

upcoming U.S. bishops' pastoral letter on the economy. A fairly regular reference was made to the "alternative" pastoral planned by Michael Novak, William Simon and others, and an animated debate on the intentions behind that alternative statement and its significance for the life of the Church ran through the discussions.

While very little information about the state of pastoral was at the time available, David Hollenbeck, on the faculty at Weston School of Theology and a staff member for the bishops' drafting committee, spoke to this topic to begin the second day's discussion. The first draft of the pastoral itself will be published in November, 1984, with a second draft out in May, 1985 and the final draft due for a vote by the national bishops' conference in November, 1985.

Discussion over the two sessions seemed to presume with little question that the economy and economic policy are appropriate matters for ethical deliberation and for episcopal consideration. The vast majority of CTSA members present seemed clearly to be critical of the free market mentality and its role currently in the development of economic policy in the United States. The group was clearest in its concern that the standards of justice should critique both the operation of the economies of the Third World and the interaction of the industrialized economies with their more dependent neighbors. If there was a frustration in the working group, it was that the topic for discussion was so broad that it was quite difficult to deal with any portion of it in detail. It was suggested that a follow-up session at next year's CTSA be organized to react to the pastoral. The group disbanded in hopes of gathering again in twelve months to carry on the conversation.

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### C. THE ROLE OF THE AFFECTIVE IN THE MORAL LIFE

The group worked along lines that had emerged in last year's seminar on *Rethinking Virtue*. A starting point of that seminar had been John Boyle's reminder that for Thomas Aquinas the moral virtues constitute part of the moral personality. In the second session of that seminar, a variety of questions had been raised concerning the role of affect or emotion in moral virtues and in the moral life in general.

This year Giles Milhaven launched the seminar with a twenty-minute dialogue, read dramatically by Justin Kelly and himself, presenting what was for the most part Thomas Aquinas' view of the moral role of *passiones*, i.e., those human emotions that are not purely spiritual, but are movements of body and soul conjoined. The dialogue genre permitted not only dialectical articulation of Thomas' concepts and judgments, but also running exemplification through caricature of ordinary experience. "Joe"

recalled events of his overabundantly emotional life and "Willie" did the same for his life devoid of all affect. During the reading and subsequent discussion, members of the group had the text of the dialogue before them as well as two pages of documentation in the *Summa Theologiae*.

For Thomas, *passio* is essential to moral life. Certain moral virtues have, as component part, certain emotions, *passiones*. Without the emotion, one does not have the virtue. For all virtues, *passio* is essential for the full reality (*perfectio*) of the virtue, since even the purely spiritual movements of the soul should overflow into bodily awareness.

Thomas parallels thus contemporary Catholic moral theology and spirituality in their insistence on the affective dimension of the Christian life. But, Milhaven claimed, the picture contemporary moral theology and spirituality draw of the emotions they recommend is generally of thoroughly rational stances of the soul. They implicitly deny the irrational, bodily nature of ordinary human emotions. They join thereby the rest of our culture in discouraging emotions and real feeling. Emotions discouraged become emotions denied and thus barred from integration into rational moral life. The repressed returns, however, in senseless, destructive explosions, as one witnesses in abortion debates. (This example was in Milhaven's prepared text, but was in fact verified in the seminar on abortion going on simultaneously.)

Milhaven's dialogue aimed simply at identifying common traits of ordinary human emotions (*passiones*) and at sharpening questions concerning their positive place in the moral life. The discussion moved back and forth between these poles with assertions and queries such as the following. Can there be genuine human emotion without bodily change, like tears, stomach knotted, heart pounding, etc.? Is emotion a form of intuitive knowledge? Genuine human emotion is often (always?) obscure in nature and object. In a given instance, illustrated in the dialogue, when tears come to the eye, one may not know in what proportions one is proud and grieving and rejoicing and at what.

To what degree is the extent and intensity of one's emotional life a matter of temperament and therefore morally indifferent? My criterion for valuing my feelings is: to what extent are they authentically human? My feelings are of value and essential to my moral life because they *are me!*

At the second meeting of the seminar Nancy Ring renewed the discussion with a thirty-minute presentation on the role of affect in moral decision-making. Taking her lead from the intentionality analysis of Bernard Lonergan, she amplified his treatment of experience and understanding with the psychologies of Carl Jung and Jacques Lacan. She thus developed the thesis that existential decisions are authentically human (moral and virtuous) to the extent that we allow our real feelings to emerge into consciousness and reveal to us the real motives operative in our decision-making. By so doing, we are enabled to judge whether our motives result in self-absorption or self-transcendence. No pre-determined set of rules can determine this.

Ring distinguished between emotion and affect. She described emotion as a transitory, physiological reaction to need and affect as quasi-permanent attitudes or feelings constellated by symbols which relate us psychologically with others. Because symbols sublimate images, and affects sublimate emotions, a physiological, bodily base is always retained. Otherwise, symbols and affects are loosed from their moorings and lose their power. Thus, attention to physiological reactions will lead us to an understanding of quasi-permanent attitudes out of which we make decision, authentic and inauthentic.

Further, Ring maintained, the meaning of symbols is interpreted within a communitarian context which hands on to us the stories by which we inform our imaginations. Thus, the natural symbolism of water is interpreted by the Christian community in such a way that it is used to initiate one into the death and resurrection of Christ. When we allow ourselves to experience the various stories out of which we operate, e.g., stories of racial and national superiority, and put such stories into imaginative dialogue with the normative story of Christianity, the death-resurrection of Jesus, then we have the possibility of making a moral decision.

At this point, Ring introduced Lonergan's notion of religious conversion, the experience of God's love flooding our hearts, which is nearly a prerequisite for our freely allowing the negative aspects of feelings and symbols to emerge into consciousness and thereby be made available for transformation. Until such time, moral decisions remain extrinsic to the subject rather than becoming constitutive of the subject's reality.

Following this schematic presentation, the participants of the seminar engaged in a discussion of themes implied in the presentation such as the relationship between subjective experience and objective morality; the distinction between will power and willingness as well as between faith and belief. The major point discussed, however, was the role that personal, communal and Christian stories play in our becoming authentic subjects open to ourselves and capable of making authentic (moral-virtuous) decisions.

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