

Essays in Systematic Theology 34: What Is the Gift of the Holy Spirit?¹

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1 Introduction

The purpose of the annual colloquium in systematic theology sponsored by the Marquette Lonergan Project is to encourage collaboration in developing a systematic theology that self-consciously attends to the multi-religious context of the contemporary world. The systematic theology envisioned in these colloquia will be Christian and Catholic. As an exercise in what Bernard Lonergan would call the functional specialty ‘systematics,’ it will attempt to attain an imperfect, analogical, and fruitful understanding of the central mysteries of Christian faith. But it will do so with sensitivity to the multi-religious world in which we live, and will attempt to communicate the implications of systematic understanding of the faith to the enterprise of dialogue and cooperation among the various religious traditions.

The colloquium is being established, then, with explicit commitment to the conviction that the Holy Spirit’s call to Christians in our day is a call to promote the collaboration of religions and to follow the exigencies of such collaboration wherever they may take us. ‘A theology mediates between a cultural matrix,’ writes Lonergan, ‘and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix.’² The world-cultural matrix of our day is multi-religious, and so a universalist systematic theology, that is, a systematic theology that would mediate Christian faith and *that* cultural matrix based in the conviction of the universal gift of what Christians call the Holy Spirit, must labor to express the meaning of the mysteries of explicitly Christian faith with

1 This was the Emmett Doerr Lecture at Marquette University in October 2009, and the first lecture in the new series of colloquia at Marquette on ‘Doing Catholic Systematic Theology in a Multi-religious World.’

2 Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003) xi.

a view to communication with sincere believers who adhere to other religious traditions, practices, and communities, and with an openness to receive from those believers the truth and accumulated wisdom of their own heritage.

Robley Edward Whitson, a Quaker author whose book *The Coming Convergence of World Religions*³ won Lonergan's admiration, calls specific traditions to identify just what it is that they uniquely bring to the table of the world religions, even while they remain ready to hear and engage the unique contributions of the other communities engaging in dialogue. The mediation that Lonergan has in mind is what he calls a mutual self-mediation. It is not a one-way street, from the Christian religion to the cultural matrix, but is rather marked by a readiness to learn from the other participants just as it hopes the other participants will be ready to learn from Christianity. Nor is it engaged simply in mediating into the present the past that is uniquely Christian, which would be an instance of what Lonergan calls self-mediation. Self-mediation, obviously, is important, and in fact is required if we are to know and articulate what is uniquely ours; but it does not equip the church to be engaged in the contemporary religious quest or to participate in the emerging religious consciousness of our time. For that consciousness will emerge precisely out of what Whitson calls the coming convergence of the world's religions. If systematic theologians are to do their job of providing on the level of our time an imperfect, analogical, cumulative, progressive, and fruitful understanding of the mysteries of Christian faith (DS 3016), then they must take seriously the multi-religious context for pursuing such understanding in our time.

The unique contributions that Christianity offers to this world-cultural matrix, I would suggest, lie principally in three doctrines: the incarnation of the eternal Word of God in Jesus of Nazareth, the Trinitarian nature of God, and the resurrection of Jesus from the dead. Also central

3 Robley Edward Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York: Newman, 1971).

is the implication of the passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus for a non-violent response to the scandal of evil in the world. Remove any one of these, and Christianity has been eviscerated of the very marrow of its bones; it would have nothing unique to bring to the dialogue. But obviously, there are other doctrinal commitments that lie behind the convictions that I have already expressed. The first and most important is a commitment to affirming the universal mission of the Holy Spirit, which means the mission of the Spirit beyond the explicit boundaries of the Christian communions. There is an opening upon this recognition in the very creeds that Christians pronounce, for those creeds acknowledge that the Holy Spirit, the third person of the Blessed Trinity, spoke through the prophets of Israel, who, like some folks in the Acts of the Apostles, did not even know there was a Holy Spirit in the Trinitarian sense affirmed in the creeds. It is that doctrine of the universal mission of the Holy Spirit that I wish to begin to try to understand, precisely by providing from the treasure-house of Christian theology certain indications of what that mission would be even when the Holy Spirit is sent to people who do not share our doctrinal convictions and commitments, including the affirmation that there is a Holy Spirit in the fully Trinitarian sense, a third subject of the one divine consciousness, who proceeds from the first two subjects of that same consciousness as their mutual love for each other.

I will begin by summarizing what is arguably the principal paper on this issue written within the community of Lonergan's students, Frederick E. Crowe's essay 'Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions.' This paper has become something of a founding document of the search for a theology of religion within the Lonergan community. Next, I will draw on three of the greatest contributions to Trinitarian theology in the Western Christian tradition in which I stand, those of Augustine, Aquinas, and Lonergan, to elucidate just what the gift of the Holy Spirit is. And finally, I will address the question of how we may acknowledge the gift when the expression of the gift contains little or nothing that is explicitly Christian or due to Christian revelation. In that context I will raise the crucial question, What happens to evangelization given these emphases?

2 Frederick Crowe's 'Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions'

Bernard Lonergan died at the Jesuit Infirmary in Pickering, Ontario, on the morning of November 26, 1984, the feast of a Jesuit saint, John Berchmans. That evening, Frederick Crowe delivered the Chancellor's lecture at the Regis College Convocation, a lecture that Crowe had been invited to deliver precisely in order to honor Lonergan in anticipation of his 80th birthday on December 17 of the same year. It was a very moving occasion, and I dare say the lecture could very well prove to be the single most outstanding contribution of Crowe's illustrious career in promoting and advancing the legacy of Bernard Lonergan. It continues to be quoted and mined for its contributions.

Crowe's paper consists of an introduction and two numbered sections, the first on 'Son and Spirit in the World' and the second entitled 'Christianity and World Religions.' In the introduction Crowe acknowledges that he is speaking as a Christian to Christians, and is attempting to define an approach to the world religions precisely from the Christian side. That approach, he suggests, will be defined by one basic thesis: 'We have simply to reverse the order in which commonly we think of the Son and Spirit in the world. Commonly we think of God first sending the Son, and of the Spirit being sent in that context, to bring to completion the work of the Son. The thesis says that, on the contrary, God first sent the Spirit, and then sent the Son in the context of the Spirit's mission, to bring to completion, perhaps not precisely the work of the Spirit, but the work which God conceived as one work to be executed in the two steps of the twofold mission of first the Spirit and then the Son.' This thesis, Crowe says, is 'the tacit supposition permeating all Lonergan's later work on the Son and Spirit.' Moreover, a complete

theology of the divine self-gift would add to the missions of the Spirit in love and of the Son in the outer word the self-gift of the Father in hope.⁴

This basic thesis has a corollary regarding the approach to the world religions from the Christian side, namely, that ‘their positive moment is the fruit of the Spirit present among them, but that this partial moment calls for its completion: the need of the world religions to hear the gospel message is the same need still that the world had when God sent the only Son to be its way and truth and life.’⁵

2.1 Son and Spirit in the World

Crowe’s basic thesis, he says, is nothing more than an instance of the time-honored principle that ‘what is first in our eyes is not first in itself; on the contrary, what is first in our eyes is last in itself, and what is last in our eyes is first in itself.’ Thus, he continues, ‘We speak, with Augustine, Aquinas, and a whole tradition, of the visible mission of the Son and the invisible mission of the Spirit. Obviously, what is visible must be first in the cognitional order of discovery, that is, first for us, and what is invisible must be last for us. But is it altogether fantastic, is it not rather to be expected, that the real order is the exact opposite?’⁶

The affirmation of the Holy Spirit as God’s first gift is found in Augustine and Aquinas, and most systematically in the latter’s *Summa theologiae*, 1, q. 38, a. 2. Lonergan universalizes and historicizes this affirmation, to ‘make the gift universally applicable throughout the world, and so come to a theology of the Spirit’s worldwide presence among us, a presence from the

4 Frederick E. Crowe, ‘Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions,’ in Crowe,

Appropriating the Lonergan Idea, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006) 325-26.

5 Ibid. 326.

6 Ibid. 328.

beginning of human time and to the ends of human space.’⁷ Here too, his work is not unique, since the doctrine has slowly emerged in the churches that everyone receives sufficient grace for salvation, that is, everyone receives the divine favor and its transforming power. If love is the first gift, then everyone receives the Holy Spirit. Such a doctrine, I dare say, was affirmed explicitly on a number of occasions by Pope John Paul II.⁸

This first affirmation is joined to a second, namely, that ‘in the fullness of time God sent the Son, not in opposition but in unity, not in subordination but in complementarity.’⁹ The unity

7 Ibid. 329.

8 ‘The universality of salvation means that it is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church. Since salvation is offered to all, it must be made concretely available to all ... For ... people [outside the Church] salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation. This grace comes from Christ; it is the result of his Sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation.’ Pope John Paul II, ‘Redemptoris Missio’ 10. Also relevant is the following, *ibid.* 28: ‘The Spirit manifests itself in a special way in the Church and in her members. Nevertheless, his presence and activity are universal, limited neither by space nor time ... The Spirit’s presence and activity affect not only the individuals but also society and history, peoples, cultures and religions. Indeed, the Spirit is at the origin of the noble ideals and undertakings which benefit humanity on its journey through history ... (cf. *Gaudium et spes*, 26, 38). Again, it is the Spirit who sows the “seeds of the Word” present in various customs and cultures, preparing them for full maturity in Christ (cf. *Lumen gentium*, 17).’

9 Crowe, ‘Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions’ 329.

and complementarity are ordered, and the order is understood through the analogy of a man and a woman in love. Crowe quotes Lonergan: 'When a man and a woman love each other but do not avow their love, they are not yet in love. Their very silence means that their love has not reached the power of self-surrender and self-donation. It is the love that each freely and fully reveals to the other that brings about the radically new situation of being in love and that begins the unfolding of its life-long implications.'¹⁰ More precisely, it is the outer word of avowal that seals the interpersonal component in the relation, the mutual presence of self-donation, and the need for sustained development and growth. The sending of the Spirit is, as it were, God's 'falling' in love with us, but God's outer word of avowal of that love is given incrementally in the progressive revelation that culminates in the sending of the one and only Son to be our savior. The very love that Paul and John say has been disclosed and revealed to us in Jesus is 'the very Love that is a divine person, the *amor donabilis* of God, given to all of us since the world began.'¹¹

2.2 Christianity and World Religions

In his second section, Crowe focuses on two questions for the Christian: 'How will our understanding of non-Christians as gifted with the Spirit affect our general attitude and relation to them? And how will it affect our particular task of evangelizing them, of preaching Jesus the Lord to all creation?'¹²

10 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 112-13.

11 Crowe, 'Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions' 330.

12 Ibid. 333.

The corollary to the basic thesis, Crowe remarks, requires a radical change in our attitude and in our religious relationship to the peoples of the world.¹³ Crowe expresses that radical change as follows:

It is not enough to thank God daily for the blessings bestowed on us in Christ the Lord, blessings that seem to make us a people set apart, unless we acknowledge also that the infinite generosity of God our savior has included all the peoples of the world in the divine family, has made them all vessels of the divine election, and has blessed them all with the first and foundational gift of God, the divine Love in the person of the Holy Spirit. We ... have to beware lest, by refusing to acknowledge the breadth and depth and height of the divine mercy, we become unfaithful stewards of the very privilege that we do in fact possess ...¹⁴

We share a religious community, then, with the people of the world's religions, a community grounded in a common orientation to the mystery of love and awe through what Christians would confess to be the indwelling Holy Spirit. 'We do not ... go to the world religions as to strangers, as to heathens, pagans, enemies of God. For we are one with them in the Spirit, and expect to find in them the fruits of the Spirit,' where the fruits of the Spirit are precisely those listed by Paul in Galatians 5.22: 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.'

The new attitude will force upon us the need to develop, first, a new language for our own self-understanding, in order to express to ourselves our new relation to the other world religions, and second, a language in which to communicate across the borders of the religions. The second task is far more complex and will take much longer to accomplish. The common

13 Ibid. 334.

14 Ibid.

language will not be specifically Christian, nor specifically Hindu, Buddhist, Jewish, or Muslim, or whatever. In his paper 'Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of Our Time,' Lonergan distinguished between long-range approaches and present possibilities. He seems particularly attracted, as am I, to Robley Edward Whitson's proposals as far as the long term is concerned, but for the present he acknowledges that we are confined to adopting the formulation of some particular tradition as at least a temporary convention, and he suggests we speak of God's love given to us through the Holy Spirit as the convention that will get us started on expressing the experienced orientation that we have in common. If that will not do, Crowe says, we have other suggestions from Lonergan: we could speak of an orientation to transcendent mystery that provides 'the primary and fundamental meaning of the name, God';¹⁵ of the 'experience of the holy';¹⁶ of an unobjectified experience of the mystery of love and awe that 'remains within subjectivity as a vector, an undertow, a fateful call to a dreaded holiness.'¹⁷

What, then, asks Crowe, of evangelization? Evangelization, he says, is no more a secondary matter for theology, even with this new approach, than it was a secondary matter for God that the eternal Word take flesh and be born of the Virgin Mary. Christians in fact have no choice but to preach among the peoples the treasures of wisdom and knowledge hidden in Christ. But our approach to the task will be modified if the basic thesis of Crowe's paper is accepted. For Lonergan, in fact, once the centrality and universality of the gift of the Holy Spirit are acknowledged, 'then, as much as ever, one needs the word – the word of tradition that has accumulated religious wisdom, the word of fellowship that unites those that share the gift of

15 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 341.

16 Ibid. 106.

17 Ibid. 113.

God's love, the word of the gospel that announces that God has loved us first and, in the fullness of time, has revealed that love in Christ crucified, dead, and risen.'¹⁸

Crowe wisely turns to chapter 20 of *Insight* to find the core of Lonergan's proposal as to how to proceed, the strategy of evangelization in a multi-religious world. He would begin by addressing in evangelical terms the problem common to the human race, the problem of evil, which is the issue that Lonergan addresses in the final chapter of *Insight*. '... if God is good, then there is not only a problem of evil, but also a solution,'¹⁹ and that solution is revealed in the life, passion, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. It is what Lonergan calls the Law of the Cross, at the heart of which is the self-sacrificing charity that returns good for evil. That revelation, in fact, articulates what the prior mission of the Holy Spirit was about all along, for grace gives rise to charity, and charity flows from the gift of God's love that is the Holy Spirit and that is revealed in the mission of the Word. If I may resort to one of my own categories, genuine evangelization promotes a soteriological differentiation of religious consciousness, which, I have wagered and will continue to wager, is sharply articulate in God's revelation in Christ, even if what such a differentiation acknowledges is present wherever the gift of the Holy Spirit has been gratefully received, however anonymously. There is much more that can and should be said on this issue, but I must leave that to further explorations in these colloquia and attempt rather to address the question of the constitution of the gift, the mission, of the Holy Spirit, who I am affirming is offered to all men and women at every time and place.

3 The Gift of the Holy Spirit as Understood in a Psychological Analogy

18 Ibid.

19 Bernard Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992) 716.

In this section I wish to suggest an advance on the Augustinian-Thomist-Lonerganian psychological analogy for understanding processions in the Trinity. There are, I believe, four installments on a psychological analogy in the Western theological tradition, and I am suggesting a fifth. The four to which I refer are to be found in (1) Augustine's *De Trinitate*, (2) Thomas's two *Summae*, (3) Lonergan's *De Deo Trino: Pars Systematica*,²⁰ and (4) Lonergan's later suggestions. I hope that the analogy that I am suggesting rejoins the Augustinian efforts, mediating them through the metaphysical precision of Aquinas and the interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness that Lonergan's work promotes.

These suggestions have been developing in my mind for some time, and were expressed most clearly in a paper that I delivered at the 2009 Boston College Lonergan Workshop, 'Sanctifying Grace, Charity, and Divine Indwelling: A Key to the *Nexus Mysteriorum Fidei*.'²¹ This section, then, summarizes that paper as best I can in brief compass.

There is an uncreated gift given to us by God, whom Christians name the Holy Spirit. The gift, as uncreated, is constituted by God alone, and by the gift God assumes a constitutive role in our living, not as an inherent form but as the term of a created relation. The subject of that relation is the central form, the soul, the core of identity, of the person elevated by sanctifying grace. The term of that relation is the Holy Spirit. 'I will ask the Father, and he will give you another Helper, the Spirit of truth, to stay with you forever. The world cannot receive him, because it cannot see him or know him. But you know him, because he remains with you and lives in you' (John 14.15-17).

20 This work is now available with Latin and English facing pages as *The Triune God:*

Systematics, vol. 12 in *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed.

Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

21 This paper is available as Essay 32 in this e-book.

This divine self-communication, constituted by God alone, allows each of the persons of the Trinity to be present to those to whom the created grace of God's favor (*gratia gratum faciens*) has been given. That grace is offered to all men and women at every time and place. It allows the persons of the Trinity to be present precisely as distinct terms of distinct created relations. What is specific and peculiar to Christianity is that it makes this set of interpersonal relations explicit. The created gift by which God draws us into participation in divine life, that is, the created grace by which it is true that the Holy Spirit is given to us and dwells in us as the term of a created relation, is to be conceived as *effected*, created, by essential divine love, that is, by the love that is common to the three divine persons; but it is also to be conceived as *immanently constituted* in terms of what Aquinas calls the 'notional acts' proper to each of the divine persons. The term 'notional acts' is used to name the distinct manner in which each of the divine persons is subject of the one divine conscious act of unrestricted understanding and unqualified love. These acts are 'notional' because they cause the divine persons to be known as distinct from one another.²² While sanctifying grace is effected by the love common to the three divine persons, it establishes in us distinct relations to each of them and a distinct participation in the divine life of each of them, in keeping with the distinct fashion in which each of them exercises the divine creative love. Christian prayer and meditation could well be conceived as the practice of fostering these distinct conscious relations to the three divine persons.

The fundamental divine gift is the gift of the Holy Spirit, but the affirmation that the Holy Spirit is sent to us can be true only if there is a created condition consequent on the mission by which it is possible to affirm the mission itself. That created consequent condition is the elevation of the central form, the 'I,' of the human being to participation in divine life, participation that is manifest precisely in the created *relation* to the uncreated Holy Spirit, a

22 See Bernard Lonergan, *The Triune God: Doctrines*, trans. Michael G. Shields, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009) 413.

relation of which the elevated central form, substantial form, soul, is the subject. As a created relation to the Holy Spirit, this relation imitates the uncreated relation to the Holy Spirit that the Father and the Son are, that is, what the psychological analogy has traditionally called active spiration. Thus the created gift called sanctifying grace is a participation in the Father and the Son, who actively ‘breathe’ the Holy Spirit. We have been given a share in the relation to the Holy Spirit that in God is the Father and the Son actively loving each other and in that loving ‘breathing,’ ‘spirating,’ the Holy Spirit. In this active loving (*notionaliter diligere*), the Father communicates divine love to the Son, who responds precisely as *Verbum spirans Amorem*, an eternal Judgment of Value that breathes eternal love, the proceeding love that is the Holy Spirit issuing as the mutual love of the Father and the Son. So the change in us entails also a created judgment of value or, better, set of judgments of value, from which there proceeds a created love that shares in the Proceeding Love that is the Holy Spirit. This created love is the love that we call charity.

Aquinas and the early Lonergan distinguish charity from sanctifying grace. Charity, as a created participation in and imitation of the Holy Spirit, sets up an inverse created relation to the Father and the Son, who thus are also present to us as terms of a created relation. Thus, after promising that he will ask the Father to send the Holy Spirit, Jesus says, ‘I will come back to you. In a little while the world will see me no more, but you will see me; and because I live, you also will live. When that day comes, you will know that I am in my Father, and that you are in me, just as I am in you’ (John 14.18-20). That statement is transposed by a technical systematic theology into the affirmation of the indwelling of all three divine persons as terms of distinct relations.

Moreover, the set of judgments of value that proceeds from the reception of the gift of God’s love constitutes the universalist ‘faith’ that Lonergan distinguishes in his later work from the beliefs of particular religious traditions: a faith that can be and undoubtedly is found in diverse traditions, and that for Lonergan is responsible for a hope that the religions of the world

will find common ground and common cause in the gift of God's love. Such faith is 'the knowledge born of religious love,'²³ a knowledge that is rooted in judgments of value consequent upon the reception of the gift of unqualified love. I hasten to add that this is my interpretation of Lonergan's distinction between faith and beliefs, not something found in so many words in his own work.

So the analogy that I am suggesting starts with the reception of the gift of God's love, recollected in memory, from which there proceeds a set of judgments of value; and from these two there flows the charity that is the love of God in return. What makes this analogy different from those proposed by Augustine, Thomas, and both the early and the later Lonergan is not its structure, which is identical in all of these analogies, but rather the fact that it is explicitly an analogy, not from nature to the supernatural order, but from the experience of supernatural grace to its creator, the triune God. Created grace itself has a Trinitarian form. The analogy in the order of grace begins with the gift of God's love, retrospectively interpreted as a gift of being on the receiving end of a love that is without qualification and that has about it something that seems to emanate from the foundation of the universe. It is possible (and I wish to emphasize the word 'possible,' since I am not an Augustine scholar) that this retrospective interpretation of one's own religious giftedness might be linked to Augustine's *memoria*, which was the starting point of his analogy. If *memoria* for Augustine is the condition under which the mind is present to itself, then my appeal to Augustine is valid.²⁴ If that is not the meaning of *memoria* in Augustine,

23 Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 115. For Lonergan's understanding of this universalist faith and its distinction from the religious beliefs of particular traditions, see *ibid.* 115-19.

24 This interpretation would seem to be consistent with the view offered by Edmund Hill, who writes in his introduction to his translation of Augustine's *De Trinitate*, '... what he means in this context by self-memory, *memoria sui*, is the mind's sheer presence to itself, which is basically given in the very fact of its being mind; rather as you might say that the Father is the

then I am proposing a distinct first step in the analogy. In either case, the initial step in the analogy is composed of the gift of God's love recollected and acknowledged in *memoria*. This issues in the inner word of a judgment of value proceeding from *memoria* and acknowledging the goodness of the gift. This judgment of value is the foundation of a universalist faith that is present in all authentic religion. The recollection and judgment of value together constitute a created share in, participation in, imitation of, divine active spiration, the active loving of the Father and the Son for each other from which divine *Amor procedens*, passive spiration, the Holy Spirit, originates. *Memoria* and its *verbum spirans amorem* give rise to the disposition of charity, the antecedent universal willingness that is a created participation in and imitation of the Holy Spirit, a disposition that establishes a reverse relation of love for the Father and the Son. The relation between the love acknowledged in *memoria* and its word, on the one hand, and charity on the other is analogous to the relation between active and passive spiration in the triune God. The three divine persons dwell in us and among us, are present to us, precisely as the uncreated terms of two created supernatural relations: supernatural, because their term is God as God is in God's threefold conscious self, which is beyond the proportion of any created nature and so absolutely supernatural.

4 Discerning the Spirit in a Multi-religious Context

The key to the discernment of the gift of the Holy Spirit is expressed in the biblical injunction 'By their fruits you will know them.' A very helpful way of discerning the fruits of the gift of the

basically divine person, since he is just God, whereas the Son is God from God.' Again, in book 14 Augustine rephrases his image as 'remembering, understanding, and willing God, rather than remembering, understanding, and willing self.' See Augustine, *The Trinity*, trans. Edmund Hill, O.P. (Brooklyn: New City Press, 1991) 52, 54. I am grateful to Gilles Mongeau for pointing me to Hill's interpretation.

Spirit is provided by the scale of values that Lonergan articulates in several places in his later work and that I have suggested may, when joined to an appropriate notion of dialectic, provide a heuristic structure for the constitution of the reign of God in history. If the gift of the Holy Spirit is universal – and the entire argument of this paper hangs on that condition – then the scale of values provides a set of heuristic directives that would enable us to discern the gift, irrespective of whether the recipients express the gift by appealing explicitly to the name of Jesus Christ or to the Holy Spirit or to the doctrinal tradition of the Church. Moreover, it provides a grid against which explicit Christian language itself can be evaluated for its authenticity.

The key to understanding development, including religious development, is articulated by Lonergan in the deceptively simple directive, ‘Specify the operator.’ Here the operator is operative grace, *gratia operans*. So the general directive that I’m attempting to follow has to do with specifying the presence and efficacy of operative grace. How, in terms of some complication of the structure of interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, is *gratia operans* to be identified? What conditions must be met for the Christian interlocutors in multi-religious dialogue to acknowledge, ‘The Holy Spirit is here?’ That is the question.

On this occasion I must limit the answer that I would suggest to the terms that I have already proposed, both in *Theology and the Dialectics of History* and in *What Is Systematic Theology?* Operative grace constitutes the realm of religious values in the integral scale of values. The general scheme of the scale I took from Lonergan, but I developed it in my own terms as consisting of relations from above and from below and as marked with variously differentiated structures of dialectical relations, where the tension of limitation and transcendence is specified at least in heuristic terms at the levels of personal, cultural, and social values. Acknowledging this structure of dialectic, which is a complication of Lonergan’s notion of dialectic, probably demands something like what I have called psychic conversion, where the constitutive role of the limitations placed by the bodily organism and the sensitive psyche is allowed to take on a positive significance in personal living and by extension in cultural

constitutive meaning and in the acknowledgment of intersubjective bonds in the constitution of community. Without these psychic conditions of genuine development, the dialectical structures of the person, the culture, and the social order are negatively skewed in the direction of too much possibility. The roots in the earth, *humus*, humility, have been lost, and the delicate balance of incarnate spirit is sacrificed to the ambitions of distorted dialectics in the person, the culture, and the community.

In the traditional terms of Catholic theology, operative grace is habitual or sanctifying grace, and it is also actual grace or, in Aquinas's terms, *divinum auxilium*, divine assistance in the concrete circumstances of life. Each of these can be either elevating grace or healing grace, or both: healing *because* elevating. The limits of the present paper allow me to do no more than to offer suggestions concerning the elevation of the core identity of the person in habitual grace, and to relate these suggestions to the scale of values in such a way as to point to the fruits of grace not only in personal life but also in the realm of culture and in the good of order in the community, where the equitable distribution of vital goods to the whole community is at stake. Through these suggestions I am anticipating and, I hope, hastening the development of a theology of social grace. We have developed in our time a theology of social sin. It is time to develop a theology of social grace.

As we have seen, Frederick Crowe identified the problem of evil as setting the stage for the explicit Christian contribution to interreligious dialogue. Chapter 20 of *Insight* was explicitly oriented to providing the heuristic structure to the divine solution to the problem of evil. In our time, fifty years after the publication of *Insight*, a new dimension to the problem of evil has stood forth, a dimension that, I confess I'm surprised to find, I anticipated in *Theology and the Dialectics of History*: namely, a standoff not so much between East and West, communism and capitalism, as between terrorist and counterterrorist violence. Evil today is intimately and recognizably bound up with the deviated transcendence of inauthentic religion, which results in violence on the scale of mass destruction. Let me be clear that I am speaking not only of certain

strands of Islam but of certain strands of all three Abrahamic traditions, of Hindu fundamentalism, and of other manifestations of a failure to acknowledge the gift of God's love that constitutes authentic religion. The situation that Lonergan addressed in the 1950s was the standoff of East and West, coming as it did toward the end of what he calls the longer cycle of decline, with its potential for nuclear devastation. Our situation today takes on an explicitly religious significance, so that the discussion among interlocutors in the dialogue in pursuit of what constitutes authentic religion is not simply a conversation of theologians seeking religious understanding, but a conversation of citizens of the world seeking religious peace. It is in that concrete context that the problem of evil must be addressed in our time, especially in the dialogue among practitioners and theologians from the diverse religious traditions of humankind. And it is in that concrete context that the gift of the Holy Spirit will be most notably discerned in our time.

The scale of values makes clear how that can be true. This is what I wish to argue in the brief time remaining to me.

In chapter 20 of *Insight* Lonergan suggests a heuristic structure for identifying the divine solution to the problem of evil before suggesting that this structure points to the explicit revelation of God in Israel and Christianity. In fact, the heuristic structure begins, not with faith (which at that time was for Lonergan identical with explicit Christian beliefs) but with charity, the charity that enables one to return good for evil. '... it is only inasmuch as [people] are willing to meet evil with good, to love their enemies, to pray for those that persecute and calumniate them, that the social surd is a potential good. It follows that love of God above all and in all so embraces the order of the universe as to love all men [and women] with a self-sacrificing love.'²⁵

Still, the good is always concrete, and so it is important to focus a bit of attention on the historically situated manner in which Lonergan presents his analysis of the structure of evil. As I

25 Lonergan, *Insight* 721-22.

have said, in his own day, the standoff of East and West had much to do with his genealogy of cultural, political, economic, and social evil, and so his understanding of what the supernatural communication of divine life had to offer by way of healing was contextualized by that situation. Thus, some elements in his heuristic structure for a solution included social and cultural values needed to meet the proportions and complexity of the problem, including, for example, the constitution of a new economic theory that was alternative to the capitalism and communism that lay behind the global standoff. The Sermon on the Mount is no Platonic form. Religious teaching that neglects social, economic, political, and cultural analysis, and that neglects the development of a psychological theory grounded in the unity-in-tension of the incarnate spirit that a human person is, is a soul without a body and offers little if anything of a solution to the concrete problems of concrete men and women living in concrete human situations. Put quite simply, the mission of the Holy Spirit calls for, and is completed in fidelity to, the entire range of the scale of values. It is not to be conceived simply in relation to religious and personal values. Without that attention to the entire scale human beings are, perhaps unknowingly, doing all they can to abort the mission of the Holy Spirit.

The issue has to do with elevation, and I wish to suggest that the elevation that is habitual in persons and manifest in their self-transcendent loving can be embodied as well in social structures. The scale of values is, in my view, isomorphic with the levels of consciousness, and the relations among the levels of the scale are isomorphic with those among the levels of consciousness, both from below and from above. Within the past year, Jeremy Blackwood of Marquette University has made very fruitful suggestions regarding the elevation that occurs at each level of consciousness as a result of the communication of divine life in grace. The graced relations in consciousness, of course, work from above downwards: from grace to moral conversion, from religious and moral conversion to intellectual conversion, and from these three conversions (even if intellectual conversion is most often implicit in a commitment to truth) to psychic conversion. On the level of the scale of values, the relations would move from the

community of persons in love with God to the efforts of the people in that community to strive together for personal integrity, and from these two sources to the constant purification and development of the meanings and values that inform given ways of life (cultural values); the movement then extends from integral cultural values to the social order and from the social order to the equitable distribution of vital goods to the entire community.

In the schema suggested by Blackwood, at each of the levels of individual consciousness a subject elevated to participation in divine life through sanctifying grace has two formal objects: the natural/proportionate object of each level and a supernatural/disproportionate object. Thus in explicit belief, the elevation of central form and the consequent horizon known as the light of faith elevate judgment by allowing the subject to know what one could not know without the elevation of central form and the light of faith. Likewise, on the level of decision, the elevation of central form and the consequent horizon of evaluation allow the subject to evaluate with God's own values,²⁶ which I am assuming are quintessentially expressed in the Sermon on the Mount. We could speak as well of the elevation of understanding, which is most dramatically expressed in mystical insight, at times ineffable, into the meaning of the divine mysteries. We can speak of the elevation of the level of experience itself, which is most dramatically expressed in intense physiological participation in divine love, but which is also abundantly illustrated in less intense fashion in the entire first volume of Hans Urs von Balthasar's theological aesthetics. The relation between the natural and the supernatural objects on each level is one of obediential potency. '... the transposition into the terms of conscious intentionality of what is meant by "a supernatural object of human knowing" is *an act of knowing that does not itself account for the knowing it attains* – the knowing is received as gift. Likewise, the transposition into the terms of

26 Jeremy Blackwood, 'Sanctifying Grace, Elevation, and the Fifth Level of Consciousness: Further Developments within Lonergan Scholarship,' paper delivered at the West Coast Methods Institute meeting, Loyola Marymount University, April 2009, 9.

conscious intentionality of what is meant by “a supernatural object of human deliberation” is *an act of deliberation that does not itself account for the value it grasps* – again, the value is received as gift.²⁷ Similar statements may be made regarding what would be meant by supernatural objects of human understanding and of ordinary human perceptive experience. While work remains to be done to specify the conscious terms and relations at each level, the structure that Blackwood suggests is clear, and its explanatory potential is enormous.

But my concern here is not just with the structure of individual consciousness but with the scale of values isomorphic with that structure, and particularly with the realm of cultural and social values. At the levels of religious and personal values, the consideration of the transformation of the five levels of individual consciousness obtains, with little more complication. But the central issue in the scale of values is the effect of genuine religious and personal values on culture, that is, on the meanings and values informing given ways of living, and again on the social values that are embodied in a good of order, and finally on the distribution of vital goods to the entire community. Here is where grace becomes social. Here is where the reign of God appears in human history. Here is where the participants in interreligious dialogue and cooperation can collaborate not only with one another but also with the God they acknowledge in their hearts and reach in their prayer, with the God that Christians acknowledge as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, the three divine persons each dwelling in the hearts of all who have accepted the gift of God’s love. The cooperation of the world’s religions under the universal gift of the Holy Spirit would thus consist in working to assure the development and communication of cultural meanings and values that are capable of constituting a social order that would secure justice and peace for all God’s children. If what I am saying is at all on the right track, then theology has a major task ahead of it, to articulate in detail the structure of cultural and social values informed by the universal gift of the Holy Spirit. And the adherents of

²⁷ Ibid. 10.

the world's religions have the even greater task of living in accord with such meanings and values and establishing political, economic, and technological structures that would guarantee to all, and especially to the poorest among us, an equitable participation in the vital values needed to sustain fruitful and loving human lives. The suggestions presented here can be little more than heuristic and programmatic. I can only hope and pray they are pointing in the right direction.