

# Ad Veritatem

Volume 12 Issue 2

St. Thomas More Society of Orange County

FEBRUARY 2007

*“In believing the Church, we put not our trust in the men whom we believe, but we put our trust in God, for whom and by whom we believe the men.”*

Thomas More  
*A Book for All Seasons*  
Arranged by E.E. Reynolds (Pg 109)

## **FEBRUARY MEETING:**

**WEDNESDAY FEBRUARY 21, 2007 NOON**

**SPEAKER: PROFESSOR JOSEPH MASTROPAOLO, PH.D.**

**TOPIC: “EVOLUTION AND THE EXACT OPPOSITE: DEVOLUTION”**

*DETAILS ON PAGE 3*



“Ad Veritatem” is Latin for “Toward the truth.”



## WHO WE ARE

In 1966, the movie *A Man For All Seasons* inspired the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences to recognize this film as the Picture of the Year. This was one of the few occasions in the history of the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences where the life of a religious figure won the hearts of the motion picture industry's elite. The central figure portrayed in *Man For All Seasons* was, of course, St. Thomas More, the great lawyer, statesman, apologist, husband, father and faithful Catholic. In 2000, St. Thomas was honored as the Lawyer of the Millennium by a secular panel of historians for the British Commonwealth. Shortly thereafter, John Paul II declared St. Thomas as the Patron Saint of Statesmen.

Inspired by a homily given by Bishop Norman McFarland at the 1995 Red Mass of Orange County, five "fearless" members of the Orange County bar met shortly thereafter at the law offices of Rutan and Tucker in Costa Mesa. These lawyers all shared the realization that the legal practice takes a severe toll on the personal and spiritual lives of those involved in it and that many in the legal profession had become too focused on the material life with the natural consequence being the de-emphasis on their spiritual life. The purpose of the meeting was to discuss the formation of a new organization for lawyers and judges in the County of Orange with its mission being to publicly support and encourage the spiritual development of its members in their Catholic faith. The group chose as its patron St. Thomas More, the greatest lawyer of his time, who was a dedicated husband and father with a deep and profound commitment to his Catholic faith, his profession and his fellow man. Thus the St. Thomas More Society of Orange County was born.

Attendance at the monthly meetings in the early years was sporadic. Our spiritual director, Fr Hugh Barbour, wisely advised us not to worry about numbers because it was more important "to be than to do or say." He encouraged the virtues of patience and perseverance. His sage advice, together with the guidance of the Holy Spirit and St. Thomas More, has led us to our current level of a fourteen member Board of Directors of lawyers and judges and a mailing list for the monthly newsletter of over 970.

The goal of the Society is to inspire and lift up the minds and hearts of the legal community of Orange County to follow the example of St. Thomas More by integrating God in every aspect of their professional and personal lives. The Society seeks to accomplish this goal through inspirational speakers at monthly meetings, this newsletter, the Red Mass, a website, an annual spiritual retreat and other events. The St. Thomas More Society also seeks to provide a haven where those who are committed to their Catholic faith as well as those who are seeking to learn more about the Church, can find fellowship and encouragement in the face of overwhelming media and cultural forces working against that pursuit.

*St. Thomas More, please pray for us. ☩*

### FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT

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VISIT OUR WEBSITE at [www.stthomasmore.net](http://www.stthomasmore.net)

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**FEBRUARY**  
**MEETING**

**PROF. EMERITUS JOSEPH MASTROPAOLO, PH.D.**  
**“EVOLUTION AND THE EXACT  
OPPOSITE: DEVOLUTION”**



**WHEN:**  
**NOON**  
**Wed. Feb 21<sup>st</sup>**

**WHERE:**  
**First American  
Title Ins. Co.  
5 First American  
Way, Santa Ana**

**FOR DIRECTIONS**  
**CALL (714) 800-3000**

**COST:**  
**\$10 for lunch**

Joseph A. Mastropaolo has a B.S., M.S., Ph.D. in kinesiology and a Post-Doctoral Research Fellowship in human physiology. As Aerospace Physiologist for Douglas Space Systems, he published two monographs on life in space, one for humans and one for experimental animals. He taught biomechanics and physiology at California State University, Long Beach for 26 years and was the physiologist for the Gossamer Condor and Albatross human powered flight projects which earned a medal in physiology from the Royal Aeronautical Society for the Kremer cross channel challenge.

**Publications:**

Biology Eliminates Evolution, Acts and Facts 33 (2): i-iv, Impact #368, February 2004  
Evolution Is Lethal Antiscience, Creation Research Society Quarterly 38: 151-158, 2001.  
Evolution Is Biologically Impossible, Acts and Facts 28 (11): i-iv, Impact #317, Nov. 1999

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**STM MONTHLY MTGS:**  
**3RD WEDNESDAY OF MONTH:**

**MARCH 21**  
**APRIL 18**  
**MAY 16**  
**JUNE 20**  
**JULY 18 †**

**ST THOMAS MORE SOCIETY**  
**SILENT RETREAT**

**Friday—Sunday March 16-18, 2007**  
**Prince of Peace Abbey**  
**Rector: Fr. Hugh Barbour**

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**A  
MESSAGE  
FROM  
OUR  
CHAPLAIN**

## HOW DOES A CLONED HUMAN GET A SOUL?

FR HUGH BAROUR, O. PRAEM, PH.D.

*Our Chaplain*

**QUESTION:** *It is easy for me to see why the Church opposes the cloning of human beings. What I don't understand is how a cloned human gets a soul, since it comes to exist in such an unnatural way. Would God "go along" with such a process and give a soul to a cloned human?*

**ANSWER:** God is the Author of nature. He, so to speak, obeys His own laws, when He infuses a rational, spiritual soul into an organism really disposed to function in a rational spiritual way. The moral circumstances of the conception do not determine whether or not God infuses the soul. After all, a conception which occurs out of wedlock, or by force of adultery, is brought about in an immoral way. But according to the laws of nature, which determine that when matter is properly organized, a human conception the infusion of a soul created directly by God, is the inevitable result. Whether the conception is by the union of human seed and ovum, or by some other artificial arrangement of bodily matter, doesn't change this fact. So God "goes along" with the laws of nature He has set in place.

This doesn't mean that He goes along with sin. Already the Holy Father has pointed out that in the case of in vitro fertilization, the human dignity of the fertilized eggs must be defended. In the end, the Church will be the one voice defending the rights and humanity of the human persons produced by cloning, just as She already does all the others. After all, original sin has marred us all from birth. One confusion may be lurking in your question, however. In Catholic philosophical language, the "law of nature" means the physical laws not determined by human reason and freedom. The "natural law" refers to the moral order of human reason, faith and freedom. What is possible for human beings to do, making use of the laws of nature, is not always morally right according to what man knows to be true and good for his happiness. The same laws of nature are at work when a butcher uses a knife and when a murderer does, but the actions are infinitely different according to the natural law. †



CREATION OF ADAM  
(DETAIL)

*Michelangelo*

(1510)

SIMPLE TRUTHS



Fulton J. Sheen

**"A man plants a tree in order that it might bring forth fruit. The tree in the Gospel which bore no fruit was ordered cut down because it only cumbered the ground. God expects returns for His great and wonderful investments in us." †**

## EVOLUTION AND THE MAGISTERIUM\*

JIMMY AKIN

Three and a half centuries ago, the Galileo incident happened. In the public mind the Church was seen as a hidebound oppressor of intellectual freedom, while Galileo was portrayed as a martyr for the cause of science.

This incident helped shape the split between faith and science, and it provided a pretext for those attached to the scientific worldview to fault the Church with all manner of intellectual villainy. The fact that the Church's actions in the Galileo episode weren't as they are often portrayed is beside the point. The Church suffered a horrible public relations disaster, and it isn't anxious to have one happen again.

Thus when evolution—the next big worldview-affecting science issue—came up, the Church was determined not to get burned in the same way again and proceeded quite cautiously.

As the Church recognized, certain theories of evolution are incompatible with the Catholic faith, as are the materialistic ideas often associated with them. That evolution would operate apart from God's sovereignty, for example, or that it produced the soul of the first man, or that man has no soul—all of these are incompatible with the faith and unprovable as matters of science.

On the other hand, it is not clear that every possible theory of evolution is incompatible with the faith. Though the majority interpretation of Genesis 1–3 in Christian history had been quite literal, there was also a strain of less insistence on the literal. In fact, the greatest of the Church Fathers, Augustine, speculated in ways that were congruent with certain aspects of modern cosmology and evolutionary thought (see his work *The Literal Meaning of Genesis*).

In view of this—and the Galileo incident—the Church took its time before weighing in on the new evolutionary thought that became popular in the nineteenth century. By the mid-twentieth century it was ready to do so.

### PIUS XII

Though there had been lesser interventions on the subject before, Pius XII issued in 1950 the encyclical *Humani Generis*, which pronounced against certain philosophical and evolutionary ideas, particularly some associated with Pierre Teilhard de Chardin, S.J.

At the same time, he gave the most authoritative statement to that date regarding the possibility of Catholics holding certain versions of evolutionary theory. He wrote:

*"The Magisterium of the Church does not forbid that, in conformity with the present state of human sciences and sacred theology, research and discussions, on the part of men experienced in both fields, take place with regard to the doctrine of evolution, in as far as it inquires into the origin of the human body as coming from pre-existent and living matter—for the Catholic faith obliges us to hold that souls are immediately created by God. However, this must be done in such a way that the reasons for both opinions, that is, those favorable and those unfavorable to evolution, be weighed and judged with the necessary seriousness, moderation, and measure, and provided that all are prepared to submit to the judgment of the Church, to whom Christ has given the mission of interpreting authentically sacred Scripture and of defending the dogmas of faith" (HG 36).*

Reading this passage, one notes how tentative Pope Pius is. He speaks of "research



ALLEGORY OF THE CREATION

Jacopo Zucchi

(1585)

**“[The Holy Father] also noted: “And to tell the truth, rather than the theory of evolution, we should speak of several theories of evolution (ibid.). Thus, all theories of evolution cannot be true.”**

\* Reprinted from  
*This Rock*  
January 2004  
[www.catholic.com](http://www.catholic.com)

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and discussions” being conducted regarding human evolution by experts in the fields of science and theology. He warns that we must regard the soul as created by God. He warns not to bias the discussions in favor of evolutionism. And he warns that the Magisterium could in the future decide that the authentic meaning of Scripture precludes the possibility of human evolution.

### ***AFTER HUMANI GENERIS***

Following the release of the *Humani Generis*, many Catholics—including high-ranking churchmen—gradually got more comfortable with the idea of human evolution. This parallels the growing ease that was gained with heliocentrism following the Galileo affair.

There are certain passages of Scripture that make it sound like the earth stands still while the sun rotates about it (e.g., Josh. 10:13; Ps. 93:1; 104:5; 19, 22; Eccles. 1:5). This is understandable, since the biblical writers—like people in every land—spoke and wrote as things appeared to them, and it does appear from the earth that the earth is stationary while the sun moves.

Before the Copernican Revolution, the Church had taken these passages at face value and had not considered the literary nature of these statements—that they were written in the language of appearances (what is sometimes called *phenomenological* language) and did not express a God’s eye view of cosmology.

Following Copernicus and Galileo, theologians rethought these passages, saw that they could be taken in a phenomenological sense, and gradually got comfortable with the idea. The same thing happened after *Humani Generis*. Taken at face value, Genesis 2:7 seems to say that God created the first man directly from the dust of the ground, and that is how most folks took it. There had always been a stand in both Christian and Jewish interpretation—even before the rise of modern science—that recognized that the early chapters of Genesis contain non-literal elements, that they present the mysterious, unseen-by-human-eye work of the Creator in a stylized manner. But the majority had tended to take these passages literally.

After the discoveries of modern biology and *Humani Generis*, it took a while for many Catholics to get comfortable taking these passages in a less literal sense. But, just as they grew at ease taking the geocentric-sounding passages in a heliocentric manner, they also began to take passages like Genesis 2:7 in a manner compatible with human evolutionism.

By the time of John Paul II, one would be hard pressed to find a high-ranking churchman who did not approve of such a reading. In fact, anxious not to have a repeat of the public relations fiasco that happened with Galileo, many Church officials went out of their way to make positive comments about modern science, including the idea of human evolution, as long as it was proposed in a way compatible with the Catholic faith.

### **JOHN PAUL II**

In 1996, Pope John Paul II gave an address to the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences on the subject of evolution, which set off a controversy regarding the subject.

Much of the controversy was fueled by rash press reports that distorted what the Pope said and made it sound as if evolution was something in which Catholics were obliged to believe. Those who do not believe in evolution—Catholic and non-Catholic alike—were taken aback by the reports.

Also fueling the controversy were claims that John Paul’s remarks (which had originally been given in French) had been mistranslated. These reports proved to be exaggerated, though there was enough of a basis to them that a slightly emended translation was issued.

We cannot conduct a full analysis of what the Pope said, but the general tone of the address was positive but cautious. He said nice things about science but also stressed the limits of science to tell us about human origins. He also discussed the varieties of human evolutionism that would not be compatible with the Catholic faith.

In the most controversial passage of the address, the Holy Father stated: “Today, almost half a century after the publication of the encyclical [*Humani Generis*], new knowledge has led to the recognition in the theory of evolution of more than a hypothesis. It is indeed remarkable that this theory has been progressively accepted by researchers, following a series of discoveries in various fields of knowledge. The convergence, neither sought nor fabricated, of the results of work that was conducted independently is in itself a significant argument in favor of

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this theory" (*Message to the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences* [Oct. 22, 1996] 4).

This passage was controversial because it was taken as a statement of Catholic doctrine. It is not. John Paul is summarizing the attitude of mainstream science regarding evolution, and recognizing that, in the prior fifty years, evolution had become regarded in mainstream science as more than a hypothesis.

The note that the convergence of scientific discoveries bearing on evolution was "neither sought nor fabricated" struck many non-evolutionists as naive, but in this case the Pope was expressing a personal assessment and not a matter of Catholic doctrine. It is also undeniable that this convergence constitutes an argument in favor of evolution; whether it is a good argument or a bad argument is a separate question.

The Holy Father went on to note that "a theory's validity depends on whether or not it can be verified; it is constantly tested against the facts; whenever it can no longer explain the latter, it shows its limitations and unsuitability. It must then be rethought" (*ibid.*). He means here that, although mainstream science has elevated evolution from a hypothesis to a theory, it still must be open to the fact that further data may require the whole thing to be rethought.

He also noted: "And to tell the truth, rather than *the* theory of evolution, we should speak of *several* theories of evolution" (*ibid.*). Thus, all theories of evolution cannot be true.

### THE CATECHISM

The *Catechism* touches briefly on the subject of evolution. It says: "The question about the origins of the world and of man has been the object of many scientific studies that have splendidly enriched our knowledge of the age and dimensions of the cosmos, the development of life-forms and the appearance of man. These discoveries invite us to even greater admiration for the greatness of the Creator, prompting us to give him thanks for all his works and for the understanding and wisdom he gives to scholars and researchers" (CCC 283).

When the *Catechism* speaks of "many scientific studies" splendidly enriching our knowledge of "the development of life-forms and the appearance of man," it is thinking of mainstream science. It is not thinking of studies done by the Institute for Creation Research or similar places.

If the *Catechism* did have such groups in mind, it would be pastorally irresponsible to speak in such a manner, for the average reader of the *Catechism* would be certain to think that mainstream science was being referred to. In fact, one would be certain to regard this as some kind of positive comment regarding the theory of evolution—which it is.

The question is: Does that make it a matter of Catholic doctrine?

The *Catechism* is certainly among the most authoritative ecclesiastical documents there is. It is the product of a collaboration among the world's bishops, issued by the authority of the Pope, who declared it to be "a sure norm for teaching the faith" (*Fidei Depositum* 3). Given this, the only thing comparable to it among non-papal Church documents would be the decrees of an ecumenical council.

Unfortunately, there have been too few such Church-wide catechisms to determine their exact role in the scheme of ecclesiastical documents. (There have been only two of them.) But it remains clear that this is a weighty document.

It also is much more guarded in what it says than the Pope's message to the Pontifical Academy of the Sciences. The fathers of the *Catechism* (if one may so term them) willed that there be a remark gesturing toward evolution in a favorable manner, but they are far less specific than the Pope was in his address.

This is, no doubt, because of the weight and the prominence of the *Catechism* itself. Whatever *it* said was more likely to be regarded by the public as Catholic doctrine. So, does the *Catechism's* positive but general statement regarding evolutionism make this a matter of Catholic doctrine?

Actually, it doesn't.

### EVOLUTION AND THE DEPOSIT OF FAITH

The fact is that at this juncture it does not look like evolution *can* be a subject of Catholic teaching. The reason has to do with its relationship to the deposit of faith (Scripture and Tradition).

Basically, a scientific claim can have one of three basic relations with the sources of faith: (1) It can be re-

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quired by them, (2) It can be precluded by them, or (3) It can be free with respect to them.

A scientific claim can be required by the sources of faith because (a) it is directly taught in them or (b) it is needed to protect a truth that is taught in the deposit of faith. An example is that the world has a beginning, that it does not go back forever in time.

Similarly, a scientific claim also can be precluded by the sources of faith because (a) they directly teach it to be false or (b) its falsity must be recognized to protect something else they teach. An example would be the idea that the universe extends back infinitely in time.

Matters that do not fall into either of the above categories are free with respect to the sources of faith, and they must stand or fall on their own scientific merits. As the Pope pointed out in his address, new data accumulates with time, so such claims may seem to stand at one time, fall at another, then get up and stumble again later.

However that plays out, Catholic doctrine is unconcerned because the sources of faith neither require nor preclude them. They are apart from the faith and the Church's ability to pronounce on them.

It is possible for it to be unclear which of the three relationships a scientific idea has, but doctrinal development can clarify this. Initially, it looked to many as if the idea of geocentrism was required by Scripture and that therefore heliocentrism was precluded. Over time, it was recognized that this was not the case. This matter is free with respect to the sources of faith.

The process of coming to that conclusion was so painful that the Church was determined not to get burned that way again, and so it is entirely natural that Church would want to say positive sounding things about evolution, but that doesn't make it a teaching of the faith.

Initially it looked to many like the theory of human evolution was precluded by the sources of faith. In the mid-twentieth century, Pius XII issued a tentative finding that this was not the case. In the remainder of the century, this conviction strengthened.

But nobody has gone to the extent of saying that it is *required* by the sources of faith. That hasn't been remotely suggested.

Until such time as the Magisterium would either reverse its twentieth-century finding that human evolution is not precluded by the deposit of faith or would make a new finding that it is required by the deposit, human evolution as a matter that is free with respect to the sources. It is a matter that must stand or fall on its own scientific merits; it is not a matter of Catholic teaching.

The sooner both sides in the evolution debate within the Catholic Church recognize this, the better for all concerned. †

## Ad Risum Vertere Veritatem\*



\*Latin for "To turn truth into laughter"

### WHO HAS THE OLDEST PROFESSION?

A doctor, a lawyer and an engineer are arguing over which of them has the oldest profession in the world.

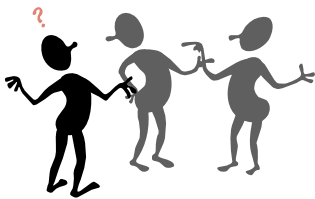
The doctor says, "On the sixth day of creation, God created Eve from a rib of Adam. That was the first surgery."

The engineer says, "I can beat that. On the second and third days of creation, out of chaos, God created the universe, the world and nature. That was the first civil engineering job."

The lawyer says, "Well, I win."

The doctor and the engineer look at him, amazed and said, "What are you talking about?"

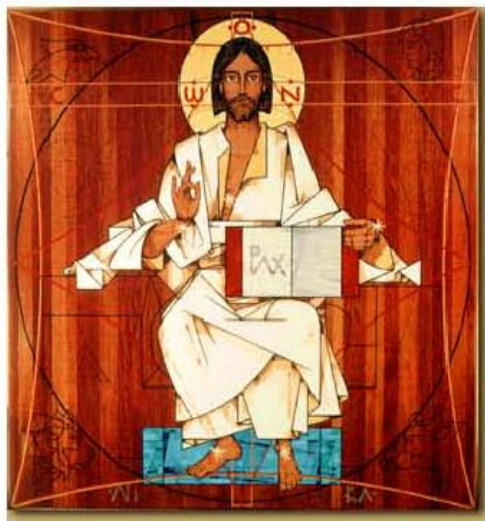
The lawyer smugly looks at them and calmly says, "Who do you think created the chaos?" †





# St. Thomas More Society Retreat

*“And he came and found them sleeping, and he said to Peter, “Simon, are you asleep? Could you not watch one hour? Watch and pray that you may not enter into temptation; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak.” (Mark 14: 37-38)*



**Then Jesus  
“went out to the  
mountain to pray,  
spending the night  
in communion  
with God. ...”**

**—Luke 6:12**

**When:** Friday evening, March 16, 2007 (check-in 7:30-8:30 p.m.) through Noon on Sunday, March 18, 2007

**Where:** Prince of Peace Retreat Center, Oceanside, CA (Benedictine)

[www.princeofpeaceabbey.org](http://www.princeofpeaceabbey.org)

**Cost:** \$130 (includes food and lodging)

**Summary:** The retreat will be a traditional, silent retreat with conferences and meditations taken from the writings of our patron, St. Thomas More, with opportunities for the Sacrament of Penance, Eucharistic Adoration and quiet time with the Lord.

**Retreat Master:** Father Hugh Barbour, O. Praem, Ph.D.

**Theme:** “Psalm 21/22: Our Savior Crucified-Teacher of Prayer”

**Contact:** Anne Lanphar (714) 250-1453 or via email at [alanphar@firstam.com](mailto:alanphar@firstam.com) or mail your check as set forth below.

**PLEASE REGISTER AS SOON AS POSSIBLE AS SPACE IS LIMITED †**

*Please register me for the St. Thomas More Retreat for the weekend of March 16-18, 2007*

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Telephone:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_ **State:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **email:** \_\_\_\_\_

*Make check payable to the “St Thomas More Society” and mail to:  
Anne Lanphar c/o First American SMS, 200 commerce, Irvine, CA 92602*

## THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE WORLD



A group of students were asked to list what they thought were the present “Seven Wonders of the World.”

Though there were some disagreements, the following received the most votes:

1. Egypt’s Great Pyramids
2. Taj Mahal
3. Grand Canyon
4. Panama Canal
5. Empire State Building
6. St. Peter’s Basilica
7. China’s Great Wall

### THOUGHT FOR THE DAY

While gathering the votes, the teacher noted that one student had not finished her paper yet. So she asked the girl if she was having trouble with her list. The girl replied, “Yes, a little. I couldn't quite make up my mind because there were so many.”

The teacher said, “Well, tell us what you have, and maybe we can help.”

The girl hesitated, then read, “I think the ‘Seven Wonders of the World’ are:



The room was so quiet you could have heard a pin drop.

The things we overlook as simple and ordinary and that we take for granted are truly wondrous! A gentle reminder: the most precious things in life cannot be built by hand or bought by man—they are a gift from God. ✝

## FREE WILL, CONSCIENCE & DUTY

ANNE NELSON LANPHAR ESQ.

### THE GIFT OF FREE WILL

God created man in His own image and likeness—that is, our soul. God also gave mankind the most amazing gift of all: a free will.

No human parent would ever give a free will to their children! Every parent knows that this free will appears very early in human development - starting somewhere around age one as evidenced by the emphatic “no” that emits from the mouth of that sweet-looking child.

God gave this special gift to us so that the love we give Him would be freely given thereby having value to Him. He could easily have created minions to obey and serve Him without choice but objects cannot love freely and slaves do not really love, they merely obey. God loved us and wanted us to love Him freely. But with this gift of free will, God also risks our rejection.

God created man as a rational being, conferring on him the dignity and privilege of being able to initiate, analyze and control his actions.

*God willed that man should be ‘left in the hand of his own counsel,’ so that he might of his own accord seek his Creator and freely attain his full and blessed perfection by cleaving to him. ‘Man is rational and therefore like God; he is created with free will and is master over his acts.’ (Catholic Catechism, ¶ 1730)*

When God gave man a free will, He also promised to never interfere with that gift otherwise, by definition, it would not be free will! Accordingly, God never interferes with our decisions – even the evil ones – even when we choose to harm another. The strongest evidence of this commitment is heard in the heart-wrenching cries of a parent’s heart who has lost a child in a brutal manner as a result of the criminal act of another human: “How could God let this happen? Where was He?” God was in His heaven keeping His commitment to us, to all mankind. Although it undoubtedly pains Him greatly when we harm one another, He *cannot* violate His word. God proved this commitment when He did not interfere even when evil men were brutally murdering His own Son by crucifixion.

God virtually gave each of one of us the right to accept or reject Him. A truly amazing gift!

### CONSCIENCE

But free will does not equate to an unlimited license to do whatever we want. This amazing gift was given with a “gentle restraint” – our conscience.

*Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey. Its voice, ever calling him to love and to do what is good and to avoid evil, sounds in his heart at the right moment.... For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God.... His conscience is man's most secret core and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths.” (Catholic Catechism, ¶ 1795)*

Conscience is not a form of “restraint” since restraint implies an element of control. God does not control an individual even via the conscience. Each person still has the free will to ignore his conscience and choose to act as he desires even if it is contrary to God’s law. Of course, by choosing to disobey God’s law, he will be held accountable for

*Free Will, Conscience & Duty* (Continued on page 12)



PETER  
DENOUNCING  
CHRIST

Rembrandt

(1660)

***God has blessed mankind with the incredible gift of a free will but also provided a guidance mechanism: the conscience. Although each person is required to follow his conscience, he has a duty to have an educated conscience and to never surrender his free will to anyone or anything.***

(Continued from page 11) **Free Will, Conscience & Duty**  
that decision.

What exactly is a conscience? What does it do? The Catholic Catechism describes it as follows:

*Conscience is man's most secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God whose voice echoes in his depths. Conscience is a judgment of reason by which the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act.*" (Catholic Catechism ¶ 1795-6)

Conscience does not restrict man's choice but serves as a method by which God lets man know His will. It reflects the element of reason given to man so that he can judge his actions. Without reason and conscience to temper free will, man would be completely unrestrained in his actions.

*Moral conscience, present at the heart of the person, enjoins him at the appropriate moment to do good and to avoid evil. It also judges particular choices, approving those that are good and denouncing those that are evil. It bears witness to the authority of truth in reference to the supreme Good to which the human person is drawn, and it welcomes the commandments. When he listens to his conscience, the prudent man can hear God speaking.* (Catholic Catechism ¶ 1777)

Conscience is a judgment of reason whereby the human person recognizes the moral quality of a concrete act that he is going to perform, is in the process of performing, or has already completed. In all he says and does, man is obliged to follow faithfully what he knows to be just and right. It is through the judgment of his conscience that man perceives and recognizes the prescriptions of the divine law:

*Conscience is a law of the mind; yet [Christians] would not grant that it is nothing more; I mean that it was not a dictate, nor conveyed the notion of responsibility, of duty, of a threat and a promise.... [Conscience] is a messenger of Him, who, both in nature and in grace, speaks to us behind a veil, and teaches and rules us by his representatives. Conscience is the aboriginal Vicar of Christ.* (The Catholic Catechism, 1963).

Can man follow his "conscience" with impunity at all times? The simple answer is yes: man **must** always obey the dictates of his conscience. "If he were deliberately to act against it, he would condemn himself." (Catholic Catechism ¶ 1790). However, although man is to act in accordance with the dictates of his conscience, certain rules do apply:

- ◆ One may never do evil so that good may result from it. In other words, the end *never* justifies the means.
- ◆ The Golden Rule: "Whatever you wish that men would do to you, do so to them."
- ◆ Charity always proceeds by way of respect for one's neighbor and his conscience: "Thus sinning against your brethren and wounding his conscience, you sin against Christ." In other words, we must not do anything which would serve to give bad example to our brother and cause him to "stumble."

So, under divine law is "ignorance bliss"? "Invincible ignorance" – meaning it is unintentional – does, in fact, protect a soul who is not held accountable for his sin since he has no knowledge of God's law and, therefore, cannot intend to violate it.<sup>1</sup> However, no one may intentionally close his mind and claim impunity based on "ignorance." And although each person must follow his conscience, he has certain **duties and responsibilities** in relation to his conscience or he is responsible and accountable for failing in meeting those duties.

## DUTY

Certain duties come with the gift of free will: (i) ***the duty to have an educated conscience***, and (ii) ***the duty to never surrender his free will to another***. Each person will be held responsible for failure to meet these duties.

### (i) DUTY TO EDUCATE THE CONSCIENCE

Although conscience is a gift from God, it does not come fully formed. Each person is responsible to pursue truth<sup>2</sup> and to form an educated conscience. This duty is a *life-long obligation* - it does not end with graduation from a Catholic school or a CCD program.

*Conscience must be informed and moral judgment enlightened. A well-formed conscience is upright and truthful. It formulates its judgments according to reason, in conformity with the true good willed by*

**Free Will, Conscience & Duty** (Continued on page 13)

(Continued from page 12) **Free Will, Conscience & Duty**

*the wisdom of the Creator. The education of conscience is indispensable for human beings who are subjected to negative influences and tempted by sin to prefer their own judgment and to reject authoritative teachings.*

*The education of the conscience is a lifelong task. From the earliest years, it awakens the child to the knowledge and practice of the interior law recognized by conscience. Prudent education teaches virtue; it prevents or cures fear, selfishness and pride, resentment rising from guilt, and feelings of complacency, born of human weakness and faults. The education of the conscience guarantees freedom and engenders peace of heart.*

*In the formation of conscience the Word of God is the light for our path, we must assimilate it in faith and prayer and put it into practice. We must also examine our conscience before the Lord's Cross. We are assisted by the gifts of the Holy Spirit, aided by the witness or advice of others and guided by the authoritative teaching of the Church. (Catholic Catechism, ¶ 1783-5)*

An uneducated conscience can be in a state of ignorance thereby resulting in erroneous judgments. Although each individual must follow his conscience, he will, however, be held accountable for his failure to meet the duty to educate his conscience. As with man's law, *ignorance is no excuse!*

*This ignorance can often be imputed to personal responsibility. This is the case when a man "takes little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin." In such cases, the person is culpable for the evil he commits.*

*Ignorance of Christ and his Gospel, bad example given by others, enslavement to one's passions, assertion of a mistaken notion of autonomy of conscience, rejection of the Church's authority and her teaching, lack of conversion and of charity: these can be at the source of errors of judgment in moral conduct. (Catholic Catechism ¶ 1791-2)*

If a person does not have the opportunity to know or pursue the truth, he will not be held responsible for the error in judgment made by his conscience nor for the ignorance that led to the error. However, the circumstances qualifying for invincible ignorance are limited and left to the judgment of our all-knowing God in His mercy and justice.

## **ii) DUTY TO NEVER SURRENDER ONE'S FREE WILL**

Because man has been given a free will, he is responsible for his decisions and actions. Abdication of the decision-making process is not acceptable in the civil law of man nor the law of God. If a person surrenders or abdicates his judgment to another person, or to outside "forces" such as superstition, materialism, drugs or alcohol, *or even the majority view held by society*, he is responsible for that decision to abdicate his free will and the consequences which flow from it.

## **CONCLUSION**

God has blessed mankind with the incredible gift of a free will but also provided a guidance mechanism: the conscience. Although each person is required to follow his conscience, he has a duty to have an educated conscience and to never surrender his free will to anyone or anything. †



**FRANK & ERNEST**



## JOHN 1: 1-3

<sup>1</sup>*In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God and the Word was God.*  
<sup>2</sup>*He was in the beginning with God;* <sup>3</sup>*all things were made through him, and without him was not anything made that was made.*

### Comment from the Navarre Bible:\*

These verses form the prologue or introduction to the Fourth Gospel; they are a poem prefacing the account of Jesus Christ's life on earth, pro-claiming and praising his divinity and eternity. Jesus is the uncreated Word, God the Only-begotten, who takes on our human condition and offers us the opportunity to become sons and daughters of God, that is, to share in God's own life in a real and supernatural way...

The prologue is very reminiscent of the first chapter of Genesis, on a number of scores: 1) the opening words are the same: "In the beginning..."; in the Gospel they refer to absolute beginning, that is, eternity, whereas in Genesis they mean the beginning of Creation and time; 2) there is a parallelism in the role of the Word: in Genesis, God creates things by his word ("And God said..."); in the Gospel we are told that they were made through the Word of God; 3) in Genesis, God's work of creation reaches its peak when he creates man in his own image and likeness; in the Gospel, the work of the Incarnate Word culminates when man is raised—by a new creation, as it were—to the dignity of being a son of God...

The sacred text calls the Son of God "the Word." The following comparison may help us understand the notion of "Word": just as a person becoming conscious of himself forms an image of himself in his mind, in the same way God the Father on knowing himself begets the eternal Word. This Word of God is singular, unique; no other can exist because in him is expressed the entire essence of God. Therefore, the Gospel does not call him simply "Word", but "the Word." Three truths are affirmed regarding the Word—that he is eternal, that he is distinct from the Father, and that he is God. "Affirming that he existed in the beginning is equivalent to saying that he existed before all things" (St Augustine, *De Trinitate*, 6,2). Also, the text says that he was with God, that is, with the Father, which means that the person of the Word is distinct from that of the Father and yet the Word is so intimately related to the Father that he even shares his divine nature: he is one in substance with the Father (cf. *Nicean Creed*).

To mark the Year of Faith (1967-1968) Pope Paul VI summed up this truth concerning the most Holy Trinity in what is called the *Creed of the People of God* (n. 11) in these words: "We believe in our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Son of God. He is the eternal Word, born of the Father before time began, and one in substance with the Father, *homoousios to Patri*, and through him all things were made. He was incarnate of the Virgin Mary by the power of the Holy Spirit, and was made man: equal therefore to the Father according to his divinity, and inferior to the Father according to his humanity and himself one, not by some impossible confusion of his natures, but by the unity of his person."

"In the beginning": "what this means is that he always was, and that he is eternal. [...] For if he is God, as indeed he is, there is nothing prior to him; if he is creator of all things, then he is the First; if he is Lord of all, then everything comes after him—created things and time" (St John Chrysostom, *Horn. on St John*, 2, 4).

After showing that the Word is in the bosom of the Father, the prologue goes on to deal with his relationship to created things. Already in the Old Testament the Word of God is shown as a creative power (cf. IS 55:10-11), as Wisdom present at the creation of the world (cf. Peoc 8:22-26). Now Revelation is extended: we are shown that creation was caused by the Word; this does not mean that the Word is an instrument subordinate and inferior to the Father: he is an active principle along with the Father and the Holy Spirit. The work of creation is an activity common to the three divine Persons of the Blessed Trinity: "the Father generating, the Son being born, the Holy Spirit proceeding; the creator of all things visible and invisible, spiritual and corporal." (Fourth Lateran Council, *De fide catholica*, Dz-Sch, 800). From tis can be deduced, among other things, the hand of the Trinity in the work of creation and, therefore, the fact that all created things are basically good. †

## SCRIPTURAL CORNER



### GOD INVITING CHRIST TO SIT ON THE THRONE AT HIS RIGHT SIDE

*Pieter de Grebber*

(1645)

*\*The Navarre Bible,  
a renovation edition of Sacred  
Scripture prepared by  
members of the  
Faculty of Theology  
of Navarre University,  
consisting of the New  
Vulgate, the Revised  
Standard Version and  
commentaries.*

## THE RUNAWAY ABBOT\*

ST. THOMAS AQUINAS

By G. K. Chesterton

St. Thomas Aquinas was a hero of the faith in quite a different sense from the early martyrs who bore witness by their deaths. He was a giant of learning, a tower of intellectual strength, a "master of those who know," as Dante said of Aristotle. He was declared a Doctor of the Church in 1567 and the Patron of Catholic Schools in 1880.\*

Some miles from the monastery of Monte Cassino stood a great crag or cliff, standing up like a pillar of the Apennines. It was crowned with a castle that bore the name of The Dry Rock, and was the eyrie in which the eaglets of the Aquino branch of the Imperial family were nursed to fly. Here lived Count Landulf of Aquino, who was the father of Thomas Aquinas and some seven other sons. In military affairs he doubtless rode with his family, in the feudal manner; and apparently had something to do with the destruction of the monastery. But it was typical of the tangle of the time, that Count Landulf seems afterwards to have thought that it would be a tactful and delicate act to put in his son Thomas as Abbot of the monastery. This would be of the nature of a graceful apology to the Church, and also, it would appear, the solution of a family difficulty.

For it had been long apparent to Count Landulf that nothing could be done with his seventh son Thomas, except to make him an Abbot or something of that kind. Born in 1226, he had from childhood a mysterious objection to becoming a predatory eagle, or even to taking an ordinary interest in falconry or tilting or any other gentlemanly pursuits. He was a large and heavy and quiet boy, and phenomenally silent, scarcely opening his mouth except to say suddenly to his schoolmaster in an explosive manner, "What is God?" The answer is not recorded but it is probable that the asker went on worrying out answers for himself. The only place for a person of this kind was the Church and presumably the cloister; and so far as that went, there was no particular difficulty. It was easy enough for a man in Count Landulf's position to arrange with some monastery for his son to be received there; and in this particular case he thought it would be a good idea if he were received in some official capacity, that would be worthy of his worldly rank. So everything was smoothly arranged for Thomas Aquinas becoming a monk, which would seem to be what he himself wanted; and sooner or later becoming Abbot of Monte Cassino. And then the curious thing happened.

In so far as we may follow rather dim and disputed events, it would seem that the young Thomas Aquinas walked into his father's castle one day and calmly announced that he had become one of the Begging Friars, of the new order founded by Dominic the Spaniard; much as the eldest son of the squire might go home and airily inform the family that he had married a gypsy; or the heir of a Tory Duke state that he was walking tomorrow with the Hunger Marchers organized by alleged Communists. By this, as has been noted already, we may pretty well measure the abyss between the old monasticism and the new, and the earthquake of the Dominican and Franciscan revolution. Thomas had appeared to wish to be a Monk; and the gates were silently opened to him and the long avenues of the abbey, the very carpet, so to speak, laid for him up to the throne of the mitred abbot. He said he wished to be a Friar, and his family flew at him like wild beasts; his brothers pursued him along the public roads, half-rent his friar's frock from his back and finally locked him up in a tower like a lunatic.

It is not very easy to trace the course of this furious family quarrel, and how it eventually spent itself against the tenacity of the young Friar; according to some stories, his mother's disapproval was short-lived and she went over to his side; but it was not only his relatives that were embroiled. We might say that the central governing class of Europe, which partly consisted of his family, were in a turmoil over the deplorable youth; even the Pope was asked for tactful intervention, and it was at one time proposed that Thomas should be allowed to wear the Dominican habit while acting as Abbot in the Benedictine Abbey. To many this would seem a tactful compromise; but it did not commend itself to the narrow medieval mind of Thomas Aquinas. He indicated sharply that he wished to be a Dominican in the Dominican Order, and not at a fancy-dress ball; and the diplomatic proposal appears to have been dropped.

Thomas of Aquino wanted to be a Friar. It was a staggering fact to his contemporaries; and

*The Runaway Abbot* (Continued on page 16)

## SAINT STORIES



TRIUMPH OF  
ST THOMAS  
AQUINAS

*Benozzo Gozzoli*

(1471)

\* Selection from  
"A Treasury of  
Catholic Reading"  
ed. John Chapin  
(New York: Farrar,  
Straus & Cudahy,  
1957).

(Continued from page 15) ***The Runaway Abbot***

it is rather an intriguing fact even to us; for this desire, limited literally and strictly to this statement, was the one practical thing to which his will was clamped with adamantine obstinacy till his death. He would not be an Abbot; he would not be a Monk; he would not even be a Prior or ruler in his own fraternity; he would not be a prominent or important Friar; he would be a Friar. It is as if Napoleon had insisted on remaining a private soldier all his life. Something in this heavy, quiet, cultivated, rather academic gentleman would not be satisfied till he was, by fixed authoritative proclamation and official pronouncement, established and appointed to be a Beggar. It is all the more interesting because, while he did more than his duty a thousand times over, he was not at all like a Beggar; nor at all likely to be a good Beggar. He had nothing of the native vagabond about him, as had his great precursors; he was not born with something of the wondering minstrel, like St. Francis; or something of the tramping missionary, like St. Dominic. But he insisted upon putting himself under military orders, to do these things at the will of another, if required. He may be compared with some of the more magnanimous aristocrats who have enrolled themselves in revolutionary armies; or some of the best of the poets and scholars who volunteered as private soldiers in the Great War. Something in the courage and consistency of Dominic and Francis had challenged his deep sense of justice; and while remaining a very reasonable person, and even a diplomatic one, he never let anything shake the iron immobility of this one decision of his youth; nor was he to be turned from his tall and towering ambition to take the lowest place.

The first effect of his decision, as we have seen, was much more stimulating and even startling. The General of the Dominicans, under whom Thomas had enrolled himself, was probably well aware of the diplomatic attempts to dislodge him and the worldly difficulties of resisting them. His expedient was to take his young follower out of Italy altogether; bidding him proceed with a few other friars to Paris. There was something prophetic even about this first progress of the travelling teacher of the nations; for Paris was indeed destined to be in some sense the goal of his spiritual journey; since it was there that he was to deliver both his great defense of the Friars and his great defiance to the antagonists of Aristotle. But this his first journey to Paris was destined to be broken off very short indeed. The friars had reached a turn of the road by a wayside fountain, a little way north of Rome, when they were overtaken by a wild cavalcade of captors, who seized on Thomas like brigands, but who were in fact only rather needlessly agitated brothers. He had a large number of brothers: perhaps only two were here involved. Indeed he was the seventh; and friends of Birth Control may lament that this philosopher was needlessly added to the noble line of ruffians who kidnapped him. It was an odd affair altogether. There is something quaint and picturesque in the idea of kidnapping a begging friar, who might in a sense be called a runaway abbot. There is a comic and tragic tangle in the motives and purposes of such a trio of strange kinsmen. There is a sort of Christian cross-purposes in the contrast between the feverish illusion of the importance of things, always marking men who are called practical; and the much more practical pertinacity of the man who is called theoretical.

Thus at least did those three strange brethren stagger or trail along their tragic road, tied together, as it were, like criminal and constable; only that the criminals were making the arrest. So their figures are seen for an instant against the horizon of history; brothers as sinister as any since Cain and Abel. For this queer outrage in the great family of Aquino does really stand out symbolically, as representing something that will forever make the Middle Ages a mystery and a bewilderment; capable of sharply contrasted interpretations like darkness and light. For in two of those men there raged, we might say screamed, a savage pride of blood and blazonry of arms, though they were princes of the most refined world of their time, which would seem more suitable to a tribe dancing round a totem. For the moment they had forgotten everything except the name of a family, that is narrower than a tribe, and far narrower than a nation. And the third figure of that trio, born of the same mother and perhaps visibly one with the others in face or form, had a conception of brotherhood broader than most modern democracy, for it was not national but international; a faith in mercy and modesty far deeper than any mere mildness of manners in the modern world; and a drastic oath of poverty, which would now be counted quite a mad exaggeration of the revolt against plutocracy and pride. Out of the same Italian castle came two savages and one sage; or one saint more pacific than most modern sages. That is the double aspect confusing a hundred controversies. That is what makes the riddle of the medieval age; that it was not one age but two ages. We look into the moods of some men, and it might be the Stone Age; we look into the minds of other men, and they might be living in the Golden Age; in the most modern sort of Utopia. There were always good men and bad men; but in this time good men who were subtle lived with bad men who were simple. They lived in the same family; they were brought up in the same nursery; and they came out to struggle, as the brothers of Aquino struggled by the wayside, when they dragged the new friar along the road and shut him up in the castle on the hill.

When his relations tried to despoil him of his friar's frock he seems to have laid about them in the fighting manner of his fathers, and it would seem successfully, since this attempt was abandoned. He accepted the imprisonment itself with his customary composure, and probably did not mind very much whether he was left to philosophize in a dungeon or in a cell. Indeed there is something in the way the whole tale is told, which suggests that through a great part of that strange abduction, he had been carried about like a lumbering stone statue. Only one tale told of his captivity shows him merely in anger; and that shows him angrier than he ever was before or after. It struck the imagination of his own time for more important reasons; but it has





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THE  
WRITINGS  
OF  
THOMAS  
MORE

## MORE ON CONSCIENCE AND THE MAJORITY

... More told a fable of his own, a merry tale about “a poor, honest man of the country who was called Company.” This man was serving on a jury, and he was the only one on the panel who was not from the same northern locality as the defendant. After listening to all the evidence, the other eleven jurors came to a quick decision in favor of their fellow Northerner. Company, “this honest man of another quarter,” did not concur. But because he “sat still and said nothing,” they paid no attention to him. They said, “We are agreed now; come let us go give our verdict.”

At this point, however, Company did intervene, declaring that “his mind did not go the way theirs did (if their minds went the way that they said),” and that they therefore should, perhaps, “tarry and talk about the matter and tell him such reasons that he might think as they did.” But until they could convince him otherwise, “he must say as he thought,” since “he had a soul of his own to keep as they had.”

The response to this reasonable request was not one based on reason. “ ‘What, good fellow, is the matter with you?’ ” they asked. “ ‘Are not we eleven here and you but one alone, and all we are agreed? Why should you stick? . . . Company, now by thy true name, good fellow, play then the good companion, and come with us. . . for good company.’ ” To help them put this issue in proper perspective, honest Company then asked this long question: “ ‘When we shall go from here and come before God and He shall send you to heaven for doing according to [what will you say then if I say this to you]: “I went once for good company with you, which is the cause that I go now to hell; play you the good fellows now again with me. As I went then for good company with you, so some of you go now for good company with me.” Would you go?’ ” No one, of course, would agree to that. And so Company would not go along with them either “ ‘for the passage of my poor soul passes all good company.’ ”

**Thomas More: A Portrait of Courage Gerald B. Wegemer Scepter Publishers (p. 177) †**

(Continued from page 16) **The Runaway Abbot**

an interest that is psychological as well as moral. For once in his life, for the first time and the last, Thomas of Aquino was really hors de lui; riding a storm outside that tower of intellect and contemplation in which he commonly lived. And that was when his brothers introduced into his room some specially gorgeous and painted courtesan, with the idea of surprising him by a sudden temptation, or at least involving him in a scandal. His anger was justified, even by less strict moral standards than his own; for the meanness was even worse than the foulness of the expedient. Even on the lowest grounds, he knew his brothers knew, and they knew that he knew, that it was an insult to him as a gentleman to suppose that he would break his pledge upon so base a provocation; and he had behind him a far more terrible sensibility; all that huge ambition of humility which was to him the voice of God out of heaven. In this one flash alone we see that huge unwieldy figure in an attitude of activity, or even animation; and he was very animated indeed. He sprang from his seat and snatched a brand out of the fire, and stood brandishing it like a flaming sword. The woman not unnaturally shrieked and fled, which was all that he wanted; but it is quaint to think of what she must have thought of that madman of monstrous stature juggling with flames and apparently threatening to burn down the house. All he did, however, was to stride after her to the door and bang and bar it behind her; and then, with a sort of impulse of violent ritual, he rammed the burning brand into the door, blackening and blistering it with one big black sign of the cross. Then he returned, and dropped it again into the fire; and sat down on that seat of sedentary scholarship, that chair of philosophy, that secret throne of contemplation, from which he never rose again.... †

## ADDRESS OF HIS HOLINESS POPE BENEDICT XVI TO THE MEMBERS OF THE PONTIFICAL ACADEMY OF SCIENCES

NOVEMBER 6, 2006

*Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen,*

I am pleased to greet the members of Pontifical Academy of Sciences on the occasion of this Plenary Assembly, and I thank Professor Nicola Cabibbo for his kind words of greeting in your name. The theme of your meeting – “Predictability in Science: Accuracy and Limitations” – deals with a distinctive attribute of modern science. Predictability, in fact, is one of the chief reasons for science’s prestige in contemporary society. The establishment of the scientific method has given the sciences the ability to predict phenomena, to study their development, and thus to control the environment in which man lives.

This increasing ‘advance’ of science, and especially its capacity to master nature through technology, has at times been linked to a corresponding ‘retreat’ of philosophy, of religion, and even of the Christian faith. Indeed, some have seen in the progress of modern science and technology one of the main causes of secularization and materialism: why invoke God’s control over these phenomena when science has shown itself capable of doing the same thing? Certainly the Church acknowledges that “with the help of science and technology..., man has extended his mastery over almost the whole of nature”, and thus “he now produces by his own enterprise benefits once looked for from heavenly powers” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 33). At the same time, Christianity does not posit an inevitable conflict between supernatural faith and scientific progress. The very starting-point of Biblical revelation is the affirmation that God created human beings, endowed them with reason, and set them over all the creatures of the earth. In this way, man has become the steward of creation and God’s “helper”. If we think, for example, of how modern science, by predicting natural phenomena, has contributed to the protection of the environment, the progress of developing nations, the fight against epidemics, and an increase in life expectancy, it becomes clear that there is no conflict between God’s providence and human enterprise. Indeed, we could say that the work of predicting, controlling and governing nature, which science today renders more practicable than in the past, is itself a part of the Creator’s plan.

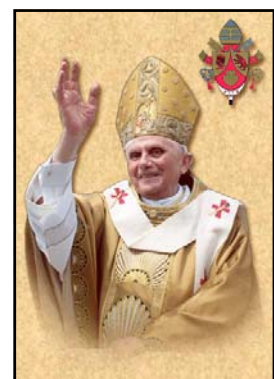
Science, however, while giving generously, gives only what it is meant to give. Man cannot place in science and technology so radical and unconditional a trust as to believe that scientific and technological progress can explain everything and completely fulfil all his existential and spiritual needs. Science cannot replace philosophy and revelation by giving an exhaustive answer to man’s most radical questions: questions about the meaning of living and dying, about ultimate values, and about the nature of progress itself. For this reason, the Second Vatican Council, after acknowledging the benefits gained by scientific advances, pointed out that the “scientific methods of investigation can be unjustifiably taken as the supreme norm for arriving at truth”, and added that “there is a danger that man, trusting too much in the discoveries of today, may think that he is sufficient unto himself and no longer seek the higher values” (*ibid.*, 57).

Scientific predictability also raises the question of the scientist’s ethical responsi-

***Papal Message*** (Continued on page 20)



**FROM  
PETER’S  
SUCCESSOR,  
POPE  
BENEDICT XVI**



(Continued from page 19) *Papal Message*

bilities. His conclusions must be guided by respect for truth and an honest acknowledgment of both the accuracy and the inevitable limitations of the scientific method. Certainly this means avoiding needlessly alarming predictions when these are not supported by sufficient data or exceed science's actual ability to predict. But it also means avoiding the opposite, namely a silence, born of fear, in the face of genuine problems. The influence of scientists in shaping public opinion on the basis of their knowledge is too important to be undermined by undue haste or the pursuit of superficial publicity. As my predecessor, Pope John Paul II, once observed: "Scientists, precisely because they 'know more', are called to 'serve more'. Since the freedom they enjoy in research gives them access to specialized knowledge, they have the responsibility of using that knowledge wisely for the benefit of the entire human family" (*Address to the Pontifical Academy of Sciences*, 11 November 2002).

Dear Academicians, our world continues to look to you and your colleagues for a clear understanding of the possible consequences of many important natural phenomena. I think, for example, of the continuing threats to the environment which are affecting whole peoples, and the urgent need to discover safe, alternative energy sources available to all. Scientists will find support from the Church in their efforts to confront these issues, since the Church has received from her divine founder the task of guiding people's consciences towards goodness, solidarity and peace. Precisely for this reason she feels in duty bound to insist that science's ability to predict and control must never be employed against human life and its dignity, but always placed at its service, at the service of this and future generations.

There is one final reflection that the subject of your Assembly can suggest to us today. As some of the papers presented in the last few days have emphasized, the scientific method itself, in its gathering of data and in the processing and use of those data in projections, has inherent limitations that necessarily restrict scientific predictability to specific contexts and approaches. Science cannot, therefore, presume to provide a complete, deterministic representation of our future and of the development of every phenomenon that it studies. Philosophy and theology might make an important contribution to this fundamentally epistemological question by, for example, helping the empirical sciences to recognize a difference between the mathematical inability to predict certain events and the validity of the principle of causality, or between scientific indeterminism or contingency (randomness) and causality on the philosophical level, or, more radically, between evolution as the origin of a succession in space and time, and creation as the ultimate origin of participated being in essential Being.

At the same time, there is a higher level that necessarily transcends all scientific predictions, namely, the human world of freedom and history. Whereas the physical cosmos can have its own spatial-temporal development, only humanity, strictly speaking, has a history, the history of its own. Freedom, like reason, is a precious part of God's image within us, and it can never be reduced to a deterministic analysis. Its transcendence vis-à-vis the material world must be acknowledged and respected, since it is a sign of our human dignity. Denying that transcendence in the name of a supposed absolute ability of the scientific method to predict and condition the human world would involve the loss of what is human in man, and, by failing to recognize his uniqueness and transcendence, could dangerously open the door to his exploitation.

Dear friends, as I conclude these reflections, I once more assure you of my close interest in the activities of this Pontifical Academy and of my prayers for you and your families. Upon all of you I invoke Almighty God's blessings of wisdom, joy and peace. †

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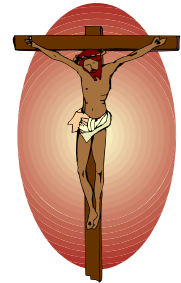
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*Heavenly Father, I offer you this day  
all that I shall think, do or say,  
uniting it with what was done  
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Amen*

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- ◆ John Flynn IV USNA (special intention)
  - ◆ Hon. Jenny Latta (serious illness)
    - ◆ Kathy Todd (cancer)
  - ◆ Susan Keenan (serious illness)
  - ◆ Melissa DiFelice (serious illness)
- ◆ Fr. George M. Luznicki (deceased)
- ◆ Madeline McKimmey (birth problems)
  - ◆ Ellie Shonefelt & Her Children
    - ◆ Janet Prahll (illness)
    - ◆ Lindsay Stevens (illness)
    - ◆ Douglas Kniec (illness)
- ◆ Anne Lanphar (special intention)
- ◆ Eleanor Kott & Family (illness)
  - ◆ David Macdonald (illness)
  - ◆ Eric & Marie Bessem
- ◆ Charles Godwin (serious illness)
  - ◆ Kevin Guice (serious illness)
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- ◆ Sean Nelson (illness)
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  - ◆ Mary Keelan (illness)
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  - ◆ Duain Cruzat (serious disease)
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- ◆ Milos & Edith Myrik (serious illness)
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  - ◆ Ryan Ronk (serious injury)
  - ◆ Kristin Burkett (serious illness)
- ◆ Darren M (questioning the Faith)
- ◆ Fr. Matt Munoz (special intention)
  - ◆ Cindie Burnes (serious illness)
- ◆ John Flynn & his wife (serious illness)
  - ◆ Ron Gable (special intention)
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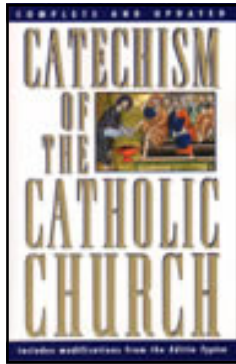
### PART ONE: The Profession of Faith

### SECTION TWO: The Profession of the Christian Faith

### CHAPTER ONE: "I Believe in God the Father"

### ARTICLE 5: I Believe in God the Father Almighty, the Creator of Heaven and Earth

#### Paragraph 6—MAN



## CATECHISM CORNER



**CREATION OF ADAM  
(DETAIL)**

*Michelangelo*

(1510)

**355** "God created man in his own image, in the image of God he created him, male and female he created them." Man occupies a unique place in creation: (I) he is "in the image of God"; (II) in his own nature he unites the spiritual and material worlds; (III) he is created "male and female"; (IV) God established him in his friendship.

#### I. "IN THE IMAGE OF GOD"

**356** of all visible creatures only man is "able to know and love his creator". He is "the only creature on earth that God has willed for its own sake", and he alone is called to share, by knowledge and love, in God's own life. It was for this end that he was created, and this is the fundamental reason for his dignity:

*What made you establish man in so great a dignity? Certainly the incalculable love by which you have looked on your creature in yourself! You are taken with love for her; for by love indeed you created her, by love you have given her a being capable of tasting your eternal Good.*

**357** Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. and he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead.

**358** God created everything for man, but man in turn was created to serve and love God and to offer all creation back to him:

*What is it that is about to be created, that enjoys such honor? It is man that great and wonderful living creature, more precious in the eyes of God than all other creatures! For him the heavens and the earth, the sea and all the rest of creation exist. God attached so much importance to his salvation that he did not spare his own Son for the sake of man. Nor does he ever cease to work, trying every possible means, until he has raised man up to himself and made him sit at his right hand.*

**359** "In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of man truly becomes clear."

*St. Paul tells us that the human race takes its origin from two men: Adam and Christ. . . the first man, Adam, he says, became a living soul, the last Adam a life-giving spirit. the first Adam was made by the last Adam, from whom he also received his soul, to give him life... the second Adam stamped his image on the first Adam when he created him. That is why he took on himself the role and the name of the first Adam, in order that he might not lose what he had made in his own image. the first Adam, the last Adam: the first had a beginning, the last knows no end. the last Adam is indeed the first; as he himself says: "I am the first and the last."*

**360** Because of its common origin the human race forms a unity, for "from one ancestor (God) made all nations to inhabit the whole earth":

*O wondrous vision, which makes us contemplate the human race in the unity of its origin in God. . . in the unity of its nature, composed equally in all men of a material body and a spiritual soul; in the unity of its immediate end and its mission in the world; in the unity of its dwelling, the earth, whose benefits all men, by right of nature, may use to sustain and develop life; in the unity of its supernatural end: God himself, to whom all ought to tend; in the unity of the means for attaining this end;. . . in the unity of the redemption wrought by Christ for all.*

**361** "This law of human solidarity and charity", without excluding the rich variety of persons, cultures and peoples, assures us that all men are truly brethren. †

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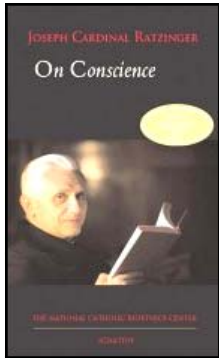
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