

RESPONSE TO WALTER PRINCIPE (2)

Fr. Principe's important presidential address has challenged us to an ever deeper and more responsible intellectual life as Catholic theologians. Central to personal and ecclesial identity, he reminds us, is memory, that habitual horizon of beliefs, meanings, and value orientations without which human intelligence would be reduced to infantile babbling. The Cartesian universal doubt, so fateful in the biases distorting modern cultures, is a fiction no one has been able to practice. It was the philosophical counterpart to those tendencies in modern Enlightenment cultures which negated the achievements of the past as no more than a benighted prehistory. Modern cultures suffer from religious amnesia, and Fr. Principe has challenged us to remove this flight from memory by serious theological retrievals of the decisive intellectual achievements of our Catholic traditions. In the theology of St. Augustine, we in the present will be able to make possible a more healing and whole future to the extent that we live—and reflect out of the redemptive and whole *memoria passionis et resurrectionis Jesu*.¹

Of the many important issues Fr. Principe has discussed I shall limit my response to three: historical retrieval and systematics, the intellectual challenge of tradition, and suggestions for our society of theological scholars.

HISTORY AND SYSTEMATICS

Fr. Principe attends to the disproportionately large number of our members whose doctoral dissertation work done in the past twelve years was on contemporary figures or questions—seventy-six percent within the twentieth century, and eighty-nine percent if the nineteenth century is included. The seriousness of this observation is strengthened when we observe that for the vast majority of Catholic theologians teaching in seminaries and Catholic colleges and universities, the longest period of sustained scholarly research without teaching responsibilities in their entire lives will have been the years spent doing doctoral theses. I would wager that the majority of those dissertations were done in what is generally termed systematic theology, including fundamental or philosophical theology, as well as doctrinal theology. If theology generally is a stepchild of modernity, then, among the four fields in contemporary theology and religious studies departments (biblical, historical, systematics, moral), systematics is orphaned. While the other three fields have journals and associations dedicated specifically to their fields (bibli-

¹Gottlieb Söhnngen, *Die Einheit der Theologie* (Freiburg: Karl Alber, 1952) 63-100, on Augustine's notion of memory. Johann Baptist Metz indicates the centrality of memory for a political theology as a practical foundational theology, *Faith in History and Society* (New York: Crossroad, 1980) 184-204.

cal, historical, ethics), there are no associations or journals dedicated to only systematic theology. Having no associations of our own, we may well be over represented in this society's membership.

I believe that Fr. Principe's message is especially important for us to understand. It is true that we have many very important contemporary challenges to meet as Catholic theologians at the end of the twentieth century. Those challenges have already been mentioned in this conference: the absence of theology from North American intellectual life, the challenge of the empirical sciences, the demands of historical consciousness as implying, not only the study of history, but also the need to transform histories distorted by racism, ethnocentrism, class oppression, sexism, and environmental destruction. To meet these contemporary challenges, however, we need our Catholic memory. The more daunting the innovations, the more must we cultivate our traditions. Insofar as the field of systematic theology considers the Word of God as true, we cannot simply leave our doctrinal and theological traditions to historians.²

Fr. Principe has raised the importance of historical criticism as a major contemporary challenge to theology. He correctly indicates that historical criticism does not negate our traditions but enables us to undertake the labor of coming to know past cultures and traditions. He has a very Catholic theological understanding of history. The new need not negate the old, the Jewish covenant is not negated by the covenant in Christ Jesus, both the ancients and the moderns are to be studied. This Catholic sense of history differs sharply from the post-Enlightenment tendency to exalt, as Hegel did, "the force of the negative" in history. Having played out this negative force in the horrors of world wars, contemporary cultures could be enriched by a more Catholic sense of historical cooperation rather than historical conflict. The genuine authority of tradition is not authoritarian.³

Fr. Principe calls attention to the many studies now going on in the history of early Christianity, the patristic and medieval periods. We cannot leave our history to historians who may know little theology. Insofar as historians are enculturated in contemporary secularist cultures, they will tend to make their histories intelligible to people living in contemporary secularist horizons. The process of critical history, of moving from historical experience to historical knowledge, should occur twice. As Lonergan has observed: "In the first instance one is coming to un-

²I am using "field of systematics" in a broad sense which would include what was previously referred to as fundamental, philosophical, apologetic, and doctrinal theology. In Bernard Lonergan's functional specialization, it would include dialectics, foundations, and doctrines, as well as the specialty of systematics.

³Bernard Lonergan, "The Dialectic of Authority," *A Third Collection* (New York: Paulist, 1985) 5-12. On a Catholic theological understanding of history, Hans Urs von Balthasar, *A Theological Anthropology* (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1967) 103-238; Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Crossroad, 1972) 175-266; Karl Rahner, *Hörer des Wortes* (Munich: Kösel Verlag, 1963) 137-202; a partial translation in Gerald McCool, ed., *A Rahner Reader* (New York: Crossroad, 1975) 46-65. Central to this Catholic theological sense of history is that sublation need not negate what is sublated. For a contrast with modernity, Zygmunt Bauman, *Modernity and the Holocaust* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1989) and Edith Wyschogrod, *Spirit in Ashes: Hegel, Heidegger, and Man-Made Mass Death* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985).

derstand one's sources. In the second instance one is using one's understood sources intelligently to come to understand the object to which they are relevant."⁴ The first phase of critical history is the very familiar one of identifying authors or historical agents, situating their actions and/or works in time and place, studying their historical contexts and sources. But then one should move on to understand the objects, processes, events, and realities referred to in those critically established sources.

For example, take the works of an Augustine, Origen, Aquinas, or Teresa. A critical historian would set about establishing their very different historical, literary, cultural contexts, what sources they drew upon, what texts are more reliable, etc. This is fairly standard stuff in historical theology. One can read the results of such critical historical field work in the surveys and articles and books given to graduate students to introduce them to a subject. But can the critical historian make the move to the second phase or instance of critical history when what an Augustine, Origen, Aquinas, or Teresa are so obviously discussing is their friendship with the triune God? What is moving forward in the historical communities of the faithful who down the ages continue to read and meditate upon these works in the contexts of their own deepening friendship with God? One cannot do justice to such a second phase critical history without theology.

While a critical historian might not need to know faith, the spiritual life, or the mystery of the Trinity to do textual criticism, establish sources, compare one set of texts with another set of texts (after all, anyone who can read can begin to do that!), it is something else if he or she is going to engage in a history of faith, prayer, or theology as an *intellectus fidei*. If the critical historian has no knowledge of God, no familiarity with faith or prayer, then the critical historian is anything but "critical" in the full sense of that word. The so-called critical historian is in fact an ignorant historian when it comes to the second phase.

Then he or she is like an historian of mathematics who knows little about mathematics. Such a person might well be able to do a smash up job at comparing various mathematical texts, at dating and placing them more or less precisely, at working out certain social and/or cultural processes that were going on at the time the mathematical texts were being produced, at who used which text to get what advantage in this or that situation, how such a text was used in the production of weapons, what the weapons did, etc., etc. Undoubtedly, such a history would be very readable for those who are not interested in knowing the history of mathematics so much as in knowing what else was going on when such and such a mathematics was being done. But no one would claim that such a history would merit the name of a genuinely critical history of mathematics.

How many genuinely critical histories of theology are being done now? The sad thing is that what passes for critical histories of religion and theology in modern secularist cultures are usually histories that are critical of (in the sense of negating) theology. They simply assume that what is really real is a secular horizon in which religion is at best a tribal prejudice or a private opinion, and at worst a neurotic delusion, or an ideology of oppression. In a secularist culture theology can become "public" only at the expense of negating its claim to be reflecting

⁴*Method in Theology*, 189, 156-58, 161-62, 348-49.

upon divine realities. So-called critical histories are histories ignorant of these realities which are transcendently immanent in human history.

I am not stating that one must be moral or holy to write a critical history of morality or of the saints. I am saying one must *know* the realities operative, the processes occurring, in morality, in religion, and in holiness.⁵ If one is going to do a critical history of faith, prayer, or theology, one had best know something about the realities of faith, prayer, or theology. If critical history in theology is not advanced to this second phase, then theology as such ceases.⁶ Instead we get what might be termed a comparative textology which only recognizes as real what is admissible into a secularist horizon. It is as if we had lost our knowledge of mathematics or science, and were limited to doing empirical and literary comparisons of mathematical and scientific texts.

In order to know the realities mediated in our religious and theological traditions, therefore, theologians had best not leave those traditions to historians who know little or no theology.

INTELLECTUAL CHALLENGES OF OUR TRADITIONS

Fr. Principe's call to a greater study and appropriation of our Catholic theological traditions should not be misunderstood as a call to a conservative classicism. The categories of conservative and liberal, reactionary and progressive, are not transcendentals. The transition from classicism to modernism is sometimes misunderstood as a dismissal of the classics. In fact, classicism does not do justice to the great classics. Classicism refers to cultural horizons which make normative what is not normative. Classicism misplaced normativity by locating it in terminology, in languages, in texts, in conceptualism. The classics transcend such misplaced normativity by inviting us to experience the wonder of intelligence and wisdom in act. Instead of understanding all cultural achievements as expressions of cooperative human intelligence in act, a classicist fixes upon either the externals of language, texts, monuments (if the classicist has an empiricist bent) or upon the logic of the ideas and concepts (if she or he has an idealist bent).⁷

⁵A central issue is how history requires judgment. From decadent scholasticism on, there has been a tendency, carried over into modern post-Enlightenment cultures, to eclipse judgment into synthetic perceptions, ideas, or meanings, which require decision and power to be realized. Hence the equation of truth and knowledge with power as domination. On correctives to this, Michael H. McCarthy, *The Crisis of Philosophy* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990). As Lonergan has indicated, we have to advert to the process of judgment correctly if we are going to resolve the issues raised by historical consciousness.

⁶On the development of modern secularism, Michael J. Buckley, *At the Origins of Modern Atheism* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1987) and his "Experience and Culture: A Point of Departure for American Atheism," *Theological Studies* 50/3 (September 1989) 443-65; William Shea, *The Naturalists and the Supernatural* (Macon GA: Mercer University Press, 1984); also James Turner, *Without God, Without Creed: The Origins of Unbelief in America* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 1985).

⁷Matthew L. Lamb, "The Notion of the Transcultural in Bernard Lonergan's Theology," *Method: A Journal of Lonergan Studies* 8/1 (March 1990) 48-73.

We moderns can just as easily fall into the fallacy of misplaced normativity. There is the widespread phenomenon of reification: we humans by our intelligence make things which we then take as more intelligent and/or normative than intelligence itself. Think of the debates on computers and "artificial intelligence." So Lonergan, for example, coupled his critique of classicism with a strong affirmation of the classics. The classics are such because they invite us to intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. The reader response is crucial, for if such conversions do not occur, then the tradition cannot be made genuine just by repeating the texts.⁸ The classics are such because they mediate far more than words, ideas, propositions, models, paradigms, or worldviews. When correctly understood, they mediate the realities of ongoing discoveries of nature, of mind, of God. Christian and Catholic classics insist that the discovery of nature and of mind is the discovery of the very image of God in us. Indeed, our discoveries are possible ultimately only because we are first found by God in God's own creative and redemptive Self-communication to us, as is evident in Karl Rahner's theology. Just as we do not pray to, or worship, ideas or propositions or models, so our minds do not rest until they know, not ideas or propositions or models, but reality and truth and beauty, as Hans Urs von Balthasar's theological works attest.

It is no surprise, then, that our Catholic classics abound with critiques of the fallacies of misplaced normativity. For example, Athanasius has Anthony pose the question to the Greek philosophers: "Which is greater mind (*νοῦς*) or letters (*γράμματα*)?" When they reply that obviously mind is greater since it creates letters, Anthony symbolically narrates how the Greeks fail to live this in the idolatry of a culture now decadent and distracted from both mind and faith in the living God.⁹ Or take Augustine's achievements in stressing the need for agapic love (*caritas*) in order to know the realities communicated in the signs of scripture and holy teachings. There is also his monumental transposition of trinitarian theology from the sensible images of Father generating Son to analogies drawn from the intelligible activities of understanding, knowing, and loving. The triune God is

⁸*Method in Theology*, 161-62: "The classics ground a tradition. They create the milieu in which they are studied and interpreted. They produce in the reader through the cultural tradition the mentality, the *Vorverständnis*, from which they will be read, studied, interpreted. Now such a tradition may be genuine, authentic, a long accumulation of insights, adjustments, re-interpretations, that repeats the original message afresh for each age. In that case the reader will exclaim, as did the disciples on the way to Emmaus: 'Did not our hearts burn within us, when he spoke on the way and opened to us the scriptures?' (Lk. 24, 32). On the other hand, the tradition may be unauthentic. It may consist in a watering-down of the original message, in recasting it into terms and meanings that fit into the assumptions and convictions of those that have dodged the issue of radical conversion. In that case a genuine interpretation will be met with incredulity and ridicule, as was St. Paul when he preached in Rome and was led to quote Isaiah: 'Go to this people and say: you will hear and hear and never understand; you will look and look, but never see' (Acts 28, 26)."

⁹Athanasius, *The Life of Anthony*, trans. Robert C. Gregg (New York: Paulist, 1980) 84-99. The Greek title is "the life and political constitution or citizenship (*πολιτεία*) of our holy father Anthony." On the recent question of authorship, Andrew Louth, "St. Athanasius and the Greek Life of Anthony," *Journal of Theological Studies* (1988) 504-509.

Infinite Understanding generating Infinite Truth spirating Infinite Love.¹⁰ Or take Thomas Aquinas who discovered that Aristotle's "lumen intellectus agentis" or light of active intelligence was the same reality Augustine wrote of as the illumination of the mind or "desiderium animi intelligendi," the desire of the mind to understand. The light of reason is only healed and intensified by the light of faith and the light of glory. Hence the whole of theology can be architectonically structured as ongoing questions.¹¹

Fr. Principe mentions how those who have deeply appropriated our Catholic theological traditions sometimes find contemporary theological work is rootless and not serious enough. If theology is to be an intellectually vital inquiry, then we contemporary systematians are going to have to take the ongoing discovery of mind in history more seriously than many of us have. Insofar as we seek to understand and transform the challenges posed by empirical sciences and historical consciousness, we cannot overlook the previous differentiations of mind in our own traditions. For example, Athanasius and Augustine were within the processes differentiating creed and doctrine from scripture and gospel. So also Aquinas contributed to a further differentiation of creed and doctrine into *summae* of theology, with their theoretical distinctions of reason and faith, nature and grace, now architectonically fashioned by a systematic structuring of questions. These differentiations were neither separations from, nor negations of, what preceded. Scripture was never abandoned, rather it was precisely to deal with the real questions which arose because the scriptures were in faith accepted as the truthful Word of God. These differentiations were moments in the ongoing discovery of mind in faith.¹²

So too, contemporary differentiations in terms of modern sciences and historical consciousness in no way negate what has preceded. For the development of human intelligence in history is concretely universal, that is, it embraces the whole span of humankind in its multiple quests for correct understanding, the truly real, and responsible love. There is a continuity of journey among the ancients and the

¹⁰Books one and two of Augustine's *De Doctrina Christiana* and books eight through ten of his *De Trinitate*. The need for spiritual exercises to understand both the philosophers who taught Augustine to search for mind, as well as the further spiritual exercises so well narrated in books five through nine of Augustine's *Confessions*, cf. Pierre Hadot, *Exercices spirituels et philosophie antique* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1987) 2nd ed. and Pierre Paul Courcelle, *Connais-toi toi-même de Socrate à Saint Bernard* (Paris: Études augustiniennes, 1974). Gerard O'Daly's *Augustine's Philosophy of Mind* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1987) 204-207, on illumination. This latter work tends to stop at first-phase critical-historical reconstruction.

¹¹Bernard Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1967). It was Lonergan's second-phase critical-historical retrieval of Aquinas that enabled him to transpose his "reaching up to the mind of Aquinas" into his invitation to intellectual self-appropriation in *Insight*.

¹²Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 249-66, 302-20. As he points out, this ongoing discovery of mind is especially important for understanding the differentiations of creed and doctrine from scripture and gospel. Doctrines are not arbitrary expressions of power or merely willful decisions; understanding them adequately requires the foundations of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion. Cf. Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth," *A Third Collection*, 239-50.

moderns: the journey of humankind towards ever more genuine intelligence, moral goodness, religious holiness. In such a journey humankind is not alone. The journey is possible only with, in, and by God's creating and gracing presence. The concrete universality of genuine catholicity is neither dominative nor authoritarian, for it is mediated in and through the particularity of each and every journey towards genuine intelligence, goodness, holiness. As Lonergan remarks: "Any incoherence in what Christians believe by faith in God is due, not to God, but to their own unauthenticity."¹³ The intellectual challenge of our traditions is that we contemporary theologians, at the very least, attain the genuine differentiations constitutive of the best of those traditions. To simply dismiss or ignore those traditions, with their differentiations, is to impoverish drastically our own self-understanding and our theology.¹⁴

This is especially the case if we as theologians are concerned with historical and social transformation. Fr. Principe's address emphasized how a hermeneutics of suspicion is not a license for total dismissal. Humankind's journey toward intelligence, goodness, and holiness is concretely and massively a way of the Cross. We can learn much from an Augustine and an Origen on the need for supernatural faith, hope, and agapic love in order that the intellectual and moral virtues not collapse into cynicism and skepticism before the injustice of human evil. We cannot liberate the oppressed if we simply contribute to the ongoing negations of their intellectual, moral, and religious identity. A primal act of oppression is the attempt to erase memory and so identity, as Roberto Goizueta reminded us.

It was within Catholic traditions that the universities emerged out of the monastic and cathedral schools. This initially led to a proper differentiation of wisdom and science, of faith and reason. That differentiation has by now become a separation and, often, an opposition. If the best and brightest students in centuries long past would flock into theology and philosophy, they now seek out the sciences and technologies, and they do this in widely different cultural, ethnic and religious contexts. The discovery of intelligence in act is precisely a concrete way of transcending bias, as Shawn Copeland indicated, without engendering further bias. We can learn much from the beggars (mendicants), an Aquinas and a Bonaventure, to aid us in the tasks of finding new ways of integrating wisdom and science, of recovering human intelligence operative in the vast developments of science, scholarship, and cultures. This learning would also manifest the inadequacies of the Aristotelian notion of science far deeper than those imagined by Galileo.

If, as Prudence Allen and others have shown, monastic traditions called both men and women to the spiritual, moral, and intellectual journey, then the exclusion of women from the universities was, perhaps, far more fateful in the devel-

¹³Ibid., 249.

¹⁴Lonergan, *Method in Theology*, 352: "A fourth factor making for continuity is the occurrence in the past of genuine achievement. . . . Aquinas's thought on grace and freedom and his thought on cognitional theory and on the trinity were genuine achievements of the human spirit. Such achievement has a permanence of its own. It can be improved upon. It can be inserted in larger and richer contexts. But unless its substance is incorporated in subsequent work, the subsequent work will be a substantially poorer affair."

opment of sexist bias in later Western cultures than has been generally acknowledged.¹⁵ Fr. Principe called our attention to the growing historical scholarship on women in our traditions, and Joann Conn indicated how contemporary feminism is developing a more self-critical style of questioning, as in Elizabeth Fox-Genovese's *Feminism without Illusion: A Critique of Individualism*. There are resources in Catholic traditions to draw upon in counteracting the hyper-individualism and careerism in modern cultures, as also for developing the needed critiques of those feminists who adopt typically naturalist rejections of Judaism and Christianity. God does not will the oppression of anyone, to the degree that sinful oppression exists, its cause is human unauthenticity.

If we accept the intellectual challenges of our traditions, if we enter into humankind's ongoing discovery of mind, we can heal in ourselves and in our cultures the biases of racism, classicism, sexism, and technocentrism. For a common root of those and all other biases is precisely the neglect of human attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, and responsible loving. We can then undertake a genuine dialectical discernment in the spirit of Newman's call to universal belief, thereby avoiding the pitfalls of a Cartesian universal doubt and its surrender into a Nietzschean nihilism.

SUGGESTIONS

In conclusion, I join with Fr. Principe in recommending that our society initiate ongoing seminars in patristic and medieval theologies. We need to encourage serious theological scholarship in these fields. There are a growing number of our younger colleagues who would contribute to the vital intellectual inquiry of our annual meetings with their scholarship in patristic and medieval theology. I would also suggest that we encourage more serious scholarly exchanges on those issues which appear to divide so-called conservatives and liberals. Those labels, as I have said, are not transcendental. The challenge we are faced with is to transcend merely rhetorical debate and explore the religious, moral, and intellectual realities and orientations underlying our many disagreements. Simply passing resolutions at our annual meetings is no substitution for promoting in depth and serious theological scholarship on those questions.

I also second strongly his recommendation that our Research and Publication Committee initiate a study of just what our actual practices are in both the academic and seminary graduate programs. The soul of a theology program is the intellectual and spiritual life of its faculty and students. There is a great danger today, as Fr. Principe points out, that this soul will suffocate under the weight of administrative bureaucracy with its instrumentalist or technical approach to all questions. There is a great danger that genuine intellectual and spiritual patterns of cooperative learning and teaching will give way to a careerist instrumentalism and professionalism, as administrators remake colleges, universities, and seminaries into the image of management control.

¹⁵Prudence Allen, *The Concept of Woman: The Aristotelian Revolution 450 BC-1250 AD* (Montreal: Eden Press, 1985) 413-43.

We need institutes for Catholic intellectual research, especially in theology as an architectonic wisdom. We need to collaborate, to contribute our small measure, in the building up of what North American cultures, churches and universities need so desperately, cathedrals of the mind: Cathedrals of the mind, far more enduring than those of stone, wherein we can cultivate attentive reverence for the goodness and holiness of every real question, of every act of correct understanding and discovery as ultimately gift, a finite created participation in the wondrous, embracing Mystery of Infinite Understanding generating Infinite Wisdom spiriting Infinite Love.¹⁶ We need cathedrals of the mind in which each and every person's restless mind and heart feels at home, in which the achievements of every age and every culture and every people will be celebrated. We need cathedrals of the mind in which we can repent of the blind stupidity that hangs like an ominous shadow over all of history, repressing unwanted insights in ourselves and oppressing countless minds and hearts by the blindness of racial, sexual, class, nationalist, and technocentric biases.

Our minds are the very image of God in us, the God who enlightens every human being who ever has, is, and will come into this world. We need cathedrals of the mind wherein we can be forgiven by God and one another as we deepen our intellectual, moral, religious reorientations toward truth, goodness, holiness. We need cathedrals of the mind in which we can address the massive injustices of our times, not with mere moralisms that hurl invectives, but with intellectually sound alternatives that address the shortsighted stupidity which ground the injustice. For justice to flourish practical wisdom is needed. Binding up the massive wounds of injustice requires both the compassion of the corporal works of mercy and the enlightenment of the spiritual works of mercy.

Finally, we need cathedrals of the mind wherein we can experience how our own most intimately personal questions, insights and orientations are intrinsically communal and interpersonal with both the concrete universality of the community of the entire human race and with the Three Persons who are more intimate to each of us than even we are to ourselves. All understanding involves a suffering, a *pati*, and it is only when the light of our minds is healed and intensified by the light of faith that we can avoid the temptations to cynicism, skepticism, and despairing nihilism when, from all around us and deep within us, come the cries of the victims. Only with the strength of the Spirit can the extended passion narratives of all of human history narrated in the new covenant be accepted as gospel, as good news of salvation in the glory of the resurrection. Incorporated within the Paschal Victim are all the victims of history, some of whose stories grace us from the opening pages of Genesis to the last pages of Revelations. They teach us a wisdom

¹⁶The image is from Bernard Lonergan, "The Gratia Operans Dissertation: Preface and Introduction," *Method: A Journal of Lonergan Studies* 3/2 (October 1985) 18. The image of a "cathedral" of the mind comes out of Christian traditions. Others would call it a synagogue, temple, or mosque of the mind. The point of the image is the need to reintegrate contemporary sciences and scholarship with religious wisdom and faith. Just as we Christians need the forgiveness of God for the many times we have betrayed the Cross by the sword, the gentleness of truth by the use of dominative power, so we need the patience of God in the long ecumenical responsibilities on which the world church has embarked. Ecumenism and the dialogue of world religions is never advanced by amnesia.

that is of God, a wisdom of the Blessed "who have come out of great suffering and been washed in the in the blood of the Lamb. They shall neither hunger nor thirst nor suffer any more, for God shall wipe away every tear from their eyes" (Rev 7:14, 17). If the depth of human suffering is to birth understanding, it is because of the *kenosis* of the divine Wisdom who alone can bring good out of evil, grace out of sin, life out of death.

Thank you again, Fr. Principe, for the graciousness of your most timely and important presidential address.

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