Because history is not a collection of things outside man, because man is his history, then to say that God has entered history is to say that he enters into a personal relationship with man, that is, with every man in the structure of his real life situation. …Each person recommences with fundamental and unpredictable newness in the dialogue with God. Just as the Jews of old discovered God in their historical experience, the Christian student of today can discover God only through the experience of his own situation of space, time, and community….God enters the history of each man and…each man must find God in this present personal history if he is ever to find God.[112]

Attentiveness to history, and personal history in particular, is *the* way to access and experience God. Acknowledging the implications for catechesis, he continues:

> The crucial question here is whether one is starting with real people and their real experience, elucidating that experience by an ever open and ever widening interpretation; or whether one begins with a set of truths that are self-interpretive and are imposed from

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[109] Lieven Boeve, *God Interrupts History: Theology in a Time of Upheaval* (New York: Continuum, 2007), 33.
[110] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 19.
[111] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 44-45.
[112] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 45-46. Sean Whittle's "Some Theological Reservations Surrounding One Contemporary Christian Approach to Teaching and Learning," *Journal of Education and Christian Belief* 18, no. 2 (2014), 200-03, calls for a Rahnerian approach to Christian education that takes theology in general terms as a framework to inform educational theory according to Rahner's anthropological turn. Reading Whittle in light of Moran makes visible a clear connection between Rahner's theory and Moran's.

the outside. And I would claim that a description of past events is — especially for a child — a set of propositional truths…*I maintain that a theology of revelation demands that the history which the teaching of revelation begins with is always the student's own history*. The student will not adequately understand this history until he eventually comes to see it within the cosmic history of God's relation with the Jewish people, the humanity of Jesus, the members of the Church, and the entire community of mankind. Nevertheless, it is only by working from his own experience, that is, from the revelational history which constitutes his life, that he will come to grasp this whole plan. He cannot be attentive to the history of the world until he is attentive to the things and people around himself.[113]

Moran claims that starting with "real people" and "real experience" opens to the possibility of wider interpretation, while an imposed set of truths from the outside as a *prior-datum* are self-interpretive and therefore restrictive with regard to the interpretation of one's experience of history. Does this imply that accessing the "real person" is not possible via tradition? Does it mean that experience within the realm of, or fostered by faith tradition is not "real" experience? Moran reconfigures catechesis. Rather than "handing on" faith in, through, and by handing on tradition, it aims at freeing the student from the "interpretive grid" that is the tradition, in order that, within the community of the Church unfettered by doctrine, he or she may freely enter into his revelatory experience. Only then can salvation history and tradition enter and aid the student in understanding the whole. According to Moran's theology of revelation, a catechesis of revelation results in the student's own history becoming the content. Moran's approach resembles, as pointed out by O'Shea, the "constructivist, discovery, problem-based, experiential and inquiry-based teaching of the kind that began in the 1960's," which offers students few, if any, foundational concepts and encourages open-ended discovery methodologies.[114] Petroc Willey argues along similar lines. He notes that the "critical theory" from the Frankfurt School (associated with the work of Horkheimer and Adorno) sees "transmission" as "overthrowing a mutuality."[115] This is problematic, because "it places the catechist in the position of 'giver' and

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[113] Moran, *Theology of Revelation,* 46-48. Emphasis mine.
[114] O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism and Post-Critical Recontextualisation," 353-54.
[115] Petroc Willey, "Catechetical Thinking in the Face of Critical Theory: Developing a Marian Understanding," *Ecce Mater Tua* 1 (2018), 125.

the learner in the place of a 'receiver,' of one who is taught….Critical theory interprets 'being taught' as a problem because of an implied superiority of the position of the teacher, the giver. This general concern about a transmission model is intensified in so far as there is also any attempt to take up a position on behalf of an 'authority' which one represents."[116] As a result, critical theorists "play down the importance of any systematic transmission of the faith."[117]

As a final observation regarding Moran's trajectory, the nature and call of the catechist is redefined. No longer one who "hands on" truths, Moran blends the images of the catechist and the teacher. While he acknowledges the indispensability of witness for religious education, Moran holds that, for the catechist, the first way in which the teacher is a witness is by teaching in a manner that is skillful, enthusiastic, and understanding.[118] Characteristic of his main thrust from noun to verb, Moran focuses on the verb "to teach" as "show how" instead of "know how." [119] Moran prefers to understand teaching as a process, as "teaching the way,"[120] instead of handing on content. Accordingly, Moran views the apostles as model catechists who, "do not ask us to accept *their message*; they invite us to share in a belief that goes beyond either of us."[121] Exactly how it is possible to share in a belief without accepting their message remains unclear. Moran holds that the catechist can provide a witness by "showing what a Christian life is by living one,"[122] but he or she cannot "demand recognition and acceptance of the divine invitation."[123] "For the catechist, this means recognizing that his is not the divine task of saving children, but rather the human task of freeing men for life in the Spirit by awakening intelligence and freedom."[124] The catechist's primary offering is simply approaching "the student at the level of human revelation. This means that he offers the possibility of a personal relationship which may begin to awaken realization of the deeper, already existing revelatory relationship with

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[116] Willey, "Catechetical Thinking," 128.
[117] Willey, "Catechetical Thinking," 129.
[118] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 119.
[119] Gabriel Moran, *Showing How: The Act of Teaching* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity Press International, 1997), 34-ff.
[120] Gabriel Moran and Maria Harris, *Reshaping Religious Education* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox Press, 1998), 32-37, 44.
[121] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 66.
[122] Ibid., 67. Elsewhere, Moran claims that the witness is a witness insofar as he is a teacher who is skilled in teaching. Secondly, the witness "is one who recognizes and accepts the values of freedom and personal autonomy. His only means for transforming another person is an appeal to the freedom of the other" (119-20).
[123] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 67.
[124] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 72-73.

God."[125] The catechist is reconstituted in Rahnerian fashion, and now functions as a catalyst for the student's becoming aware of the already existing relationship, an activity which does not exclude the objective elements of doctrine, but which de-emphasizes them at the outset of religious education.[126]

2.3   Thomas Groome and Shared Christian Praxis

In a certain sense, Thomas Groome's catechetical theory and methodology of Shared Christian Praxis reifies Moran's catechetical theory. Groome was born in Ireland where he eventually received the equivalent of a Masters of Divinity from St. Patrick's Seminary and was ordained to the priesthood. Later, he left the priesthood, married, and studied at Fordham University and received a PhD from Union Theological Seminary at Columbia University. Groome is presently a Professor of Theology and Religious Education at Boston College.[127] He first lays out the framework for his method in *Christian Religious Education* (1980) and offers its full development in *Sharing Faith* (1991). Groome prefers to describe his entire enterprise as "Christian religious education" over and above the use of the word "catechesis," though this is not to disregard the value of catechesis. Catechesis refers to the "activity of reechoing or retelling the story of Christian faith that has been handed down," and is thus to be situated within the "broader enterprise of Christian religious education."[128] Limiting catechesis within a broader vision allows for another source to inform the project, namely educational science (and "the other sciences which inform education"),[129] and situates education according to its etymology as an activity of "leading out."[130] Groome's educational enterprise takes place in time. The past must be accounted for, not for the sake of self-preservation, but as a part of the present educative action of "leading out" from what one has inherited from the past, with particular concern for the

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[125] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 67.

[126] Moran, *Catechesis of Revelation,* 67.

[127] For further biographical details and a thorough exposition of Groome's catechetical contribution, see Paruch, "A Study of the Direct Ramifications of Vatican Council II on Catechetics," 313-ff. See also Gerard O'Shea, *Review of Religious Education for The Catholic Education Office: Diocese of Parramatta* (Literature Review, The University of Notre Dame Australia, 2014), 99-ff; and Petroc Willey, "The Pedagogue and the Teacher," *The Pedagogy of God* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2011), 46-47.

[128] Groome, *Christian Religious Education,* 27.

[129] Groome, *Christian Religious Education,* 27.

[130] Groome, *Christian Religious Education,* 5.

future (i.e. for the sake of building a better world). For Groome, education aims to address one's temporality and is not confined to the individual but has political ramifications in the social sphere.[131] From here, Groome establishes an epistemological basis in experience,[132] a shift within Christian religious education that was already underway by the 1980s.[133]

Just as Rahner begins with anthropology, so too does Groome. As will become clear, Groome's methodology flows from his fundamental anthropological principle that human beings are knowing subjects. He attempts to overcome the split between being and knowing by rooting the contents of one's knowledge in the knowing subject's very being. Tom Beaudoin goes on to argue that the knowing subject, for Groome (i.e. the basis for his theological anthropology), is marked by five dimensions: "the knowing subject as existential, pedagogical, liberational, theological, and critical."[134] Given his anthropological starting point, these five dimensions heavily shape Groome's methodology and are worth further, albeit brief, consideration, as a way of introducing a treatment of Groome's thought. Beaudoin's "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," provides a summary of Groome's anthropological principles:

- Existential - "How we *know* is rooted in who we *are* temporally. Between our being in time and place, and our knowing, there is no outside…to be is to be temporal, historical, communal, and responsible. Subjects can never escape the historical relativity of their time and place."[135]
- Pedagogical - One comes to know by reconstructing experience, and, therefore, knowing is developmental and sequential. Knowing always involves the totality of the person, both with respect to "conation" and with respect to "one's experience of the total life-situation, both personal and social."[136] Therefore, "knowing is always political."[137]

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[131] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 5-17.
[132] See Tom Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," *Religious Education* 100, no.2 (2015), 127.
[133] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 145-ff.
[134] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 129.
[135] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 130.
[136] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 132.
[137] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 132.

- Liberational - For Groome, Jesus reveals and affirms the "capacity of the subject to be and know freely, by offering a spiritual, personal, and social/political freedom to those who seek, choose, and know the good — that is, to every knowing subject."[138]

- Theological - Beaudoin points out that in Groome's later work, "the theological dimension of the knowing subject is…theorized in terms of 'everyday revelation,' by which he adopts Rahner's later theological anthropology, focusing on God's continual self-communication and the human ability to appropriate it, in his terms, in 'conative rather than simply informative ways.'"[139] While "all subjects experience a basic dynamism toward self-transcendence, for Christian-knowing subjects, this becomes most explicit as the kingdom of God, a transformed and transforming Church and world…for Groome, it is the experience of the kingdom of God, both in the scripture and in our present, that reveals God to humans and humans to each other."[140]

- Critical - Noting a contribution from Habermas, Groome holds that every subject brings a particular "interest" to knowing, thereby shaping the outcome of what is known. Subjects must become more conscious of these "interests" and "self-critical about their interests and the social context that supports or inhibits those interests."[141]

Basing his catechetical pedagogy on these anthropological principles, Groome approaches Christian religious education through *praxis*.[142] He defines *praxis* as "a critical reflection within a community context on lived experience. The reflection is informed by one's own past and future and by the Story and Vision of the Christian community."[143] *Praxis* is grounded in an "epistemic ontology" that means teaching should "reflect an 'ontological turn' to engage all the dimensions and dynamics of human 'being' and be epistemic in that it turns participants to the consciousness that arises from their whole 'being' as agent-subjects located and related in place and time."[144] Furthermore, Tom Beaudoin calls Groome's Heideggerean

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[138] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 133.
[139] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 135.
[140] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 134.
[141] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 135.
[142] For a philosophical overview of *praxis*, see Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 153-ff.
[143] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 152.
[144] Thomas Groome, *Sharing Faith* (San Francisco: HarperSanFrancisco, 1991), 85.

foundation an "existentialist anthropology," where "to be is to be temporal, historical, communal, and responsible. Subjects can never escape the historical relativity of their time and place."[145] Groome's pedagogy aims to accomplish the following:[146]

1. Engage the "being" of people in their self-identity as "agent-subjects-in-relationship"
2. Engage the "place" in which peoples' being is realized
3. Engage peoples' "being in time" and the faith tradition of the Christian community over time
4. Engage peoples' dynamic structure for conation
5. Engage peoples' decision for their "truth" in Christian faith

Amongst other influences, those of Heidegger and Rahner are prominent. For Groome, the conative aim that shapes his *praxis* approach drives at more than "cognitive achievement," though it does not intend to leave the cognitive dimension behind.[147] Arguing for the term "conation" in place of "conversion," Groome says, "conative activity [i.e. the foundational eros that drives to actualize human 'being'] engages people's corporeal, mental, and volitional capacities, their heads, hearts, and overt behaviors, their cognition, desire, and will as they realize their own 'being' in right relationship with others and the world and contribute to it in ways that are life-giving for all."[148] For Groome, Christian conation aims at helping someone to realize his/her Christian "being" *and* becoming Christian.

Akin to the approach proposed by Moran, Groome's Shared Christian Praxis begins with human experience before giving consideration to the "contents" of the faith. By way of defining terms, p*raxis* refers to "the consciousness and agency that arise from and are expressed in any and every aspect of people's 'being' as agent-subjects-in-relationship, whether realized in actions that are personal, interpersonal, sociopolitical, or cosmic."[149] *Christian* refers to a "Christian Story and Vision that emerges from the faith of the Christian community in our time and over its

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[145] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 130.
[146] Groom, *Sharing Faith,* 85-86.
[147] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 125.
[148] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 30. For more on conation, see 26-32.
[149] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 136.

history," a Story and Vision that "should not be idealized as monolithic."[150] *Shared* points to "this approach as one of mutual partnership, active participation, and dialogue with oneself, with others, with God, and with Story/Vision of Christian faith."[151] In concrete steps, this approach advances according to the following movements:[152]

1. Focusing Activity - Aims "to turn people to their present praxis, to some aspect of their lives in the world with shared focus."[153] This largely centers on a symbol that participants "look through" "to their own situation in life,"[154] with a focus on the "participants' *personal* consciousness of present praxis."[155]

2. Critical Reflection on Present Action - Aims to "encourage participants in critical consciousness and appropriation of present praxis, to promote a dialectic among them and their location in place and time. Critical and historical consciousness emerges as participants un-cover and dis-cover the personal/social sources of and reasons for present praxis and discern its consequences."[156]

3. Making Accessible Christian Story and Vision[157] - "Makes accessible to participants a Story/Vision of their faith community as it pertains to the focused theme…As participants have critically interpreted the 'text' and context of their lives, so the educator now brings critical hermeneutics to the texts and contexts of Christian Story/Vision, to make it accessible."[158]

4. Dialectical Hermeneutics to Appropriate Story/Vision to Participants' Stories and Visions - "To enable participants to critically appropriate the faith community's Story/Vision to their own lives and contexts. By 'appropriation' I mean that

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[150] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 138.
[151] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 142.
[152] For the purposes of the present study, only Groome's steps in *Sharing Faith* will be considered here, though an earlier form of Shared Christian Praxis appears in *Christian Religious Education*, 184-ff.
[153] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 155-56.
[154] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 156.
[155] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 188.
[156] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 188.
[157] Note the omission of the article "the" before "Christian" and the implication that there is not one Christian story, but openness to many Christian stories as developed in various locales.
[158] Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 215.

          participants integrate Christian Story/Vision by personal agency into their own

          identity and understanding."[159]

5. Decision/Response for Lived Christian Faith - "Movement 5 encourages participants

          to a decision for knowing, desiring, and doing with others what is humanizing and

          life-giving for all."[160]

Groome's Shared Christian Praxis begins and ends with the human agent. The primary "content" considered within the movements identified above is life in all its dimensions, the "present *praxis*" of the participant critically examined through a dialectical process that uncovers sources of historical conditioning, or otherwise. Here, Rahner's contribution is clear, as Groome centers his entire approach on the "agent-subjects of revelation," who, "through reflection on their own present praxis in the world…can encounter, recognize, and appropriate God's ongoing self-disclosure."[161] Tom Beaudoin describes Groome's approach as a theology of teaching that "encourages learning through personal appropriation, where the 'subject' of the teaching is the learner's existential experience, to which the religious tradition speaks in a dialogue involving learners interpreting the tradition, construed very broadly, for their situation, and their situation through the tradition."[162] Reflecting on Rahner's argument that all faith "knowing" begins from human "being," with its characteristic "existentials" of self-presence, freedom, and self-transcendence, all of which are permeated by what Rahner calls the "supernatural existential" (the "ground and horizon of human existence"[163]), Groome says:

> For existential subjects, God's self-revelation always originates, albeit in an unthematic
> way, in the depths of human existence, precisely because of our God-gifted "supernatural
> existential" — it gives us the capacity to encounter and recognize God's self-
> communication. Thus, every human "experience" can have a transcendental dimension in
> that it reflects "an unthematic and anonymous, as it were, knowledge of God." At first

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[159] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 250.
[160] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 267.
[161] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 162.
[162] Beaudoin, "The Theological Anthropology of Thomas Groome," 127.
[163] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 162.

this might look like a natural knowledge of God, but it is always already more than natural — it is prompted by God's grace, working within.[164]

Christian Story/Vision aims at providing something of a "thematic" expression of revelation. Story/Vision refers to a "symbolic mediation of God's revelation of Godself,"[165] and one that rejects the same neo-scholastic understanding of revelation highlighted by Moran.[166] Story and Vision are "localized," and not relegated to one mode of expression. They are to to be interpreted according to a proper critical hermeneutic as determined and executed by the educator and presented to the participants in a way that is accessible. Generally speaking, the content and whole of Scripture and tradition (i.e. the analogy of faith), is not taken into account, but only those parts of Story/Vision that pertain to the present *praxis*. From here, participants "make their own" the Story/Vision and integrate it into their own experience. Finally, aligned with Groome's emphasis on the "reign of God" and "faith as doing,"[167] Shared Christian Praxis aims to produce action; it aims at producing "Christian actors."[168] Therefore, one sees in Shared Christian Praxis the application of Groome's understanding of religious education, namely that it is religious and transcendental,[169] educational, and therefore essentially political.[170]

Shifting focus slightly to the person of the catechist, Groome's vision for the catechist apes Moran's. Admitting an "identity crisis" in the aftermath of the collapse of neo-scholastic catechesis, Groome attempts to rebuild the catechist's identity by first universalizing the educational responsibility of members of the Church. In a recent paper, Groome calls for a "total catechetical education." Here, he not only means "total" in the sense that this education should be cognitive, behavioral, and affective, but that virtually everyone and everything is capable of carrying out this Christian education.[171] This totalizing, horizontalizing, and open-ended nature

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[164] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 162.
[165] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 218.
[166] See Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 219.
[167] See Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 14-ff; and *Christian Religious Education,* 63-ff.
[168] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 267.
[169] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 11-12. See also *Christian Religious Education,* 22.
[170] Groome, *Sharing Faith,* 12-24. See also *Christian Religious Education,* 25-26 and Thomas Groome, "The Purposes of Christian Catechesis," *Empowering Catechetical Leaders* (Washington, D.C.: National Catholic Educational Association, 1999), 5-ff.
[171] See Groome, "Handing on the Faith," 179-ff.

of understanding catechesis results in a question about what specifically makes a catechist a catechist? What is distinctive about this particular call? Is anyone and everyone a teacher? In *Christian Religious Education*, he says the religious educator is to "represent" Jesus Christ in an "incarnational" ministry of the Word. The task of the teacher is to help people "incarnate the Word in their everyday existence" by staying with the person through the slow process of inculcating a new way of life.[172] This ministry is carried out by way of witnessing, or, to use Groome's preferred word, "representation,"which is "to act temporarily for [others] when they cannot act for themselves."[173] In Christianity, this means every Christian represents Christ for the other:

> The people with whom we work are themselves Christ's representatives to us and Christ's representatives to each other. In this sense, all the participants in an event of Christian religious education participate in an act of ministry. The teacher is distinguished as the leader in creating the context…But in that context the participants minister to each other, teacher to students, students to teacher, and students to students.[174]

The work of representation for the religious educator means conserving and sharing the Story, proposing the liberating, future-oriented dimension of the ministry as Vision, and to celebrate life by "being with" in present solidarity.[175] Groome's understanding of the religious educator, as is characteristic of his approach on the whole, takes on a political bent. The educator leads one into a critical exploration of present praxis by representing Christ in sharing the Story, proposing the Vision, and in being-with the other.

2.4   *Conclusions Pertaining to Moran and Groome's Contributions*

Although cursory, this overview of the contributions of Moran and Groome in the realm of catechetics (à la Rahner) allows for several conclusions. First, Moran and Groome's line of thought takes the "Heideggerean problematic" seriously and confronts neo-scholastic

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[172] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 266.
[173] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 267.
[174] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 268.
[175] Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 269-74.

conceptions of catechesis by way of Heidegger's reversal in which history reveals being, rather than interpreting history according to being. The logical conclusion of this reversal means Moran and Groome turn their focus to history as the *locus* of God's ongoing revelation through the Rahnerian "transcendental experience." Rahner describes this as follows:

> The history of salvation and revelation…[are] coexistent and coextensive with the history of the world and of the human spirit, and hence also with the history of religion. Because there is self-transcendence on man's part through God's ontological and revelatory self-communication, the history of revelation takes place wherever this transcendental history has its history, and hence in the whole history of man.[176]

Any thematic efforts, or attempts to categorize transcendental experience are secondary and come into effect following the experience. One must ask if tradition can play a role in guiding one to God's revelation, or if the individual is first on his or her own in front of his or her own (religious) experience. If the present study has rightly understood the Rahnerian trajectory, it seems as though only after one, as an agent-subject becomes aware of his or her own history, and hence, his or her own "unthematic" encounter with God, might the Church and tradition be able to offer some assistance in completing what began in the religious experience by offering an interpretation that the person can approbate. Following this line, Moran and Groome relegate the Church, her authority, tradition, and Scripture in favor of a transcendental religious approach to understanding revelation and carrying out the task of catechesis.[177] To this one might pose the

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[176] Karl Rahner, *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity,* trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1978), 143.

[177] Luigi Giussani's basic approach to education runs contrary to the positions of Moran and Groome. Giussani argues that a true education is an education of "*what is human in us,* our source or origin. Although expressed in different ways in each individual, this properly human dimension always reflects the same substance, for behind the diversity of different cultures, customs, and expressions, the human heart is *one and the same*." Therefore, Giussani claims that the first concern of education is that it educates the heart of man. He proposes that this education be accomplished in the following manner: (1) The past must be presented in a suitable form that provides them with a "working hypothesis," a tradition; (2) This tradition must speak "from within the context of a *life experience* that highlights a correspondence with the heart's deepest needs; in other words, from the context of a life experience that speaks for itself;" (3) A true education must embrace criticism: "The student must be exposed to the past through a life experience that can propose that past to him and justify it [points 1 and 2]. He must take this past and these reasons, look at them critically, compare them with the contents of his heart, and say, 'This is true,' or 'This is not true,' or 'I'm not sure.'" In this way, Giussani's educational theory runs contrary to constructivist theory, critical theory, and the Moran/Groome trajectory, in that Giussani maintains the primacy of tradition as a necessary starting

question: Is it really the case that tradition cannot provide access to the religious experience? That tradition only taints the immediate purity of experience? What happens if the tradition of the Church does not "square" with one's experience? Can it be discarded? In a certain sense, "vulgarised Rahnerianism" indicates a complete reversal of the neo-scholastic position that seems to reduce faith to ratifying revelation-as-propositional-truth. One might call faith in this view "truth without relationship." In a "vulgarised Rahnerian" position, faith is pure relationship without content, or "relationship without truth," and no mention is made regarding faith as a theological virtue. Where once faith merely ratified propositional truth claims, now faith ratifies one's own penetration of the depths of his being and experience.[178] One already has immediate access to a relationship that needs no reference to the contents of tradition. Following Rahner's sympathetic view toward modernity and the transcendental approach, Moran and Groome's positions would eventually sync with liberation theology as the manifestation of the Spirit in the *praxis* of history.[179]

Second, catechesis as expressive of the Christian mission falls out of favor for Moran,[180] and is incorporated into the "Christian" part of Groome's more expansive understanding of Christian Religious Education.[181] Rahner's "anonymous Christianity," at least in a vulgarized form taken to its logical conclusion, appears to dissolve the need for a distinctively Christian mission that calls for conversion and baptism. Evangelization and catechesis are no longer necessary; Religious education is necessary. Moran claims that religious education has two aims,

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point for an authentic education. See Giussani, *The Risk of Education,* trans. Rosanna M. Giammanco Frongia (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 2001), 7-10.

[178] See Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith," *L'Osservatore Romano,* March 16, 2016, http://www.osservatoreromano.va/en/news/beginning-faith.

[179] For more on this point, see Rowland's insight in *Catholic Theology,* 168. Here, Rowland notes that German "political theologians," such as Johann Baptist Metz, saw the existentialism and transcendentalism in Rahner's position as inadequate, because faith is not a purely private affair. Rather, faith "has an accompanying *praxis,* and…it is the role of a political ethics to link the two." Groome, in particular, seems to employ this insight in the realm of catechetics.

[180] See Johanna Paruch, "A Study of the Direct Ramifications of Vatican Council II on Catechetics," 241, where she quotes from Sean Innerst, *Catholic Dossier,* Ignatius Press, November 1997. Innerst says, "These popular works [of Moran] represented not only the first steps toward a rejection of any objective content to revelation, but also a reduction of the received virtue of faith to a personal 'experience.' In point of fact, the logic of Moran's position led him to repudiate catechesis altogether, finally declaring, 'the problem of catechetics is that it exists.'"

[181] Groome, *Christian Religious Education,* 23-26.

"To teach people to practice a religious way of life and to teach people to understand religion."[182] Groome speaks of religious education as the activity that deliberately attends to the transcendent dimension of life for the sake of promoting and enabling a conscious relationship with the ultimate ground of being.[183] In the face of this Rahnerian position, Ratzinger levels several questions: "Is the Christian really just man as he is? Is that what he is supposed to be? Is not man as he is that which is insufficient, that which must be mastered and transcended?…Is not the main point of the faith of both Testaments that man is what he ought to be only by conversion, that is, when he ceases to be what he is?…Does not such a concept, which turns being into history but also history into being, result in a vast stagnation despite the talk of self-transcendence as the content of man's being?"[184] More recently, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, in a 2016 interview with Fr. Jacques Servais, notes that the abandonment of Christian mission following the Council results in a double-crisis:

> On the one hand this seems to remove any motivation for a future missionary commitment. Why should one try to convince the people to accept the Christian faith when they can be saved even without it? But also for Christians an issue emerged: the obligatory nature of the faith and its way of life began to seem uncertain and problematic. If there are those who can save themselves in other ways, it is not clear, in the final analysis, why the Christian himself is bound by the requirements of the Christian faith and its morals. If faith and salvation are no longer interdependent, faith itself becomes unmotivated.[185]

As a final observation regarding Moran and Groome, the "being" of the catechist is transformed into the "being" of an educator. In other words, what is traditionally distinctive about the catechist falls away — the catechist as witness who "hands on" the faith. With Moran and Groome, the concept of witness remains, but the witness serves to lead the student into his/her experience via relationship, and out of this experience into the world to change the world and to bring about the "reign of God." On the one hand, it appears the catechist/educator is given

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182 Harris and Moran, *Reshaping Religious Education*, 30.
183 Groome, *Christian Religious Education,* 22.
184 Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 166.
185 Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith."

maximal freedom to use, misuse, or disregard *content*, while on the other hand, the catechist/educator is confined by a new catechetical method. Finally, as becomes apparent in Groome's recent call for "Total Catechetical Education," in making the whole of the Church's activity catechetical and removing the overt distinction "catechist" risks a universalizing of catechesis, and a horizontalizing of the role of catechist, in such a way that the catechist within the Church ceases to exist.[186] If all are catechists, none are catechists. If all activity is catechizing and all are catechists, what need is there for catechesis and the catechist as these realities are traditionally understood?

3.   The Postmodern Condition, Recontextualization, and Catechesis

3.1   The Postmodern Condition "Defined"

In light of what has been said regarding the Rahnerian trajectory, Lieven Boeve believes that with the postmodern context, the time has come to move beyond modern theology's correlation attempts with regard to modernity, and toward a method of recontextualization. Boeve is a Belgian theologian, born in 1966 and who received his doctorate in 1995 after writing on postmodernism in relation to theology. He is a Professor of Systematic Theology at Katholieke Universiteit Leuven. Noting Paul Tillich's correlation project — correlating Christianity into a modern context — Boeve says that modernity strived for rationality and emancipation by banishing religion. He summarizes the movement and confirms much of what was discussed above, saying, "Although this claimed autonomy of the subject was first rejected by the church and theology, afterwards they embraced it. Rationality, human freedom, and social liberation were considered privileged *loci theologici*…Secular culture was no longer considered to be alien from Christianity, rather it was the place in which God was actively present in the struggle for an authentic subjectivity and social justice."[187] However, in the present, postmodern context, Boeve believes the modern correlation project has come to an end. He notes the following reasons:[188]

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[186] Groome, "Handing on the Faith," 177.
[187] Lieven Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 32.
[188] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 34-35.

1. Plurality has rendered obsolete the notion that Christianity needs to simply dialogue with an "easily identifiable secular culture." Dialogue between two partners is not possible in today's world of dynamic, irreducible, and even conflicting views.

2. The totalizing nature of modern epistemological standards and the resulting "grand narratives" has been criticized by postmodernism and its option for radical plurality, otherness, and difference. Postmodernism guards against all totalizing attempts.

3. Postmodernism criticizes "any facile presupposition of consensus, continuity, and harmony."

4. The "factual overlap" between Christianity and culture has disappeared. By this "factual overlap," Boeve gets at the reality that statistically, a large number of young people have already grown up without belonging to a religion.[189]

Boeve holds that correlation theologians operated according to the epistemological standards of modernity. Sweeney adds that accordingly, faith is "understood as 'adding' to or 'qualifying' a secular standard of rationality."[190] "Adding to" and "qualifying," seem to be apt descriptors for the faith in the visions of Moran and Groome. Boeve goes on to argue that with the dismantling of the singular modern dialogue partner, theology must make a choice vis-à-vis postmodernism: continuity or discontinuity. Boeve highlights the "Radical Orthodoxy" movement as an example of the latter, describing this movement as holding that "theology ought…to take the discontinuity between Christian faith and contemporary context as its point of departure…a theology that leaves modernity behind."[191] Rather than the "radical counter narrative" apparent in "Radical Orthodoxy," Boeve calls instead for a recontextualization of the correlation method in the postmodern context via dialogue within the context. In doing so, Boeve seeks to avoid what he sees as the Scylla of modern correlation and its presupposition of continuity between Christianity and history (the equation of history and Christian revelation), and the Charybdis of discontinuity movements that seem to deny history and context as contributors to tradition.[192] In order to better

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[189] See Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 16-19.
[190] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 106.
[191] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 36.
[192] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 38.

understand Boeve's position, the present study will briefly explore postmodernism in general, before tracing Boeve's recontextualization attempt via his theology of interruption.

Scholars frequently claim that postmodernism, by its nature, evades definition. Kevin Vanhoozer points out that postmodernism rejects the notion of definition, because definitions can never be "neutral" and always reveal more about the person offering the definition. Postmodernism resists totalizing attempts at explanation and, therefore, it is more accurate to speak of postmodernities, according to David Tracy, than to speak of postmodernism.[193] In light of such a warning, Sweeney aims to identify some basic characteristics. He first notes that Jean-François Lyotard calls the phenomenon a "condition," rather than a "position."[194] Postmodernity is a state of being, a condition of being within reality, rather than a philosophical position imposed upon reality. A philosophical position would tend toward a totalizing understanding of reality. Instead, Lyotard defines "postmodern" as "incredulity toward metanarratives,"[195] and as noted by Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz, "the admission of heterogeneous subjectivity and cultivation of difference by reflexion."[196] Lyotard references the crisis in metaphysics as legitimizing the obsolescence of the metannarrative.[197] By metanarrative, Lyotard means any claim to explain the whole of reality by a mode of unification, "whether it is a speculative narrative [philosophy] or a narrative of emancipation [politics]."[198] Vanhoozer expands on this, and identifies four metannaratives that postmodernism rejects:

1. Reason — Postmoderns "do not reject 'reason' but 'Reason.' They deny the notion of universal rationality; reason is rather a contextual and relative affair. What counts as

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[193] See Kevin Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity: A Report on Knowledge (of God)," *The Cambridge Companion to Postmodern Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2003), 3.

[194] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 22.

[195] Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge,* trans. Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi (Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 1984), xxiv.

[196] Hanna-Barbara Gerl-Falkovitz, "Recent Developments in International Feminist Philosophy: Tendencies and Interpretation of 'Gender' Studies" (presentation, Laghi Chair Lecture Series College Symposium, Pontifical College Josephine, March 21, 2002).

[197] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, xxiv. See also Lieven Boeve, *Lyotard and Theology* (New York, Bloomsbury, 2014), 11-12.

[198] Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition*, 37. Rowland defines metanarrative or "master narrative" in simple terms: "The concept refers to a narrative about narratives of historical meaning, experience or knowledge, which offers a society a legitimation through the anticipated completion of a (as yet unrealised) master idea," in *Catholic Theology*, 161.

rational is relative to the prevailing narrative in a society or institution."[199] Reason must be viewed not as a universal, but in light of the particular context in which it is formed.

2. Truth — Here modernity's metaphysical attempts "of mastering natural reality in a comprehensive conceptual scheme," are criticized. Postmoderns challenge assertions of "that's the way things are," by responding "that's the way things are for you." "Truth on this view is a compelling story told by persons in position of power in order to perpetuate their way of seeing and organizing the natural and social world."[200]

3. History — Postmoderns react against thinkers like Kant, Hegel, and Marx, all moderns who "have attempted to tell the story of humanity, usually in terms of the progress of the race." Rather than accounts that "purport to recount universal history" via continuity, postmoderns favor discontinuity and do not hold that there is "one true story" the describes all of history.[201]

4. Self — "There is no one true way of recounting one's own history and thus no one true way of narrating one's own identity…The postmodern self is not master of but subject to the material and social and linguistic conditions of a historical situation that precedes her."[202] In this way, the self is open-ended and adrift.

In response to metanarratives such as those described by Vanhoozer, Boeve argues that "For Lyotard, philosophy's role, as well as art's, at the present time is *to place such hegemonic narratives,* which want to comprehensively master everything, *under critique*. At the same time, philosophy has its assignment *to bear witness to what escapes such narratives,* to give voice to the other of the narrative, to what differs from the narrative (*le différend)."*[203] Here it becomes clear that apart from its negative critique of hegemonic metanarratives, postmodernism makes the positive contribution of giving voice to difference. Sweeney notes that Lyotard follows Nietzsche's thought of "the perceived impossibility of grounding the particular in the universal,

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[199] Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity," 10.
[200] Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity," 11.
[201] Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity," 11.
[202] Vanhoozer, "Theology and the Condition of Postmodernity," 11-12.
[203] Lieven Boeve, *Theology at the Crossroads of University, Church and Society: Dialogue, Difference and Catholic Identity* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2014), 49.

something which can also be expressed in terms of the non-identity of the signifier and the signified. The response to this metaphysical crisis of representation…is…a 'condition' characterized by suspension, deferral, and openness."[204] Sweeney calls this "being-without-confidence," which causes one to defer "reason's aspirations to commensurability with its object."[205] Sweeney quotes James C. Livingston as describing the condition as "'emptiness of self,' 'absence,' 'loss of self,' 'the movement toward silence,' 'the unrepresentable,' 'the crisis of legitimization,'" and notes that "the twilight of certainty means that dimensions once dismissed as irrelevant or unworthy of consideration all suddenly become equally worthy of consideration, given the relativizing of the standards of traditionally privileged modes of discourse."[206] Critiquing postmodernism's attempt to identify itself as a "condition" so as to avoid self-contradiction, Rowland notes that "progress" was the metanarrative of modernity, with "the celebration of 'difference'" being a "kind of master narrative of the culture of postmodernity. Although the postmoderns regard all master narratives as oppressive, the celebration of difference is regarded as an exception to this principle because it does not really affirm or privilege anything."[207] Sweeney comments on this, saying, that while most postmodernisms embrace flux as a way of preventing totalitarianism, "particularity becomes universality,"[208] and "there remains an enduring 'metaphysical' tendency to place absolute conditions on what can and cannot be said…there is the tendency to continue thinking in terms of a closed system — what could be called metaphysical in the pejorative sense."[209] Sweeney claims that postmodernism, in an apparent posture of "humility," rejects the very possibility of an event "that would shatter both the self-sufficiency *and* the 'humility' of *Dasein*" and consequently risks limiting the mode of God's appearance — the same critique leveled against metaphysics.[210]

3.2   *Boeve and Recontextualization*

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[204] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 23.
[205] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 23.
[206] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 23.
[207] Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 161.
[208] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 125.
[209] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 186.
[210] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 186.

Within the postmodern condition, Boeve argues that theology must be recontextualized by a method grounded in a theology of interruption. Boeve notes that the present context is post-Christian and post-secular, and not only in a chronologically linear sense, but in the sense that "our relation to the Christian faith and to secularization has changed."[211] Post-Christian means to say that Christianity is no longer the given background that grants meaning, and post-secular aims at the reality that the modernization of society did not result in the complete banishment of religion, but in its pluralization and in the way in which one deals with it.[212] In this post-Christian and post-secular context, Boeve notes that the *individual reactions* of detraditionalization, individualization, and pluralization are now the sociocultural processes that change society.[213] In short, this means tradition is not transferred *de facto* from one generation to another, that identity not assigned but constructed, and that "equal and reciprocal recognition of the philosophical/religious position" must be granted.[214] Within such circumstances, correlation is simply no longer possible as there is not a singular secular culture to which theology relates. Boeve also holds that discontinuity is not an option, as "history and context make an essential contribution to the development of tradition and the way in which Christian faith is given shape in space and time."[215] In the face of an evolved context, Boeve argues for a method of recontextualization, which Sweeney describes as "an ongoing process that never achieves a static resting place in certainty and that resists any claim to a totalizing theological discourse…theology is not a master-narrative, but must itself be situated by the ever-changing hermeneutical dimension of time."[216]

Boeve fashions the recontextualization method according to the theological category of interruption. Basing his position in hermeneutics and apophatic theology, Boeve holds that the Christian narrative must "allow itself to be interrupted and become a narrative of interruption."[217] He adds:

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[211] Boeve, *Theology at the Crossroads,* 41.
[212] Boeve, *Theology at the Crossroads,* 41-42.
[213] Boeve, *Theology at the Crossroads,* 44. Boeve prefers the more postmodern -ization suffix over -ism due to the emphasis on the individual reaction and action (-izations) as opposed to the more ideological and totalizing (-isms). Cf. *God Interrupts History,* 38-39, 41.
[214] Boeve, *Theology at the Crossroads,* 45.
[215] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 38.
[216] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 48.
[217] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 45.

The Christian narrative is never allowed to close itself. When it does, the God of love breaks the narrative open. Interruption functions here as a *theological* category…Following Jesus means engaging the challenge of the other who interrupts our narratives…For Christians, professing Christ is then also the interruption *par excellence* of history. It is this God and this interruption to which the Christian narrative bears witness, a witness that never attempts to completely grasp or contain this God or this interruption. Moreover, whenever this narrative tends to close itself, it is itself interrupted — broken open — precisely by the same God who prevents the Christian narrative from closing itself and who, when this nonetheless occurs, becomes its first victim. Even when God is eliminated, however, interruption still occurs. Belief in the Resurrection is the sharpest expression of this. When narratives are forced shut, even unto death, God nevertheless still breaks them open.[218]

Sweeney summarizes, saying, "What we say about God is always particular, but at the same time God cannot simply be identified with particularity."[219] Boeve's hermeneutics ground theology in history and any attempt at Christian witness is not to be an attempt at "grasping" God or "containing" God, but is rather a proclamation of the God who interrupts, a God whose being one cannot speak of, but only his particularity. In other words, to witness is to express a radically particular experience of God that cannot, and should not, make a claim on or for another's experience.

Boeve's Christology is the foundation of his theology of interruption, a theology that, as will be seen, radically alters the concept of tradition. In his attempt at a postmodern Christology, Boeve has recourse to Chalcedonian Christology, the language of which he recasts in light of the postmodern condition. Boeve holds that the Fathers emphasized universality (divinity) as the key

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[218] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 47.
[219] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 114.

to unlocking particularity (humanity). Boeve aims to start from the opposite perspective: "How can one think universality starting from particularity?"[220] Boeve says:

> Only in the all too concrete, in the all too historical, in the all too contingent — and in an interpretation thereof — does God engage history in an irreducible and definitive way, without, however, coinciding with it. Incarnation never implies the neutralization or cancellation of the historical-particular in terms of the universal, or of the contingent-historical in terms of the absolute. The latter is always irreducibly inscribed in the former, without discrediting the former, but at the same time, without isolating the latter from the former. Only in the all too human is God revealed, not without it — only in the all-too-historical can Christians read God's presence and activity.[221]

Sweeney summarizes Boeve's position as follows:

> Jesus' humanity, as particular, embodies a radical hermeneutical path to God. To say that the Word is made flesh, is to say that in becoming flesh the Word subjects Itself to the hermeneutical condition of the *human*. In this, the "Logos incarnated in the word, becomes signified in the word, but does not identify itself with the word. The word 'evokes,' thereby determining the indeterminable Logos, and precisely in this determining distinguishes itself from the Logos." In other words, "word" (note the lower case), as a phenomenon occurring within the limits of history, is not able to contain the divinity of Logos as such: "The word never becomes Logos, but is the way to the Logos."[222]

Boeve's position prevents the particular from containing or becoming the universal (ontologically speaking), while holding that it is only in the particular that one has access to the universal. In other words, Boeve particularizes the universal, whereas he holds the Fathers

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[220] Lieven Boeve, "*Christus Postmodernus:* An Attempt at Apophatic Christology," in *The Myriad Christ: Plurality and the Quest for Unity in Contemporary Christology,* ed. Terrance Merrigan and Jacques Haers (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2000), 588.

[221] Lieven Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 156. See also 176.

[222] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 113.

universalized the particular. Jesus' humanity is a definitive hermeneutical path to God but the "word" (i.e. the incarnate Jesus Christ), is not Logos itself. In attempting to evade onto-theology, the particularity of Jesus Christ does not contain the universal, but reveals the universal "*in* his humanity and not *in spite of it*."[223] Boeve claims that the Incarnation demands a "radical hermeneutics" that takes divine revelation seriously while also relativizing it, allowing the Incarnation and Christian tradition to speak of God without claiming to be God.[224] As Sweeney puts it, "It is no longer possible to speak of Incarnation as an ontological event…Christianity must give up any pretensions of absoluteness and adopt a narrative of interruption."[225] In this regard, Boeve says, "Where tradition is absolutized, it is precisely Godself who interrupts such self-enclosing rigidity and fosters recontextualization."[226]

Boeve's Christological position reconstitutes tradition, and, consequently, catechesis. Arguing against a "cumulative" approach to the development of tradition (i.e. elucidating and explicating what was implicitly known), wherein one receives tradition as an heir, Boeve argues for a non-cumulative, dynamic approach based upon recontexualization. Regarding this approach to tradition, Boeve says:

> The result of recontextualization is thus *not so much 'more' tradition but rather 'different' tradition*…We are *not only heirs to the inheritance [i.e. tradition], we are also its testators*…By way of recontextualisation, we are called to experience and reflect upon Christianity's offer of meaning and to pass it on. This certainly does not mean that the tradition simply adapts itself — some will say "surrenders" itself — to time and context. What it does imply is that every time and context challenges us to give shape to the message of God's love revealed in Jesus Christ in a contemporary way.[227]

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[223] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 176.
[224] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 177.
[225] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 113.
[226] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 177.
[227] Lieven Boeve, *Interrupting Tradition: An Essay on Christian Faith in a Postmodern Context* (Louvain: Peeters Press, 2003), 23-24.

Arguing against what could be perceived in the modernist attempts at reframing tradition in light of "ongoing revelation," Boeve claims that recontextualization does not add to the tradition, but tests the tradition in light of the present context. Following a genealogy of recontextualized traditions over the centuries,[228] Boeve holds that recontextualizing the faith in light of context frequently results in a "different" tradition. Context and hermeneutics shape and change the experience of faith tradition to the point where "*The* Christian narrative no longer exists, we only have access to it through its relation to the context…From the perspective of history, the Christian narrative worked its way through a variety of successive contexts, continually recontextualising along the way. As a result it took on a multitude of different forms that were not always reconcilable with those it had left behind."[229] In many ways, Boeve's Christology (as illustrated above) is an example of recontextualization and the "different" tradition that results.

Tradition-as-narrative-of-interruption has radical implications on what is traditionally known as catechesis. Because God reveals himself as the God-of-interruption, the Christian can both take the particular Christian narrative seriously, and at the same time, in a "radical-hermeneutical" way, qualify the narrative so that it does not become a totalizing metanarrative.[230] For Boeve, interruption is not a "*formal, empty category*; it is charged rather with the narrative tradition of the God of love revealed in concrete history, of the God who became human among humans. *Imitatio Christi* then summons Christians to a praxis of being both interrupted and interrupting."[231] In this way, Boeve renders "different" the traditional understanding of evangelization. The Christian narrative itself is a particular narrative interrupted by the God who interrupts closed narratives and who challenges the Christian narrative to interrupt hegemonic narratives. The Gospel moves away from being a metanarrative and is recast in the light of interruption. The praxis of mission, then, is one of "respecting the very otherness of the other, questioning, challenging the other, criticizing him or her where he or she tends to become hegemonic."[232] In this way is the other saved — saved from hegemonic tendencies and capable of standing within the postmodern context. According to Boeve, conceptualizing God as Other,

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[228] Lieven Boeve, *Interrupting Tradition*, 22-ff.
[229] Lieven Boeve, *Interrupting Tradition*, 24.
[230] See Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 47-48.
[231] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 48.
[232] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 48. See also Boeve, *Lyotard and Theology*, 99.

as the one over and above human concepts and who breaks them open when they close in on themselves, helps with coming to terms "with our actual condition. The fact that God does not have a 'place' in the Christian narrative but can only be evoked in God's ungraspability, prevents us from falling anew into the trap of totalitarianism."[233] The Christian mission in a postmodern context becomes something entirely other than its traditional conception. Following the fall of the modern project, mission should not be seen as an opportunity to present a new metanarrative convinced of itself and concerned with the salvation of souls,[234] rather, in the "humility" that typifies postmodernism, Christianity is to exist "as a small narrative, or better still as an open narrative, as a narrative that offers orientation and integration without thereby being determined to integrate everything in its own narrative in a totalitarian way."[235]

The plural context shapes the whole of Boeve's approach to religious education and interreligious dialogue.[236] With regard to the latter, Boeve notes the tendencies of approaches marked by exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. He argues that exclusivism (salvation through *faith in* Christ alone) and inclusivism (salvation through Christ alone) *universalize* the Christian claim and are prone to "'totalitarian features' and the denigration of other religious truth claims,"[237] while pluralism (many equal pathways to salvation) *particularizes* the Christian claim by making it one truth contained by a higher religious truth that all pathways to God are equal. Exclusivism and inclusivism tend to deny religious truth claims of other religions, while pluralism "relativizes the confession of Christ by subordinating it to a transcendent, more comprehensive truth, to which other religions also contribute as partial truths or perspectives on truth."[238] In his attempt at a *via media*, Boeve argues for an "alternate form of inclusivism." Sweeney, summarizing Boeve's position, notes that one who "accepts that the impossibility of a

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[233] Boeve, *Lyotard and Theology*, 99.

[234] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 115.

[235] Boeve, *Interrupting Tradition*, 175. The implications can be drawn out politico-theologically as well. For example, see *God Interrupts History*, 48. Sweeney comments on this as well in *Sacramental Presence*, 115, where he says that Christianity is "emboldened to apply this particularity positively to the non-violent embrace of otherness, to victims, and to open dialogue with other 'life options.'"

[236] For a more thorough treatment of this topic, especially as it pertains to the work of Didier Pollefeyt, see O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism," 364-372.

[237] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence*, 116. See Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 166-ff.

[238] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 170-71. For more on exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism, see Didier Pollefeyt, "Interreligious Dialogue beyond Absolutism, Relativism, and Particularism," in *Encountering the Stranger: A Jewish-Christian-Muslim Trialogue* (Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2012), 245-59.

universal point of view means that one cannot assert the primacy of any single religious claim, but that at the same time affirms that Christian particularity is, as particular, irreducibly unique."[239] The Christian narrative can neither make a totalizing claim on other religions, nor can its uniqueness be denied. It is neither capable of a universal claim, nor is it subject to any universal religious claim. As this theory plays out in the field of Catholic education, due recourse must be given to plurality, particularity, and narrativity for the sake of fostering respectful dialogue between a multiplicity of voices.[240] Rather than transmit tradition, religious education consists of fostering "a sort of refuge, a free and open space, a *play or training ground* for purposeful interpersonal existence in the plural society of tomorrow."[241] In this conception, as noted above, the traditional understanding of Catholic evangelization is rendered obsolete. Rather than seeking the salvation of souls, the goal of mission is dialogue that avoids universalizing the Christian claim, while preventing its particularization. Salvation in the postmodern sense concerns itself with salvation from hegemony.[242] The other remains other, and precisely as other, he interrupts one's own religious narrative. It is in light of otherness, and only in light of otherness, that one is in communion with the other, and seen in this light, one must ask whether or not postmodern interruption has the ability to establish communion, or if it ultimately only results in isolation.

In light of all that has been said regarding modern and postmodern theology and the implications in catechetics, what can one conclude about the role of the catechist? In the "vulgarized Rahnerianism" of Moran and Groome, the catechist as one who hands on the tradition is circumscribed by the view that the catechist is really the religious educator who, through methodological praxis, shows the student how to critically evaluate his own life, how to perceive the ongoing revelation of God within it, and how to act in freedom and for freedom as a result of it. This view, shaped by Rahner's transcendental Thomism, holds that it is in the

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[239] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 116.
[240] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 116.
[241] Lieven Boeve, "Beyond Correlation Strategies: Teaching Religion in a Detraditionalised and Pluralised Context," in *Hermeneutics and Religious Education,* trans. H. Lombaerts and D. Pollefeyt (Leuven: Leuven University Press, 2004), 252.
[242] It is interesting to consider this "shift" in the goal of salvation, and, therefore, the goal of evangelization, in light of 1 Cor. 1:17. Here, Paul says, "For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel, and not with the wisdom of human eloquence, so that the cross of Christ might not be emptied of its meaning."

transcendent experience of becoming consciously aware of oneself that one discovers and makes explicit what was already present (anonymous Christianity); the religious educator serves to foster this transcendent experience of oneself. O'Shea argues that "vulgarized Rahnerianism" is re-cast in postmodern recontextualization.[243] Again, the religious educators are not to "hand on" tradition, but, according to Boeve, are to serve as "experts and guides." They are "to endeavour to surface, clarify and interpret the significant questions raised by the class group."[244] Teachers are to foster, while emphasizing their role as participants in, communication about fundamental life options — a process that will likely result in the need for the teacher to bear forth his or her own witness.[245] However, this witness, this personal expression of the Christian narrative, serves only to make explicit one's own particular belief as a way of opening it to the other to be interrupted by the other, while interrupting the narrative of the other. In other words, the catechist no longer functions as one who "re-echoes" or who "hands on;" the catechist is not and cannot be a "being-for," but only a "being-with."[246] One can also conclude that, following Lyotard, the religious educator today is to be a champion of fostering difference-thinking. Today's catechist is a "testator" of tradition.

4.   Conclusion

In concluding this chapter, one must first admit its limitations. A thorough study of modern and postmodern catechetics is simply not possible within the scope of the present study. In an attempt to provide a sufficient survey of the Rahnerian trajectory, the present study briefly explored the positions of Rahner, Moran, Groome, and Boeve, and all for the sake of grasping the context in which Ratzinger's position develops. In so doing, this study has attempted to show that the Church's understanding of her mission to evangelize has been deeply influenced by a theology of revelation in light of the "Heideggerean problematic," as attempts have been made in

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[243] O'Shea, "Vulgarised Rahnerianism," 364-372.
[244] Boeve, "Beyond Correlation Strategies," 252.
[245] Boeve, "Beyond Correlation Strategies," 253.
[246] As a concrete example of this position, I have noticed a shift in language within various institutions and organizations that promote mission and service trips. Just 10 years ago, I heard the argument that justice is a greater virtue than charity — a position largely grounded in liberation theology. In a recent presentation, I learned that now solidarity is greater than charity. One is not to go on mission to "be-for," or to fight via politics for others from a "position of privilege." Instead, one is simply to "be-with" them. This, it seems to me, is a fascinating illustration of the shift that has taken place within evangelization from modernistic tendencies to postmodern ones.

both modern and postmodern theology to reconcile being and time. Both modern and postmodern attempts at this reconciliation ultimately result in the disappearance of being for the sake of time. Being becomes time. Within modernism, this means the truth of being is nothing other than the grand narratives, "guaranteed" by science, that will bring peace, salvation, and freedom to the whole of mankind, by mankind itself. In a word, modernism, secularly speaking, seeks to save man from ignorance and injustice via purely human devices, with the self-assured claim of calculated scientific certainty and idealistic utopian visions. Attaching itself to these historical developments via correlation, theologians operating within the Rahnerian trajectory place time over being, and anthropology over ontology. Revelation must be ongoing within time, and God must be discoverable within one's critical self-reflection. Christianity is man becoming aware of himself, and, in this way, realizing he was a Christian all along (Anonymous Christianity!). Therefore, Moran and Groome move toward a praxis-approach that takes the subject and his personal history (one that is inevitably shaped by history-at-large) as the content of God's revelation — a discovery which downplays the "otherness and specificity of the Christian event"[247] — and, by fostering a sympathy with the local community's Story and Vision, the method aims at generating pragmatic, humanistic action. Evangelization becomes about self-discovery and humanistic political action.

The postmodern "condition" concerns itself with *le différend* and with preventing totalizing metannaratives. Boeve's theology of interruption, a recontextualized form of correlation in light of plurality, maintains the reduction of being to time and takes postmodernism as its hermeneutic. Boeve attempts to dismantle the Christian claim as a metanarrative. In Boeve's vision, the open-ended Christian narrative aims at interrupting closed narratives while remaining open to being interrupted, and, in this way, it makes its contribution to the salvation of mankind from modernism's totalizing approaches to reality. In this view, "anonymous Christianity," as described by Rahner, is not even required for salvation because the whole question of salvation has been recast. Modernism had already attempted to create heaven on earth — an attempt that failed numerous times. Postmodernism has seemingly done away with the problem of heaven altogether. There is just the here and now, and who one is and how

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[247] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 195.

one lives in the here and now is ultimately up to him or her. Salvation takes place when one frees him/herself from metanarratives and abides in radical particularity. One must simply be true to his beliefs while being open to those of others, and all the while willing to challenge hegemony. Boeve pushes Rahner's approach to its logical conclusion in "its excessive reification of subjectivity."[248]

As one follows the trajectory of "vulgarised Rahnerianism," it becomes clear that the Church and her tradition (including her dogmas and doctrines) falls out of favor. No longer viewed as a way to access God's revelation in the here-and-now, tradition can even be seen as a hindrance to the authentic religious experience. The religious experience takes place in one's life, which takes place outside of the "catechetical moment" as it has traditionally been conceived, and outside of the liturgy. Following this trajectory means the liturgy celebrates with the rest of the community that religious experience that, properly speaking, has taken place outside of the liturgy and which the liturgy cannot foster. Likewise, the Church and her tradition, and the handing on of the faith (as it is traditionally held to do in the act of catechizing), no longer serve to lead one into the mystery, but only serve as part of a secondary movement of interpretation or thematizing the transcendent religious experience that precedes catechesis. As a result, for Moran and Groome, catechesis, as it has traditionally been understood, is no longer as important as "religious education." In the thought of Boeve, tradition can no longer simply be received as an "heir" would receive an inheritance in the mode of blindly accepting a treasure. Instead, members of the Church are tasked with becoming "testators," and, in so being, recontextualize tradition according to postmodernity and its apophatic stance toward Being. Now, one cannot know anything for certain beyond the particular. Any totalizing truth claim runs the risk of hegemony, which — following the historical horrors that resulted from modernism — is that from which man truly needs to be saved.

In sum, one can see that Neo-scholasticism objectifies revelation via metaphysics and pays little attention to history. This results in a reduction of faith to mere ratification — faith ratifies that which has already been sorted out by metaphysical philosophy. While it springs from

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[248] Sweeney, *Sacramental Presence,* 195.

the same root of "pure reason" as Neo-scholasticism, modernism objectifies human history via science and pays little attention to the particularity of the Christian event, ultimately reducing faith to humanistic praxis. Finally, postmodernism attempts to operate entirely outside of ontology, and relativizes revelation via the particularity of history. The result is the reduction of faith to a totally open narrative that exists to be interrupted and to interrupt hegemonic truth claims. In every case, faith is reduced away from what it has always been: God's gift to mankind and the means by which man enters into relationship with the God who reveals himself.

Ch. 2 - Fundamental Theology along Personalist Lines: Ratzinger's Theological Underpinnings for Evangelization

Chapter 1 of the present study attempted to identify the theological underpinnings, largely rooted in Rahner's theological vision, of several highly-influential theologians and religious educators since the time of Vatican II. The chapter did not aim at a complete study of each position, but rather a survey of the key theological insights that inform evangelization today. The Rahnerian trajectory largely begins from an anthropological, anthropocentric position wherein history, even personal history, becomes the starting point for fundamental theology. In the process, one can see fairly clearly, as Moran points out, that a theology of revelation (i.e. fundamental theology) cannot help but have significant implications on the field of catechetics. How one understands the nature of revelation and the nature of faith, inevitably determines how one goes about awakening faith by "handing on" revelation (i.e. evangelizing and providing catechesis). The developments in theology and catechetics were traced more specifically from the time of the Council through Moran's significant contributions in the United States, to the 1980s and 1990s with Thomas Groome and Shared Christian Praxis. Finally, Boeve's more recent contribution of recontextualization of theology as interruption has been considered in light of the current, postmodern context.

The present chapter will attempt a survey of the key elements of Joseph Ratzinger's fundamental theology that pertain most directly to his vision for evangelization and catechesis. In many places, one will see points of convergence with the positions described in Chapter 1. However, more contrasting points will begin appear, as the previous chapter will serve to draw Ratzinger's position into striking relief. Therefore, the present chapter aims to respond to the questions: What is Ratzinger's theological starting point for evangelization? What lies at the bottom of Ratzinger's fundamental theology that will inevitably affect his vision for evangelization? The chapter will attempt to answer such questions by considering (1) Ratzinger's understanding of revelation, (2) the nature of this revelation as the revelation of the *logos*, (3) the fundamental dynamics of faith, and (4) the ecclesial nature of faith. However, before addressing each of these parts, the chapter will first engage with Ratzinger's criticism of the theological and catechetical positions that appear in Chapter 1.

1.   Ratzinger on the Causes of the Catechetical Crisis

1.1   Questioning the Anthropocentrism of the Dutch Catechism

As has already been noted, Ratzinger shares in the general critique of Neo-scholasticism and its effects upon catechesis. At the same time, he is equally as critical of the Rahnerian trajectory within evangelization and catechesis. In 1966, almost immediately following the Council, the Dutch bishops' conference published its "new" Catechism. This Catechism, despite its "praiseworthy originality," was found by Pope Paul VI's 1968 commission of six cardinals, to be imprecise and in need of being corrected with regard to various fundamental points.[1] Also in 1968, Ratzinger noted that the Dutch Catechism had attempted to take into account the findings of historical-critical scholarship, along with the "the fundamental change in the presuppositions of our thinking by the mathematical-scientific-technological world" that has eclipsed that "old, static, geocentric world view, which took ontological thinking for granted."[2] In short, the Dutch Catechism aimed at answering the questions of a "post-metaphysical" age dominated by positivism,[3] and it did so in two fundamental ways: (1) by calling itself "new" in its "living voice; and (2) in assuming the perspective of a "post-metaphysical" age. The Dutch Catechism aims at a "new living voice" that cuts between Luther's claim that Scripture is self-interpreting without need of the Magisterium, and the Catholic position that Scripture needs the living voice of the Magisterium.[4] Ratzinger notes that the problem with the Dutch Catechism lies in the fact that path between *sola scriptura* and Magisterium remains unclear. In its attempt at being "post-metaphysical," the Dutch Catechism proceeds according to phenomenology and "descriptive-narrative thinking" that attempts to discover the "question of meaning [*Sinnfrage*] and things that give meaning [*Sinngebung*] in the course of human life, in the events of history, and to situate the faith on the level of meaningful answer [*Sinngebung*] that can be detected in the course of

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[1] Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 12.
[2] Joseph Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," in *Dogma and Preaching,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 62. Originally published under the title "Der Holländische Katechismus: Versuch einer theologischen Würdigung," *Hochland* 62 (1970): 301-13.
[3] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 62.
[4] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 62-63.

events themselves."[5] Ratzinger also points out that the work also operates in a decidedly anthropocentric fashion. He cites the chief editor, Fr. Guus van Hemert, as saying "Human existence is never left behind. The whole catechism moves within human existence," and J. Dreißen, as saying "Catechizing does not mean presenting to the child truths that it did not yet know….The supply depends on the demand….Life is believed, and the faith is lived."[6] Already, then, in the late 1960s, Ratzinger questions the anthropocentric vision so closely related to the Rahnerian position. This anthropocentric vision poses a number of problems for theology and for evangelization: "Does Christian preaching really present nothing to us that we do not already know ourselves?…can we fit catechesis into the scheme of supply and demand?…Should it only affirm and reinforce what already is…?"[7] While its attempt to truly address the man of today is noteworthy,[8] its anthropocentrism and phenomenological thinking lie at the bottom of the other concerns.[9]

1.2   Criticism: Identifying the Causes of the Catechetical Crisis

Ratzinger's more reserved critique of the Dutch Catechism in 1968, became a more pointed critique of the catechetical movement by 1983. In his lecture, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," Ratzinger calls the situation within catechesis a "crisis," that, to be sure, has been heavily impacted by the technological, and "self-made world of man."[10] Ratzinger notes that feasibility (the reduction of certainty to what can be calculated) has radically changed the landscape for man, with salvation no longer a question pertaining to God, but to man who is the engineer of his own future, and whose morality is determined by social acceptability.[11] The impact of the world on the traditional supports for catechesis — the family and the parish — is all too clear, and the faith "can no longer connect with the experience of faith lived out in the living Church," and is instead "to be condemned to remain mute in an age whose language and

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[5] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 63.
[6] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 63.
[7] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 63-64.
[8] See Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 64-65.
[9] Ratzinger, "Theology and Preaching in the Dutch Catechism," 66-74.
[10] Joseph Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," in *Handing on the Faith in an Age of Disbelief*, trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 13-14.
[11] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 14.

thought feed almost exclusively by now upon experiences of the self-made world of man."[12] In the face of this situation, Ratzinger admits that catechetics has worked diligently to find new ways of handing on the faith in the present milieu. However, Ratzinger holds that these efforts, "instead of helping to overcome the crisis, have tended in large measure to aggravate the problems…declaring in general that the literary genre 'catechism' was outmoded" and renouncing "a structured, fundamental schema for transmitting the faith, drawing upon tradition in its entirety, resulted in a fragmentation of the faith presentation, which not only abetted arbitrariness, but also simultaneously called into question the seriousness of the individual elements of the content."[13] What lay behind these decisions was the hasty *aggiornamento* of the catechetical texts following the Council, that had already become dated. Ratzinger says, "It is inevitable that whoever binds himself too rashly to today already looks old-fashioned tomorrow…catechesis had to be constantly written anew."[14] Therefore, the collapse of the effectiveness of catechesis is not entirely a result of external cultural forces,[15] but internal ones as well. In 1983, Ratzinger names two of these internal forces: (1) the hypertrophy of method; and (2) the crisis of faith.

Ratzinger first identified a hypertrophy of method as opposed to content, wherein method became the measure of content and no longer served as its vehicle.[16] Supply must now be determined by demand, "so the instructor had to stop at what was immediately accessible, instead of seeking ways of going beyond it and advancing to things that are not understood at first but that alone can make a positive change in man and the world. In this way the actual potential of the faith to be an agent of change was crippled."[17] Ratzinger notes that catechetics detached itself from dogmatic and systematic theology and became its own self-sufficient

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[12] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 14-15.
[13] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 15.
[14] Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church,* 12. In many ways, Rahner notes this point about the transitory-ness of contemporary catechetics, and accepts it. In calling for "short formulas" of faith, Rahner calls for an explanation of the faith that is: (1) intelligible to and able to be easily and immediately assimilated by the man of today; (2) capable of addressing the large number of intellectual trends today; (3) remain brief as the person of today is busy; (4) anticipate a short life span. See Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 122. See also Karl Rahner, "A Short Formula of Christian Faith," in *A Rahner Reader,* ed. Gerald A. McCool (New York: The Seabury Press, 1981), 205-11.
[15] See Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church,* 13.
[16] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16.
[17] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16.

standard.[18] In many ways, this position is apparent in Moran and Groome. The reconstitution of revelation as "ongoing" and subjective, without reference to the Church or to tradition, frees catechesis to act as its own standard. Next, Ratzinger notes the corresponding tendency "to rank praxis over truth, which within the context of neo-marxist and positivistic philosophies now made its way into theology as well."[19] Determining supply by demand also betrays the priority of anthropology over theology, which is, in effect, a "radical anthropocentrism."[20] As modernism's anthropological vision collapses, Ratzinger notes that a new center of gravity is established in "the predominance of sociology or even the primacy of experience, which became the measure for one's understanding of the faith heritage."[21] On this point, Ratzinger issues forth a sharp critique of catechetical theories like that of Groome: "Catechesis remained entirely a matter of accommodations designed to facilitate communication, never moving beyond them to deal with the subject itself."[22] When content is relegated, and nothing common and objective stands at the heart of the faith, then "faith in each case must be what the community in question thinks, what its members discover in dialogue to be their common conviction. 'Community' replaces Church, and its religious experience is consulted instead of the Church's tradition."[23] Here, Ratzinger attacks positions like that of Groome who proposes Story and Vision as a way of emphasizing the local community over the universal Church,[24] along the same lines as the ecclesiology that understands "people of God" in an entirely horizontal manner and sees the Church "as a network of groups, which as such precede the whole and achieve harmony with one another by building a

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[18] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16.

[19] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16. See also Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 14-18.

[20] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16.

[21] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 16.

[22] Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 14. Ratzinger also highlights this condition in the years leading up to the promulgation of the *Catechism* in an October 9, 2002 address entitled "Current Doctrinal Relevance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church." Here he says, "After the epochal turning point of the Second Vatican Council, the catechetical tools used until then seemed insufficient, no longer on a par with the consciousness of faith as it was expressed by the Council. A multiplicity of experiments began - analogous to what happened with the liturgy. Even with all of the valid elements, that could be found in different publications, *a vision of the whole was lacking*. After the great turning point it seemed to be problematical to know what was still valid and what was not" (emphasis mine).

[23] Joseph Ratzinger, "Standards for Preaching the Gospel Today," in *Dogma and Preaching,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 31.

[24] For example, see Groome, *Christian Religious Education*, 152.

consensus."[25] At the bottom of the issue of method and content lies a question of the very faith of the Church.

At this point, the cause of the crisis that is likely *the* cause, becomes clear: the crisis of faith, or perhaps more precisely, the "crisis of faith *in the faith shared with the Church of all ages.*"[26] He says:

> The fact that catechists no longer dared to present the faith as an organic whole, on its own terms, but only piecemeal, in excerpts that reflected individual anthropological experiences, was ultimately due to the fact that they no longer had confidence in that whole. It was due to a crisis of faith, or, more precisely, to a crisis of the faith shared *with* the Church of all ages. As a consequence, dogma was largely left out of catechesis, and teachers tried to construct the faith right out of the Bible…When scientific certainty is regarded as the only permissible or the only possible form of certainty, then the certainty of dogma necessarily appears to be either an outmoded, archaic stage of thought or else the emanation of the will to power of self-perpetuating institutions.[27]

The Church's members are not immune to the culture. Ratzinger aptly linked the crisis to the rise of the technological world, where, in "a self-made world of man, one does not immediately encounter the Creator; rather, initially, it is only himself that man always encounters. The fundamental structure of this world is feasibility, and the manner of its certainty is the certainty of what can be calculated."[28] In this world, faith falls out of favor as being "unscientific," and, in a world without God, everything runs the risk of becoming self-made, even within the Church, as decisions are made not with reference to God, but with regard to feasibility or "consumer"

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[25] Joseph Ratzinger, "*Communio:* A Program," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: The Unity of the Church,* trans. Peter Casarella (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2010), 124. For more on this point, see Joseph Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church" in *Called to Communion,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 13-45; Joseph Ratzinger, "The Universal Church and the Particular Church: The Task of the Bishop," in *Called to Communion,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 75-103; and Joseph Ratzinger, "Difficulties in Teaching the Faith Today," in *Handing on the Faith in an Age of Disbelief,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 73-74.

[26] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 17 (Emphasis mine).

[27] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 17.

[28] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 14.

trends.[29] With God out of the picture, one stands, not even on the "hard facts" of science, but precariously on hypotheses about methods and Scripture.[30] Catechetics attempted to establish itself on Scripture without regard for dogma.[31] Instead, catechists opted for a return to the literary sources and an attempt to "unearth" the historical Jesus according to historical-critical methods. However, as Ratzinger points out, when the Bible no longer lives and is interpreted within the living organism of the Church, any form of exegesis becomes necrophilia.[32] When the Bible no longer needs to be read as an organic whole, personal experience becomes the standard for what is relevant. The result is "a sort of theological empiricism, in which the experience of the group, of the parish, or of the 'experts' (= the manager of the experiences) becomes the supreme source"[33] for determining what in Scripture is valid and what is outmoded. Everything becomes a matter of taste, with the Bible being used "to provide applause for what we ourselves want."[34] The Bible thus disintegrates as a sacred book, and eventually, the sources behind the text become more important than the Bible itself.

In addition to the two causes for the catechetical crisis Ratzinger identifies in 1983, one finds three additional points worth noting in his 1992 article entitled "Christ and the Church: Current Problems in Theology and Consequences for Catechesis." Writing in light of the fact that catechetics cannot completely, by its very nature, extricate itself from theology, Ratzinger notes three theological crises that deeply impact catechesis. The first crisis lies in a contemporary Christology that denies Jesus as Christ. The Jesus of the Gospels is not the real Jesus. Instead, exegesis must set out to find the real Jesus of history. Additionally, a second split between Jesus and Christ lies in modernity's understanding of redemption. Today, redemption refers either to

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[29] See Joseph Ratzinger, *Co-Workers of the Truth*, trans. Mary Frances McCarthy and Lothar Krauth (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1992), 340-41.

[30] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 21.

[31] For example, see Groome, *Sharing Faith*, 215.

[32] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 19. The term "necrophilia," here, is not used in reference to the psychological disordered of being sexually aroused by a corpse, but of an attraction to or fixation upon an ideological position that effectively renders an object lifeless through technological manipulation or an excessive application of scientific methods. See a similar point on pg. 271 of this thesis.

[33] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 22.

[34] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the the Sources of the Faith," 20. See also Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Report*, 72.

"psychological-individual," or to "political-collective" salvation. In these cases, "Jesus *has* not redeemed us, but he can be a role model for the way redemption or liberation comes about."[35]

Second, Ratzinger highlights the rise of a deism flowing from the Enlightenment which says, "God has nothing to do with us," and the whole problem of sin vanishes.[36] Now there is no need for redemption, no need for the Son to take flesh, and no need for the Cross. All of this has a significant impact on the liturgy,[37] as:

> The primary subject of the liturgy is neither God nor Christ, but the 'we' of the ones celebrating. And liturgy cannot of course have adoration as its primary content since, according to the deistic understanding of God, there is no reason for it. There is just as little reason for it to be concerned with atonement, sacrifice, or the forgiveness of sin. Instead, the point for those celebrating is to secure community with each other and thereby escape the isolation into which modern existence forces them. The point is to communicate experiences of liberation, joy, and reconciliation; denounce what is harmful; and provide impulses for action. For this reason the community has to create its own liturgy and not just receive it from traditions that have become unintelligible; it portrays itself and celebrates itself.[38]

Removing God from the picture simultaneously removes the problem of sin and reconfigures the nature of liturgy. No longer a participation of the Body of Christ in the work of her Head for the sake of her redemption, liturgy devolves into communal expression and banal self-affirmation. The emphasis of the liturgy becomes more and more the creativity of the community. Finally, the deism of the present day affects morality, which cannot be conceived of in terms of theology any longer, but only in terms of ethics. When God is limited to the transcendental sphere and is capable of providing no "categorical" instructions, God becomes a frame of reference devoid of content and "the meaning of moral conduct must then be determined solely within the world."[39]

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[35] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 38.
[36] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 39.
[37] For more on the relationship between catechesis and liturgy, see *CCC*, §1074.
[38] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 39.
[39] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 41.

Careful to not overextend theories of "natural law" without regard for historicity, Ratzinger does point out the rise of an extreme dualism between nature and history, being and time, essence and existence, which he believes "can only be overcome by a renewal of belief in creation,"[40] and a serious dialogue regarding the manner in which essence and historicity coincide.[41]

Finally, Ratzinger identifies a humanistic attitude as foundational to the catechetical crisis — one which has called the entire missionary enterprise of the Church into question. In a 1958 lecture, "The New Pagans and the Church," he identifies this attitude, saying:

> For the modern Christian, it has become unthinkable that Christianity, and in particular the Catholic Church, should be the only way of salvation; therefore, the absoluteness of the Church, and with that, also the strict seriousness of her missionary claim, and, in fact, all of her demands, have become really questionable…We cannot believe that the man next to us, who is an upright, charitable, and good man, will end up going to hell because he is not a practicing Catholic. The idea that all "good" men will be saved today, for the normal Christian, is just as self-evident as formerly was the conviction of the opposite.[42]

In 2016, Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI would call this attitude, this transition in thought, not a "development" of dogma, but an "evolution" of dogma that arose following the discovery of the New World and the birth of the modern era.[43] In the 2016 interview, Benedict XVI identifies two ways in which theologians have attempted to reconcile mission with this new "evolution." He explicitly points out Rahner's "Anonymous Christianity" thesis, which attempts to reconcile Christianity via the transcendental structure of human consciousness. Benedict XVI describes the goal of mission in Rahner's position as simply raising to "consciousness what is structural in man as such. Thus, when a man accepts himself in his essential being, he fulfills the essence of being a Christian without knowing what it is in a conceptual way. The Christian, therefore,

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[40] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 41.
[41] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 42.
[42] Joseph Ratzinger, "The New Pagans and the Church," *Homiletic and Pastoral Review,* trans. Kenneth Baker (January 30, 2017); https://www.hprweb.com/2017/01/the-new-pagans-and-the-church/
[43] See Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith." *L'Osservatore Romano,* March 16, 2016 (http://www.osservatoreromano.va/en/news/beginning-faith)

coincides with the human and, in this sense, every man who accepts himself is a Christian even if he does not know it."[44] The second attempt at reconciliation, one he considers even less acceptable, is found in "pluralistic theories of religion, according to which all religions, each in their own way, would be means to salvation and in this sense, in their effects must be considered equivalent."[45]

As a result of this "evolution" and the acceptance of the attempts at reconciliation, Benedict XVI identifies a double-crisis amongst Christians:

> On the one hand this seems to remove all motivation for a future missionary commitment. Why should one try to convince people to accept the Christian faith when they can save themselves without it? But among Christians too an issue emerged: the obligatory nature of the faith and its way of life began to seem uncertain and problematic. If people can save themselves in other ways, it is not clear, in the final analysis, why Christians should be bound by the requirements of Christian faith and morals. If faith and salvation are no longer interdependent, faith has no motive.[46]

Though pre-dating his 2016 assessment by some 58 years, his conclusion in 1958 is largely the same:

> Why can those outside the Church have it so easy, when it is made so difficult for us? He begins to think and to feel that the faith is a burden, and not a grace. In any event, he still has the impression that, ultimately, there are two ways to be saved: through the merely subjectively measured morality for those outside the Church, and for Church members. And he cannot have the feeling that he has inherited the better part; in any event, his faithfulness is grievously burdened by the establishment of a way to salvation alongside that of the Church. It is obvious that the missionary zeal of the Church has suffered grievously under this internal uncertainty.[47]

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[44] Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith."
[45] Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith."
[46] Benedict XVI, "The Beginning of Faith."
[47] Ratzinger, "The New Pagans and the Church."

In many ways, the positions of Moran and Groome adopt Rahner's thinking along the lines of "Anonymous Christianity," with a transcendental and subjective approach to revelation, faith, and mission. Boeve, in a certain sense, seems to move away from the problem altogether. He critiques exclusivism, inclusivism, and the same pluralism that Benedict XVI denounces. Instead, Boeve argues for a recontexualized inclusivism that allows for the radical particularity of each religion, including Christianity. However, in so doing, Boeve seems to have avoided addressing the problem of salvation in a serious manner. Given Benedict XVI/Ratzinger's exposition on what he perceives to be a crisis in mission — and a corresponding crisis in catechetics — in the decades leading up to and following Vatican II, the present study will attempt to pursue, via Ratzinger's theological insights, a renewed vision for evangelization in the 21st century.

2.   Ratzinger's Theology of Revelation[48]

2.1   Revelation as Act

Ratzinger owes much of his theology of revelation to Bonaventure. In *Milestones*, Ratzinger summarizes Bonaventure's position as he had developed it in his *Habilitationschrift*:

> In Bonaventure (as well as in theologians of the thirteenth century) there was nothing corresponding to our conception of "revelation," by which we are normally in the habit of referring to all the revealed contents of the faith: it has even become a part of linguistic usage to refer to Sacred Scripture simply as "revelation." Such an identification would have been unthinkable in the language of the High Middle Ages. Here, "revelation" is always a concept denoting an act. The word refers to the act in which God shows himself,

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[48] This section aims at providing a basic overview of Ratzinger's theology of revelation. For more thorough treatments of this topic, see Rowland, *Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed,* 48-70; Rowland, *Ratzinger's Faith,* 48-65*;* Aidan Nichols, *The Thought of Pope Benedict XVI* (New York: Burns & Oates, 2007), 34-44; Cong Quy Joseph Lam, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Retractations* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 30-88; Gaál, *The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI,* 73-106; and Christopher Collins, *The Word Made Love* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2013), 21-54.

not to the objectified result of this act. And because this is so, the receiving subject is always also a part of the concept of "revelation." Where there is no one to perceive "revelation," no re-*vel*-ation has occurred, because no *veil* has been removed. By definition, revelation requires someone who apprehends it.[49]

Ratzinger's emphasis on the subjective element drew harsh criticism from Michael Schmaus, one of Ratzinger's *Habilitationschrift* readers, who believed the theology smacked of "a dangerous modernism that had to lead to the subjectivization of the concept of revelation."[50] Ratzinger's *Habilitationschrift* laid a foundation for his work on the theology of revelation, work that would eventually impact Vatican II in a significant way. Jared Wicks deserves credit for publishing a lecture found in the archives that Ratzinger gave regarding the schemata *De fontibus revelationis* (On the Sources of Revelation), at Cardinal Frings' request to the German-speaking bishops one day before the solemn opening of the Council.[51] In this lecture, Ratzinger opens by criticizing the schemata's title as diverging from both Trent and Vatican I.[52] He says:

> Actually, Scripture and tradition are not the sources of revelation, but instead revelation, God's speaking and his manifesting of himself, is the *unus fons* [one source], from which then the two streams of Scripture and tradition flow out. This is the true way of speaking of tradition, which Trent took for granted… [Calling Scripture and tradition "sources" of revelation] is flawed in failing to distinguish the order of reality from the order of our knowing…Scripture and tradition are *for us* sources from which we know revelation, but they are not *in themselves* its sources, for revelation is itself the source of Scripture and tradition.[53]

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[49] Ratzinger, *Milestones,* 108. See also Joseph Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," in *On the Way to Jesus Christ,* trans. Michael Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 81-82.

[50] Ratzinger, *Milestones,* 109.

[51] For Wicks' commentary on this lecture, see "Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger as *peritus* before and during Vatican Council II," 241-43. The text itself appears beginning on 269. For further commentary on Ratzinger's assessment of *De fontibus revalationis,* see Lam, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Retractations*, 57-64.

[52] See Wicks, "Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger," 270.

[53] Wicks, Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger," 270.

While Scripture and tradition are rightly called sources for theology, calling them sources of revelation "does not depict the order of reality…God's speaking and acting…comes before all historical formulations of this speaking, being the one source that feeds Scripture and tradition."[54] Ratzinger notes that calling Scripture and tradition "sources of revelation" would mean starting with historicism and not with faith, and that before speaking of the nature of Scripture and tradition as witnesses to revelation, Vatican II would do well to speak of the nature of revelation first.[55] Without proceeding in this way, characterizing revelation with its "material principles" could result in at least two errors: (1) a *sola scriptura* approach that claims Scripture and revelation are identical,[56] and, as a corollary, (2) a kind of positivism that "identifies revelation with its concrete attestations."[57] As it would turn out, Ratzinger's influence was certainly felt within the conciliar deliberations that eventually produced *Dei Verbum*.

Dei Verbum presents revelation personally. Following the Council, in his commentary on *Dei Verbum*, Ratzinger points out that, compared with Vatican I's *Dei Filius*, Vatican II's *Dei Verbum,* with its emphasis on God himself "in his wisdom and goodness," gives "a far greater emphasis to the personal and theocentric starting point."[58] He adds, "It is God himself, the person of God, from whom revelation proceeds and to whom it returns, and thus revelation necessarily reaches — also with the person who receives it — into the personal centre of man, it touches him in the depth of his being, not only in his individual faculties, in his will and understanding."[59]

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[54] Wicks, Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger," 270.

[55] Wicks, "Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger," 271.

[56] Frequently, Ratzinger notes Geiselmann's contribution in this regard. See Joseph Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," in *God's Word: Scripture—Tradition—Office,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), 47-48. J.R. Geiselmann, a dogmatician at Tübingen, argued prior to the start of Vatican II, that Trent's statement "*in libris scriptis et sine scripto traditionibus*," traditionally been understood as meaning Scripture did not contain the whole truth and that there was no possibility of *sola scriptura*, should be interpreted in light of the first draft of the Tridentine text. The formulation in the first draft clearly divided revelation into two sources, saying that truth is contained "*partim in libris scriptis partim in sine scripto traditionibus*." In the final text, however, Trent dropped the "*partim*" — "*partim*," and Geiselmann sees this as not dividing truth into two sources, thus opening the door for a Catholic theologian to "argue the material sufficiency of Scripture," and "that Holy Scripture transmits revelation to us sufficiently" (Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 48). Geiselmann thus concludes that Trent intended to point in the direction of a thoroughly acceptable *sola scriptura*. Ratzinger critiques Geiselmann's thesis, though he appreciates the enthusiasm behind it for ecumenical progress. Nonetheless, he questions its historical and factual basis, along with the definition of "sufficiency of Scripture," etc.

[57] Wicks, Six texts by Prof. Joseph Ratzinger," 271.

[58] Joseph Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II,* vol. 3, trans. Lalit Adolphus, et al. (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 171.

[59] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 171.

Commenting on Ratzinger's comparison between Vatican I and II, Christopher Collins notes that in *Dei Filius,* "revelation is seen as a monologue from God to humanity rather than a dialogue between God and humanity," and one that follows the "material tradition" whereby God hands on that which is extrinsic to himself.[60] In other words, the neo-scholastic conception of revelation resulted in a loss of the dynamism of dialogue that is central to a personalist conception of reality. In the neo-scholastic approach, revelation is seen as a matter of God giving to humanity truths *about* himself, as if the truths are extrinsic and outside of his person, instead of *giving* himself. *Dei Verbum* would proceed to develop "an understanding of revelation that is seen basically as dialogue."[61] With this, both the Council and Ratzinger move away from the neo-scholastic propositional understanding of revelation, a position that Ratzinger calls historicist and intellectualist, for which "revelation chiefly meant a store of mysterious supernatural teachings, which automatically reduces faith very much to an acceptance of these supernatural insights."[62] Rather than springing from revelation-as-ethical-choice or revelation-as-lofty-propositions, Ratzinger calls for faith that springs from *revelatio*-as-*actio,* one which has narrative and personalist undertones as opposed to propositional ones.

Diverging from a neo-scholastic view that reduces revelation to propositions, Ratzinger highlights the relationship of Scripture and revelation vis-á-vis tradition, by identifying the following "roots" or "layers" of the relationship:[63]

- First Root: Revelation goes beyond Scripture in two directions: (1) given its basis in God, revelation extends upward into God's action; and (2) as a reality that involves man and happens within the dynamism of faith, it extends beyond the mediating fact of Scripture. Scripture is not revelation, but is part of the greater reality known as revelation.[64] In the same vein, Ratzinger elsewhere says: "*the Word* is always greater

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[60] Collins, *The Word Made Love*, 43.
[61] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 171.
[62] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 172. See also Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," 82; and Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 107-08.
[63] See Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 62-63.
[64] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 53. See also pg. 62 where he calls tradition "the surplus of the reality 'revelation' compared with 'Scripture.'"

than *the words* and is never exhausted by the words. On the contrary: the words take part in the inexhaustibility of the Word; they become accessible on the basis of him and therefore grow, as it were, in their encounter with all generations."[65] To this point, Ratzinger notes that "Bonaventure believed that there was a gradual, historical, progressive development in the understanding of Scripture which was in no way closed."[66] Getting *behind* the words of Scripture, to the Word itself, can take place through the (1) spiritual understanding of Scripture (*spiritualis intelligentia)*, meaning the allegorical, tropological, and anagogical interpretations of Scripture,[67] (2) the *figurae sacramentales* (akin to typological figures who historically pre-date Jesus Christ),[68] and (3) the *multiformes theoriae,* "through which the reader can apprehend many manifestations of *theoria* or meaning of the one truth, the one Word being spoken throughout the whole of Scripture."[69] From the one *Logos*, many *logoi spermatikoi* are "produced and planted in the soil of human history," and not only within what is recounted in Scripture, meaning the present circumstances can be a place in which the Logos can be encountered and which must be interpreted in light of the narrative that has preceded it.[70]

- Second Root: "The specific character of New Testament revelation as *pneuma* compared with *gramma*…The creed, as a rule of faith, over the particular details of what was written. The creed appears as the hermeneutic key to the Scriptures, which without any hermeneutic would ultimately have to remain silent."[71] Essentially, this means that Scripture cannot be "objectivized," or that a *sola scriptura* position is untenable with regard to history and, therefore, with regard to interpretation.

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[65] Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," 82.

[66] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in Bonaventure,* trans. Zachary Hayes (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1989), 75.

[67] Ratzinger, *Theology of History in Bonaventure*, 62-63. For an overview of Ratzinger's treatment of Bonaventure on these ways of entering into Scripture, see Collins, *The Word Made Love*, 27-28.

[68] Ratzinger, *Theology of History in Bonaventure,* 10.

[69] Collins, *The Word Made Love,* 28. See also Ratzinger, *Theology of History in Bonaventure,* 7.

[70] Collins, *The Word Made Love,* 28-29.

[71] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 62-63.

- Third Root: The Christ-event remains present in the "presence of Christ's Spirit in his body, the Church, and associated with this the authority to interpret the Christ of yesterday with the Christ of today."[72]

Ratzinger notes that Bonaventure does not speak of "revelation," as in a singular event, but of "revelations,"[73] many events that disclose meaning. Collins argues that at the heart of the narrative of salvation history one finds the *acts* of God, and "not simply the *content* of what is ultimately revealed. Revelation…is not a static body of data or knowledge but rather always characterized by the dynamic of an *unfolding event*, in turn giving it a narrative texture rather than a propositional one…what is *behind* Scripture is always more than the 'letter' of Scripture itself."[74] Concretely, this means that for tradition, the following is true: (1) "the entire mystery of Christ's presence is in the first instance the whole reality that is transmitted in tradition, the decisive and fundamental reality that is always antecedent all individual explications…and which represents what in actual fact has to be transmitted;"[75] (2) consequently, tradition's concrete form is present in faith, which is "the indwelling of Christ;"[76] (3) tradition's "organ" lies in the authority of the Church; (4) tradition is articulated in the creed (*fides quae*), the rule of faith.[77] The revelation of God in his Word is *the* source of revelation, of which Scripture and Tradition participate and mediate, but the whole of which they cannot and do not contain. Revelation requires the receiving subject, but not only that: revelation requires faith, the receptivity of the subject to that which is revealed, in order for revelation to take place. The Holy Spirit, operative within the Church and her living and listening memory, makes Christ's presence accessible today.[78]

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[72] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 63.
[73] See Ratzinger, *The Theology of History in Bonaventure*, 57.
[74] Collins, *The Word Made Love*, 27.
[75] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 63-64.
[76] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 64.
[77] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 64.
[78] Cf. Lorenzo Albacete, "The Key to the Christian Life," *Traces* (April 2003), accessed on Mar. 27, 2018 at http://archivio.traces-cl.com/april03/thekeyto.html.

From what has been determined thus far, one can say that Ratzinger's position regarding revelation is similar to that of Moran's in many ways.[79] Ratzinger also believes the assertion that revelation "closed with the death of the last apostle must appear as far too simplistic."[80] Jesus Christ is the fullness and perfection of revelation, therefore he is the "end." At the same time, the "end" is also the "beginning" of the fullness of revelation. The Incarnate Word does not end God's speaking, but is, "Man's being constantly addressed by God, it is the constant relating of man to the one man who is the Word of God himself."[81] He continues:

> Thus subsequent history cannot surpass what has taken place in Christ, but it must attempt to catch up with it gradually, to catch up all humanity in the man who, as a man coming from God, is the man for all others, the area of all human existence and the one and only Adam. And if we made the point that Christ was the end of God's speaking because after him there was nothing more to say, then that also means that he is the constant address of God to man, that nothing comes *after* him, but that in him the whole extent of God's word begins to reveal itself.[82]

In Jesus Christ, revelation has reached it "high point," to use Moran's terminology. Nothing can surpass the perfect union of the dialogue between God and man as is present in the very person of Jesus Christ, and, in this way, the Word incarnate is the "end" of revelation because the veil cannot be removed any further. Still, insofar as Jesus Christ has been raised from the dead and is present now, he is the constant presence of the perfection of God's revelation which all of history, indeed, each person's history, attempts to catch up with, to enter into, to understand. Here, however, the divergence between Moran's position and Ratzinger's begins to become apparent. Moran's "high point" of revelation ultimately comes "from below," with Jesus Christ's

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[79] Cf. Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 63-ff.

[80] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 86.

[81] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 175.

[82] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 175. In his examination report for this dissertation, Fr. D. Vincent Twomey recommended the following translation of the cited text: "Thus while subsequent history cannot indeed surpass what happened in Christ, yet it must however attempt gradually to retrieve it, to retrieve humanity in the one who, as coming from God, is the man for all others, the sphere of all human existence and the definitive Adam." See Joseph Ratzinger Gesemmelte Schriften 7/2, p. 743. See also Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," 82-83.

human nature, his "reflexive consciousness," becoming aware of his identity as the Son of God, and manifesting this identity in the Paschal Mystery. For Moran, the "fullness of time" seems to be reconfigured as Jesus' transcendent experience of himself wherein he realizes most fully his identity as the Son.[83] The starting point for Moran is largely anthropocentric and transcendental, and revelation is recast as an event within time — ongoing, transcendental religious experience. It is also worth noting that Boeve does not place the emphasis so much in the transcendental experience as he does in the hermeneutical implications, wherein the particulars (note the plural) within history become capable of speaking about God. The Incarnation is "fullness" in that the all-too-human, the all-too-particular manifests the divine — Jesus is the "fullness" of interruption and marks the definitive hermeneutical path in his humanity and not in spite of it. Rather than trying to understand how the particular can contain the universal, Boeve attempts to show how the particular, "the concrete and the accidental make the manifestation of God possible," which "does not mean that God coincides with the concrete and accidental."[84] According to Boeve, God is revealed in and through Jesus' humanity, and it is only the all-too-human, in the particular, that can give expression to God, thus relativizing divine revelation "since the particular never coincides with God, just as God and humanity are united in a single person, undivided and undiluted…the latter cannot be substituted nor can it be absolutized."[85] Jesus' humanity can speak about God, but Jesus is not God.

For Ratzinger, the fullness of revelation is neither something brought about by time itself, nor is it the reduction of revelation to history, but because, in the Incarnation, eternity enters into time and brings time into eternity, Love, too, becomes the causality operating in the world.[86] "It is not that God *is* time, but he *has* time."[87] Because God has time both by creating time *and* entering into time, revelation does have a past "insofar as it took place in historical facts, but also has its constant 'today,' insofar as what once happened remains forever living and effective in the faith of the Church, and Christian faith never refers merely to what is past; rather, it refers

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[83] Moran, *Theology of Revelation*, 74.
[84] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 176.
[85] Boeve, *God Interrupts History*, 176.
[86] Joseph Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Prayer and Liturgy," in *The Feast of Faith* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 31-32.
[87] Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Prayer and Liturgy," 26.

equally to what is present and what is to come."[88] Here, Ratzinger's position aims to solve what both he and Moran believe to be a simplistic assertion, that revelation "closed" with the death of the last apostle. However, unlike Moran, Ratzinger solves the problem not by moving beyond the historical, or material, aspects of the tradition (Christianity has a past and it has a content), nor by moving beyond the Church, but by holding a position that revelation is "closed in terms of its material principle [the contents of the testimony provided by the historical witnesses], but it is present, and remains present, in terms of its reality."[89] Revelation remains present insofar as there is faith in what God has revealed, which is accessible in the faith and Tradition of the Church. Scripture and Tradition remain essential for accessing God's *acts* of revelation, as they mediate these *acts* today. For Ratzinger, Tradition "gives us the guarantee that what we believe is the original message of Christ, preached by the Apostles."[90] Ratzinger anticipates the postmodern position that denies Jesus as "the man who *is* God," opting instead for the Christ who "becomes the one who has *experienced* God in a special way."[91] His corresponding treatment of the impersonal way in which Buddhism understands God as sheer negation could apply to the conclusions this study has drawn regarding Boeve's position. Ratzinger says that God, in this case, has no positive relationship with the world, "then the world has to be overcome as a source of suffering, but it can no longer be shaped. Religion then points out ways to overcome the world, to free people from the burden of its semblance, but it offers no standards by which we can live in the world."[92] Thus separating Christ from God appears to be humility, preventing God from bowing down so low, however "the higher form of humility consists in allowing God to do precisely what appears to us to be unfitting and to bow down to what he does, not to what we contrive about him and for him."[93]

2.2   *Jesus Christ's Self-Identification as "The Son"*

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[88] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 87.
[89] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 86.
[90] Benedict XVI, "The Faith of the Church," in *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013), 23.
[91] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 21.
[92] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 23.
[93] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 28.

Ratzinger frequently conjectures that the Gospels set out to answer two inseparable questions: "Who is Jesus?" and "Where is he from?"[94] Ratzinger traces the Church's responses to these questions by considering the various titles that developed as a way of describing Jesus Christ. First, he considers the development of the title "Christ (Messiah)." He notes that this title made little sense outside of Semitic culture,[95] and that it needed further explanation and clarification due to ambiguities in the understanding of the title within that very culture.[96] Consequently, "Christ" ceased to function as a title and melded with the name Jesus: Jesus Christ. Benedict XVI points out that "what began as an interpretation ended up as a name, and therein lies a deeper message: He is completely one with his office; his task and his person are totally inseparable from each other."[97] The next attempt at a suitable title also proved to be insufficient. The title, "Lord," when applied to Jesus, did claim a unity between him and God. However, the title is derived from the paraphrase for the divine name in the Old Testament, so something more distinctive of the Christian event would be necessary.[98] As was the case with the title "Lord," the title "Son of God" "connected him with the being of God himself," though the expression at the time contained a political ring.[99] Exactly what this word "Son" meant became hotly debated in the first centuries of Christianity. Does the term refer to a special closeness to God, or that the Son is equal to God? The Council of Nicea (325) would utilize the philosophical word *homooúsios*, "of the same substance," as a way of safeguarding the biblical term "the Son." Ratzinger adds:

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[94] See Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives,* trans. Phillip J. Whitmore (New York: Image, 2012), 1-4. See also Joseph Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," in *Behold the Pierced One,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 15-ff; and Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 319-ff.

[95] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 319. See also the *CCC*'s treatment of this title in §436-40.

[96] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 16.

[97] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 319.

[98] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 320. For more on this title, see the *CCC,* §446-51.

[99] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 320. With regard to the title "Son of God," as it was understood in the Old Testament, see Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 216-ff. Here he addresses the "king" theology of the old testament that is tied to the Davidic kingdom, as well as the title's application in the Emperor Augustus' political theology. As it is applied in Christianity, the title assumes the connotation of service. See also *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 335-39; Joseph Ratzinger, *God and the World,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2002), 265-ff; and the *Catechism,* §441-45.

When Jesus' witnesses call him "the Son," this statement is not meant in a mythological or political sense — those being the two most obvious interpretations given the context of the time. Rather, it is meant to be understood quite literally: Yes, in God himself there is an eternal dialogue between Father and Son, who are both truly one and the same God in the Holy Spirit.[100]

As is intimated here, the title "the Son" is distinct from the title "Son of God," and comes from a different linguistic heritage. Ratzinger, in numerous places, points out that the phrase was not used in Jesus' public preaching, but in his prayer: "it forms the natural corollary to his new mode of addressing God, *Abba*."[101] Ratzinger points out that the title "the Son" has little prehistory and is essentially only found on the lips of Jesus. It is, therefore, for Ratzinger, the "key" into unlocking something of the mystery of Jesus Christ's person. With regard to the title, Ratzinger holds that the decisive testimony can be found in the Gospel of John and the *Jubelruf* (joyful shout) prayer recorded in Matthew's and Luke's Gospels (cf. Mt. 11:25-27; Lk. 10:21-22).[102] In Luke's gospel, Jesus exclaims, "no one knows the Father except the Son," which leads Benedict XVI to allude to Plotinus' idea that Goethe captures as "If the eye were not sunlike, it could never see the sun."[103] Every process of knowing involves some similarity that allows for assimilation — a union between knower and the known. This is akin to the statement at the end of John's prologue: "No one has ever seen God; it is the only Son, who is nearest to the Father's heart, who has made him known" (Jn. 1:18). The *Jubelruf* is a filial dialogue that reveals that "the Son" means "perfect communion in knowledge, which is at the same time communion in being. Unity in knowing is possible only because it is unity in being."[104]

John's Gospel carries the understanding of "the Son" further — into the realm of relation. Ratzinger makes this point by comparing Jesus parallel statements in John's Gospel: "I and the

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[100] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 320.

[101] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 223. Cf. "Taking Bearings in Christology," 18-ff; and *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 339-ff.

[102] Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 339.

[103] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 340.

[104] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 340. Ratzinger goes on to point out that the *Jubelruf* also highlights the unity of wills between Father and Son. The Son wills to whom the Father is revealed, but the Son's will is not arbitrary, it is always united with the will of the Father.

Father are one" (Jn. 10:30) and "The Son can do nothing of his own accord" (Jn. 5:19 and 30).
He says:

> By calling the Lord "Son," John gives him a name that always points away from him and
> beyond him; he thus employs a term that denotes essentially a relatedness. He thereby
> puts his whole Christology into the context of the idea of relation…In that Jesus is called
> 'Son' and thereby made 'relative' to the Father, and in that Christology is ratified as a
> statement of relation, the automatic result is the total reference of Christ back to the
> Father. Precisely because he does not stand in *himself*, he stands in *him*, constantly one
> with him.[105]

He continues:

> The Son as Son, and insofar as he is Son, does not proceed in any way from himself and
> so is completely one with the Father; since he is nothing beside him, claims no special
> position of his own, confronts the Father with nothing belonging only to him, makes no
> reservations for what is specifically his own, therefore he is completely equal to the
> Father. The logic is compelling: If there is nothing in which he is just he, no kind of
> fenced-off private ground, then he coincides with the Father, is "one" with him…To
> John, "Son" means being from another; thus, with this word he defines the being of this
> man as being from another and for others, as a being that is completely open on both
> sides, knows no reserved area of the mere "I"…this being is pure relation (not
> substantiality) and, as pure relation, pure unity.[106]

In and of itself, the phrase "the Son" expresses relatedness to the Father, the referent without
which it (i.e. the title "the Son") would not make sense.[107] With this title, John turns his

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[105] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 185.

[106] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 186-87.

[107] It is important to note the ordering of the paragraphs in the *CCC* with regard to the Trinity. Following its
treatment on belief in one God (§199-ff), the *CCC* makes reference to the revelation of the Father by the Son (§238-
42) and the revelation of the Father and the Son by the Spirit (§243-48), prior to explicating the dogma of the Trinity
as one God in three persons (§249-56). This revelation leads the Church to develop its own terminology, indeed, she

Christology into a Christology of relatedness. His emphasis remains on the person of the Son who is completely equal to the Father because he holds nothing for his own, just as the Father holds nothing as his own. Son means nothing, dare we say, *is nothing*, without Father, and vice versa.[108] The *Catechism* echoes this point, saying "He is eternally Father in relation to his only Son, who is eternally Son only in relation to his Father."[109] Ratzinger addresses the nature of sonship with the expression "being-from." Drawing from John's Gospel, Ratzinger notes, "The Son as Son, and insofar as he is Son, does not proceed in any way from himself and so is completely one with the Father; since he is nothing beside him, claims no special position of his own…"[110] The Son's origin is "'from above — from God himself…Only God is truly his 'father,'"[111] hence, any talk about "being-from" is talk of sonship, of filial relationship that ultimately has as its prototype the eternally begotten Son and the eternally begetting Father. Any filial relationship, humanly speaking, pales in comparison to that of the Son and the Father. To further clarify, Ratzinger adds, "The first Person does not beget the Son as if the act of begetting were subsequent to the finished Person; it *is* the act of begetting, of giving oneself, of streaming forth. It is identical with the act of self-giving."[112] The first Person of the Trinity does not beget the second Person subsequently, as if the first Person were "finished," and then proceeded to beget the second Person. The Father, as Giver, is the very *act* of giving, and the Son is the *act* of being given (receiving) and being given over/outpoured (the self-emptying of *kenosis*) in the Fathers's giving that extends to creation (cf. Jn. 3:16). Eternally begotten is the Son — the pure act of the Father's self-giving is the Son. This leads Augustine to say, "In God there are no accidents, only substance and relation."[113] This concept of person differs entirely from the idea of the "individual" and reveals relation as that which ends thinking only in terms of substance.[114] As a final point here, Ratzinger adds that it is precisely in the perfect communion of persons in

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gave new meaning to words in order to signify "an ineffable master, 'infinitely beyond all that we can humanly understand'" (*CCC*, §251).

[108] See Joseph Ratzinger, "Christ and His Church," in *Journey to Easter,* trans. Dame Mary Groves (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1987), 137.

[109] *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* §240.

[110] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 186.

[111] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives,* 7-8. See also Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 271-72.

[112] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 184.

[113] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 184.

[114] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 184.

the Trinity, in the pure act of self-giving and self-receiving between persons in the Trinity —
pure act that holds nothing as "individual" or "private" — that one finds, and can enter into, the
unity which is the ground and sustenance of all reality.[115] The unity that exists between persons
in the Trinity is found in that which is shared between Father and Son — the nothing and the all.
Nothing is not shared; all is shared.

Concerning John's Christology, Ratzinger goes on to make two additional points
regarding the relatedness that is apparent in the expression "the Son." First, he considers
"mission," and then "Word" (*logos*). Regarding the former, Ratzinger notes that "mission"
theology is a theology "of being in relation and of relation as a mode of unity," as is indicated in
a late Jewish saying that the "ambassador of a man is like the man himself."[116] Jesus is nothing
but the ambassador in John's Gospel, as he is completely one with the one who sent him, one
whose being is interpreted as being "from" and being "for" — "being is conceived as absolute
openness without reservation."[117] Jesus Christ is the Word incarnate, the incarnation of the Son,
whose existence as being-from and being-for is now extended, whose mission, is extended, so to
speak, to *be for* humanity. Jesus Christ, as the Son, is entirely from the Father and for the Father,
and "for the many."[118] Again, he points out the extension to Christian existence as existence-as-
mission, with Jesus' statement "As the Father has sent me, even so I send you" (Jn. 13:20; 17:18;
20:21). This essentially means that in Jesus Christ, one encounters:

> The identity of work and being, of deed and person, of the total merging of the person in
> his work and in the total coincidence of the doing with the person himself, who keeps
> back nothing for himself but gives himself completely in his work…his activity reaches
> right down to the ground of being and is one with it…The "servant" aspect is no longer
> explained as a deed, behind which the person of Jesus remains aloof; it is made to
> embrace the whole existence of Jesus, so that his *being* itself is service.[119]

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[115] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 188.
[116] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 188.
[117] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 188.
[118] See Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* trans. Vatican Secretariat of State (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 134-38.
[119] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 226.

In other words, "the *being* of Christ ('Incarnation' theology!) is *actualitas,* stepping beyond oneself, the exodus of going out from self; it is, not a being that rests in itself, but the act of being sent, of being son, of serving. Conversely, this 'doing' is not just 'doing' but 'being;' it reaches down into the depths of being and coincides with it. This being is exodus, transformation."[120] Jesus Christ's very being is act, his very being is "from" the Father's "for," such that his being is gift, exodus.

As for the the *logos,* Ratzinger holds that *logos* encompasses two theological areas: (1) insofar as *logos* refers to word, creative reason, and love, it is decisive for understanding the Christian image of God; (2) "the concept of *logos* simultaneously forms the core of Christology, of faith in Christ."[121] He says, "If it is true that the term *logos* — the Word in the beginning, creative reason, and love — is decisive for the Christian image of God, and if the concept of *logos* simultaneously forms the core of Christology, of faith in Christ, then the indivisibility of faith in God and faith in his incarnate Son, Jesus Christ, is only confirmed once more."[122] These two threads, the Christian image of God and faith in Jesus Christ, intersect, as David Bonagura points out, in the Prologue of John's Gospel.[123] To this end, Ratzinger decisively states, "the same Logos, the creative rationality from which the world has sprung, is personally present in this man Jesus. The same power that made the world is itself entering into the world and talking with us."[124] In order to briefly consider these themes, David Bonagura's article, "*Logos* to Son in the Christology of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI," will prove a helpful guide in traversing Ratzinger's thought. Bonagura's treatment proceeds in the following progression: (1) God as *Logos;* (2) From *Logos* to Son; (3) the Word Incarnate. Each theme will be treated briefly below.

Ratzinger begins his treatment of *logos* by considering the manner in which the Septuagint interprets God's self-revelation in Exodus 3:14 ("I AM WHO I AM") in light of the

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[120] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 230.
[121] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 28. As quoted in David Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son in the Christology of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI," *New Blackfriars* 93, no. 1046 (2011), 475.
[122] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 28.
[123] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 475.
[124] Ratzinger, *God and the World,* 26. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 475.

Hellenistic concept of *logos*. Here, "I AM WHO I AM" becomes "I am he that is." Ratzinger argues that the philosophical interpretation of the Hebrew weds belief to ontology, since the "biblical concept for God is here identified with the philosophical concept of God."[125] The "he that is" refers to the eternal God, the *Logos,* the eternal reason, which, in being wedded to the Israelite "God of your fathers," means that God is not bound to a particular location like the pagans, but brings about a convergence between the eternal and the personal. The Israelites meet the eternal God personally, because God has initiated a personal relationship. Bonagura notes that this convergence of the eternal and the personal in God helps the Israelites to understand other dimensions: (1) God is the "most powerful God and force in the world"; (2) "he is the God of the Promise, of the future, rather than as a force of nature"; (3) "he transcends the bonds of singular and plural."[126] The Old Testament's image of God becomes clear: God is both "personal and proximate," and "he is transcendent, absolute being, with power over space and time."[127] In making this point, Ratzinger holds that the early Christians, confronted by pagan cults with local deities, made the conscious decision in favor of the "God of the philosophers" against those pagan, local gods" — "the choice thus made meant opting for the *logos* against any kind of myth; it meant the definitive demythologization of the world and of religion."[128]

This said, the Christian understanding of God-as-*Logos* transcends the Greek concept of *logos* in several ways. The philosophical God, the *logos,* for the Greeks, referred to the eternal rationality of being. This *logos* is isolated — pure being, or pure rationality. However, in being wed to the biblical image of God, in the light of faith, *Logos* is now no longer pure thought-thinking-thought, or the "eternal mathematics of the universe, but also *agape,* the power of creative love."[129] In this way, the God of the philosophers is transcended:

> *The philosophical God is essentially self-centered*, thought simply contemplating itself. The God of faith is basically defined by the category of relationship. He is creative fullness encompassing the whole. Thereby a completely new picture of the world, a

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[125] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 119. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 476.
[126] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 476.
[127] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 477.
[128] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 137-38. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 477.
[129] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 143.

complete new world order is established: the highest possibility of Being no longer seems to be the detachment of him who exists in himself and needs only himself. On the contrary, the highest mode of Being includes the element of relationship…[T]he supreme Being no longer appears as absolute, enclosed autarchy but turns out to be at the same time involvement, creative power, which creates and bears and loves other things.[130]

The distant *logos* of the philosophers is recast in light of relationality and creativity. Now, nothing that the creative *Logos* creates is too small or insignificant for relationship. The philosophical understanding of *logos* as pure thought "based on the notion that thought and thought alone is divine" is transcended by the "God of faith, [Who] as thought, is also love."[131] For Christians, love is higher than thought, and thought is a kind of love. Love and *Logos* are identical. Here, Ratzinger says, "The *logos* of the whole world, the creative original thought, is at the same time love; in fact this thought is creative because, as thought, it is love, and as love, it is thought. It becomes apparent that truth and love are originally identical."[132]

Bonagura goes on to describe Ratzinger's movement from *Logos* to Son, noting that reflection on revelation, not only on philosophical insight, leads to knowing God as the Trinity. Ratzinger notes that, though God is one being, in his self-disclosure, "God seems to converse with himself…there are an 'I' and a 'You' in him."[133] In God's revelation, as indicated in the scriptural testimony, God conducts a dialogue, or rather, God *is* a dialogue. Ratzinger says that God "is not only *logos* but also *dia-logos,* not only idea and meaning but speech and word in the reciprocal exchanges of partners in conversation."[134] Commenting on the relationality that is the Trinity, Bonagura says, "Relation…constitutes the essence of being, which is to say that in his essence God is relation."[135] The relatedness of God as Trinity does not destroy God's unity, but is the very essence of personal unity. Trinitarian relationality becomes clear in those Gospel passages in which Jesus Christ identifies himself as "Son," and God as "Father" — the one can

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[130] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 147-48. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 478.
[131] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 148. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 478.
[132] Ratzinger, I*ntroduction to Christianity,* 148. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 479.
[133] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 182. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 481.
[134] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 183. As quoted in Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 481.
[135] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 481.

only be understood, can only exist, in light of the other. Hence, understanding *logos* as Son is ultimately possible in the light of the Word incarnate, in light of the person of Jesus Christ.

By applying the word *Logos* to Jesus Christ in the Prologue of John's Gospel, *Logos* acquires a new meaning, an expanded meaning, as "it no longer denotes simply the permeation of all being by meaning; it characterizes this man; he who is here is 'Word.' The concept of *logos,* which to the Greeks meant 'meaning' (*ratio*), changes here really into 'word' (*verbum*). He who is here is Word; he is consequently 'spoken' and, hence, the pure relation between the speaker and the spoken to."[136] Word is that which connects and makes relationship, makes communication possible between speaker and the one being spoken to, and "existence that is entirely way and openness."[137] The Word opens the way for communion — the Word who is the Way of communion with the Father. Jesus Christ is the *Logos* of God, that meaningful Word that establishes the ground of man's existence as relationship with the Father, in his relationship with the Father. This relationship is made possible by the Way that is *Logos*, a Word that is Truth, and a Word, without which, there is no life, because life without relation is *Shéol*. Hence:

> The Logos stoops to assume as his own the will of man, and speaks to the Father with the "I" of this man, and thereby transforms the word of a man into the eternal Word, into his own blessed "Yes, Father." While giving to this man his own "I," his own identity, the Logos frees man, saves him, divinizes him. We here touch almost palpably on the reality meant by the phrase "God became man."[138]

In Jesus Christ, the Son of God, "the absolutely staggering alliance of *logos* and *sarx*," takes place. In response to how the eternal *Logos* could take flesh, Bonagura follows Ratzinger and highlights the process of incarnation as a dialogue, as an expression of obedience (e.g. "a body you have prepared for me" (Heb. 10:5); "My ears thou has opened" (Ps. 40:6)). Bonagura adds, "The incarnation visibly manifests the *logos* as the choice of the personal, the particular, and the

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[136] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 189. For more on this transition from *logos* to Son, see Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 479-82. See also Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ*, 77.
[137] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 189.
[138] Benedict XVI, "True God and True Man," 102.

free over the impersonal, the universal, and the necessary; for in it the Logos, the eternal Word of God, freely assumed the particular, human flesh, so that the particular may share in the universal, life with God."[139] As God, the Son takes on flesh, a body, in and through the obedience of Mary, and in and through the obedience of the Son, reconciliation between man and God takes place. What is more, on the Cross, the *Logos* reveals itself as a radical love for man,[140] which is wholly "given over to obedience and love, loving to the end (cf. Jn. 13:10), he himself becomes the true 'offering.'"[141] The cross reveals the radical convergence of *logos* and love not as "two parallel or even opposing realities but one, the one and only absolute."[142] In *Truth and Tolerance*, Ratzinger adds that "the primacy of the Logos and the primacy of love proved to be identical. The Logos was seen to be, not merely mathematical reason at the basis of things, but a creative love taken to the point of becoming sympathy, suffering with the creature."[143] In "And the Word Became Flesh," Ratzinger notes that it would not be wrong to translate Jn. 1:14 as "The meaning became flesh," given the Greek understanding of *logos* as "meaning."[144] This "meaning" has turned towards men and women and addresses humanity, "given in a completely personal way to each of us…God is not some distant sublime being that we can never approach. He is very near, within calling distance, easy to reach. He has time for us — so much time that he lay in the crib as man and remained eternally man."[145] The convergence of *logos* and love in the Incarnation of the Son and the manifestation of this love on the Cross, brings together reason and faith. In so doing, the ground of the rational basis of faith is established,[146] as he "who bears in himself the totality of Being reaches beyond the 'greatest,' so that to him it is small, and he reaches into the smallest, because to him nothing is too small. Precisely this overstepping of the greatest and reaching down into the smallest is the true nature of absolute spirit."[147]

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[139] David Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 483.

[140] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 484. See also *Deus Caritas Est,* §12.

[141] Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 334.

[142] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 148.

[143] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?", in *Truth and Tolerance,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 182.

[144] Joseph Ratzinger, "And the Word Became Flesh," *Seeking God's Face,* trans. David Smith and Robert Cunningham (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1982), 84.

[145] Ratzinger, "And the Word Became Flesh," 84-85.

[146] Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 479.

[147] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 146.

2.4   *"The Son" as Basis for Personalist Understanding of the Content of Revelation*

God's self-revelation as dialogue is more than an isolated experience of reflexive self-consciousness, but is his very being (being as *personal*). This dialogue reaches out in Jesus Christ and invites man to respond and to be re-constituted in a relationship that man is given out of sheer gratuity. In this relationship, man's true nature is restored. It is in this light that Ratzinger holds that the purpose of revelation is not to hand on "facts" about God, but is the revelation of God's self, the giving over of God himself, for the sake of man's being able to understand himself, to be himself. Revelation is an act that does not intend to hand over information about God, but which aims at conversion, faith. Ratzinger says:

> The Council desired to express again the character of revelation as a totality, in which word and event make up one whole, a true dialogue which touches man in his totality, not only challenging his reason, but, as dialogue, *addressing him as a partner,* indeed, *giving him his true nature for the first time.*[148]

Furthermore, he points out the perfection of revelation in Christ:

> In him the dialogue of God has attained its goal; it has become a union. We can see again here how little intellectualism and doctrinairism are able to comprehend the nature of revelation, which is not concerned with talking *about* something that is quite external to the person, but with the realization of the existence of man, with the relation of the human "I" to the divine "thou," that the purpose of this dialogue is ultimately not information, but unity and transformation…[Revelation] does not reveal *something,* nor does it reveal various kinds of things, but in the man Jesus, in the man who is God, we are able to understand the whole nature of man.[149]

In recovering an understanding of revelation-as-act instead of revelation-as-extrinsic-content, Ratzinger identifies the foundation of his anthropology in the personalism inherent within

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[148] Ratzinger, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, Origin and Background," 172. Emphasis mine.
[149] Joseph Ratzinger, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," 175-76.

revelation itself. The present study will take up Ratzinger's theological anthropology at great length further on. For now, it is sufficient to note the link between his theology of revelation and his theological anthropology. As will be seen, the revelation of God in Christ, is the revelation of what it means *to be person,* and what it means *to be mission.* This revelation makes faith both possible and necessary.

Looking to recover that which predates Boethius' definition of person as *naturae rationalis individua substantia* (the individual substance of a rational nature),[150] Ratzinger traces the root of the word "person" to the Greek *prosopon.* The prosopographic exegesis of antiquity identified *prosopon* as a "role" within drama, a dialogical partner who appears and who speaks. Early Christian theologians discovered within the texts of Scripture a similar dialogical character within the words attributed to God, but here, "person" no longer means "role," it is no longer a literary device, because "it takes on a completely new reality in terms of faith in the Word of God"[151] and the word "person - *persona*" is born. God himself is a dialogical reality. Ratzinger notes, "The word *prosopon* = 'role' is thus at the transitional point where it gives birth to the idea of person."[152] In God there is realism, a revelation, an event - the disclosure of one *Persona* to another *persona.* Grasping the personal nature of God shaped the theological debates in the first centuries of Christianity, with Tertullian providing the first valid expression to a Trinitarian formula, saying God is "one being in three persons."[153] Ratzinger advances from here to treat the teachings of Augustine:

> According to Augustine and late patristic theology, the three persons that exist in God are in their nature relations. They are, therefore, not substances that stand next to each other, but they are real existing relations, and nothing besides...In God, person means relation. Relation, being related, is not something superadded to the person, but it is the person itself. In its nature, the person exists only as relation…Put more concretely, the first person does not generate in the sense that the act of generating a Son is added

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[150] Joseph Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person in Theology," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture,* trans. Michael Waldstein (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 112. See also *Introduction to Christianity*, 160-61, 180-ff.
[151] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 105.
[152] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 105-6.
[153] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 104.

[accidental] to the already complete person, but the person is the deed of generating, of giving itself, of streaming itself forth. The person is identical with this act of self-donation. One could thus define the first person as self-donation in fruitful knowledge and love; it is not the one who gives himself, in whom the act of self-donation is found, but it is this self-donation, pure reality of act....In God, person is the pure relativity of being turned toward the other; it does not lie on the level of substance - the substance is one - but on the level of dialogical relationality toward the other.[154]

God is one divine being in three persons. God's substance, that which "stands under" or "grounds" his being, is divine, and, at the same time, God is personal. God is the act of self-donation and entrustment as perfectly actualized dialogical relationality. Hence in theology, formulations which predate Boethius, constitute personhood as relation — relationality — and not as something superimposed upon substance-that-is-person. Relationality is what constitutes the person-as-person. Insofar as the Father gives/relates himself (eternally-begetting) to the Son, the Father is Father. The same holds true for the Son in his reciprocal relationship with the Father. In *Introduction to Christianity,* Ratzinger describes consequence of this this reality as follows:

> The experience of the God who conducts a dialogue, of the God who is not only logos but also dia-logos, not only idea and meaning but speech and word in the reciprocal exchanges of partners in conversation - this experience exploded the ancient division of reality into substance, the real thing, and accidents, the merely circumstantial. It now became clear that the dialogue, the *relatio*, stands beside the substance as an equally primordial form of being.[155]

This understanding of "person" reveals a third fundamental category that demolishes the division of reality between substance and accident. Substance is not the only primordial form of being — person stands alongside. Person is being-in-relation. "Person is the pure relation of being related,

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[154] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 108.
[155] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 183.

nothing else. Relationship is not something extra added to the person, as it is with us; it only exists at all as relatedness."[156] In God, person is the act of begetting, of self-gift, of being in relation. Ratzinger says, "The idea of person expresses in its origin the idea of dialogue and the idea of God as the dialogical being. It refers to God as the being that lives in the word and consists of the word as 'I' and 'you' and 'we.'"[157] This means, following Henri de Lubac, that God does not exemplify loneliness, but "ec-stasy" (the complete "going out" of himself), "the mystery of the Trinity has opened to us a totally new perspective: the ground of being is *communio*."[158] The revelation of the *Logos* in the Son, incarnated in Jesus Christ, reveals *logos* as *communio*.

A person, according to the Scriptural understanding, is "not a substance that closes itself in itself, but the phenomenon of complete relativity, which is, of course, realized in its entirety only in the one who is God, but which indicates the direction of all personal being."[159] Here, the insufficiency of Boethius' definition of personhood becomes all the more apparent, as Ratzinger's exploration invites a theological application to anthropology. Scripture, it seems, indicates this analogous relationship between divine personhood and human personhood by way of the words "image and likeness." Ratzinger reflects further:

> The image of God means, first of all, that human beings cannot be closed in on themselves. Human beings who attempt this betray themselves. To be the image of God implies relationality. It is the dynamic that sets the human being in motion toward the totally Other. Hence it means the capacity for relationship; it is the human capacity for God. Human beings are, as a consequence, most profoundly human when they step out of themselves and become capable of addressing God on familiar terms. Indeed, to the question as to what distinguishes the human being from the animal, as to what is specifically different about human beings, the answer has to be that they are beings that God made capable of thinking and praying. They are most profoundly themselves when

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[156] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 183.
[157] Joseph Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 107.
[158] From Henri de Lubac, *La Foi chrétienne,* 14. As quoted in Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 22-23.
[159] Joseph Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 109.

they discover their relation to their Creator. Therefore the image of God also means that human beings are beings of word and of love, beings moving toward Another, oriented to giving themselves to the Other and only truly receiving themselves back in real self-giving.[160]

The more insular, isolated, or "individualized" a person becomes, the less he will find himself. The human being becomes more a person (i.e. more him/herself) to the extent that he recognizes and lives within this primordial relationship, this communion that exists with, and has been given by the Creator. The revelation of God in the Son (i.e. the revelation of God as personal) lays the foundation for Ratzinger's understanding of anthropology — a topic which will be taken up in much greater length in Ch. 3.

3. The Nature of Faith

3.1 Revelation — Faith

From what has been said thus far, it is possible to conclude that what is distinctive about Christian revelation is the revelation of God-as-*Logos* in Jesus Christ. As has also been noted, revelation is only possible when there is a receiving subject. Ratzinger points out that the "act of reception of revelation…is called, in the language of the Bible, 'faith.'"[161] Ratzinger continues by identifying two ways in which "faith," in the New Testament, means the "same as the indwelling of Christ":

On one hand, [revelation] appears…as identical with faith (Eph. 3:17), in which the individual meets Christ and, in him, enters into the sphere of his saving power. It also lies concealed, however, under the Pauline expression "body of Christ," which is intended to express the way that the community of believers — the Church — represents Christ's active presence in this world, a presence into which he is gathering mankind and through

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[160] Joseph Ratzinger, '*In the Beginning…*,' trans. Boniface Ramsey (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1990), 47-48.
[161] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 57.

which he enables them to share in his mighty presence. According to what we have already said, both of these together signify that believing is entering into the abode of Christ, in the abiding reality of Christ, to which Scripture bears witness but which Scripture itself by all means *is* not. What may further be concluded from that is that the presence of revelation essentially has to do with the realities of "faith" and "Church," which for their part — as now becomes clear — are closely connected with each other.[162]

He says, "Revelation always and only becomes a reality where there is faith."[163] For example, it is possible to have Scripture without having revelation, because even if one understands the written word intellectually, if he has not "met Christ" and entered "into the sphere of his saving power," the inner reality, the appropriation of revelation in faith has not taken place. In other words, Ratzinger points out, "the person who receives it is a part of the revelation to a certain degree…You cannot put revelation in your pocket like a book you carry around with you. It is a living reality that requires a living person as the locus of its presence."[164] For Ratzinger, Christian revelation and Christian faith are two aspects of one reality, with faith containing both personal and communal elements. Hence, for Ratzinger, understanding the nature of revelation means understanding the nature of faith and the nature of the Church.

3.2   Belief in the World of Today

Ratzinger provides a thorough treatment of his theological conception of faith in *Introduction to Christianity*. Reflecting at length on the first words of the Apostles' Creed, "I believe," Ratzinger argues that man, who is a "seeing creature, whose living area seems to be marked off by the range of what he can see and grasp," seeks a second mode of seeing that can move him into another mode of reality.[165] He does not seek after observable facts, but "a fundamental mode of behavior toward being, toward existence, toward one's own sector of reality, and toward reality as a whole."[166] Therefore, "to believe is to be granted a share in Jesus'

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[162] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 57-58.
[163] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 52.
[164] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 52.
[165] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 50.
[166] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 50.

vision [cf. Jn. 6:56]…Because Jesus is the Son, he has an unceasing vision of the Father. Because he is man, we can share this vision. Because he is both God and man *at once,* he is neither a historical person nor simply removed from all time in eternity…He is in the midst of time, always alive, always present."[167] Accessing that which is outside the visible, or that which is made ("makability,"feasibility"[168]) by human hands, accessing that which is the "ground" of reality, requires "con-version" because man is always drawn to the visible, and, therefore, the makable, as a natural inclination. Viewed in this light, faith is conversion. Ratzinger says that man "must turn around to recognize how blind he is if he trusts only what he sees with his eyes…Belief *is* the conversion in which man discovered that he is following an illusion if he devotes himself only to the tangible," and "it remains a turn that is new every day," a "lifelong conversion."[169] Faith requires trusting in something other than what one can grasp "on his own," so to speak, what he can grasp through observation or rationalization. Faith requires the will, an about-turn, and in this way, faith requires the involvement of one's whole person — "a perishing of the mere self and precisely thus a resurrection of the true self."[170]

The radical nature of faith comes into striking relief vis-à-vis the modern mind. Ratzinger traces the genesis of modern technical thinking (i.e. the reduction of knowledge to that which man has made, *techne*) that centers on *faciendum* (doing, making, changing the world) from ancient thought that held that human thinking was rethinking of being itself and striving after wisdom, to Cartesian skepticism and the demand for mathematical certainty, and finally to Giambattista Vico (1668-1744) who asserts "real knowledge is the knowledge of causes…we can truly know only what we have made ourselves, for it is only ourselves that we are familiar with."[171] Karl Marx (1818-83) takes Vico's thesis and advances it beyond knowing something of the world and into an impetus for changing the world. *Techne* was for the ancients a lower-level

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[167] Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," in *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997), 27. See also Joseph Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, trans. Robert Nowell (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 29-30.
[168] Ratzinger traces the genesis of modern technical thinking (i.e. the reduction of knowledge to that which man has made (*techne*)) that centers on *faciendum* (doing, making, changing the world). He says with the modern man, "wherever he comes from, he can look his future in the eye with the determination to make himself into whatever he wishes; he does not need to regard it as impossible to make himself into the God who now stands at the end as *faciendum,* as something makable, not at the beginning, as *logos,* meaning" (*Introduction to Christianity,* 66).
[169] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 51.
[170] Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," 26.
[171] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 61.

of learning because it centered only on human things and did not attain toward being, but now *techne* marked the only way to proceed. The modern man holds that "wherever he comes from, he can look his future in the eye with the determination to make himself into whatever he wishes; he does not need to regard it as impossible to make himself into the God who now stands at the end as *faciendum*, as something makable, not at the beginning, as *logos*, meaning."[172]

3.3   The Biblical Understanding of Belief

Against the modern conception of faith as essentially believing in oneself — that all he can know is what he can see and make — biblical belief centers on the concepts of "stand— understand." Ratzinger asserts, "Belief operates on a completely different plane from that of making and 'makability.' Essentially, it is entrusting oneself to that which has not been made by oneself and never could be made and which precisely in this way supports and makes possible all our making."[173] Ratzinger's position, one could say, is anti-modern, even postmodern. He draws attention to the Heideggerean critique that calculating thought concerned with makability had overcome reflective thought that concerned itself with meaning. Meaning cannot be created on one's own — "meaning that is self-made is in the last analysis no meaning. Meaning, that is, the ground on which our existence as a totality can stand and live, cannot be made but only received."[174] Belief means accepting that meaning which is the ground of one's existence that he did not make for himself, but receives and which holds him. With regard to Christian faith, Ratzinger adds:

> For to believe as a Christian means in fact entrusting oneself to the meaning that upholds me and the world; taking it as the firm ground on which I can stand fearlessly. Using rather more traditional language, we could say that to believe as a Christian means understanding our existence as a response to the word, the *logos*, that upholds and maintains all things. It means affirming that the meaning we do not make but can only

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[172] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 66.
[173] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 70.
[174] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 73.

receive is already granted to us, so that we have only to take it and to entrust ourselves to it…the receiving precedes the making.[175]

One must stand, stand-firm, in order to understand. This is a radical reversal to the makability of modernity. Yet, precisely in this way, faith is rational, because *logos,* as meaning, must also be truth. Understanding allows man to deal with the truth of *logos* as meaning, reason. Said another way, Ratzinger would likely agree that human beings cannot "know" Being, but they can understand something of that which Being reveals of itself. Referring to Augustine's experience, Benedict XVI notes, "It is not we who possess the Truth after having sought it, but the Truth that seeks us out and possesses us."[176] This is not to say that human reason cannot pick up glimpses of God in creation or in history, but that the limitations of practical knowledge, of the reduction of reason to the empirical and calculable, are apparent and can even be dangerous. Instead, one must seek understanding, which presupposes that he is standing on that which he did not make for himself or conceive of by himself. Ratzinger says, "Understanding means seizing and grasping as *meaning* the meaning that man has received as *ground,"* and that understanding is grasping the "ground on which we have taken our stand as meaning and truth."[177] At the same time, just because human reason is limited, does not mean it stands opposed to faith, nor does faith stand opposed to or destroy reason. Ratzinger holds both together — faith *and* reason, Jerusalem *and* Athens. Pablo Blanco describes Ratzinger's position clearly, saying that because Ratzinger understands *Logos* as both the eternal Word of the Father and as God's "reflection and projection in creation — the *logos,* the truth, the meaning of things…[which, in the case of humanity, means] endowment with the *logos*, the capacity for word and thought, communication and knowledge, reason and relationship, love and truth," "the answer of faith does not obviate or excuse the free exercise of rationality, but — on the contrary — it requires and reinforces it…both [faith and reason] ultimately lead back to the divine Logos."[178]

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[175] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 73.

[176] Benedict XVI, "The Ways that Lead to Knowledge of God," *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013), 30.

[177] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 77.

[178] Pablo Blanco, "*Logos* and *Dia-Logos:* Faith, Reason, (and Love) According to Joseph Ratzinger," *Anglican Theological Review* 92, no. 3 (2010): 501-2.

In *Principles of Catholic Theology,* Ratzinger identifies points of similarity and contrast between the biblical understanding of conversion (*metanoia*) and Greek thought. For the Greeks, in order for man to be himself, he must constantly turn away from external matters and turn within. If one turns to his innermost depths and penetrates deeply enough, he will access the divine in himself, "that, to be truly himself, man, as a whole, has need of a comprehensive movement of conversion and self-communion."[179] The biblical understanding does not admit to this dualism of man, that he must simply turn away from the impurity of the external and enter into the perfectly pure inner world. Biblical belief, according to Ratzinger, is more critical and radical, in that it does not only criticize that which man engages with externally, but the impurity that lies in man's interior as well. The whole of man, the external and the internal, stands in need of salvation. Therefore, biblical conversion demands one to turn away from himself and toward "the God who calls."[180] He continues, "Man is oriented, not to the innermost depths of his own being, but to the God who comes to him from without, to the Thou *who reveals himself to him and, in doing so, redeems him*."[181] Christianity marks a radical, personal, even positivistic realism, in this God who comes to man from without. Christian faith is "turning" the whole of oneself in response to the God who reveals himself in Jesus Christ. Only in the "turning," only in the act of faith, is there revelation, redemption. The personal character of Christian faith is its most distinctive feature. Pablo Blanco captures the personal nature of faith and draws the connection to grace, saying that faith "is an act that reaches the centre of the person. That is why one can and must call grace a gift, a present from God. This is the main origin. It is there thanks to the other person who comes out to meet me, comes into me and makes me open. His secret is in saying 'you' and this truly becomes a 'me.' So the faith is a 'yes' to God in Jesus Christ."[182] Faith is always a *personal* response to the God who *personally* initiates, through the God who *personally* initiates — it is a gift that invites and allows for a participation in God's very life that is *communio*. Faith, in the Christian conception, is not a self-contained and private experience, but an interpersonal event.

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[179] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 59.
[180] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 60.
[181] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 60. Emphasis mine.
[182] Blanco, "The Theology of Joseph Ratzinger: *Nuclear Ideas,"* 160.

Benedict XVI's now famous line has always been the heart of his understanding of the nature of faith: "Being a Christian is not the result of an ethical choice or a lofty idea, but the encounter with an event, a person, which gives life a new horizon and a decisive direction."[183] Christian faith is not the result of a "turning in," a "choosing for oneself by oneself," or a "transcendental, religious experience." This is not to say that these experiences do not express the religiosity of man, for indeed they do. However, they are not, by their nature, necessarily Christian. A realist personalism marks the whole mode of understanding revelation and faith for Ratzinger. Far from merely ratifying propositions, faith is a personal encounter, "it is the encounter with the man Jesus, and in this encounter, it experiences the meaning of the world as a person."[184] His explanation of this reality is worth quoting at length:

> In Jesus' life from the Father, in the immediacy and intensity of his converse with him in prayer and, indeed, face to face, he is God's witness, through whom the intangible has become tangible, the distant has drawn near. And further: he is not simply the witness whose evidence we trust when he tells us what he has seen in an existence that had really made the complete about-turn from a false contentment with the foreground of life to the depths of the whole truth; he is the presence of the eternal itself in this world. In his life, in the unconditional devotion of himself to men, the meaning of the world is present before us; it vouchsafes itself to us as love that loves even me and makes life worth living by this incomprehensible gift of a love free from any threat of fading away or any tinge of egoism. The meaning of the world is the "you," though only the one that is not itself an open question but rather the ground of all, which needs no other ground.

> Thus faith is the finding of a "you" that upholds me and amid all the unfulfilled — and in the last resort unfulfillable — hope of human encounters gives me the promise of and indestructible love that not only longs for eternity but also guarantees it. Christian faith lives on the discovery that not only is there such a thing as objective meaning but that this meaning knows me and loves me, that I can entrust myself to it like the child who knows that everything he may be wondering about is safe in the "you" of his mother. Thus in the

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[183] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §1.
[184] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 79.

last analysis believing, trusting, and loving are one, and all the theses around which belief revolves are only concrete expressions of the all-embracing about-turn, of the assertion "I believe in you" — of the discovery of God in the countenance of the man Jesus of Nazareth.[185]

One could argue that these paragraphs summarize Ratzinger's entire theological enterprise. His primary concern, at all times, is to start from, abide in, and end with the *Logos* incarnate. He is ultimately not concerned with answering the question 'What?' that drives at some sort of metaphysical certainty about the essence of God, nor is his primary concern understanding a 'How?' by demanding scientific certainty rooted in this-worldly praxis. At the same time, he does not denounce these inquiries. Rather, if the eternal *logos* has revealed itself as person, then *the* question that matters, *the* question whose answer shapes all other questions and their answers, is 'Who?' Who are You who encounters me? Who are You, that You want to reach into the depths of hell to save me? Coming to know and to enter into this You is the Way of the Christian life — central to which is the redemption of his identity in light of a Trinitarian anthropology.

4. The Ecclesial Form of Faith

With this cursory overview of some of the key elements that comprise Ratzinger's fundamental theology, this study has already identified significant components of what will shape Ratzinger's understanding of both evangelization and catechesis. Yet, before engaging his vision for these topics more directly, the role of the Church must be considered, for it is the Church who evangelizes and catechizes today, and, therefore, the Church who plays a central role in the dynamism of faith.

4.1   *Faith and Forming the "We"*

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[185] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 79-80. See also Benedict XVI, "What is Faith?", *The Transforming Power of Faith* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2013), 14-15; Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2010), §25; and Joseph Ratzinger, "Having Complete Confidence in Him," *Ministers of Your Joy*, trans. Robert Nowell (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989), 48-49.

For Ratzinger, faith is tied to first-hand knowledge. He says, "Jesus, who knows God at first-hand and sees God, is for that reason the true mediator between God and human beings. His human vision of the divine reality is the source of light for everyone."[186] How does this vision come to the person today? How does this vision reach the person in such a way that he can stand—understand? Ratzinger answers the question by first considering what he calls "natural faith." In the everyday, ordinary experience of faith — which is part of the fabric of human existence (i.e. living on the knowledge of others and on those who have gone before us)[187] — one's first-hand knowledge becomes another's through an act of faith, which is to say, an act of trust in the other. Ratzinger says, "through my trust I come to share in another's knowledge."[188] This conception of faith essentially says: I believe *in* you, *that* what you have seen and are testifying to is true. Belief is a participation in the knowledge of the knower.[189] Here, one has discovered what Ratzinger calls the "social aspect of the phenomena of faith. Nobody knows everything, but together we know what is needful: faith forms a network of mutual dependence that is at the same time a network of mutual solidarity."[190] While this is the case in the "natural" setting, it is also the case with regard to faith in God. Ratzinger says:

> Our knowledge of God, too, depends on this mutuality, on a trust that becomes sharing and is then verified for the individual in her or her lived experience. Our relationship with God is first of all and at the same time also a relationship with our fellow men and women: it rests on a communion of human beings, and indeed the communication of relationship with God mediates the deepest possibility of human communication that goes beyond utility to reach the ground of the person.[191]

Jesus Christ has actual, first-hand knowledge of God. His perception, his vision, "is the point of reference of our faith, the point where it is anchored in reality."[192] At the same time, those who

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[186] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 30.
[187] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 5-9.
[188] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 27.
[189] See Josef Pieper, *Belief and Faith: A Philosophical Tract,* trans. Richard and Clara Winston (Chicago: Henry Regnery Company, 1963, 14-24.
[190] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 27.
[191] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 28.
[192] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 29.

are in communion with Christ, who enter into and who share in his vision, can also become a "point of reference." In this way, the witness, the "saint" (not in the sense of a person who has been canonized or who even has all of the qualities of a canonized saint, but in the original sense of the term from the early Church — one who is a witness, a point of reference) inspires something of a second-hand knowledge. One encounters the faith of the Church in her witnesses, and through the testimony of the witnesses (believing in the witnesses, that what the witnesses have seen is true) one believes second-hand. In this way, one can enter into Jesus' first-hand knowledge, however imperfect and inexact this knowledge will be while on pilgrimage in this life.

Following Pauline theology, Ratzinger identifies the Church as the sacrament, the "concrete" other who is outside and who now comes "in" to meet the individual from the outside. In a subtle critique of Rahnerian thinking, Ratzinger holds together the realities of revelation-faith and church-faith. The faith response to revelation is not possible outside of the Church who, as one with Christ as his body through the Holy Spirit, allows for the encounter in the here and now. Furthermore, Paul claims that "faith comes from what is heard" (Rom. 10:17), as opposed to philosophy which proceeds from solitary thinking. Faith coming from hearing means that faith comes from that which the person did not think out for himself, but "thinking in the context of faith is always a thinking over something previously heard and received."[193] Thought precedes word in philosophy, but word precedes thought in faith. Faith is "not something thought up by myself; it is something said to me, which hits me as something that has not been thought out and could not be thought out and lays an obligation on me."[194] Because the word comes from outside and impresses itself on the person, the word is always ahead of one's thinking and cannot be changed by the person on a whim, but instead requires that the person be "handed over" into the Word.[195] Still, faith-as-word reveals another dimension. Word is always directed by a social aim, it is a "call to community, to unity of mind through the unity of the word…Only secondarily will it then open the way for each individual's private venture in search

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[193] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 91. See also Pope Francis' *Lumen Fidei* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2013), §8 and 22.
[194] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 91-92.
[195] Ratzinger, *Gospel, Catechesis, Catechism,* 30.

of truth…Faith is fundamentally centered on 'You' and 'We'; only via this double clamp does it link man with God."[196] The mediation of faith through Jesus, and its secondary mediation through the saints, means that the "many live for the few and the few live for the many,"[197] that no individual person can build his own bridge to the divine, but must receive it as God's own gift of himself, mediated through others, through tradition. Hence, the act of faith's contingency on other people means "breaking out of the isolation of my ego…breaking down the door of my subjectivity."[198] This is precisely what Paul refers to in Gal. 2:20, wherein his ego is broken open and finds itself again "united not only with Jesus but with everybody who has followed the same path…Churchly faith…lives and moves in the 'we' of the Church, one with the common 'I' of Jesus Christ…I cannot build my personal faith in a private dialogue with Jesus. Faith lives in this 'we,' or else it is not alive."[199] This position is quite the opposite of the trajectory laid out within the "vulgarized Rahnerian" vision, wherein personal experience makes access to revelation possible, and where the Church and her traditional doctrines and sacraments are, at best, retroactive and retrospective aids to interpreting one's private revelation.

4.2   Encountering Jesus in the Faith of the Church

How is it that the Church can be sure she is making the real, historical Jesus known today? By way of an initial answer to these questions, one might consider Ratzinger's preliminary remarks in "Jesus Christ Today." Here, commenting on Heb. 13:8, "Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever," Ratzinger claims "we can see Jesus Christ correctly today only if we understand him in union with the Christ of 'yesterday' and see in the Christ of yesterday and today the eternal Christ. The three dimensions of time as well as going beyond time into that which is simultaneously its origin and future are always a part of the encounter with Christ."[200] In his explanation, Ratzinger is of the opinion that, generally, Jesus is encountered first in the present — in how he reveals himself today, in how people understand

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[196] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 93. Ratzinger also considers the social aspect of the phenomenon of faith in *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 27-ff.
[197] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 29.
[198] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 36.
[199] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 36-37.
[200] Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 11.

him, in how people accept or reject him, etc. One can encounter Jesus today "because he is a today for many and therefore has a today."[201] Therefore, to ensure that one is encountering the whole Christ, and not a piece of him as can result from historical-criticism that claims scientific objectivity but often resorts to its own various hermeneutical straightjackets, one must "heed the Christ of yesterday as he reveals himself in the sources, especially in Scripture. If, in the process, I listen to him carefully and do not excise essential parts of his appearance because of a dogmatically asserted worldview, I see him open to the future and I see him coming from eternity, which embraces the past, the present, and the future, all at once."[202] Ratzinger sees much of modern theology shaped by the Enlightenment and focusing on the Christ of yesterday. This position sees the Church as opposed to the historical Jesus, and concerning herself only with the "Christ of faith" by subordinating Scripture to herself and by ignoring the historical Jesus. This modern approach aiming at discovering the authentic Jesus eventually locks him in the past,[203] whereas the Church strives to faithfully give witness to Christ as his revelation is accessible through Scripture and Tradition. Finally, Jesus Christ is the one who will come. Ratzinger notes that in his own understanding of his earthly life, Jesus Christ "perceived it as a going forth from the Father and simultaneously as a remaining with him; thus he brought eternity into play with and connected it to time."[204]

Denying one or more of these dimensions results in distorting the image of Jesus Christ or rendering him incomprehensible. Knowledge of Jesus cannot take place at the expense of the past (Moran!) for the sake of creating and shaping the future (Groome!), nor can it understand time "merely as a moment that irrevocably passes away" (Boeve!). Those who diminish one or another of the dimensions of time, those who deny or minimize Jesus' eternity, turn "away in principle from what really makes up the figure of Jesus and what it seeks to convey. Knowledge is always a path. Those who reject the possibility of such an existence extended in time have in fact thereby denied themselves access to the sources that invite us to embark on this journey of being."[205] Therefore, it is possible to know Jesus today because he *has time*, because his

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201 Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 13.
202 Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 13.
203 Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 12.
204 Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 12.
205 Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ, Today," 12-13.

existence embraces past, present, and future. It is possible to know Jesus today because the "Incarnation was not his last word."[206] The Incarnation is perfected in the Cross and Resurrection, and, as such, "Christ can come only because he has gone before us in the way of life of the Holy Spirit and shares himself through him and in him."[207] Here, Ratzinger connects the dots between the gift of the Holy Spirit and the gift of the Church. The intrinsic unity of Holy Spirit and Church appears in the original Greek text of the Apostles' Creed, which simply says, "I believe in Holy Spirit." The definite article "the" is missing, which means originally the text was not a reference to the person of the Holy Spirit, but to "the Holy Spirit as God's gift to history in the community of those who believe in Christ."[208] In other words, Christianity is not merely metaphysics that concerns itself with Being that stands before and outside of time, nor is it concerned merely with a this-worldly, future-oriented praxis. Instead, from the standpoint of faith, "one may say that for *history* God stands at the end, while for *being* he stands at the beginning," it is an "all-embracing horizon" accessible today because of "the man who can embrace all men because he has lost himself and them to God."[209] The all-embracing horizon in this closeness is the gift of the Holy Spirit who makes possible the presence of Jesus Christ through the disciples' testimony today.[210]

5.   Conclusion:

In light of the previous chapter's exploration of Moran, Groome, and Boeve, and with due consideration of the topics covered in the present chapter, one could draw numerous conclusions:

First, for Ratzinger, the revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ stands as the objective starting point, whereas Rahnerian thought places *ethos* (the subjective-knower) over *logos*. Postmodernism, in its defense of *le différend,* vaults *pathos* over both *logos* and *ethos*. It no longer matters who says what — everyone stands on equal footing in terms of authority.

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[206] Joseph Ratzinger, "Church Movements and Their Place in Theology," in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 183.
[207] Ratzinger, "Church Movements and Their Place in Theology," 183-84.
[208] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 331.
[209] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 242-43.
[210] See Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* 282-86.

Likewise, *logos* is discounted as objective truth claims are dismantled. What remains is the voice of the different. What remains is a *pathos* which holds sway over reason, nature, authoritarian structures, and being. Ratzinger, on the other hand, sees in Jesus Christ the *logos* made flesh who, as God, reveals the truth of who man is (*ethos*) and the triumph of love over the metanarrative of death in the suffering love (*pathos*) of the Cross.

Second, in their reaction against Neo-scholasticism, Moran and Groome relegate tradition, which tends, for them, to restrict one's transcendent religious experience (i.e. the experience of God's revelation). Rather than leading with tradition (i.e. doctrine, salvation history, the authority of the magisterium), Moran and Groome flip the model. No longer does *praxis* serve content, but rather, content serves *praxis* as that which *can* help the unthematic religious experience become thematic. Boeve, in his recontextualization, rejects the idea that one receives tradition as an heir, and prefers the image of testator. One receives tradition so as to test that tradition, to allow for the "humility" of present postmodern context to interrupt what is to be a small and open narrative (i.e. the opposite of a metanarrative). While Ratzinger allows for the religious experience, he remains aware of its limitations. Commenting upon the relegation of tradition, Ratzinger identifies the source of what he labeled a "catechetical crisis" as the "crisis of faith *in the faith shared with the Church of all ages*."[211] The result of this, in his eyes, has been the hypertrophy of method (aimed at personal *praxis*) as opposed to content, and the divide between dogma and exegesis. Rather than being a hindrance to revelation, Ratzinger sees tradition as that which carries religious experiences to their end, because it is precisely within the tradition of the Church, the "We," which the "I" did not create for itself that the "I" can stand. In the Church, the Spirit bestows memory, listening, and communion. In taking flesh and existing in time through the *communio* who is the Holy Spirit, God has given history memory, or access to memory, that is, being. In time, man can access being because God has revealed himself as *Logos* in Jesus Christ, who holds being and time together in his very person — past, present, and future. Tradition provides access to that ground, *logos*, on which the person can stand and can understand. In this way, tradition is necessary for accessing revelation and not an optional afterthought or that which the receiving subject, exercising the role of ultimate arbiter in light of

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[211] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 17 (Emphasis mine).

history and history alone, can test and change as he wishes. When it comes to revelation—faith, tradition, and the Church are essential for accessing the one *Logos,* insofar as *Logos* has revealed itself.

The revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ leads to a final conclusion: for Ratzinger, faith is based upon need. Man is a seeing creature who cannot see as much as he wishes and is in need of someone from outside of himself to reveal more to him. Man is a creature created by love and for love, yet he does not love perfectly. He stands in need of a love that can pick him up and carry him. Ultimately, man stands in serious need due to the reality of death. The infinite within man longs for eternity, to live forever, but everywhere man turns, he is confronted by limitation, weakness, suffering, and ultimately, death. Ratzinger sees death as that cause of one's ultimate fear, that fear which is ultimately at the bottom of every fear. In this way, Ratzinger points out an inescapable metanarrative. No matter how far postmodernism goes in its pursuit of (or defense of) difference and the denial of objective truth, one reality is true for every man and woman: death. No matter how one tries to distract himself from it, or how we, as a society, banalize it, death comes for everyone. In fact, existentially, it is possible to experience, in the here and now, something of death, which is to say, hell. Sartre's nihilism, for Ratzinger, stands at the end of a long line of thought. Does it have an answer? Can faith in the resurrection speak again in the face of a postmodernity that seemingly avoids the problem of death altogether, and settles for maintaining alterity at all costs? The Church's evangelizing mission is nothing other than fostering the encounter between the revelation of the *Logos,* the revelation of God, in Jesus Christ, and the corresponding free and personal act of receptivity known as faith.

With this, we have identified the manner in which the present study must proceed. Who is man, and who is woman, in light of the *Logos*? How does this revelation simultaneously lay the foundation for faith? How does Ratzinger's theological anthropology provide a basis for his understanding of faith? How, exactly, is the Church to proceed in carrying out her evangelizing mission? Does the revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ bring anything to bear upon her approach to evangelization? Chapters 3 & 4 will attempt answers to questions such as these, with Ch. 3 focusing on Ratzinger's understanding of theological anthropology as the basis for what

one might call a "theology of encounter." Ch. 4 will attempt to explore how theological anthropology can, and should, inform the Church's approach to evangelization and catechesis.

Ch. 3 - Theological Anthropology and Existential Eschatology: Toward a Theology of Encounter

The previous chapter attempted to highlight the essential elements of Ratzinger's fundamental theology, insofar as these stand as fundamental building blocks in establishing his vision for evangelization. As has been illustrated, Ratzinger's fundamental theology holds together revelation—faith—Church. The present chapter will attempt to answer more precisely what it means that in Jesus Christ, "in the man who is God, we are able to understand the whole nature of man,"[1] and its implications for evangelization. In other words, this chapter will attempt to understand something of the anthropological content accessible in the *Logos-made-flesh*. Additionally, as will become clear, taking *Logos* as a starting point for understanding man will further expose man's need for faith.

The present chapter will consider the implications of the revelation of the *Logos* in terms of anthropology: how the revelation of the *Logos* in Christ makes a theological anthropology possible, and how it simultaneously exposes man's deepest need. This will necessarily lead into eschatological considerations of the problems of sin and death. Here, faith arrives on the scene, as one becomes aware of his or her need and turns to God in order to love the other as one loves himself (Mk. 12:31). *Faith involves the encounter of one's isolated, or isolating "I," which is to say, one's self imposed hell, with the communio of the persons of God manifest in Christ Jesus, and accessible in the communio of the Church*. Hence, the chapter will make a concerted effort toward understanding what Ratzinger means by "encounter" (i.e. a theology of encounter), and how encounter necessarily leads into a process of discipleship that reconstitutes the human person according to the theological anthropology revealed in the *Logos*. Though the confines of the present study do not allow for a penetrating study of any one of the aforementioned themes, it will aim to provide a sufficient enough base according to Ratzinger's theological anthropology and a theology of encounter on which the next chapter can stand and from which conclusions can be drawn regarding Ratzinger's vision for evangelization.

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[1] Joseph Ratzinger, "Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation," 176.

As will become clear, for Ratzinger, the revelation of the *Logos* as person, as a "Who," reveals the "Why," the depth of man's need for faith. One must understand something of what the human person is supposed to be, and therefore, why he is in need, if one is going to understand how to approach evangelization today. The *Logos'* revelation as person lays the foundation for "How" evangelization must take shape in order to be true to the *Logos*. Before one can properly address any question of method ("how?"), one must consider the content ("what?", or, better said, "who?"). This exercise, as will be seen, not only casts light on missionary motive or desire ("Why should one even care to consider the far off possibility that *Logos* took flesh in Jesus Christ?"), but also lays the foundation for "how" evangelization can move forward with the *Logos* and according to the "logic" of the *Logos,* the "logic" of *communio*.

1.   **Anthropology**

1.1   A Christological Starting Point for a Theological Anthropology

In his 2013 article "Human Embodiment and Trinitarian Anthropology," Gerard O'Shea notes that the *General Directory for Catechesis* calls for catechesis guided by a Trinitarian Christocentrism. He goes on to explain that in the realm of catechetics, this means "that it is about bringing human beings into relationship with the Blessed Trinity, through Christ."[2] While O'Shea follows the trajectory of the *General Directory for Catechesis* and applies the expression to both anthropology and catechesis, with regards to anthropology, Ratzinger/Benedict XVI has no other starting point than a Trinitarian Christocentrism.

For Ratzinger, the primary theological reference point, even with regard to anthropology, is always the Incarnation of the *Logos*.[3] In proceeding this way, Ratzinger always aims to move from and within the heart of the Church, while striving to remain faithful to the original and

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[2] Gerard O'Shea, "Human Embodiment and Trinitarian Anthropology — Six Implications for Religious Education," *Studia Elkie* 15, no. 4 (2013), 456.

[3] Devlin, "The Theology of Human Personhood According to Joseph Ratzinger," 62.

enduring impetus of Vatican II — of which Ratzinger sees *Gaudium et Spes* §22 as a key for reading the whole Council in a Christocentric light.[4] In his commentary on *Gaudium et Spes* §22, Ratzinger points out the novelty of this article's statement, "The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light"[5]:

> We are probably justified in saying that here for the first time in an official document of the magisterium, a new type of completely Christocentric theology appears. On the basis of Christ this dares to present theology as anthropology and only becomes radically theological by including man in discourse about God by way of Christ, thus manifesting the deepest unity of theology.[6]

The generally "theologically reserved" text of *Gaudium et Spes* reaches new heights, and provides the basis for a theological anthropology in light of Christ. This theological anthropology is profoundly christocentric, which does not mean it is not also profoundly Trinitarian. In his commentary on *Dei Verbum*, Ratzinger highlights the manner in which the document is written in Christocentric terms, though it should not be taken to be a one-sided view:

> Christ is described finally as the mediator of revelation and the fullness of revelation itself — it does not present a one-sided Christocentric view. If, however, one wished to consider it as Christocentric, then this should, at any rate, be understood wholly in the Pauline sense: Christ stands in the centre as mediator, his "place" is characterized by the mediating word *per*; he enfolds us in the dimension of the Spirit, and our being in him means at the same time that we have been led to the Father. Thus, on the one hand, the pneumatological dimension is not overlooked here, this emerging naturally from a Christology of the resurrection as a correction to a one-sided Christology of the incarnation, and at the same time the theocentric position is given appropriate emphasis, towards which the Christocentric view, properly understood, is necessarily orientated.[7]

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[4] Cf. Rowland, *Catholic Theology*, 94.

[5] *Gaudium et Spes*, §22.

[6] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Dignity of the Human Person," in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol. V, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (New York: Crossroad, 1989), 159.

[7] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 172.

Said another way, the movement of revelation "proceeds from God (the Father), comes to us through Christ, and admits us to the fellowship of God in the Holy Spirit."[8] While this excerpt deals with divine revelation, it can easily be applied to anthropology. A Christocentric approach naturally leads into Trinitarian mystery. Hence it becomes clear that Ratzinger's conception of Christocentrism aligns with the intention of the Council, and is in no way exclusive of the Trinity, but is, rather, the way into a Trinitarian understanding of revelation, catechesis, anthropology, etc.

With regard to anthropology, one might object that a starting point in Christology — a distinctly theological starting point — risks, as Anne Devlin puts it, not "speaking about man as such."[9] Ratzinger anticipates this critique and agrees that often Christ is seen as "the simply unique ontological exception which must be treated as such."[10] By way of refutation, Ratzinger follows the methodological insight provided by Teilhard de Chardin who, reflecting on the discovery of radium in the natural sciences, asks if this discovery is an anomaly or if it opens the way for a new physics. According to de Chardin, if the discovery had been dismissed as an anomaly, modern physics would not have come to be. Making a Christological connection, Ratzinger observes:

> Something methodologically decisive for all human thinking becomes visible here. The seeming exception is in reality very often the symptom that shows us the insufficiency of our previous schema of order, which helps us to break open this schema and to conquer a new realm of reality. The exception shows us that we have built our closets too small, as it were, and that we must break them open and go on in order to see the whole. This is the meaning of Christology from its origin: what is disclosed in Christ, whom faith certainly presents as unique, is not only a speculative exception; what is disclosed in truth is what the riddle of the human person really intends.[11]

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[8] Ratzinger, "Revelation Itself," 172.
[9] Devlin, "The Theology of Human Personhood," 63.
[10] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 113.
[11] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 114.

Ratzinger's argument sounds oddly similar to to that of Boeve's theology of interruption.[12] However, Ratzinger speaks of interruption in order to give credence to Christology in the realm of anthropology in general, as opposed to the manner in which Boeve's theory challenges the faith itself. The uniqueness of Christ, his radical particularity, is not an anomaly that should be considered an exception to the rule and disregarded, but is, rather, he who breaks open the insufficiency of previous schemas and widens the horizon. It is Christ alone, who Scripture presents as the "last Adam," the "second Adam," the "definitive Adam" who is the "image of God," who "alone appears [as] the complete answer to the question about what the human being is…He is the definitive human being, and creation is, as it were, a preliminary sketch that points to him."[13] Christ is not the exception, but is, from his exceptional position, the rule. If Christ is "the fulfillment of the entire human being, then the Christological concept of person is an indication for theology of how person is to be understood as such."[14] From here, Ratzinger provides three insights shaped by Christology that open into a Trinitarian anthropology:

1. *Image, Spirit, Relationality* — While the second creation account in Genesis 2 notes that human beings come from the "earth," into which God breathes his life, the first account speaks of the human being as created in God's "image and likeness" (Gn. 1:26-27). In this, Ratzinger sees that "the human being is directly related to God…Each human being is known by God and loved by him. Each is willed by God, and each is God's image."[15] He goes on to point out that an image, by its very nature, points to that which is beyond itself and "manifests something that it itself is not. Thus the image of God means, first of all, that human beings cannot be closed in on themselves…To be the image of God implies relationality…It means the capacity for relationship; it is the human capacity for God…[They are] most profoundly human when they step out of themselves and become capable of addressing God on familiar terms…The image of God also means that human persons are beings of word and of

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[12] See Ch. 1, section 3.2 of this study.

[13] Ratzinger, '*In the Beginning…*', 48. See also Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 114.

[14] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 114.

[15] Ratzinger, '*In the Beginning…*', 45.

love, beings moving toward Another, oriented to giving themselves to the Other and only truly receiving themselves back in real self-giving."[16] He notes that the difference between matter and spirit is that the matter is thrown upon itself, while spirit is that which "throws itself forth, guides itself or designs itself."[17] In other words, spirit not only *is,* like matter *is,* but spirit reaches beyond itself and, in so doing, spirit comes to itself, "being with the other is its form of being with itself."[18] Spirit is that which leads beyond itself, it is relativity. As body/soul composite beings, human beings are, in their very nature, personal beings. Hence, human *being* and human *person* cannot be severed. It is of the nature of the human being, as such, to be person. Human being is personal being, or being-person. Human being is personal being because "relativity toward the other constitutes the human person. The human person is the event or being of relativity. The more the person's relativity aims totally and directly at its final goal, at transcendence, the more the person is itself."[19] At this point, we have come full-circle. "Image of God" means more than relationship between human beings, but that the person, the human being who is not only biological material, has, by his personal nature, the possibility of relationship with the Other, with God. In this way, the (human) spirit comes to itself and is clearly set apart from animals.[20]

2. *One person, two natures —* In Christ, there are two natures (human and divine) in one person, the *Logos*. In Christ, all that is stated in no. 1 regarding image and spirit, is realized perfectly, and "such being-with-the-other does not cancel his being-with-himself, but brings it fully to itself…In Christ, in the man who is completely with God, human existence is not canceled, but comes to its highest possibility, which consists in transcending itself into the absolute and in the integration of its own relativity into the absoluteness of divine love."[21] As noted above, Scripture refers to

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[16] Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 47-48.

[17] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 115.

[18] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 115. See also Joseph Ratzinger, "Beyond Death," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture*, trans. W.J. O'Hara (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 12-13. Here, Ratzinger calls the soul "the dynamism of an unlimited openness, which at the same time means participation in infinity, in the eternal" (12).

[19] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 116.

[20] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 116. See also Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 48.

[21] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 116.

Christ as the "last Adam," the new Adam, and the definitive Adam, who takes up the whole of human nature and redeems it. Jesus Christ is the answer to what it means to be human — he is the way, the truth, and the life (cf. Jn. 14:6). Therefore, the relationship between creature and Christ, or of first to second Adam, is one that is marked by transition. Human beings are relative to the absolute and the eternal and, as such, their relativity "implies 'being on the way' in the manner of human history."[22] Insofar as human beings are beings-in-time, they are characterized by transition — "they are not yet themselves; they must ultimately become themselves."[23]

3. *From the Pure I/Thou to the "We"* — Theologically, as indicated in no. 2 with naming Christ the "final Adam," "the definitive human being," Christ is the "all-encompassing space in which the 'we' of human beings gathers on the way to the Father. He is not only an example that is followed, but he is the integrating space in which the 'we' of human beings gathers itself toward the 'you' of God."[24] Similarly, God is not a simple "I," but the "We" of Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.[25] On both sides, then, that of God and that of humanity united as a "we" in the one person of Christ, there is not a pure "I" or "you," but "we". "This trinitarian 'we,' the fact that even God exists only as a 'we,' prepares at the same time the space of the human 'we.'…Christ, the one, is here the 'we' into which Love, namely the Holy Spirit, gathers us and which means simultaneously being bound to each other and being directed toward the common 'you' of the one Father."[26]

At this point, Ratzinger has taken his reader from the creation account's statement that man is created in God's "image and likeness," into a Christology that examines the person of Jesus

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[22] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 116. See also Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 48-49.

[23] Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 49.

[24] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 117.

[25] On this point, see Ratzinger's "Concerning the Notion of Person," 104-110; and *Introduction to Christianity*, 182-83, where Ratzinger says the oneness of God lies on the plane of substance, and as such, the three-ness could not be sought there. "Seen as substance, God is One but…there exists in him the phenomenon of dialogue, of differentiation, and of relationship through speech…the God who is not only *logos* but also *dia-logos,* not only idea and meaning but speech and word in the reciprocal exchanges of partners in conversation…It now became clear that the dialogue, the *relatio,* stands beside the substance as an equally primordial form of being."

[26] Ratzinger, "Concerning the Notion of Person," 117. See also Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 48-49.

Christ as the one who perfectly realizes human *being* as *personal* being. Ratzinger's theological, and therefore, Trinitarian anthropology proceeds along these lines: (1) it is deeply marked by personalism; (2) rooted in the Incarnation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ; and (3) accessible in the "We" of the Church. Christ is the one in whom individual human beings are gathered and bound together by the personal Love of the Holy Spirit, for the sake of communion with the Father.

Insofar as *Logos* has been revealed in Jesus Christ, indeed, *is* Jesus Christ, Jesus stands as the directional arrow for all humanity. Hence Ratzinger says, "To John, being a Christian means being like the Son, becoming a son; that is, not standing on one's own and in oneself, but living completely open in the 'from' and 'toward.' Insofar as the Christian is a 'Christian,' this is true of him. And certainly such utterances will make him realize to how small an extent he is a Christian."[27] A Christology derived from Jesus' self-identification as "the Son," has opened into Trinitarian anthropology of distinction-in-relation, of being-in-relation that is the basis of unity ("The divine Unity is Triune"[28]). As will be seen below, the person whose "I" has been encountered by the Son, is in the state of becoming, in the Son, a being that does not belong to itself but is becoming itself by moving away from itself and into pure relatedness:

> What is so much yours as yourself, and what is so little yours as yourself? The most individual element in us — the only thing that belongs to us in the last analysis — our own "I," is at the same time the least individual element of all, for it is precisely our "I" that we have neither from ourselves nor for ourselves. The "I" is simultaneously what I have completely and what least of all belongs to me. Thus here again the concept of mere substance (=what stands in itself!) is shattered, and it is made apparent how being that truly understands itself grasps at the same time that *in* being itself does not belong to itself; that it only comes to itself by moving away from itself and finding its way back as relatedness to its true primordial state.[29]

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[27] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 187.

[28] *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* §254.

[29] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 190.

At this point, Ratzinger, connects the dots between dogma and life, between Trinitarian Christocentrism and anthropology, saying, "It is the nature of Christian existence to receive and to live life as relatedness and, thus, to enter into that unity which is the ground of all reality and sustains it."[30] This study will proceed by considering the relatedness of the Trinity, insofar as the persons of the Trinity are revealed as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Ratzinger further describes the person of the Trinity as being-from (Son), being-for (Father), and being-with (Holy Spirit). Drawing on the personalism of the Son, he says that God is, "by his very nature entirely being-for (Father), being-from (Son), and being-with (Holy Spirit). Man, for his part, is God's image precisely insofar as the 'from,' 'with,' and 'for' constitute the fundamental anthropological pattern."[31] The following will consider each aspect of the pattern in turn, as a way of providing a survey of the elements of Ratzinger's theological anthropology.

1.2   *Being-from (Son)*

Chapter 2 of the present study anticipated this section and explored the revelation of God in Jesus Christ as "the Son." Ratzinger grounds his understanding of "Son" as being-from via John's Gospel. In reflecting on John's Gospel, Ratzinger notes, "The Son as Son, and insofar as he is Son, does not proceed in any way from himself and so is completely one with the Father; since he is nothing beside him, claims no special position of his own…"[32] The Son's origin is "'from above — from God himself…Only God is truly his 'father,'"[33] hence, any talk about "being-from" is talk of sonship, of filial relationship that ultimately has as its prototype the eternally begotten Son and the eternally begetting Father. Hence, any human filial relationship, ultimately pales in comparison to that of the Son and the Father. The first Person of the Trinity does not beget the second Person subsequently, as if the first Person were "finished," and then proceeded to beget the second Person. Eternally begotten *is* the Son — the pure *act* of the Father's self-giving is the Son. Given what has already been said about the sonship of Jesus

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[30] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 188.

[31] Joseph Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture,* trans. Adrian J. Walker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 159-60.

[32] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 186.

[33] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives,* 7-8. See also *Introduction to Christianity,* 271-72.

Christ, this study will proceed to briefly consider the manner in which God bases human existence in the image of the Son as being-from.

Human existence, albeit in a manner that is far more dissimilar than it is similar to the eternal begotten-ness of the Son, [34] is patterned on the Son's being-from. First, we are told in Genesis 2 that man is formed by God from the dust of the ground. Man is from the earth, he is not pure spirit and he is also not a negative/demonic spirit, because God himself fashioned man from the dust. The relation to the dust also illustrates the unity of the whole human race — there is one humanity (from one earth) in the many human beings, and "throughout all the highs and lows of history the human being stays the same — earth, formed from earth, and destined to return to it."[35] But man is not only body, he is "spirit in body." Body is that which separates one human being from the other, it makes it impossible for one to be completely *in* the other, it is "a dissociating principle."[36] The body marks the space in which one person exists, where one person ends. At the same time, the body stands as a physical reminder that one did not make himself, but came from another — from others. Spirit, as noted above, is that which goes out of itself, beyond itself, that which depends on the other for "finding" itself. And so, in the context of human life marked by "spirit in body," it means "the one, whole man — is deeply marked by his belonging to the whole of mankind — the one 'Adam.'…Man is a being that can only 'be' by virtue of others."[37] Similarly, Möhler claims, "Man, as a being set entirely in a context of relationship, cannot come to himself through himself, although he cannot do it without himself either."[38] This "being set entirely in the context of relationship," refers according to Ratzinger, not only to the present moment, but to the past and the future, and not only in terms of soul, but body as well. For example, one's mental life depends upon "the medium of language," which one did not and could not simply invent on his own. Rather, language bears within itself the

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[34] See Ratzinger, *God and the World*, 272.

[35] Ratzinger, *'In the Beginning…'*, 42-43.

[36] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 245.

[37] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 246.

[38] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 246. This leads into a reflection by Ratzinger on Möhler's contemporary, Franz von Baader. Von Baader renounced the Cartesian mode of pure reason, a reason that claims by self-awareness/self-knowledge alone, one can deduce the knowledge of God. Von Baader, rather, argues that the Cartesian "Cogito, ergo sum" ("I think, therefore I am") should be changed into "Cogitor, ergo sum" ("I am thought, therefore I am"). "Only from man's being known," Ratzinger says, "can his knowledge and he himself be understood" (246-47).

contribution of the whole history of humanity and it is this history into which the individual man is submerged.[39] At the same time, man lives for the future and could not exist without a future.[40] For Ratzinger, the Cartesian man-monad simply does not exist. There is no self-made man who "plans himself anew from square one of his own freedom…who keeps starting again from scratch."[41] Man only exists within a framework of human life that holds him and molds him, and from which he is brought forth.

In addition to biological, linguistic, and historical considerations of being-from, Ratzinger speaks of the personal nature of humanity's being-from inasmuch as this is manifest in love. In doing so, he frequently returns to the image of the mother. Motherhood is not a purely biological reality or responsibility, but a spiritual one as well. Biology may give life, but the human being is that which needs more than a "first birth," but an "appropriate love and thereby a way to grow to human maturity."[42] He says:

> The life a mother gives to her child is not just physical [biological] life; she gives total life when she takes the child's tears and turns them into smiles. It is only when life has been accepted and perceived as accepted that it becomes also acceptable. Man is that strange creature that needs not just physical birth but also appreciation if he is to subsist.[43]

From a psychological perspective, Conrad Baars claims, "Biological birth is not enough. *Psychic birth* through authentic affirmation is an absolute necessity for one to be capable of finding true human happiness in this life."[44] Without the loving affirmation that brings about a "psychic rebirth," or the perceived acceptance of one's life by another, life can sink into a hopeless despair. Similarly, Josef Pieper notes that the underlying reality in every expression of love is the affirmation of the "good" of the other, "It is a way of turning to him or it and saying, 'It's good that you exist; it's good that you are in this world.'…what we need over and above sheer

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[39] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 247.
[40] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 247.
[41] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 248.
[42] Ratzinger, *God and the World*, 274.
[43] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 80.
[44] Conrad Baars, *Born Only Once* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2016), 7.

existence is: to be loved by another person."[45] Reflecting on this need, Ratzinger says, "Being is not good, especially if you have not experienced it as welcome, have not had a 'Yes' said to you, that is, if you have not been loved."[46] Here, one touches the fragility of being human and existing within the "from," but not only the need for love in the present, but in the future as well. Precisely here, one encounters another problem: any affirmation another human being can offer is merely finite, and his infinite need is unmasked. This, in fact, marks the great fear of every man and woman, that fear of losing love,[47] a fear that seems like an inevitable prospect vis-à-vis death. This fear lies in the thought, according to Ratzinger, that "man has no permanence in himself and consequently can only continue to exist in another but that his existence in another is only shadowy and once again not final, because this other must perish, too."[48] Man ultimately cannot live only from the affirmation, the acceptance of his being, by another finite human being. His desire extends further to what appears to be beyond his nature. He longs for an infinite affirmation of his existence that can carry him across the void — a never-ending *from,* an eternal "yes," capable of holding him in existence even beyond biological decay. Is such a hope tenable? Is not the absurdity of man's existence the result of such a sorry state? Is Sartre's anthropology of despair the true anthropology? Is it the case, to quote Hesse, that "Life is loneliness…Everyone is alone"?[49] In some manner, man must experience the affirmation of his existence from another, indeed, from the Other.

The human person needs a "supernatural" love that is greater than any natural "yes" to his being in order for his existence to be anything other than absurd. One experiences this love in Jesus Christ. Ratzinger says:

Like every love, "supernatural" love comes from a "yes" that has been given to me but in this case from a greater "you" than any human being. It is the irruption of God's "yes" into my life through Jesus Christ's "yes" to us who had distanced ourselves from God's

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[45] Josef Pieper, *Josef Pieper: An Anthology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 28, 30.
[46] Joseph Ratzinger, "On Hope," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture,* trans. Esther Tillman (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 30.
[47] Ratzinger, "On Hope," 30.
[48] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 303.
[49] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 300.

"yes," a "yes" upheld in the incarnation, the cross and the resurrection. *Agape* thus presupposes that the crucified love of the Lord has become perceptible to me, that it touches me through faith.[50]

Not only is man incapable of living entirely from himself as a self-sufficient man-monad, in the end, he is unable to "live on" through the "yes" of other human beings. In fact, the finitude of the human "yes" can always be a cause of doubt and question: Is it really good that I exist? Does this person really know the whole truth about me? If not, is this person's love true? If this person knew the whole truth about me, would he/she still love me? Hence, Ratzinger points out that "Love alone is of no avail…if truth is not on its side. Only when truth and love are in harmony can man know joy. For it is truth that makes man free."[51] Man needs a "supernatural" gift, a "supernatural" "yes" capable of seeing the whole of man and affirming the whole of him past, present, and future. In short, man needs a "yes" from God that is capable of affirming and holding him in existence. Jesus Christ issues forth this "yes." Regarding God's "yes," Ratzinger says, "One who is loved so that the other identifies his life with this love and no longer desires to live if he is deprived of it; one who is loved even unto death — such a one knows that he is truly loved. But if God so loves us, then we are loved in truth. Then love is truth, and truth is love. Then life is worth living."[52]

1.3   Being-for

According to Ratzinger, the Father is being-for (pro-existence) and the Son is His ambassador. Jesus Christ, the new Moses,[53] who, from the Father's bosom has seen the Father

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[50] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 101. See also Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 350.

[51] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 80.

[52] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 81.

[53] In his Introduction to *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* Benedict XVI argues that for Israel, the prophet was not a soothsayer — a teller of future events. Rather, the prophet was to show the face of God, "and in so doing…shows us the path that we have to take" (4). Moses spoke with the Lord "'face to face,' as a man speaks to his friend," but Moses was not granted the ability to actually behold God's face. The new Moses will be granted this type of vision, in fact, this will be the sign of the new Moses, that "He lives before the face of God, not just as a friend, but as a Son; he lives in the most intimate unity with the Father" (6). Jesus fulfills the melancholy that hangs over Dt. 34:10, "And there has not arisen a prophet since in Israel like Moses, whom the Lord knew face to face."

(cf. Jn. 1:18), reveals the Father (cf. Jn. 14:9; 1:18; 10:30; 12:45) and loses "his own identity in the role of ambassador; he is nothing but the ambassador who represents the other without interposing his own individuality."[54] The Son who is completely "from another," is, therefore, completely "for." His identity as Son does not proceed in any way from himself and stands open "toward" the Father and, hence, "for" others. Benedict XVI notes:

> True, no one has ever seen God as he is. And yet God is not totally invisible to us; he does not remain completely inaccessible. God loved us first…and this love of God has appeared in our midst. He has become visible in as much as he "has sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him" (1 Jn 4:9). God has made himself visible: in Jesus we are able to see the Father.[55]

Following the testimony of Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, the fullness of revelation in the Incarnate Son is precisely the way to come to an understanding of the Father's being-for. The Son reveals the Father perfectly, and in this way, allows one to catch a glimpse of the Love that transforms. Hence, for Ratzinger, Christocentrism provides the path into the Mystery of the Trinity. The Son who is entirely from the Father's "for," reveals the Father's "for" in the Incarnation.

Given Ratzinger's understanding of Christology as rooted in Jesus' self-identification as "the Son," Jesus identifies with and expresses the Father's being-for, which is extended by the Father into creation in the giving of his only Son (cf. Jn. 3:16). The Son, as the event of relativity, the act of being-from the Father's being-for, is, in the Incarnation, the manifestation of the extent of the Father's being-for humanity, insofar as the Son identifies with the Father's being-for and is given "for the many." The total relativity of the Son's existence as being-from and being-for is captured in the titles "the Word," "the one sent," and "I am." All indicate the "merging of the person in his work and in the total coincidence of the doing with the person himself, who keeps back nothing for himself but gives himself completely in his work…The

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[54] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 188.
[55] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §17.

'servant' aspect is no longer explained as a deed, behind which the person of Jesus remains aloof; it is made to embrace the whole existence of Jesus, so that his *being* itself is service. And precisely because this being, as a totality, is nothing but service, it is sonship."[56] The Son's perfect obedience is a consecration, a giving over of his human will to the divine will in such a way that it "expresses both total unity with the Father and total existence for the world. Jesus belongs entirely to God, and that is what makes him entirely 'for all.'"[57] For Ratzinger, being-for is the nexus between the theology of the Incarnation (Christology) and the theology of the Cross (soteriology), the dynamic tension between which is so often severed.[58] He says, "We have found that the *being* of Christ ('Incarnation' theology!) is *actualitas,* stepping beyond oneself, the exodus of going out from self; it is, not a being that rests in itself, but the act of being sent, of being son, of serving. Conversely, this 'doing' is not just 'doing' but 'being;' it reaches down into the depths of being and coincides with it."[59] *Being* Son is the pure relativity of being-from and being-for, wherein "being" and "doing" coincide and are one. To be "Son" is to be "from" and, simultaneously, "for." As Benedict XVI puts it, "The Father's act of 'giving' is fully accomplished in the love of the Son 'to the end' (Jn. 13:1), that is, to the Cross."[60] Christopher Ruddy argues that it is precisely the Cross that Jesus Christ's vicarious representation ("a representation standing for or in the place of something or someone else"[61]) is perfectly manifest — a revelation that allows for a Christology "centered on Christ's pro-existence as the one whose entire being is 'for' the service and salvation of the many, and an ecclesiology that sees the Church — in the words of Yves Congar that Ratzinger makes his own — as a '*pars pro toto'* and an 'minority in service of a majority.'"[62] An attempt will be made in what follows, however brief, at providing a basic overview of the Father's "being-for" (i.e. pro-existence) as manifest in the Son's "being-for" in and through his vicarious-representative suffering "for the many."

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[56] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 226. See also 188 and 203, and *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 319.
[57] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* 86-87.
[58] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 228-29.
[59] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 230.
[60] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 344.
[61] This is Christopher Ruddy's literal translation from the German *stellvertretung,* as indicated in his "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 564.
[62] Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 565.

In the realm of salvation history and its correlative soteriology, pro-existence appears most fully in the form of Jesus' vicarious representation, which was anticipated in the Old Testament. Ruddy holds that Ratzinger lays the foundation of his thought on vicarious representation in *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, where Ratzinger argues that salvation history's "fundamental law"[63] "is one of vicarious representation, which manifests itself in several dimensions: divine election; the relationship between the 'few' and the 'many'; and the exchange between Christ and humanity, as well as between the Church and the world."[64] As noted above, Israel was granted a special "sonship" by a patrimony of election over and above the common Fatherhood of God as Creator of all. Ruddy comments that Ratzinger follows Barth and Balthasar in holding that election must ultimately be determined by Christology, rather than the double predestination of salvation and damnation. Following Ratzinger's treatment in *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, Ruddy says, "A properly Christian understanding of election holds instead that God and humanity become visible and known in Christ, and that Christ is chosen [elected] to take on the burden of humanity's sin and death in exchange for humanity's salvation. Election…is always a predestination to happiness…is always for the sake of service and mission, not of self-aggrandizement: 'election is always, at bottom, election for others.'"[65] Being chosen on behalf of others [election] is the fundamental pattern or law of salvation history, as the healing of the whole takes place according to the "dialectical antitheses of the few and the many."[66] Ratzinger offers illustrations of the dialectic of the "few" and the "many" in both *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood* and in "Vicarious Representation." Ruddy provides a helpful summary of these insights:

> Ratzinger sees this pattern at work in, for instance, the relationship between pairs of brothers (Cain and Abel, Ishmael and Isaac, Esau and Jacob) that receives its definitive resolution-through-reversal in Luke's parable of the Prodigal Son (or Two Brothers), in which the rejection of the one brother becomes the means for the election of both. Scripture as a whole, Ratzinger writes in "Stellvertretung" ["Vicarious Representation"],

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[63] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, trans. W.A. Glen-Doepel (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993), 79.

[64] Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 567.

[65] Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 567-68.

[66] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 75.

bears witness to this salvific law. Preeminent in the Old Testament are the figures of Moses in Deuteronomy and of the Suffering Servant in Isaiah; Moses 'dies outside the promised land as one struck vicariously by God's wrath and made an outcast,' while Second Isaiah — the "culmination" of this theme in the Old Testament — depicts the Suffering Servant as one who also dies as an outcast and, in so doing, "receives 'the many,' that is, humankind itself, as his portion."[67]

Ruddy notes that Ratzinger's understanding of election within the "few—many" relationship centers itself on the concept of exchange, wherein the rejection of one is exchanged for the acceptance of the other. And, this exchange is not without freedom. Rather, vicarious representation always includes a human agency that chooses love and suffering "for the sake of others."[68]

With regard to salvation history, vicarious representation reaches its high point in Jesus Christ, from whom "New Testament theology is first and foremost a theology of vicarious representation."[69] With regard to Jesus Christ's vicarious representation, Ratzinger says:

> Jesus Christ, the only one worthy of salvation, now takes its complete opposite, the *whole* of damnation, on himself in a sacred exchange…In the normal course of events God must damn the sinner and elect the just man; in Christ, however, there takes place the paradoxical miracle of grace which reverses this: he who alone is just and thus alone is chosen (because the only one worthy), Christ, becomes rejected, takes the fate of the rejection of all upon himself, and thus renders all in his place — in him and through him — elected, just as he had become rejected in us and through us.[70]

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[67] Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 568. See *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 78 and Joseph Ratzinger, "Vicarious Representation," *Letter and Spirit* 7, (2011) 210-16. To bring in the more liturgical element, one could also note, here, the Temple sacrifices of the Old Testament with the sacrifices of bulls and goats as an exchange for the atonement of men. In the end, these sacrifices are inadequate, yet they do point to a positive content that is "signified and intended in that cult," and which would be definitively surpassed in Christ's sacrificial offering of himself. See Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* 229-ff (quote from 232).
[68] Ruddy, "'For the Many': The Vicarious-Representative Heart of Joseph Ratzinger's Theology," 569.
[69] Ratzinger, "Vicarious Representation," 212.
[70] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 76-77. See also *Introduction to Christianity,* 282.

Ratzinger is careful to avoid casting a sinister light upon the Father, as can often be the case in the vulgarized form of Anselm of Canterbury's (ca. 1033-1109) "satisfaction theory." He summarizes Anselm's argument by saying that man's sin infinitely offends the infinite God, but man cannot produce an infinite reparation — "he can offend infinitely…but he cannot produce an infinite reparation."[71] Anselm addresses the problem of the disorder and man's eternal imprisonment by finding his answer to the dilemma in Christ: God becomes man and removes the injustice from the inside by making possible what was impossible for man on his own, an infinite reparation.[72] The vulgarized form sees the Cross as "a mechanism of injured and restored right…an attitude that insists on a precise balance between debit and credit…Many devotional texts actually force one to think that Christian faith in the Cross imagines a God whose unrelenting righteousness demanded a human sacrifice, the sacrifice of his own Son, and one turns away in horror."[73] Is the Cross the mechanism whereby the Son endures the wrath of the Father in place of sinful humanity in order to restore justice? Or, does this "satisfaction theory" cast a sinister light on the God-is-love thesis? Does it not seem to destroy the entire concept of being-from, being-for, and being-with?

Ratzinger declares false the conception of the Cross as mechanism of injured right. The Cross represents the "radical twist" that Christianity effects in the history of religion, where expiation usually requires expiatory actions on the part of men who are aware of, acknowledge, and try to remove feelings of guilt before the divine via conciliatory actions.[74] The Cross marks "something new, something unheard of":

> God does not wait until the guilty come to be reconciled; he goes to meet them and reconciles them…[The Cross] stands there, not as the work of expiation that mankind offers to the wrathful God, but as the expression of that foolish love of God's that gives

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[71] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 232.
[72] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 233.
[73] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 281.
[74] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 282.

itself away to the point of humiliation in order thus to save man; it is *his* approach to us, not the other way about.[75]

And perhaps more profoundly:

> [The Cross] is the radical nature of the love that gives itself completely, of the process in which one is what one does and does what one is; it is the expression of a life that is completely being for others.[76]

The Cross is not the expression of a vengeful God whose wrath is satisfied in the destruction of the Son, but the radical form of love that "is the culmination of that turning of God against himself in which he gives himself in order to raise man up and save him."[77] In other words, the Cross is the expression of the Father's complete giving of himself, in the Son, to save sinful humanity. Taking up the imagery of the heart, Ratzinger notes the Stoics saw the task of the heart as self-preservation. The pierced heart of Jesus overturns this definition, as His heart "is not concerned with self-preservation but with self-surrender. It saves the world by opening itself…by giving itself away."[78] The Cross breaks apart Aristotle's image of the monotonous and disengaged God, and confronts the man-monad with an apparent "foolishness" that the man-monad condemns and rejects. It is mankind who rejects God's elected One. Yet in the chosen One's free decision to "become rejected in us and through us," to become one who takes upon himself the wages of sin (death = *Shêol* = isolation), i.e. rejection as remuneration, isolation as what the man-monad wanted, the great reversal takes place — "The rejected man is now chosen in his very rejection."[79] God's elected One (i.e. incarnate Love) has entered death's domain, the domain of willful rejection, as he who has allowed himself to be rejected and who is truly rejected, in order to choose/elect the rejected. In this way, one can see why Ratzinger repeatedly returns, almost as a refrain, to 1 Cor. 15:28, "that God may be all in all." The Cross, which seems

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[75] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 283.

[76] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 282.

[77] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §12. See also Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 206-7.

[78] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Mystery of Easter: Substance and Foundation of Devotion to the Sacred Heart," *Behold the Pierced One,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 69.

[79] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 78.

to be the ultimate sign of man's rejection of God and the manifestation of a life that, at least superficially, had been a complete failure, is "the point at which one can actually touch God," as "the cosmic Nothing is the true All, because 'for' is the really divine thing."[80] Love that is completely poured out and rejected as nothing, is precisely the point in which all can touch God because all have rejected Him in some way. The cosmic Nothing (being-for — pro-existence) that holds nothing for itself and gives itself completely, altruistically, and gratuitously, is the true All because the gift is complete. Being-for unites Nothing and All, "elect" and "reject," Incarnation and Cross, and Christology and soteriology.

1.4   Being-with

Finally, Ratzinger's Trinitarian anthropology describes the Holy Spirit as a being-with.[81] By way of introducing the subject, Ratzinger notes that "pneumatology" and "spirituality" are connected in that the Holy Spirit (the "object" of pneumatology) is "recognizable in the way in which he forms human life [i.e. spirituality]…Speaking about the Holy Spirit includes looking at him in man, to whom he has given himself."[82] Who is this Holy Spirit recognizable in human life? Who is this Holy Spirit who is operative in the body of the Church? Before answering such questions, Ratzinger notes the difficulty in speaking about the Spirit who seems to be even more mysterious than Jesus Christ, and about whom talk often vacillates between speculation and fantasy. Therefore, in order to speak "meaningfully, reliably, and defensibly about the Holy Spirit," Ratzinger holds that three conditions must be upheld: (1) Talk of the Holy Spirit cannot be pure theory but must be in reference to experienced reality that has been "interpreted and communicated in thought;" (2) Experience of the Spirit must be tested — discerned; (3) The experience must be tested "in front of and standing in the context of the whole…one submits the experience of 'spirit' to the entirety of the Church."[83] In seeking a reliable foothold, Ratzinger

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[80] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 256-57.

[81] It is worth noting that Ratzinger writes far less on the Holy Spirit than he does on Jesus Christ. Joseph Murphy makes this point and provides a helpful bibliography of Ratzinger's primary treatises on the Holy Spirit in his first footnote in *Christ Our Joy: The Theological Vision of Pope Benedict XVI* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), 139.

[82] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*: Concerning the Relationship of Pneumatology and Spirituality in Augustine," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture*, trans. Peter Casarella (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 168. See also Joseph Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* trans. Brian McNeil (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), 120.

[83] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 168-69.

settles upon Augustine's thought that has endured for 1500 years, and from whom he draws the foundation of his understanding of the Holy Spirit and the corresponding anthropological implications. Augustine treats the Holy Spirit in a threefold manner: as *communio,* as love, and as gift.

Augustine begins his treatment on the Holy Spirit by exploring the name "Holy Spirit" itself, from which he draws his observation about the Holy Spirit as *communio.* While "Father" and "Son" indicate characteristic uniqueness, the words "Holy" and "Spirit" seem to serve as descriptors for God in a generic fashion, as "God is spirit" (cf. Jn. 4:24) and "being spirit and being holy is the essential description of God."[84] Augustine sees the answer to the question about the identity of the Holy Spirit in the tension created by this dilemma, for "when he is named by that which is the divinity of God, by what the Father and Son have in common, then his essence is just that, the *communio* of Father and Son. The particularity of the Holy Spirit is evidently that the Holy Spirit is what the Father and Son have in common. His particularity is being unity."[85] The Holy Spirit is mutuality. The Holy Spirit is that which is shared by the Father and the Son *in a person*. Ratzinger explains:

> The mediation of Father and Son comes to full unity not when it is seen in a universal ontic *consubstantialitas* but as *communio.* In other words, it is not derived from a universally metaphysical substance but from the person. According to the nature of God, it is intrinsically personal. The dyad returns to unity in the Trinity without breaking up the dialogue. Dialogue is actually confirmed in just this way. A mediation that backs into unity that was not another Person would break up the dialogue as dialogue. The Spirit is Person as unity, unity as Person.[86]

How are Father and Son united? How is their mutual self-giving, how is their mutuality, expressed in such a way that it is a personal unity? The dyad returns to unity, the dialogue is truly dialogue and therefore is truly communication, only through the mediation of another

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[84] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 170.
[85] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 170.
[86] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 170-71.

Person. If union came about in and through a substance, it would no longer be dialogue, and, hence, it would not be personal. The *communio* of the Father and Son, their personal union, is the Holy Spirit. Said another way, Ratzinger notes that the Holy Spirit "is that which is common, the unity of the Father and the Son, the unity in Person. The Father and the Son are one with each other by going out beyond themselves; it is in the third Person, in the fruitfulness of their act of giving, that they are One."[87] With due caution given the limitation of analogy, one can see something of this mystery in the reality of family life. Here, in the sexual act between husband and wife, a mutual exchange of self-giving and self-receiving personal love, the act itself has the capacity to generate a person (the mutual act of self-giving is not person, but has the potential to create new life). That person, the child, is, in a certain sense, an icon of relativity and of personal mediation. The child is the image of the act of personal love *in person.* The child is the living image of the "yes" of the union between husband and wife, and husband and wife are in union, and come back into union, in a personal way (as father and mother) only in the reality of the child. Similarly, in returning to the theology of the Trinity and Ratzinger's treatment of Augustine's pneumatology, Ratzinger says, "Spirit is the unity that God gives himself. In this unity, he himself gives himself. In this unity, the Father and the Son give themselves back to one another."[88]

As *communio*, "The Holy Spirit does not represent a third reality somewhere next to or between the other two. He leads us to the unity of God."[89] With this point, Ratzinger engages with the thought of the Italian abbot, Joachim of Fiore (ca. 1130-1202), who held that the definitive form of the Church had not yet come, and that following the kingdom of the Father (Old Testament) and the kingdom of the Son (hierarchical church established by the Son), a kingdom of universal peace and freedom would come in the Holy Spirit.[90] Rather than separating the Word from the Spirit, as Joachim had done, Ratzinger holds that "the Christianity of the Spirit is the Christianity of the lived Word. The Spirit dwells in the Word, not in a departure from the Word. The Word is the location of the Spirit; Jesus is the source of the Spirit. The more

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[87] Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* 119.
[88] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 171.
[89] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," *Images of Hope: Meditations on Major Feasts,* trans. John Rock and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 65.
[90] See Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* 115-18.

we enter into him, the more really do we enter into the Spirit, and the Spirit enters into us."[91] Juxtaposing Irenaeus' "sketch of the trinitarian logic of history" with that of Joachim's reveals the converse of Joachim's position to be true:

> For Irenaeus, this [the trinitarian logic] is not an ascent from the Father to the Son and then finally to liberation, to the Spirit. Within history, the direction taken by the Persons is the exact opposite of this: the Spirit is present at the beginning as an instruction and guidance of man that is as yet scarcely perceptible. He leads to the Son and, through the Son, to the Father.[92]

For Ratzinger, the union between Spirit and Word, along with the Spirit's "disappearing into the Son and into the Father,"[93] become bastions for a proper discernment of spirits, and prevent the possibility of an entirely separate pneumatology.

In a second attempt at understanding something of the Holy Spirit, Augustine argues that the Holy Spirit can also be called by the name "love" (*caritas*). Ratzinger traces Augustine's treatment of several verses from 1 John 4, namely:[94]

- Verse 12: If we love one another, God abides in us…
- Verse 16b: God is love, and he who abides in love, God abides in him.
- Verse 13: We recognize that we abide in him and he in us because he has given us of his spirit.

Ratzinger explains:

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[91] Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* 118.
[92] Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* 119.
[93] Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ,* 121.
[94] Scripture quotes are direct from Ratzinger in "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 172.

In the first instance, love gives abiding; in the second instance, love gives the Holy Spirit. In the above verses, *pneuma* takes the place of love and vice versa. Or literally: "The Holy Spirit, of whom he has given us, causes us to abide in God, and God in us. But love does this. He is, therefore, the God who is love." To clarify, Augustine adds that Romans 5:5 states that the love of God is poured out through the Holy Spirit who is given to us. It appears to me that these observations are correct in principle. The gift of God is the Holy Spirit. The gift of God is love. God communicates himself in the Holy Spirit as love.[95]

On a practical note, if love is the basic characteristic of the Holy Spirit, then love is the primary criterion by which one can proceed in a discernment of spirits. What is more, because love is abiding (i.e. constancy), love proves itself not in vacillation, disorder, or erratic behavior (i.e. not in any one moment alone), but over time. Ratzinger sees hereto connection between love and the endurance of truth, saying, "Love in the full sense can exist only where constancy exists, where abiding exists. Because love has to do with abiding, it cannot take place anywhere except where there is eternity."[96] As a final point, Ratzinger comments on Augustine's treatment of 1 Jn. 4:7, which states "Love is from God." Verse 16b, as noted above, says, "God is love." Juxtaposing the verses, then, Augustine notes that on one hand God is love, and on the other, love is from God. Putting these statements together, "love is 'God from God,'" which, for Ratzinger, "explains once again that this 'God from God' — God as the power to emerge and become near… — is the Holy Spirit and that we may receive what is said about *agape* as an equivalent elucidation of what the Holy Spirit is."[97] If this is the case, then, the profound interrelationship between being-from, being-for, and being-with becomes apparent in the God who is Love in personal *communio.*

Finally, Augustine treats the Holy Spirit as Gift. Here, Augustine refers primarily to Jesus' interaction with the Samaritan woman (Jn. 4:7-14), wherein Jesus repeatedly utilizes the words "gift," "give," and "given." Augustine compares this text with that in Jn. 7:37, which reads "If anyone thirsts, let him come to me and drink. As Scripture states, from his body a

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[95] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 172-73.
[96] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 173.
[97] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 174.

stream of living water will flow," and v. 39: "He says this about the Spirit, whom those who came to believe in him were to receive." To this, Augustine adds 1 Cor. 12:13, which says, "All of us have been given to drink of the one Spirit." Ratzinger now points out the relationship between Christology and pneumatology, saying, "The crucified Lord is the generative source of life for the world. The well of the Spirit is the crucified Christ. From him each Christian becomes the well of the Spirit."[98] Christ is the well and the Spirit is the living water. This means the Christian, he who no longer lives in his own "I" but whose "I" has been and is becoming conformed to Christ's, is also a well of the Spirit from whom men have access to the Holy Spirit who alone satisfies their infinite thirst.[99] This point must be developed further. Additionally one must also note Ratzinger's treatment on the Ascension, which he calls "the gesture of blessing."[100] Christian iconography of the Ascension frequently portrays Jesus' raised hands in the gesture of blessing (cf. Lk. 24:50). Ratzinger says, "He blesses; he has become blessing for us."[101] This explains the seemingly odd joy of the apostles, for they are ones blessed and not abandoned, ones who "knew that they were forever blessed and stood under blessing hands wherever they went."[102] This blessing can be a new experience of nearness, despite the Ascension (that "going away"), because Jesus *gives* the Counselor (cf. Jn. 14:16; Lk. 11:13). The blessing offered by Christ in the mystery of the Ascension is the Holy Spirit, who is the *gift* of Father and Son.[103] In this way, the gift of the Holy Spirit, the blessing of God in giving the Holy Spirit, brings joy. Joy, as noted by Ratzinger, is the harmony one finds within himself when he accepts himself. However, no person can completely accept himself unless he has first been accepted by another — because another has said "yes" to him.[104] The joy of the apostles at the Ascension must stand as the fruit of a "yes" given to them. This "yes" that is the *gift* of blessing is nothing other than the *gift* of God himself — "what really matters is that God as gift is actually

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[98] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 175.

[99] cf. Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio*," 175.

[100] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Beginning of a New Nearness," *Images of Hope: Meditations on Major Feasts,* trans. John Rock and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 56. See also Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*, 280-ff.

[101] Ratzinger, "The Beginning of a New Nearness," 56.

[102] Ratzinger, "The Beginning of a New Nearness," 56.

[103] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio,*" 181.

[104] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 79-80.

God; in other words, that the Holy Spirit is divine."[105] And, "where joylessness rules and humor dies, we may be certain that the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Jesus Christ, is not present."[106]

2. Freedom and Truth

2.1 Contemporary Definitions of Freedom

Karl Marx defines freedom as the ability "to do one thing today and another tomorrow; to hunt in the morning, fish in the afternoon, breed cattle in the evening and criticize after dinner, just as I please."[107] Similarly, Ratzinger holds that popular opinion defines freedom today, "as the right and the opportunity to do just what we wish and not to have to do anything which we do not wish to do…Freedom would mean that our own will is the sole norm of our action and that the will not only can desire anything but also has the chance to carry out its desire."[108] Here, one has arrived at a postmodern understanding of freedom, as that which need not have recourse to reason, or to nature. How did this separation between freedom and truth, between will and reason, between history and being come about? A full treatment on this topic is not possible within the scope of this study, so a brief survey following Ratzinger's assessment will have to suffice.

Ratzinger begins his history of the development of the contemporary understanding of freedom by considering Martin Luther, and Luther's cry for the freedom of conscience in the face of the authority of the Church.[109] The Church, her structure and magisterium, were now seen, not as a support, but as an impediment to freedom. For Luther, "Redemption now meant

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[105] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit as *Communio,*" 176.

[106] Joseph Ratzinger, *The God of Jesus Christ*, 113. See also Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 84.

[107] Karl Marx and F. Engels. *Werke,* 39 vol. (Berlin, 1961-1971), 3:33, as quoted in Joseph Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture,* trans. Adrian J. Walker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 148.

[108] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 148.

[109] For a more thorough treatment of Ratzinger's historical survey, see Peter John McGregor, *Heart to Heart: The Spiritual Christology of Joseph Ratzinger* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick Publications, 2016), 244-49. See also Andrew T.J. Kaethler, "Freedom in Relationship: Joseph Ratzinger and Alexander Schmemann in Dialogue," *New Blackfriars* (2014), 398-401.

liberation, liberation from the yoke of a supra-individual order."[110] Next, Ratzinger treats the Enlightenment's cry for rationalism, at the bottom of which lies a Cartesian skepticism that tends to cast doubt on sense perception, tradition, and the like.[111] Descartes' *cogito ergo sum*[112] further opened the growing divide between being and knowing. The Church no longer holds a place of authority, and, "reason shall reign, and in the end no other authority is admitted than that of reason. Only what is accessible to reason has validity; what is not reasonable, that is, not accessible to reason, cannot be binding either."[113] Rationalism is the way to an enlightened form of freedom and, as Ratzinger points out, Enlightenment rationalism would generally proceed in one of two socio-political philosophies. The first is what Ratzinger calls the "Anglo-Saxon current," "with its predominantly natural rights orientation and its proclivity toward constitutional democracy."[114] This understanding becomes the foundation of democracy, that "freedom is not bestowed on man from without. He is a bearer of rights because he is created free,"[115] and the individual, with his individual rights, must be protected from the community. The second procession of rationalism can be identified in Marxism. Marxism "proceeds from the principle that freedom is indivisible, hence, that it exists as such only when it is the freedom of all. Freedom is tied to equality."[116] Ratzinger goes on to note that the Marxist idea of individual freedom as dependent on the whole means that the struggle for freedom ultimately means changing the macro level.[117] In many ways, these Enlightenment projects have ground to a halt. The limitations of Marxism and democracy have been revealed, and a third trend within the Enlightenment pursuit of liberation now becomes dominant — anarchy. Ratzinger says, "The anarchist trend in the longing for freedom is growing in strength because the ordered forms of communal freedom are unsatisfactory. The grand promises made at the inception of modernity have not been kept."[118] Rousseau's concept of freedom in anarchy involves separating reason

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[110] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 151.
[111] See Rene Descartes, "Meditation I - Of the Things of Which We May Doubt," in *Meditations on First Philosophy* (New York: BN Publishing, 2007), 75-79.
[112] See Rene Descartes, "Part IV," in *Discourse on Method* (New York: BN Publishing, 2007), 31. See also Descartes, "Meditation III - Of God: That He Exists," in *Meditations on First Philosophy*, 92. Here, Descartes says, "I am because I doubt."
[113] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 152.
[114] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 152.
[115] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 152.
[116] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 154.
[117] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 154-55.
[118] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 156.

and will from nature, it is an anti-metaphysical position, that sees nature as anti-rational.[119] This attempt at freedom aims to sweepingly annul norms and to extend individual liberty.[120] Rousseau's anarchic movement aimed at autarchy, a radical particularism and the complete freedom of the individual. Postmodernism's rejection of the metanarrative, and its apparent separation of reason and nature results in a an apparent triumph of the will, unfettered by reason, over nature. As a final point, here, Ratzinger argues that Sartre's philosophy of freedom captures this radical understanding. He characterizes Sartre's philosophy as regarding:

> Man as condemned to freedom. In contrast to the animal, man has no "nature." The animal lives out its existence according to laws it is simply born with; it does not need deliberate what to do with its life. But man's essence is undetermined. It is an open question. I must decide myself what I understand by "humanity," what I want to do with it, and how I want to fashion it. Man has no nature, but is sheer freedom. His life must take some direction or other, but in the end it comes to nothing. This absurd freedom is man's hell…The isolation of a radical concept of freedom, which for Sartre was a lived experience, shows with all desirable clarity that liberation from the truth does not produce pure freedom, but abolishes it. Anarchic freedom, taken radically, does not redeem, but makes man a miscarried creature, a pointless being.[121]

In a most striking way, anarchic freedom manifests itself in gender ideology. Margaret McCarthy, in her article "Gender Ideology and the Humanum," traces the development of contemporary gender ideology through the decades, beginning with John Stuart Mill's argument that society has brought about the subjection of women, and moving to De Beauvoir's theory of gender as a "social construct," before addressing Firestone's turn away from addressing "outside" problems like society, eduction, etc. and considering the problem to be the female body itself (namely, its biological demands with regard to reproduction). McCarthy goes on to point out that Judith Butler takes both threads (external = society, and internal = body) and

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[119] McGregor, *Heart to Heart*, 247.
[120] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 166. To this point, one could add Derrida's definition of deconstructionism as an apt descriptor of postmodern freedom: "the dissolution of 'essentials' or 'essences.'" See Gerl-Falkovitz, "Recent Developments in International Feminist Philosophy," 2.
[121] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 156-57.

argues that the body itself is a social construct, throwing out the idea of the givenness of nature, and clearly a path "for a bodily construct *of one's own making*, with no opposing bodily evidence in the way."[122] At the bottom of it, person is now understood according to a radical individualism as a "self-maker."[123]

In response to this historical survey, Ratzinger asserts that while Austrian philosopher, Ernst Topitsch, held that no reasonable man could still, today, want to be like, or equal to God, "if we look more closely we must assert the exact opposite: the implicit goal of all of modernity's struggles for freedom is to be at last like a god who depends on nothing and no one, and whose own freedom is not restricted by that of another."[124] Within this thirst for freedom, however contorted by modernity and postmodernity, lies a fundamental truth that Topitsch denies: that the "thirst for freedom and liberation lives in every human being," and that "nothing from what has been attained really corresponds to our desire."[125] Following this historical assessment of the status of freedom, one is left to question: What is freedom, actually? Where does freedom come from? In order to come to a more complete understanding of the role of the Son in human freedom, the present study will briefly treat Ratzinger's understanding of God and his understanding of the hypostatic union.

2.2   Ratzinger's Definition of Freedom as Rooted in God

With regard to freedom in Ratzinger's thought, Peter John McGregor points out that the starting point is *Logos,[126]* or as Ratzinger calls it, "the primacy of the *logos* as against mere matter."[127] *Logos* is "idea," "freedom," and "love," and faith means "deciding for the view that thought and meaning do not just form a chance by-product of being; that, on the contrary, all being is a product of thought and, indeed, in its innermost structure is itself thought."[128] Ratzinger calls *logos,* in this sense, the "objective mind," that stands before and above human

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[122] See Margaret McCarthy, "Gender Ideology and the Humanum," *Communio* 43 (2016), 278-85, quote on 284.
[123] McCarthy, "Gender Ideology and the Humanum," 286.
[124] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 159.
[125] Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 19.
[126] See McGregor, *Heart to Heart*, 251-56. See also Bonagura, "*Logos* to Son," 476-82.
[127] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 151.
[128] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 152.

"subjective mind,"meaning "our thinking is, indeed, only a rethinking of what in reality has already been thought out beforehand."[129] From here, Ratzinger notes that one has come to the key distinction between materialism and idealism. Matter is that "being" which "does not itself comprehend being, that 'is' but does not understand itself."[130] Conversely, "mind" can be "described as being that understands itself, as being that is present to itself."[131] This idealistic solution to the problem of being "signifies the idea that all being is the being-thought by one single consciousness. The unity of being consists in the identity of the one consciousness, whose impulses constitute the many things that are."[132] Christian belief actually goes beyond both positions. Indeed any being is the result of being-thought, and, while matter cannot comprehend itself, it can point beyond itself. And, in response to idealism, Christianity claims:

> Being is being-thought — yet not in such a way that it remains only thought and that the appearance of independence proves to be mere appearance to anyone who looks more closely. On the contrary, Christian belief in God means that things are the being-thought of a creative consciousness, of a creative freedom, and that the creative consciousness that bears up all things has released what has been thought into the freedom of its own, independent existence….While [Idealism]…explains everything real as the content of a single consciousness, in the Christian view what supports it all is a creative freedom that sets what has been thought in the freedom of its own being, so that, on the one hand, it is the being-thought of a consciousness and yet, on the other hand, is true being itself.[133]

While all being is being-thought, the source of unity within being (or between being (lowercase) and Being (uppercase)) is not found in the "single consciousness" of the "objective mind." Instead, at the core of Christianity lies the truth that this "objective mind" creates in such a way that being is not only being-thought, but is the being-thought of *Logos* who is not only "idea," but who is "love," and, therefore, "freedom." To be is not only being-thought, but being-thought and given freedom, which stands as a source of possible unity should the person love in return.

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[129] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 153. See also McGregor, *Heart to Heart*, 252.
[130] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 156.
[131] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 156-57.
[132] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 157.
[133] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 157.

In his commentary on freedom as it is discussed in *Introduction to Christianity,* McGregor points out that up to this point, Ratzinger is only treating being-as-such, and has not yet engaged being-as-personal.[134] Hence, in the next section, Ratzinger notes that Christian belief in God as *logos,* "in the preexisting, world-supporting reality of the creative meaning,…is at the same time…belief in the personal nature of that meaning…not an anonymous, neutral consciousness but rather freedom, creative love, a person."[135] He adds:

> If the Christian option for the *logos* means an option for a personal, creative meaning, then it is at the same time an option for the primacy of the particular as against the universal. The highest is not the most universal but, precisely, the particular, and the Christian faith is thus above all also the option for man as the irreducible, infinity-oriented being. And here once again it is the option for the primacy of freedom as against the primacy of some cosmic necessity or natural law.[136]

Christianity goes beyond idealism in that it maintains the primacy of the particular, which is to say, the primacy of freedom. The universal, the all, is not the only reality, but instead, the particular, the "many," holds equal footing. Universal necessity is not all, or, as noted in Ch. 2, substance is not the only primordial reality — relationality stands alongside it. Therefore, the personal nature of *Logos* means that freedom must be taken into account. *Logos,* who thinks being into existence, is, insofar as it has revealed itself, personal being. *Logos*-as-personal means not only is creative thinking the precondition and ground of all being and that this "objective mind" knows the whole of its thought, but that this *Logos* not only thinks, but also, as noted above, loves. Because *Logos* loves, indeed, because *Logos* is love, "it has given its thought the freedom of its own existence, objectivized it, released it into distinct being…this thinking knows its thought in its distinct being, loves it and, loving, upholds it."[137] Ratzinger notes that the implications of this freedom are "extensive." By this he means that the structure of the world is

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[134] McGregor, *Heart to Heart,* 253.
[135] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 158. See also McGregor, *Heart to Heart,* 253.
[136] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 158.
[137] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 159. See also McGregor, *Heart to Heart,* 254.

not cosmic necessity, but that a certain incalculability resulting necessarily from freedom, is an inescapable part of the world. *Logos*-as-love, *Logos*-as-person, means being exists in the "arena of love" which is also "the playground of freedom," and that evil (i.e. freely choosing against love) is possible.[138] This also means that person differs from individual. Greeks saw the individual as a reproduction, a splitting up of the idea of matter. Instead, the person is unique and unrepeatable, and oneness (i.e. sameness of human being) is "not the unique and final thing; plurality, too, has its own and definitive right."[139]

Ratzinger's *The Spirit of the Liturgy* takes up the topic of freedom in the concepts of *exitus* and *reditus*. Plotinus conceived of *exitus*, not as a going out, but a falling down — a falling away from divinity. *Reditus*, on the other hand, marks the reversal, the journey back, a redemption from finitude — a climb that marks the burden of our lives. Christianity takes up this schema but understands them in a thoroughly positive manner:

> *Exitus* is not a fall from the infinite, the rupture of being and thus the cause of all the sorrow in the world. No, *exitus* is first and foremost something thoroughly positive. It is the Creator's free act of creation. It is his positive will that the created order should exist as something good in relation to himself, from which a response of freedom and love can be given back to him...The creature, existing in its own right, comes home to itself, and this act is an answer in freedom to God's love. It accepts creation from God as his offer of love, and thus ensues a dialogue of love, that wholly new kind of unity that love alone can create...This *reditus* is a "return", but it does not abolish creation; rather, it bestows its full and final perfection. This is how Christians understand God being "all in all."[140]

Christianity understands the reality of the person as thoroughly positive and free. It is marked by the free act of the creator - an act that gives freedom and respects freedom. Man is free to respond to God, to be in dialogue, in relationship with God, and in so doing, man steps into himself, is himself. In this act of response, this act of giving himself, man is most fully "person."

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[138] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 160. See also McGregor, *Heart to Heart*, 254.
[139] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 161.
[140] Joseph Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, trans. John Saward (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2000), 32-33.

The person is in the image of God, the *Logos,* who is personal, and who is free to the extent that he receives his being from God, to the extent that he receives himself as "image of God." Man is free to reject this original relationship or free to accept and enter into it. He was designed by Relationship and made for relationship, by Love and for love, and the extent to which he accepts this reality, lives in it, and is transformed by it is the extent to which he is free.

God freely creates man in freedom and endows man with freedom for communion/relationship, i.e. freedom to exist as person. With this observation, one returns to the anthropological pattern explicated above. To be made in the "image of God" is to be made in the image of the "real God," who is:

> By his very nature entirely being-for (Father), being-from (Son), and being-with (Holy Spirit). Man, for his part, is God's image precisely insofar as the "from," "with," and "for" constitute the fundamental anthropological pattern. Whenever there is an attempt to free ourselves from this pattern, we are not on our way to divinity [as, in our infinite pursuit of freedom might lead us to believe], but to dehumanization, to the destruction of being itself through the destruction of the truth.[141]

Here, Ratzinger's theological anthropology coincides with his anthropology of freedom. Man is being-in-relation insofar as man is made in the "image and likeness" of God. This is the truth of his existence. Precisely because man is created in the "image of God," the thirst for freedom is its expression, "it is the thirst 'to sit at the right hand of God,' to be 'like God.'"[142] It is also true, however, that because he is a being-in-relation to Love, he is a being-in-freedom. Man is free to choose if he will embrace the truth of his being-in-relation, his fundamental anthropological pattern, or not.

This fundamental anthropological pattern, this truth that stands at the heart of and which preconditions freedom, touches the whole person, including his or her "body" and "corporality."

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[141] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 159-60. See also Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, §6.

[142] Joseph Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 19.

Here, one confronts, again, contemporary gender ideology. The present study is not fundamentally concerned with considering the various nuances of contemporary gender theory. However, given the prevalence of this topic today, a brief word must be given. For Ratzinger, the "body" or "corporality," indeed separates one person from another, erecting a dividing line "that signifies distances and limit," and is, to this extent, "a dissociating principle."[143] At the same time, to exist with a body — a corporeal form — reveals descent from another person. Ratzinger says, "Human beings depend in a very real and at the same time very complex sense on one another for their lives."[144] The body reveals the created nature of the person. And, Benedict XVI points out, just as young people have come to understand that something is wrong with regard to the relationship between humanity and nature (in the realm of ecology), humanity must also come to understand that "man too has a nature that he must respect and that he cannot manipulate at will. Man is not merely self-creating freedom. Man does not create himself. He is intellect and will, but he is also nature, and his will is rightly ordered if he respects his nature, listens to it and accepts himself for who he is, as one who did not create himself. In this way, and in no other, is true human freedom fulfilled."[145] Elsewhere, Ratzinger ties what he means by "nature" more closely to the "body" and even to sexual identity. Reacting against de Beauvoir's

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[143] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 245.

[144] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 245-46. In all that follows, it is important to note that, while Ratzinger does not treat human sexuality to the same extend as John Paul II does in theology of the body, their understanding of an "adequate anthropology" is essentially the same. For John Paul II, "To say that man is created in the image and likeness of God means that man is called to exist 'for' others, to become a gift" (John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1988), §7. Being-as-gift and the call to love, becomes visible in and through the human body, which is either male or female. Maleness and femaleness reveal that the human person is involved in both receiving and in giving, that is to say, in love. The body witnesses "to creation as a fundamental gift, and therefore a witness *to Love as the source from which this same giving springs*. Masculinity-femininity — namely, sex — is the original sign of a creative donation and at the same time <the sign of a gift that> man, male-female, becomes aware of as a gift lived so to speak in an original way" (John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body,* trans. Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2006), §14.4). The body itself reveals: (1) That one was created, that one is not God, that one's life has been given, and that there are some aspects of one's existence that one cannot determine for oneself but that one receives; (2) That one's maleness or femaleness (i.e. male or female body) is a reminder that one is called to love. The body reveals unity (the same gift of humanity) and difference (maleness and femaleness), and, as such, the possibility to give and to receive from another. As John Paul II says, "The body, in fact, and only the body, is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and the divine. It has been created to transfer into the visible reality of the world the mystery hidden from eternity in God, and thus to be a sign of it" (John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them,* §19:4); (3) The male or female body is a reminder that one is called to love fruitfully, that loving another with whom one shares both unity and difference, love can be fruitful — it can grow and does not collapse on itself.

[145] Benedict XVI, "The Listening Heart: Reflections on the Foundations of Law," *Address of Pope Benedict XVI,* Sept. 22, 2011 (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011), https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2011/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20110922_reichstag-berlin.html. See also John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor,* §48.

"one is not born a woman, one becomes so," and gender ideology that claims gender is no longer a given element of nature that one has to accept and make sense of, but a social role one chooses for oneself, Ratzinger says:

> People dispute the idea that they have a nature, given by their bodily identity, that serves as a defining element of the human being. They deny their nature and decide that it is not something previously given to them, but that they make it for themselves. According to the biblical creation account, being created by God as male and female pertains to the essence of the human creature. This duality is an essential aspect of what being human is all about, as ordained by God. This very duality as something previously given is what is now disputed…it was not God who created them male and female -- hitherto society did this, now we decide for ourselves. Man and woman as created realities, as the nature of the human being, no longer exist. Man calls his nature into question. From now on he is merely spirit and will…From now on there is only the abstract human being, who chooses for himself what his nature is to be. Man and woman in their created state as complementary versions of what it means to be human are disputed.[146]

For Ratzinger, human "nature" refers to a "common truth of a single humanity present in every man,"[147] and, more specifically, to the givenness of the human body, in its duality as male/female. The givenness of the body, and its corresponding reliance on the bodies of others, reveals that man is not a self-creating freedom from which he or she makes him or herself *ex nihilo*. Instead, maleness and femaleness refer to the two ways of being human as "given" or "written" into human nature. This said, — and this is where the kernel of truth within gender ideology lies — this nature (apparent in the bodily form of male/female) contains a task that appeals to freedom. On this point, McCarthy says:

> The human being is not the only one who has a nature but is the one to whom this nature has been entrusted as a task, so that it might be fulfilled through freedom (not merely

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[146] Benedict XVI, "Address of his Holiness Benedict XVI on the Occasion of Christmas Greetings to the Roman Curia" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012)

[147] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 164. To this, Ratzinger adds that from the perspective of faith in creation, one can say: "there is one divine idea, 'man,' to which it is our task to answer."

instinct [as in animals]). One does indeed have to become what one is, and so must become a woman or a man. But one becomes what one is already even if only *in nuce,* not one's own social construct *ex nihilo*. Moreover, the persons we are — the ones entrusted with our nature — are always already in relation to the Creator, in and through our parents. Indeed, the more we are persons (individuals), the more we are in relationships of dependence on others. The human body itself testifies to this by demanding from its earliest stages — more than any other animal body — the "outside help" of nurture and education.[148]

In every age, each person has the responsibility to choose what one is — the freedom to accept his or her nature, or not. This is the "playground of freedom" into which each human person is born, and within which, is able to accept him or herself. However, in light of gender ideology today, McCarthy notes a significant shift in "the turning of what really *is* a construct — the abstract 'individual' — into a new natural, so as to turn what is really natural — constitutive relations — into a 'construct.'"[149] To respond to what man is in truth, to live responsibly and in freedom, is to live the Decalogue, which means, "to live our Godlikeness, to correspond to the truth of our being and thus to do the good."[150] At this point, one comes up against what Ratzinger will consider the nature of sin to be. Sin is that free and disruptive decision that is dehumanizing and, at the same time, anti-personal because being-human is being-person (i.e. being-in-relation). The god of the isolated "I," that "I" that pursues a purely autonomous freedom devoid of any "from," "for," or "with," is, in Ratzinger's terms, "the image of what the Christian tradition would call the devil — the anti-God—because it harbors exactly the radical antithesis to the real God."[151] Before considering the nature of sin and sin's implications, this study will first consider the manner in which Christ is the perfection of human freedom. In light of what has already been

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[148] McCarthy, "Gender Ideology and the Humanum," 290. Benedict XVI makes a similar point, saying, man's "very nature contains a direction and a norm, and becoming inwardly one with this direction and norm is what freedom is all about" (*Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, 204).

[149] McCarthy, "Gender Ideology and the Humanum," 294. According to McCarthy, in order to respond to such a situation, the Church needs to understand what is happening in the world and to meet the brokenness that lies at the core of the present situation. This means that in order to meet the brokenness, the Church must "first be able to know it *as broken*." The Church must also acknowledge a new level to this brokenness, equipped with "a new substitute anthropology which *promotes* this brokenness, even produces it."

[150] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 164.

[151] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 159. See also Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 19-20.

said above, if Jesus Christ is the fullness of revelation and the one who fully reveals man to himself, then Jesus Christ must express the fullness of human freedom (i.e. its nature and its source) in his person.

2.*3*   *Freedom in Christ*

Ratzinger takes up the topic of the freedom of Christ in regard to the contemporary Christological debates pertaining to Monophysitism and Nestorianism. Ratzinger disagrees with those who hold that a monophysitic tendency presents a danger today, with its overemphasis on the divine nature at the expense of the human (or, said another way, the emphasis of Being over time (Heidegger), or of the universal over the particular (Boeve)). Instead, the "threat for us is exactly the reverse — a one-sided separation Christology (Nestorianism) in which, when one reflects on the humanity of Christ, his divinity largely disappears, the unity of his person is dissolved, and reconstructions of the merely human Jesus dominate, which reflect more the ideas of our times than the true figure of our Lord."[152] Ratzinger sees Constantinople III (680-81) in particular, along with Nicea II (787), as clarifying and correcting what is often construed as a parallelism, or a Chalcedonian dualism, between the two natures of Christ. Constantinople III teaches that dualism had always seemed necessary to safeguard Jesus' freedom, but "in such attempts it had been forgotten that when the human will is taken up into the will of God, freedom is not destroyed; indeed, only then does genuine freedom come into its own."[153] Jesus' human will is not absorbed into the divine will, but along the path of freedom, gives itself over to the divine will in such a way that the "metaphysical two-ness of a human and a divine will is not abrogated, but in the realm of the *person,* in the realm of freedom, the fusion of both takes place, with the result that they become *one* will, not naturally, but personally."[154] Said another way, the human and divine will become one, not in substance, but in relation.

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[152] Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 10. For a thorough treatment on the "quasi-Nestorianism" identified by the International Theological Commission in 1979, see Aaron Riches, "After Chalcedon: The Oneness of Christ and the Dyothelite Mediation of His Theandric Unity," *Modern Theology* 24, no. 2 (2008), 201-ff.

[153] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 38. For a recent treatment on this topic in his thought, see Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*, 157-161.

[154] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 39. On this point, David Bonagura holds that Ratzinger's use of the word "fusion" is problematic, as "it does not accurately express the hypostatic union." Bonagura then holds that Ratzinger's use of "wille" as in "faculty" maintains both the human and divine "faculties" of the "wille," which are

For Ratzinger, the "fusion" of wills in Jesus Christ is manifest most clearly in his prayer. To this end, Aaron Riches, following the argument of Marie-Joseph le Guillou, argues that in order to grasp the profundity of Constantinople III, it must be read in light of the texts that undergird it: those of Maximus the Confessor (580-662) and the acts of the Lateran Synod (649).[155] According to Riches, "a Maximian reading of Constantinople III "yields a full 'narrativisation' of Chalcedon ontology, a blending of historical event and metaphysical speculation, of story and ontology."[156] Ratzinger follows this path, and finds in Maximus' treatment of the agony in the garden a basis for what he calls "spiritual christology," and the grounding of human freedom in the prayer of the Son. David Bonagura's essay, "Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's Christology of Jesus' Prayer and Two Contemporary Theological Questions," provides a helpful navigation of this topic.[157] Bonagura points out that for Ratzinger, prayer is dialogue, "a real exchange between God and man,"[158] and Jesus' prayer, therefore, differs from that of a creature. Rather, "It is the dialogue of love within God himself — the dialogue that God *is*."[159] The praying of Jesus "is the Son conversing with the Father; Jesus' human consciousness and will, his human soul, is taken up into that exchange."[160] This spiritual reading, stemming from Constantinople III, sees the Logos speaking "in the I-form of the human will and mind of Jesus; it has become his I, has become adopted into his I, because the human will is completely one with the will of the Logos,"[161] and becomes the basis for Ratzinger's spiritual interpretation of the content of Chalcedon that does not overemphasize the parallelism between the two natures, but maintains their duality in the unity of the one person, as expressed in the Son's prayer.[162] Constantinople III holds that:

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brought into union by the "gnomic will," "that is, the personal act of willing." See David Bonagura, "Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's Christology of Jesus' Prayer and Two Contemporary Theological Questions," *Nova et Vetera* 12, no. 1 (2014), 294 (see footnote 38). For a fuller treatment on Ratzinger, Maximus, and the gnomic will, see McGregor, *Heart to Heart,* 233-41.

[155] Riches, "After Chalcedon," 204.
[156] Riches, "After Chalcedon," 204.
[157] See Bonagura, "Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's Christology of Jesus' Prayer and Two Contemporary Theological Questions," 293-97.
[158] Joseph Ratzinger, "Theological Basis of Prayer and Liturgy," 26.
[159] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 344.
[160] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 7.
[161] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 39.
[162] See Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 37.

As man, Jesus has a human will which is not absorbed by the divine will. But this human will follows the divine will and thus becomes one will with it, not in a natural manner but along the path of freedom. The metaphysical two-ness of a human and a divine will is not abrogated, but in the realm of the *person,* in the realm of freedom, the fusion of both takes place, with the result that they become *one* will, not naturally, but personally. This free unity — a form of unity created by love — is higher and more interior than a mere natural unity. It corresponds to the highest unity there is, namely, trinitarian unity.[163]

The Council cites Jn. 6:38 ("I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who send me") as an example of the *divine Logos* speaking of the *human* will of Jesus, whereby there are not two "I's" but one. The *Logos* speaks of the will of Jesus using the word 'I.' This has become his 'I,' has been assumed into his 'I,' because the human will is fully united with the will of the *Logos*. For Ratzinger, Maximus' treatment of the agony in the garden, which undergirds Constantinople III, exposes how "the human will of Jesus enters into the will of the Son. By doing so, it receives the identity of the Son, which consists in entire subordination of the I to the Thou, in the giving and transferring of the I to the Thou. This is the mode of being of the one who is pure relation and pure act."[164] With this, as Bonagura says, the dualism or parallelism between the two natures "disappears because the active willing of the person brings the two natures into harmony. The prayer of Jesus thus reaffirms the dogma of Chalcedon: Christ is one person, and it is the divine Son whose prayer personally unites his divine and human natures in his dialogue with the Father."[165]

At this point, it is possible to draw two conclusions that pertain to the topic at hand. First, it is important to note that in the prayer of Jesus Christ, which lies as the basis of Constantinople III and which allows for a correct interpretation for Chalcedon, provides insight into the way in which the human person can be truly free. The Nestorian position which diminishes the divinity

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[163] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 39.

[164] Ratzinger, "True God and True Man," 102. See also Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 9-11.

[165] Bonagura, "Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's Christology of Jesus' Prayer and Two Contemporary Theological Questions," 296.

of Christ, also results in a minimization of "of the notion of imitation," by holding that while "Jesus may have been both God and man,…*we* are, after all, only humans; *we* cannot imitate him in his divinity, but can follow him only as a human."[166] However, Ratzinger holds this interpretation thinks too little of human beings and too little of freedom. Instead, being "imitators of God" (Eph. 5:1) means that believing in Jesus Christ means that Jesus has opened this way for us, and that only by participating in this way, can one enter into the freedom that is salvation:

> In fact only that unity of divinity and humanity which in Christ is not parallelism, where one stands alongside the other, but real compenetration — compenetration between God and man — means salvation for mankind. Only thus in fact does that true "being with God" take place, without which liberation and freedom to not exist…The Council of Constantinople has analyzed concretely the problem of the two natures and one person in Christ in view of the problem of the will of Jesus. We are reminded firmly that there exists a specific will of the *man* Jesus that is not absorbed into the divine will. But this human will *follows* the divine will and thus becomes a single will with it, not, however, in a forced way but by way of freedom. The metaphysical duplicity of a human will and a divine will is not eliminated, but in the personal sphere, the area of freedom, there is accomplished a fusion of the two, so that this becomes not *one single natural will* but *one personal will*.[167]

This way of freedom is entry into, or sharing in, divine communion, it is abiding in divine communion (being-from, being-with, and being-for) and it is tied to the paschal mystery,[168] wherein Jesus died praying,[169] and through which human beings can participate in his prayer.[170] Hence:

> We come to grasp the manner of our liberation, our participation in the Son's freedom. As a result of the unity of wills of which we have spoken, the greatest possible change

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[166] Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 21.
[167] Benedict XVI, "True God and True Man," 100-1. See also Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 37-ff.
[168] Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 21.
[169] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 22-25.
[170] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25-27.

has taken place in man, the only change which meets his desire: he has become divine. We can therefore describe that prayer which enters into praying of Jesus and becomes the prayer of Jesus in the Body of Christ as freedom's laboratory.[171]

To imitate Christ, then, so as to enter into freedom is possible by entering into the Son's prayer, which is to say, entering into, or sharing in, the human nature of Jesus Christ. This entry is possible through the Holy Spirit who binds persons to Jesus Christ, and, in sharing in the one Spirit, to one another. The "place" of this sharing in the Spirit is the Body of Christ, the Church. The Church, and abiding in the Church, becomes the concrete arena, or laboratory of freedom, where man not only discovers his identity, but accepts it and lives it.[172] Hence freedom is ultimately attained in union with Jesus Christ, through the union of his human will to the divine will, in a personal giving over of himself, as Son, to the Father. For, as Ratzinger holds, "Wherever the I gives itself to the Thou, there is freedom because this involves the reception of the 'form of God.'"[173] This process necessarily implies the paschal mystery, the Cross, because it means stepping out of preconceived patterns of self-sufficiency and into the being-from, being-for, and being-with of the Trinity.

Second, Ratzinger's spiritual Christology and his reading on freedom, as noted by Bonagura, "fuses the 'from below' and 'from above' approaches" to Christology.[174] In making this point, Bonagura quotes from *Behold the Pierced One:*

Jesus' unique relationship to God…is revealed to us in the sentence which remains the measure and model of all real prayer: "Not what I will, but what thou wilt" (Mk. 14:36). Jesus' human will assimilates itself to the will of the Son. In doing this, he receives the

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[171] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 42. Similarly, McGregor points out that in Ratzinger's 1981 essay, "Freedom and Constraint in the Church," Ratzinger points out that one of the biblical terms for freedom — *elutheria* — does not refer to freedom of choice, "but the fullness of membership and possession of rights in a family or society." In other words, freedom is the result of belonging, "to be free one must truly belong to the household." Hence, "to be free means to be a son." See McGregor, *Heart to Heart,* 259.

[172] See Ratzinger, "Theological Basis of Prayer and Liturgy," 26.

[173] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 41.

[174] Bonagura, "Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's Christology of Jesus' Prayer and Two Contemporary Theological Questions," 295.

Son's identity, i.e., the complete subordination of the I to the Thou, the self-giving and self-expropriation of the I to the Thou. This is the very essence of him who is pure relation and pure act. Wherever the I gives itself to the Thou, there is freedom because this involves the reception of the "form of God."[175]

"From below," from Jesus' human nature, his human will "assimilates" itself to the will of the Son. This is the very essence of what it means to be person — pure relation and pure act. The human will gives itself over freely and completely and perfectly, and it does so in a way that constitutes the person. This can also be described from the opposite direction, "from above," in that:

> The Logos so humbles himself that he adopts a man's will as his own and addresses the Father with the I of his human being; he transfers his own I to this man and thus transforms human speech into the eternal Word, into his blessed "Yes, Father." By imparting his own I, his own identity, to this human being, he liberates him, redeems him, makes him God.[176]

From this vantage point, "from above," one sees something even more radical, perhaps, than the total "yes" of the human will to the divine: the "yes" of the Logos to humanity to the point of stooping to adopt a human will as its own and to address "the Father with the 'I' of this human being." The Logos says "yes" to man, and man says "yes" to God in Jesus Christ. Therefore, the "from above" and "from below" in Christ are drawn into the unity established through the mutuality of two "yeses." Ratzinger thus highlights Paul's exclamation that "Jesus Christ is Yes" (cf. 2 Cor. 1:19-ff), and that entry into this mutual exchange of "yeses," this affirmation of being, is, at one and the same time, freedom.[177]

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[175] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 41.
[176] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 41.
[177] See Ratzinger, "Theological Basis of Prayer and Liturgy," 27.

3.   Sin — Death

3.1   Sin and Original Sin

The Christian conception of reality and freedom has significant implications, for if creation is the completely serious "playground" of freedom,[178] then creation is marked by the very real possibility of choosing against God. The human being is, by his personal nature, therefore, confronted by an ethical decision from the outset, and is free to sin, i.e. free to cut off communion and to choose against his or her nature. He is free to reject dialogue and mutter his own monologue. When it comes to man's freely choosing to sin, Ratzinger says:

> Everything is bound up with freedom, and the creature has the freedom to turn the positive *exitus* of its creation around, as it were, to rupture it in the Fall: this is the refusal to be dependent, saying No to the *reditus*. Love is seen as dependence and is rejected. In its place come autonomy and autarchy: existing from oneself and in oneself, being a god of one's own making. The arch from *exitus* to *reditus* is broken. The return is no longer desired, and ascent by one's powers proves to be impossible.[179]

In Adam's fall, the *exitus* that had existed at the origin as a positive and free act of creation-for-relationship is no longer seen as positive or desirable. Adam rejects the original relationship, refusing, as it were, his dependence on God, his creaturely status, and cuts off the *reditus*. Ratzinger draws out this original sin as the antithesis of relationality, of communion. Personal sin is, in fact, a rejection of Love, and the choice for autonomy - a counterfeit freedom that aims at a self-sufficient life without reference to God or any other. In this exercise of freedom, the person "refuses to recognize his own limitations and tries to be completely self-sufficient."[180] Sin is the expression of the autonomous "I" that is the antithesis of person-as-relation because it is the disruption of the fundamental relationship, a relationship without which "nothing else can be

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[178] See Joseph Ratzinger, *Eschatology: Death and Eternal Life*, trans. Michael Waldstein (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1988), 216.

[179] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 33.

[180] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 302.

truly in order."[181] Sin is the rejection of truth, the rejection of the fundamental pattern of being-from, being-for, and being-with.

Sin is tied to the interplay between freedom and truth, or, rather, the possibility of choosing against the truth. Ratzinger, who coined the expression, "the dictatorship of relativism,"[182] is aware of dominance of freedom over truth, or the will over reason, today. He notes that the standard definition of freedom today would be "the right and the opportunity to do just what we wish and not to have to do anything which we do not wish to do…Freedom would mean that our own will is the sole norm of our action and that the will not only can desire anything but also has the chance to carry out its desire."[183] Noting the disillusionment that resulted with the collapse of modernity, the radical current of the Enlightenment is left to breach the limitations of the modern project in its anarchism (Rousseau!). As quoted above, "The grand promises [metanarratives!] made at the inception of modernity have not been kept, yet their fascination is unabated…man's essence is undermined. It is an open question. I must decide myself what I understand by 'humanity,' what I want to do with it, and how I want to fashion it. Man has no nature, but is sheer freedom."[184] While the radical concept of freedom in this trend moves beyond social anarchy and into a personal anarchy against one's own nature, it is the case that the tension between freedom and nature has always been and is always at play in every moral decision man has made throughout history. At the bottom of it, the radical cry for freedom is to be like god — "a god who depends on nothing and no one, and whose own freedom is not restricted by that of another."[185] Ratzinger continues:

> To be totally free, without the competing freedom of others, without a "from" and a "for" — this desire presupposes not an image of God, but an idol. The primal error of such a radicalized will to freedom lies in the idea of a divinity conceived as a pure egoism. The god thought of in this way is not a God, but an idol. Indeed, it is the image of what the Christian tradition would call the devil — the anti-God — because it harbors

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[181] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: The Infancy Narratives*, 43-44.
[182] See Joseph Ratzinger, "Homily of his eminence Card. Joseph Ratzinger: Mass Pro Eligendo Romano Pontifice," (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005).
[183] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 148.
[184] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 156-57.
[185] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 159.

exactly the radical antithesis to the real God…Whenever there is an attempt to free ourselves from this pattern [i.e. being-from, being-for, being-with], we are not on our way to divinity, but to dehumanization, to the destruction of being itself through the destruction of the truth. The Jacobin variant of the idea of liberation…is a rebellion against man's very being, a rebellion against truth, which consequently leads man — as Sartre penetratingly saw — into a self-contradictory existence which we call hell.[186]

Sin can be characterized by the "will to freedom," which is a "will to power" — marked by the illusion of a complete self-sufficiency. Sin is the overexertion of freedom against one's created nature that results not in humanization, but an anti-personal dehumanization. Elsewhere Ratzinger says, "at the very heart of sin lies human beings' denial of their creatureliness, inasmuch as they refuse to accept the standard and the limitations that are implicit in it. They do not want to be creatures, do not want to be subject to a standard, do not want be dependent…sin is, in its essence, a renunciation of the truth."[187] The ennui that results from the banality of egoism seeks an outlet in drugs, or the drug of sin (for sin is always a 'drug,' the lie of false happiness).[188] Sin is the expression of idolatry characterized often by the worship of bread (possessions), love (pleasure), and power; it is "the attempt to keep one's own possessions safe…the fear that tries to tame the mysterious by worshipping it."[189] Sin makes "absolutes out of what is not in itself the absolute, and they thereby make slaves of men."[190]

This understanding of person-as-relation, person-in-relation, lays a foundation for understanding original sin as well. Ratzinger explains:

Original sin is not an assertion about a natural deficiency in or concerning man, but a statement about a relationship that can be meaningfully formulated only in the context of the God-man relation. The essence of sin can only be understood in an anthropology of relation, not by looking at an isolated human being. Such an anthropology is even more

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[186] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 160.
[187] Ratzinger, '*In the Beginning…*', 70-71.
[188] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 99, quotation from 96.
[189] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 112.
[190] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Chrsitianity*, 111.

essential in the case of grace. We could therefore describe original sin as a statement about God's evaluation of man; evaluation not as something external, but as revealing the very depths of his interior being. It is the collapse of what man is, both in his origin from God and in himself, the contradiction between the will of the Creator and man's empirical being.[191]

Ratzinger, it appears, issues forth a subtle critique of the purely substantialist view of the human person (person as individual substance of a rational nature). The essence of original sin is not to be found here (though the effects of original sin, as the *Catechism* notes, the "fallen state" are observable on this level in the intellect and will of the rational nature), but rather, in the anthropology of relation that defines the person as such. Original sin can only be rightly understood in light of the God-man relationship, that "collapse" of what man is and is meant to be as a person-in-relation. Now there is not original dependence, not *reditus*, but a tendency toward autonomy and isolation. Ratzinger identifies this "sin-damaged" world as a network of broken relationships, saying:

> No human being is closed in upon himself or herself...no one can live of or for himself or herself alone. We receive our life not only at the moment of birth but every day from without - from others who are not ourselves but who nonetheless somehow pertain to us. Human beings have their selves not only in themselves but also outside of themselves: they live in those whom they love and in those who love them and to whom they are "present." Human beings are relational, and they possess their lives - themselves - only by way of relationship. I alone am not myself, but only in and with you am I myself. To be truly a human being means to be related in love, to be *of* and *for*. But sin means the damaging or the destruction of relationality. Sin is a rejection of relationality because it wants to make the human being a god. Sin is loss of relationship, disturbance of relationship, and therefore it is not restricted to the individual. When I destroy a relationship, then this event - sin - touches the other person involved in the relationship. Consequently sin is always an offense that touches others, that alters the world and

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[191] Joseph Ratzinger, *Daughter Zion*, trans. John M. McDermott (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1983), 69-70. See also Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 248-49.

damages it. To the extent that this is true, when the network of human relationships is damaged from the very beginning, then every human being enters into a world that is marked by relational damage. At the very moment that a person begins human existence, which is a good, he or she is confronted by a sin-damaged world. Each of us enters into a situation in which relationality has been hurt. Consequently each person is, from the very start, damaged in relationships and does not engage in them as he or she ought. Sin pursues the human being, and he or she capitulates to it.[192]

Sin exists as both an individual and social reality, and hence, is best characterized as personal, i.e. inter-personal/relational. Sin operates on the level of the person and damages the person-as-relation. Original sin exists on the level of relationship, and signifies the original and fundamental broken relationship between Creator and creature, and the aftermath of the fundamental disunion — a network of broken relationships. In other words, sin not only impacts one's personal relationship with God (i.e. the level of relation between the person and God), but between the person and others, and others and the person. Others become the victims of one's sin, and one becomes the victim of the sins committed by others. Right relationship, then, can be broken not only by actions for which one is responsible, but by those acts committed by others of which the person often bears no responsibility, but stands as the unfortunate beneficiary of broken relationality.

3.2   Death and Hell

In theological terms, and following Ratzinger's vision of the person and his understanding of the fallen person, mankind finds itself in a seemingly hopeless state when left its own devices. He notes that "the importance of the offense varies according to the addressee. Since God is infinite, the offense to him implicit in humanity's sin is also infinitely important…He [man] can offend infinitely - his capacity extends that far - but he cannot produce an infinite reparation; what he, as a finite being, gives will always be only finite.[193] The "rank" or "status," the "office" of the person sinned against, the addressee of the sin, determines the sin's

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[192] Ratzinger, *In the Beginning*, 72-73.
[193] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 232.

gravity. In the case of an offense against God, who is infinite, the sin itself takes on an infinite proportion - man's freedom (and his finitude) is capable of this much. His finitude is not capable of bridging the infinite chasm that now exists in his fundamental relationship. Damage in this fundamental relationship means damage in inter-personal relationships, and by adopting this attitude of self-sufficiency, man has delivered himself up to death.[194]

In *Eschatology,* Ratzinger notes three "forms," or "dimensions" of death. First, "death is present as the nothingness of an empty existence which ends up in a mere semblance of living."[195] Second, death is present in the physical process of biological disintegration. In order to understand how the two forms are interrelated, Ratzinger considers each in its turn. Regarding the latter, death as it is found in the biological condition, one is forced to face the fact that "existence is not at his disposal, nor is his life his own property."[196] On biological death's doorstep, one stands staring at "a night into whose solitude no voice reaches."[197] This is the "door through which we can only walk alone — the door of death…all fear in the world is fear of this loneliness."[198] In the midst of such circumstances, one can either defiantly attempt to overpower death with his own willpower, thus revealing a "desperate anger" as "his basic attitude to life,"[199] or he can trust and allow himself to be led. Ratzinger says, "In this second case, the human attitude towards pain, towards the presence of death within the living, merges with the attitude we call love."[200] With this, Ratzinger has already moved into addressing the first form of death — that empty existence that results not from physical ailment, but from a woundedness in the innermost recesses of the soul: a lack of love. Faced with this type of death, the person, again, can attempt to procure love by himself, or apathetically try to distract himself away from his need, or he can trust and open himself with confidence "that the Power which has so determined us will not deceive us."[201] Therefore, it is the case that the "confrontation with physical death is actually a confrontation with the basic constitution of human existence. It places before us a

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[194] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 302.
[195] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 95.
[196] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 96.
[197] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 301.
[198] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 301.
[199] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 96.
[200] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 96.
[201] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 96.

choice: to accept either the pattern of love, or the pattern of power. Here we are at the source of the most decisive of questions."[202] Precisely here, a third form of death appears in the giving over of oneself in love. Here, "death is met with in the daring of that love which leaves self behind, giving itself to the other."[203] In sum, when confronted with death, one's freedom is most "at play." In this "playground" of freedom, the stakes are highest. As noted by Ratzinger, adopting the attitude of self-sufficiency and power in this moment means delivering oneself up to death, whereas the willful love that dies to itself results in life.

The dialogical understanding of personhood reveals the nature of person as one who is in relation, and sin as that which cuts off relationship. The result is death — the hell of isolation. Said another way, his personal being now broken by sin, tends toward death, i.e. hell (cf. Rom 6:23). Ratzinger characterizes hell in existential terms, saying:

> Wherever there is such solitude as to be inaccessible to the transforming word of love, then that is the place we call hell. And we know that not a few men of our time, so apparently optimistic, hold the view that every encounter remains superficial, that no man has access to the ultimate and true profundity of another and that, therefore, in the ultimate depths of every existence lies desperation, even hell…One thing is sure: there will come a night when no word of comfort will penetrate the dark abandon, there will be a door which we must pass though in absolute solitude: the door of death. All this world's anguish is, in the final analysis, the anguish generated by this solitude. This is why in the Old Testament, the word indicating the kingdom of the dead was identical to the word for hell: *shêol*. Death, in fact, is absolute solitude. But this solitude which can no longer be illumined by love, which is so profound that love can no longer reach it, is hell.[204]

Ratzinger says, "Death is absolute loneliness…the loneliness into which love can no longer advance is — hell."[205] He draws a line between heaven and hell, as, according to McGregor,

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[202] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 96.
[203] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 95.
[204] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Anguish of an Absence: Meditation 1," *30 Days* (March 2006). Accessed on Mar. 27, 2018 at http://www.30giorni.it/articoli_id_10282_l3.htm. See also Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 301.
[205] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 301.

"two states [that] form the two poles of the total range of possible human existence. These two poles are existential rather than cosmic. It is possible for any human person to move to the hellish pole through the definite rejection of being-for the other."[206] What can save the person from this state of affairs? What can save a person from the hell of death? In his attempts to preserve his life beyond the grave, man frequently resorts to one of two attempts: (1) to live on in one's children; and (2) to seek out fame and the living on in the memory of others. Both options fall short, however, due to the finitude of one's children and the finitude of whomever carries the memory.[207] Additionally, man's own present existence is its own hell, with encounters seeming to remain superficial, and no relationship able to cure the wound of loneliness. Sartre's anthropology is based upon this idea, as Ratzinger notes, "hell, despair, would dwell at the bottom of our existence, in the shape of that loneliness which is as inescapable as it is dreadful."[208] No idea, moral code, or philosophy can solve the riddle and restore the one relationship capable of restoring the others. In a certain sense, the existential philosophers of the 20th century get at the truth of the fallen man: he is alone, incapable of accessing real relationship, real communion, and, left on his own, his life is a farce. One could also argue that death stands as the metanarrative that even postmodernity cannot do away with. In fact, it is no narrative at all. Death is simply fact and its ominous nature lingers like a cloud over the whole of one's life, no matter how he attempts to hide it away or trivialize it.

4.   Toward a Theology of Encounter

In addition to the argument for faith laid out in *Introduction to Christianity*, the case for faith as fulfilling the need for standing — understanding, Ratzinger also identifies a second argument for the necessity of faith: the shortfall of love. Jesus Christ, the one who returns perfect Love for perfect Love, by this means brings about expiation. But, as has been pointed out, the Pauline concept of the "last Adam" means that Jesus Christ is the "exemplary man" — a theological concept saturated in pro-existence — the goal for each and every human person.

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[206] McGregor, *Heart to Heart*, 268.

[207] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 303.

[208] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 300.

With regard to the "last Adam," Ratzinger, following the Pauline tradition, holds that Jesus exemplifies the goal of becoming man ("hominization") in His oneness (being-from and being-for) with the Infinite Being. He says:

> Man is the more himself the more he is with "the other." He only comes *to* himself by moving away *from* himself…Man is finally intended for *the* other, the truly other, for God; he is all the more himself the more he is with the *entirely* Other, with God. Accordingly, he is completely himself when he has ceased to stand in himself, to shut himself off in himself, and to assert himself, when in fact he is pure openness to God…man comes to himself by moving out beyond himself…that man is most fully man, indeed *the* true man…who not only has contact with the infinite — the Infinite Being! — but is one with him: Jesus Christ.[209]

When it comes to the fulfillment of the person, Ratzinger, following the Judeo-Christian tradition, holds that fulfillment is found in love. Love saves. Love received and love given. One must be loved in order to love. Love "is enough, and it saves a man. Whoever loves is a Christian."[210] This almost seems too simple, but if Jesus Christ is the "last Adam," and the "last Adam" is the one who loves perfectly, then the one who loves perfectly loves as Christ does and is a Christian. The challenge, however, comes in the perfection of God the Father's love as pro-existence (cf. Mt. 5:48), "for love, as it is here portrayed as the content of being a Christian, demands that we try to love as God loves," and:

> He loves us, not because we are especially good, particularly virtuous, or of any great merit, not because we are useful or even necessary to him; he loves us not, because *we* are good, but because *he* is good. He loves us, although we have nothing to offer him; he loves us, even in the ragged raiment of the prodigal son, who is no longer wearing anything lovable. To love in the Christian sense means trying to follow in this path: not just loving someone we like, who pleases us, who suits us, and certainly not just someone

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[209] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 234-35. See also *Gaudium et Spes*, §22 and 24.
[210] Joseph Ratzinger, *What It Means to be a Christian*, trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 69.

who has something to offer us…Practicing Christian love in the same way as Christ means that we are good to someone who needs our kindness, even if we do not like him.[211]

If being a Christian simply means loving perfectly as Christ loves, achieving the "Copernican revolution"[212] that shifts the axis of our being from and for oneself to revolving around the Son, in the Son as being-from and being-for, if it is as simple as love, then why does one need faith? In the face of the "last Adam," in the face of the magnanimous call to love perfectly — as freeing as it is, it is also "something very demanding" — the honest person must admit that his state is rather pre-Copernican.[213] In short, the "last Adam" reveals both the heights to which man is called, and, at the same time, the depths of which he is capable in his wretchedness. Faith is the admitting of the shortfall: "What faith basically means is just that this shortfall that we all have in our love is made up by the surplus of Jesus Christ's love, acting on our behalf."[214] The question then becomes: How can one understand the transformation that needs to happen? What happens when the greatness of God's love meets the weakness of human love? Ratzinger's understanding of the word "encounter" might prove helpful in theologically considering the starting point of this transformation, and it is to a theological treatment of this word that the present study now turns.

4.1   Definition

Msgr. Luigi Giussani describes an encounter as the confrontation with a fact, i.e. reality.[215] For Giussani, the method of encounter is marked by "the chance meeting with a reality external to the self, an objective, eminently 'encounterable' presence that, while 'outside' of the self, moves the heart. (The word 'encounter' has an exterior connotation just as decisive as the interior one.)"[216] An encounter means "something distinctly objective educated man's

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[211] Ratzinger, *What It Means to be a Christian*, 69-70.
[212] See Ratzinger, *What It Means to Be a Christian*, 70-73.
[213] Ratzinger, *What It Means to be a Christian*, 74.
[214] Ratzinger, *What It Means to be a Christian*, 74.
[215] Luigi Giussani, *At the Origin of the Christian Claim*, trans. Viviane Hewitt (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1998), 40.
[216] Luigi Giussani, *Why the Church?*, trans. Viviane Hewitt (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2001), 20.

subjectivity,"[217] something or someone (an "objective" other) erupts onto the scene and brings about a change in the subject. Encounter (lit. "meeting of adversaries, confrontation" and even "fight" in Old French) is the in-breaking of God's personhood, of his completely open "I," of *communio* into the *shêol* that is the result of human sin. God's communal nature as "I", "You", and "We" stands in stark contrast to the isolating nature of sin that locks man in himself, in his "I", and, therefore, this isolated "I" stands in opposition to the radical relationality of God. As Ratzinger says, "life means communion, whereas the heart of death is the absence of relationship."[218] In his prideful self-sufficiency and the shame of one's self-awareness of his or her wretchedness, the human being cannot stand to bear a God who would take flesh, a God who comes close. This frighteningly unfathomable love that confronts one's autonomy must be done away with and killed off. But, in freely giving himself over to death (cf. Jn. 10:18), in entering into the abyss at the hands of those who stand opposed, Jesus Christ enters into isolation, he enters into hell and breaks it from the inside, so to speak (the third "form" of death noted above). The harrowing of hell is a radical encounter between the Truth of Love, between the *Logos*-as-Love manifesting the truth of the human person as a being-from, being-with, and being-for, to the person who has been broken from the pattern due to sin in all its forms, and who finds himself, or who has established himself as an isolated "I." The encounter is, therefore, marked by the pain of the light of Truth, revealing the person's shortfall and dehumanized state, on the one hand, and, on the other hand, the incision of the Truth of Love with the "yes" of God to the person despite his broken state — a "yes" that initiates the process of healing that is nothing other than conversion. The encounter with truth in both directions (the truth of man's situation and the truth of God's unconditional love) initiates a path of healing and freedom. Ratzinger reflects on the mystery of Holy Saturday[219] in this light, saying:

> "Descended into hell" - this confession of Holy Saturday means that Christ passed
> through the door of solitude, that he descended into the unreachable and insuperable
> depth of our condition of solitude. This means, however, that also in that extreme night

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[217] Giussani, *Why the Church?*, 20.

[218] Ratzinger, *Eschatology*, 82.

[219] In *Seek That Which Is Above*, Ratzinger notes that the ancient Church saw Christ's descent into hell (i.e. Holy Saturday), not as a word or a day of mourning, but one of victory. See Joseph Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 84-85.

which no word penetrates, when we will all be like children, banished, weeping, there

will be a voice that calls to us, a hand that takes our hand and leads us on. Man's

insuperable solitude was overcome from the moment *He* entered it. Hell was beaten from

the moment love entered the region of death and the no man's land of solitude was

inhabited by him.[220]

Because eternally-begotten Son cannot exist, as Son, apart from communion (i.e. Holy Spirit)

with the Father, when this communion willingly enters the realm of isolation in the person of

Jesus Christ, it "breaks" death from the inside. When communion enters the realm of the dead it

is isolation no more — whether this death is the result of physiological deterioration or the

"empty existence" that results from sin. Man's attempts to kill off the frightening love of God,

the love that embraces man who cannot bear to embrace himself, are foiled by God's reckless,

foolish love that goes to the depths, and loves man, says "yes" to man, even despite man's

rejection.

4.2   Encounter as Conversion

The word "encounter," provides an access point to understanding the radical nature of the

Pauline sense of conversion (i.e. "It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me" (Gal.

2:20)), which is more than the revision of opinions and attitudes but the exchange of one "I" for

another.[221] Encounter is a double death-event. First, Christ gives himself freely over to death

initiating an encounter between the pure relationality of God (being-from, being-for, being-with)

in Jesus Christ in the hell of the isolated "I." This death-event can reach man now insofar as

shêol stands as an existential possibility, even if it lacks the eternal finality traditionally ascribed

to hell. The resulting second "moment" of death is marked by "an exchange of the old subject for

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[220] Ratzinger, "The Anguish of an Absence: Meditation 2." Cf. Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 80-ff; and Benedict XVI, "Easter Vigil: Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI," April 7, 2007 (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2007/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20070407_veglia-pasquale.html.

[221] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," *The Nature and Mission of Theology: Approaches to Understanding Its Role in the Light of Present Controversy,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1995), 51. See also Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," 26; and Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 35-ff and 103.

another. The 'I' ceases to be an autonomous subject standing in itself. It is snatched away from itself and fitted into a new subject. The 'I' is not simply submerged, but it must really release its grip on itself in order to then receive itself anew in and together with a greater 'I.'"[222] The encounter initiated by God confronts the radical opposition to God within man, an opposition that damages the very nature of person-as-relation, and reconstitutes the person as such in an act of faith whereby the person receives relation and thereby allows God to burst the confines of the isolated "I." Faith is the "yes" to the "You" of God in Jesus Christ, a "You" the "I" did not create or give itself, but which enters into the "space" of the isolated "I" precisely as the presence and gift of communion. The presence provokes the "about-turn" that is conversion and one that is the radical death-event of the isolated "I." In Christ, the "I" is isolated no more.

The breaking down of the isolated "I" by communion is precisely what makes resurrection, and, consequently, heaven, possible. Man, who has no permanence in himself and who, in a fit of futility, tries to stay alive in another, encounters in Jesus Christ:

> He who *is*, who does not come into existence and pass away again but abides in the midst of transience: the God of the living, who does not hold just the shadow and echo of my being, whose ideas are not just copies of reality. I myself am his thought, which establishes me more securely, so to speak, than I am in myself; his thought is not the posthumous shadow but the original source and strength of my being. In him I can stand as more than a shadow; in him I am truly closer to myself than I should be if I just tried to stand by myself.[223]

We have already noted that without this "yes," the door of death that one must walk through on his own is absolute loneliness. With Christ's descent into hell, hell is overcome because "there is life in the midst of death, because love dwells in it. Now only deliberate self-enclosure is hell or, as the Bible calls it, the second death (Rev. 20:14, for example)."[224] Now the doors of death stand open since the God who is *communio* has dwelt in death, the God who is life and love and "yes"

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[222] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 51.
[223] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 303-4.
[224] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 301.

for the human person. Rather than hell being the "default" position of God-less isolation, it is now filled with God's presence. One must freely choose against this presence and lock himself, deliberately, in the hell of isolation. With this, with the gates of hell stand open because Love has dwelt there (cf. Ps. 139:8-12), one comes to the truth of the Resurrection. Immortality always proceeds from love; love is the foundation of immortality, not autonomy. Human love might be strong as death (Songs 8:6), but it does not appear strong enough, on its own, to overcome death. Only God's love can shatter death and "be the foundation of our immortality…love has managed to break through death here and thus has transformed fundamentally the situation of all of us."[225]

Conversion works toward resurrection, toward the redemption and healing of the person, toward *theosis*. This new life begins *in* history, it is an historical event, because Jesus Christ came for men and women who are *in* time, and who, precisely as such, need to be saved *in* time. Regarding the "fundamental anthropological pattern," the person finds that he or she exists in light of the "from*"* on many levels. Christianity is the finding of a You (or, better said, the *being found* by the You) that sustains the person in the face of the insuperable solitude of death that seems so pervasive as to cut off the "from" in every direction (whether it is the result of a personal sin or whether one is the victim of the sin of another), leaving the person alone, forgotten. In Christ, the power of love is so strong that He is capable of keeping alive not just a memory of the person, not just a shadow of his existence, but the person himself. In Christ, and his total sacrifice on the Cross, love is perfected and becomes stronger than death because "it is at the same time total 'being held' by him."[226] "To belong to him, to be called by him, is to be rooted in life indestructible,"[227] because "love is the foundation of immortality, and immortality proceeds from love alone…only his love, coinciding with God's own power of life and love, can be the foundation of our immortality."[228] Resurrection, then, indicates the possibility of the other pole of human existence, heaven, which stands in stark contrast to hell, "the definitive rejection of 'being-for.'"[229] In the mystery of the Incarnation, God has made a door for himself into hell, and in the mystery of Easter, he provides an exit. In this conception, "Death is no longer a house

[225] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 306-07.
[226] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 305.
[227] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 114.
[228] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 306.
[229] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 312.

with no exits, a place of no return,"[230] and "Life is not a waiting room leading to the void but the beginning of eternity."[231] Heaven marks the other pole of human existence, opposite that of utter solitude and the impossibility of communion, as the "confluence of God and man"[232] "inside God's own being."[233] Given what has been said thus far, this experience of resurrection, which is the passing through death in the communion of life, and the abiding in this life within God's own being, is possible, even if not fully, in the here-and-now that marks the life of historical man between the eternal poles of heaven and hell. In other words, if it is possible to experience something of the loneliness of hell in the here-and-now, it is possible (only in Christ), to enter into his death (self-sacrificial love) which defeats death, and opens the way to new life.

4.3   Encounter and Joy

While Ratzinger holds that it is possible to existentially experience hell on earth, he also holds the converse to be true; it is be possible to experience the joy of living the resurrection in the here and now. On the topic of joy, Ratzinger attempts to vindicate Christianity from what French psychiatrists called "*maladie catholique,*"a "special neurosis that is the product of a warped pedagogy so exclusively concentrated on the fourth and sixth commandments that the resultant complex with regard to authority and purity renders the individual…incapable of free self-development."[234] Nietzsche also railed against this type of joyless Christianity, claiming that Christianity "poisoned" *eros,*[235] and that Christian morality denounces the basic joys of life with a "morality of resentment," which he contrasts with a Dionysian morality of the strong, fearless, and creative.[236] Nietzsche and the like have attempted to establish an entirely this-worldly vision of man's happiness. But, one must ask, have all of man's attempts to make himself joyful attained their end? Even more foundationally, what makes the person joyful? Ratzinger answers this question by saying:

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[230] Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, 84.
[231] Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, 85.
[232] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 313.
[233] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 312.
[234] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 77.
[235] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §3.
[236] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 76-77.

The root of man's joy is the harmony he enjoys with himself. He lives in this affirmation. And only one who can accept himself can also accept the *thou*, can accept the world. The reason why an individual cannot accept the *thou*, cannot come to terms with him, is that he does not like his own *I* and, for that reason, cannot accept a *thou*.[237]

The terrible reality, however, is that one cannot accept himself on his own — by his own efforts. Ratzinger says, "Of ourselves, we cannot come to terms with ourselves. Our *I* becomes acceptable to us only if it has first become acceptable to another *I*. We can love ourselves [and others] only if we have first been loved by someone else."[238] Taking the affirming expression "It is good that you exist" from Josef Pieper, Ratzinger notes that man needs to hear from another these words, but not with words — with an act of the other's being.

Confronted with such an intense need, Ratzinger raises the question: How can I know this love is true, that it is really good that I exist, and not just a tragic error? Love must be accompanied by truth. Here, the infinite nature of human desire, in particular the desire for unending love, and therefore, unending joy, comes to the fore. As noted above, only the affirmation of one's being by the very ground of one's being can satisfy, only the affirmation provided by one not on the same finite level as a man, but who is the very cause of that man's existence, can satisfy his need for affirmation in truth and love.[239] In other words, a merely finite "yes" to one's existence from another human being is does not, in the end, satisfy the infinite longing of the human heart for a "yes" that can carry one across the void of death. One longs for

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[237] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 79.

[238] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 79-80.

[239] See also Baars, *Born Only Once: The Miracle of Affirmation*. Baars presents, albeit from a psychological perspective, a similar thesis as Ratzinger's theological one. Baars argues that *the* neurosis of the modern era is an Emotional Deprivation Disorder caused by disaffirmation. He notes that man is that being that cannot stand if he is born only once (biological birth), but must be "born again" (psychic rebirth) by way of the loving affirmation of another. One cannot affirm himself. Affirmation, that is, the state of being able to stand *firm* within oneself (to accept oneself), must be given by another who is aware of the goodness of the other, attracted to that goodness, and expressive of that goodness. Given the personal nature of human beings, human affirmation is necessary for thriving, however, something more is needed. The person has an infinite longing for affirmation that cannot be satisfied within the realm of human finitude, no matter how perfectly affirming the other might be. The human heart longs to be affirmed by God and only in this way can the human person stand *firm*.

a "yes" capable of conquering the problem of death. Reflecting upon the Gospel, the Christian *evangelium*, Ratzinger claims:

> The Cross, which was for Nietzsche the most detestable expression of the negative character of the Christian religion, is in truth the center of the evangelium, the glad tidings: "It is good that you exist" —no, "It is necessary that you exist." The Cross is the approbation of our existence, not in words, but in an act so completely radical that it caused God to become flesh and pierced this flesh to the quick; that, to God, it was worth the death of his incarnate Son. One who is so loved that the other identifies his life with this love and no longer desires to live if he is deprived of it; one who is loved even unto death — such a one knows that he is truly loved. But if God so loves us, then we are loved in truth. Then love is truth, and truth is love.[240]

In Jesus Christ, the God who is *Logos* not only takes flesh, but in and through his flesh, identifies his life with God's love for man, and, in dying, enters into the deprivation of love to show the man who has deprived himself of love that even there he is loved (cf. Ps. 139:8). God's affirming presence in the depths of one's existence "proves its strength not least in the fact that it sustains us when all else about us is darkness,"[241] and allows man to give himself freely and fully, while still remaining in harmony with himself.[242] Revelation—faith can, thus, in light of Ratzinger's personalism, be described within the dynamism of the word "encounter," which is conversion and which initiates deeper conversion. The encounter with Christ is the loving acceptance of one's "I" by the "Thou" of Christ that results in joy,[243] and the boundless breaking open of that "I" in its transformation into the "I" of Christ. The Gospel is *evangelium*.

4.4   Encounter and Boundless Conversion

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[240] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 81

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[241] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 81.

[242] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 79.

[243] According to Pieper, joy is always a byproduct of love, a secondary effect of love. While there can be many "reasons" for joy, it is the case that love stands as the common denominator. See Pieper, *An Anthology,* 32-39.

Christian conversion is the result of the "in-breaking" of God into the isolated "I." Conversion is not a reference to the program of the "ethical idealist." The "ethical idealist," as Dietrich von Hildebrand notes, simply "wants to change only in certain respects but without letting the whole of his nature become involved."[244] In a similar vein, one could say that Christian conversion is not a reference to modernity's attempt to change the person for the sake of progress, or postmodernity's push to overcome nature and to express difference. These attitudes betray a position that is all-too-willing to change, but often by way of frenetic self-asserted will-to-change for the sake of amounting to something in the eyes of the world.[245] In contrast, Christian *metanoia,* "readiness to change," is marked by its "boundlessness, its utter radicality."[246] Ratzinger says, "To be a Christian, one must change not just in some particular area but without reservation even to the innermost depths of one's being."[247] The "death-event" that is Christian conversion, when yielded to, knows no bounds save for the boundless opening of the "I" on either side — that gives life "a new horizon and a decisive direction."[248] Conversion means hearing the message of the Gospel that is the Truth of Love, becoming aware of and shocked by one's own guilt caused by selfish self-preservation and the isolating of his "I," by expressing contrition, and by experiencing forgiveness, which is not a one-time event, but a path of forgiveness.[249] Conversion always implies the painful process of repentance and forgiveness. In this way, it becomes clear that encounter gives rise to discipleship, and that the whole could be described as a process of anthropological healing according to the *Logos.*

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[244] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 61. Here, Ratzinger is quoting from Hildebrand's *Transformation in Christ* (New York: Longmans, Green and Co., 1948).

[245] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 61-62.

[246] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 61. See also John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), §88.

[247] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 60.

[248] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §1.

[249] See Joseph Ratzinger, "A Discussion between F. Greiner and J. Ratzinger," *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 188-89; and Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 91-97.

5.   The Journey to Truth and Freedom: From Encounter to Discipleship

For Ratzinger, discipleship is a process of anthropological healing that begins with encounter and ends in *theosis*. In his funeral homily for Msgr. Luigi Giussani, Ratzinger drew the connection between the initial encounter with Christ, and discipleship. He says, "Christianity is not an intellectual system, a collection of dogmas, or moralism. Christianity is instead an encounter, a love story; it is an event….to encounter Christ means to follow him. This encounter is a road, a journey."[250] Being a Christian is the result of the encounter with Christ, the encounter between communion and isolation, the encounter of the isolated "I" and the "We" of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in and through the "We" of the Church. But, being Christian is an ongoing, or living encounter. The new and boundless horizon, the decisive direction of one's life patterned on that of Christ, is to be lived.[251] Discipleship is this life; it is the "gradual unfolding of this encounter."[252] Ratzinger describes discipleship in *Seek That Which Is Above*:

> Discipleship means accepting the entire path, going forward into those things that are above, the hidden things that are the real ones: truth, love, our being children of God. Discipleship of this kind only happens, however, in the modality of the Cross, in the true losing of self that alone can open the treasury of God and of the earth, that alone releases, as it were, the living wellsprings of the depths and cause the power of real life to stream into this world. Discipleship is a stepping-forward into what is hidden in order to find, through this genuine loss of self, what it is to be a human being. It also means discovering that store of joy of which the world stands in such urgent need. Not only do we have a right, we also have a duty to rejoice, because the Lord has given us joy and the world is waiting for it.[253]

Following Christ does not mean imitating a life that is "past and gone," nor is it an "activism" that turns discipleship into "a program for action with all kinds of compromises and

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[250] Joseph Ratzinger, "Funeral Homily for Msgr. Luigi Giussani," *Joseph Ratzinger in Communio: Anthropology and Culture*, trans. Communion and Liberation (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2013), 184-85.
[251] Cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §1.
[252] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, §17.
[253] Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, 55.

revaluations."[254] Discipleship always implies the death event (i.e. encounter), Resurrection, and abiding Sonship. Discipleship always implies "being with the Father."[255] In this sense, discipleship is not a "beginning" that is eventually transcended, but "is the fulfillment and destination of his life. He always remains a disciple."[256] Hence, discipleship is the process, beginning with encounter and ending with *theosis*, that brings about the healing of the human person, that brings about the freedom of the human person in accord with the truth (i.e. theological anthropology). Given the relationship between evangelization, catechesis, and discipleship, a brief theological treatment on Ratzinger's understanding of discipleship is well-suited for the present study.

5.1   Discipleship as Being-from

Ratzinger's starting point for understanding discipleship centers around two parallel texts: Mk. 3:13-19 and Lk. 6:12-16.[257] Both accounts note that Jesus is on the mountain. Luke explicitly acknowledges that Jesus went up the mountain to pray.[258] In any case, "the hills are the place of Jesus's prayer. They are the place where he is alone, where he turns to the Father."[259] The mountain signifies the place of Jesus' communion with God, "the place on the heights, above the works and deeds of everyday life."[260] Benedict XVI continues:

> The calling of the disciples is a prayer event; it is as if they were begotten in prayer, in
> intimacy with the Father. The calling of the Twelve, far from being purely functional,

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[254] Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above,* 54.

[255] Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above,* 54. See also the "Funeral Homily for Msgr. Luigi Giussani," 185. Here Ratzinger describes discipleship as a journey that passes through the "valley of darkness." Discipleship is a journey that requires passing through this dark valley, passing through the Way of the Cross, in order to be joyful.

[256] As quoted in Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 62. Here, Ratzinger is quoting directly from K.H. Schelkle, *Discipleship and Priesthood* (London, Sheed & Ward, 1966), 24.

[257] See Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 170-82; Benedict XVI, "Witnesses of Christ," in *Jesus, the Apostles, and the Early Church: General Audiences (15 March 2006 - 14 February 2007)* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 14; Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 18; Joseph Ratzinger, "In the Beginning is Listening," *Ministers of Your Joy,* trans. Robert Nowell (Ann Arbor, MI: Servant Publications, 1989), 82-90.

[258] See Benedict XVI's note on this point in *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 170.

[259] Ratzinger, "In the Beginning is Listening," 83.

[260] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 170.

takes on a deeply theological meaning: Their calling emerges from the Son's dialogue with the Father and is anchored there…You cannot make yourself a disciple — it is an event of election, a free decision of the Lord's will, which in its turn is anchored in his communion of will with the Father.[261]

This one paragraph captures much of what has been stated to this point. Discipleship is borne from Jesus Christ's communion with the Father. Discipleship is borne from the union of wills in the singular person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is perfectly united with the Father. The Son's dialogue with the Father in the Holy Spirit is the *ground of encounter,* that *communio* which confronts the death of the isolated "I" and breaks through it. The prayer of Jesus Christ, as the deepest self-manifestation of the Son (of Sonship) is the source of encounter, and, therefore, the source of discipleship. Just as faith cannot come about on one's own, but must be given, discipleship proceeds along the same lines. One cannot make himself a disciple — it is an event of election, an encounter initiated by the Lord, an invitation extended by the Father through the Son. This paragraph also contains the starting point for Ratzinger's "spiritual Christology,"[262]

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[261] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 170.

[262] This study will attempt to make connections between spiritual Christology and discipleship, but will not provide a systematic treatment of spiritual Christology. Given the plethora of research conducted within the area that could be called "Ratzinger Studies," only a handful of scholars have treated what Ratzinger calls "spiritual Christology." Emery de Gaál (see de Gaál, *The Theology of Pope Benedict XVI,* 4-5, 86-88) briefly treats spiritual Christology in relation to anthropology, by noting that it is "the spiritual figure that permits access to the essence of a human being…The inner figure of Jesus Christ contains, in its history and self-immolation on the cross, the measure for future, self-confident humanity" (4). De Gaál adds that "immersing oneself in the prayer of Jesus is to know the person of Jesus himself. This is *the* indispensable heuristic principle for Christology and indeed for all of the Christian faith" (5). Joseph Murphy, in *Christ Our Joy,* provides a brief treatment on the prayer of Jesus in relation to his title "Son" (see Murphy, *Christ Our Joy,* 120-27). Murphy, following Ratzinger, argues that the Gospel testimony claims that Jesus' words and deeds flowed from the Son's communion with the Father as expressed in prayer. Murphy notes that one enters into this prayer of the Son through his own prayer, which not only allows the person to understand Jesus Christ as "Son," but in the intimacy of *Abba* — Son, "man's true liberation takes place" (123). This liberation is possible for man, because in Christ, and in entering into Christ's prayer, man comes face-to-face with the truth of his own being, and therefore, the freedom of truth. Here, Murphy cites Ratzinger, "The question of Jesus' filial relation to the Father gets to the very root of the question of man's freedom and liberation, and unless this is done everything else is futile. Any liberation of man which does not enable him to become divine betrays man, betrays his boundless yearning" (123; on this point, see also Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 35"). Con Quy Joseph Lam explores Ratzinger's spiritual Christology in light of his theology of revelation (see Lam, *Joseph Ratzinger's Theological Retractations,* 109-46). Lam argues that Ratzinger's Christology is neither "from above" (Monophysitic) or "from below" (Nestorian), but "from within" (21, 90-91). Lam highlights the Augustinian and Bonaventurean influence on Ratzinger's spiritual Christology — a Christology that is performative, rather than merely informative. One who enters the path provoked by spiritual Christology is invited onto a path of conversion made possible by the Son's sending of the Holy Spirit who draws believers into the Son's prayer with the Father. Aaron Riches, following Ratzinger, argues that it is within the prayer of the Incarnate

thus linking his visions for both discipleship and Christology. Spiritual Christology means that "Christology is born of prayer or not at all,"[263] that it is not only by seeing the Son at prayer that one comes to understand his identity as Son, but by entering into the Son's prayer. One can only become a disciple as the result of Jesus' prayer, and one can only come to know who Jesus is as the disciple who is invited to participate in his prayer.[264] In introducing his spiritual Christology, Ratzinger makes explicit the connection between spiritual Christology and discipleship, saying, "Only by entering into Jesus' solitude, only by participating in what is most personal to him, his communication with the Father, can one see what this most personal reality is; only thus can one penetrate to his identity. This is the only way to understand him and to grasp what 'following Jesus' means."[265] Discipleship is the movement *from* the encounter of Jesus Christ — who died praying[266] and so, as *communio*, entered into and destroyed death as from the inside — and one's life, into life *with* Him and *in* His constant communication with the Father.

5.2   *Discipleship as Being-with*

Son, that a theandric unification takes place between the two natures of Christ in the union wills (see Riches, "After Chalcedon," 200-17). Riches holds that the "filial prayer of Jesus specifies the mode of mutual indwelling of divinity and humanity in the Son's singular synthetic Person" (207) Reflecting on the prayer of the Son, therefore, "concretely abolishes whatever latent binary logic is unwittingly preserved at Chalcedon," an achievement that abolishes "every dualism of the two natures in Christ" (207). Scott Hahn's *Covenant and Communion* contains a brief treatment on spiritual Christology, a contribution Hahn calls one of Ratzinger's "most unique and important" (see Scott Hahn, *Covenant and Communion* (Grand Rapids, MI: BrazosPress, 2009), 143-45). Hahn highlights the connection between Jesus' prayer and the prayer of the Israelites, as the fulfillment of Israelite prayer and liturgy. Drawing attention to another "key" within Ratzinger's spiritual Christology, namely, the heart of Christ, Sarah Butler argues that the image of the "pierced heart" of Christ stands as a central theme for Benedict XVI (see Sarah Butler, "Benedict XVI: Apostle of the 'Pierced Heart of Jesus,'" in *The Pontificate of Benedict XVI: Its Premises and Promises* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2009)). Peter John McGregor's *Heart to Heart* (Eugene, OR: Pickwick, 2016), a study which has already been referenced several times, is the most comprehensive, critical study of Ratzinger's spiritual Christology available in English. Here, McGregor provides an historical survey of the development of spiritual Christology in Ratzinger's thought, with a particular emphasis on its role in the *Jesus of Nazareth* trilogy, and a call for a stronger connection to be developed within this line of thought between Christology and pneumatology.

[263] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 46.
[264] See Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25-27.
[265] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 19.
[266] See Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 22-25.

The text from Mark's Gospel proceeds with a double-assignment: the Twelve are tasked "to be with him, and to be sent out to preach."[267] There seems to be a contradiction in motivations here. Ratzinger points out the difficulty, saying, "Either, one could say, Jesus wants them to form his entourage and always to accompany him; or he wants people he can send out who then will of course only be with him from time to time. If we transpose this question into the terminology of a later age, then one would say that here the monastic, contemplative vocation and the apostolic vocation seem to be intertwined."[268] In his more recent work, Benedict XVI adds:

> They must be with him in order to get to know him; in order to attain that intimate acquaintance with him that could not be given to the 'people' — who saw him only from the outside and took him for a prophet, a great figure in the history of religions, but were unable to perceive his uniqueness (cf. Mt. 16:13-ff). The Twelve must be with him so as to be able to recognize his oneness with the Father and thus become witnesses to his mystery…One might say that they have to pass from outward to inward communion with Jesus.[269]

Discipleship marks this movement from the "outside" to the "inside" that is initiated by the encounter with Jesus Christ as the event of election by which one begins the process of discipleship. Discipleship is the process of becoming a witness. Ratzinger calls the Twelve "eye-witnesses," and "ear-witnesses." He says, "Only someone who knows him, who knows his words and deeds, who has himself or herself experienced him in the encounter of long days and nights — only that kind of person can bring him to others."[270] Still, one might question exactly what it means to "be with" Jesus. How can one "be with" him? Overlaying spiritual Christology with discipleship can come to one's aid.

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[267] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 172.
[268] Ratzinger, "In the Beginning is Listening," 86.
[269] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 172.
[270] Ratzinger, "In the Beginning is Listening," 87.

Ratzinger's spiritual Christology claims that one can be with Jesus Christ to the extent in which he or she participates in his prayer. Ratzinger claims that "since the center of the person of Jesus is prayer, it is essential to participate in his prayer if we are to know and understand him."[271] In explaining this statement, Ratzinger begins with the epistemological axiom that knowledge "depends on a certain similarity between the knower and the known," that "like is known by like."[272] Knowledge demands a certain level of empathy, through which one enters into that which is to be known — one must become "one with him or it, and thus become able to understand."[273] He illustrates this point by noting that a mathematical equation can only be solved by thinking mathematically and that medicine is only truly medicine if one enters into the art of healing and not merely via books. Similarly, he notes that religion's fundamental act is prayer, the means by which one seeks to bind him or herself to the divine, or, to make conciliation for broken bonds.[274] If the central act of the person of Jesus is prayer, "of unbroken communication with the one he calls 'Father,'"[275] then it is "only possible really to understand this person by entering into this act of prayer, by participating in it."[276] Ratzinger adds:

> A participation in the mind of Jesus, i.e. in his prayer, which (as we have seen) is an act of love, of self-giving and self-expropriation to men, is not some kind of pious

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[271] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25. Mariusz Biliniewicz rightly points out the connection between prayer and the liturgy in Ratzinger. If one is to understand Ratzinger's position on liturgy (the highest form/expression of prayer), he must understand prayer in general. Biliniewicz follows the Ratzinger's thought in "On the Theological Basis of Prayer and the Liturgy," which identifies three contemporary challenges to prayer: (1) the rejection of metaphysics, which is simultaneously the rejection of creation and the Christian concept of God; (2) the rule of causality that claims the whole of reality is pre-determined and that within such determinism, no real freedom exists or ability to affect reality; (3) the third objection is rooted in Aristotle's argument that the eternal is immutable and entirely removed from the vicissitudes of time. Ratzinger sees the third objections as the most pressing, and finds in the Christian doctrine of the Trinity the answer to how the eternal can enter into time, and, conversely, how time can affect eternity. Only revelation can provide an answer to the philosophical objection raised by Aristotle. Biliniewicz says, "According to Christian faith, the eternal God, who is a community of Three Divine Persons, through the Incarnation of the Son, the Second Person of the Holy Trinity, crossed the border between eternity and time by his own will and initiative. God became one of us and thus built the bridge between what is eternal and what is temporal, between the Creator and creation, between Divinity and humanity. The Incarnation of the Logos allowed humans, who are immersed in time, to communicate with God, who is outside time and has power over time…we can speak to God because God has spoken to us first and enabled us to speak to Him through His Son" (Mariusz Biliniewicz, *The Liturgical Vision of Pope Benedict XVI: A Theological Inquiry* (New York: Peter Lang, 2013), 9-10). See also Ratzinger, "On the Theological Basis of Prayer and the Liturgy," 18-22.
[272] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25.
[273] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25.
[274] Cf. Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 25.
[275] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 26.
[276] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 26.

supplement to reading the Gospels, adding nothing to knowledge of him or even being an obstacle to the rigorous purity of critical knowing. On the contrary, it is the basic precondition if real understanding, in the sense of modern hermeneutics — i.e., the entering-in to the same time and the same meaning — is to take place.[277]

Entering into the prayer of Jesus Christ is what Ratzinger means by the call to "be with" Jesus. One must enter into Jesus' communication with the Father in order to truly "see" Jesus, to "know" Jesus, as the Son. In order to be a witness, one must "be with" Jesus Christ in his communication, as Son, with the Father. This said, being-with is also Ratzinger's descriptor for the Holy Spirit. Being with Jesus is being with Him in and through the Holy Spirit, and being with Jesus in his prayer means entering, with Him, into that life of the Spirit that is *communio*. It is only from being with Jesus in the Holy Spirit that mission is borne, and one can begin to grasp the spiritual depth of what Paul VI means when he calls the Holy Spirit the "principal agent of evangelization."[278]

In concluding this treatment of discipleship as being-with, one final point must be made: Jesus does not call an isolated disciple. Discipleship is not a privatized event. Instead, Jesus calls together the many disciples, and from there, creates an even more intimate family that "is in principle intended to be universal…This 'we' of the new family is not amorphous. Jesus calls an inner core of people specially chosen by him, who are to carry on his mission and give this family order and shape."[279] Benedict XVI notes that this group of the Twelve is not amorphous and anonymous, but that they are known and called by name.[280] Therefore, in being called by Christ's prayer to enter into Christ's prayer, a transformation occurs on two levels. Vertically, discipleship refers to relationship with God through Jesus Christ. However, in discipleship, being-with does not only extend between Jesus and the disciple, but between disciples themselves. Horizontally, then, discipleship refers to the fact that God calls many (different)

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[277] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 26.

[278] Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1975), §75.

[279] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 169.

[280] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 177. He also notes that the group is rather heterogenous on 177-82.

people by name, drawing them into relationship with one another in himself, in his body. Therefore, discipleship always contains a social dimension by its very nature.

5.3   Discipleship as Being-for/"Being sent"

As has been illustrated above, Jesus' entire being is *for*, insofar as he is "Son" and "sent" on "mission" by the Father. In being entirely "from," the Son takes the Father's "being for" on as his own (e.g. Mt. 11:27; Jn. 16:15; Jn. 17:10). Christian discipleship is nothing other than a participation in the "being-from" of the Son, which reaches the person through the Son's manifestation of the Father's pre-existent initiative (i.e. being-for"). The encounter with Christ generates a new "being-from" (i.e. a rebirth), and initiates one into a way of life, into "being with" Jesus Christ. Being *with* Christ means entering into his very prayer so as to know him and to learn to be with him always. At the same time, being-with is and becomes being-for — being "with" God transforms the person to "be for," to "be sent." The basic contours of being-for as pro-existence, have been considered above. Discipleship is the means by which one enters into the dynamism of Jesus' pro-existence. On the relationship between being-with and being-sent, Benedict XVI explains:

> At the same time, however, [the Twelve] are there in order to become Jesus' envoys — "apostles," no less — who bring his message to the world, first to the lost sheep of the House of Israel, but then "to the ends of the earth." Being with Jesus and being sent by him seem at first sight mutually exclusive, but they clearly belong together. The Apostles have to learn to be with him in a way that enables them, even when they go to the ends of the earth, to be with him still. Being with him includes the missionary dynamic by its very nature, since Jesus' whole being is mission.[281]

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[281] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 172. Cf. Ratzinger, "In the Beginning is Listening," 86.

Again, faith acknowledges that Jesus' existence as the "last Adam" not only concerns all of mankind as some sort of lofty ideal, but that He saves all of mankind from its wretched shortfall. Jesus' being called "Adam" implies the whole of mankind — he is a "corporate personality" who "gathers the whole creature 'Adam' in himself."[282] In reflecting upon Jn. 12:32 ("When I am lifted up from the earth, I will draw all men to myself"), Ratzinger notes, "The event of the crucifixion appears there as a process of opening, in which the scattered man-monads are drawn into the embrace of Jesus Christ, into the wide span of his outstretched arms, in order to arrive, in this union, at their goal, the goal of humanity."[283] Jesus' completely open existence in the dynamic movement between "from" and "for" makes him "the man of the future…the future of man lies in 'being-for.'"[284] Jesus' existence as the "last Adam" draws all of mankind into his open existence between the "from" and "for," and reveals that becoming fully oneself (future man) means complete receiving-self and self-giving in and through Jesus Christ. By being with Jesus, the disciple is painfully conformed to the obedience of the Son, who, as *Logos,* unites both wills (human and divine) "in one assent to the will of the Father, that the communion between human and divine being is consummated…The act of participation in this filial obedience, as truly effecting a change in man, is at the same time the only effective action that truly has power to change and renew society."[285] Being *with* Jesus implies a process of conversion, whereby one's will, indeed, one's entire person, is conformed to the Son, in whose incarnation, the union of the human and divine wills brings about the reconciliation of mankind with God.[286] This being with Jesus makes possible the genuine giving over of oneself, which is the nature of what it means to be human.[287] Without being "from" and "with," one cannot be "for" according to the pattern set forth in the *Logos* incarnate.

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[282] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 236.

[283] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 240.

[284] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 240.

[285] Joseph Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist — Fellowship — Mission," in *Pilgrim Fellowship of Faith,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 81-82.

[286] It is worth noting here that Ratzinger takes up Constantinople III in both dealing with spiritual Christology directly (see Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 32-42) and in his application of spiritual Christology to the Eucharist (see Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist — Fellowship — Mission," 80-81). The relationship should be fairly clear. The spiritual Christology of Constantinople III attempts to reveal the center of Jesus' person as prayer, i.e. the union of his human will with his divine will in the one divine Person. If discipleship marks the entry of the person, spiritually, into the life of Christ (i.e. spiritual Christology), then the Eucharist marks the *concrete* entry of the person into the Person of Christ. In the giving and receiving of the Eucharist by Christ and the Church, respectively, the individual participates in the Paschal Mystery whereby his will is purified and conformed to that of Christ's.

[287] See Ratzinger, Ratzinger, *Seek That Which Is Above*, 55.

6.   The Church as the "Place" of Encounter, the "Place" of Discipleship

One must acknowledge, as Ratzinger does, the difficulty with all that has been said about encounter and discipleship, not only from the vantage point of history, but from that of human psychology as well. How can the Cross and Resurrection, how can the Ascension and Pentecost be present and actual today? How can these events be more than mere propositions rooted in the experience of men from the past who, themselves, have died (Moran!)? "How can the cross of the Lord come through to me from history so that I am able to experience the living reality that Pascal perceived in his meditation on the Lord on the Mount of Olives: 'I shed those drops of blood for you?'"[288] Ratzinger's answer: The Church. The *gift* of blessing given in the Ascension, by which "through his power over space, he is present and accessible to all — throughout history and in every place,"[289] becomes concretized in the gift of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. At Pentecost, "the Holy Spirit becomes visible and depictable in the Church,"[290] and the Church now stands as the answer to the existential problem of one's personhood-in-isolation that cannot seem to find its fulfillment by relating to the other.[291] As noted in Ch. 2, the Church makes accessible the being-from of the Son, "because the Lord lives even today in his saints and because in the love that comes *from their faith* his love can touch me directly….in all encounters with the love of the saints, with those who really believe and love, I always encounter more than these particular men and women. I encounter the new thing that can only become of them through the other, through him, and thus the way is opened up in me too for direct access to him."[292] The faith of the Church, the faith of those who today live from faith, becomes the reference point for others in the concrete here and now. In their faith, the "yes" of Jesus Christ is tangible, it can be experienced with the same potency as that of the experience of Peter, John, James, the Samaritan woman, Mary Magdalene, and so forth.

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[288] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 101-02.
[289] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* 284.
[290] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 68.
[291] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 66.
[292] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 102. (Emphasis mine).

While, in attempt to establish a basic understanding of the dynamics of revelation and faith, the emphasis has been placed upon Christ and the individual, it is not the case that the experience of conversion is at all possible as a privatized matter. It is not as if the individual, on his own, could bring about the exchange of his "I" with that of Christ by means of his own "work." This would only be a repetition of the autonomous "I's" futile attempts at self-sufficiency. Instead, Ratzinger follows the logic laid out by St. Paul in Galatians as the third chapter (3:27-29) provides the basis of the 2:20 formula. He notes that:

> The exchange of subjects includes a passive element, which Paul rightly characterizes as death, in the sense of receiving a share in the event of the Cross. It can come to someone only from the outside, from another person. Because Christian conversion throws open the frontier between the "I" and the "not-I," it can be bestowed upon one only by the "not-I" and can never be achieved solely in the interiority of one's personal decision. It has a sacramental structure. The "I no longer live" does not describe a private mystical experience but rather defines the essence of baptism. What takes place is a sacramental event, hence, and event involving the Church. The passive side of becoming a Christian calls for the acting Church, in which the unity of believers as a single subject manifests itself in its bodily and historical dimensions.[293]

The sacramental event St. Paul and Ratzinger refer to is the sacrament of Baptism. Rather emphatically, Benedict XVI describes the relationship between the individual and the Church in Baptism:

> With these words, Paul is not describing some mystical experience which could perhaps have been granted him, and could be of interest to us from a historical point of view, if at all. No, this phrase is an expression of what happened at Baptism. My "I" is taken away from me and is incorporated into a new and greater subject. This means that my "I" is back again, but now transformed, broken up, opened through incorporation into the other, in whom it acquires its new breadth of existence. Paul explains the same thing to us once

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[293] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 52. See also Ratzinger, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 23.

again from another angle when, in Chapter Three of the Letter to the Galatians…You have become one in Christ (cf. Gal 3:28). Not just one thing, but one, one only, one single new subject. This liberation of our "I" from its isolation, this finding oneself in a new subject means finding oneself within the vastness of God and being drawn into a life which has now moved out of the context of "dying and becoming". The great explosion of the Resurrection has seized us in Baptism so as to draw us on. Thus we are associated with a new dimension of life into which, amid the tribulations of our day, we are already in some way introduced. To live one's own life as a continual entry into this open space: this is the meaning of being baptized, of being Christian.…The Resurrection is not a thing of the past, the Resurrection has reached us and seized us. We grasp hold of it, we grasp hold of the risen Lord, and we know that he holds us firmly even when our hands grow weak.…I, but no longer I: this is the formula of Christian life rooted in Baptism, the formula of the Resurrection within time. I, but no longer I: if we live in this way, we transform the world.[294]

Paul speaks of an exchange of love by which man becomes wholly himself - by allowing himself to be loved so as to fulfill his highest calling, which is to love. Ratzinger says, "For his 'salvation' man is meant to rely on receiving."[295] Man's salvation (i.e. the restoration of his relationship with God) does not come about from his own resources, from one's own planning or speculation, but "demands the positivity of what confronts us, what comes to us as something positive, something to be received…the intrinsic necessity of the apparently historical contingency of Christianity can be shown, the 'must' of its—to us—objectionable positivity as an event that comes from outside."[296]

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[294] Benedict XVI, "Easter Vigil: Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2006/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20060415_veglia-pasquale.html.

[295] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 267.

[296] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 268-69.

7.   Conclusion

Ratzinger's starting point is always *Logos,* as revealed in Jesus Christ, who reveals what it means to be a human person. Hence, his fundamental theology shapes his anthropology. Ratzinger does not separate Christ from God, nor does he hold the two natures in Christ in a certain parallelism (hence, he attempts to avoid both Monophysitism and Nestorianism). The key for Ratzinger's Christology, then, is Jesus Christ's revelation of himself as "the Son." This title, along with the corresponding *"Abba"* of the Father, reveals that God is personal, and person is the event of relativity. In Jesus, *being* Son is pure *actualitas*. Furthermore, Ratzinger argues that the Holy Spirit is the *personal* unity of Father and Son. This discovery, made by the Church Fathers, results in the observation that reality is not merely substance and accident, but that person stands as an equally primordial mode of being. Trinitarian Christocentrism becomes the way forward for an authentic personalist anthropology — one that is fully grounded in the *Logos* as revealed in Jesus Christ, the fullness of God's revelation and he who reveals man to himself. Ratzinger's theological anthropology can be described in Trinitarian fashion by the words being-from, being-for, and being-with, and saying "yes" to this pattern means living in accord with the truth of one's being-as-person — the result of which is freedom.

For Ratzinger, stepping outside of this anthropological pattern and living under the illusion that one can manage *from* oneself alone, and to live *for* oneself alone, *without* need of relationship, always results in breaking from the pattern (that is, not living in accord with the truth of one's being) and falling into bondage. The isolation and loneliness that results can be described as death, or as hell. Jesus Christ, as the Son of God who is ever-always in communion with the Father, freely enters into the realm of the dead and breaks death from the inside out — when communion enters isolation, it is isolation no longer. These anthropological and eschatological insights become a basis for Ratzinger's theology of encounter. Additionally, encounter serves as the starting point for the process of the healing of the person in the truth, a process known as discipleship. In short, Ratzinger's Christocentrism drives at a theological anthropology that is both identity and task. Discipleship, initiated by the encounter with Christ, is the process of being led into this identity and task, of being restored in the fundamental anthropological pattern, and living mission as a result of this restoration and according to the

pattern. The present study will now apply the principles taken from theological anthropology in an attempt to understand *how* it is that the Church makes the revelation of God in Jesus Christ accessible today according to the pattern set forth by the *Logos*. How does the movement from encounter to discipleship come about through the Church today? How, according to Ratzinger's insight, ought the Church evangelize? How does the Church evangelize as a disciple (i.e. as a being-from, a being-with, and a being-for) in order to make new disciples? What form does this take? If the revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ takes center stage for Ratzinger's understanding of anthropology and discipleship, how does *Logos* come to bear in his vision for evangelization? Ultimately, pressing into Ratzinger's theological insight, one sees that the Church must evangelize in a manner that aligns with the nature of who God is — the *communio* of Father (being-for), Son (being-from), and Holy Spirit (being-with), in order to form disciples from *communio,* in *communio,* and for *communio*.

Ch. 4 - Evangelization According to the Logos: Toward an Anthropology of Evangelization

Chapter 3 considered the implications of the revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ on anthropology, along with the consequences of breaking away from the fundamental anthropological pattern revealed by the *Logos*. Chapter 3 also discussed the nature of discipleship as a process of redemption that aims at bringing about the healing and the fulfillment (*theosis*) of the person. As has been illustrated, the inner dynamism of discipleship (being-with) ultimately results in an outward, external, missionary movement (being-sent, being-for). The present chapter will attempt to approach discipleship from the opposite perspective: from the outside in. In even simpler terms, the present chapter will attempt to understand the manner in which the Church, as the concrete "other" who stands outside of the individual as *communio*, and, as such, encounters the individual with the announcement of the Gospel and the invitation to follow Christ. The Church sets out with Christ on mission; the Church participates in Christ's mission. This means the Church evangelizes in accord with how Christ evangelizes and who Christ is. In this way, the Church lives her discipleship. Therefore, the present chapter is primarily concerned with the question of method. It is a direct engagement with Ratzinger's initial and unanswered question inspired by Kierkegaard's clown: How can one communicate the Gospel today?

Acutely aware of the cultural shifts taking place in the West, Benedict XVI says, "in the past it was possible to recognize a unitary cultural matrix, broadly accepted in its appeal to the content of the faith and the values inspired by it, today this no longer seems to be the case in large swathes of society, because of a profound crisis of faith that has affected many people."[1] As has been noted, equally as challenging as believing, perhaps, is the corollary: the challenge of communicating the Gospel today. This question of communication became more pressing as Benedict XVI's pontificate continued. For example, on November 28, 2012, in the midst of the Year of Faith, Benedict XVI asks:

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[1] Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011), §6.

How can we talk about God in our time? How can we communicate the Gospel so as to open roads to his saving truth in our contemporaries' hearts — that are all too often closed — and minds — that are at times distracted by the many dazzling lights of society?…How can we talk about God today? The first answer is that we can talk about God because he has talked to us; so the first condition for speaking of God is listening to all that God himself has said. God has spoken to us!...Thus God is a reality of our life, he is so great that he has time for us too, he takes an interest in us. In Jesus of Nazareth we encounter the face of God, who came down from his heaven to immerse himself in the human world, in our world, and to teach "the art of living", the road to happiness; to set us free from sin and make us children of God (cf. Eph 1:5; Rom 8:14). Talking about God means first of all expressing clearly what God we must bring to the men and women of our time: not an abstract God, a hypothesis, but a real God, a God who exists, who has entered history and is present in history; the God of Jesus Christ as an answer to the fundamental question of the meaning of life and of how we should live. Consequently, speaking of God demands familiarity with Jesus and his Gospel, it implies that we have a real, personal knowledge of God and a strong passion for his plan of salvation without succumbing to the temptation of success, but following God's own method. God's method is that of humility — God makes himself one of us — his method is brought about through the Incarnation in the simple house of Nazareth; through the Grotto of Bethlehem; through the Parable of the Mustard Seed.[2]

Until now, this study has not engaged Ratzinger directly on the question of method as insofar as evangelization and catechesis, or, to use Ratzinger's expression, "catechization,"[3] are concerned with both content and method. Regarding the latter, Ratzinger, as a theologian and as Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, admits that he is not responsible for catechetical methodology.[4] While Ratzinger may not have developed a catechetical method per se, his theological contributions can give shape to principles that ought to shape methodology given

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[2] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 42-43. For more on evangelization and humility, see Joseph Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

[3] Joseph Ratzinger and Raymond Arroyo, "Cardinal Ratzinger Interview: Raymond Arroyo with Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger," *The World Over*, September 5, 2003, https://www.ewtn.com/library/ISSUES/RATZINTV.HTM.

[4] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 42.

Ratzinger's starting point with the *Logos* incarnate, and the Church's responsibility to make present and accessible in every age this great Mystery. Ratzinger has been clear that any method must serve content, and not vice versa, and therefore, content has priority over, "determines," and is the real measure for method.[5] For Ratzinger, the *Logos* himself becomes the measure for methods pertaining to evangelization and catechesis. As becomes clear in the lengthy excerpt above, only because God speaks first in the *Logos,* can men and women speak about God today. This real God has entered history and saved man through a particular method — one of humility — that is manifest in his very person. God saves humanity through the humble method of the Incarnation and the Cross. If content determines method, and the content is the frighteningly personal love of God, His "yes" to humanity manifest in the breakthrough of the shockingly humble act of Incarnation — Cross, then any method of proclaiming these glad tidings must follow the same path. This study has attempted to illustrate Ratzinger's emphasis on the personalism of the *Logos* as revealed Jesus Christ, along with the corresponding implications for anthropology according to a Trinitarian Christocentrism. The revelation of the *Logos* in Jesus Christ leads one into the heart of the personal, Trinitarian Mystery. If content determines method, and the content is personal, then the method must be personal. Accordingly, if the personal nature of the Trinity is manifest in an anthropological pattern as being-from (Son), being-for (Father), and being-with (Holy Spirit), then methods pertaining evangelization and catechesis must pattern themselves accordingly.

The present chapter seeks to explore precisely how the Church is to make disciples, i.e. how the Church is to evangelize. For Ratzinger, evangelization means setting out with Christ to transform poverty of every kind. The most profound poverty is that isolation, that loneliness of death that results from sin as a reality not only biological in nature, but existential as well. If evangelization truly exists as "glad tidings," then it means the Church must be able to, in some way, bring about joy in the midst of joyless loneliness. As has been established, only an eternal *communio* is capable of revealing itself (and thus revealing the whole nature of man) and of establishing the possibility of *communio* even in the midst of death. The revelation of the *Logos* in Christ reveals eternal *communio* as the fundamental "logic" of all reality. The "ground" of

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[5] See Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 42; and Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church,* 14.

reality is the personal act of being *communio*. Evangelization aims at bringing people into contact with the revelation of *Logos* in Jesus Christ, i.e. with the whole truth of the nature of man and with the possibility of redemption. While the content of the Christian *evangelium*, the origin of the *evangelium*, is personal and the method of its transmission must account for this, it is also true that the goal of the method is deeply personal — the personalization of the recipient of the Gospel. Ratzinger's exposition on discipleship makes this clear. Not only is God being-from, being-with, and being-sent, but the redemption and healing of the disciple means being reconfigured according to this same fundamental anthropological pattern. If discipleship is thus, then evangelization is the process whereby the Church helps individuals along this path. The Church's fruitfulness in her evangelizing efforts that aim redeem, and heal the person-in-isolation, are in some ways contingent upon her own faithfulness in proceeding in the "image" of *communio* and in accord with the "logic" of *communio*. The Church participates in Jesus' mission as a being-from, a being-for, and a being-with. In other words, only evangelization as an act from *communio*, in *communio*, and for *communio* transforms this poverty of loneliness and stands as true "glad tidings."

The present chapter will argue that, for Ratzinger, evangelization, if it is true to its content (the revelation of the *Logos* as *communio* in the mode of being-from, being-for, and being-with) and its aim (introducing men and women to the revelation of *Logos*, thus initiating a path of discipleship as being-from, being-with, and being-for), also bears the marks of the theological anthropology revealed in the *Logos* of God: being-from, being-for, being-with. The Church, the whole Body of Christ, evangelizes in this mode, and consequently, so ought each individual member of this Body. The chapter will proceed in a Trinitarian manner by exploring *how* Ratzinger describes the Church's evangelizing efforts according to each aspect of theological anthropology. This chapter will first consider the nature of the Church as being-from. Next, the chapter will consider how being-from necessitates being-for. Finally, the chapter will consider the Church-as-*communio* and her catechetical activity as being-with, insofar as the "definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in

the life of the Holy Trinity."[6] Catechesis leads one to the healing of love in the Father's love, which is, simultaneously, a sharing in the Father's love, through worship. As will become clear, due to the dynamism of the *perichoresis* of the persons of the Trinity, along with the dynamism of the anthropological vision, a clean analysis of each aspect of being-from, being-for, and being-with becomes difficult. One flows from and bleeds into the other.

1.   The Necessity of Being-from for Evangelization

When bringing the three aspects of Ratzinger's theological anthropology to bear on the question of method in evangelization and catechesis, being-from must appear to be the outlier. How can being-from provide any contribution to a method for evangelizing activity in the first place? As will be seen, however, the Church's being-from" actually holds a certain pride-of-place when it comes to evangelization, for without abiding in the *from,* the Church can do nothing (cf. Jn. 15:5). Indeed, being-from within evangelization, i.e. the Church's own act of faith, is the absolutely necessary starting point for evangelization. The *Lineamenta* for the Synod on the New Evangelization supports this claim. Admitting the difficulty of the present circumstances, and aware of the work to be done, the document says, "The Church does not give up or retreat into herself; instead, she undertakes a project to revitalize herself. She makes the Person of Jesus Christ and a personal encounter with him central to her thinking, knowing that he will give his Spirit and provide the force to announce and proclaim the Gospel in new ways which can speak to today's cultures."[7] Similarly, Benedict XVI himself calls for the Church to become aware of "the need to rediscover the journey of faith so as to shed ever clearer light on the joy and renewed enthusiasm of the encounter with Christ."[8] Therefore, the present section will attempt to examine the origin of the Church as "from," insofar as her faith results in a life that is an expression of that being-from, before considering Ratzinger's deliberations on renewal within the Church as necessary for the abiding that is being-from, without which evangelization cannot take place.

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[6] John Paul II, *Catechesi Tradendae*, §5.
[7] XIII Ordinary General Assembly of the Synod of Bishops, *Lineamenta: The New Evangelization for the Transmission of the Christian Faith* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011), §5.
[8] Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei*, §2.

1.1   A Christological-Ecclesiological Perspective

How does the Church share in the sonship of Christ? How does the Church operate as a being-from in the Son? From what source does evangelization spring? For the Church, what is her origin such that her essence is mission? This section will attempt to answer such questions in search of the enduring, or perpetual starting point for the Church's evangelizing mission. This pursuit will proceed down two paths. First, this study will consider the Church's being-from from a Christological perspective, before approaching the subject with a pneumatological-ecclesiological lens.

In "The Origin and Essence of the Church," Ratzinger attempts to follow the testimony of the New Testament in order to trace something of the origins of the Church. Following Joachim Jeremias, Ratzinger notes that Jesus' proclamation of the "Kingdom of God," marks an immanent activity of gathering the eschatological people of God.[9] For Jesus, "'Kingdom of God' does not mean some thing or place but the present action of God. One may therefore translate the programmatic declaration of Mark 1:15, 'the Kingdom of God is near at hand,' as 'God is near'…Wherever he is, is the Kingdom."[10] Jesus' work, then, is to gather a new people. Ratzinger identifies four elements that he considers essential to understanding the Church:

1. Men are drawn together by moving toward God.
2. "The point of convergence of this new people is Christ; it becomes a people solely through his call and its response to his call and to his person."[11]
3. The family of God becomes a central image for Jesus in describing this new people: "God is the father of the family, Jesus the master of the house, and it therefore stands to reason that he addresses the members of this people as children, even though they are adults, and that to gain true understanding of themselves, those who belong to this people must first lay down their grown-up autonomy and acknowledge themselves as

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[9] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 22.
[10] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 22-23. See also Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 46-63.
[11] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 23.

children before God."[12] Being childlike becomes a central demand placed upon the member of this new family.

4. Jeremias claims that for religious groups at the time of Jesus Christ, a rule of prayer was a sign of community. Therefore, the disciples' request for a prayer displays an "awareness of having become a new community that has its source in Jesus…the Church is a communion united principally on the basis of prayer — of prayer with Jesus, which gives us a shared openness to God."[13]

The "Our Father" prayer beautifully expresses the social nature (being-with) of the Church as the direct result of being-from — i.e. being inserted into Christ's being-from. Following Cyprian, Ratzinger captures the dynamic of the social dimension of faith in reflecting on the word "our" of the Our Father:

> Only *one* man has the right to say "*my* Father" to God, and that is Jesus Christ, the only-begotten Son. All other men must say "*our* Father," for the Father is God for us so long as we are part of the community of his children. For 'me' he becomes a Father only through my being in the "we" of his children. The Christian prayer to the Father "is not the call of souls that know nothing outside God and itself," but is bound to the community of brothers. Together with these brothers we make up the one Christ in whom and through whom alone we are able to say "Father," because only through Christ and in Christ are we his "children."[14]

Elsewhere, Ratzinger says, "we can of right call God 'Father' in the measure with which we are inserted in that 'we' in which God's love searches for us."[15] The word *our* captures the real demand of Christianity, that the person step out of himself and not only live as a son/daughter *from* the Father, but to acknowledge that this *from* is only possible as part of the "we" that God has gathered in his nearness to humanity in Christ Jesus.

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[12] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 23-24.
[13] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 24. Again, note the connection with spiritual Christology.
[14] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 51-52. See also Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 140-141.
[15] Ratzinger, "Christ and His Church," 138.

The "Our Father" marks to first step in the Church's being borne from "a special communion of prayer with and from Jesus."[16] The "new people" gathered as one in his very person does not destroy the People of God of the Old Testament, but renews this people. He does not found a "People of God," but renews the people "by deepening its relationship to God and by opening it up for all mankind."[17] He does this by entering into the "already existing subject of tradition, God's People of Israel, with his proclamation and his whole person," and "by transforming his death into an act of prayer, an act of love, and thus by making himself communicable," "he has made it possible for people to participate in his most intimate and personal act of being, i.e. his dialogue with the Father."[18] According to Ratzinger, Jesus' Last Supper transforms the Passover of Israel "into an entirely new worship, which logically meant a break with the temple community and thereby definitively established a people of the 'New Covenant."[19] He describes the words of the institution of the Eucharist as having to do with a covenant ordeal, referring both backward to the Sinai covenant and forward to the promise of the New Covenant by Jeremiah. Just as Passover and Sinai were "founding acts whereby Israel become and ever anew becomes a people," these are now "integrated into the Eucharist."[20] Now a temple is no longer needed as the guarantor of unity and the center of worship, the Body of the Lord is the new temple in which Christians are gathered. Therefore, Ratzinger concludes:

> [The Eucharist] is the making of a covenant and, as such, is the concrete foundation of the new people: the people comes into being through its covenant relation to God. We could also say that by his eucharistic action, Jesus draws the disciples into his relationship with God and, therefore, into his mission [the Father as being-for], which aims to reach "the many," the humanity of all places and of all times….It could be said that the people of the New Covenant takes its origin as a people from the Body and Blood of Christ; solely in terms of this center does it have the status of a people.[21]

[16] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 26.
[17] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 30.
[18] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 30.
[19] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 26.
[20] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 27. See also Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week*, 125-38; Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* 35-50.
[21] Ratzinger, "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 28-29.

In Christ, God draws all mankind into one with God, and, in so doing, draws all men and women into fellowship with one another. Not only is the relationship restored between man and God in Jesus' "being for," but relationship between men and women is as well. As Eve was created from the rib of Adam's side, the Church issues forth from the open side of Christ on the Cross. "The open side of the new Adam repeats the mystery of the 'open side' of man at creation: it is the beginning of a new definitive community of men with one another, a community symbolized here by blood and water, in which John points to the basic Christian sacraments of baptism and Eucharist and, through them, to the Church as the sign of the new community of men."[22] The institution of the Eucharist at the Last Supper gives the act of oblation that is visible in the open side an "enduring presence,"[23] and "receiving the Lord in the Eucharist, accordingly, means entering into a community of existence with Christ, entering into that state in which human existence is opened up to God and which is at the same time the necessary condition for the opening up of the inner being of men for one another."[24] The Eucharist holds together being-from and being-for. Sacramental communion means becoming one with the Lord by being drawn out of oneself; it also entails entering into communion with all those who are drawn into one in the Lord.[25] Sonship in the Son implies a new relationship to the Father, the restoration of relationship with the Father. But, because one is not a son in the Son in the singular sense, because Christ's "I" opens to embrace the whole of mankind, becoming a son in the Son means not only "sonship" and "fatherhood," but "brotherhood" as well. Those who enter into Christian brotherhood enter into the "we" wherein barriers have been removed (cf. Gal. 3:27-28; Col. 3:10-11), save for the one true barrier — that which exists between Creator and creature.[26] All who live within the Church, the "body of Christ," live *from* the same source — baptism that made all sons in the Son and reconstituted in relationship with the one Father of all. Being-from

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[22] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity*, 241. See also *Deus Caritas Est,* §12-13.

[23] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §13.

[24] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 79.

[25] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §14. On this point, Thomas Dalzell highlights the fact that vis-á-vis horizontalizing tendencies within the Church and her understanding of the Eucharist, Ratzinger stresses vertical communion over horizontal communion. This priority attempts to preserve the theological understanding of salvation as a "gift received" rather than a manmade reality which is often implicated by a purely horizontal orthopraxis. See Thomas G. Dalzell, "Eucharist, Communion, and Orthopraxis in the Theology of Joseph Ratzinger," *Irish Theological Quarterly* 78, no. 2 (2013): 103-22.

[26] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 59.

in Christ marks the removal of boundaries between men and women and the establishment of a universal brotherhood, which has always stood as a prospect for mankind.

Historically, brotherhood has always implied both unity and division. For the Greeks, brotherhood is based upon "the extended blood relationship of a nation," or "elective affinity," which has the double-effect of uniting friends and partitioning off those who are not friends.[27] Old Testament brotherhood was rooted in the common Father, the one and only God. God is the Father of all through creation, but has a special "paternity toward Israel…through election."[28] This meant that Israel's "barrier" (the real difference between the Israelite and the non-Israelite) to the outsider was indeed present, but it was open. There were, in effect, two ethical zones. One's brother is one's coreligionist and compatriot, but because Israel's God is not a national god, but a supranational one, responsibility goes beyond and the "elected" brother bears some responsibility for the "other" brother.[29] The Enlightenment took up the idea of an all-embracing brotherhood based upon natural equal rights, the removal of differing ethical zones (i.e. differing responsibilities or behaviors towards brothers vs. those on the "outside"), and the dismissal of God as Father of all.[30] Christianity develops the concept of brotherhood in a manner similar to that of Israel. However, brotherhood with Jesus is not contingent on whether one is part of a national faith, rather, it is nonpolitical. Brotherhood with Jesus is based upon one's lowliness and need, and in this way, it is universal (i.e. open to all) under the one Father. Regarding Christianity, Ratzinger adds, "this brotherliness is founded on our being incorporated in Christ Jesus…Like the fatherhood of God, the brotherhood of Christians in the Lord is raised — through the Christ-event—above the realm of ideas to the dignity of true actuality…It rests on the fact of our being embodied in Christ. The act that does this for us is baptism."[31] Faith, which

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[27] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 5.
[28] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 8.
[29] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 11.
[30] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 14-ff. Here, Ratzinger notes that Marxism maintains a dualism along socio-economic lines: capital and proletariat. This is a political division wherein "brotherhood toward some involves enmity toward others," for the sake of the same goal as the Enlightenment: "the unified, undifferentiated brotherhood of all men" (17-18).
[31] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 50.

is always both personal and ecclesial, unites one with Christ and with one another, and in so doing, removes barriers pertaining to nature, history, nationality, race, etc.[32]

However, the converse is also true. Entry into relationship with Christ may remove barriers between one and another believer, but it also erects barriers between the believer and the non-believer: "It is also apparent that the coming community of the faithful will form a new fraternal community which will be distinct from those who do not believe."[33] Just as faith removes barriers, it simultaneously erects a new one — between the Christian and the non-Christian. This simultaneous obstruction-removing and obstruction-making act of faith is concretized in the parish community and the Eucharist that stands as the source and center of the brotherhood[34] — outside of which stand the *hoi exo* (those who stand outside).[35] While establishing the legitimate and concrete brotherhood of faith remains a priority, Christians are committed -- by nature of what it means to be Christian -- to a "universal openness," to those *hoi exo* that does not stand against the "other" but *for* the other. With this, we have already alluded to the close connection between being-from, being-with, and being-for. The being-from in faith establishes both a real bond (being-with) with other Christians, and a very real barrier between the Christian and non-Christian. Yet, it is a not a definitive and unbreakable barrier, but one which opens and allows the "elect" to serve the "many" (pro-existence, being-for), so that all might be one as the Father and Son are one (cf. Jn. 17:21).

1.2   A Pneumatological-Ecclesiological Perspective

From a different vantage point one can gain additional insight into being-from. It has been established that human beings require more than a biological birth (i.e. a biological *from*), and that their desire for a "yes" to their existence is infinite in nature and, hence, in search of the "supernatural." It has also been established that the "yes" of Jesus Christ to humanity in and through his life, death, and resurrection *in time* is the *agape*-foundation of his existence *from*

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[32] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 57-58.
[33] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 29.
[34] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 68.
[35] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 67.

God, a foundation capable of affirming his existence in the face of death.[36] For Ratzinger, the tongues of fire that came to rest on each person in the cenacle personally is the sign that God's *gift* of *love* that is the living water, the Holy Spirit, that "yes" of Jesus Christ touches each person's life personally. Ratzinger says:

> Christ assumed human nature, that which binds us all and from which he binds us. The Holy Spirit, however, has been given to each as a person: through him, Christ becomes a personal answer for each of us. The unification of men as the Church should accomplish it does not occur through the extinguishing of the person but rather through his completion, which means his infinite openness.[37]

The Holy Spirit brings Jesus' "yes" to each person; the Holy Spirit "personalizes" Jesus' "yes,"[38] which is nothing short of the "yes" of the Father. The "yes" *from* the Father's *for,* as expressed by the Son and participated in *through* the Holy Spirit, opens the way for the fullest expression of the person as infinite openness (being-from and being-for) — the one whose "I" has been accepted by Christ's and transformed in Christ, and who can say "yes" to the other. To live life in the Spirit, then, means to live life within this personalized "yes" of Jesus Christ and the bond which it forges with all who have accepted the gift of this "yes" that is offered to all. The perfect "yes" uttered once and for all reaches each person through the one Holy Spirit; in the Holy Spirit, the one and the many are held in dynamic tension.

All of this said, the personalization of God's "yes" for each individual, insofar as it is offered through the work of the Spirit, cannot be a purely private affair.. Ratzinger calls this the principle of catholicity which belongs to the "constitution of the Church."[39] By this, he means that "no one acts merely from his own will and his own genius. Everyone must act, speak, think

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[36] See Ch. 3, section 4.
[37] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 70.
[38] Perhaps this explains the radical transformation that takes place in the Apostles following Pentecost. The Scriptural account seems to indicate that, notwithstanding other effects, a principal effect of the Holy Spirit's movement at Pentecost is the removal of fear, or the ability to stand firm in the midst of fear. See, for example, the transformation that takes place in Peter between Lk. 22:54-ff and Acts 4:5-ff.
[39] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 70.

from the communion of the new We of the Church that stands in intercommunion with the We of the triune God."[40] Every Christian has a personal responsibility to become obedient to the faith that is given to him, and not the other way around. He continues:

> Becoming Christian means receiving the whole Church into oneself, or, rather, allowing oneself to be taken up into her. When I speak, think, act, I do so as a Christian always in the whole and from the whole. Thus the Spirit comes to the Word, and thus men come together. They come outwardly to one another only if they came to one another inwardly: if I have become inwardly broad, open, and large; if I have received the others through my co-believing and co-loving so that I am no longer ever alone but rather my whole essence is characterized by this "co-."[41]

Fellowship with Jesus and knowledge of him "presupposes that we are in communication with the living subject of tradition to which all this is linked — in communication with the Church."[42] The Church's tradition is central to what it means for the Church as a whole to be-from. This tradition "is the transcendental subject in whose memory the past is present" and for which the passage of time leads to advances that are "not the advent of something entirely new but the process whereby the memory becomes aware of itself."[43]

The catechetical attempt of interpreting Scripture without reference to dogma, as described in Chapter 2, section 1.2, provides a marked example of a breakdown of being-from. Ratzinger assesses the crisis of recent years as being driven by a new "immediacy," a more "direct access to the written sources of the faith," "whereas previously the Bible entered into instruction in the faith only in a manner mediated by the schema of Church teaching."[44] In his "Christocentrism in Preaching?," Ratzinger adds, "Dogma is scriptural interpretation. Thus there

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[40] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 70. Murphy, in *Christ Our Joy* also points out that "in the Church, one does not speak one's own word but 'disappears' into the ecclesial 'we'" (146). In this way the member of the Church imitates the "Trinitarian Spirit" who "does not appear as a separate and separable 'I,' but 'disappears' into the Father and the Son" (145).
[41] Ibid., 70-71.
[42] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 30.
[43] Ratzinger, "Taking Bearings in Christology," 31.
[44] Ratzinger, "Handing on Faith and Sources of Faith," 21.

is a necessary mutual relationship and a priority between Scripture and dogma. The interpreter ranks, not higher, but lower than what is interpreted. But that which is interpreted lives only through the interpretation."[45] Benedict XVI further explains in *Jesus of Nazareth*:

> The Scripture emerged from within the heart of a living subject — the pilgrim people of God — and lives within this same subject. One could say that the books of Scripture involve three interacting subjects. First of all, there is the individual author or group of authors to whom we owe a particular scriptural text. But these authors are not autonomous writers in the modern sense; they form part of a collective subject, the "People of God," from within whose heart and to whom they speak. Hence, this subject is actually the deeper "author" of the Scriptures. And yet likewise, this people does not exist alone; rather, it knows that it is led, and spoken to, by God himself, who — through men and their humanity — is at the deepest level the one speaking. The connection with the subject we call "People of God" is vital for Scripture.[46]

This is not to discount historical-critical exegesis, the value of which Ratzinger attests to quite clearly,[47] but rather, transcends historical-critical exegesis in search of a "properly theological interpretation of the Bible"[48] that is aligned with *Dei Verbum*'s call for reading Scripture by attending to the content and unity of Scripture, and by taking into account the living tradition and the Church's analogy of faith.[49] Scripture expresses what happened, while dogma indicates its importance "by uncovering the previously discussed root cause of the event — the fact that God *has* become man, that God himself is Father, Son, and Spirit…dogma…is not…immediately kerygma, but, rather, the norm for kerygma."[50] Dogma negatively marks the limits of preaching, while Scripture positively shows for the way of preaching.[51] Ratzinger says, "Dogma is the norm

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[45] Joseph Ratzinger, "Christocentrism in Preaching?," in *Dogma and Preaching,* trans. Micheal J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press), 51.
[46] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* xx-xxi.
[47] Cf. Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* xxiii.
[48] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* xxiii.
[49] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* xviii. Cf. *Dei Verbum,* §12.
[50] Ratzinger, "Christocentrism in Preaching?," 52.
[51] Ratzinger, "Christocentrism in Preaching?," 52.

for what is dogmatic about kerygma, while Scripture is the norm for what is kerygmatic about kerygma."[52] Evangelization demands both, and when dogma — often viewed in light of its negative nature without regard for its positive contribution in maintaining being-from — is diminished in importance and becomes an "external frame of reference that no longer had much significance…The result is a sort of theological emporium, in which the experience of the group, of the parish, or of the 'experts' (= the manager of the experiences) becomes the supreme source."[53] By way of summary, then, Ratzinger can say, "to evangelize means to acquaint men with Jesus as we come to know him through the Gospels. To evangelize is to introduce men into a communion of life with him as well as into the fellowship of disciples, the community that journeys with him."[54]

Christian existence, and, therefore, Christian mission, can be described in part by the word *from*. Man does not come from himself but from others, and his ongoing existence depends upon the network of humanity that does not only exist in the present, but comes to him from the past and tends toward the future. In the face of death, man's immortality, the enduring existence in the "yes" of another for which he longs, cannot come about through human love alone, but is possible *from* and in God's gift of himself in the suffering, death, and resurrection of the God-man, Jesus Christ — an affirmation of his existence that is accessible today in the faith and life of the Church. This affirmation of one's existence from God is the sign of God's fatherhood, for "the fatherhood of God means a devotion toward us, an acceptance of us by God at the deepest level, so that we can belong to him and turn to him in childlike love."[55] As has become clear, the acceptance of God's "yes" (i.e. becoming a son in the Son, being-from) becomes the foundation *from* which the Church's mission perpetually springs. The Holy Spirit, operative in, and imaged by the Church, comes to one personally, yet the Holy Spirit comes with the whole "yes" of Christ. This "yes" encounters the self-imposed limits of one's "I" constructed via egoism, and breaks the limits in a death-event that is conversion. Ratzinger describes this encounter, saying,

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[52] Ratzinger, "Christocentrism in Preaching?," 52.
[53] Ratzinger, "Handing on Faith and Sources of Faith," 21-22. See also "Christocentrism in Preaching?," 57-58.
[54] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 53.
[55] Ratzinger, *God and the World*, 275.

"The I loses itself in order to find itself anew in a larger subject that spans heaven and earth, past, present, and future, and therein touches truth itself."[56]

1.3 *Ecclesial Renewal for the Sake of Abiding as a Being-from*[57]

Though of divine origin, because she is a human and divine reality existing in a *status viatoris,* the Church stands in need of renewal. *Sacrosanctum Concilium* identifies the essence of the Church as "both human and divine, visible and yet invisibly equipped, eager to act and yet intent on contemplation, present in this world and yet not at home in it; and she is all these things in such wise that in her the human is directed and subordinated to the divine, the visible likewise to the invisible, action to contemplation, and this present world to that city yet to come, which we seek."[58] The Church needs renewal inasmuch as the human is not always directed to and subordinate to the divine, the visible directed to and subordinate to the invisible, action directed to and subordinate to contemplation of the divine mysteries, and the present world directed to that which is to come. *Lumen Gentium* corroborates this, saying, "while Christ…knew nothing of sin, but came to expiate only the sins of the people, the Church, embracing in its bosom sinners, at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, always follows the way of penance and renewal."[59] The Church does not exist as some sort of elitist club, but to "reveal to the world, faithfully though darkly, the mystery of its Lord until, in the end, it will be manifested in full light."[60] Benedict XVI echoes, saying, "At the end of the day, the point of the Church is to turn

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[56] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 71.

[57] The bulk of the insights within this section come from a paper I presented entitled "The Benedict XVI Option: Ecclesial Renewal and the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*," at Franciscan University of Steubenville's "Speaking the Truth in Love Conference," Oct. 13-15, 2017. For additional commentary on Ratzinger's theological position regarding ecclesial renewal, see Edward Mushi's "Benedict XVI's hermeneutics of reform and its implications for the renewal of the Church," *Pacifica* 26, no. 3 (2013): 279-94. Here, Mushi traces Ratzinger's thought pertaining to continuity and discontinuity. Ultimately, Mushi argues that attempts at authentic renewal within the Church must not take a polarized position, opting for one or the other, but must be amenable to aspects of continuity and discontinuity. For an overview of the Vatican II documents most relevant to the topic of renewal, see Peter De Mey, "Church Renewal and Reform in the Documents of Vatican II: History, Theology, Terminology," *The Jurist* 71, (2011): 369-400.

[58] Second Vatican Council, *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticano, 1963), §2.

[59] *Lumen Gentium*, §8.

[60] *Lumen Gentium*, §8. Ratzinger highlights the personal and missional dimensions of the Church, saying, "Jesus draws the disciples into his relationship with God and, therefore, into his mission, which aims to reach 'the many,' the humanity of all places and of all times." See "The Origin and Essence of the Church," 28.

us toward God and to enable God to enter into the world."[61] Yet the Church "smacks" of institution, of human constructs, of bureaucracy, and of everything human, i.e. fallen and sinful. Renewal serves the Church insofar as her revelation of the mystery of the Lord remains darkened by sin. Therefore, she stands in need of renewal in order "to speak the Gospel of Christ in a way understandable to contemporary man – i.e., in a contemporary fashion (*aggiornamento* means bringing up to date)…the objective is precisely that Christ may become understood."[62] As to what stands in need of renewal in the Church, one can simply state: everything human, everything tending toward self-sufficiency and averse to being-from.

Generally speaking, Ratzinger explores renewal on two levels: the level of ecclesiastical structures and the level of the individual. Every age provides the opportunity for the faith to be expressed anew, to offer testimony within the present context and in a way that is intelligible to those in the current milieu. The Church, constantly in need of human "vehicles" in order to transmit the Gospel, must become aware of and admit to the obsolescence of such vehicles and ways in which they have set "themselves up as the essence of the Church," and prevent "us from seeing through to what is truly essential."[63] In short, the Church risks becoming an end unto herself, becoming self-referential, instead of the sacrament of salvation, a sign pointing to Another. Ratzinger notes that "in her human structures the Church is always *semper reformanda*, but one must be clear in this question as to how and up to what point."[64] In *Salt of the Earth* he claims "we have too much bureaucracy. Therefore, it will be necessary to simplify things. Everything should not take place by way of committees; there must even also be the personal encounter. And not everything can be dealt with rationally. However much Christianity makes a claim on reason and claims to speak to it, there are other dimensions of the perception of reality that we also need."[65]

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[61] Benedict XVI, *Light of the World: The Pope, the Church, and the Signs of the Times,* trans. Michael J. Miller and Adrian J. Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2010), 155.

[62] Ratzinger, *Theological Highlights of Vatican II*, ix. It is interesting to consider the similarity here between Ratzinger's understanding of renewal and Boeve's theological category of interruption. However, for Boeve, God interrupts the narrative itself through the flux of context, and for Ratzinger, it is narrative (or the recovery thereof) that interrupts the flux of context and human construct, in order to re-found itself on that which has been there from the outset.

[63] Joseph Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," *Called to Communion,* trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 142.

[64] Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Report,* 50.

[65] Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 266.

As for reform at the individual level, one must only consider the personal nature of sin and its ramifications both personally and communally to recognize the deep need for reform. This said, Ratzinger is quick to note the line in the liturgy spoken by the priest each Mass, "look not on our sins, but on the faith of your Church." The understanding behind this line is simple, "everybody in the Church, with no exception, had to confess himself a sinner, beseech forgiveness and then set out on the path of his real reform. But this in no way means that the Church as such was also a sinner. The Church…is a reality that surpasses, mysteriously and infinitely, the sum of her members."[66] That the Church is in need of constant renewal, both in terms of her structures and in terms of her members, might seem obvious enough. How to go about this renewal, however, is more difficult to discern.

In an attempt to grasp authentic renewal, or "true reform," Benedict XVI explores its opposite, which he calls "futile reform." Ratzinger personifies futile reform in the person of 'the maker.' He describes the attitude of 'the maker,' by saying, "The Church must no longer be fitted over us from above like a ready-made garment; no, we 'make' the Church ourselves, and do so in constantly new ways. It thus finally becomes 'our' Church, for which we are actively responsible…The Church arises out of discussion, compromise and resolution."[67] This futile reform has its roots, according to Benedict XVI, in the Church's inability to live up to an ideal, so "a desperate attempt is undertaken to bring her into conformity with our wishes."[68] The 'maker' takes matters into his own hands, and makes decisions based upon his own devices. In this vein, Ratzinger goes on to say:

> The maker values his own activity above all. He thereby restricts his horizon to the realm of things that he can grasp and that can become the object of his making. Strictly

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[66] Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Report,* 52.
[67] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 137. Ratzinger also takes up this theme in his homily "Party of Christ or Church of Jesus Christ?" in *Called to Communion*, trans. Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1996), 158-60; in "Why I Am Still in the Church," in *Fundamental Speeches,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 136, 140-41; and also in his October 8, 2012 meditation delivered on the occasion of the XIII Extraordinary Synod of Bishops.
[68] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 136.

speaking, he sees only objects. He has absolutely no capacity to perceive what is greater than he is, since such a reality would set a limit to his activity. He squeezes the world into the empirical realm; man is amputated. Man builds himself his own prison, against which he then noisily protests.[69]

The futile reform carried out by 'the maker' can, generally speaking, be identified by the following characteristics:

- *Church as democracy* - Here, "the maker" moves "from the paternalistic Church to the community Church" in which all are active agents of Christian existence.[70] This system comes equipped with a system of representation, term limits, and majority vote.
- *Faith reduced to opinion* - When the truth — the truths of the faith — are subject to majority vote, the whole of it is relativized to the point of mere opinion. Ratzinger notes that "Everything that men make can also be undone again by others. Everything that has its origin in human likes can be disliked by others. Everything that one majority decides upon can be revoked by another majority. A church based on human resolutions becomes a merely human church. It is reduced to the level of the makable, of the obvious, of opinion. Opinion replaces faith. And in fact, in the self-made formulas of faith with which I am acquainted, the meaning of the words 'I believe' never signifies anything beyond 'we opine.'"[71]
- *Fruitfulness reduced to the empirical* - The reform of 'the maker' centered around statistics, metrics, and strategies aimed at reversing trends, etc. That which is makable by human devices must prove its value in the face of counterpositions — often via quantitative measures. Fruitfulness is reduced to statistics. To this position, Ratzinger responds: "Statistics is not one of God's measurements…I think we have to disregard quantitative measures of success. After all, we're not a business operation that can look at the numbers to measure whether our policy has been successful and whether we're selling more and more. Rather, we're performing a service, and in the end, when we've

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[69] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 143.
[70] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 137.
[71] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 139-40.

done our job, we put it in the Lord's hands."[72] And finally, "A self-made church is reduced to the empirical domain and thus, precisely as a dream [a utopian ideal], comes to nothing."[73]

In contrast to futile reform, Ratzinger personifies true reform in the image of "the wonderer." He notes that this sense of wonder, when it comes to ecclesial renewal, lies in the realization that the Church is not something made by men, but is "given to us all."[74] "The wonderer" is not pre-occupied with an overemphasis on the Church or idealistic visions of what the Church could be, but rather consistently looks to God, unites himself to God, and desires that God be known today. Wonder says 'no' to empirical confinement, and "prepares man for the act of faith, which opens him to the horizon of the eternal and infinite. And only the unlimited is large enough for our nature and in accord with the call of our essential being."[75] In a more recent address, Benedict XVI says, "The Church does not begin with our 'making,' but with the 'making' and 'speaking' of God."[76] Though not speaking about renewal per se, Benedict XVI observes that the original monastic communities did not set out to "make" a culture. Instead, a culture, indeed, the renewal of a culture, was a fruit of their pursuit:

> It was not their intention to create a culture nor even to preserve a culture from the past. Their motivation was much more basic. Their goal was: *quaerere Deum*. Amid the confusion of the times, in which nothing seemed permanent, they wanted to do the essential – to make an effort to find what was perennially valid and lasting, life

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[72] Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 15-16.

[73] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 140.

[74] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 140. Benedict XVI provides witness to this reality in his inaugural homily from April 24, 2005, where he said, "My real programme of governance is not to do my own will, not to pursue my own ideas, but to listen, together with the whole Church, to the word and the will of the Lord, to be guided by Him, so that He himself will lead the Church at this hour of our history." See Benedict XVI, "Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI: Mass, Imposition of the Pallium, and Conferral of the Fisherman's Ring for the Beginning of the Petrine Ministry of the Bishop of Rome" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005). https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20050424_inizio-pontificato.html.

[75] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 143.

[76] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

itself. They were searching for God. They wanted to go from the inessential to the essential, to the only truly important and reliable thing there is.[77]

The shift from making to receiving, from the realm of the building to the realm of gift, from the empirical to the realm of faith, cannot be over-emphasized, and has significant bearing on renewal. If the Church is not an object or organization made by the hands of men, but is given to men by God, then renewal cannot be handcrafted by men. Renewal must be received. Renewal cannot be contrived according to the ideals and tastes of men, it cannot be made by human hands, but is an event the Church opens herself to and begs for God to bring about in her, in his time and in his way. If God creates the Church, then God must recreate the Church — renewing her in every age.

David Gibson, in *The Rule of Benedict*, claimed early in Benedict XVI's pontificate that Benedict would likely not buckle to pressure to change in the areas of church teaching and practice, or with regard to church structures. Instead, Gibson holds that Benedict XVI would "focus on a third option [for renewal], the cultivation of personal holiness, as the preeminent means to renew, rather than change, the Church."[78] This line is consistent with the general refrain of Ratzinger's teaching on renewal. As he closes his address "A Company in Constant Renewal," Ratzinger emphasizes the need for personal renewal, with a particular emphasis on one's awareness that he stands in need of forgiveness, and that this grace of forgiveness/being forgiven, results in a desire to follow on the way of penance, the way of discipleship. He says:

Forgiveness, together with its realization in me by way of penance and discipleship, is first of all the wholly personal center of all renewal. But because forgiveness touches the very core of the person, it gathers men together and is also the center of the renewal of the community. For when the dust and filth that disfigures God's image in me are removed, I thereby become similar to the other who is likewise in God's image; above all

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[77] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI: Meeting with Representatives from the World of Culture" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2008). http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2008/september/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20080912_parigi-cultura.html.

[78] Gibson, *The Rule of Benedict*, 301.

I become similar to Christ, who is the image of God without qualification, the model according to which we have all been created.[79]

Creation and renewal are wholly personal acts of the God who is three persons in one God. Renewal does not come about by democratic election, proposed legislation, or human genius, but by the grace of God operative in the person who repents and believes. Here, Ratzinger's treatment of the saints and the call to holiness are particularly fitting. In *The Ratzinger Report*, he says, "Saints, in fact, reformed the Church in depth, not by working up plans for new structures, but by reforming themselves. What the Church needs in order to respond to the needs of man in every age is holiness, not management."[80] In saying this, Ratzinger is neither referencing the canonized saints, nor is he following Rahner's well-known, but dramatic saying about the Christian of tomorrow needing to be a mystic or he will be without faith. Rather, Ratzinger claims that Christianity will "be doomed to suffocation if we don't learn something of interiorization, in which faith sinks personally into the depth of one's own life and in that depth sustains and illuminates."[81] The act of faith expressed by and in the person, the saint who has encountered Christ, allows the person to become a point of reference capable of renewing the Church, and these saints who have been "inwardly seized by Christianity, who experience it as joy and hope, who have thus become lovers,"[82] are what the Church stands urgently in need of in order to carry out her mission. This topic will be taken up in greater detail below.

According to Ratzinger, true reform, personified by 'the wonderer,' and occurring both at the levels of ecclesial structure and of the person, can be characterized by both discontinuity and continuity. He says in his 2005 Christmas Address to the Roman Curia:

It is precisely in this combination of continuity and discontinuity at different levels that the very nature of true reform consists. In this process of innovation in continuity we must learn to understand more practically than before that the Church's decisions on

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[79] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 153.
[80] Ratzinger, *The Ratzinger Report,* 53.
[81] Ratzinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 267.
[82] Ratinger, *Salt of the Earth*, 269. See also Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei,* §6; and Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 33-34.

contingent matters…should necessarily be contingent themselves, precisely because they refer to a specific reality that is changeable in itself. It was necessary to learn to recognize that in these decisions it is only the principles that express the permanent aspect, since they remain as an undercurrent, motivating decisions from within. On the other hand, not so permanent are the practical forms that depend on the historical situation and are therefore subject to change.[83]

With regard to discontinuity, Ratzinger introduces a metaphor taken from Michelangelo, that of the sculptor who sees in the stone an image lying in wait within, an pure image to be uncovered.[84] The task, then, was simply removal, or *ablatio*. For Benedict XVI, ecclesial renewal is *ablatio*. He says:

> This image [*ablatio*] contains the prototypical model of Church reform. The Church will constantly have need of human constructions to help her speak and act in the era in which she finds herself…But they become obsolete; they risk setting themselves up at the essence of the Church and thus prevent us from seeing through to what is truly essential…Reform is ever-renewed *ablatio* – removal, whose purpose is to allow the *nobilis forma*, the countenance of the bride, and with it the Bridegroom himself, the living Lord, to appear…This path alone allows the divine to penetrate and brings about "*congregatio,*" which as both gathering and purification is that pure communion we all long for, where "I" is no longer pitted against "I" and self against self.[85]

Authentic reform, according to Benedict XVI, is not about erecting new façades, or "remodeling" according to "our tastes," but consists in letting go of the human structures, letting go of the "subsidiary constructions."[86] In this regard, renewal can rightly be said to admit of

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[83] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings - 2005."

[84] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 141-42.

[85] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 142-43.

[86] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 140. One would be remiss to not point out the pain entailed in such a process of purification. Ratzinger is calling for "an unsparing examination of conscience on this point [that the Church needs not become more human, but more divine, for then she will become truly human] at all levels in the Church. On every level this would have to have very real consequences and would be bound to bring about an

discontinuity. Subsidiary constructions that have become obsolete must be discontinued, whether on the level of structures, or on the level of the person who has lost focus and has built up himself instead of allowing himself to be made ever anew by the Lord.

If renewal is essentially *ablatio*, the removing or discontinuing outmoded human structures and programs within the Church (ones that may have once borne fruit, but over time have obscured one from seeing the pure form of Jesus' face), or the dismantling of one's own personal stairway to a heavenly ideal, how does the Church, or the individual, know what to remove or discontinue? In other words, just because Ratzinger flips the action from making to removing, how can one be sure God is acting and not simply man and his preferences? How can one be sure the renewal is authentic? To extend the metaphor, what guides the direction of the sculptor's chisel and supplies the precise force necessary for authentic *ablatio*? To this, Ratzinger responds, "The primary, the fundamental *ablatio* that is needed for the Church is the act of faith itself, which breaks the barriers of finitude and thus creates the open space that reaches into the unlimited."[87] The aspect of discontinuity in renewal is directed by, or perhaps better said, is the result of the act of faith. Here, it is important to note the dual aspects of faith — *fides qua* and *fides quae*. The personal act of faith (*fides qua*) is only possible in response to that which precedes and invites it — the *memoria Ecclesia* — that living memory, tradition. The testimony of the *memoria Ecclesia* makes possible the constancy of faith (*pistis*), an act that reaffirms the origin, the *nobilis forma* of which the *memoria* testifies.[88] The Church's faithful testimony makes the act of faith possible and constant. In this light, Benedict XVI's statement

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ablatio that would allow the true inherent form to reemerge" (Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 146-47). In *The Ratzinger Report,* he says, "Real 'reform' is to strive to let what is ours disappear as much as possible so what belongs to Christ may become more visible" (53). When Ratzinger makes this point, and repeatedly calls for conversion, it is difficult to understand the ground Lieven Boeve stands on in his article "Conversion and Cognitive Dissonance: Evaluating the Theological-Ecclesial Program of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI," *Horizons* 40, no. 2 (2013): 242-54. Here, Boeve argues that Benedict XVI's program of calling the world to conversion assumed that the Church was not in need of its own conversion. Boeve contends that Benedict XVI experienced "cognitive dissonance" as a result of the realization that the Church was not a beacon of light but was riddled with sin and scandal, ultimately resulting in his resignation from the papacy in order to resolve the dissonance and regain consonance through prayer. Given Ratzinger's constant refrain and call for conversion as a source of renewal, given the awareness he displays regarding the world's expectations for the Church and her lack of fulfilling those expectations in his 1990 lecture "A Company in Constant Renewal," and given the decades spent in ecclesial leadership, one would find it difficult to believe Benedict XVI was suddenly overcome by "cognitive dissonance."
[87] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 144.
[88] For a more complete treatment of this point, see Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 60-ff.

that "it is precisely this combination of continuity and discontinuity at different levels that the very nature of true reform consists" becomes clear.[89] Renewal is not about making more, but about recovering the origin. Renewal is the returning, the constantly turning back to what was once new, what is new, and what will always be new — renewal is the rediscovery of the truth that once again makes new and sets free. Additionally, Ratzinger describes faith as "a continual opening of oneself, God's action of breaking into the human world and in response to this man's breaking out toward God, which at the same time leads men toward one another."[90] Faith renews on multiple levels — the vertical and the horizontal. *Pistis* reaffirms the origin, allowing one to be grasped by Christ and open to the other in the *communio* of the Church. Therefore, "In every age, therefore, faith itself in its full magnitude and breadth is the essential reform that we need; it is in the light of faith that we must test the value of self-constructed organizations in the Church."[91]

2. Evangelization as Being-for

2.1 Being-for: Moving from Christology to Ecclesiology

An inner dynamism exists between being-from and being-for, as one leads into the other and back again. Ratzinger captures this dynamism, saying, "Becoming a Christian is not at all something given to us so that we, each individual for himself, can pocket it and keep our distance from those others who are going off empty-handed. No: in a certain sense, one does not become a Christian for oneself at all; rather, one does so for the sake of the whole, for others, for everyone."[92] If Jesus Christ is the perfect man who is the perfect being-act of being-for, then the Christian faith exists as salvation both in a negative and a positive sense. Negatively, being Christian means being drawn into the open existence of Christ that saves one from damnation in isolation. On the other hand, positively speaking, Christianity means entering into, indeed,

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[89] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering Them His Christmas Greetings - 2005."

[90] Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?", 199-200.

[91] Ratzinger, "A Company in Constant Renewal," 145.

[92] Ratzinger, *What It Means to Be a Christian*, 54. See also Ratzinger, "Jesus Christ Today," 32; and Luigi Giussani, *Generating Traces in the History of the World: New Traces of the Christian Experience* (London: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010), 88-89.

participating in, Jesus Christ's pro-existence. Christianity means not only being saved from one's sinfulness, but also the stepping into him/herself as mission in Christ. Said another way, in becoming part of the being-from (Church as body of Christ) from the being-for of the Father, the Church shares in and identifies with Jesus' pro-existence as her own. Ratzinger says, "The Church, as such and as a whole, is the bearer of this vicarious election, the highest mission of which is to become vicarious rejection. The task of the Church and of the individual Christian is a dynamic one…Election is always, at bottom, election for others. For the Church as for the individual, election is identical with missionary obligation…However important it is for the Church to grow into the unity of a single brotherhood, she must always remember that she is only one of two sons, one brother beside another, and that her mission is not to condemn the wayward brother, but to save him."[93] The deepest meaning of the Church's existence is "grounded wholly in the vicarious existence of Jesus Christ."[94]

The movement from Christology to Ecclesiology is grounded in Ratzinger's understanding of pro-existence and its manifestation in soteriology as vicarious representation. Precisely what this means for the person in concrete reality remains to be answered. How does the Church participate in Christ's being-for? The backbone of Ratzinger's answer can be found in *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood* under three categories*:* (1) missionary activity; (2) *Agape*; and (3) vicarious suffering.[95] The present study will briefly consider each of these aspects, which can be applied both to the Church as a whole and to each individual member.

2.2   Being-for in Missionary Activity

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[93] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 79-80. See also Ratzinger, "Vicarious Representation," 215. Ruddy defends Ratzinger's vision of the Church as the "mustard seed" and the "little flock" against what his critics attribute to him — a vision for a "smaller but purer" Church marked by a "neo-exclusivism," or a "crypto-Donatism." Ruddy roots his defense in Ratzinger's understanding of vicarious representation, that, fundamentally, the Church cannot be reduced to an exclusivism or "holier-than-thou" attitude, but always stands in a posture of service, humility, and openness. See Christopher Ruddy, "'Smaller But Purer'?: Joseph Ratzinger on the 'Little Flock' and Vicarious Representation," *Nova et Vetera,* English Edition, Vol. 13, No. 3 (2015): 713-741.
[94] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 80.
[95] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 81-ff.

For Ratzinger, "missionary activity" is closely tied to the proclamation of the Gospel. To be sure, the Gospel must be proclaimed within the "church that is already founded and already alive," but the missionary activity of preaching is "the act by which she goes beyond herself and is founded anew where she does not yet exist…[the] surpassing of the closed circle and a proclamation of the faith to a new world, in which it must make itself comprehensible once again."[96] For this reason, Jesus calls the Twelve "to preach and have authority to cast out demons" (Mk. 3:14). The Apostles are evangelists, first and foremost, who preach the Gospel and gather the scattered man-monads into the new family of God that is the Church. Preaching is never, as Benedict XVI notes, "just words, never just instruction. It is an event, just as Jesus himself is an event, God's Word in person. By announcing him, the Apostles lead their listeners to encounter him."[97] We will return to proclamation in a moment, but before doing so, a word about the commission to cast out demons. Benedict XVI says, "Because the world is ruled by the powers of evil, this preaching is at the same time a struggle with those powers."[98] Benedict perceives the exorcism of proclamation along two lines. First, he considers the manner in which faith makes the world more rational — casting out the "indeterminable powers of chance" that comprise "chaos theory" and the forces and demons that seem to confront the *homo religiosus*. He says, "To 'exorcise' the world — to establish it in the light of the *ratio* (reason) that comes from eternal creative reason [*Logos*!] and its saving goodness and refers back to it — that is a permanent, central task of the messengers of Jesus Christ."[99] In addition to exorcising the world of its irrationality, Christian proclamation also confronts demonic powers. The Christian cannot overcome these forces by his own resources, but instead, "in faith, in communion with the only true Lord of the world, he is given the 'armor of God.' It enables him — in the communion of the whole body of Christ [being-from and being-with!] — to oppose these powers, knowing that the Lord's gift of faith restores the pure breath of life."[100] Matthew's Gospel pairs the restoration of life brought about by the exorcistic function of preaching with the mission to heal (cf. Mt. 10:1). Christianity is a religion of healing, a religion of redemption. Miracles of healing are

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[96] Joseph Ratzinger, "Church as the Place of Preaching," in *Dogma and Preaching,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2011), 20.

[97] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 173.

[98] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 173.

[99] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 174.

[100] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration,* 175.

always "signs" that point to God and move men toward God.[101] However, the ultimate goal of Christian preaching and the ministry of healing is not bodily healing, but the "becoming-one with God" that is "the true process of man's healing."[102] Viewed in this light, one could argue that the primary (or initial) proclamation of the Gospel[103] breaks the bonds of sin and death (the powers of darkness or irrationality), while catechesis serves as a ministry of the ongoing healing of the person through his becoming one with God. This latter point will be taken up in greater length further on. Now, this study will turn its attention, albeit briefly, to Ratzinger's understanding of how the primary proclamation of the Gospel can take place.

2.3   On the Problem of Culture and the Communication of the Gospel

Ratzinger, always cognizant of the reality of culture, argues that between a believer and his message of the Gospel, between "communication" and "evangelization" stands culture. Culture designates the medium, or the space in which the message is to be conveyed – it is communicated within a culture.[104] In reality, the Gospel is not proclaimed to people whose minds are a *tabula rasa*. Ratzinger says, "Man is never alone, he bears the stamp of a community that provides him with patterns of thinking, feeling, and acting. This system of notions and thought patterns that preconditions the individual human being goes by the name of culture."[105] Ratzinger notes that culture contains common language, government, law, custom, moral concepts, art, forms of worship, etc. "'Culture is the system of life into which the Word of the gospel enters…The gospel to a certain extent presupposes culture; it never replaces it, but it does leave its mark upon it."[106] To be sure, the "faith itself is cultural. It does not exist in a naked state, as sheer religion. Simply by telling man who he is and how he should go about being human, faith is creating culture and is culture. This message of faith is not an abstract message; it is one that

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[101] Cf. Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, 176.

[102] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, 176.

[103] See Congregation for the Clergy, *General Directory for Catechesis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), §51, 58, 60, 61.

[104] Joseph Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," in *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2005), 43.

[105] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 43-44.

[106] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 44.

has matured through a long history and through manifold intercultural fusions."[107] At the same time, it is clear that the faith stands as its own independent agent, over and above any one religious, nationalistic, or other form of culture.[108] On this point, Ratzinger notes that while the faith may have attributes of the Greco-Roman culture in which it arose, or that the faith may have marks of Israelite culture, the faith works these "into new form."[109] In every case:

> Looking more deeply into it, we are able to perceive a process in which God struggles with man and gradually opens him up for his most profound Word, for himself: for the Son, who is the Logos. The Bible is not simply the expression of the culture of the people of Israel; rather, it is ever at odds with the natural temptation these people have simply to be themselves, to make themselves at home in their own culture. Faith in God and an assent to God's will are forever being wrung from this people against their own wishes and their own ideas. This faith is in continual opposition to Israel's own religious inclinations and to its own religious culture…This basic model likewise determines the encounter of the Christian message with Greek culture.[110]

The faith allows for a multiplicity of cultures. John Paul II describes this reality, saying, "While it demands of all who hear it the adherence of faith, the proclamation of the Gospel in different cultures allows people to preserve their own cultural identity. This in no way creates division, because the community of the baptized is marked by a universality which can embrace every culture."[111]

Given what has been said regarding the relationship between Christianity and culture, how does the Gospel leave its "mark" on culture? Can the Gospel be anything other than "just another thing" that man is preoccupied with? In response, Ratzinger takes up an obscure image

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[107] Joseph Ratzinger, "Faith, Religion, and Culture," in *Truth and Tolerance,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 67.

[108] Cf. Ratzinger, "Faith, Religion, and Culture," 67.

[109] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?," in *Truth and Tolerance,* trans. Henry Taylor (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2004), 198.

[110] Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?," 198-200.

[111] John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1998), §71. Also quoted in Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?," 196.

from the book of Amos which St. Basil considers when struggling to proclaim the Gospel to people impacted by the secular Greco-Roman culture of his day. Amos calls himself a "dresser" of sycamore trees. Sycamore trees bear forth figs, but this fruit is tasteless (useless) unless, at just the right time, the dresser of the tree slits the fruit and allows its juices to run out and over it several days before plucking it.[112] Basil, as summarized by Ratzinger, draws a few important lessons for evangelization from this image:[113]

1. Just as the fig cannot slit itself; outside intervention is necessary. The same holds true for culture — it must be "cut" from the outside in order to be transformed.

2. The Gospel, i.e. the Logos itself, slits the culture. The Gospel is that which slits through the culture and pierces the heart of the hearer (cf. Acts 2:37-42), bringing about interior transformation and the renewal of the culture through that person.

3. Just as the fruit undergoes a 'trial,' the slit of the Gospel brings about a painful process, because it calls for a purification process, a conversion process, brought about by faith.

4. "Ultimately only the Logos himself can guide our cultures to their true purity and maturity, but the Logos makes us his servants, the 'dresser of sycamore trees.'"[114]

5. The dresser must know the fig very well in order to cut it in the right way and at precisely the right time. The same holds true for needing to know the culture very well - perhaps even better than it knows itself.

6. The "dresser" must be patiently involved in the whole process. "The gospel is a…cut that demands patient involvement and understanding, so that it occurs at the right time, in the right place, and in the right way; a cut, then, that requires sympathy and understanding of the culture from within, an appreciation for its dangers and its hidden or evident potential. Thus it is clear also that this cut 'is not a momentary effort that is automatically followed by a ripening process'. Rather, an ongoing and patient encounter between the Logos and the culture is necessary, mediated by the service of the faithful."[115]

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[112] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 46.
[113] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 46-48.
[114] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 47.
[115] Ratzinger, "Communication and Culture," 48.

Ratzinger's image gets at something of the violence of the encounter — the violence of evangelization. Evangelization is a true encounter that is a death-event and which initiates a process of healing. Evangelization cannot be reduced to banal programs, and catechesis must be more than the recitation of the catechism or the memorization of propositions. At the heart of evangelization and catechesis, one always finds the person, the servant of the *Logos*, who must be patiently involved in the process.

Despite the insights regarding the communication of the Gospel and culture, Ratzinger admits that the challenge of relativism makes evangelization increasingly difficult today. He says, "Faith cannot of course find points of contact with philosophies that exclude questions concerning the truth, but it can do so with movements that are trying to break out of the relativist prison."[116] This is a harrowing statement, given how widespread the "dictatorship of relativism" has become, with its characteristic of not recognizing "anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one's own ego and desires."[117] Now, "culture is set against truth," and the relativism that marks the "basic attitude of enlightened people" results in substituting practice (*praxis*) for truth. Now, "we do not know what is true, but we do know what we should do: raise up and introduce a better society."[118] Even a cursory historical sketch of culture and religion will reveal that:

> Christianity has more in common with the ancient cultures of mankind than with the relativistic and rationalistic world that has cut loose from the fundamental insights of mankind and is thus leading man into a vacuum, devoid of meaning, which risks being fatal for him unless the answer to it comes to him in time. For the knowledge that man must turn toward God, and toward what is eternal, is found right across all the cultures; the knowledge about sin, repentance, and forgiveness; the knowledge concerning communion with God and eternal life; and finally the knowledge of the basic rules of morality, as they are found in the form of the Ten Commandments. It is not relativism

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[116] Ratzinger, "The Truth of Christianity?," 198-200.
[117] Ratzinger, "Homily of his eminence Card. Joseph Ratzinger: Mass Pro Eligendo Romano Pontifice."
[118] Ratzinger, "Faith, Religion, and Culture," 72.

that is confirmed; rather, it is the unity of the human condition and its common experience of contact with a truth that is greater than we are.[119]

When it comes to the proclamation of the Gospel, then, at least in the West, this proclamation must confront the radically "other" culture of relativism. The question then becomes, what steps are necessary in order to prepare the culture to be slit by the Gospel? The answer lies in Ratzinger's point about human experience. In some way, the communion human condition and experience must be awakened, and this must happen to him *in time*. How can truth meet man *in time*? Or, perhaps more specifically, how can truth meet man in time *at this time*? Though brief, the present study will provide two insights from Benedict XVI on this theme.

First, Benedict XVI recalls the "court of the Gentiles" as a possible pastoral initiative, which has since been taken up as a forum by the Pontifical Council for Culture. Benedict XVI introduced his thoughts about this court in his 2009 Christmas greetings to the Roman Curia:

Here I think naturally of the words which Jesus quoted from the Prophet Isaiah, namely that the Temple must be a house of prayer for all the nations (cf. Is 56: 7; Mk 11: 17). Jesus was thinking of the so-called "Court of the Gentiles" which he cleared of extraneous affairs so that it could be a free space for the Gentiles who wished to pray there to the one God, even if they could not take part in the mystery for whose service the inner part of the Temple was reserved. A place of prayer for all the peoples by this he was thinking of people who know God, so to speak, only from afar; who are dissatisfied with their own gods, rites and myths; who desire the Pure and the Great, even if God remains for them the "unknown God" (cf. Acts 17: 23). They had to pray to the unknown God, yet in this way they were somehow in touch with the true God, albeit amid all kinds of obscurity. I think that today too the Church should open a sort of "Court of the Gentiles" in which people might in some way latch on to God, without knowing him and before gaining access to his mystery, at whose service the inner life of the Church stands. Today, in addition to interreligious dialogue, there should be a dialogue with those to

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[119] Ratzinger, "Faith, Religion, and Culture," 79.

whom religion is something foreign, to whom God is unknown and who nevertheless do not want to be left merely Godless, but rather to draw near to him, albeit as the Unknown.[120]

The Church, perhaps purified of "extraneous affairs" by her own act of faith and the resulting renewal, could become a welcoming beacon for those searching for God. Still, pushing the image further and considering the manner in which Christ's Body is the new Temple, and the Church, as the Body of Christ, one can question how each individual member of the Church, through living the life in Christ, can be a sign of one who has found the "Pure and Great" and whose life is an "on ramp" for the one who is searching.[121]

Second, under Benedict XVI's pontificate, the Pontifical Council for Culture, engaged the topic of the present culture and the Gospel, and called for a *via pulchritudinis* (way of beauty). The plenary assembly's concluding document, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," makes the following argument for an "apt *pastoral approach to culture*":

> Too often in recent years, the *truth* has been instrumentalised by ideologies, and the *good* horizontalised into a merely social act as though charity towards neighbour alone sufficed without being rooted in love of God. Relativism…continues to spread, encouraging a climate of miscomprehension, and making real, serious and reasoned encounters rare.
> Beginning with the simple experience of the marvel-arousing meeting with beauty, the *via pulchritudinis* can open the pathway for the search for God, and disposes the heart

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[120] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to Members of the Roman Curia and Papal Representatives for the Traditional Exchange of Christmas Greetings" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009).

[121] For more on the ideas presented in this paragraph pertaining to the "courtyard of the Gentiles," see Leonardo Franchi's "The Catholic School as a *Courtyard of the Gentiles," Journal of Catholic Education* 17, no. 2 (2014): 57-76. Here, Franchi argues that the idea of a "courtyard of the Gentiles" might engage the tension Catholic schools feel between pluralism and tradition. Daniel Blackman argues that the dialogue between Catholicism and Judaism encouraged by *Nostra Aetate* has become detached from evangelization, and sees principles derived from the Judaism and the Temple as helpful for reinvigorating this dialogue. See Daniel Blackman, "The Courtyard of the Gentiles," *Israel Affairs* 16, no. 4 (2010): 579-98.

and spirit to meet Christ, who is the Beauty of Holiness Incarnate, offered by God to men for their salvation. It invites contemporary Augustines, unquenchable seekers of love, truth and beauty, to see through perceptible beauty to eternal Beauty, and with fervour discover Holy God, the author of all beauty.[122]

The document does not call for the Church to abandon the good and the true in her evangelization attempts. Instead, the document points to the ability of beauty to lead and to awaken the person's search for God, to prepare a pathway for the good and the true. The document goes on to identify three "ways of beauty" that can lead the person to God: (1) the beauty of creation;[123] (2) the beauty of the arts;[124] and (3) the beauty of Christ.[125] While the first two deserve a full treatment in their own right, the present study will focus on the beauty of Christ. On this point, the Pontifical Council for Culture first identifies the unprecedented beauty of Christ, who is not the anthropological exception, as explained in Ch. 3, but the model of the beautiful life for all humanity.[126] The image of Christ becomes accessible today, as a way of beauty, most profoundly in the liturgy.[127] However, as Benedict XVI explains in *Sacramentum Caritatis,* "It is first and foremost the witness who introduces others to the mysteries."[128] It is here that the interplay of the words "witness" and "saint" appear ultimately as one. The Pontifical Council for Cultures' document quotes Pope Benedict XVI, saying, "the saint is the one who is so fascinated by the beauty of God and by his perfect truth that he is progressively transformed by it. For this beauty and this truth, he is ready to renounce everything, even himself."[129] Elsewhere he says, "Today, for faith to grow, we must lead ourselves and the persons

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[122] Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2006), §II.1

[123] Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.1.

[124] Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.2.

[125] Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.3.

[126] Cf. Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.3.A.

[127] Cf. Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.1.C.

[128] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, §64.

[129] Pontifical Council for Culture, "The *Via Pulchritudinis*: Privileged Pathway for Evangelization and Dialogue," §III.1.B.

we meet to encounter the saints and to enter into contact with the Beautiful. The witness is the saint, and the saint cannot help but bear witness."[130] On this point, Louis J. Rouleau draws the connection between Benedict XVI's interest in the action of God in history and the enduring manifestation of this action through the Holy Spirit operative in the lives of the saints as manifest in Benedict XVI's General Audiences on the great figures in the history of the Church (given from March 15, 2006 - April 13, 2011).[131] Rouleau points out that Benedict XVI "is animated by the conviction that holiness possesses an evidential power," for it is the beauty of the image of Christ apparent in the saints that "establishes the credibility of Christianity."[132] While the Pontifical Council for Culture calls for a *via pulchritudinis* of witness for evangelization amidst the relativized culture, Ratzinger has frequently called for the same.

The call for witness appears in Ratzinger's *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*. Here, Ratzinger says, "It is the role of the Church to speak to the world the word of God given in Christ, to witness before the world to the public saving work of God so that everyone can hear it."[133] All of this fulfills the public commissions of Christ to the disciples (e.g. Mt. 10:27, Mt. 28:19) and follows the public nature of Jesus' preaching (e.g. Jn. 18:20, Mk. 14:49).[134] Ratzinger uses the verb "to witness"in two senses: (1) the aspect of witness as "saint" or reference point, and (2) the martyrological aspect of witness. Regarding the former, in this personalistic and existential vision of evangelization, Jesus, who knows God and sees God first-hand, whose vision of God that is the source of light for everyone, should not be seen in isolation. The "saints," both the canonized and "hidden," are those who "with Jesus receive a ray of his brightness, actual and real experience of God [*sic*]," and are those who are "all called to use their

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[130] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Feeling of Things, the Contemplation of Beauty" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2002),
http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20020824_ratzinger-cl-rimini_en.html.

[131] See Louis J. Rouleau, "Holiness and the History of the Church in Benedict XVI's General Audiences," *Logos* 17, no. 3 (2014), 158-73.

[132] Rouleau, "Holiness and the History of the Church," 166.

[133] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 82. Ratzinger includes a point in this section worth noting. He claims that the Church must perform her missionary activity with "holy discretion," recognizing "that there are places where the word would be wasted, thrown away, if it were spoken…He best disseminates the word who does not squander it but proclaims it." The soil must be prepared, so to speak, for the seed of the Gospel to sink in, lest, like the parable of the sower, much of the seed fail to bear the intended fruit.

[134] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 81.

experience of the risen Lord to become a point of reference for others that could bring them into contact with Jesus' vision of the living God."[135] Time and time again, Ratzinger speaks of the saints-as-witness or the saints-as-reference-point. It is clear that he drives at the early Church's understanding of the word: not as a seemingly unattainable goal for a "few," but as that to which the "many" who comprise the "few" of the Church are called. For example:[136]

- "Whoever had and lived the faith in Christ Risen was called to become a point of reference for all others, setting them in this way in contact with the Person and the Message of Jesus, who reveals the face of the Living God. And this holds true also for us: a Christian who lets himself be guided and gradually shaped by the faith of the Church, in spite of his weaknesses, his limitations, and his difficulties, becomes like a window open to the light of the living God, receiving this light and transmitting it to the world."[137]

- "Is there anyone who does not know Dostoyevsky's often quoted sentence: 'The Beautiful will save us'? However, people usually forget that Dostoyevsky is referring here to the redeeming Beauty of Christ. We must learn to see Him. If we know Him, not only in words, but if we are struck by the arrow of his paradoxical beauty, then we will truly know him, and know him not only because we have heard others speak about him. Then we will have found the beauty of Truth, of the Truth that redeems. Nothing can bring us into close contact with the beauty of Christ himself other than the world of beauty created by faith and light that shines out from the faces of the saints, through whom his own light becomes visible."[138]

- "Paul was effective, not because of brilliant rhetoric and sophisticated strategies, but rather because he exerted himself and left himself vulnerable in the service of the Gospel."[139]

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[135] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 30-33.
[136] Rowland has a treatment on this topic in *Benedict XVI: A Guide for the Perplexed*, 90-91.
[137] Benedict XVI, "The Faith of the Church," 23.
[138] Ratzinger, "The Feeling of Things, the Contemplation of Beauty."
[139] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Warrior and the Sufferer," in *Images of Hope*, trans. John Rock and Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2006), 26.

- At the origin of every new catechetical endeavor, one finds the person of the catechist for whom "the Church has ceased to be something external for him but has 'awakened in his soul,'" and who can "with his dynamic of faith, retransform the letter into a living voice. He will face contradiction, but above all, he will evoke the joy that comes from meeting Jesus."[140]

- "The renewal of the Church is also achieved through the witness offered by the lives of believers: by their very existence in the world, Christians are called to radiate the word of truth that the Lord Jesus has left us."[141]

- "It is important that every form of proclamation keep in mind, first of all, the intrinsic relationship between the communication of God's word and Christian witness. The very credibility of our proclamation depends on this. On the one hand, the word must communicate every-thing that the Lord himself has told us. On the other hand, it is indispensable, through witness, to make this word credible, lest it appear merely as a beautiful philosophy or utopia, rather than a reality that can be lived and itself give life."[142]

- "Actually I must say that also for my personal faith many saints, not all, are true stars in the firmament of history. And I would like to add that for me not only a few great saints whom I love and whom I know well are "signposts", but precisely also the simple saints, that is, the good people I see in my life who will never be canonized. They are ordinary people, so to speak, without visible heroism but in their everyday goodness I see the truth of faith. This goodness, which they have developed in the faith of the Church, is for me the most reliable apology of Christianity and the sign of where the truth lies."[143]

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[140] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 59.
[141] Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei,* §6.
[142] Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini,* §97.
[143] Benedict XVI, "The Holiness: General Audience, April 13, 2011," (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2011). This is similar to what he says in "On the Theological Basis of Church Music," in *The Feast of Faith,* trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 124, "Next to the saints, the art which the Church has produced is the only real 'apologia' for her history."

Ratzinger's personalism, which undergirds his theology of revelation-faith, now comes to bear upon the Church in dramatic fashion. Evangelization demands something personal of the "saint." The saint's vision, the *who* and *what* he or she has witnessed, opens and is meant to be opened so as to awaken others. The transformation of the saint's life by the "yes" of Jesus Christ, and the saint's own *fiat*, marks a giving over to the beauty, goodness, and truth of Christ, and the corresponding transformation that results in the saint's being a window through which the light of Christ can shine. It is also worth noting the emphasis in Ratzinger's writing on sanctity and weakness. The "saint" is not necessarily the person who is perfectly whole and who always has been. Instead, the "saint" is the one who knows Jesus because Jesus has exposed his own wounds (cf. Jn. 20:20) because Jesus has entered into the wounds of the "saint," and has and is redeeming them. The "saint," like Paul, knows that God "will act in [his/her] weakness,"[144] and that his/her weaknesses and wounds that are being redeemed, are something of a window through which the other catches a glimpse of the Divine Physician himself.[145]

As for the second aspect of witness, in his meditation on the hymn *"Nunc, Sancte, nobis Spiritus,"* Benedict XVI traces the philological development from the use of the word *professio* in pre-Christian Latin, to *confessio* in Christian Latin. This development brings in the martyrological aspect of witness:

> The element of witnessing to faith in front of the enemy, even in situations of passion and of the danger of death. Christian confession essentially involves a willingness to suffer: this seems to me to be very important. Again, in the essence of the *"confessio"* of our Creed, an openness to passion, suffering, indeed, giving up life is implied. And this guarantees credibility: the *"confessio"* is not just something that can be abandoned; the *"confessio"* implies the willingness to give up my life, to accept the passion. This is also truly the verification of the *"confessio."* It can be seen that for us *"confessio"* is not a word, it is more than pain, it is more than death.[146]

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[144] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 45.
[145] See also Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi*, §21-22, 41.
[146] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

Missionary activity, i.e. the proclamation of the Gospel, holds within itself the need for witness. Gospel cannot be proclaimed as some outside piece of information that is passed along in some banal fashion. The proclamation of the Gospel is a *confessio* shaped by the *confessio* of the Creed, and one which lays a personal demand upon the evangelist — to witness with a testimony that is a personal confession of faith in the face of possible persecution. Consequently, the proclamation of the Gospel implies that a witness is the one proclaiming the "glad tidings." Witness is the prerequisite for proclamation — making proclamation a testimony — and, testimony an expression of one's willingness to witness, to suffer for the truth, and to do so in love. This aspect of witness, therefore, carries this study from the being-for of proclamation to the being-for of *agape*.

2.4   Being-for in Agape

Agape love is unselfish in character, and vis-à-vis *eros,* Benedict XVI says *agape* "love now becomes concern and care for the other. No longer is it self-seeking, a sinking in the intoxication of happiness; instead it seeks the good of the beloved: it becomes renunciation and it is ready, and even willing, for sacrifice."[147] In light of Christ, the "last Adam" who is the completely open existence between "from" and "for," "being a Christian means essentially changing over from being for oneself to being for one another…leaving behind the seclusion and tranquility of his 'I' [and] departs from himself in order by this frustration [*Durchkreuzung*] of his 'I' to follow the crucified Christ and exist for others."[148] For Ratzinger, it is never possible to separate *agape* from *eros* without damaging each,[149] or, to remain closer to the present terminology, being-for is never possible without being-from. Commenting on the command to love neighbor "as yourself," meaning "that self-love, the affirmation of one's own being, provides the form and measure for love of one's neighbor,"[150] Ratzinger delineates between egoism and self-love, saying:

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[147] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §6.

[148] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 252-53.

[149] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §5-7.

[150] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 98. See also *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 80.

Egoism and real self-love are not only not identical but exclude each other. Someone can be a great egoist and nevertheless be dissatisfied with himself. Indeed, egoism is often precisely a consequence of being torn apart oneself, of the attempt to create another ego for oneself, whereas the right relationship to the ego in freedom grows of itself. One could almost talk of an anthropological circle: to the extent that people are always seeking themselves, would like to bring about their own self-realization, and are intent on the success and fulfillment of their ego, this ego becomes objectionable, annoying, and unsatisfactory…Only the "yes" that is given me by someone else makes me capable for my part of addressing this "yes" to myself, in and with the other. The "I" is realized by the "you." On the other hand it is true that only someone who has accepted himself can address a real "yes" to someone else. Accepting oneself, "loving" oneself, once again presupposes truth and demands a continual pilgrimage towards the truth.[151]

Egoism is the isolated attempt at the self-made man — that never-ending dissatisfaction vis-à-vis the moving bar set by man himself (one which is always deeply impacted by the culture in which he lives and from which he can never completely remove himself). The self-seeking of egoism results in dissatisfaction with oneself, which cannot but lead to dissatisfaction with others, to the inability to love. Being sought after by another who issues forth the "yes" to one's existence is precisely that which pulls a man or woman out of egoism and makes "self-love" possible. In other words, "self-love" is only possible through the initiative that another person takes toward me, and a word or a deed from the other that makes me acceptable to me. "Self-love" is only possible through communion with another who "gives" me myself, allowing me to accept myself and to give myself in accept others.

Ratzinger points out that *agape* is manifest in two forms. First, "the relations of Christians among one another ought to have an attractive and exemplary force, constituting an effective active mission."[152] The love shared within the Christian community should stand as a witness to all as a lamp stand (cf. Mk. 4:21) and as a city visible on the hill (cf. Mt. 5:14).[153]

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[151] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 99-100.
[152] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 82.
[153] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 82.

Second, "Christians can never, and must never, be satisfied with saluting and loving their brothers, that is, their fellow believers; they must follow the Lord who performed his work of love for those who neither knew nor loved him (see Rom. 5:6), directing their love to all those who need them, without asking for thanks or a response."[154] *Agape* demands a "deep personal sharing in the needs and sufferings of others," which "becomes a sharing of my very self with them: if my gift is not to prove a source of humiliation, I must give to others not only something that is my own, but my very self; I must be personally present in my gift,"[155] it becomes infused by and an expression of *caritas* when, in sharing oneself, one shares Christ.

Agape, in the Christian sense of the word, means that not just any "yes," but God's "yes," God's *caritas* has entered into one's life. On this point, Ratzinger says:

> Like every love, "supernatural" love comes from a "yes" that has been given to me but in this case from a greater "you" than any human being. It is the irruption of God's "yes" into my life through Jesus Christ's "yes" to us who had distanced ourselves from God's "yes," a "yes" upheld in the incarnation, the cross, and the resurrection. *Agape* thus presupposes that the crucified love of the Lord has become perceptible to me, that it touches me through faith.[156]

Now, "the consciousness that, in Christ, God has given himself for us, even unto death, must inspire us to live no longer for ourselves but for him, and, with him, for others."[157] The Church makes this love perceptible to the person today, and reconstitutes the person (cf. Gal. 2:20) to the point where the new "I" to which the person is led is no longer strange for the person but is his "home" due to the transforming power of faith.[158] Only at this point, wherein the Church/member of the Church becomes rooted in a radical reception of the truth of God's love,[159] can *agape* spill out and over to the "stranger" who is no longer a stranger due to the all-embracing love of God in Jesus Christ. Ratzinger says:

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[154] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood,* 83.
[155] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §33-34.
[156] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 101.
[157] Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §34.
[158] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 103.
[159] See Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 254.

Christ wishes to use my faculties and capabilities for him, even when a purely human natural attraction does not exist. Now I can give him Christ's "yes" that fills my life as my own "yes" and yet his, even when and precisely when natural sympathy is not there. In the place of individual, private sympathies and antipathies there has entered Christ's sympathy, his compassion, his suffering with and loving with people. From this compassion of Christ that has been communicated to me and that becomes my own in the life of faith I can hand on a compassion, a "yes," that is greater than my own and enables the other to feel that profoundest "yes" that alone gives meaning and support to every human "yes."…It presupposes that in the life of faith I come to the inward exchange of my ego with Christ so that his "yes" really penetrates into my being and becomes mine. It also presupposes practice on the part of the other: actually to venture this "yes" from him to the other for whom I am needed. It is only in this kind of risk-taking, at first still unaccustomed and perhaps a little frightening, that the power to do so grows and the Easter connection becomes ever more recognizable: this crucifixion of oneself — self-denial—leads to a great inner joy, to "resurrection." The more I dare lose myself, the more I discover that it is precisely in this way that I find myself. Thus through the encounter with Jesus a new realism accrues to me, and he again strengthens me anew in acting from membership with him…The challenge of the cross…demands that I give my ego into Jesus' hands, not so that he may destroy it but so that in him it may become free and expand. The "yes" of Jesus Christ that I hand on is only really his if it has also become completely mine.[160]

One can draw a number of conclusions here. The "yes" of Jesus Christ is the Gospel—*evangelium* and it becomes Gospel when it first penetrates the being of the believer to the point that he/she identifies with the "yes" and can venture this "yes," one that is not his own but the Lord's, to the other regardless of his feelings towards him. *Agape* becomes *caritas* when it is God's "yes" in Jesus Christ that is given to the other. This "yes" demands much of the believer — the dissolution of his own "I" and his willingness to join in Jesus' compassionate suffering-

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[160] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 103-4.

with and suffering-for.[161] Thus, in light of the first responsibility of the Church toward the "other brother," one can say that the proclamation of the Gospel occurs when, in *agape,* the Christian issues forth the "yes" of Jesus Christ to the non-believer, who, in accepting the affirmation of his existence by the God who loved him when he did not know God or love God (cf. Rom. 5:6), he is able to accept himself and others. Hence, the truth of Love Incarnate, must become, as Benedict XVI says, "the flame of love, a flame that truly ignites my being…the great passion of my being and so ignites my neighbour…truth becomes charity in me and charity like fire ignites my neighbour."[162]

In a certain sense, one can say, then, that *caritas* inspires mission and is manifest in an *agape* that really demands something personal on the part of the Church, on the part of the evangelist. *Caritas* inspires mission, because this mission leads into those places of isolation, those places closed off to divine Love. *Caritas* leads the Church-as-*communio* out of herself, against herself, and into this hellish "space" of the other, the "space" in need of a missionary proclamation, the "yes" of the Lord. In this vein, Ratzinger says:

> For the saints, "Hell" is not so much a threat to be hurled at other people but a challenge to oneself. It is a challenge to suffer in the dark night of faith, to experience communion with Christ in solidarity with his descent into the Night…One serves the salvation of the world by leaving one's own salvation behind for the sake of others. In such piety, nothing of the dreadful reality of Hell is denied. Hell is so real that it reaches right into the existence of the saints. Hope can take it on, only if one shares in the suffering of Hell's night by the side of the One who came to transform our night by his suffering.[163]

Caritas allows the saint, the one who is in communion with Christ, to become capable, in some sense, of giving him/herself over with Christ in his entry into the hell of the other (i.e. His encounter with the other). The "saint" is the concrete "in-breaking" of the "body of Christ" in the very reality of the other who is capable of being a presence in the other's isolation and, through

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[161] See Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi,* §39-40.
[162] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."
[163] Ratzinger, *Eschatology,* 218.

his or her own being-in-*communio* and vulnerability, of issuing forth a word that can reach the other and draw them into contact with the Word. When the person-in-*communio* willingly enters into the hell of the other with Christ, and issues forth the word of hope whose content is simply "I believe in God,"[164] as a presence in that hell and as a word issued forth at just the right time and in the right way, and is received by the other, evangelization occurs. *Caritas* initiates and ignites *confessio,* missionary proclamation marked by a willingness to suffer, a willingness to give up one's life, to give oneself over to the Truth, in the Truth, and for the Truth, and in the face of the other, even in the midst of the hell of the other, it becomes clear that the confession is worth suffering unto death in order that that which is stronger than death can break through for the other.[165] The Church's "setting out with Christ" in order to hand on the love of God essentially means the "saints"[166] provide a "secondary mediation" of faith in the hellish "places" present on this earth.

Benedict XVI calls *confessio* and *caritas* two ways in which God involves the Church, humanity, in his mission.[167] The ties between charity and confession within evangelization illustrate the ties between evangelization and the sacrament of Baptism, which is to say, the experience of the Cross. Because evangelization is motivated by *veritas*, that is the connection of truth and love as it is visible in the Cross, evangelization concerns itself with forgiveness. Ratzinger defines forgiveness as "the restoration of truth, the renewal of being, and the overcoming of the lie that lurks in every sin: of its nature sin is always a departure from the truth of one's own being and thus from the truth of the creator, God…Forgiveness is participation in the pain of transition from the drug of sin to the truth of love."[168] What does this mean, then, for the evangelist, for the person who is with Christ on mission? Ratzinger answers:

> It is preceding and accompanying someone on this path of death and rebirth. Only
> preceding and accompanying addicts in this way (for sin is always a "drug," the lie of

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[164] Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," 26.

[165] See Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

[166] See Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 33. In the early Church, this was a general description of a Christian, who, though not possessing all of the qualities one would suspect for a canonized saint, was to use their experience of knowing the risen Lord as a point of reference for others

[167] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

[168] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 95.

false happiness) can enable them to let themselves be led through the dark journey of suffering. It is only by going ahead to enter into the suffering and into the death involved in the way of transformation that makes this journey bearable, because it is only in this way that the dark night of the narrow way the light of hope in new life becomes visible. The reverse is true: only love gives the power to forgive, that is, to accompany the other on the road of the suffering that transforms. It is only this that makes it possible to accept and to endure with and on behalf of the other the death of the lie. It is only this that enables one to remain a bearer of the light in the pitch-black and seemingly endless tunnel and to make noticeable the fresh air of promise that leads to rebirth.[169]

Evangelization requires a compassionate "preceding" and "accompanying." The witness goes ahead and before the other with Christ (i.e. Truth and Love) and so enters into the death-event of the "I," or, by way of a secondary mediation, actually helps to initiate that event of transformational suffering — the "I" becoming the "not I." None of this is possible — in other words, evangelization is impossible — without the love that gives the power to forgive, without the love (*caritas* expressed in *agape*) that gives the evangelist the power to *for-give*, to go before the other and, with and in Christ's "for" the other, to "give" the other him/herself (i.e. rebirth).[170] Evangelization is death, restoration, and rebirth because Baptism is death, restoration, and rebirth. Ratzinger points out that the whole catechumenate, i.e. the Church's process of bringing someone into *communio* through baptism/the baptismal confession of faith, is ordered to baptism and, therefore, "the catechumenate itself is a part of baptism."[171] From what has been said, this statement cuts in two directions. On the one hand, evangelization, and, more proximately, catechesis, are directed by and ordered to the death-event that is the rebirth of Baptism. Evangelization means to show the path and to teach the art of living;[172] it is to lead the other to Life. On the other hand, and this is less obvious, the catechumenate is part of Baptism in that Baptism configures the person to Christ, in his death and his resurrection, which is to say his self-emptying mission of being-for. One's own personal part of the Church's evangelizing mission, then, is the existential living-out of the ontological and ecclesial event that is Baptism.

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[169] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 95-96.
[170] See Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ*, 103.
[171] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 35.
[172] See Joseph Ratzinger, "Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

Just as the Church entered into the *shêol* of the other and accompanies along the path of catechumenate, now the newly-baptized person is thrust by Baptism into the Church's mission, into the "places" of isolation in the other. The newly-baptized is now sent to go be-*for*e the other and to be-*with* the other in the journey of truth and love that is the death-event of the self-sufficient "I" and its reconstitution as a person-in-relation patterned in the image of God's being-from, being-for, and being-with.

2.5   *Being-for in Vicarious Suffering*

Agape is self-giving, regardless of whether or not the gift is received, regardless of whether or not the "yes" is accepted. This fact leads into Ratzinger's final point regarding the Church's relation to nonbelievers, one which he calls the "last and highest mission" of the Christian — "to suffer for them and in their place as the Master did."[173] He says:

> The disciples of Christ will always be "few," as the Lord said, and as such stand before the mass, the "many," as Jesus, the one, stands for the man (that is, the whole of mankind)…The disciples of Jesus are few, but as Jesus himself was one "for the many," so it will always be their mission to not be against but "for the many." When all other ways fail, there will always remain the royal way of vicarious suffering by the side of the Lord. It is in her defeat that the Church constantly achieves her highest victory and stands nearest to Christ.[174]

Jesus Christ, who willingly accepted rejection of men who cannot stand a God who dares to love him so completely so as to be "yes" for the those who turn away, is the model here. The Christian who dares to issue forth the "yes" to the other and who is rejected by the other, in that moment of rejection, and suffering, stands closest to Christ who was rejected, suffered, and died. Pro-existence is that continued clinging to the "yes" of Jesus Christ in the midst of the "no" of rejection, that the "yes" may be present even in the face of the "no," and ultimately in place of the "no." Pro-existence, then, reaches its high point in a vicarious representation that is vicarious

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[173] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 83.
[174] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 83-84.

rejection. This expression of *agape* in the midst of rejection, one that not only suffers with and is of service to the other, but which goes before the other, this is pro-existence as vicarious representation. And, this vicarious representation is precisely the way in which the Church breaks through the gates of the netherworld today (cf. Mt. 16:18), as a presence in the midst of the hell of isolation, the enduring "yes" in the face of "no."

Ratzinger identifies the Father as being-for (i.e. pro-existence) in his eternally begetting the Son, which is the Father's very act of self-giving. The Father's being-for touches the Church and her individual members insofar as the Church lives *from* the Father's being-for as sons in the Son. In the Son, the Church experiences the "yes" of the Father for the Son, and, insofar as the Son is the ambassador sent by the Father with a message that is not his own, so too is the Church sent out in and with the Son who is entirely *from* the Father and *for* the many.

3.   The Church and Catechesis as Being-with

3.1   The Church Herself as Communio — Being-with

In identifying the Holy Spirit as "*Communio,*"[175] Ratzinger notes that the Holy Spirit always points to the Trinity — three divine persons, one God, one *communio*. He also notes that the Holy Spirit points to humanity as well. He says, "the trinitarian God is the archetype of the new united humanity, the archetype of the Church…Church does not mean another idea in addition to man, but rather man on the way to himself."[176] God's plan for man is "unity according to the image of God," a love that is "entirely one, single, and that he is, however, at the

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[175] See Ch. 3, sec. 1.4.

[176] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 65. The word "parish," denoting the geographical or physical "place" in which one's Catholic Christianity is concretely lived, captures this notion of man "on the way to himself," on the *status viatoris*. Etymologically, the word "parish" is derived from the Greek word for "sojourner," one who is present in a place only temporarily as part of a longer journey. Furthermore, the word parish is derived from *para* ("near") and *oikos* ("house"). The parish is a "near house," a place where sojourner-neighbors gather on the Way. For more on man as *status viatoris*, see Josef Pieper, *On Hope*, trans. Mary Frances McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986).

same time counterpart, exchange, community."[177] Men and women are made for community, communication, and communion — which is possible in their common human nature. However:

> We are not only nature but also persons, and in such a way that each person represents a unique way of being human different from everyone else. Therefore, nature alone is not sufficient to communicate the inner sensibility of persons. If we want to draw another distinction between individuality and personality, then we could say that individuality divides and being a person opens. Being a person is by nature being related.[178]

The problem of individuality, the inability to dialogue, the "ultimate inaccessibility of the other, the impossibility of giving oneself to another and understanding one another for any length of time" has been, in Ratzinger's opinion, all-too-apparent in the twentieth century. The Holy Spirit, a theology of the Spirit as *communio,* and, therefore, a clear reference to the Trinity, reveals "that we men among ourselves can become one only when we find ourselves in a higher unity, as it were, in a third party. Only when we are one with God can we be united among ourselves. The way to the other leads over God."[179] Persons, by nature of being persons, aspire beyond their own temporal-spacial boundaries for relationship. However, as has been noted, relationship with another is not possible without the presence of "the all-embracing third," who is "greater and higher than individuals," and which is God who "in truth is the first."[180]

The Holy Spirit is that "third party" that makes human communion possible "as God's gift to history in the community of those who believe in Christ."[181] The Church, as *communio*, as that body that is not only "from" and "for," but also "with" God and "with" humanity, stands as the concrete "all-embracing third" in space and in time. The Church stands as a transtemporal visible body, the "space" in which God comes to man and man to God, and also the "space" in which men come to each other. The Church is the union of "yeses" — that of God and of man.

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[177]Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 66.
[178] Joseph Ratzinger, "*Communio:* A Program," 126.
[179] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 66.
[180] Ratzinger, "*Communio:* A Program," 126.
[181] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 331.

Because she is with God she can be with man. Mary, as Benedict XVI points out, is the model of this closeness with God that allows for closeness to others. He says, regarding her Assumption:

> Mary is taken up body and soul into the glory of Heaven, and with God and in God she is Queen of Heaven and earth. And is she really so remote from us? The contrary is true. Precisely because she is with God and in God, she is very close to each one of us.While she lived on this earth she could only be close to a few people. Being in God, who is close to us, actually, "within" all of us, Mary shares in this closeness of God. Being in God and with God, she is close to each one of us, knows our hearts, can hear our prayers, can help us with her motherly kindness and has been given to us, as the Lord said, precisely as a "mother" to whom we can turn at every moment.[182]

The Church is to exist in the same manner. In her deepest nature, then, the Church is "the overcoming of the boundary between I and Thou, the union of men among themselves through the radical transcendence of self into eternal love," made possible, because "Church is mankind being brought into the way of life of the trinitarian God."[183] The Church, as the *communion* between God and men through Jesus Christ in the Holy Spirit makes communion between men and women possible insofar as she is the image and gift of the Holy Spirit. Faith is at one and the same time a gift of the Holy Spirit (cf. 1 Cor. 12:3) *and* a gift of the Church.[184]

The Church, this objective "third" that is the "space" in which persons come together in time, in the present moment, exists as such because she make the Christian fact encounter-able

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[182] Benedict XVI, "Homily of His Holiness Benedict XVI: Mass on the Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005), https://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/homilies/2005/documents/hf_ben-xvi_hom_20050815_assunzione-maria.html.

[183] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 68-69. For Ratzinger, this is precisely why there cannot be such a thing as a church purely "from below." Nothing that originates "from below" is capable of attaining to the heights of Trinitarian life. Similarly, the Church "cannot become a national Church or be identified with a race or a class. She must…be catholic…The Church does not begin, therefore, as a club; rather, she begins catholic. She speaks on her first day in all languages, in the languages of the planet. She was first universal before she brought forth local churches" (69).

[184] With regard to the latter point, the Introductory Rites in the "Rite of Baptism for One Child," the celebrant of the sacrament asks the parents of the child being brought forth for Baptism: "What do you ask of God's Church for N.?" The parents may respond "Baptism," but they may also respond "Faith" (accessed via *iBreviary* on June 25, 2018 at http://www.ibreviary.com/m/preghiere.php?tipo=Rito&id=103).

today. Giussani calls the Church "a reality comprised of those who believe in him," and "the encounterable form of his presence."[185] Citing Acts 9:4, and the mysterious line "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?," Giussani comments that the gift of the Spirit assimilates the person into the single body of Christ in an ontological sense.[186] Furthermore, Giussani says:

> It is by encountering the unity of believers that we quite literally meet up with Christ, by encountering the Church as it emerges in the way it has been fixed by the Spirit. To encounter the Church, I must meet men and women in given surroundings. It is impossible to encounter the universal Church in its entirety…we meet the Church as it emerges locally, in each environment…it is the mystery of God that is present.[187]

The Church exists as *communio,* and is, therefore, at the service of encounter. The Christian event happens today — it still happens today — in the mystery of the Church. The Church is that objective reality, that fact, which confronts the subject as such, and provokes a response. But, the Church is only capable of serving encounter insofar as she stands as *communio* with God in the Holy Spirit, and insofar as this one *communio* manifests itself in the concrete reality of persons.

Ratzinger holds that the Church stands as *communio* in two distinct ways: as one united in prayer and in the sacrament of the breaking of the bread. The Church's *communio* is established and manifest in her prayer and in her participation in the Eucharist. With regard to the former, the Church can evangelize insofar as she is a being-with God in prayer. Benedict XVI says:

> We can only cooperate…the beginning must come from God. So it is not a mere formality if we start our sessions each day with prayer: this corresponds to reality itself. Only God's precedence makes our journey possible…Therefore, it is important always to know that the first word, the true initiative, the true activity comes from God and only by inserting ourselves into the divine initiative, only by begging for this divine initiative,

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[185] Giussani, *Why the Church?*, 21.
[186] Giussani, *Why the Church?*, 21.
[187] Giussani, *Why the Church?*, 22.

shall we too be able to become — with him and in him — evangelizers. God is always the beginning, and it is always only he who can make Pentecost, who can create the Church, who can show the reality of his being with us. On the other hand, however, this God, who is always the beginning, also wants to involve our activity, so that the activities are theandric, so to speak, made by God, but with our involvement and implying our being, all our activity.[188]

In prayer, the Church enters into the divine initiative, and in this way, and only in this way illustrated by the Son who prays for disciples, does she make disciples. The Church is a being with God and in God, and because she is a being with God, and in God, she must proceed "theandrically"[189] — she is capable of being with and for others. This ability for persons to come together is possible through the initiative of God, as Ratzinger says:

> The communion of people with one another is possible because of God, who unites us through Christ in the Holy Spirit so that communion becomes a community, a "church" in the genuine sense of the word. The church discussed in the New Testament is a church "from above," not a humanly fabricated "above: but from the real "above" about which Jesus says: "You belong to what is below, I belong to what is above" (Jn. 8:23)…The ecclesiology "from below" which is commended to us today presupposes that one regards the Church as a purely sociological quantity and that Christ as an acting subject has no real significance. But in this case, one is no longer speaking about a church at all but about a society which has also set religious goals for itself…such a church will also be "from below" in a theological sense, namely, "of this world."[190]

Only God can "make" the Church by way of His own initiative through Jesus Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit.[191] Therefore, reflecting upon the saying of Don Didamo, an Italian parish priest, "Jesus preached by day, by night he prayed," Ratzinger says, "With these few words, he wished to say: Jesus had to acquire the disciples from God. The same is always true.

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[188] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."
[189] Cf. Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."
[190] Ratzinger, "*Communio:* A Program," 126-27.
[191] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

We ourselves cannot gather men. We must acquire them by God for God. All methods are empty without the foundation of prayer. The word of the announcement must always be drenched in an intense life of prayer."[192] Only God can create the Church.

As for the latter, the Church's *communio* is most concretely manifest in those who participate in the breaking of the bread, which is the very font from which mission flows.[193] Ratzinger notes how classical theology saw the Eucharist not so much as "the soul's meeting with Christ," but "as the *concorporatio cum Christo* — as the Christians' becoming one in the one body of the Lord."[194] And again, "Receiving the Lord in the Eucharist, accordingly, means entering into a community of existence with Christ, entering into that state in which human existence is opened up to God and which is at the same time the necessary condition for the opening up of the inner being of men for one another."[195] Hence it is precisely in the *communio* of Creator and creature, a painful exchange that frees and redeems man from the shackles of selfishness, that community is born, that the Church is born. "The inmost mystery of communion between God and man is accessible in the sacrament of the Body of the Risen One; and the mystery…thereby demands our body and draws it in and makes itself a reality in one *Body*."[196] Faith involves the encounter of one's isolated, or isolating "I," which is to say, one's self imposed hell, with the *communio* of the persons of God manifest in Christ Jesus and made accessible in the Church. In and through this *communio* of the Church, he who was previously on the outside comes into *communio* with God and with men. Therefore, a Church that is not *communio* is not actually capable of evangelizing (i.e. answering the problem of man's dismantled theological anthropology), is not capable of meeting the real needs of man. Becoming Christian means being taken up, or taken over, by the faith of the Church,[197] and then sent "for the many" as part of the one *Body* united in prayer and in the Paschal sacrifice. Therefore, it is

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[192] Joseph Ratzinger, "Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

[193] *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, §10.

[194] Ratzinger, *The Meaning of Christian Brotherhood*, 68.

[195] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 79.

[196] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 83.

[197] On this point, Ratzinger highlights Guardini's conversion by recalling Guardini's own words: "There must be, therefore, an objective authority that can draw my response out of that hiding place of self-assertion. But there is only one: the Catholic Church in her authority and precision. The question of keeping or giving away one's soul is ultimately decided, not in the presence of God, but in the presence of the Church" ("From Liturgy to Christology," in *Fundamental Speeches from Five Decades*, trans. Michael J. Miller, JR Foster, and Adrian Walker (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2012), 242-43.

the Holy Spirit (i.e. *Communio*) operative in the Church (i.e. those co-believing and co-loving members of the one body) who makes evangelization possible. In other words, the Christian who becomes in Christ the "well" of the Holy Spirit is able to bring the life-giving "yes" of Christ (i.e. the Holy Spirit) into the "hell" of the other. The Christian is capable of being in "hell" with the "other" brother and is never alone, the Christian is never alone in his own experiences of hell, because his entire existence is characterized by "co" or "with." It is precisely in this deeply personal, and, therefore, Trinitarian way, that evangelization comes about, with the Holy Spirit as the principal agent because the Holy Spirit operative in the Church and the person of the Christian, is tasked with being the presence that unites the "yes" of Jesus Christ and the "yes" of the "other" brother *in her very self*. The Church is the image of the Holy Spirit, she is *communio,* in that she is the mediation of the "yes" of Christ and the "yes" of those who believe. The evangelist is called to participate in this process wherein by "becoming small, in participating in the whole, does he become great."[198] It is in concrete compassion (suffering-with) and the *kenosis* of *agape* (being-for) that the Christian/the Church, is able to offer the other consolation of abiding in the "yes" of Jesus Christ.[199]

3.2   *Catechesis as a Concrete Manifestation of Being-with in the Act of Evangelizing*

In addition to the Church's *communio* itself as a manifestation of God's *communio* and necessity for evangelization to reach its goal, Ratzinger's anthropological principle of being-with (Holy Spirit) is particularly manifest within the Church's catechetical ministry. As noted by Ratzinger, catechesis is "secondary," in that it necessarily follows the missionary proclamation and its reception. The Holy Spirit, as being-with, not only inspires the being-with of the other in the hell of the other, but also inspires the Church to "stay-with" the other as he or she is led back into full *communio* by the Holy Spirit (*Communio*). This is precisely what takes place in catechesis. Just as the Holy Spirit plays an indispensably personal role in uniting the dyad of the Father and Son in the Trinity, but "disappears" into the Father and into the Son, so the Church, in her catechetical ministry, which is ultimately nothing other than the testimony of her faith,

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[198] Ratzinger, "The Holy Spirit and the Church," 71.
[199] See Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), §39.

"disappears" in magnifying the person of Jesus Christ, the Son who perfectly reveals the Father because He is one with the Father.

In the section on discipleship in Ch. 3, this study noted that the encounter of the Son's being-from, which is fully realized in His prayer with the Father who is being-for, therefore meets the individual in the dynamism of the death-event. The c*ommunio* of the Trinity encounters the isolation of the individual person through the power of the *Communio* (Holy Spirit, being-with) in the encounter with Jesus Christ, the Son (being-from) who is always in relationship with the Father (being-for). This encounter, which sacramentally-speaking, flows from and takes place in Baptism which plunges the person into the death and resurrection of Christ, marks the beginning of a journey, a way of life, shaped by *communio*. That which was once isolation, and which, due to concupiscence, always risks sliding back into the isolation that results from sin and a sin-laden world, must learn to abide in *communio*. To be sure, encounter is event, death-event, but it is also the case that it is not instantaneous and final. The boundless nature of Christian conversion in the face of the those "gravitational forces" that seem to draw the person back into himself, or which distract his infinite desire for everlasting *communio*, this boundlessness of Christian conversion requires *pistis* (faith, constancy), or rather, it is *pistis*. This paradox of continuity and discontinuity, constancy and change, marks what is meant by Christian *metanoia*. Once one has discovered the way of truth, that way is no longer changeable. Any change, any stepping away or turning away, is always a stepping or turning away from the truth.[200] *Pistis* means constancy, abiding in, and being-with that Truth to which one has given himself over, and rejecting the ever-present pull of self-interest. Seen in this way, even following the death-event of encounter, "the malleability of his existence must not decrease but increase. This means that truth remains always a way, a goal — that it never becomes something wholly one's own. Christ, who is the truth, is in this world also the way, precisely because he is the truth."[201] Catechesis serves *pistis,* and, therefore, works to make boundless *metanoia* possible insofar as the handing on of tradition operates as (1) a testimony that, indeed has content, but

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[200] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 63.
[201] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 63.

also (2) "a definite existential orientation."[202] This study will consider these two components, which, are essentially the same as the three fundamental characteristics of initiatory catechesis as listed in the *General Directory for Catechesis,* §67-68. At the same time, catechesis contains an ongoing element beyond direct sacramental initiation,[203] for even those who have been initiated in the Church, remain, in a certain sense, "a community of catechumens, a community of both learning and living, in which our eyes are opened as we walk."[204]

3.3   Catechesis as Testimony

As a testimony, catechesis aims to bring one face-to-face with the Person of Christ, and continually invites the act of faith. The objective content of the testimony, i.e. the objective content of tradition, preserved by the Church and brought to the catechumen's mind and heart from outside, that pure form (*nobilis forma*) of the face of Christ, invites the catechumen to say "yes" to Jesus Christ once again.[205] Ratzinger speaks to this task of catechesis, saying, "the essential task of catechesis is to lead to the knowledge of God and of the One whom he has sent, or, as the *Roman Catechism* advisedly says: to remind people of this knowledge, for it is written in the deepest part of each and every one of us."[206] The *Catechism*'s provocation for the act of faith calls for both a "yes" and a "no." As an initial or continued "yes" to Jesus Christ, it is an expression of faith in the continuous testimony borne by the Church throughout the ages. Yet every "yes" implies a "no," renouncing or discontinuing that which obstructs or obscures one from, in this case, beholding the face of Christ and living within the Way that is Christian discipleship. The knowledge of faith, this *noblis forma,* is neither static, nor is it mere information that one accepts with the intellect alone. Catechesis does not supply doctrines,

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[202] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 35. See also Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2007), §64.

[203] Cf. *General Directory for Catechesis,* §69-72

[204] Benedict XVI, "Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI on the Occassion of Christmas Greetings to the Roman Curia" (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2012).

[205] Cf. *CCC* §170.

[206] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 27. Cf. John Paul II's *Catechesi Tradendae* §5: "The definitive aim of catechesis is to put people not only in touch but in communion, in intimacy, with Jesus Christ: only He can lead us to the love of the Father in the Spirit and make us share in the life of the Holy Trinity."

formulas, or propositions as an end in themselves, but as the means by which one knows more deeply and encounters more fully the reality, the Person of Jesus Christ.

Further relating catechesis-as-testimony to pneumatology and Christology, Ratzinger follows John's Gospel and claims that John affirms that only the Holy Spirit can make Jesus known, "the Spirit of both the Father and of the Son."[207] The Spirit operates, according to John's pneumatology, in three ways: First, the Spirit bestows remembrance in a way that joins the individual to the whole and which allows the individual to understand that which had not been understood previously.[208] Memory ensures that it is always the same Christ, the same revelation, "yet it unveils and discloses itself in its fullness generation after generation; indeed, it lives its own life anew in every present moment."[209] In Christ, God has given himself perfectly, a perfect act that can never be trumped and which, in this way, concludes revelation. Yet, because this revelation of the Word is God, then revelation can never be past but always and everywhere the Word that contains past, present, and future.[210] Second, the Spirit listens and teaches how to listen. The Spirit listens and does not add, and in this way, seeks to guide others into the "heart of the Word." Ratzinger says, the Holy Spirit's "method is simply to allow what stands before me as an other to express itself and to enter into me."[211] In this way, the Holy Spirit operative in the Church, makes conversion (that boundless chance of Christian *metanoia*) possible. In this way, *metanoia* is identical with *pistis*, (faith, constancy). Christian *metanoia* as openness to boundless change does not come about by being blown by the winds of the *zeitgeist*, but by standing firm in Christ amid all of the forces that confront the person "from below," in order to be molded "from above." *Metanoia* takes place within the gravitational pulls of egoism and of truth, and is accomplished in clinging to the truth of Jesus Christ.[212] The Church does not present Jesus in a multifarious fashion. Instead, the Church, guided by the Spirit, aims to allow the figure of Jesus to stand before believers and unbelievers for all of time as a constant invitation to faith.[213] Finally, the Spirit effects "a space of listening and remembering, a 'we'" that is the Church. [214]

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[207] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 54.
[208] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 55.
[209] Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," 83.
[210] Ratzinger, "Looking at Christ," 83.
[211] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 55.
[212] See Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 60-ff.
[213] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 55.
[214] Ratzinger, "The Spiritual Basis and Ecclesial Identity of Theology," 55.

The Church is the locus of knowledge and one's "understanding" can only be effected by "standing" within the "we" of the Church. All understanding takes place by participating, within the "we" of the Church, in her remembering and in her listening to that living memory.

Ratzinger expands on the notion of memory as that which mediates between being and time in *Principles of Catholic Theology*. Here he calls the Church the *memoria Ecclesiae,* that is "the memory of the Church, the Church as memory."[215] The Creed is the confession of the Church's memory, whether confession refers to the object or subject of faith. The Creed confesses belief in the "object" — the triune God who reveals *communio* as the ground of being. Believing in the Trinity as ground of being means becoming *communio*. In a similar vein, Ratzinger adds that accessing and remaining in communion with Christ is possible only through faith, yet "in order to remain in unity with the crucified and risen Lord, the practical sign of juridical unity, 'remaining in the teaching of the apostles,' is indispensable."[216] Therefore, insofar as the creed is a subjective confession, the "I" is ultimately always the "'I' of the believing Church, to which the individual 'I' belongs as long as it believes. In other words, the 'I' of the credo embraces the transition from the individual 'I' to the ecclesial 'I'…the 'I' of the Church is a structural precondition of the creed."[217] The individual believing subject believes "in" and "with" the believing subject of the Church — the "we," or the ecclesial "I." This ecclesial "I," of which the individual becomes a part and in which he can stand, is a "transtemporal subject," the *communio Ecclesiae,* which is the mediator between being and time as a concrete "body of believers" through her one *memoria*. Therefore, Church is 'catholic,' not only in a geographical or synchronous manner, but also diachronically. Following Augustine, Ratzinger says:

> God is memory per se, that is, all-embracing being, in whom, however, being is embraced *as* time. Christian faith, by its very nature, includes the act of remembering; in this way, it brings about the unity of history and the unity of man before God, or rather: it can bring about the unity of history because God has given it memory.[218]

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[215] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 23. See also Maximilian Heinrich Heim's chapter "Church as the Locus of Faith," in *Life in the Church and Living Theology* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2007), 147-ff.
[216] Joseph Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist — Fellowship — Mission," 69.
[217] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 23. See also Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," 27-28.
[218] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 23.

As has been shown previously, in the Church, Christ is "living and present" because Christ is not dead: "she is his body, in which his Spirit is at work."[219] Elsewhere, Ratzinger notes "the Holy Spirit as God's gift to history in the community of those who believe in Christ."[220] An embrace of the Church's one *memoria* is at one and the same time an embrace of the whole and unified history of the Spirit's action in Church.

Ratzinger's most direct involvement with the world of catechesis, outside of his ecclesial function as Pope and Bishop, was his role in shepherding the commission that wrote the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Not surprisingly, Ratzinger's continual promotion and defense of the *Catechism* contain some of his deepest catechetical insights. Morgan, Willey, and Cointet claim that the *Catechism* prevents handing on and learning about the faith from being reduced to a facile technique. Instead, the *Catechism,* "in its very richness, points...toward the realization that catechesis is a craft, and that catechists are being called to be apprenticed in the Lord's own school to learn the principles and how to work out this craft."[221] These authors see in the *Catechism,* in and through its structure, a calling for and the enabling of a holistic formation in the faith and in how to transmit the faith — "to learn and to teach holistically — the *whole Faith* for the *whole person.*"[222] Given Ratzinger's central role in producing the *Catechism,* one can, therefore, gain some insight into Ratzinger's catechetical mind and vision in and through the *Catechism*.

The *Catechism* is a source for *pistis*. The *Catechism*, in its literary form, is a testimony — a proclamation or expression of the truth of the faith. The *Catechism* speaks, as noted by Ratzinger in a 2002 address, "not as a theology book, but a book of the faith, for the teaching of the faith...Its literary form is more than anything else the testimony, the proclamation that comes from the internal certainty of the faith...the testimony contains the intelligent summary of the word received, but remains nevertheless distinct from the language of reason that searches

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[219] Ratzinger, "The Question of the Concept of Tradition," 58.
[220] Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 331.
[221] Pierre de Cointet, Barbara Morgan, and Petroc Willey, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2008), 8.
[222] De Cointet, Morgan, and Willey, *The Catechism of the Catholic Church and the Craft of Catechesis,* 15-16.

scientifically."[223] The *Catechism* is a testimony that shines light on the person of Christ as He has revealed himself, as He encounters persons in the sacraments of the Church, and as He invites individuals to follow him in a way of life and into intimacy with the Father through the spiritual life (i.e. the life in the Spirit). Ratzinger notes that the *Catechism* provides this testimony, in particular, by trusting the biblical word. "It holds the Christ of the Gospels to be the real Jesus."[224] He emphatically adds:

> The *Catechism,* reading the Gospels with faith-filled courage as a many-layered and reliable whole, restores to us an amazingly rich and vivid portrait of Jesus…Acquaintance with this figure evokes joy: this is evangelization. We can talk again with this Jesus. He is not only a "program," the representative of a cause, whose remarkable poverty of content can only leave us perplexed. When I ask myself why our churches are emptying out, why our faith is trickling away, I would answer that one of the chief reasons is the evacuation of the figure of Jesus, coupled with the deistic conception of God. The more or less romantic ersatz Jesus currently being offered is not enough. He lacks reality; he is too far away. But the Jesus of the Gospels, whom we come to know again in the *Catechism,* is present because he is the Son and accessible to me because he is man. His human history is never merely a thing of the past; all of it is preserved in him and in the communion of his disciples as a thing of the present that still touches me today.[225]

Ratzinger issues forth this declaration amidst the "vehement attacks" claiming the *Catechism* allegedly "slept through an entire century of exegesis," and has "not progressed beyond a 'fundamentalistic' biblical exegesis."[226] In response, Ratzinger directs critics to consider the substantial treatment on biblical science in §101-41, and even the incorporation of solid contemporary exegesis with the *Catechism*'s treatment on the Christological titles, as an example.[227] The *Catechism* trusts the biblical word and the biblical narrative as testimony and

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[223] Joseph Ratzinger, "Current Doctrinal Relevance of the Catechism of the Catholic Church."
[224] Joseph Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 64.
[225] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 69.
[226] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 64.
[227] See *CCC* §430-55.

transmits this testimony throughout, with what might be the most striking example of this testimony in its treatment on the Christological articles of the Profession of Faith spanning from §430-682.

Ratzinger's claim about *Catechism*-as-testimony also means that in the *Catechism*, there is "no trace of ecclesiocentrism."[228] He says, "The Church is the place from which the *Catechism* thinks, the common subject that bears both authors and readers. But this subject does not look at herself. She exists precisely to offer those new eyes of faith without which we see nothing but distorted reflections of Jesus, not Jesus himself. The Church exists to let us see Christ and hear the Gospel."[229] Both in its presentation, and in its invitation, the *Catechism* remains christocentric.[230] As such, the *Catechism* and catechesis carried out along its course, complies with the principle of disappearance pertaining to the Holy Spirit and an authentic discernment of spirits highlighted in Ch. 3. This casts light on the aim of the *Catechism* as well. Though speaking about the *Roman Catechism*, the point still applies to the recent *Catechism*, as Ratzinger says:

> The *Catechism* means to explain thereby the content and objective of all catechesis, and in doing so it also explains fundamentally what faith is: faith is aimed at being able to live…Faith is life, because it is relationship; a knowledge that becomes love and love that comes from knowledge and leads to knowledge. Just as faith means another sort of ability than the ability to accomplish particular tasks, namely, the very ability to live, so too it also concerns another level of being and knowing than the knowledge of this or that particular thing: it has to do with the very basic recognition in which we become aware of our foundation, learn to accept it, and, because we have a foundation, are able to live.[231]

Perhaps, here, one reaches the definitive aim of faith and the nature of discipleship: the ability to live. Catechesis is a testimony that springs from the faith and enables the act of faith, the fruit of

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[228] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 69.
[229] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 69-70.
[230] For example, see *CCC* §1403.
[231] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of Faith," 26-27. See also Ratzinger's *Introduction to Christianity,* 69-81.

which is the ability to live. In commenting upon the four pillars of the *Catechism*, Ratzinger echoes this point — catechesis aims at living. He says that whoever, "wishes to become a Christian must learn to believe [Creed]. He must, in addition, make his own the Christian way of life [morality]…He also has to be able to pray as a Christian [prayer] and, lastly, he must enter into the mysteries, into the Church's liturgical cult [sacraments]. Initiation into the faith is not the communication of a theory…Initiation into the faith is thus itself a 'mystagogy' preparing the way to Baptism and to the process of conversion, in which we do not merely act ourselves, but rather let God act in us."[232] Catechesis is a testimony of faith that makes faith possible as a way of life for the catechumen.

3.4   An Experiential and Existential Catechesis

For Benedict XVI, catechesis cannot remain a purely intellectual or speculative affair. He says, "In the Church's most ancient tradition, the process of Christian formation always had an experiential character. While not neglecting a systematic understanding of the content of the faith, it centered on a vital and convincing encounter with Christ, as proclaimed by authentic witnesses. It is first and foremost the witness who introduces others to the mysteries. Naturally, this initial encounter gains depth through catechesis and finds its source and summit in the celebration of the Eucharist."[233] Insofar as catechesis introduces a person to a "definite existential orientation," it could be said that catechetical activity introduces and apprentices a person down the experiential path that is Christianity — the Way. As was noted previously, Ratzinger views the catechumenate, and, by extension, all of catechesis, as an integral part of the sacrament of Baptism itself.[234] Ratzinger considers this insight tremendously important:

> On the one hand, it reveals the catechumenate as something quite different from religious instruction as it is generally understood…On the other hand, the sacrament is not just a liturgical act but a process, a long road that demands an individual's whole strength,

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[232] Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 29.
[233] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, §64.
[234] Cf. *CCC*, §1229-32.

mind, will and heart. Here, too, the separation [between catechumenate/catechesis and sacrament] has had disastrous consequences. It has led to a ritualization of the sacrament and a doctrinalization of the word.[235]

Faith is not a theory and revelation is not a list of propositions. Before Christianity acquired its name, it was simply called "the Way," which means it was, and is, fundamentally a *praxis*. It is not a *praxis* devoid of content, but a *praxis* derived from the Paschal Mystery that has concrete implications, including moral implications, on the way in which one lives life. One could liken this to swimming. One cannot simply read about swimming and learn to swim, as if it were possible on his own. Instead, one learns the art of swimming from another who already knows the way and can show that way to the novice. Likewise, catechesis is an "existential training in existence with God."[236]

In an attempt to define experience, Ratzinger follows Aquinas' formulaic summation of the Aristotelean axiom, "There is nothing in the intellect that was not first in the senses." From Aquinas' *Anima forma corporis* ("The soul is the form of the body"), "it follows that the way of human cognition always requires the combination of corporal instrument and spiritual appropriation…All human knowledge must have a sensory structure; it must have its beginning in experience, in the perception of the senses."[237] To this point, Ratzinger adds two "correctives." The first he takes from Ignatius of Loyola and the expression "God is always greater," and "Whatever is discovered to exist, God always transcends it."[238] God is always "more" than any one religious experience, and it is, in fact, the road that experience invites us to embark upon that invites the "constant revision of our experiences."[239] The second "corrective" comes in the Platonic statement: "There is nothing in the senses without the prior action of the intellect" He goes on to say, "The senses experience nothing if no question has been raised, if there is no preceding command from the intellect without which sensory experience cannot take place…it is only when the intellect shines light on sensory experience that this sensory experience has any

[235] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 36.
[236] Ratzinger, "On the Meaning of Faith," 33.
[237] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 344.
[238] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 345.
[239] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 346.

value as knowledge and that experiences thus become possible."[240] Avoiding any bifurcation, Ratzinger roots his understanding of "experience" in the "dynamic link between intellect and senses from which there is constructed a path to deeper knowledge."[241]

Following Jean Mouroux, Ratzinger next identifies various stages of experience.[242] The first stage is "empirical experience," which is the most immediate and uncritical sense perception. "Empirical experience" is uncritical and often inexact, and one which calls for a second stage — "experimental experience." Modern natural sciences have their roots in this stage as the intellect seeks to experiment on perceived reality. However, when it comes to faith, "this stage is not appropriate to what is truly divine or truly human because the condition of experience at this level is, as it were, a putting to death of the object."[243] Heidegger calls the fact that nature is controlled in a scientific experiment a technique named *Ge-stell*, a "set-up," and Brague speaks of how experimentation removes the object's freedom. Kołakowski calls the manner in which natural sciences deal with the object (i.e. nature) a form of necrophilia. Ratzinger comments, "The fact that a similar way of dealing with faith and with God must of necessity lead to a God-is-dead theology need hardly be elaborated here."[244] The third stage, called "experiential" by Mouroux and "existential" by Beinert, makes the case that "the decisive factor is not control but letting oneself be controlled."[245] Balthasar points out that this opens the way for Christian experience, which is the fruit of overcoming one's self-will.[246] Ratzinger concludes:

> To say that God is trinitarian means, in fact, to confess that he is self-transcendence, "unselfishness," and, consequently, that he can be known only in what reflects his own nature. From this there follows an important catechetical conclusion: the being-led to a religious experience, which must start in the place where man finds himself, can yield no

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[240] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 348.
[241] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 348.
[242] See Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 346-ff.
[243] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 349.
[244] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 349.
[245] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 349.
[246] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 349-50.

fruit if it is not, from the beginning, directed to the acquisition of a readiness for renunciation…From the perspective of Christian faith, we might say that religious experience in its most exalted Christian form bears the mark of the Cross…The Cross redeems, it enables us to see.[247]

This last point is essential and ties into what has already been described as the goal of discipleship being pro-existence. The Church's catechetical efforts aim to journey with the person who has been encountered by Christ deeper into this encounter to the point of being ready to renounce his or her very self. Man can only find himself if he is given himself by another, a being-given (being-from) that makes him capable of, indeed, propels him, to give himself to another (being-for). Catechesis becomes that experience of abiding *with*-in the gift-nature of *from — for*. Here, the intimate bonds between catechesis and liturgy become clear as catechesis fosters abiding in the gift of the liturgical act, the act of worship, that comes out to meet man and re-establishes him as a being-from and carries him forward as a being-for.[248]

In light of the brief treatment on Mouroux and experience, Ratzinger identifies three kinds of Christian experience and that catechesis only concerns itself with the first two:[249]

1. "The experience of creation and history, which offers itself to man not only in the range of possibilities that are open to him for transcending the superficial but also as a road leading him to a meeting with the ground of being."
2. "The experience of the Christian community and of Christian individuals, in which the ways of transcending creation and history are opened to man, that is, in which the first type of experience is made ready, intensified and cast in a Christian mold."
3. "From a combination of types one and two, there develops, then, a very personal experience with God in Christ and, finally, the genuinely supernatural experience."

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[247] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 350. To this point, Ratzinger highlights the beatitude "Happy are the pure in heart: they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8).
[248] Cf. Ratzinger, *Introduction to Christianity,* 283.
[249] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 352. Here, we can also site Benedict XVI's "The Ways that Lead to Knowledge of God," 33-35. Following a similar trajectory, Benedict XVI identifies the following as pathways: (1) The beauty of creation, (2) The thirst for the infinite that rests within man — his insatiable desire for happiness, (3) The faith of those who believe.

Far from disregarding the transcendent religious experience Moran and Groome seek to foster in their religious education models, Ratzinger highlights its value as a transcendent experience of beauty within creation and history that lead beyond to the truth of being. However, the Christian experience — the experience of the community in life and in worship (i.e. the pilgrim fellowship that familiarizes one with the lifestyle that is Christianity[250]), which is the experience of mutual support as a force that sustains life,[251] becomes a second-hand source of faith, "a light for others."[252] This second-hand faith carries the new believer to "first-hand" experience of encountering Another person outside of oneself who comes into oneself, an experience that, in this life, is a mere foretaste of what is to come.[253] The community, and in particular, the "saint," provoke the religious sense of the catechumen (no. 1 in the list above) to its end by allowing what has been awakened by creation and history to touch its aim, and in touching it, to be led deeper into that same first-hand experience of the saint. This is why, "in the Church's most ancient tradition, the process of Christian formation always had an experiential character…centered on a vital and convincing encounter with Christ, as proclaimed by authentic witnesses. It is first and foremost the witness who introduces others to the mysteries."[254] At this point, the present study will have to touch on both the role of community and the role of the catechist-as-witness. However, before doing so, a deeper explanation of what Ratzinger means by the "experiential" nature of catechesis is in order.

In order to illustrate the points taken from Mouroux, and to make a catechetical connection, Ratzinger turns to the account of the woman at the well (Jn. 4:4-42). In the woman's initial interaction with Jesus, Ratzinger sees an example of the "empirical" experience. What appears to be at stake here is a drink of water (H_2O). The "empirical" experience is transcended when the conversation leads her to become aware of her "elemental thirst," her desire for life. However, her understanding remains on the biological, or "experimental" level. She desires something of a fountain of youth, some physical water source that will allow her to live forever

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[250] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 57, 59.
[251] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 351.
[252] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 351.
[253] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 352.
[254] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §64.

and to be satisfied on earth. However, in the next stage, the "experiential" stage, the woman "no longer asks for *something,* for water or for any other single thing, but for life, for herself,"[255] as she says, "Sir, give me this water, so that I may not be thirsty or have to keep coming here to draw water" (Jn. 4:15). To this, Jesus says, "Go and call your husband" (Jn. 4:16). This, Ratzinger says, is both "intentional and necessary":

> For her life as a whole, with all its thirst, is the true subject here. As a result, there comes to light the real dilemma, the deep seated waywardness, of her existence: she is brought face to face with herself…a new transition has occurred — to preserve our earlier terminology, a transition from empirical and experimental to "experiential" experience, to "existential experience." The woman now stands face to face with herself. It is no longer a question now of *something* but of the depths of the *I* itself and, consequently, of the radical poverty that is man's I-myself, the place where this *I* is ultimately revealed behind the superficiality of the *something*. From this perspective, we might regard the conversation between Jesus and the Samaritan woman as the prototype of catechesis. It must lead from the *something* to the *I*. Beyond every *something* it must ensure the involvement of man himself, of *this* particular man. It must produce self-knowledge, and self-acknowledgement so that the indigence and need of man's being will be evident.[256]

Jesus leads the woman from the ordinary and somewhat superficial, deeper into the depths of her being, into the depths of her desire, to a place of truth. She has to admit the truth of her desire for satisfaction — her desire for love in truth. She is at stake here, her very identity is at stake. The surrender of her longing to Jesus allows her, experientially, to use Mouroux's language, to be led by, to be "controlled" by Christ. He leads her to confront the truth about herself and her feeble attempts to slake her thirst in her various love-affairs. The woman becomes aware of her waywardness, and in this way, aware of her real need.

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[255] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 353.
[256] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 353-54.

In her openness to being led by Christ, the woman finds herself in adoration. Ratzinger identifies this with her question in Jn. 4:20, saying, "It is only apparently without motivation but in reality inevitable that the woman should ask now: How do things stand with regard to adoration, that is, with regard to God and my relationship to him."[257] A catechetical process that has Christ as its anthropological anchor leads the person to adoration, where one "sees" the truth of him or herself, the depths of one's own being. Here, in a humble posture of adoration laden with one's neediness, the spiritual life, "a relationship and communion with God,"[258] is established. Ratzinger says, "Only at this point does the offering of Jesus' true gift become possible. For the 'gift of God' is God himself, God precisely as gift — that is, the Holy Spirit (cf. verses 10 and 24)."[259] Jesus leads the woman to the depths of her thirst wherein she becomes aware of the real thirst that drives her, and learns receive that which satisfies her thirst. Catechesis aims at "exposing the *I*, so that it lets the masks fall and moves out of the realm of something into that of being. Its goal is *conversio*, that conversion of man that results in his standing face to face with himself."[260] Catechesis results in what Ratzinger calls "the question of all questions: How can I worship God?"[261] The answer: in Spirit and in truth. Catechesis aims at revealing the truth of the person to the person himself in its testimony of Jesus Christ, that the catechumen might open to the gift of God that is the Holy Spirit, and in this way, enter into his identity as a son in the Son and into that which he was created for: worship.[262] Elsewhere, Ratzinger says, "*Christian preaching is not the presentation of a doctrinal system but, rather, training in Christian reality, the crystallization point of which is the eucharistic celebration.*"[263] In other words, the content of catechesis, the act of catechizing, and experiential nature of catechesis aim at discipleship — the very personal experience with God in Christ and, finally, the genuinely supernatural experience.

Catechesis, in this light, consists of entering into the way of Jesus' prayer, and, being-with Jesus in his prayer, then, is essentially a healing process. As a way of further describing this

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[257] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 354.
[258] John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992), §45.
[259] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 354.
[260] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 355. Emphasis mine.
[261] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology*, 355.
[262] For an additional perspective on worship, especially as it pertains to leisure and living a full human existence, see Josef Pieper, *Leisure the Basis of Culture,* trans. Alexander Dru (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2009), 65-74.
[263] Ratzinger, "Christocentrism in Preaching?," 51. Emphasis in original.

process that takes place as a participation in the prayer of Jesus, the *exitus* and *reditus* can again provide clarity. Rather than the non-Christian thought that mankind marked a fall from the infinite (*exitus*), Christianity reconfigures the word into something thoroughly positive. As has already been established, *exitus* has nothing to do, first and foremost, with man, but with God. *Exitus* is the Creator's thoroughly positive and free act of creating that is ordered to the *reditus* as its own free act on the part of the creature. Sin is the breaking away from the pattern, in freedom, the rejection of being-from (the Creator's positive *exitus*) as the supreme attempt of the individual to establish his or her autonomy. One no longer desires to return (*reditus*) because one no longer accepts the *exitus*. In this way, the person rejects the fundamental movement of his or her life. Here, Ratzinger points out the redemptive quality of worship, and therefore the manner in which the Resurrection can come to touch one's life in the here and now through worship:

> If "sacrifice" in its essence is simply returning to love and therefore divination, worship now has a new aspect: the healing of wounded freedom, atonement, purification, deliverance from estrangement. The essence of worship, of sacrifice — the process of assimilation, of growth in love, and thus the way into freedom — remains unchanged. But now it assumes the aspect of healing, the loving transformation of broken freedom, of painful expiation. Worship is directed to the Other in himself, to his all-sufficiency, but now it refers itself to the Other who alone can extricate me from the knot that I myself cannot untie.[264]

Being-with Christ in his prayer means entering into his complete, the total handing over of himself in love to the Father. Ratzinger notes that "It means emerging from the state of separation, of apparent autonomy, of existing only for oneself and in oneself…That is why St. Augustine could say that the true 'sacrifice' is the *civitas Dei,* that is, love-transformed mankind, the divinization of creation and the surrender of all things to God: God all in all (cf. 1 Cor. 15:28). That is the purpose of the world. That is the essence of sacrifice and worship…the goal of worship and the goal of creation as a whole are one and the same."[265]

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[264] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, 33.
[265] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* 28.

Here, the present study has come face-to-face with the concept of *logikē latreia*. St. Paul takes up this reality of "worship and sacrifice with spirit and mind,"[266] or worship in "accordance with *logos*,"[267] *in* Rom. 12:1, and it becomes central to Ratzinger's understanding of entering into Jesus' prayer in the Eucharist. Ancient cults saw prayer as the "word" that is sacrifice, which goes from man to God embodying the whole of man "and enabling him to become 'word' (*logos*) in himself. It is man, conforming himself to *logos* and becoming *logos* through faith."[268] Israel's exile generated the notion of *logikē latreia,* as Temple worship was no longer possible and the importance of the word of prayer entered into the concept of sacrifice. The Old Testament still expected the restoration of the Temple that a sacrifice according to Hellenistic logos-mysticism simply could not satisfy. The Incarnation of *Logos* in Jesus Christ bridges the gap, for:

> When that happens, the Logos is more than just the 'Meaning' behind and above things. Now he himself has entered into flesh, has become bodily…The Word is no longer just the representation of something else, of what is bodily. In Jesus' self-surrender on the Cross, the Word is united with the entire reality of human life and suffering. There is no longer a replacement cult. Now the vicarious sacrifice of Jesus takes us up and leads us into that likeness with God, that transformation into love, which is the only true adoration.[269]

In the next stage of development, the Fathers of the Church see the Eucharist "as essentially *oratio,* sacrifice in the Word…The Fathers call the Eucharist simply 'prayer,' that is, the sacrifice of the Word."[270] The Eucharist overcomes the gap that still existed in the Old Testament movement toward worship according to the *Logos,* which does not replace man, but, as a

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[266] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* 45. For more on *logikē latreia,* see Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §70; Joseph Ratzinger, "The Image of the World and of Human Beings in the Liturgy and Its Expression in Church Music," in *A New Song for the Lord,* trans. Martha M. Matesich (New York: The Crossroad Publishing Company, 1996), 152; Joseph Ratzinger, "Eucharist and Mission," 114-18.

[267] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* 50.

[268] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 46.

[269] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 46.

[270] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 46.

vicarious sacrifice (*Stellvertretung*), "takes up into itself those whom it represents; it is not external to them [as animal sacrifices were], but a shaping influence on them."[271] Ratzinger frequently quotes Augustine on this point, who stresses the nature of the food of the Eucharist as that which is stronger than man. Typically, when human beings eat, they take food into themselves and transform that food into themselves, so to speak. In the Eucharist, the opposite is true. When one feeds on the Eucharist, the Eucharist transforms the person into itself.[272] This leads Ratzinger to conclude that entering into Jesus' prayer, and becoming "contemporary with the Pasch of Christ in the liturgy of the Church is also, in fact, an anthropological reality. The celebration is not just a rite, not just a liturgical 'game.' It is meant to be indeed a *logikē latreia*, the 'logicizing' of my existence, my interior contemporaneity with the self-giving of Christ."[273] In *Sacramentum Caritatis,* Benedict XVI echoes his point from *The Spirit of the Liturgy*, noting how the Eucharist "logicizes" and transfigures every part of a person's life, saying:

> Christians, in all their actions, are called to offer true worship to God. Here the intrinsically eucharistic nature of Christian life begins to take shape. The Eucharist, since it embraces the concrete, everyday existence of the believer, makes possible, day by day, the progressive transfiguration of all those called by grace to reflect the image of the Son of God (cf. Rom 8:29ff.). There is nothing authentically human – our thoughts and affections, our words and deeds – that does not find in the sacrament of the Eucharist the form it needs to be lived to the full. Here we can see the full human import of the radical newness brought by Christ in the Eucharist: the worship of God in our lives cannot be relegated to something private and individual, but tends by its nature to permeate every aspect of our existence. Worship pleasing to God thus becomes a new way of living our whole life.[274]

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[271] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 57-58.

[272] For example, see *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §70. For more on the Eucharist as a sacrament of "transformations," see Joseph Ratzinger, "Eucharist—Communio—Solidarity," in *Joseph Ratzinger Collected Works: Theology of the Liturgy, Vol. 11,* trans. Michael J. Miller (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014), 368-70. Cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §13.

[273] Ratzinger, *The Spirit of the Liturgy,* 58.

[274] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §71.

In the "logic" of the Eucharist, persons no longer stand beside each other, "but become one with and one in the one Body and in the one living Christ."[275] Discipleship, or, communion with Christ as *logikē latreia*, as Eucharistic communion with Christ (Eucharist), always contains a social dimension. As Ratzinger says, "Fellowship in the body of Christ and in receiving the Body of Christ means fellowship with one another. This of its very nature includes mutual acceptance, giving and receiving on both sides, and readiness to share one's goods."[276] Elsewhere, Ratzinger says "The goal of the Eucharist is the transformation of those who receive it in authentic communion with his [Christ's] transformation. And so the goal is unity, that we, instead of being separated individuals who live alongside or in conflict with one another, might become, with Christ and in him, one organism of self-giving and might live unto the resurrection and the new world."[277] Perhaps the Samaritan woman's re-entry into society is a sign that this healing of love had taken place and was taking place. Being Christian is loving as the Father loves (perfect being-for) as manifest in Jesus Christ, but this perfect love is not attainable for man on his own. He stands in need in the midst of his shortfall, and faith is admitting one's need in the midst of his isolating habits, and the about-face and entry into the open existence of the Son. Hence, "being a Christian is in reality nothing other than partaking in the mystery of the Incarnation, or, to use Saint Paul's expression: the Church, insofar as she is the Church, is the 'body of Christ.'"[278]

The Church's "being-with" in her catechetical ministry that leads the catechumen into *communio* through Baptism and ultimately into the *communio* of the Eucharist, a *communio* that builds up the "single brotherhood" of the Church, at this point transitions into being-for. Reflecting on the Eucharist and pro-existence, Benedict XVI says:

> Recent theology has rightly underlined the use of the word "for" in all four accounts [of the Last Supper], a word that may be considered the key not only to the Last Supper accounts, but to the figure of Jesus overall. His entire being is expressed by the word

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[275] Ratzinger, "Eucharist and Mission," 118.
[276] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 69.
[277] Ratzinger, "Eucharist—Communio—Solidarity," 370.
[278] Joseph Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 77. Cf. Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* §14.

"pro-existence" — he is there, not for himself, but for others. This is not merely a dimension of his existence, but its innermost essence and its entirety. His very being is a "being-for." If we are able to grasp this, then we have truly come close to the mystery of Jesus, *and we have understood what discipleship is*.[279]

As if it were not already clear enough, here, the being-with of the person, the disciple that was made possible by the Church's being-from, being-for, and being-with, leads the disciple to become a being-for. Being encountered (being-from) by Jesus' prayer in the concrete *communio* of the Church and vaulted on the path of discipleship (being-with), means being led into the heart of the liturgical act whereby, in its highest expression in the Mass, Jesus Christ gives himself as a sacrifice of love to the Father. Jesus, who is entirely "from," gives himself over to the Father in love — he is entirely "for" the Father. Catechesis means the Church, incarnating the being-with of the Holy Spirit, is also being-with the disciple, the catechumen, and leading him into this Mystery of Jesus' "for" — a participation that human persons cannot accomplish on their own, but can only participate in through the free self-offering in the Son's "for." Entering into Christ's prayer, into his sacrifice, is worship, which, according to Plato, "is entirely concerned with the wholeness and the healing of love."[280] The Incarnation marks the communion between God and man, a perfect reconciliation that had once seemed impossible, which gives Plato's understanding of worship a new meaning. Plato spoke, not about God, but about the gods and about the notion of divinity. In Jesus, a new event occurs, "the one God entering into concrete communion with men by incarnating himself in human nature…[which] is at the same time the reconciliation, atonement, and fellowship (communion) of those who hitherto were set in opposition to one another — Jews and Gentiles."[281] The Eucharist is the beating heart of the Church, constantly healing her broken and inferior love, and existing as a "channel open from the man Jesus to the people who are his 'members,' themselves becoming a Eucharist and thereby themselves a 'heart' and a 'love' for the Church."[282] The Eucharist stands as "the mystical heart" of Christian mission, which prevents that mission from devolving into

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[279] Benedict XVI, *Jesus of Nazareth: Holy Week,* 134, emphasis mine.
[280] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 76.
[281] Ratzinger, "Communion: Eucharist—Fellowship—Mission," 76.
[282] Ratzinger, "Eucharist and Mission," 122.

propaganda-pushing, or power-plays,[283] by providing a concrete, sacramental basis, that involves "being united in a concrete sense with the Body of Christ, which was sacrificed and is living eternally in the Resurrection…Thus, the missionary work of the Apostle does not exist alongside the liturgy; rather, both constitute a living whole with several dimensions."[284]

The deeply liturgical trajectory of catechesis leads Benedict XVI to say, "This basic structure of the Christian experience calls for a process of mystagogy."[285] Because catechesis, as initiation into the faith, is always a process of conversion and a preparation for the Sacraments of Initiation, and because all catechesis has as its model the Baptismal catechumenate,[286] catechesis always follows a mystagogical trajectory.[287] In *Sacramentum Caritatis,* Benedict XVI identifies three elements that must be respected within this mystagogical trajectory:[288]

1. "It interprets the rites in the light of the events of our salvation, in accordance with the Church's living tradition. The celebration of the Eucharist, in its infinite richness, makes constant reference to salvation history. In Christ crucified and risen, we truly celebrate the one who has united all things in himself (cf. Eph 1:10). From the beginning, the Christian community has interpreted the events of Jesus' life, and the Paschal Mystery in particular, in relation to the entire history of the Old Testament."[289] Noting that liturgy is the privileged place for proclamation, *Verbum Domini* calls for (1) the biblical formation of Christians,[290] (2) catechesis that helps believers to realize the ways in which salvation history is part of their lives,[291] and (3) adequate preparation for hearing the word proclaimed in the liturgy.[292] To this final

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[283] Ratzinger, "Eucharist and Mission," 121.
[284] Ratzinger, "Eucharist and Mission," 120.
[285] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, §64.
[286] See *General Directory for Catechesis*, §59.
[287] See Ratzinger, *Introduction to the Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 29.
[288] For more on this paragraph in *Sacramentum Caritatis*, see Raymond Cardinal Burke, *Divine Love Made Flesh* (San Diego, CA: Catholic Action for Faith and Family, 2012) and James Pauley, "Catechetical Mystagogy: Pope Benedict XVI on 'Mystagogical Catechesis," 14-15.
[289] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis*, §64.
[290] Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, §75.
[291] Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini*, §74.
[292] Benedict XVI, *Verbum Domini,* §72.

point, one might that Benedict XVI places a particular emphasis on the practice of *lectio divina* in *Verbum Domini,* §86-87.

2. "A mystagogical catechesis must also be concerned with presenting the meaning of the signs contained in the rites. This is particularly important in a highly technological age like our own, which risks losing the ability to appreciate signs and symbols. More than simply conveying information, a mystagogical catechesis should be capable of making the faithful more sensitive to the language of signs and gestures which, together with the word, make up the rite."[293] Particularly in an age that is ironically highly "hands on" and "connected" and yet so inundated by media and so individualized through technology, this aspect cannot be emphasized enough. Again, Gerard O'Shea, in his approach to catechesis through the Trinitarian anthropology laid out by Sophia Calvalletti, has become a champion of this mystagogical approach that moves from the body/senses to the heart, and finally to the intellect.[294]

3. "Finally, a mystagogical catechesis must be concerned with bringing out the significance of the rites for the Christian life in all its dimensions – work and responsibility, thoughts and emotions, activity and repose. Part of the mystagogical process is to demonstrate how the mysteries celebrated in the rite are linked to the missionary responsibility of the faithful."[295] This point links directly with the aim of catechesis as the perpetual "being-with" stage of discipleship that prepares the disciple for, and enables the disciple to be sent (i.e. being-for).

3.5   *The Catechist and the Need for Pilgrim Fellowship*

Repeatedly, Ratzinger returns to the indispensable role of the catechist as a witness for catechesis.[296] Given the fact that the catechist is necessarily an evangelist due to catechesis

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[293] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §64.

[294] See O'Shea, "Human Embodiment and Trinitarian Anthropology — Six Implications for Religious Education," 455-66.

[295] Benedict XVI, *Sacramentum Caritatis,* §64.

[296] Similarly, the *General Directory for Catechesis,* §156 calls the catechist the "soul of every method." It says, "No methodology, no matter how well tested, can dispense with the person of the catechist in every phase of the catechetical process. The charism given to him by the Spirit, a solid spirituality and transparent witness of life, constitutes the soul of every method. Only his own human and Christian qualities guarantee a good use of texts and

operating within evangelization, this point is largely akin to what was said above regarding the witness and pro-existence within missionary proclamation, Ratzinger says, "Only conviction convinces, and it still does today. And so I would say that the first prerequisite for effective instruction in the faith is the catechist's own living faith, which also enables him to find ways to communicate his conviction to others."[297] Here, Ratzinger ties together the relationship between witness and method. The witness, the catechist who is personally convinced of the faith through his own encounter with Jesus Christ and who is participating in Jesus' being-for, will strive with Christ, in the Spirit, to find new ways to communicate the Gospel to others. On this point, in his 1983 address, Ratzinger makes a point that might be surprising for some when he noted that the *Roman Catechism*, for its part, not only ensured the indispensable identity of the faith-content (the *fidei depositum*), but, by making a distinction between text and commentary, between the "text of the proclamation of the faith" and the "spoken or written text by which it is imparted," it promoted "the necessary freedom of the catechist in responding to various situations."[298] In short, preserving the content (*fidei* depositum) does not mean the dismantling of the personality and person of the catechist, but, in fact, highlights the importance of the human person and maintains the primacy of the person over the program. Somewhat remarkably, perhaps, Ratzinger notes that the *Roman Catechism* of the 16th century was aware of the problem of catechetical methodology, that much depends upon the mode of presentation. Ratzinger says:

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other work instruments. The catechist is essentially a mediator. He facilitates communication between the people and the mystery of God, between subjects amongst themselves, as well as with the community." See also James Pauley, *Liturgical Catechesis for the 21st Century* (Chicago, IL: Liturgical Training Publications, 2017), 23-24. Pauley says, "Reaching out from our own intimate friendship with God, catechists teach others, helping them perceive the call to life in Christ. This understanding of the catechists mediatorial presence is provocative and worthy of any catechists deeper reflection." St. Augustine captures this "mediatorial" reality in a sermon on St. John the Baptist: "John is the voice, but the Lord *is the Word who was in the beginning*…Take away the word, the meaning, and what is the voice? Where there is no understanding, there is only a meaningless sound. The voice without the word strikes the ear but does not build up the heart…In my search for a way to let this message reach you, so that the word already in my heart may find place also in yours, I use my voice to speak to you. The sound of my voice brings the meaning of the word to you and then passes away. The word which the sound has brought to you is now in your heart, and yet it is still also in mine…The sound of the voice has made itself heard in the service of the word, and has gone away, as though it were saying: *My joy is complete*. Let us hold on to the word; we must not lose the word conceived inwardly in our hearts" (Augustine of Hippo, *Sermo 293,3: PL 1328-1329,* as quoted in *The Liturgy of the Hours, Vol. I: Advent Season, Christmas Season* (New York: Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 1975), 261). See also Francis D. Kelly, *The Mystery We Proclaim* (Huntington, IN: Our Sunday Visitor, 1999), 138; Sofia Cavallettii, *The Religious Potential of the Child* (Chicago: Catechesis of the Good Shepherd Publication, 1992), 48-52.

[297] Ratzinger, "Difficulties in Teaching the Faith Today," 66. See also a similar reference on 68.

[298] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 39.

One must carefully study the age, intellectual ability, way of life, and social situation of the listeners, so as to really become all things to all men. The catechist must know who needs milk and who needs solid food, and he should adapts his teaching to the ability of the listeners who absorb it. The biggest surprise for us, however, may be the fact that this catechism allows the catechist much more freedom than contemporary catechetics, generally speaking, is inclined to do.[299]

In a similar fashion, far from demanding particular methods, or overrunning the person of the catechist and the importance of community in the process of catechesis, the *Catechism* flowing from Vatican II encourages and ennobles each of these:

By design, this Catechism does not set out to provide the adaptation of doctrinal presentations and catechetical methods required by the differences of culture, age, spiritual maturity, and social and ecclesial condition among all those to whom it is addressed. Such indispensable adaptations are the responsibility of particular catechisms and, even more, of those who instruct the faithful.[300]

The *Catechism* goes on in §24 to quote the portion of the *Roman Catechism* that reminds catechists that "those who are called to the ministry of preaching must suit their words to the maturity and understanding of their hearers." While the *Catechism* appeals to the "interior teacher," the Holy Spirit, "the *Catechism* needs the exterior teacher, the catechist, as well as the companionship of the communion of disciples. Without the living words of the catechist…the book remains dumb."[301] Ratzinger thus concludes that at the origin of every new catechetical endeavor, you find the person of the catechist for whom "the Church has ceased to be something external for him but has 'awakened in his soul,'" and who can "with his dynamic of faith, retransform the letter into a living voice. He will face contradiction, but above all, he will evoke the joy that comes from meeting Jesus."[302]

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[299] Ratzinger, "Handing on the Faith and the Sources of the Faith," 38.
[300] *CCC* §24.
[301] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis, Catechism," 59.
[302] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 59.

As for the need for pilgrim fellowship, a "communion of disciples," Ratzinger notes the breakdown in the traditional social structures for catechesis: the family and the parish. In a 1983 interview, Ratzinger notes that catechesis requires a community of believers, and "the fact that the family, albeit the basic unit of such a living faith community, often no longer performs this service nowadays makes it all the more the responsibility of the parish to offer such opportunities for shared faith."[303] By 1992, Ratzinger adds that "parish communities are not yet sufficiently prepared for their new responsibility which has arisen from the overall failure of the family as bearer of the faith tradition."[304] What can be done? Ratzinger starkly notes that the efficacy of the new evangelization depends upon establishing, once again, whether in homes, at the parish, through ecclesial movements, etc., "a community in which faith lives and in which its word can therefore be experienced as living, life-giving word."[305]

4. Conclusion

By way of conclusion, one can see that Ratzinger himself does not provide an extensive, detailed treatise on a methodology for evangelization and catechesis. Instead, he willingly admits this has not been his role. In order to grasp how Ratzinger's thought might provide something of a theoretical framework for a vision for evangelization and for a method suitable for today, one must begin from Ratzinger's starting point in the revelation of the *Logos,* as accessed through the Church and her tradition, and follow the logic therein. The personal nature of this revelation provides anthropological "keys" that shape the whole of what could be called Ratzinger's vision for evangelization. These keys are captured in the words being-from, being-with, and being-for, which he also uses to describe the persons in the Trinity. The Church's approach to evangelization is, therefore, Trinitarian and personal at its core. As has become clear, a *perichoresis* exists between the realities of being-from, being-for, and being-with — examining one only serves to bring into sharper focus the unity of them all.

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[303] Ratzinger, "Difficulties in Teaching the Faith Today," 67.

[304] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 44.

[305] Ratzinger, "Christ and the Church," 44. Ratzinger, no doubt, sees the increase of ecclesial movements as a possible response to this need for community. For more on his understanding of these movements, see *The Ratzinger Report,* 42-44 and "Church Movements and Their Place in Theology," 176-208.

In many ways, the present chapter and previous chapter must be held together. In Ch. 3, this study attempted to show how, according to the pattern of theological anthropology, encounter moves into discipleship, the height of which is the healing of love and that ability to announce the Gospel to others "as the message of truth." Only when this happens, only when one believes and is transformed by belief *to the point of announcing this truth to others*, does evangelization happen. Ratzinger himself captures this in his reflection upon Paul's line, "The Son of God…loved me and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20), when he says:

> Christ walked his path for me. This certainty is a grace given to accompany me in all the stages of my life, in my successes and failures, in my hopes and my suffering. He did all that he did for me and for every man who crosses my path in life: Jesus loved him, too, and gave himself up for him, just as he loved and loves me still. When we have learned to believe this again, when we are able to announce it to others as the message of truth, evangelization takes place. Then we know that the kingdom of God is near. And this knowledge gives us the strength to live and act out of this nearness.[306]

Consequently, Ch. 4 attempted to trace, again following the cues laid out in theological anthropology, a deeply personal approach to evangelization and catechesis — a method that adequately serves both the content (Trinitarian life of *communio*) and the goal of its transmission (discipleship).

Ratzinger's vision for evangelization proceeds according to the Trinitarian pattern manifest in a theological anthropology according to the revelation of the *Logos* in the person of Jesus Christ. For Ratzinger, methods of evangelization and catechesis must follow the Trinitarian pattern of being-from, being-with, and being-for in order to faithfully serve and transmit the content of her mission and to evangelize in accord who the disciple is. Evangelization seeks to communicate the *Logos* of God in the person of Jesus Christ as "glad tidings" and to "logify" human persons, and it does so according to the logic inscribed in theological anthropology. In

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[306] Ratzinger, "Evangelization, Catechesis and Catechism," 71.

other words, Ratzinger's approach to evangelization is marked by Trinitarian personalism and serves as a guide for how the Church can faithfully communicate the Gospel today. Hence, for Ratzinger, evangelization does not only consist of communicating information about God and the human person, but initiates one into the Way, into the life of discipleship marked by being-from, being-with, and being-for. In short, Ratzinger's method for evangelization is shot through with the *Logos*. His methodology for approaching evangelization proceeds according to the personalism of the *Logos* itself, as determined by the Trinitarian pattern. Evangelization must proceed anthropologically. Or, said another way, the personal nature of the revelation of the *Logos* of God in Jesus Christ, establishes an anthropological pattern by which evangelization proceeds.

Conclusion: An Attempt at a Synthesis and Two Implications for the Formation of Those Entrusted with Evangelization

1.   An Attempt at a Synthesis

From the outset, this study has attempted to consider Ratzinger's vision for evangelization, as it has become apparent in the decades following Vatican II — an era that witnessed the collapse of the modern project and the advent of the postmodern era. Both Ratzinger and Rahner react to Neo-scholasticism and attempt to take the "Heideggerian Problematic" seriously by exploring the relationship between ontology and history. Though in agreement on "many desires and conclusions," Ratzinger admits that "Rahner and I lived on two different theological planets."[1] As becomes clear, the Rahnerian trajectory characterized by Balthasar and Nichols as "vulgarised Rahnerianism" and expressed in different ways in the work of Moran, Groome, and Boeve, stands in stark contrast to the path marked out by Ratzinger.

The Rahnerian trajectory, as identified in the work of Moran, Groome, and Boeve, tends to collapse ontology into history, being into time, and truth into freedom. The reduction of being to time, as expressed in correlation positions like Moran's "ongoing revelation," stands as a myopia that only considers the present and/or the future, and risks vacating the tradition and content of the faith altogether. The outworking of this fundamental theology in the areas of evangelization and catechetics, ultimately results in mission proving to be unnecessary, as one is always already a Christian by the nature of being human, whether or not he realizes it (Anonymous Christianity!). The same is true in the case of Boeve's postmodern recontextualization. Christianity ought no longer present itself as a metanarrative of Love, as this could be seen as hegemonic and a betrayal of *le différend*. Instead, evangelization stands to present Christianity as an open narrative — open to being challenged and to challenge other closed narratives. Boeve criticizes Ratzinger's position vis-à-vis the issue of secularism, or otherwise put, within the postmodern "condition." According to Rowland, Boeve summarizes the current theological "options" within this confrontation as (1) correlation (the project of Rahner,

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[1] Ratzinger, *Milestones*, 128.

Schillebeeckx, Küng, and Tracy), (2) the critical stance toward secularism in the positions of *Communio* and Radical Orthodoxy, and (3) Boeve's project of recontextualization according to interruption.[2] Boeve claims that in Ratzinger:

> It is not dialogue with the world that one should expect to find on the theological agenda, but rather conversion of a world characterized by the absence of faith and declining values. The current context, certainly the European context, has alienated itself to such a degree from the Christian faith that an emphasis on the Christian alternative as a rupture with the world is the only approach that can claim legitimacy.[3]

Boeve ultimately holds that Ratzinger's stance toward postmodernism is marked more by opposition and discontinuity, and one that wants to retreat always into the pure form of the faith found in the Tradition. While Ratzinger may hold that "the world," in his mind refers to that part of humanity that does not know Jesus Christ, "he is not at all opposed to the idea of representatives of the Catholic faith, theologians, teachers, priests, etc. entering into conversations and relationships with such persons."[4] But the purpose of the dialogue must be moving toward conversion. If one starts with, as Boeve does, the current philosophical climate anemic to the possibility of a metanarrative, then Ratzinger's position must look like one that discontinues traversing alongside the present milieu. According to Boeve's position, evangelization can be nothing more than Christianity as an open narrative, i.e., open to being interrupted and interrupting. This appears to make Christianity more appealing within a postmodern context, however, in doing so, the central content of the faith (i.e. its potency), even if not abandoned altogether, is mitigated.

Ratzinger rejects the reduction of being to time, and also "rejects the proposition that history or culture itself constitutes the Tradition."[5] He does, however, believe in an organic development of tradition, whereby the Church's memory becomes more aware of itself. Rowland

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[2] See Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 163.
[3] Boeve, *God Interrupts History,* 6. As quoted in Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 163.
[4] Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 163.
[5] Rowland, *Catholic Theology,* 164.

points out that Ratzinger emphasizes "'the seat of all faith is the *memoria Ecclesiae*'…He believes that 'there can be a waxing or waning, a forgetting or remembering, but no recasting of truth in time…the decisive question for today is whether that memory can continue to exist through which the Church becomes Christ and without which she sinks into nothingness.'"[6] Therefore, from Ratzinger's perspective, theologians like Boeve run the risk of discontinuity — stepping away from the tradition — and of abandoning the mission of the Church in rejecting Christianity as *the* metanarrative in light of the view that there can be no metannarative. The very trust which the Church has received is at stake (cf. 2 Tim. 1:12-14), and in some ways has been compromised. Rowland comments to this effect, saying:

> Members of the millennial generation find themselves in a situation where they have rarely experienced a fully functional Catholic culture. To find out about Christianity, especially the Catholic version of it, they watch documentaries and movies, they interrogate older Catholics, they google information about the saints, liturgies and cultural practices. The cultural capital that should follow as a natural endowment upon their baptism, has been frittered away, buried and in some cases even deliberately suppressed by previous generations. They are like archeologists. They discover fragments of the faith which they find attractive and then they try to figure out where the fragment once fitted into a Catholic frame of mind.[7]

With this reflection, Rowland captures the situation that can result from a "vulgarised Rahnerianism" in the realm of catechetics.

This thesis argues Ratzinger's starting point is always the faith of the Church, the *memoria Ecclesiae,* and the belief in the ontological event of the *Logos* taking flesh. This stands as his starting point for evangelization as well. How can one speak about God today? In a certain sense, one speaks about God in the same way in which the Church has spoken about God

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[6] Tracey Rowland, "The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the Culture of the Incarnation," (conference paper, Speaking the Truth in Love Conference, Steubenville, OH, October 2017). Quotation from Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 23.

[7] Tracey Rowland, "The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* and the Culture of the Incarnation."

throughout the ages: because God has spoken to man most fully in the Word incarnate, man can communicate about God. Evangelization means communicating about God according to the mode, the pattern revealed and established by God.[8] God's own method is a method of humility. In Jesus Christ, *logos* is revealed not as some distant and eternal reason, outside of time and opposed to freedom, but as person, love, and freedom. The *logos* does not stand entirely outside of time, but neither is *Logos* reduced to time. Instead, in Jesus Christ, *Logos* has entered into the fullness of time, and, therefore, has time. While, for Ratzinger, revelation is the *act* of God's self-disclosure, that requires a receiving-subject, yet always extends beyond (is more than) the testimony provided by the receiving-subject (i.e. the Church in her Scripture and Tradition), it is also the case that the testimony provides a unique and sure access point, guided by the Holy Spirit, wherein one can encounter this Jesus. For Ratzinger, the Church and tradition are not shackles or optional extras to cast aside, nor are they an interpretive grid that can be used retrospectively to render thematic the unthematic. Instead, the faith of the Church proposes Jesus Christ insofar as He has been presented through the ages via the *memoria ecclesiae*. This *memoria* provides access to, and guarantees that, the Jesus of today is the Jesus of yesterday, prays *maranatha* for the coming of Jesus tomorrow (*parousia*) by standing open to the gift of the Holy Spirit.

While Ratzinger is clear that the faith of the Church must shape the content of evangelization and catechesis, he admittedly has less to say regarding methodology. However, in further considering his starting point of the revelation of the *Logos,* one could say that Ratzinger's vision for evangelization proceeds according to the Trinitarian pattern as manifest in a theological anthropology according to the revelation of the *Logos* in the person of Jesus Christ. In other words, *who* is *how*. Who the *Logos* is and has revealed himself to be in Jesus Christ as *communio,* is how *Logos* acts, serves.

According to Ratzinger, the very structure of evangelization itself, in following the *Logos*, is a structure of humility. In his 2000 address to catechists and religion teachers, Ratzinger says, "Large things always begin from the small seed, and the mass movements are

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[8] See Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation;" and Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 42-43.

always ephemeral. In his vision of the evolutionary process, Teilhard de Chardin mentions the "white of the origins" (*le blanc des origines*): The beginning of a new species is invisible and cannot be found by scientific research. The sources are hidden—they are too small. In other words: The large realities begin in humility."[9] Here, Ratzinger is responding to polarizing temptations: the temptation of complacency that says one need not evangelize (confining the Gospel within the small circle of a few), and the temptation "of impatience, the temptation of immediately finding the great success, in finding large numbers."[10] The latter stands of particular concern within efforts toward a "new evangelization" today:

> New evangelization cannot mean: immediately attracting the large masses that have distanced themselves from the Church by using new and more refined methods. No—this is not what new evangelization promises. New evangelization means: never being satisfied with the fact that from the grain of mustard seed, the great tree of the Universal Church grew; never thinking that the fact that different birds may find place among its branches can suffice—rather, it means to dare, once again and with the humility of the small grain, to leave up to God the when and how it will grow (Mark 4:26-29).[11]

Ratzinger's contribution toward a vision of evangelization and catechesis, with specific regard to method, "derives from this structure" of humility.[12] Herein lies *Logos*' lesson for evangelization.

Ratzinger's vision for evangelization, deeply permeated by the revelation of *Logos* as *Love* in Jesus Christ, the Son, proceeds in a manner marked by a Christian personalism. Said another way, his theological anthropology is rooted in "the Son." He says:

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[9] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers." Benedict XVI makes the same point pertaining to the Eucharist in *Light of the World*, 158. Here, he says, "The Eucharist is the place where men can receive the kind of formation from which new things come into being. This is why the great figures who throughout history have really brought about revolutions for good have been the saints who, touched by Christ, have brought new impulses into the world."

[10] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

[11] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

[12] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

The sign of the Son is his communion with the Father. The Son introduces us into the Trinitarian communion, into the circle of eternal love, whose persons are "pure relations," the pure act of giving oneself and of welcome. The Trinitarian plan—visible in the Son, who does not speak in his name—shows the form of life of the true evangelizer—rather, evangelizing is not merely a way of speaking, but a form of living: living in the listening and giving voice to the Father. "He will not speak on his own authority, but whatever he hears he will speak," says the Lord about the Holy Spirit (John 16:13). This Christological and pneumatological form of evangelization is also, at the same time, an ecclesiological form: The Lord and the Spirit build the Church, communicate through the Church. The proclamation of Christ, the proclamation of the Kingdom of God presupposes listening to his voice in the voice of the Church. "Not [*sic*] speak on his own authority" means: to speak in the mission of the Church.[13]

The *Logos*, Jesus Christ, "the Son," reveals Trinitarian *communio*. This Trinitarian life of *communio* reveals the "form of life of the true evangelizer." Evangelization is not a matter of some techniques or propaganda, but a form of life, a way of being and living according to the Trinitarian "pattern": being-form, being-for, being-with. This is the way in which the Church evangelizes. In being-from, she recognizes that her source is in the Lord and constantly seeks to remain with Him. As such, the Church (the evangelist) also hold that, on their own authority or by their own means, they cannot make disciples. Disciples must be borne from prayer — they are the Father's to "make." By being-for, the Church (the evangelist) joins in Jesus Christ's pro-existence, which is to say, she participates in the Father's perfect love. As a being-for, the Church enters into the hell of isolation that results within the world of the individual encumbered by the effects of original and personal sin, and "breaks" death from the inside through an accompanying presence and the Word of the Gospel — the only true word that can bring never-ending joy. In being-with, the Church (the evangelist) joins in the mission of the Holy Spirit, who does not speak in His own name, but who "disappears" in providing the magnifying testimony to Jesus Christ. The Church's ability to carry out this mission according to the method of the Son, as an expression of humility — the evangelist's ability to carry out this mission — is

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[13] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

contingent upon those disciples who have been encountered by Christ (being-from), who have been with Him and who have participated in His prayer (being-with), and who, as such, have allowed and are allowing their being to be transformed with Christ and in Christ as a self-offering (being-for). In other words, this discipleship, "this expropriation of one's person, offering it to Christ for the salvation of men, is the fundamental condition of the true commitment for the Gospel."[14] Therefore, while discovering and attempting new methods for communicating the Gospel is necessary and important, nothing can ultimately replace *the* method — the Cross. Jesus' entire life was "a path toward the cross, ascension toward Jerusalem. Jesus did not redeem the world with beautiful words but with his suffering and his death."[15] Without a "logified" life, without living "in accordance with the *Logos,"* evangelization is impossible. The logic is compelling: *If evangelization is the Church's setting out with and in Christ to transform poverty of every kind, and if setting out with Jesus Christ means setting out according to the pattern established by the revelation of the* Logos *as Son, then evangelization is shaped according to the pattern established by the revelation of the* Logos *as Son.*

A vision for evangelization and catechesis flowing from the *Logos* requires the concrete form of being-from, a being-with, and a being-for. As he often does, Ratzinger turns to the life of a saint to "see" the law of expropriation in action. He claims that the beginning of St. Paul's mission is marked by success that "was not the fruit of great rhetorical art or pastoral prudence; the fruitfulness was tied to the suffering, to the communion in the passion with Christ (see 1 Cor. 2:1-5; 2 Corinthians 11:30; Galatians 4:12-14)."[16] In his November 28, 2012 address, months before his resignation of the papacy, Benedict XVI again examines the life of St. Paul and identifies the following characteristics of this law of expropriation at play in Paul's life:

- "The first real fact, therefore, is that Paul does not speak of a philosophy that he developed, he does not speak of ideas that he found elsewhere or invented, but of a

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[14] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."
[15] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."
[16] Ratzinger, "The New Evangelization: Building the Civilization of Love — Address to Catechists and Religion Teachers."

reality of his life, he speaks of the God who entered his life, he speaks of a real God who is alive, who spoke with him and will speak with us, he speaks of the Crucified and Risen Christ."[17] Paul's starting point is the faith of the Church, the belief in the *Logos* incarnate who died and who has been raised. Paul's starting point is not something he has given himself, rather, he has attached himself to the Son's "being-from."

- "Paul does not seek for himself, he does not want to make a fan club for himself, he does not wish to go down in history as the head of a school of great knowledge, he is not self-seeking; rather, Saint Paul proclaims Christ and wants to gain people for the true and real God."[18] This "disappearing act" of Paul can only come from an emptying of the ego, a deep knowledge of God that comes through listening and a "being-with" Him. In short, Paul lives a life in the Holy Spirit (being-with) and only because he lives life from this place, can he give his life with Christ "for the many."

- Finally, "The Apostle is not satisfied with proclaiming words but expends his whole life in the great work of faith."[19] To recall and expand upon a line quoted earlier: "Paul was effective, not because of brilliant rhetoric and sophisticated strategies, but rather because he exerted himself and left himself vulnerable in the service of the Gospel. The Church even today can convince people only insofar as her ambassadors are ready to let themselves be wounded. Where the readiness to suffer is lacking, so too is the essential evidence of truth on which the Church depends. Her struggle can only ever be the struggle of those who let themselves be poured out: the struggle of martyrs."[20] Therefore, Paul's life and ministry tends toward and attains this "law of expropriation" for the Gospel, the "being-for" that is "the fundamental condition of the true commitment for the Gospel."

As a final word, one can see that Ratzinger's approach and criteria for evangelization and catechesis, indeed, his vision for evangelization on the whole, is shaped by theological

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[17] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 44.
[18] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 44.
[19] Benedict XVI, "How to Speak about God," 45.
[20] Joseph Ratzinger, "The Warrior and the Sufferer," 26.

anthropology: being-from, being-with, and being-for. Removing one of these personal aspects, or taking a myopic view and overemphasizing one at the expense of the others, diminishes the Trinitarian *perichoresis* and distorts evangelization. Humanistic and neo-Marxist trends in theology and catechetics emphasize a humanistic being-for over and above being-from. Said another way, the being-from of the Church's faith, her tradition, tend to be left behind, as one presses into his or her own religious experience fostered by a religious education that aims at practical, political action. Postmodern trends, in some ways, recapture being-from, or at least accept the value of tradition, but only in a limited capacity that cannot stand as a metanarrative. These trends do not allow for a being-for, but instead emphasize being-with as coexistence and open-narrative. Both the modern and postmodern trends within theology and catechetics (and, therefore, in evangelization), are, at least in part, a reaction to the anti-historical approach of Neo-scholasticism and its overemphasis on being-from. Conversely, Ratzinger's approach attempts to overcome the dissonance that results in evangelization and catechesis when one aspect overtakes the others — he attempts to hold all three aspects in their dynamic and creative tension. Only evangelization carried out in the personal mode of the Trinity as revealed by the *Logos*, maintains the personalism due to the content (the Person of Jesus Christ who reveals the Persons of the Trinity) and to the aim (discipleship). Said another way, the revelation of the *Logos* as person, as "who" not "what," when applied to evangelization, means "who" is "how." If method is to serve and faithfully express content, and the content is deeply personal, then the method, in order to serve and faithfully express the content, must be personal. If mission is sharing in the mission of the Trinity, and the Trinity is a *communio* of persons as manifest in the *Logos* Incarnate, then methods pertaining evangelization and catechesis must pattern themselves accordingly. The personal nature of God manifests an anthropological pattern according to the persons of the Trinity as being-from, being-for, and being-with, and evangelization aims at forming disciples who are restored as persons in this anthropological pattern. Therefore, mission must pattern itself accordingly. The revelation of the *Logos,* and the corresponding theological anthropology, provide keys to understanding Ratzinger's vision for evangelization, and offer guiding principles (via a Trinitarian, anthropological pedagogy) for evangelizing methods that must necessarily account for the nuance of geographical area, culture, etc.

2.   Two Implications for the Formation of Those Entrusted with Evangelization

The present study, with its, albeit brief survey of the Rahnerian trajectory and its attempt at synthesizing Ratzinger's vision for evangelization by mining his fundamental theology for clues, certainly opens to a wide array of possible questions and areas of further study. This study cannot sufficiently consider all of the possible implications, and, hence, it will limit itself to the two most pressing pastoral considerations.

2.1   Ratzinger's Theological Anthropology as a "Help" for Further Defining Catechist Formation in the Dimension of Being

The *General Directory for Catechesis* calls for catechist formation in three dimensions: being, knowing, and *savoir-faire* (literally, "to know (how) to," "taking the right action in a certain circumstance").[21] The deepest dimension of formation, which, in a very real sense is the foundation of catechist formation, is the dimension of being. This dimension comprises "his human and Christian dimension" and is to "help him mature as a person, a believer and as an apostle."[22] Formation in the dimension of knowing aims to provide "sufficient knowledge of the

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[21] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §238.

[22] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §238. A fuller explanation of the dimension of being can be found in §239.

message that he transmits and of those to whom he transmits the message,"[23] and leads into *savoir-faire*, "knowing how to transmit the message, so that it is an act of communication."[24]

The *General Directory for Catechesis*[25] calls the dimension of being "the deepest dimension," and it "refers to the very being of the catechist, to his human and Christian dimension."[26] Its aim is to "help him to mature as a person, a believer and as an apostle."[27] However, neither the *General Directory for Catechesis*, nor the Guide for Catechists, offer a precise guide for how to develop these characteristics of human maturity. Instead, both simply

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[23] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §238. The *General Directory for Catechesis* roots the dimension of knowing, when it comes to doctrine, in Scripture and *The Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Bishop Richard J. Malone, in his article "Divine Pedagogy and Doctrinal Formation of Catechists," says, "Doctrinal formation for catechists like catechesis itself must be deeply rooted in the Church's doctrine of divine revelation." He goes on to lay out the basics of this theology as drawn from *Dei Verbum*. See Malone, "Divine Pedagogy and Doctrinal Formation of Catechists," *The Pedagogy of God* (Steubenville, OH: Emmaus Road Publishing, 2011), 87. The connection between divine revelation and catechist formation will be taken up at length in the next chapter. With regard to this formation in the dimension of knowing, Johannes Hofinger challenges formators to keep the end in mind. Speaking specifically about religious sisters being trained as catechists, Hoffinger, reacting to the rigidity of Neo-scholasticism, claims the sisters do not need a background in "scientific" theology, but to construct this formation from the vantage point of their catechetical activity. He does, however, balance this by noting that "she must know more than she teaches" like any good teacher. See Hofinger, "Theological Training for Sisters," *The Art of Teaching Christian Doctrine* (South Bend, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1957, 218-19. See also Emilio Alberich and Jerome Vallabaraj, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms* (Bangalore, India: Kristu Jyoti Publications, 2004), 289; and Carl-Mario Sultana, "Catechists Through Formation not by Default," *Melita Theologica*, 62 (2012), 133-38.

[24] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §238. The extended explanations of the dimension of knowing can be found in §240-43, and in the dimension of *savoir-faire* in §244-45. For more on *savoir-faire*, see Sultana, "Catechists Through Formation not by Default," 138-ff; and Alberich and Vallabaraj, *Communicating a Faith that Transforms*, 289-ff. Ann Garrido provides a challenge when it comes to this type of formation, and calls for a "field education." This is not to deny the need for classroom instruction, but getting out of the classroom and into the field brings *savoir-faire* formation to life. See Garrido, "A Catholic Vision of Theological Field Education," *Seminary Journal,* 16.3 (2010), 30-34.

[25] Absent in the 1971 *General Catechetical Directory* and the 1983 *Code of Canon Law*, which charges bishops with ensuring proper formation for catechists with regard to doctrine and teaching methods, the insertion of the "dimension of being" in the 1997 *General Directory for Catechesis* as an integral part of catechist formation stands as a recent development. Several years prior, the *Guide for Catechists* hinted at what would become the "dimension of being," calling for the whole "being" of the catechist to be an integrated whole: "There cannot be separate parallel lives: a 'spiritual' life with its values and demands, a 'secular' life with its various forms of expression, and an 'apostolic' life with its own requirements" (see the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples, *Guide for Catechists* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1993), *Guide for Catechists,* §20). The *Guide for Catechists* identifies three possible "parallel lives": spiritual, secular, and apostolic. The document calls for a "unity and harmony" that requires the reorientation of parts of a person's nature or personality that have disintegrated. A reorientation of this magnitude is takes place "in the depths of one's soul," where one finds Jesus Christ, the "principle and source of the catechist's identity" (*Guide for Catechists,* §20.) Herein lies the seedbed for the *General Directory for Catechesis* and its call for formation in the dimension of being.

[26] *General Directory for Catechesis,* §238.

[27] *General Directory for Catechesis,* §238. The *Guide for Catechists,* §20 calls these the "secular," "spiritual," and "apostolic" lives of the catechist that must be brought into one.

state the ideal and, only the *Guide for Catechists* indicates explicitly that these characteristics need to be cultivated by formation.[28] The *General Directory for Catechesis* puts forth the "exercise of catechesis" itself, due to its "constant consideration and evaluation," as a means by which the catechist can grow in human maturity.[29] While it is indeed true that growth happens when, in any field, a person carries out an assigned task with due diligence, one must still question exactly how the human formation called for within the dimension of being is to be carried out, what exactly it means, and if it is prudent within the present culture to presume such levels of human maturity within those called to catechize.[30]

The *General Directory for Catechesis'* section on formation in the dimension of being next calls for the nourishment of the catechist's spirituality. Again pointing out that the act of catechizing itself is a form of nourishment that helps the catechist grow as a believer, the *General Directory for Catechesis* explicitly points out that formation in the dimension of being "above all, nourishes the *spirituality* of the catechist, so that his activity springs in truth from his own witness of life…Every theme covered by formation should feed, in the first place, the faith of the catechist."[31] Effective catechesis springs forth from the witness. Therefore, every aspect of formation, should be oriented to the faith-life of the catechist in formation.

Finally, the *General Directory for Catechesis* calls for formation in the dimension of being to nourish "the *apostolic consciousness of the catechist*…his sense of being an evangelizer."[32] Mindful of the fact that catechesis is situated within a process of evangelization as an "essential moment," the catechist, therefore, by his nature, is an evangelist. This apostolic awareness must be fed by "identifying with the figure of Jesus Christ, teacher and formatter of

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[28] This is presumably implied within the *General Directory for Catechesis*.

[29] See *General Directory for Catechesis*, §239.

[30] With regard to the last question, see, for example, Jean Twenge, *iGen* (New York: Atria Books, 2017). This book summarizes the current sociological findings of those born between 1995-2012, the earliest of which have already graduated from college if they followed a traditional route. Of particular relevance are her sections on the following: continued increase in "screen time," (pgs. 49-ff); spending time outside of the house without their parents (pgs. 19-ff); use of leisure time (pgs. 32-ff); decreased face-to-face interaction (pgs. 73-ff); increase in loneliness, depression, and self-harm (pgs. 96-ff); and the claim that youth are in no hurry to grow up, as "Eighteen-year-olds now look like 14-year-olds once did…" (40).

[31] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §239.

[32] *General Directory for Catechesis,* §239.

disciples by seeking to acquire the zeal which Jesus had for the Kingdom."[33] The call of the apostles in the Gospel of Mark (3:13-15) stands as a reminder that one cannot conjure up apostolic zeal on his own. Rather, this comes as a gift from the Lord *who calls the apostles to himself* — by being with the Lord. This "identification" with Jesus is possible by *being* with Jesus. The paragraph also notes that the exercise of catechesis, much like previous points, plays a significant role in fostering the apostolic vocation.[34] It also notes that the concrete evangelization efforts within his or her parish and diocese also serve to form apostolic consciousness in light of the particular concerns and priorities of the local church.

Is there any further guidance for carrying out a formation in the dimension of being? The *General Directory for Catechesis* calls this dimension the "deepest," yet seems to provide little explanation of it, and relatively little guidance for its execution. Juxtaposing the *General Directory for Catechesis'* dimensions of formation (being, knowing, and *savoir-faire*) with other magisterial documents on formation might offer a hermeneutical key for understanding the dimension of being. The *General Directory for Catechesis* ultimately breaks down the dimension of being into a human and a Christian component. Formation in the dimension of knowing centers on the knowledge of content, whether biblio-theological or in the human sciences. This dimension could be likened to an intellectual formation. *Savoir-faire*, the final dimension, concerns itself with technique; it concerns itself with the activity, or art of catechizing. This formation is more practical in nature and resembles an apostolic formation. Considering the dimensions as such, and comparing them with other Magisterial documents, opens a new horizon. Documents such as Vatican II's document on the lay faithful (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* -1965) and priestly training (*Optatam Totius* - 1965), and John Paul II's *Christifideles Laici* (1988) and *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992) also provide "areas of formation," both for the lay faithful and for those preparing for the priesthood.[35] Generally speaking, these documents identify four areas: human, spiritual, intellectual, and apostolic or pastoral. While the documents do not call these "areas" of formation "dimensions," the clear connection to the *General*

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[33] *General Directory for Catechesis*, §239.

[34] While one must certainly agree with this point, one could counter with a question about why so many zealous apostles who throw themselves into their apostolate "burn out" after a couple of years.

[35] Cf. *Apostolicam Actuositatem* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), §28-29; *Optatam Totius* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1965), §4-20; John Paul II, *Christifideles Laici* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1988), §60; and John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, §42-59.

Directory for Catechesis' dimensions can be easily seen. The dimension of being contains both human and spiritual formation; the dimension of knowing is essentially intellectual formation; and the dimension of *savoir-faire* is apostolic or pastoral formation.

John Paul II, in *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* highlights the dynamic integration of human and spiritual formation, and ultimately grounds the entire "dimension" in the person of Christ. He says, "Human formation, when it is carried out in the context of an anthropology which is open to the full truth regarding the human person, leads to and finds its completion in spiritual formation."[36] By "anthropology open to the full truth regarding the human person," John Paul II, no doubt, has in mind Jesus Christ and "the human perfection which shines forth in the incarnate Son of God."[37] Here, John Paul II echoes *Gaudium et Spes'* statement that Jesus Christ "fully reveals man to man himself and makes his supreme calling clear."[38] In Jesus Christ, the perfect integration of human and divine occurs, with the free submission of Christ's human nature to the divine in the one Person. Given what has already been said in this present study about the divine initiative taken by the *Logos,* it could also be said that "formation in the dimension of being," is formation in a theological anthropology according to the revelation of the *Logos,* a formation in "being-from," "being-for," and "being-with." Given the general enigma surrounding formation in the "dimension of being," Ratzinger's theological anthropology could not only provide some further definition and insight, but could give a more concrete form to this deepest dimension of formation. The implications of Ratzinger's theological anthropology within the realm of catechist formation could warrant a much deeper study.

2.2   Concerning the Relationship between Psychology and Discipleship

Ratzinger, as has been quoted numerous times, says that "man, for his part, is God's image precisely insofar as the 'from,' 'with,' and 'for' constitute the fundamental

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[36] John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (Citta del Vaticano: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1992), §45. For more on the dynamic relationship that exists between human and spiritual formation, see James Keating, "Christ is the Sure Foundation: Priestly Human Formation Completed in and by Spiritual Formation," *Nova et Vetera* 8, no. 4 (2010), 884.

[37] John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* §43.

[38] *Gaudium et Spes,* §22.

anthropological pattern."[39] He then adds, "Whenever there is an attempt to free ourselves from this pattern, we are not on our way to divinity, but to dehumanization."[40] At the same time, "Being is not good…if you have not experienced it as welcome, have not had 'Yes' said to you, that is, if you have not been loved."[41] Therefore, it is worth considering deeply not only the manner in which personal sin is an attempt to free oneself from the anthropological pattern and its resulting dehumanization, but also the manner in which original sin exists as a pattern of broken relationships that can be equally dehumanizing. In other words, personal sin breaks relationship and wounds the individual. Personal sin involves a bondage from which one needs to be set free, and a woundedness of which one must be healed and redeemed by the wounds of Christ. At the same time, the effects of original sin damage relationships and can leave persons bound and wounded. The nature of person-as-relation means sin damages relationships — first and foremost the relationship with God — but also relationships with other human beings. Human existence is marked by relational damage,[42] and this relational damage can significantly inhibit one's ability to relate to and trust in God. In other words, original sin can greatly hamper one's ability to enter into and journey down the road of discipleship.

Evangelization attempts that are serious about "expropriation" patterned along God's "from," "with," and "for," must take into account the manner in which "from," "with," and "for" exist as broken human realities for many people. Ratzinger admits the difficulty here, saying, "Grace does not abolish nature but presupposes it…Supernatural love cannot grow if its human foundations are lacking."[43] Evangelization, therefore, must not only be able to address and speak to the reality and consequences of one's sinful actions, but also address and speak to the sin-laden nature of human existence and the ways in which the sins of others, or their manner of neglecting love, impact the person. In *Principles of Catholic Theology,* Ratzinger adds, "Man is that strange creature that needs not just physical birth but also appreciation if he is to subsist."[44] Anne Devlin provides the following commentary on these lines:

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[39] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 160.
[40] Ratzinger, "Truth and Freedom," 160.
[41] Ratzinger, "On Hope," 30.
[42] See Ratzinger, '*In the Beginning…,*' 72-73.
[43] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 101.
[44] Ratzinger, *Principles of Catholic Theology,* 80.

> It is someone else, from whom the child comes, who affirms — that is, who recognizes the truth of — who and what the child is. To the parents, first, and then in expanding circles, to the family and friends in the child's community, is given the task of communicating to this child that the fundamental word on his life is "It is good that *you* are."[45]

Without this "rebirth," or "second birth" by way of affirmation, one cannot love. These points highlight the necessity for evangelization to offer a deep consideration of the impact of human relationships on the person, particularly the most fundamental relationships, all of which almost surely requires some consideration of the psychological effects of any relational damage resulting from these relationships.[46] Providing a psychological treatise would carry the present study far off its course. Nonetheless, it is worth pointing out that Conrad Baars' work on affirmation in *Born Only Once,* provides numerous observations from the psychological field that align with Ratzinger's theological vision.[47] Additionally, attachment theory, developed most notably by John Bowlby (1907-1990) and Mary Ainsworth (1913-1999), provides more nuanced and empirically rigorous findings regarding the relationship between attachment security and moral development.[48] Dr. Andrew Sodergren's doctoral dissertation provides a thorough overview of the points of convergence and divergence between attachment theory and Catholic

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[45] Devlin, "The Theology of Human Personhood According to Joseph Ratzinger," 91-92.

[46] In a 1995 article, Louis Camelli, speaking about the importance of psychological considerations pertaining to human formation, says: "I believe that dealing with origins, figuring out who we are and how we have become who we are, is primarily a task of human formation with a strong emphasis on the use of psychological resources. Dealing with promise, understanding the call to discipleship, life transformed, and, ultimately, the vision of God is primarily a task of spiritual formation. Both are important and both need attention if, as *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* no. 43 indicates, the priest is to use his humanity as a bridge for connecting with people and communicating to them the mystery of Christ. If emphasis falls lopsidedly in one direction or another, just on origins and psychology or just on promise and spirituality, distortions inevitably set in" (Louis Camelli, "Origins and Promise: Perspectives on Human Formation for Priesthood," *Seminary Journal* 1, no. 2 (Fall 1995), 16). In his article, however, Camelli seems to reduce human formation to psychological formation in an attempt to ensure that the psychological aspect is not overlooked or overtaken by pious practices. As important as this may be, his argument tends to reduce human formation to the psychological realm which could have the effect of an undue division between psychological science and Jesus Christ and his humanity. The magisterial documents, on the other hand also advocate for psychology and psychological maturity, but not without regard for who Christ is. In other words, psychological care within a process of human formation should be congruent with what Christ reveals about the human person, and finds its end in Christ.

[47] See Baars, *Born Only Once*, chs. 2-5.

[48] For a basic overview of attachment theory from both a historical and a theoretical position, see Robert Karen, *Becoming Attached: First Relationships and How They Shape Our Capacity to Love* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1998).

teaching on the human person and morality (i.e. one's capacity to love).[49] Numerous connections with Ratzinger's theological anthropology seem plausible and worth exploring, namely the manner in which the brokenness existing within human relationships affects or hinders entry into and growth in discipleship. Given the fact of the Incarnation, it could also be worth exploring the manner in which the Incarnation can serve to touch and heal, even from a psychological perspective, today. Further study pertaining to the relationships between evangelization, theological anthropology, and psychology could be insightful for shaping evangelizing efforts and better understanding the manner in which healing, particularly psychological healing, can come to bear within evangelization.

This study has attempted to engage with the thought of Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI and to faithfully follow its trajectory with regard to evangelization and catechesis in order to: (1) make an attempt at further advancing scholarship surrounding Ratzinger's contribution to evangelization after Vatican II, and (2) provide some contribution toward an ever-deepening penetration of the life and thought of Joseph Ratzinger. It appears that Ratzinger's vision for evangelization and catechesis according to the *Logos,* as developed along the lines of his theological anthropology, presents a possible solution for the dissonance that has resulted from the catechetical "crisis" since Vatican II. He says:

> After the end of the apostolic age the early Church had as yet developed only relatively little in the way of a direct missionary activity as a Church, that it did not have any particular strategy for proclaiming the faith to the heathen, and that nevertheless this became the age of the greatest missionary success. The conversion of the ancient world to Christianity was not the result of any planned activity on the part of the Church but the fruit of the proof of the faith as it became visible in the life of Christians and of the community of the Church...The new evangelization we need so urgently today is not to be attained with cleverly thought out ideas, however cunningly these are elaborated: the catastrophic failure of modern catechesis is all too obvious. It is only the interaction of a

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[49] Andrew Sodergren, "Attachment and Morality: A Catholic Perspective," (PhD thesis, The Institute for Psychological Sciences, 2009).

truth conclusive in itself with its proof in the life of this truth that can enable that particular evidence of the faith to be illuminated that the human heart awaits: it is only through this door that the Holy Spirit enters the world.[50]

For Ratzinger, evangelization according to the *Logos* calls for a *perichoresis* between content, aim/objective, and method — all shaped by a Trinitarian personalism consonant with humanity's existential situation today. At the same time, Ratzinger knows that the Church, on her own, did not and cannot, initiate or establish evangelization according to the *Logos*. She needs the Holy Spirit, that fire of God that is "transforming fire, a fire of passion…that leads to God…that transforms, renews and creates a new man, who becomes light in God. Thus, in the end, we can only pray to the Lord that the "*confessio*" be founded in us [being-from] deeply and become the fire that ignites others [being-for]; thus the fire of his presence, the novelty of his being with us [being-with], might become really visible and the strength of the present and future."[51] *Veni Sancte Spiritus, Veni per Mariam.*

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[50] Ratzinger, *The Yes of Jesus Christ,* 34-35.
[51] Benedict XVI, "Meditation of His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI During the First General Congregation."

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