

## Presidential Address

### CATHOLIC THEOLOGY AND THE RETRIEVAL OF ITS INTELLECTUAL TRADITION: PROBLEMS AND POSSIBILITIES

Shortly after Kuwait had been liberated from the Iraqi forces, the curator of the Kuwait National Museum appeared on a television interview. The Iraqis had destroyed the interior of the museum, but only after they had pillaged the finest artistic and historic treasures it contained. The curator said sadly, "They stole or destroyed our most precious heritage—the art objects, monuments, and records that gave us our identity as a nation." That indeed was likely a good part of Saddam Hussein's purpose because he constantly tried to justify his invasion of Kuwait by denying its identity as a separate country, insisting it was only another province of Iraq. To remove national treasures of the past would destroy the historical evidence of Kuwait's distinct identity.

I cite this incident as a concrete example of the importance of history and historical traditions to the identity of any group, whether it be political, social, cultural or religious. In speaking about Catholic theology's intellectual tradition, my first task may have to be to insist that it is indeed important to our very identity as Catholics and as Catholic intellectuals to maintain, deepen, reexamine critically and, where necessary, retrieve the Catholic intellectual tradition that guarantees our identity and nourishes our theology as intellectually vital inquiry.

If we look at the Jewish people, our forebears in the faith, we see how important it has always been for them to maintain and develop their traditions. They begin every Passover meal by retelling their story, and their scriptures and traditions are the life line keeping them from losing their identity amid the floods of dispersals and persecutions. And Jewish scholars, for their part, take care to evoke and embrace their traditions when they study Halakah and Aggadah.<sup>1</sup>

Our most basic Catholic tradition consists in our remembering Jesus Christ and his passing to the Father: we recall this sacred event each time we celebrate and relive it in the Eucharist. Indeed, we would cease to be church, to be the People of God we are, if we were to cease remembering Jesus and his decisive entry into

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<sup>1</sup>See M. Fishbane, "Judaism," in Keith Crim, ed., *Abingdon Dictionary of Living Religions* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1981) 387: "The sages said that one who would know the will of God should study Halakah (in Midrash, Mishnah, and Talmud); whereas the knowledge and love of God is fostered by Aggadah (the homiletic, ethical, or theological reflections on the Torah). For it is in the agadic dicta (the earliest collections of which date from the fourth century A.D.) that one senses the capacity of the Torah to reveal its 'seventy faces'."

the course of history. And as the story of Jesus has been handed over to us through the centuries, his memory has been the basis for the growth of traditions. Some of these traditions are indeed contingent, time limited, and so particular in context that they have to be examined for their relevance today, whereas others are considered normative although needing restatement or reinterpretation. But even those that are contingent and changeable are worthy of study because they can teach us how the church has evangelized in each age, and we can learn from both past mistakes and past successes.

At our convention in Toronto in 1988, I tried to show, by using the double image of a fortress and launching pad, how important the history of theology is for today's theology. When used well, the history of theology can be a fortress preserving past insights that are pertinent to present-day discussions. At the same time, the history of theology can teach us how to be free from a narrow "now" mentality in such a way that we can launch ourselves into new research and discoveries.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the ideas presented in that address, I would point to the increasing use of experience as an important starting point in theology. Our convention next year will, in fact, undertake critical examination of such use of experience. Now in this regard one of the great values of history of thought as well as of past literature, art, or music, is that they allow us to live through a range of experience vastly greater than anything we could enjoy if we were to limit ourselves only to our experiences in the present or recent decades. Even though today we would not compose music in Mozart's style, we would never deprive ourselves of the experience of his beautiful compositions or of what can still be learned from them.

One rule that such historical experience seems to establish is that intense theological activity and progress often takes place in periods when past tradition has been actively retrieved and creatively appropriated. In the West this was the case in what have been called the "Carolingian renaissance" of the ninth century or the more important "renaissances" of the twelfth century and then of the thirteenth century, to say nothing of the paradigmatic renaissance of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. More recently, the achievements of the Second Vatican Council would have been impossible without the groundwork of over a half century of historical research in the bible, the fathers, liturgy, philosophy, theology, and ecclesiastical history. In letters and speeches while he was nuncio in France, the future Pope John XXIII, who had the inspiration and courage to convoke the council, showed how much he loved and used history.<sup>3</sup> In his early years as a priest he had taught patristics and church history in the seminary of Bergamo,<sup>4</sup> and in these letters written in France, while quoting authors from different centuries of church

<sup>2</sup>See "The History of Theology: Fortress or Launching Pad?" *CTSA Proceedings* 43 (1988) 19-40; also in John P. Boyle and George Kilcourse, eds., *The Sources of Theology, Current Issues in Theology* 3 (Louisville KY: Bellarmine College, 1988) 19-40.

<sup>3</sup>See Loris Capovilla, ed., *Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli: Pope John XXIII, Mission to France, 1944-1953*, trans. Dorothy White (London-Dublin-Melbourne: Geoffrey Chapman, 1966); French original: *Souvenirs d'un Nonce, Cahiers de France (1944-1953)* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1963).

<sup>4</sup>See *ibid.*, 4 (an article from *L'Osservatore Romano*).

history,<sup>5</sup> he once remarks that he is working at night to complete his edition of sixteenth-century documents concerning St. Charles Borromeo.<sup>6</sup> He recalls his love for Baronius, the influential church historian,<sup>7</sup> and confides that he has not lost his love for delving into archives;<sup>8</sup> in support of this activity he quotes Cicero's dictum, "History is life's teacher."<sup>9</sup> How much, we may wonder, did his appreciation of history give him the perspective and freedom to take the daring step of calling the council?

The contributions of many outstanding theologians of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries drew a great deal from their extensive work in the history of theology. In the nineteenth century, Johann Adam Möhler was a professor of history at Tübingen and Munich and wrote several historical studies while producing his creative theological works; Matthias Joseph Scheeben's *Dogmatik* drew on Aquinas and many of the Fathers as well as on modern theologians. Nor can John Henry Newman's creative theology be divorced from his great historical studies of the Fathers. In our century Rahner, Urs von Balthasar, Chenu, de Lubac, Congar, Daniélou, Lonergan, and Murray all engaged in important historical studies while opening new vistas for contemporary theology. Was this historical background accidental to their achievement? Did it not rather broaden and deepen their perspective as well as free them from the particularities of their time so that they could speak so creatively to contemporary concerns?

There seems, however, to be a decline of interest in the Catholic intellectual tradition among our theologians, such that we must ask if we do not need a concerted effort to retrieve that tradition. Let me present a few facts—they are based on what are, to be sure, two brief, partial surveys of dissertations done in the past twelve years. The first survey looks at the titles of dissertations done by members of our society, whereas the second examines the titles of dissertations produced in four graduate schools of theology.

During the years 1979 to 1990, according to my count, our members produced 232 dissertations.<sup>10</sup> Of these 232 dissertations, ten were on scripture. Eleven studied patristic authors: of these only one was on Augustine, two examined Origen

<sup>5</sup>E.g., Augustine (ibid., 119), Leo the Great (98), Catherine of Siena (118), Dante (100), and Bossuet (94, 127). His sermon commemorating the Council of Lyons of 1245 (28-34) is full of historical detail.

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., 140. The earlier volumes he edited are *Gli atti della visita apostolica di S. Carlo Borromeo a Bergamo (1575)*, 2 vols., in Johannes Gallati, ed., *Fontes Ambrosiani in lucem editi cura et studio Bibliothecae Ambrosiani* 13, 17 (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 1937-1957).

<sup>7</sup>Ibid., 10. An earlier (1907) lecture by him was published as *Il Cardinale Cesare Baronio* (Rome: Edizioni di Storia e Letteratura, 1961).

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., 25.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., 26: "Historia magistra vitae" (*De oratore* 2, 9, 36).

<sup>10</sup>This count was based on George Kilcourse, ed., *The Catholic Theological Society of America: Directory 1988* (Louisville KY: Bellarmine College, 1988), and on the lists of new members (with their dissertation titles) in the *CTSA Proceedings* for 1989 and 1990; the 1989 volume included the list of new members and dissertations for 1988, which were not covered by the *Directory*.

and two others Cyprian, while each of the rest looked at a different patristic author. Medieval authors or topics fared a bit better: of the twenty-six dissertations, ten were on Thomas Aquinas and three on Bonaventure. The sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries saw eleven dissertations, the nineteenth century thirty-one, of which seven were on Newman. The other 175 (or seventy-six percent) were on contemporary themes or twentieth-century authors. Some of these authors are still relatively young and still developing their own thought, often in reaction to criticism from their peers. I think it a rather unhealthy practice to devote the energy of a dissertation on authors whose significance remains dubious until they have withstood the test of time. Dissertations on subjects or authors of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries together accounted for eighty-nine percent of the total.

Three of the four graduate schools whose dissertation titles I had available were Catholic; the fourth is a union of a number of colleges, several of them Catholic. There was considerable variation in the number of historical studies, but on the whole there was a relatively small amount of work on any topic between the biblical period and the twentieth century.

The first Catholic faculty, which listed twenty-nine dissertations, produced proportionately more dissertations than the others on historical persons or themes. Two were on the Fathers (Augustine, Gregory of Nyssa), three on medieval authors (Aquinas, Julian of Norwich, Marsilius of Padua), three on sixteenth- and seventeenth-century themes, three on the nineteenth-century topics and eighteen on twentieth-century themes or authors.

A second Catholic institution had ninety-two dissertations between 1979 and 1990. The biblical area was represented by fourteen dissertations, but there were only two patristic dissertations (on Pelagius and Origen) and only one medieval study (on Pope John XXIII). The sixteenth to the eighteenth centuries saw only two dissertations, whereas the nineteenth century had nine. The twentieth century had the bulk, sixty-four out of ninety-two. (Three dissertations out of ninety-two on the patristic and medieval periods is rather sparse, to say the least.)

A third Catholic institution had seventy-four dissertations in these twelve years. A remarkably high number (twenty-three) were biblical, while there were three patristic and seven medieval dissertations. The sixteenth century saw five and the nineteenth century two dissertations, while the twentieth century was involved in thirty-four.

Data on the fourth institution covers only the last five years, 1986–1990. This theological union, which has a number of Protestant and Catholic schools, listed ninety-five dissertations for these years. Of these, fifteen were on biblical topics, and sixteen were historical dissertations, but of these only one was patristic, and there was none for the medieval period. Most of the sixteen historical dissertations were concerned with the nineteenth or early twentieth centuries. Sixty-four of the ninety-five dissertations were on authors or themes from the twentieth century.

On the other hand, a very superficial look at titles of recent theses in *Dissertation Abstracts* gave me the impression that a fair amount of patristic and medieval dissertation work is being done in secular or Protestant theological faculties or schools.

I would hasten to add that dissertation titles alone cannot give a full or accurate picture of how much knowledge graduates in theology possess concerning our



Catholic intellectual tradition. Most of them probably had some historical work in their graduate programs.<sup>11</sup> Nevertheless, it seems clear that the research interest of most of our theologians in the last twelve years has generally not focused on the Catholic intellectual tradition. The Greek Fathers are practically untouched. Even more surprisingly, Augustine has practically disappeared—is this the result of the bad press he has received for some of his views, so that other still valuable themes in this influential author are being neglected?

Another indication of a weakening of knowledge about our tradition is the handling of history by some theologians on their forays into the past. I use the word "foray" deliberately, for at times some theologians seem to conduct raids on history to gather booty for their own preconceived positions rather than submitting themselves to a more objective grasp of the full historical context and teaching of the authors or themes they mention.

What is remarkable for those concerned about our intellectual tradition is that while interest in the past and knowledge of it seems to be in a serious state of decline among our theologians, other scholars, including many in secular universities, are doing a great deal of work in the Fathers and in medieval and later authors. Later this year there will be, once again, a huge gathering in Oxford of patristic scholars from around the world, including many from North America. On this continent the North American Patristic Society has over 400 members who meet each year and who maintain contact through a lively newsletter. Only about thirty-five of our members are also members of this society. Villanova University overcomes our neglect of Augustine by a yearly conference on the great bishop of Hippo that results each year in a volume of scholarly studies devoted to his thought and influence.

In the medieval field, the International Society for the Study of Medieval Philosophy includes many theologians and examines a wide variety of theological topics through its yearly bulletin and its international conferences (it will meet in Ottawa in 1992). The Medieval Academy of America, which concentrates more on history, art, and literature, nevertheless has had sections on medieval theology in recent years. At Western Michigan University in Kalamazoo a yearly medieval conference gathers some 2,000 scholars who investigate every aspect of medieval life and culture—a life and culture permeated by Catholic theology, spirituality, and church history as well as by art and literature reflecting Catholic traditions. This past May saw roughly the following number of papers: seven on Augustine, ten on Hildegard of Bingen, seven on Bernard, ten on other Cistercian authors, twenty on Aquinas, four on other Dominicans, five on Bridget of Sweden, five on Ockham, nine on other Franciscan authors, including Scotus, ten on the medieval church, two on Julian of Norwich, five on Nicholas of Cusa. Fifteen papers dealt with biblical topics, thirty-five with various aspects of spirituality, while the largest group of papers (forty-four) dealt with special women's issues, many of them related to theology.

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<sup>11</sup>Another limitation of using dissertation titles alone was pointed out in a discussion after the paper by Professor Mary Ann Hinsdale, who correctly stated that dissertations, even if examining more recent authors or contemporary topics, nevertheless often contain a section giving the historical background necessary for understanding the subject.

In my association with some of these patristic and medieval scholars, I encounter at times the view, sometimes expressed not very gently, that our contemporary Catholic theology is rootless, not serious enough, too much occupied with current fads, too little concerned to learn from the past, perhaps too easily led into repeating past mistakes or not seeing the consequences of some of its positions—consequences that could be foreseen from the perspective of a better grounding in the Catholic intellectual tradition. One often hears the adage that those who forget history are condemned to repeat its mistakes. On the other hand, there is often a practical problem that leads us to miss the contributions these scholars could make to theology: a good number of them remain rather uninterested in contemporary theological issues and prefer to rest comfortably in their preoccupation with the past. Thus theologians work in the present without the benefit of input from these specialists in the tradition, whose own studies often seem to lack contemporary significance. Should not this chasm be bridged?

If these facts are pertinent, we may ask about possible causes of a decline in interest in the Catholic intellectual tradition. Perhaps the first cause is simply the general decline among all students of any sense of the importance of history. Part of this general attitude would then be a certain loss of interest in our Catholic Christian heritage. Does this have to do with how new ways of learning affect us, for example, the need for the immediate, the present in every field? Maybe television and film have changed the way people perceive things, leaving them impervious to the perspectives of the distant or even nearer past. I have already heard about students who, when they have seen or heard in their books or classes the names of Michelangelo or Raphael or Leonardo or Donatello, have identified them in the first instance with the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles!

Looking more closely at the question of our Christian Catholic heritage, we can ask what is happening when so many of our grade, high school, and college students are being educated in public secular institutions. What chance do they have of acquiring a deep appreciation of the Catholic tradition other than what they may or may not get in their home or parish? Even our Catholic schools, according to some college teachers I have spoken with, seem unable to instill such a knowledge in students. For one must now ask whether teachers in our Catholic schools themselves always have a sufficient knowledge of our Catholic traditions, including our intellectual endowment. All this is bound to affect those who go on to study theology in graduate schools.

Another problem is the decline in language skills. If theologians are to have more than a superficial knowledge of our intellectual tradition, they must be able to read the great authors of the past in their original languages. In particular, lack of knowledge of Latin and Greek cuts them off not only from the texts of many patristic and medieval authors, but also from those of the councils and from other official documents. Theologians who know only their maternal language cannot benefit from the contribution that books and articles in other modern languages can make to knowledge of the tradition. One may wonder as well about the skills of students in reading texts from another period, even those written in their own familiar language.

Another factor in this decline comes from a very positive achievement of contemporary theology—the growth of multidisciplinary studies. It has been a great

advance to realize that no theological problem can be dealt with solely by using philosophy. Contemporary theology requires input from sociology, psychology, politics, economics, linguistics, the natural sciences (as we have heard at this convention), and other disciplines. But this positive advance does create a problem—the sheer lack of time any researcher or student needs to explore the historical aspects of a subject, including time to acquire the linguistic and hermeneutical skills necessary for such exploration.

More generally, lack of time is a problem for the higher proportion of lay students and scholars now doing theology. Formerly, religious communities or diocesan authorities supported students over many years of study, giving them time to acquire skills and training for historical work and to do the necessary study or research. But today the large body of lay students generally lacks the sustained financial support needed for the lengthy study that would include grounding in the historical background of their topic or for research having a historical topic as its object. Many lay students are already married and have a spouse and sometimes children eagerly waiting for them to finish and get work so that they can lead a normal family life. Some religious communities, I am happy to note, have recognized the financial need of such students and have established bursaries or scholarships to help finance their studies.

Even if students or professors doing research have the required time, money, and leisure for historical research, they may be influenced by another view subtly working against studying our intellectual tradition. The impact of so many new disciplines and of new methods within these disciplines, as well as so many hermeneutical and linguistic questions, may persuade a contemporary theologian that history is less important than these approaches. They may judge that these changes mean we are in the midst of what Thomas S. Kuhn originally called a "paradigm shift," although, finding "paradigm" too ambiguous a term, he now prefers to speak of a change in "disciplinary matrix." This, he says, is an outlook or approach that is "disciplinary" because it is the common possession of the practitioners of a professional discipline, and [is a] 'matrix' because it is composed of ordered elements of various sorts, each requiring further elucidation."<sup>12</sup> If theology and all learning is in such flux, if there is such a fundamental shift and newness of outlook, what, theologians may ask, is to be gained by long, difficult studies of historical tradition?

A symposium held in Tübingen in 1985 asked whether Kuhn's theories apply to contemporary theology. Some suggested that we are indeed in the midst of such a deep change because of developments in hermeneutics, political theology, liberation theology, process thought, feminist perspectives, ecology, the role of praxis and of experience. Others held that these new developments are in fact so diverse that we may see the development of not one but many new paradigms or conceptual models that will have to live together.<sup>13</sup> Nevertheless, Gregory Baum and

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<sup>12</sup>See his "Second Thoughts on Paradigms," first published in 1974 (after two editions of his *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* [Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962, 1970]) and then in his *The Essential Tension: Selected Studies in Scientific Tradition and Change* (Chicago-London: University of Chicago Press, 1977) 293-319.

<sup>13</sup>See Hans Küng and David Tracy, eds., *Paradigm Change in Theology*, trans. Margaret Köhl (New York: Crossroad, 1989).

several others at the symposium, as well as Avery Dulles in his review of the proceedings, saw the importance of relating these shifts in paradigms or conceptual models to the canonical scriptures, the normative creeds, and the intellectual tradition of the past.<sup>14</sup>

Among the methods contributing to these new outlooks or models, some hermeneutical discussions and methods may tempt scholars away from doing historical-critical studies of the past. Some of these recent hermeneutical developments are the contributions of structuralism, deconstruction, and various forms of reader response. While each of these has its contribution to make, there are signs that some of them are already in decline. It may well be that scholars who take them up could find that they have spent a lot of time and energy only to be bypassed by some other new approach. In this respect, Jonathan Culler has pointed out the tendency of young graduate students to rush to adopt novelties in critical theory as a way of differentiating themselves from the past.<sup>15</sup> William Safire, in an amusing column in the *New York Times*, welcomes "semiotic fans to lit-crit's glorious new era of *post-deconstructionism*," observing that "postmodern art is on the way out, of course, and the newer wave is, for lack of an original idea, being called *post-postmodernism*, which sounds more like a stutter than a style."<sup>16</sup> He delights in quoting Professor Geoffrey H. Hartman, whose rather ambiguous study of Derrida shows appreciation of some of this deconstructionist's insights, but who asks whether certain of these devices are not really a surrealist "Derridadaism." Hartman also speaks of the irritation that can be caused by "the dialectophage or boa-deconstructor aspects of Derrida's systematic play."<sup>17</sup> Safire adds that David Lehman, referring to Paul de Man, an important American deconstructionist, gives his own book, *Signs of the Times*, the subtitle *Deconstruction and the Fall of Paul de Man*. Safire remarks, "That language philosophy is provocative, but it goes nowhere and cries out for a more satisfying theory to refute it. . . . That's why we are certain to see the rise of post-deconstructionism."<sup>18</sup>

<sup>14</sup>The review of *Paradigm Change* by Avery Dulles appeared in *The Tablet* (7 July 1990) 858.

<sup>15</sup>*On Deconstruction: Theory and Criticism after Structuralism* (Ithaca NY: Cornell University Press, 1982) 10: "The frequency with which attacks on theoretically oriented criticism condemn graduate students for mechanically imitating certain models, for taking on ideas they are too ignorant and immature to handle, and for rushing to adopt a spurious or faddish novelty, suggests that the threat of recent critical theory is linked to its specific appeal to the young. For its opponents, theory may be dangerous precisely because it threatens to [become] . . . the source of intellectual youth's attempt to differentiate itself from the past."

<sup>16</sup>"Sign Here," in "Magazine Section" (19 March 1991) 18.

<sup>17</sup>See Hartman, *Saving the Text: Literature/Derrida/Philosophy* (Baltimore and London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981) 33 and 22. Hartman adds, somewhat sympathetically it seems, "Derrida deconstructs not only others but also himself: the activity, that is, of philosophizing in general. He shows how much metaphor remains and must remain, how much equivocation and palimpsest-residue. He does not advocate a more literary philosophy, but he doubts that philosophy can get beyond being a form of language. The very desire of philosophy to be itself only, in and for itself, absolute knowledge is the ultimate pathos." (23)

<sup>18</sup>"Sign Here," 20.



With respect to reader response, it is true, of course, that the classics of any age would not be classics unless they elicited response from readers. Their value as classics is precisely their ability to offer new insights into the questions and problems of every age. Some have used the image of the text as a mirror reflecting back on the reader, with the reader's response being the only important element. While there is indeed a need to go beyond a search for the author's intention or meaning (sometimes called "the window approach"—through the text to the author and the original context), I would insist that there remains a need for historical critical work on the texts of the Fathers and later authors, whether by scholars writing introductions and notes or by the reader, as the necessary preliminary to responses in our day.<sup>19</sup>

An example of this need is the case of studies of Thomas Aquinas. For a long period, Aquinas was subject precisely to a kind of reader response that mined his work for answers to contemporary problems but often disregarded the very questions he was asking and trying to resolve. Texts from his earlier and later works were put together in a kind of scissors-and-paste method that ignored his personal development and changes in his views during his life. His texts were read and responded to without reference to their context; his answers were quoted without reference to the arguments or objections he was answering. Rival schools of Thomists grew up, often with little attention to sound exegetical method. There was indeed a paradigm shift, or change in disciplinary matrix, and this in a healthy direction, when scholars such as Chenu, Gilson, Congar, Eschmann, Pegis and others began reading texts of Aquinas with the methods of historical research, letting Aquinas be seen in his milieu with his own problems. Then, conscious of Aquinas' limits, his cultural- and time-limited perspectives, the reader could respond to his text less subjectively. It became possible to appropriate some of Aquinas' innovative contributions, such as his insistence on the unity of the human person as ensouled flesh, his teaching about the positive role of the emotions or passions in an integral morality, and his emphasizing Christian freedom under the New Law, the inviolability of individual conscience, and the role of prudence as opposed to a morality of obligation and casuistry. I do not mean to deny that the reader-response methods have value but I wish to stand up stoutly in defence of sound historical-critical scholarship to get at the intention and meaning of an author.<sup>20</sup> This is not so difficult as some of these recent theorists assert so dog-

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<sup>19</sup>The imagery of mirror and window is that of Murray Krieger in his book, *A Window to Criticism* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1964) 3-4; it has been widely echoed in much recent literature on the Bible. I owe this information to John Reumann's as-yet-unpublished essay prepared for the United States Lutheran-Catholic Dialogue, September 1990, "After the Historical-Critical Method(s), What?: Trends in Biblical Interpretation and Ecumenical Dialogue," 3 and n. 14.

<sup>20</sup>See the reference to Lonergan and the remarks in "The History of Theology" (cited above, n. 2) n. 13 and 22-23.

Ruemann's essay, cited above (n. 19), shows that difficulties with historical-critical approaches are particularly acute in biblical studies because of the scarcity of extratextual data that could help the interpreter. The problem is less acute, and therefore less serious although not entirely absent, for texts of postbiblical authors where historical sources independent of the text help to get at the context and intention of the author.

matically (expecting that their own texts should be understood according to the meaning they intend rather than by an independent reader-response!).

Another reason why there may be questions about the value of historical retrieval of the tradition is suspicion about the objectivity or universal applicability of documents and other indicators of that tradition. Some might want to apply to the witnesses of our Catholic tradition the words that Garry Trudeau put on the lips of a commencement speaker in a recent *Doonsbury* column, and ask: "Are these witnesses of Catholic tradition not larded with 'subconscious racism, sexism, and classism'? Is it not dominated by 'offensive elements of western rationalism and linear logic'? Has it not been dominated by 'white male and eurocentric perspectives'?" They might also wonder whether our tradition does not display so much paternalism and so many hierarchical patterns that we may as well forget the past. Does not the "new appropriateness" or "consensus of the moment" or "political correctness" require us to jettison our history and our intellectual traditions?

Another factor that, in my opinion, affects the ability of younger theologians to acquire or develop more knowledge of our intellectual traditions is one aspect of the practice of tenure. Judgments of a young professor's tenure are often made after a period of only five years. This seems to me to be incredibly short and unfair. These professors are often preparing lectures for the first time, and are trying to improve their teaching methods—all this frequently within a heavy timetable. They are expected to show interest in their faculty or institution by serving on committees, sharing self-studies and the like. They are under pressure to publish, to attend conferences and to give papers. As far as publication goes, they may be influenced in their research and writing by the dangerous criterion of quantity rather than quality—that is, when four or five short papers on current issues are judged better than one or two well-researched papers involving the time-consuming effort to locate the issues in a broader historical context.

No wonder that our younger scholars—and perhaps our older ones interested in producing a book every year or two—avoid the slower, more arduous task of doing historical research for its own sake or for creative contemporary work. And, outside the issue of tenure or advancement in rank and salary, I wonder if there is not a moral problem here, involving the old capital vice of pride or vanity—the desire to publish many books or articles or to produce a lot of papers for the sake of personal renown and reputation rather than to work more slowly and thoroughly as a humble, less publicized servant of the truth?

### *Possibilities*

What possibilities are there for retrieval of our Catholic intellectual tradition? It seems to me that those who are convinced that we need such a retrieval will have to work to raise the consciousness not only of our theologians but also of our administrators to this need. Programs in theology in our Catholic institutions should certainly require historical study of our intellectual tradition. Those of us who are called to review theological faculties should examine the requirements and quality of historical training as well as the language regulations that would help such training. Faculties should be examined to see that there are qualified professors for each period of history. My brief examination of faculties revealed that it is often the presence of a stimulating professor that leads to interest and quality research in the history of theology.

I wonder also if it is not time for us, as theologians, to question the validity of the way the tenure system works, especially in the case of beginning professors. As I have suggested, tenure procedures may discourage historical research and writing. At least, those who act as judges of tenure should weigh the time and depth needed for historical study against other types of research and writing. Perhaps indeed we should question the whole tenure system, or at least a promotion system that counts quantity of papers, conferences and publications as more important than qualitative research including the time-consuming historical dimension.

I suggest that an examination of the whole system and how it works might be a worthy project for our research and publications committee. This committee might also encourage a more thorough study of the kind I did so sporadically, that is, an examination of the dissertations being done, and perhaps also the amount of historical background required in dissertations and in comprehensive examinations. Those of us who direct such examinations and serve on dissertation boards might also keep the historical dimension in mind in our assessments.

I cannot go into the thorny question of the Catholic identity of our colleges and universities that has been raised in several quarters recently.<sup>21</sup> It seems, however, that faculties of theology and of arts in Catholic institutions are within their rights if they make a sound knowledge of the Catholic intellectual tradition a requirement in the hiring of new faculty members. And should we not challenge departments of religious studies or theology in secular institutions to include study of every period of Christian history in their programs? This is no apologetic or sectarian issue: the quality of such programs suffers from thin representation of our western Christian tradition. Lutheran scholars have admitted to me that their tradition has been weakened by the way their theologians often skip from the bible to Augustine to Luther. Again, secular scholars in the field of spirituality often display a woeful ignorance of Catholic traditions in this field, being able to discourse learnedly on spiritual gurus in other traditions but knowing hardly any Catholic names other than, possibly, Eckhart, a favorite foil for comparative studies with eastern spiritual authors.<sup>22</sup>

But how shall we gain greater contact with that large body of scholars, both Catholic and others, who teach, do research, and write in periods of history stretching from the Fathers to the early twentieth century? One way would be to engage in more group research or group projects in theology, and to include historians in the group. The explosion of knowledge in so many areas makes it more and more necessary to have such group projects. The contributions of historians would give depth to our modern researchers and would also encourage some of these historians to relate their work more actively to contemporary problems.

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<sup>21</sup>See, e.g., James Tunstead Burtchaell, "The Decline and Fall of the Christian College," *First Things: A Monthly Journal of Religion and Public Life* 12 (April 1991) 16-29; and no. 13 (May 1991) 30-38; and Peter Steinfels, "Catholic Colleges Chart Paths Still Catholic and Yet Diverse," *The New York Times*, 1 May 1991, A1 and B8.

<sup>22</sup>Another example is the frequently observed warped view of Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite on the part of those who know only his *Mystical Theology* with its negative "theologies" or statements about God but who are ignorant of the rich treatment of symbols, of the sacraments, and of Christ in his *Ecclesiastical Hierarchy*.

In Canada, the chief granting agency for research, the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, as well as the Canadian Federation for the Humanities and the Royal Society of Canada all encourage group research. They find that, by contrast with scholars in the physical and social sciences, who usually work in groups, scholars in the humanities tend to do their research in isolation. I remember asking M.-D. Chenu in 1951 how one could cope with all the new material in biblical, patristic, medieval, and modern history together with the new insights of modern disciplines. His answer, even more pertinent today than forty years ago, was that the only way to do it was to group scholars in a common effort that would have input from all the different disciplines and periods. He had promoted such scholarly cooperation by building a brilliant team of scholars at Le Saulchoir that had remarkable success. And, in fact, there is clear evidence that the number of symposia or colloquia that are interdisciplinary in character is increasing.<sup>23</sup>

In relation to this question, it seems to me that there is an issue of intellectual honesty for us theologians and for all scholars today. That is, there is just too much information and there are too many disciplines involved for any one person to pretend to claim sufficient knowledge to explore a topic thoroughly. Should not intellectual modesty lead us to admit our limitations and join with others, including historians, for more comprehensive approaches to research and writing?

For our society, I think we must try to do more to attract scholars doing historical work to join us and to help us at our conventions and in our research projects. I heartily endorse the suggestion that has been made that our convention program include seminars in patristic and in medieval theology as well as in history of modern theology. I am quite sure that regular sessions in these areas, linked with our more general program, would attract such scholars and would benefit them as well as our theologians interested in contemporary topics. Perhaps the plenary sessions could frequently include a talk that would introduce a historical perspective.

In today's restricted finances, it might seem utopian to suggest that our administrators should finance participation not only in our CTSA convention but also in at least one other meeting that features some aspect of historical theology. We might investigate the possibility of our convention being held in conjunction with that of other related societies. In Canada the yearly meetings of all the learned societies at a different university over a period of two weeks is very beneficial because scholars in different but related disciplines are able to meet each other and attend some sessions of each other's conferences.

What about the problem I mentioned concerning the view that our traditions should be given up because they are judged too narrow, one-sided, patriarchal,

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<sup>23</sup>An example I came across recently while preparing the homily for our liturgy on the feast of St. Anthony of Padua shows the fruitfulness of such interdisciplinary colloquia. It is entitled *S. Antonio di Padova fra storia e pietà: colloquio interdisciplinare su "il fenomeno antoniano"* (Padua: Edizioni Messaggero, 1977). It uses phenomenological methods to explore the transition in appreciation of Anthony as a sound theologian and preacher to devotion paid him as a benevolent miracle worker and finder of lost objects. Besides phenomenologists, the colloquium included a number of historians, psychologists, sociologists, and theologians, each of whom contributed from her or his specialty to a common purpose.



European-centered, overly logical or rational, and the like? One answer is to look at the good work being done by historians precisely to lay open some of these distortions and to recover elements too often neglected. I have already mentioned, as one example, the work being done on medieval women at the Western Michigan University conference each year as well as in many other studies and publications. These studies uncover the sociological, psychological, and theological elements that downplay the role of women; they seek to recover the important but often neglected role played by women.<sup>24</sup> Other historical studies have brought out, in a critical way that can lead to healthy revision, the harmful influence of Platonic and Neoplatonic dualism, Stoic *apatheia*, and Manicheism on Christian anthropology and spirituality, particularly in the areas of the emotions, sexuality, and attitudes towards marriage and religious life.

For those who see too great a European bias in our theology, research into the successes and failures of inculturation in the past can shed light on this issue. That is, did European theology—to take our discipline as an example—interfere with the legitimate development of theology, liturgy, and spirituality among Africans and Asians and among the indigenous people of all the continents? As for the charge that our theology has become too logical, the more rhetorical theology of the Fathers and of many medieval theologians and scripture commentators, with their greater attention to symbolism and concreteness, should attract theologians to do research in these earlier centuries.<sup>25</sup>

May I make a final, practical suggestion that might help to keep us all in contact with the scriptures and at least part of our intellectual tradition? The office of readings within the Divine Office presents a rich collection of biblical texts and of texts from patristic, medieval, and early modern authors. Dipping into them each day could help us to continue that remembering which should be so much a part of our intellectual makeup, no matter what kind of theology we are doing or what problem we are examining.

### Conclusion

In conclusion, let me say how sad it would be if most of us lost illuminating contact with our Catholic intellectual tradition. Gone from our theological ken, including its spiritual aspect, would be authors as rich in their diversity as Irenaeus, Origen, Basil, Augustine, Boethius, Pseudo-Dionysius, John Damascene, Simeon the New Theologian, Anselm, Hildegard of Bingen, Bonaventure, Hadewijch, Thomas Aquinas, Mechtilde of Magdeburg, Eckhart, Catherine of Siena, Dante, Teresa of Avila, Francis de Sales, and Blaise Pascal, to name but a few authors who wrote between the second and the seventeenth centuries. Sample texts from these and a number of other authors will be appended, as illustrations of how

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<sup>24</sup>Studies have shown how most of the so-called barbarian rulers of Western Europe became converts to Christianity through the influence of their Christian wives, whose names were often forgotten or neglected. The result was that whole tribes and nations became Christian, albeit by methods that today we might judge questionable.

<sup>25</sup>On this topic see M.-D. Chenu, "La littérature comme lieu de la théologie," *Revue des sciences philosophiques et théologiques* 53 (1969) 70-80.

the Catholic intellectual and spiritual tradition has been received, carried, and amplified over the centuries.<sup>26</sup>

This great tradition has not only fostered intellectual pursuits but has helped to create the sense of sacramentality, the appreciation of the goodness of creation, the validation of human effort within God's graciousness, that are so much a part of Catholic outlook and life. The intellectually vital Catholic theology of the past has always worked itself into the broader traditions of Catholic life and spirituality. G. K. Chesterton once remarked about this link of doctrine and life, "A slip in the definitions might stop all the dances; might wither all the Christmas trees or break all the Easter eggs."<sup>27</sup> The film, "Babette's Feast," plays on the difference between a puritanism that feels guilty about using the good things of creation and a Catholic spirit and culture that appreciates the festivity and communion of a banquet as well as the artistry involved in preparing such a feast. Such a link between Catholic spirituality and Catholic culture is suggested, finally, by Hilaire Belloc's little verse that I take as a signature to this plea for retrieval of our Catholic intellectual tradition:

Wherever a Catholic sun doth shine  
There's lots of laughter and good red wine,  
At least I've always found it so . . .  
BENEDICAMUS DOMINO!

WALTER H. PRINCIPE, c.s.b.  
*Pontifical Institute of Mediaeval Studies  
and University of Toronto*

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<sup>26</sup>In the address itself only a few of these could be quoted; the others, still only a few gleanings from a rich harvest, are given here.

<sup>27</sup>The full text (from *Orthodoxy* [London: John Lane, 1908; rpt. 1924]) gives the context: "The Church could not afford to swerve a hair's breadth on some things if she was to continue her great and daring experiment of the irregular equilibrium. Once let one idea become less powerful and some other idea would become too powerful. . . . The smallest link was let drop by the artificers of the Mediterranean, and the lion of ancestral pessimism burst his chain in the forgotten forests of the north. . . . If some small mistake were made in doctrine, huge blunders might be made in human happiness. A sentence phrased wrong about the nature of symbolism would have broken all the best statues in Europe. A slip in the definitions might stop all the dances; might wither all the Christmas trees or break all the Easter eggs. Doctrines had to be defined within strict limits, even in order that man might enjoy general human liberties. The Church had to be careful, if only that the world might be careless." (182-83)

Chesterton might seem to attach too much importance to the letter of definitions, but it is clear from his reference to ideas that he is mainly concerned about the impact of errors about the mysteries of faith expressed (always incompletely) by the definitions. I have discussed the relations between doctrinal statements and the mysterious realities of faith in *Faith, History and Cultures: Stability and Change in Church Teachings*, The Père Marquette Lecture in Theology 1991 (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1991).

## Appendix

## SOME ILLUSTRATIVE TEXTS

*Ignatius of Antioch.* "Earthly longings have been crucified; in me there is left no spark of desire for mundane things, but only a murmur of living water that whispers within me, 'Come to the Father'."

*Irenaeus.* "The glory of God is the living person, whose life is the vision of God."

*Origen.* "I know what an indwelt soul is and I know what a deserted soul is. . . . If the soul does not have the Holy Spirit, it is deserted. It is dwelt in when it is filled with God, when it has Christ, when the Holy Spirit is in it."

*Cyprian.* "The greatest offering we can make to God is our peace, our concord with our brothers and sisters as a people made one with the unity of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit."

*Athanasius.* "The Word of God became human so that we might be made divine."

*Basil.* "The Holy Spirit, like the sun making itself firmly at home in very pure eyes, will show you in Itself the Image of the Invisible; in the blessed contemplation of the Image you will see the ineffable beauty of the Archetype."

*Gregory Nazianzen.* "He is 'Son of Man' by reason of Adam and by reason of the Virgin, from both of whom he came. . . . He is 'Christ' by reason of his divinity: for his divinity is the anointing of the humanity, making it holy not by operation as in other 'christs' but by the presence in entirety of the [divinity] which gives anointing—whose work it is that the one who anoints is called 'human' and that the one who receives the anointing is made to be God."

*Gregory of Nyssa.* "Christ, the author and fountain of peace, is like a pure, untainted stream. If you draw your mind's thoughts and your heart's inclinations from him, you will show forth a likeness to Christ, your source and origin, just as the gleaming water in a jar resembles the flowing water from which it was taken."

*Augustine.* "Our greatest human misery is to be without the One without Whom we cannot be. . . . If we do not remember or understand or love God, God is not with us."

"Question the beauty of the earth, the beauty of the sea, the beauty of the wide air around you, the beauty of the sky . . . ; question all these. They will all answer you: 'Behold and see, we are beautiful.' Their beauty is their confession of God. Who made these beautiful changing things, if not One who is beautiful and does not change?"

"He whose power was so great hungered, thirsted, grew weary, fell asleep, was taken prisoner, was beaten, crucified, slain. This is the way: walk through humility that you may come to eternity. Christ as God is the home toward which we go; Christ as human is the way by which we go."

*Leo the Great.* "[In Christ] the properties of each nature . . . are preserved and come together into one person: humility is taken up by majesty, weakness by power, mortality by eternity; . . . an inviolable nature is united to one that could suffer."

*Boethius.* "A person is an individual substance of a rational nature."

"Eternity is the total, perfect, and simultaneous possession of unending life."

"Beatitude is a state made perfect by the gathering together of all goods."

*Pseudo-Dionysius the Areopagite.* "The Divine Being Itself . . . is called Goodness because the Good, as Essential Good, by Its Being sends forth Its Goodness to all things that are."

"From this Beautiful [God] all things have their being, each kind being beautiful according to its own reason, and the Beautiful causes the harmonies and sympathies and communion of all things."

"Jesus, the source and perfecter of all hierarchies."

"Assimilation to, and union with, God, as far as it is attainable, is deification. And this is the common goal of every hierarchy—the clinging love towards God and divine things. . . ."

"At the end of the ascent discourse will be totally silent because totally united to the One Whom no words can describe."

*Gregory the Great.* "Christ heard supercelestial realities from the Father and wished his servants to know them so as to make them friends. . . . When we love these supercelestial realities, we already know these realities we love, because love itself is knowledge."

*John Damascene.* "Finally, the great sea of God's benevolence towards us was made manifest, for the Creator and Lord took up the struggle on behalf of us creatures and became a teacher in deed . . . , simultaneously manifesting divine goodness, wisdom, justice, and power. Goodness, because God did not despise the weakness of the divine handiwork but, when we fell, had compassion on us and stretched out a hand to us. Justice, because, when we had suffered defeat, God did not have another [than us] conquer the tyrant or snatch us away from death by force; rather, the Good and Just One made us the victors, we who had once been enslaved by sin—like rescuing like, a most difficult task. Wisdom, because God found the most fitting solution for this most difficult problem. . . ."

"And he, while being perfect God, became perfectly human and accomplished the newest of all new things, the only new thing under the sun, by which the infinite power of God was clearly shown. For what is greater than for God to become human?"

*Simeon the New Theologian.* "I therefore entreat your love to pursue [charity] with all your strength and to run after it with faith so that you may hold on it. You will by no means be disappointed of your hopes! However great your zeal and many the efforts of your asceticism, they are all in vain and without useful result unless they attain to love in a broken spirit (Ps 51:19). By no other virtue, by no other fulfilment of the Lord's commandment, can anyone be known as a disciple of Christ."



*Anselm.* "O Lord, I do not seek to penetrate your depths, for in no way can I compare my intellect to it, but I desire in some way to understand your truth, which my heart believes and loves. For I do not seek to understand in order that I may believe, but I believe in order that I may understand."

"[In the Trinity] neither does unity lose its properties unless some opposition stands in the way, nor does relation lose its properties unless insuperable unity stands in the way."

"O Lord, make me partake of your Body and Blood in mouth and heart and grasp them by faith and affection in such a way that through their power I may merit to be rooted into the likeness of your death and resurrection . . . so that I may be worthy to be incorporated into your body 'which is the Church' and become your member and you my Head."

*Hildegard of Bingen.* [Song of the Virtues]:

O ancient holy ones, what makes you marvel at us?  
The Word of God gleams in a human form,  
and so we sparkle with it,  
building the limbs of His lovely body.

*Abelard.* "By raising a doubt, we arrive at inquiry, and by inquiring we grasp truth."

"I do not wish to be a philosopher in such a way as to reject Paul; I do not want to be Aristotle in such a way as to be separated from Christ."

*Heloise.* "Through lack and need of a rule proper to women, today women as well as men undertake the same profession of rule in monasteries, and the same yoke of monastic observance is imposed on the physically weaker sex as on the stronger. At present among Latin [monasteries] the identical rule of St. Benedict is professed by women equally with men. Clearly, this rule is written for men alone, and so it can be fully followed only by men. . . . To say nothing here about the other articles of the rule, what has it to do with women when it writes about cowls, femorals, and scapulars, or about tunics or woolen garments that cannot, as is prescribed, be worn next to the skin on account of our monthly periods?"

*Bernard.* "The reason for loving God is the very Self of God; the measure of loving God is to love God without measure."

*Hugh of St. Victor.* "Here is the whole of divinity: this is that spiritual structure which is raised on high, built as it were with as many levels as it contains mysteries."

*Richard of St. Victor.* "In a mutual and deeply fervent love nothing is surely more precious and noble than for you to want someone else to be loved equally by the one whom you love supremely and by whom you are supremely loved. And so the proof of a charity that has reached its perfection is the desire to share the love shown to oneself."

"Contemplation is a free penetration of the mind into the wonders of wisdom, upheld and accompanied by admiration."

*Francis of Assisi.* "Praised be you, my Lord, through those who give pardon for your love, and bear infirmity and tribulation. Blessed are they who endure in peace, for by you, Most High, they shall be crowned."

*Clare of Assisi.* "Place your mind before the mirror of eternity. Place your soul in the brilliance of glory. Place your heart in the figure of the divine substance. And transform your whole being into the image of the Godhead Itself through contemplation, so that you too may feel what His friends feel as they taste the hidden sweetness which God's very Self has reserved from the beginning to those who love God."

*Hadewijch.* "Things of great wonder come to those who give their all to love. "They will be glued to love with love, and with love they will fathom love. . . ."

"God grant that all who crave love be well prepared for love, that they may live of her wealth alone, and draw her into their love."

*Bonaventure.* "That which is believable, the object of faith, passes into a mode in which it becomes intelligible."

"The knowledge given us in this book [Lombard's *Sentences*] is chiefly given so that we may become good."

*Thomas Aquinas.* "Having spoken of the Exemplar, God, we must now examine God's image, the human person, insofar as we *also* are principles of our own works by reason of our free choice and power over our own works."

"The Son is the Word—not any kind of word, but the Word breathing forth Love; hence Augustine says that the Word we mean to speak of is Knowledge with Love."

"The Son is not sent to us [from the Father] in every kind of knowledge we acquire but only in that kind of instruction of our intellects whereby we burst forth with affections of love, as is said in John 6:45: 'Everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to me,' and Psalm 38:4 says: 'In my meditation a fire is enkindled.' And so Augustine says explicitly that 'the Son is sent when the Son is known and perceived by someone': now 'perception' means a certain kind of experiential knowledge."

*Mechtilde of Magdeburg.*

As the Godhead strikes the note  
Humanity sings  
The Holy Spirit is the harpist  
And all the strings must sound  
which are strung in love.

"The Trinity is like a mother's cloak wherein a child finds a home and lays its head on the maternal breast."

*Eckhart.* "A virgin who is a wife, free and unfettered in affections, is equally near both to God and to self. She brings forth much fruit and is big withal, no less and no more than God is. This virgin who is a wife accomplishes this birth, bears fruit every day an hundred- or a thousand-fold—yes, she gives birth times without number and bears fruit from the most fertile of soils."

*Dante Alighieri.* "In God's will is our peace."

Maiden and Mother, daughter of thine own Son,  
Beyond all creatures lowly and lifted high,  
Of the Eternal Design the cornerstone!

*Jan Van Ruysbroeck.* "The abyss of Goodness that we taste and possess we can neither grasp nor understand; neither can we enter into it by ourselves or by means of our own activities. And so we are poor in ourselves, but rich in God; hungry and thirsty in ourselves, drunken and fulfilled in God; busy in ourselves, idle in God. And thus we shall remain throughout eternity. But without the exercise of love, we can never possess God; and whosoever thinks or feels otherwise is deceived."

*Catherine of Siena.* "Truth must be ministered by truthful persons who are in love with the truth."

"If we are not searching for the truth, we show that truth is not in us."<sup>28</sup>

*William Langland.* "If there were no more mercy among the poor than among the rich, beggars might go meatless to slumber. God is often in the gorge of these great masters, but among the lowly are his mercy and his works. . . . Clerics and other conditions converse of God readily and have God much in the mouth, but they are mean in their hearts."

*Chaucer.*

A good man was there of religioun,  
And was a povre Parson of a town;  
But rich he was of holy thought and work.  
He was also a learned man, a clerk. . . .  
Full loth were him to cursen for his tythes,  
But rather would he give, out of doubt,  
Un-to his povre parishfolk about  
Of his offering, and eke of his substance  
He could in little thing have suffisance.

*Julian of Norwich.* "Our great Father, almighty God . . . wanted the second person to become our Mother, our brother and our savior. . . . As truly as God is our Father, so truly is God our Mother. Our Father wills, our Mother works, our good Lord the Holy Spirit confirms."

"God said: 'You will not be overcome.' God wants us to pay attention to his words, and always to be strong in our certainty, in well-being and in woe, for he loves and delights in us, and so he wishes us to love him and delight in him and trust greatly in him, and all will be well."

*Ignatius of Loyola.* "God alone can give consolation to the soul without previous cause. It is for the Creator alone to enter into a soul, leave it, act upon it, and draw it totally toward divine love."

<sup>28</sup>I am grateful to Susanne Noffke, O.P., for these quotations from Catherine.

*Teresa of Avila.* "I cannot admit that those who suffer do not pray because, by offering their sufferings to God, they often pray better than those who break their heads in solitude and imagine that if they shed a few tears they are praying."

*John of the Cross.* "How delicately in love You make me fall."

"In the evening of life we shall be judged on love."

"Where there is no love, put love in and you will draw love out."

*Francis de Sales.* ". . . Devotion must be practiced in different ways by the nobleman and by the working man, by the servant and by the prince, by the widow, by the unmarried girl and by the married woman. But even this distinction is not sufficient; for the practice of devotion must be adapted to the strength, to the occupation and to the duties of each one in particular. . . . Is it proper for a bishop to want to lead a solitary life like a Carthusian, or for married people to be no more concerned than a Capuchin about increasing their income . . . ?"

*Pascal.* "The heart has reasons that reason knows not."

"We are neither angels nor beasts, and it is our misery that if we want to play the angel we end up playing the beast."