

Class 10, November 9 2009, *What Is Systematic Theology?* chapters 5-8

Chapter 5

We have seen **two** areas of expansion on Lonergan's reflections on systematics: the notion of mysteries that do not have dogmatic status, and the notion of theological doctrines. (Review this.) A **third** area has to do with the transposition of categories from past contexts into the present context, a **fourth** with the integration of categories transposed from past contexts with categories developed today, and a **fifth** with the correct way to conceive the relation of general categories to special categories.

Question 1: What is transposition? What suggestions are made in chapter 5 for transposing categories in the doctrine of grace?

I stay with the same examples as were used in the chapter on theological doctrines. So, with regard to grace, I insist that, while the metaphysical categories in which excellent theologies of grace have been proposed are not to be jettisoned, still they must be **grounded in terms and relations derived from interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness**. E.g., **what is a created communication of the divine nature?** What is meant by calling it **absolutely supernatural?** (These are the first two theses of Lonergan's 'De ente supernaturali.')

More precisely (43), 'What, *in terms of interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness*, is an absolutely supernatural "created communication of the divine nature"? What are the referents, in interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness, of the metaphysical terms and relations that Lonergan employs to speak about sanctifying grace? In Scholastic metaphysical terms we are talking about an entitative habit rooted in the essence of the soul. But one can accept that Scholastic metaphysical analysis in its entirety and still not have fulfilled the contemporary exigence, for that exigence calls **not only for theory but also for some foundation of theory in corresponding elements in intentional consciousness and/or religious experience**. It is the task of systematic theology to answer on the level of one's own time the question, 'What in the world do these doctrines mean?'

I emphasize the difficulty, which for me has to do with 'finding terms and relations in religious experience that correspond to the distinction of **sanctifying grace and charity**' (43), which I highlight by pointing to the difficulty of interpreting Romans 5.5. 44-45:

Romans 5.5 is not talking about our love for God, except insofar as God's own love is given to us to be our love as well. Ultimately, only an explicit connection with the Trinitarian processions, such as appears in Lonergan's four-point hypothesis that we will speak of below in more detail, will provide the satisfactory conceptualization. That hypothesis gives us an articulation that allows us to speak of sanctifying grace, however haltingly but also, as Lonergan writes, *sine inconvenientia*, not inappropriately, as the created external participation in the actively spirating love of Father and Son. That **created participation in God's own love** is what medieval systematic theology conceived as the entitative habit, rooted in the essence of the soul, known as sanctifying grace. The four-point hypothesis goes on to conceive the habit of charity as what is breathed forth in us from sanctifying grace, and so as a **created participation in the passive spiration that is the Holy Spirit**.

As the Holy Spirit is the uncreated internal term of the actively spirating love of Father and Son, so the habit of charity is the created external term of the actively spirating *being-in-love* that is sanctifying grace. This is fundamentally what it means to be *recipients* of the mission of the Holy Spirit. But it is also what it means to say that, when the Holy Spirit is given to us, the Father and the Son come with the Spirit to dwell with us. The mission of the Holy Spirit *is* the eternal procession of the Spirit within the divinity, joined to a created external term, the habit of charity. But the habit of charity flows from the new *being* that is a being in love, and that being in love is a created participation in active spiration, in Father and Son together breathing the Holy Spirit. The dynamic state of being in love gives rise in a habitual fashion to acts of love of God and neighbour, as the agapē of the Father and the judgment of value that is the Son together breathe the proceeding Love that is the Holy Spirit ... The mystery is that we are given the capacity to love as a created participation in the proceeding love in God. In us that created participation in God's own proceeding love is breathed forth from the created participation in God's actively spirating love, the entitative change in our being that is sanctifying grace. Clearly, of course, if the mystery of sanctifying grace has to do with an entitative habit, it extends beyond consciousness. But it also must have some implications that can be specified in terms of religious *experience*. Such specifications provide **the grounding categories for a theology of grace**, the terms and relations that express an understanding of the doctrine of grace.

All of this has to do with the place of **interiority** in the derivation of categories.

Question 2: What is the significance of interiorly differentiated consciousness for the psychological analogy and the preferential option for the poor?

Second, then, the relevance of interiority to the psychological analogy is obvious. This kind of analogical understanding of the Trinitarian mystery *must* turn to interiorly and religiously differentiated conscious for its basic terms and relations.

As for the preferential option, I appeal to the scale of values. 45: '...this notion is rooted in Lonergan's intentionality analysis, and so appealing to it satisfies the demands we are making in this third point, namely, that the categories of a systematic theology must be derived from interiorly and religiously differentiated consciousness.' We will see more of this later.

Question 3: Why, according to Doran, are general as well as special categories required in systematic theology?

The three examples also manifest the presence of both general and special categories. 45: 'Special categories are proper to theology, and their ground is religious experience properly appropriated. General categories are shared with other disciplines, and their ground lies in interiorly differentiated consciousness.' In the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition, as contrasted with an Augustinian-Bonaventurian line of thought, I insist on the significance of general categories. 45:

... if systematics shies away from employing the categories that are provided to it by other disciplines, it is also renegeing on its responsibility to provide for the realities affirmed in doctrines the witness of contemporary understanding. A systematic theologian who is wary