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BIBLICAL VIEW OF SALVATION

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WHAT IS THE IDEA OF SALVATION PRESENTED BY DIVINE REVELATION?

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INTRODUCTION

Why not begin exploring the relevance of the concept of salvation? Salvation is a controversial topic today. Everybody wants to save and be saved! Maybe not everybody! In Hollywood in a men's room of a prominent hotel, there was this graffiti written on the wall: Jesus saves, but Moses invests! The revolutionary who kills millions of people wants to save his country. The abortionist wants to save freedom of choice. The terrorist wants to save! Salvation is a term with more meanings than registered religions in the United States. What does it mean?

Adam and Eve used their God-given free will and asserted their independence. In doing so, they initiated both their separations from God and secular existence.

Throughout the Bible, notions of time and history, contrasted with timeless myth, are pervasive. God's acts of creating the world require 'six days' to complete. Abraham's departure from Mesopotamia and Moses's from Egypt, are events in space and time. Jesus moves in time with his people towards his Kingdom.

In addition to notions of history, the Bible introduces early in Genesis the idea of the world as divine creation. Because it is created, the earth and all things on it are separated from God and subjected to human mastery.[1] That is to say, they are

[1] Gen 1: 28.

secularized. Seeds of secularization were sown in Hebrew Scripture in the form of "God who stands 'outside' the cosmos, which is His creation, but which He confronts and does not permeate."[2] What opened the way for 'historization', self-creating activity of human persons, was the necessity of having to fend for themselves after being expelled from the Garden. Transcendentalization of God together with "the disenchantment of the world" created space for history as the arena of both divine and human actions.[3] A third related motif is an ethical rationalization, in the sense of imposing rationality of life.[4]

1. SALVATION IS NOT ONLY AN ESCHATOLOGICAL EVENT

Biblical faith is not much concerned with asking of what does salvation consist or in recommending techniques, whether mystical or ethical, by which salvation may be attained. It is concerned rather with proclamation of the (accomplished?) fact of salvation, and thus it differed from all religions by being 'kerygmatic' in character. The Bible is concerned with the fact that God actually has in concrete historical fact saved His people from destruction, that is, from destroying themselves. The Bible proclaims that historical salvation thus attested is but the foreshadowing or the 'type' of salvation that is to come. This is the theme of both Hebrew and Christian Scripture. God is God of salvation: this is the Gospel of both Hebrew and Christian faith. God has saved His people and He will save them. In the Bible, salvation is both a historical and eschatological reality. The Son of God was named Jesus, which means 'savior'. Salvation is the central theme of the entire Bible and as such is related to every other biblical theme.

In Hebrew Scripture, the determinative experience of Yahweh's salvation was deliverance from Egyptian bondage, the miracle of the Red Sea, and subsequent experience of God's Fatherly care in the wilderness.

By considering salvation as an eschatological event intends more than that it is a future event or reality. An eschatological reality is one that is presently real, active, yet

[2] Peter L. Berger, *The Social Reality of Religion* (Harmon*ds*worth: Penguin, 1973), p. 121.
[3] *Ibid.,* p. 124.
[4] *Ibid.,* p. 125.

neither fully realized nor made visible (except to faith), nor consummated. Humankind lives in an intermediate state, 'between the times', when by faith people know already salvation that is theirs, although they have not fully appropriated or finally apprehended it. In Hebrew Scripture, Israel's salvation is already assured, for it was achieved at the exodus from Egypt and ratified by the everlasting covenant that God made with Moses on Mt. Sinai. According to teaching of the prophets, God's salvific act at the Red Sea was active in Israel's history. It was a continuing redemption, delivering God's people from Assyrian invasion and Babylonian exile. It would be consummated in the final redemption of God's people at the end of the age, the day of creation of new heavens, and a new earth. It is especially in the prophecy of Deutero-Isaiah that this doctrine is most fully developed and clearly expressed.

There is no divorce or contradiction between the historical and the eschatological, because the former, by becoming active in the present and no mere past-and-gone event, is the matrix and type of the latter. Eschatological salvation, even now active in the present, is the final realization beyond history of that which the historical redemption foreshadowed and promised. Past, present, and future constitute not three deliverances, but one deliverance. To consider the biblical view of time as linear is misleading if it obscures this truth.

2. THE BIBLICAL STORY: LOOKING BACKWARDS TO MOVE FORWARD

The central point of reference for an adequate understanding of salvation and proper anthropology of the human person is the creative Word in whose likeness humans are made. So the Biblical story of creation is a projection back into history of the Incarnate Son of God.[5]

[5] *Gaudium et Spes* as quoted in *Redemptor Hominis* 8: "The truth is that only in the mystery of the incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light . . . Christ, the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals man to himself and brings to light his most high calling."

The common thread that unites all of John Paul II's teaching is a focus on human person in light of mystery of Christ. Much of teaching of Paul VI in *Humanae Vitae* appealed to natural law. John Paul II, however, appeals to dignity of the person and biblical revelation. Thus, an

> For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven: a time to be born and a time to die.[6] The birth referred to here is human salvation, as suggested by Isaiah.[7]
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> *I put to death and I shall give life,* God says, teaching us that death to sin and life in the Spirit is his gift, and promising that whatever he puts to death he will restore to life again.[8]

The whole of human life is like a pilgrimage toward the Father's house, not a return to what existed initially in the Garden, but rather towards solidarity, unity, "recapitulation," and intimacy that exists in the love of Jesus Christ crucified and resurrected. Persons discover everyday His unconditional love for every human person and, especially, for the 'prodigal son'. A person's earthly pilgrimage affects him in the most intimate recesses of his being, and extends to the community of believers and

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exposition of biblical texts frames his teaching offered within catechesis on theology of the body, *Mulieribus Dignitatem* and *Evangelium Vitae.* John Paul attempts to make the human person, revealed in light of Christ, the basis of Church's teaching about human life.

[6] Eccl 3: 1-2; cf. Eccl 8: 17; 12: 13-14: "I recognize that man is unable to find out all God's works that is done under the sun, however much man toils in searching . . . The last word when all is heard: fear God and kept his commandments; for this is man's all, because God will bring to judgement every work with all its hidden qualities whether good or bad."

[7] Isa 49: 1b: "The LORD called me before I was born, while I was in my mother's womb he named me; 6b: I will give you as a light to the nations, that my salvation may reach to the end of the earth"; 8b: "On a day of salvation I have helped you; I have kept you and given you as a covenant to the people"; 10b: "For he who has pity on them will lead them"; 13b: "For the LORD has comforted his people, and will have compassion on his suffering ones"; 51: 6b: "But my salvation will be forever, and my deliverance will never be ended"; 8b: "But my deliverance will be forever, and my salvation to all generations"; 51: 16b: "You are my people;" 52: 7: "The messenger who announces peace, who brings good news, who announces salvation"; 10b: "And all the en*ds* of the earth shall see the salvation of our God."

> This reaches its full term and is not stillborn when, having been conceived by the fear of God, the soul's own birth pan*gs* bring it to the light of day. We are in a sense our own parents, and we give birth to ourselves by our own free choice of what is good. Such a choice becomes possible for us when we have received God into ourselves and have become children of God, children of the Most High. On the other hand, if what the Apostle calls *the form of Christ* has not been produced in us, we abort ourselves (From a homily on Ecclesiastes by St. Gregory of Nyssa, bishop (Hom. 6: PG 44, 702-703), LH III, p. 238).

[8] *Ibid.,* p. 239.

eventually to entire humankind. In *Exodus,* there is clear symbolic reference to the human person's deliverance from bondage and journey toward his Father's house. [9] In Christian Scripture, contemporary life is already under the sign of salvation. This was accomplished with the advent of Jesus of Nazareth, which culminated in the paschal mystery, but will only be fulfilled in Christ's final return, the 'Parousia'.

For a thousand years, ancient Hebrews and their predecessors struggled with the dualism of good and evil domains. The Babylonian myth of Marduk and Timat had influenced Hebrew thinking, followed by the ancient Persian dualism of the good God and a prince of darkness. In the creation myth, Chaos, the adversary of the Creator of heaven and earth, played an important role. Adam and Eve encountered Satan, the tempter, who appeared as a serpent, reminiscent of the primeval dragon. Satan challenged God and severely tested Job. Even Jesus while in the desert for forty days was tempted three times by Satan.

The Judeo-Christian tradition focused on the presence of evil alongside God:

> I have set before you life and prosperity, death and doom. If you obey the commandments of . . . God, which I enjoin on you today, loving him, and walking in his ways, and keeping his commandments, statutes, and decrees, you will live and grow numerous, and . . . God will bless you . . . If . . . you turn away your hearts and will not listen, but are led astray and adore and serve other gods, I tell you now that you will certainly perish.

The underlying reality of two domains of action is emphasized in Christian Scripture, which speaks of God's things and Caesar's things,[10] and about two swords.[11] Jesus is said to have acknowledged that he was a king to Pontius Pilate. He clarified, however, that his kingdom was not this world.[12] Emperor Constantine brought these two

[9] Ex 14: 22-23; 15: 1-2, 12-13.
[10] Lk 20: 25.
[11] Lk 22: 38.
[12] Jn 18: 36; Mt 26: 64; cf. Jn 8: 47: "Whoever belon*gs* to God hears the wor*ds* of God; for this reason you do not listen, because you do not belong to God." Cf. Jn 10: 27: "My sheep hear my voice. I know them and they follow me."

worlds together publicly and politically after he became a Christian. The Judeo-Christian tradition had by then turned the concept on its head.

The unique achievement of the Judeo-Christian tradition, however, is that it turned the God-Satan dualism into dialectic. The Spirit of God broods over the primeval chaos and makes it the womb from which a well-ordered creation emerges. Satan was not able to destroy the first parents in their Fall. Instead, the Fall inspired God to provide a most generous redemptive plan for the entire creation. In the story of Job, trials caused by Satan only tested and confirmed fidelity of the true believer. Jesus' firm response to the threefold temptation of pleasure, pride, and power only serve to reaffirm the threefold Deuteronomic law[13] that a person has to love God with his whole heart, whole soul, and whole strength.[14]

3. IN THE BEGINNING – SOLIDARITY AND INTIMACY

The intent here is to focus on the human person as revealed in the Bible looking back from the Light of Christ. The point of departure is Jesus' response to the Pharisees' question concerning permissibility of divorce.[15] When confronted with such a fundamental question about meaning of marriage and human sexuality, Jesus appealed to "the beginning" described early in Genesis. Although these chapters may be mythic in the sense that they are not history as is understood in the early 21st century, they nevertheless offer fundamental theological truths about the human person and can illumine current human experience.

Via biblical analysis, three initial human experiences – original solitude, unity, and nakedness – that occurred in the Garden of Eden are located within history. The first

[13] Deut 6: 5.
[14] Mt 22: 37; Mk 12: 29-30.
[15] Cf. Mt 19:4-6: "Some Pharisees came to him, and to test him they asked, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any cause?" He answered, "Have you not read that the one who made them at the beginning 'made them male and female,' and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh'? So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate."

Adam is depicted in Genesis as being, like all human persons who followed, aware of himself as a subject, an 'I'. Yet Adam also discovered uniqueness of his existence because, unlike animals which he named,[16] he was capable of expressing his subjectivity and freedom. This original solitude provided an opportunity to respond in gratitude and obedience to the Creator. It also produced, however, a profound longing for another being like himself.[17]

This longing is answered in creation of woman – another person, equal in dignity, another 'I' revealed by means of the body. Yet this body was wonderfully different from that of man, revealing a unique and original way of being a human person. Far from dividing humankind, these differences were intended to bring them together in a unity of love. Body, thus, has a nuptial meaning, pointing toward human need for community. The most fundamental and intense form of human community is unity of man and woman in the covenant of marriage. When this communion is characterized by authentic self-giving love, marriage becomes a communion of persons that reflects God's own Trinitarian life.[18]

The most intimate expression of this communion within marriage occurs via bodies of husband and wife. In sexual self-donation the couple speaks a 'language of the body', expressing in a manner more profound than words the totality of their gift to each other. In this embodied dialogue of mutual love the couple continually discovers more profoundly each other and themselves. Hence, the biblical expression for intercourse – "to know"[19] – pertains because it expresses knowledge gained for sexual self-giving.

As God intended, this language spoken by husband and wife via their naked bodies was unattended by shame.[20] Contrast this shameless discovery of the nuptial

[16] Cf. Gen 2:19: "So out of the ground the LORD God formed every animal of the field and every bird of the air, and brought them to the man to see what he would call them; and whatever the man called every living creature, that was its name."
[17] Cf. Gen 2:18: "Then the LORD God said, "It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper as his partner.""
[18] Cf. "General audience of January 16, 1980," *Op. cit. The Theology of the Body,* pp. 63-66; John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem* 7.
[19] Cf. Gen 4:1a: "Now the man knew his wife Eve."
[20] Cf. Gen 2:25: "And the man and his wife were both naked, and were not ashamed."

character of the body with experience of shame after the Fall.[21] The experience of original nakedness indicates a time of integration within human persons when there was no "interior rupture and opposition between what is spiritual and what is sensible." It also indicates a period of harmony between man and woman when there was no "rupture between . . . male and female."[22]

Sin shattered original integrity of the person and unity between male and female. In this fallen state, body is no longer subordinated to spirit and so its capacity to express the person is diminished. Now experience of nakedness brings shame and fear.[23] Unity, solidarity, between man and woman is also broken and replaced by suspicion and alienation. Rather than self-donation, masculine-feminine relationships became marked by domination and subservience, in words of Yahweh to woman following the first sin.[24] This leads to lust, the propensity of fallen humanity to regard other persons not as persons, but as objects to be controlled or means to be used for personal gratification. Lust limits both the nuptial character of the body and ability of persons to form communions with other persons. Fallen humankind is confronted with its inclination to sin known as concupiscence. This inclination is continually played out in relationship between sexes.[25]

If this understanding of the person accounts for ravages of sin, it is even more profoundly marked by hope in the power of redemption. While it does not erase history of human persons as a fallen race or restore them to a state of original innocence, Christ's grace can enable them to live as God intended "from the beginning." This includes redemption of the body, in which grace enables body to again express the person as it did

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[21] Cf. Gen 3:7: "Then the eyes of both were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made loincloths for themselves."
[22] Cf. "General audience of January 2, 1980," *Op. cit., The Theology of the Body,* p. 58.
[23] Cf. Gen 3:7, 10: "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." See also Mt 6: 31-34; Lk 12: 4, 32. "Stop worrying then over questions like, what are we to eat, to drink, to wear. The unbelievers are always running after these thing*s* . . . Enough then of worrying about tomorrow. Let tomorrow take care of itself . . . Do not be afraid of those who kill the body and can do no more . . . Do not live in fear, little flock, it has pleased your Father to give you the kingdom."
[24] Gen 3:16b: "He shall rule over you"; cf. *Op. cit., Mulieris Dignitatem,* 10.
[25] *Ibid*.

at creation. Such an idea implies that in reality creation already included humankind's election in Christ.[26] Hence, marriage is a "primordial sacrament."[27]

Grace also surmounts alienation not only between sexes but also among all persons, enabling appreciation of both their equal dignity and their irreducible originality as persons.[28]

4. COMMON GOOD

The paschal sacrament brings together in unity of faith those persons physically separated from each other. In the Church calendar, persons can move from festival to festival, from holy day to holy day. In this way, persons regularly refresh their souls.

The grace of a feast is not restricted to one occasion. Its rays of glory are always at hand to enlighten the minds of persons who desire it. God gives people the feast. It helps guide them through their daily trials during the year.

> God now gives us the joy of salvation that shines out from this feast, as he brings us together to form one assembly, uniting us all in spirit in every place, allowing us to pray together and to offer common thanksgiving, as is our duty on the feast. Such is the wonder of his love: he gathers to this feast those who are far apart, and brings together in unity of faith those who may be physically separated from each other.[29]

5. COMMITMENT, COVENANT, SOLIDARITY

Another point central to human salvation found in the Bible is the formation of an authentic human family by divine election and call. In Hebrew Scripture, God is committed to create Israel. The people of Israel were 'elected' by God, not for special exemptions, but for a special mission, to bring God's blessing to all nations. From

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[26] Cf. Eph 2:3-4: "All of us once lived among them in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of the flesh and senses, and we were by nature children of wrath, like everyone else."
[27] Cf. General audience of October 6, 1982," *Op. cit., The Theology of the Body,* pp. 333-336.
[28] Eph 5:21: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ; cf. *Op. cit., Mulieris Dignitatem,* 24.
[29] From an Easter letter by St. Athanasius (Ep. 5, 1-2: PG 26, 1379-1380) quoted in *Liturgy of the Hours*, Vol. II, pp. 322-323.

historical reality of having been called into existence by an exodus from slavery in Egypt and identifies a people ultimately decided for and committed to, Israel confesses the faith articulated in Genesis 1-3 that this same God created the entire earth. "Israel looked back in faith from her own election to the creation of the world."[30] For this reason, most interpreters emphasize that divine commitment to exodus deliverance is the premise of biblical faith concerning genesis of all things.

Creation is that origination and emergence that enacts an ultimate self-commitment. As that which has first been decided for and committed to, creation involves God's promise to be with all that is called into being. Faithful witness to creation is not some explanation of origin of species but ultimacy of the commitment made to the species.[31] Covenant is God's promise to work for the common good of creation in all that creation encounters in its existence. Out of 'chaos' God said, "Let there be" all conditions required for life by His crowning achievement Christian faith affirms covenant relationship to be the foundation of all human integrity. The union of man and woman in marriage as well as the union between the Word and humanity in the community of Church are extensions of the covenantal principle delineated in the Bible. The confession that the Church is truly sent by God in the service of God's owns purposes and mission in the world remains undisputed in Christian ecclesiological doctrine.

6. SIGNS, WONDERS, AND SACRAMENT

As commonly confessed, the Church's mission is to live out its thanksgiving in trustworthy praise and confession (orthodoxy), and in trustworthy practice and service (orthopraxy),[32] unto the ends of the earth. This lived *eucharistia* is the embodied meaning and fulfillment of the gospel of grace. It is *sacramental* in that it is both a

[30] Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis: A Commentary* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), p. 44.
[31] Christopher Morse, *Not Every Spirit: A Dogmatics of Christian Disbelief* (Valley Forge, PA: Trinity, 1994), pp. 211-212.
[32] Jas 1: 27; 2: 13, 17, 22. Looking after orphans and widows in their distress and keeping oneself unspotted by the world make for pure worship without stain before our God and Father . . .mercy triumphs over judgement . . . faith that doth nothing in practice is dead . . . Abraham's faith was both assisting his works and implemented by his works."

material sign on the earth, in the sense of a visible and audible means of God's pledge of trustworthiness. It is also a wonder, in the sense that the material sign only becomes significant and trusted via the mystery of God's grace in making it so. *Sacramentum*, which originally meant a pledge or oath, comes to be used in early Christianity to translate the Greek term *mystērion*. Ecclesiological doctrine speaks of the sacramentality of the church's Eucharistic mission in that this apostolate is said to take place by means of visible and audible signs the true wonder of which only mystery of God's grace can make manifest.

The commissioning of the apostles[33]reflects similar testimony from Isaiah to be announced; it is said, before all the nations.[34] Testimonies to God's witness as involving "signs and wonders" occur throughout Hebrew and Christian Scripture.[35] The same theme is found in the prayer of Jeremiah who extended it to include all humankind.[36] Similarly, the God who saved Daniel from the lions is said to work deliverance and rescue with "signs and wonders in heaven and on earth."[37]

In Christian Scripture, God's signs and wonders in the Exodus are recalled[38]and are said to accompany the apostles who are commissioned witnesses.[39] Other expressions of this commission were noted earlier.[40] Ecclesiological doctrines seek to interpret elements of this Great Commission as signs and wonders and sacrament as (1) the sign of going into the entire world, (2) the sign of proclamation. When faithful to the Gospel it is

[33] Acts 1: 8: But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."
[34] Isa 43: 10: "You are my witnesses, says the Lord, and my servant whom I have chosen."
[35] Neh 9: 10: "You made a name for yourself, which remains to this day."
[36] Jer 32: 20: "You showed signs and wonders in the land of Egypt, and to this day in Israel and among all humankind, and have made yourself a name that continues to this very day."
[37] Dan 6: 27.
[38] Acts 7: 36.
[39] Acts 2: 43: "Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles;" 5: 12: "Now many signs and wonders were done among the people through the apostles;" Mt 28: 18-20: "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember I am with you always, to the end of the age."
[40] Acts 1: 8: "You will be my witnesses in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth."

understood by the Church to involve, every form of signification - speech, music, gesture, dance, assistance, public demonstration, or any other art or concerted action - insofar as by such means God's grace in Jesus Christ finds trustworthy communication in *eucharistia*.

Ecclesiological doctrine concerning proclamation of the Word acknowledges its Eucharistic context. In this connection the Russian Orthodox theologian Alexander Schmemann writes as follows of "real life [as] 'Eucharist,'" a movement "to accept in love, and to move towards what is loved and accepted:"

> Western Christians are so accustomed to distinguishing the Word from the sacrament that it may be difficult for them to understand that in the Orthodox perspective the liturgy of the Word is as sacramental as the sacrament is "evangelical." The sacrament is a manifestation of the Word. And unless the false dichotomy between Word and sacrament is overcome, the true meaning of both Word and sacrament, and especially the true meaning of Christian sacramentalism cannot be grasped in all their wonderful implications.[41]

Faith that the Church's ministry and mission as the Eucharistic body of Christ is to signify the Gospel in every facet of its life and activity [of the people], both within the service of worship and out in the wider world. This entails a refusal to believe that the Church has any authority for what it says or does in its rituals, policies, pronouncements, or unspoken attitudes if these do not [in fact] signify the Gospel of Jesus to whom "all authority in heaven and on earth has been given."[42] Only the Church that is faithful[43] to

[41] Alexander Schmemann, *The World as Sacrament* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1966), selection from pp. 29-55 reprinted in *Readings in Christian Theology*, ed. Hodgson and King, 284-85.
[42] Mt 28:18.
[43] 2 Pet 3: 9-12: "The Lord does not delay in keeping His promise – though some consider it delay. Rather He shows you generous patience, since He wants none to perish but all to come to repentance. The day of the Lord will come like a thief. How holy in your conduct and devotion (*must you be*) looking for the coming of the day of God and trying to hasten it!"

the rock of Peter's confessions comes to know "the keys of the kingdom of heaven"[44] in determining what is to be "bound" on earth and what is to be "loosed."[45]

(3) A third element of the Great Commission is the sign of sacraments, which have been ordained by Christ for the Church's ministry and mission – Baptism, Confirmation, Eucharist, Penance and Reconciliation, Anointing the Sick, Holy Orders, and Matrimony.[46] Understanding of Jesus Christ as *the* Sacrament from which all sacramentality derives has received heightened emphasis in recent interpretation.[47]

The sacramental body of Christ in its witness to all the world as a Eucharistic community of all baptized persons does need and receive from all the world witness of God's grace already there and sent on before in the incarnate, risen, and coming life span of Jesus Christ.

7. THE CHURCH COMMUNITY

Salvation is key to the Church's teaching. According to Vatican II, the Church universal itself is understood as the sacrament of salvation in the world.[48] It exercises its service of salvation in preaching and the sacraments.[49] Of particular significance for salvation are baptism and baptism of desire,[50] or the sacrament of penance on the part of persons who have fallen after baptism.[51] Although salvation comes only from God's grace, human persons are empowered to cooperate, since grace sets in motion a new morality.[52]

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[44] Mt 16: 15-19.
[45] Mt 18:18.
[46] For further reference see *CCC*, pp. 338-471.
[47] See *CCC* § 1113-1116 and references to the Roman Catholic teaching of the Second Vatican General Council in *Christian Faith in Doctrinal Documents*, ed. Neuner and Dupuis, 378-80. Among twentieth-century Orthodox interpretations see Alexander Schmemann's discussion of "Christ Our Eucharist" in *The Word as Sacrament*, 29-55, and Christos Yannaras's reflections on the ethics of Eucharistic ontology in *The Freedom of Morality* (Crestwood, NY: St. Vladimir's Seminary, 1984).
[48] *LG* 1, 9, 48, 59: see SC 5, 26; AG 1, 5: *GS* 42, 45.
[49] *DS* 1604-1608; 2536; LH 11.
[50] *DS* 1529, 1604, 1618.
[51] *DS* 1672, 1706, 1579.
[52] *DS* 225-230, 373-397, 1520-1583.

Because there is grace outside the Church universal,[53] salvation is possible for innocent atheists and adherents of other religions who do not know Christ.[54] The basis for salvation's universality is the Incarnation: according to the creed, "He came down from heaven for us and for our salvation."[55]

The Church is a community that is guided by ecclesial doctrine and which confesses its life in grace to be somehow the body of the One born in a manger, and yet a body denied unto death by its own members. There is a common life as Church and, likewise, a common good. It is a community that professes to be called into existence by God's commissioning.[56] According to biblical depictions, God's Word as Revelation may be said to be a community-creating event. When God "speaks" to declare covenant fidelity with creation, a community of faith with both its affirmations and refusals comes into being.

A category of objections is that ecclesiological doctrine sometimes leads to the apparent conclusion that the institutional body of the modern church is the sole locus of the incarnate Christ prolonged on the earth. Ignatius of Antioch, linked existence of true church with existence of a congregational overseer or bishop.[57] Ecclesiological teaching shows greater flexibility today and allows in varying degrees for the possibility of salvation outside the institutional church to those who are of conscientious intent.

A second category of objections questions emphasis placed upon correct formulations of belief in the church's attempts historically to identify its orthodoxy as well as its universality or catholicity. Post-Enlightenment theologies influenced by Kant did define the true presence of the Church more in terms of moral practice than of metaphysical claims, ritual observances, or creedal formulations.[58] Theologies in the

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[53] *DS* 2429.
[54] *LG* 16; *GS* 22.
[55] *DS* 125.
[56] *Ekklēsia* in Greek means 'those who are called out'.
[57] Ignatius of Antioch, *Epistle to the Philadelphians*, 3.2, in *The Apostolic Fathers*, ed. Lake, 1:241: "For as many as belong to God and Jesus Christ, - these are with the bishop."
[58] Immanuel Kant, *Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone* (orig. published 1793; New York: Harper and Row, 1960), 92: "The true (visible) church," in Kant's words, "is that which exhibits the (moral) kingdom of God on earth so far as it can be brought to pass by men."

second half of 20th century criticize a continuing preoccupation in theology with issues of God-talk rather than "praxis seeking justice" as "God-walk." [59] "Orthopraxy" has come increasingly into use.

> The intention . . . is not to deny the meaning of *orthodoxy*, understood as a proclamation of and reflection on statements considered to be true. Rather, the goal is to balance and even to reject the primacy and almost exclusiveness which doctrine has enjoyed in Christian life and to modify the emphasis upon the attainment of an orthodoxy which is often nothing more than fidelity to an obsolete tradition or debatable interpretation. Intention is to recognize work and importance of concrete behavior, of deeds, of action, of praxis in the Christian life.[60]

The objection to identifying the true presence of the Church in terms of creedal God-talk rather than practical deeds of God-walk finds support in Christian texts.[61] Among prophetic testimonies of Hebrew Scriptures, none in this respect are quoted more often than Amos and Micah.[62]

A third category of objections questions the extent to which the Church's understanding of its commission to go into all the world contributes to the disregard of the prior good of that world as God's creation.[63]

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[59] Frederick Herzog, *Justice Church* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis, 1980), p. 51. See also Herzog, *God-Walk: Liberation Shaping Dogmatics* (Maryknoll, N. Y.: Orbis, 1988), p. 17.
[60] Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (Maryknoll, N Y: Orbis, 1973), 10.
[61] "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father in heaven" (Mt 7: 21); "Whoever says, 'I abide in him [Jesus Christ],' ought to walk just as he walked" (1 Jn 2: 6); "For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is also dead" (Jas 2: 2-6; "Truly I tell you, just as you did [or, did not] do it to one of the least of these . . . you did it [or, did not do it] to me" (Mt 25: 40, or 45).
[62] "I hate, I despise your festivals, and I take no delight in your solemn assemblies . . . But let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Am 5: 21, 24); and "What does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?" (Mic 6: 8).
[63] In Greek, *apostoloi,* are 'persons who are sent forth' to carry out in the world 'apostolic' mission, or 'apostolate'.

Where is existence of Church to be recognized when it is discerned from a practice of what Paul calls eating the bread[64] and drinking the cup? The question of discerning the body is addressed to participants in the Eucharist.[65] When the Eucharist is taken as the context for discernment, theology cannot speak about the body of Christ without speaking about bodies of people visibly gathered together. Church does not exist apart from some particular human gathering embodied in material circumstances of a specific location even when the mystical communion of that gathering is said to exceed its local boundaries and extend beyond death.

The Church is a body of people giving thanks. Common to ecclesiological teachings is affirmation that Church exists wherever a certain thanksgiving occurs. This thanksgiving, as nothing else, is what determines the true location of Church. Church is a community of persons who thank God for loving all creation in Jesus Christ.

The Psalmist, in characteristic Hebraic tradition, sings of the call to enter the gates of the Lord God with thanksgiving, to give thanks that the Lord of all the earth is good and steadfast in a love that endures forever in faithfulness to all generations.[66] Christian Scriptural accounts of Jesus giving the bread and cup to the disciples at the final Passover meal before the Crucifixion reiterate in five instances the words, "when he had given thanks."[67]

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[64] Jn 6: 35; 10: 10; 11: 25; 14: 6: "*Jesus explained to them*: I myself am the bread of Life . . . I came that you might have life and have it to the full . . . I am the resurrection and the life . . . I am the way, the truth and the life; no one comes to the Father but through me."

[65] Paul's counsel to Corinthians regarding "whoever . . .eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord" (1 Cor 11: 27): "For all who eat and drink without discerning the body, eat and drink judgment against themselves" (1 Cor 11: 29). "Now you are the body of Christ and individually members of it," Paul continues, with "varieties of gifts" "for the common good" that "God has appointed in the church" (1 Cor 12:4, 7, 27-28).

[66] Ps 100: 4-5: "Enter his gates with thanksgiving, and his courts with praise. Give thanks to him, bless his name. For the Lord is good; his steadfast love endures forever, and his faithfulness to all generations."

[67] Mt 26: 27; Mk 14: 23; Lk 22: 17, 19; and 1 Cor 11: 23. Holy Communion, in Christian worship thus comes to be known in liturgical terminology by the Greek word for thanksgiving, *eucharistia*, as "the Eucharist." Reminder to Colossians of their call to be "in the one body" "And be thankful" (Col 3: 15). "And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything . . . giving thanks" (Col 3: 17).

Jesus promises solidarity[68] on several occasions.[69] He considers himself to be 'one body with the disciples' and them to be members of his body.

Eucharistia or thanksgiving is a uniting of God and Church in Holy Communion. God shares in the act of thanksgiving with human persons on various occasions.[70] All these instances suggest a uniting of God and human persons in solidarity in a community of shared delight. *Eucharistia* is a sharing in the body of the life that God finds "well pleasing." The thanksgiving of the body of Christ as a Eucharistic community may be understood, therefore, to involve God as well as human persons in that both God's delight and human delight are portrayed as united in a holy communion of rejoicing.

"Those who believe and know the truth" as those who do not in the name of abstinence reject any of God's good creation "provided it is received with thanksgiving" (1 Tim 4: 4-5).

[68] 1 Jn 1:3, 10; 3:18. 23; 4: 8, 10-12: "This fellowship of ours is with the Father and with His Son Jesus Christ . . . If we say that we have not sinned (*or loved enough!*) we make Him a liar! Let us love, not in word of speech, but in truth and action . . . His commandment is this we are to believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ and are to love one another as He commanded us . . . for God is love . . . not that we loved God, but that He has loved us and has sent us His Son as an offering for our sins. We must have the same love for one another. If we love one another God dwells in us."

[69] "Where two or three are gathered in my name, I am there among them" (Mt 18: 20). Jesus prays for solidarity with the disciples: "The glory that you have given me I have given them, so that they may be one, as we are one, I in them and you in me, that they may become completely one, so that the world may know that you have sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me" (Jn 17: 22-23). "O Father most holy, protect them with your Name which you have given me that they may be one even as we are one. As you have sent me into the world, so I have sent them into the world" (Jn 17: 11). "Go and make disciples of all the nations. Baptize them in the name of the Father and the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Teach them to carry out everything I have commanded you and know that I am with you always until the end of the world" (Mt 28: 19-20). The author of Ephesians writes that no one ever hates one's own body, but "nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body" (Eph 5:29-30).

[70] God looking upon all creation as good (Gen 1: 31), as rejoicing in God's works (Ps 104: 31), as delighting in steadfast love, justice, and righteousness in the earth (Jer 9: 24), as delighting in those who act faithfully (Prov 12: 22), as delighting in the prayer of the upright (Prov 15: 8). Most especially is the servant upon whom God's spirit rests, who will bring forth justice to the nations, designated by God in the prophecy of Isaiah as "my chosen, in whom my soul delights" (Isa 42: 1). In the synoptic Gospels God's delight is focused upon Jesus at his baptism in the Jordan when the voice from heaven announces, "This is my Son, the Beloved, with whom I am well pleased" (Mt 3: 17; see also Mk 1: 11; Lk 3: 22). This announcement of God's good pleasure is later repeated on the Mount at the Transfiguration (Mt 17: 5), as recalled also in 2 Pet 1: 17. According to the reported teaching of Jesus there is said to be "more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance" (Lk 15: 7).

Here is a significant distinction between Christological doctrine concerning the person, or life span of Jesus Christ, and ecclesiological doctrine concerning the Church as the body of Jesus Christ. The person of Jesus Christ is confessed, in the language of Chalcedon, to be a 'union' of the nature of God and the nature of humanity in one *hypostasis*, or actuality. This is considered to mean professed concomitance of eternal life[71] and human life given in one life span of Jesus Christ. Church as the body of Jesus Christ, in distinction, is confessed to be a "communion" of the delight of God and the delight of humanity in one life given for all in which God is "well pleased." The language of 'communion' derives from Paul: 'The cup of blessing, is it not a sharing [*koinōnia*, 'communion'] in the body of Christ?[72] Thus to refer to Church as a sharing in the body and blood of Christ is not to equate the life span of Jesus Christ with the history of the Christian Church, or with the sum total of individual churches. The *communion* of Church is thankfulness for the *union* for all is not reducible to the praise of this *communion* by some. The Eucharistic body that delights in the life span of Jesus Christ given for all refuses to believe that the life span of Jesus Christ is limited to those who give thanks for it.

Body of Christ becomes manifest to faith as a community where good is done and truth is believed and known. From the standpoint of discerning the body in partaking of the cup of salvation and the broken bread both amount to the same thing, the living out of thankfulness for God's love to all creation in concrete circumstances, "at all times, and in all places."[73] That Church's thanksgiving as both orthodoxy and orthopraxy does not

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[71] "Eternal life is this: to know you the only true God and him whom you have sent, Jesus Christ " (Jn 17: 3)." Everything has been given over to me by my Father. No one knows he Son but the Father and no one knows the Father but the Son and anyone to whom the Son wishes to reveal him (Mt 11:27; cf. Jn 6: 29, 40, 8: 33, 14: 7).

[72] 1 Cor 10: 16.

[73] *The Book of Common Prayer*, Holy Eucharist, Rite 1: "It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God." In Rite Two the revised wording is "always and everywhere." Also the "varieties of gifts," Paul advises the unlikely Corinthians, bring with them - "varieties of services" and "varieties of activities" - all activated by the God, to manifest the same Spirit "for the common good," in the one body of Christ, of which there are many members (1 Cor 12: 4-7).

prove fruitless in the midst of all denials, betrayals, and corruptions is affirmed by faith that the broken body of Christ exists in the power of the Resurrection.[74] No authorities and powers can confirm this claim to social analysis. "Entailed in the testimony that the corruption of Church is subject to unfailing power of the Resurrection over all life and death is the refusal to believe that the church in either its living or dying is subject to the failings of its members."[75]

To believe that Church is 'catholic' is to refuse to believe that the love for which the body of Christ gives thanks is not universally God's love to all.[76] Expressed with regard to the wider world, to believe that Church is 'catholic' from the perspective of this *eucharistia* is to refuse to believe that being loved by God in the life span of Jesus Christ is not universally the gift of all creation.

In addition to universality, 'catholicity is used to refer to fullness, in the sense of a communion of Christ's body that is fully, and not merely partially, receptive to varieties of gifts of Holy Spirit. If, as with Ignatius of Antioch, catholicity of Church is held to reside "wherever Jesus Christ is,"[77] then Eucharistic communion that is always located somewhere is never simply local. If, as with Vincent of Lerins, catholicity of Church is held to reside in shared beliefs, what is still said to be catholic is something to be taken as trustworthy not simply by one locality but "everywhere, always, and by all."[78]

8. THE SERVANT OF EACH AND ALL PERSONS

Catholics put their future hope in one word, which they have borrowed from the Hebrews: 'salvation'. For Hebrews, salvation is deliverance from evil of every kind and description, and initially from corrosive and fundamental evil of a person's own malice. Salvation is regeneration of the person. It is deliverance from evil that he suffered

[74] Of the Risen Christ, Ephesians states that God in victorious confrontation with all authorities and powers entrenched in high places " has put all things under his feet and has made him the head over all things for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all" (Eph 1: 22).
[75] *Op. Cit.,* Morse, p. 300.
[76] *Ibid.,* p. 305; The Christ "who descended" is praised as "the same one who ascended far above all the heavens, so that he might fill all things" (Eph 4: 10).
[77] Ignatius, *Epistle to the Smyrnaeans* 8.2.
[78] Vincent of Lerins, *Commonitorium* 2.3.

because of malice of other persons, whether of his own people or external enemies. It is deliverance, finally, from evil that arises out of a hostile nature, insubordinate to man because man is insubordinate to God.[79]

When the Psalmist prays, "Judge me," he asks that he be given his rights - victory over his enemies. Judgment for Hebrews is less a dispensation of justice than a victory for the right and the good. The judgment that they expect is a world judgment, a judgment of nations; for nations are for them embodiment of evil forces, the only reality that the nations' gods possessed. Judgment finally and conclusively demonstrated that the Lord alone is God, and there is none like Him.

While salvation is deliverance from evil, it is also acquisition of good. This good, as represented in the kingdom[80] of the future, seems best summed up in the Hebrew word that has no English equivalent, *shalom*, translated 'peace', 'order', and 'well being'. This is order imposed from above, for it is created and sustained by the Lord's unopposed governing will. It brings security and peace of mind.

For Hebrews, the good life is freedom under God's sovereignty to do those things that a person can do and wants to do without fear or hindrance. Primarily it is a life of union with the Lord who dwells among His people, a surrender to a person and not to an Idea - a person who responds to love with love. [81]

This Kingdom is not, however, the Hebrew Utopia.[82] The fundamental character is this: it is not a kingdom in which human welfare is paramount. God does not, as the Hebrews see it, bring to pass this judgment and this Kingdom in order that human

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[79] John L. McKenzie, S.J. *The Two-Edged Sword, An Interpretation of the Old Testament* Garden City: NY: Image Books, 1966, p. 236.
[80] Mt 4: 17; 5: 3; 6: 33: "Reform your lives! The kingdom of heaven is at hand . . . How blessed are the poor in spirit, the reign of God is theirs . . . Seek first God's kingship over you, His way of holiness, and all these things will be given you besides."
[81] *Op. Cit.,* McKenzie, p. 237.
[82] Mk 8: 29, 31-34: "And you, he went on to ask, who do you say that I am? Peter answered him: you are the Messiah (*the Christ*) . . . He began to teach them the Son of Man has to suffer much, be rejected and put to death but rise three days later . . .He summoned the crowd with his disciples and said to them: "If a man wishes to come after me, he must deny his very self, take up his cross and follow in my steps."

persons may live the good life. They may do so, of course, but prophets were looking at something other than the best thing for human persons. They considered the Kingdom as fulfillment in time and space of divine reality, of holiness of God Himself. It is something that God has to do because His own inner nature requires it. Being what He is, He must finally provide good that surmounts evil, converting energy used for the sake of evil into energy used for the sake of good. The cyclic struggle between the two must end.[83] This is His 'glory,' as Hebrews use the word, that He shows Himself to be 'holy'. Nothing less than this cosmic upheaval will prove it. When the Lord's will is supreme, then all things, human persons and nature alike, will have reached their term. Whatever this may mean for persons, they can hope for nothing better; and they must face this future, at once terrifying and consoling, with a sweeping act of faith in the power and will of God for good.[84]

Hebrew religious history from its origins to its final catastrophe is the history of a collective personality. Prophets commonly imagined Israel as an individual person, and addressed Israel as such. To study the personal religion of early Israel is to study it as a national spiritual adventure. The spiritual adventure of Israel is typical as well as historical. It is the story of a spiritual tragedy, but redeemed by hope. Hope, however, does not take away the tragedy, which consists in total failure and destruction of a vital human entity.[85]

From this knowledge of God, Jeremiah gained profound insight into the problem demonstrated by his life and words: evil cannot be explained away, nor can it be expelled

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[83] Mt 24: 42; 26: 41: "Stay awake therefore you cannot know the day your Lord is coming . . .Be on your guard and pray that you may not undergo the test; the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."
[84] *Ibid.,* p. 238; see also Jn 4: 34; 8: 29; Lk 24: 44; Mk 3: 25: "Doing the will of him who sent me and bringing his work to completion is my food . . .I always do what pleases him . . .Recall those words I spoke to you: "Everything written about me in the law of Moses and the prophets and the psalms has to be fulfilled" . . . whoever does the will of God is brother and sister and mother to me. (Jn 15: 9,12; 14: 21;Mt 5: 44): " As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you. Live on in my love. You will live in my love, if you keep my commandments, even as I have kept my Father's commandments and live in his love . . . This is my commandment: love one another as I have loved you . . .My commandment to you is: love your enemies, pray for your persecutors. This will prove that you are sons of your heavenly Father."
[85] *Ibid.,* p.240.

by force or by any other human means. Human persons, like Jeremiah himself, like the kingdom of Judah, can surmount evil only by suffering it, by permitting it to overwhelm them. Let other peoples try to avert it by politics, sociology, psychology, philosophy, theology, war, diplomacy, or by all other human plans and devices. Jeremiah understood that these would fail, and that the kingdom of Judah would fulfill its destiny only by falling before the sword of the conqueror. He could, therefore, look upon this terrible prospect with calmness, even with some satisfaction.[86]

This attitude is not, by any human standard, reasonable. It is instinctive to resist evil by all possible means or to flee from it. It is neither instinctive nor prudent to think that embracing it conquers evil. Jeremiah had no other advice for his people except that they should embrace it. They did not, of course, accept his advice, for they were persons of wisdom and prudence to whom this advice seemed folly.[87] They could not understand, any more than he could, (or anymore than contemporary persons can understand) how their salvation would be found in the destruction of all they valued.[88] Lacking his faith in the power and will of God for good, they could not possibly have found his advice anything but subversive.[89]

The same mystery appears even more clearly in the figure whom Isaiah calls the Servant of the Lord.[90] The years between the fall of Jerusalem to the Babylonians and its restoration by the Persians - from 587 to 538 B. C. – form the parameters of the Servant. This figure is called Servant because the prophet does not indicate his identity. He is a man with a mission, and the mission is 'salvation'. His mission is not a mission only to the people of Israel, but to nations beyond Israel as well. His image is modeled upon the

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[86] *Ibid.,* p. 267.
[87] 1 Cor 1: 22-25: "Yes Jews demand signs and Greeks look for wisdom. But we preach Christ crucified – a stumbling block to Jews and an absurdity to Gentiles, but to those who are called Jews and Greeks alike, Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God." and Eph 3: 17: "May Christ dwell in your hearts through faith and may charity be the root and foundation of your life."
[88] Lk 6: 22; 14: 26: "If anyone comes to me without turning his back on his father and mother, his wife and his children, his brothers and sister, indeed his very self, he cannot be my follower . . . Blest shall you be when men hate you, when they ostracize you and insult you and proscribe your name as evil because of the Son of Man."
[89] *Op. Cit.,* McKenzie, p. 267-68.
[90] See Isa 42, 49-53.

Hebrew concept of a prophet, as is easily deduced from his description. The means by which the Servant will accomplish his mission are not the means of a king or warrior. He will speak to people to be sure, but not with authority of a ruler. Indeed, the prophet expressly excludes any means that involve display or violence; the Servant will do his work softly and quietly.[91] As the image of the Servant grows clearer in the prophet's mind, it darkens. Hostility and opposition appear, which the Servant must overcome and will overcome, because the Lord who has chosen him is with him. Finally, the darkness bursts into the vision of Isaiah 53.

There the Servant appears as a marvel, a mystery, and an incredible phenomenon. This chosen Servant of the Lord is considered to lack all human attractiveness, to have been reduced to insignificance. People turn from him in horror and dread - not, as some have foolishly thought, because he was ugly and deformed, but like Job,[92] was abandoned by his friends and - because the hand of the Lord has touched him. It has touched him in ways in which the prophet has not described clearly, because he did not sufficiently understand them. The hand of the Lord, however, has lain upon the Servant an intolerable burden of suffering, so great that he finally succumbs under it.[93] The prophet's language obviously implies that the Servant suffers violence at the hands of human persons. Servants of the Lord in Hebrew Scripture often had to face violence, or the threat of it. However it happened, the Servant dies painfully and ignobly, and no human person cares.[94]

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[91] Cf. Lama Anagarika Govinda, *Insights of a Himalayan* Pilgrim (Oakland, CA: Dharma, 1991), p. 22: "How as it possible that Buddhism . . . could conquer India so quickly? Adhering to . . . *ahimsa*, Buddhism was opposed to any form of violence. Its 'weapon' . . . was introduction of . . . karma with a new and more psychological meaning."
[92] Job 1: 20-21; 2: 10; 19: 25-26: "Job cast himself prostrate on the ground and said: the Lord gave and the Lord has taken away; blessed to the name of the Lord . . . We accept good things from God and should we not accept evil? . . . But as for me my Vindicator lives whom I myself shall see. And from my flesh I shall see God; my inmost being is consumed with longing."
[93] Isa 53: 4-6: "Yet it was our infirmities he bore, our sufferings that he endured, while we thought of him as striken, as one smitten by God and afflicted. But he was pierced for our offenses, crushed for our sins; upon him was the chastisement that makes us whole, by his stripes we were healed. We had all gone astray like sheep, each following his own way. But the Lord laid upon him the guilt of us all."
[94] *Op. Cit.,* McKenzie, p. 268-69.

The prophet understands that this is the Lord's doing; and that the Servant's death is invested with real significance, for his death has brought healing, salvation to many persons, although they are unaware of it.[95] In his defeat is his victory. His death is an atoning death, an act of submission to the Lord, which the Lord accepts on behalf of persons who, in some mysterious way, share it. The Servant's death is not as desperate as the death that Job foresees for himself. In a way that the prophet does not explain, the Servant himself shall look upon the fruits of his atoning death. The Servant, like Jeremiah, can do nothing about the evil that threatens him except submit to it, yield to it. It works itself out upon him. He is not himself guilty; the wrath of the Lord is not aimed at him, as it was aimed at the iniquitous people of Israel. Yet God treats him as if he were angry with him, as Job said of himself, and he is reckoned among the wicked. In submitting to evil, however, he accomplishes the mission that the Lord has given him. Via his own death, salvation comes. Here is no speculative theology of vicarious atonement. The prophet has understood this truth that through suffering of human persons, other persons can be spared from suffering. Evil still remains an irrational factor in human life, but persons can deal with it in such a way that what they do is the best thing they can do. There is no apparent reason why this should be so. The human mind does not easily accept it. The Servant of the Lord, as conceived by the prophet, is the final answer Hebrew Scripture offers as to how human persons shall confront evil that they cannot overcome. They surrender to it; they become its victims.[96]

This is what Hebrew Scripture has to say about power of the human person. Every person has a secret weapon that cannot be taken from him - his power to suffer and to die, while retaining his faith in the power and will of God for good. He realizes this in

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[95] Rev 7: 17; 21: 4-5, 22-26; 22: 5; cf. Is 25:8, 1 Cor 15: 58: "He shall wipe every tear from their eyes and there shall no more be death or mourning or crying or pain: for the former world has passed away . . . See! I make all things new! . . . I saw no temple in the city. The Lord Almighty is the temple. He and the Lamb. The city has no need of sun or moon, for the glory of God gave it light and the lamp was the Lamb (*Jesus the Pascal Lamb slain for us!*) The nations shall walk by its light . . .its gates shall never shut during day and there shall be no night. The treasures and the wealth of the nations shall be brought there."

[96] *Op. Cit.,* McKenzie, p. 269.

his own personal destruction, later "in obedience even to the point of death on a cross."[97] Notice that this personal religion of Hebrew Scripture consistently follows the same path pursued earlier. It is negation of human powers and human values; it is the depth of human despair from which faith in God emerges.[98] The encounter is not with institutions and laws and such; neither is it particularly with evil. It is an encounter with the essential 'goods' of the human person: his body, spirit, life, his very self. These also seem to accomplish nothing good. It is in their death that there is life.[99]

The paradigm of the suffering servant becomes even more poignant in the advent of the new covenant in Jesus Christ[100], who traveled to Galilee proclaiming the good news of God: "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near; repent, and believe in the good news."[101] Human persons are urged to have the same mind that was in Christ Jesus – that of a slave.[102] For having such a mind, such an attitude, God exalted the human person Jesus so that "every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord."[103]

That "mind" urged all human persons to "love[104] your enemies and pray for those who persecute you,"[105] " do not resist an evildoer. But if anyone strikes you on the right cheek, turn the other also."[106] In this manner the person can reach salvation because

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[97] Phil 2: 8b.
[98] Jn 14: 1; 16: 33. "Do not let your hearts be troubled. Have faith in God and faith in me . . . I tell you this that in me you may find peace. You will suffer in the world. But take courage. I have overcome the world."
[99] *Op. Cit.,* McKenzie, p. 273.
[100] Rev 3: 20; 22: 20 cf. Lk 14: 15; 22: 30. "The Amen the faithful witness and true, the Source of God's creation has this to say: Here I stand knocking at the door, if anyone hears me calling and opens the door I will enter his house and will have supper with him and he with me . . . The one who gives this testimony says, 'Yes, I am coming soon.' Amen, come Lord Jesus!"
[101] Mk 1: 15.
[102] Phil 2: 5-8.
[103] Phil 2: 9-11.
[104] Gal 5: 6; 13-14; Rom 13: 8-10; 1 Cor 13; 14: 1. "The whole law has found fulfilment in this one saying: you shall love our neighbor as yourself. Owe no debt to anyone except the debt that binds us to one another . . . There are in the end three things faith, hope and love, and the greatest of these is love; seek eagerly after love."
[105] Mt 5: 44.
[106] Mt 5: 39.

"blessed" are persons who are poor[107] in spirit, mourn, meek, hunger and thirst for righteousness, merciful, pure in heart, peacemakers, persecuted for righteousness' sake, or reviled and persecuted for the sake of Jesus Christ.[108]

9. SUFFERING LEADS TO HAPPINESS AND TO SOLIDARITY IN GOD

Holy Spirit gives to some a special charism of healing[109] so as to make manifest power of grace of the risen Lord. Even the most intense prayers, however, do not always obtain healing of all illnesses. St. Paul must learn from the Lord, consequently, that "my grace is sufficient for you, for my power is made perfect in weakness." These sufferings to be endured can mean, "in my flesh I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his Body, that is, the Church."[110]

By grace of this sacrament sick persons receive strength and the gift of uniting themselves more closely to Christ's Passion. In a certain way they are consecrated to bear fruit by configuration to the Savior's redemptive Passion.[111] Suffering, a consequence of original sin, acquires a new meaning; it becomes participation in Jesus' saving work.

Desire for true happiness frees human persons from immoderate attachment to goods of this world so that they can find fulfillment in the vision and beatitude of God.[112] "The promise[113] [of seeing God] surpasses all beatitude . . .In Scripture, to see is to possess . . . Whoever sees God has obtained all the goods of which he can conceive."[114]

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[107] Lk 4: 18-21; 7: 20-23; 11: 20; 17: 21: *He pointed to the fulfillment of the Scriptures in him*: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; therefore he has anointed me. (*Christ, the Anointed*). He has sent me to bring glad tidin*gs* to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives, recovery of sight to the blind and lease to prisoners . . . Jesus began saying to them: Today this scripture passage is fulfilled in your hearing . . . The blind recover their sight, cripples walk, lepers are cured, the deaf hear, dead men are raised to life, and the poor have the good news preached to them. Blest is that man who finds no stumbling block in me . . . If it is by the finger of God that I cast out devils, than the reign of God is upon you . . . the reign of God is already in your mind."
[108] Mt 5: 1-11.
[109] *CCC* § 1508; Cf. 1 Cor 12: 9, 28, 30.
[110] 2 Cor 12: 9, Col 1: 24.
[111] *CCC* § 1521.
[112] *CCC* § 2548.
[113] Gal 3: 21, 26-28; Eph 3: 17-19. "Each one of you is a son of God because of your faith in Christ Jesus. All of you who have been baptized into Christ have clothed yourself with him.

In this way of perfection, the Spirit and Bride call whoever hears them[115] to perfect communion with God[116]:

> There will true glory be, where no one will be praised by mistake or flattery; true honor will not be refused to the worthy, nor granted to the unworthy; likewise, no one unworthy will pretend to be worthy, where only those who are worthy will be admitted. There true peace will reign, where no one will experience opposition either from self or others. God himself will be virtue's reward. He gives virtue and has promised to give Himself as the best and greatest reward that could exist. "I shall be their God and they will be my people." This is also the meaning of the Apostle's words: "So that God may be all in all." God Himself will be the goal of human desires. Persons shall contemplate Him without end, love Him without surfeit, and also praise Him without weariness. This gift, this state, this act, like eternal life itself, will assuredly be common to all.[117]

This solidarity of all "blessed" persons is real and growing, although there are no hard statistics to back up such a statement. The number of Christians in the world is growing, if not by leaps and bounds, certainly in keeping with population growth among Christian families. Such solidarity and the common good it denotes are an important part of contemporary Christianity.

> The Mass reenacts the moment of Redemption. In every Mass, the Cross of Calvary is transplanted to every corner of the world. Human persons are taking sides, either sharing Redemption or rejecting it by the way they live. Participants are not intended to sit and watch the cross as something completed, ended. What was done on Calvary enables persons and empowers them only to the degree that

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There does not exist among you Jew or Greek slave or freeman, male or female. If you belong to Christ, you are a descendent of Abraham – you inherit all that was promised."
[114] St. Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus* 6: *PG* 44, 1265A.
[115] *CCC* § 2550; Cf. Rev 22: 17.
[116] Ps 23: 1; 63: 2, 4, 8-9: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want . . . .O God, you are my God whom I seek: for you my flesh pines and my soul thirsts like the earth parched, lifeless and without water. For your kindness is a greater good than life, that you are my help and in the shadow of your wings I shout for joy. My soul clings fast to you; your right hand upholds me."
[117] St. Augustine, *De civ. Dei*, 22, 30: *PL* 41, 801-802; cf. Lev 26: 12; cf. 1 Cor 15:28.

they repeat it in their lives. All that has been said and done in the Mass is to be carried away by the people to be lived, practiced, and woven into circumstances and conditions of their daily lives.

Persons who share in the living presence of Christ via the Eucharist are called to go out and to make that presence [of the crucified and resurrected Christ] operational, living among human persons in the entire world.[118] The Mass nourishes persons to "go in the peace of Christ to love and serve one another." It is an invitation to go out and put into practice immediately what the person said he was going to do. That is what life is all about[119] - the tangible, physical act of participating in the body and blood of the crucified and risen Christ. In the moment and act of communion, communing persons become members of one another. They not only partake of the Eucharist but can actually become like the body of Jesus, become Eucharist themselves, completing what is lacking in Christ's afflictions by self-giving love for the whole world.

10. A NEW VISION OF SOLIDARITY

Vatican II offered a positive Christian vision. It defined Church as (1) a sacrament of salvation, (2) a symbol of Christian unity[120] with the Trinitarian God, and

[118] *Ibid.,* p. 14: That going out wears people out, so the Eucharist is both the beginning and the end. It draws people to it, rejuvenates them, then pushes them out into the world. It is an overflow of the Lord's presence. The Mass is part of the world and the world is part of the Lord.

[119] *Ibid.,* p. 14: To become Eucharist, I mean to become willing to give ourselves, to be willing to risk all that we have, willing to bring new life to others, willing to break open our bodies. The full sense of the Eucharist would be to understand the totality of our lives as Eucharist. The major connection between Eucharist and the life of commitment to justice is that in the Eucharistic celebration we are nourished and empowered and we are sent forth to become Eucharist for others.

[120] Jn 17: 11, 15, 20-23. "O Father most holy, I do not ask you to take them out of the world, but to guard them from the evil one . . . I do not pray for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their word, that all may be one, as you Father are in me and I in you I pray that they be one in us, that the world may believe that you sent me. I have given them the glory you gave me that they may be one as we are one – I living in them, you living in me – that their unity may be complete. So shall the world know that you sent me and that you loved them as you loved me."

(3) liturgy and worship of all persons united in the one Son of God-become-a-human-person uniting the whole world to Himself.

(1) All human persons form one universal community and appeal to different religions for answers to unsolved riddles of human existence. Religion is not simply a quest for God-experience, but a search for ways to translate that experience into a person's own life and put it at the service of other persons. It is not ontology to God for man, but anthropology of man before God.

(2) Church in Christ is in nature of a sacrament, a sign, and an instrument,

that is, of communion with God and of unity among human persons. Church is neither Christ nor the Centre. The Kingdom of God is far larger than the Church. The Church serves salvation.

(3) Various peoples contain a hidden power providing a way of life imbued

with profound religious sense. The religious history of humankind is of one. Various religious founders - Moses,[121] Confucius, Buddha, Jesus, and Mohammed and their religions - appeared at different historical moments and comprise an integral part of the one divine plan of salvation, a common heritage of all human persons.

(4) Christ the Lord, high priest among human persons made the new

people a kingdom of priests to God His Father.[122] All persons are called to belong to the new people of God.[123] One people of God, accordingly, are present in all the various and different nations of the earth.[124] Christ the one Son of God-become-man is the Centre, since he alone offers the possibility to all persons to become sons or daughters of the one Father.

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[121] God revealed His own name to Moses: He who is for human persons, their redeemer and liberator. Ex 3: 7, 14: "The Lord said (from the burning bush that was not consumed) I have witnessed the affliction of my people in Egypt and have heard their cry of complaint against their slave drivers . . . I am who I am. This is what you (Moses) shall tell the Israelites: I Am (Yahweh) sent me to you."
[122] Heb 5: 1-5.
[123] *CCC* § 1546; Rev 1: 6; cf. Rev 5: 9-10; 1 Pet 2: 5, 9; *LG* 10 § 1.
[124] *CCC* § 781-786.

(5) Hear the Word of God with reverence and proclaim it with faith.[125]

Permit all persons and peoples to hear the universal summons to salvation. Scripture is not esoteric doctrine but expresses unity of God's self-disclosure in creation and in every event in human history. Words proclaim works.[126] Scripture is recognized by all religions as not only human achievement but as the word of God and work of Spirit; it is the point of contact among religions.

(6) Christ instituted the Eucharist to perpetuate the sacrifice of Cross and

to entrust to his spouse the Church a memorial of death and resurrection, a sacrament of love, a sign of unity, a bond of charity, a paschal banquet in which Christ is consumed and the human mind filled with grace.[127] Worship, instead of being intended to placate an angry God, manifests God's union with human persons and celebration of salvation accorded humankind.

St. Paul elaborates further significance of human action.[128] He points out the importance of God sending forth His Son, born of a woman under Jewish Law; that persons subject to the Law may be redeemed, and guided to graduate from being little different than slaves to sons by adoption. To attain such adoption, a person should assume responsibility of an heir. Perhaps the Christian root of secularization is found in this notion of unity in human nature of receptivity and creativity. The human person has become open to some person (God) other than human persons and to the mystery of his being in the world (heir to creation). Equally, a person is able to respond as one who can either give or withhold himself. Here is laid the basis for human lordship over the world and its powers:

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[125] Acts 2: 23; 4: 12; 10: 34-35, cf. 2: 21; 1 Tim 2: 4-6. "Jesus was delivered up by set purpose and plan of God . . . This is the Jesus God has raised up and we are his witnesses . . . There is no salvation in any one else for there is no other name in the whole world by which we re to be saved . . . (*And Peter proceeded*) I begin to see how true it is that God shows no partiality. Rather the man of any nation who fears God and acts uprightly is acceptable to Him."
[126] *Dei Verbum* 1-2.
[127] *CCC* § 1337.
[128] Gal 4: 1-4,8-10, 21-31.

(1) Missionary activity manifests God's plan, its epiphany, and realization

in world and in history. God, through mission, brings to conclusion history of salvation. Religious work pretends to provide the external and social complement to what the Spirit and the Risen Christ are already doing in people's hearts. Is not all appearance of conquest of the world for Christ, territory, jurisdiction, and all ecclesiastical paraphernalia of missionary activity a denial of Mission itself?

(2) Joy and hope[129], grief and anguish of contemporary persons,

especially poor or afflicted people, are thus the joy and hope, grief and anguish of followers of Christ.[130] Jesus' condemnation of riches and his proclamations that poor people are blessed intended the beginning of a new era of hope for victims.

(3) All authority in the Church derives from Eucharistic fellowship and is

closer to familial authority than to divine authority of kings.

11. SOLIDARITY IS SELF-DONATION

Vatican II was pivotal in the development of theology of the body. *Gaudium et Spes* 22 and 24 is quoted in almost every encyclical.

> In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the Mystery of Man truly becomes clear. For Adam, the first man was a type of Him Who was to come – Christ the Lord. Christ, the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of His love, fully reveals Man to himself and brings to light his most high calling.[131]

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[129] Rom 5: 2-5; 8: 11. "Through Our Lord Jesus Christ we have gained access by faith to grace and we boast of our hope for the glory of God . . . And this hope will not disappoint us because the love of God has been poured in our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us. If the Spirit of Him who raised Christ from the dead dwells in you then He who raised Christ from the dead will bring your immortal bodies to life also through the Spirit dwelling in you."
[130] *Gaudium et Spes* 1; Old Church policy attempted to influence directly rich and powerful people and through their favor do good for poor people. Crucified Savior who replaced Old Covenant fashioned on the condescending treaty of the conquering Lord made with vanquished people, with a New Covenant on a footing of equality of suffering Son with Father, declares that it is poor people who can really explore hopes for a new century.
[131] *Gaudium et Spes,* 22.

Christ, via His Incarnation, gave man's body a "dignity beyond compare." He worked with human hands, and divinity became visible in his body. Redemption reaches right to the Redemption of the body.[132] This teaching, says John Paul II, is not only for Christians, but also for all human persons because all of them have access to fruits of Redemption.

Christ came "to reveal Himself to man and at the same time, to reveal the inmost depths of human nature." Love, says the Pope, is the motive both for creation and God's covenant with Israel. Out of disinterested love God created man in His image and likeness and established the first communion of persons in the image of the Trinity, and the first communion of persons was formed in human marriage.

The world was a gift to Adam and Eve and they were a gift to each other. When Adam and Eve sinned, they lost this sense of the world and each other as a gift. Only the New Covenant in Jesus Christ restored the gift and dignity of the human person. In addition, Christ enabled men and women to become Children of God.[133]

The other pivotal quotation is: "Man is the only creature on earth which God has willed for itself, who cannot find himself except through a sincere gift of himself."[134]

A human person is not only a gift to another human person but he cannot fulfill himself unless he gives himself as a gift to another person. The nature of God as love, of man and woman as gift to each other, and of fulfillment through mutual giving [intimacy] are key concepts. Body expresses the entire person. The person reveals himself through 'the language of the body.' Solidarity, intimacy, pertains to the unitive aspect of personal relations.

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[132] Rom 8: 19, 22, 28, 32, 35, 39. 40
[133] Jn 1:14; 12b; 3: 16: "The Word (*of God*) became flesh and made his dwelling among us . . .Any who did accept him, he empowered to become children of God . . .God so loved the world as to give his Only-begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him may not perish, but have everlasting life."
[134] *Gaudium et Spes*, 24.

On the natural level, human persons can discover the true language of the body, but it is Revelation that enables the human person, "male and female in his full temporal and eschatological vocation," to understand that he is intended for union with the Trinitarian God. God has called persons to witness and to interpret the eternal plan of love, by becoming ministers of the sacrament, which 'from the beginning' was constituted by the sign of the union in one flesh

'Original nakedness' is key to full understanding of the human person's body and subjectivity. Consciousness of the body developed within the person's subjectivity. It was on the basis of his body, for example, Adam became aware his difference from the animals, which was emphasized still further in his tilling of the earth. With Adam's disobedience, the human person had a new experience of his body.

The shame he experienced was not only a change from ignorance to knowledge, but also a radical change in meaning of nakedness, especially in the man/woman relationship. Shame brings fear, not only of the 'second self', but the human person's own self. The human person instinctively seeks to be affirmed and accepted in his full value. Shame both draws man and woman together and drives them apart. Understanding this is fundamental for formation of ethos both in human society and in the man/woman relationship. An analysis of shame shows how deeply rooted it is in interpersonal relations and how it expresses the central rules for communion of persons.

Before the Fall and the change it brought about, the human person had a particular fullness of consciousness especially of the body and experience. Original nakedness signified that man and woman not only had complete freedom from shame in external perception of one another, but also enjoyed fullness of interpersonal communication, which John Paul II, calls "peace of interior gaze." Via the medium of he body, the man and woman communicated with each other according to *communio personarum*. There was no rupture between the spiritual and sensual, between the person in his humanity and in his sexual differentiation. Shame expresses disturbance of this tranquillity, specifically at the level of sexual complementarity by which persons had been gift to each other.

"Bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." Here is a body that expresses personhood. Sexual differentiation is both the original sign of gift that each person is for the other person and awareness of gift as it is lived. According to God's original plan, meaning of body is nuptial [intimacy]. Via the person's transcendent likeness to God, insofar as he is a gift, he has a primordial awareness of the nuptial [intimate] meaning of his body.

Awareness of body includes awareness of procreative capacity. Unlike animals, man's sexuality is not ruled by instinct, but is raised to the level of the person. Body not only has the procreative dimension, common to all creatures, but also has the nuptial [intimacy], unitive attribute, or capacity for expressing love. Man and woman are gifts to each other as persons and through the gift fulfill each other. Whereas, in fallen condition, body is under constraint of concupiscence, in original innocence, man and woman could be a disinterested gift to each other through complete self-mastery. Thus, in the first beatifying meeting, man finds woman and she finds him. In this innocence, he accepts her interiorly; he accepts her as she is willed for her own sake. A true communion of persons [intimacy] comes about when the person is affirmed by reciprocal acceptance of the gift.

Historical man is aware of the nuptial [intimate] meaning of his body, which is a sign of being created in God's Image. Body was created to make visible invisible realities of God. Holiness entered the visible world with man. By his creation in God's Image, man reveals that sacramentality of Creation and sacramentality of the body is conditioned by his awareness of the gift. When either man or woman becomes a mere object for the other through lust, communion [intimacy] of persons is violated or diminished. Original sin disturbed the person's interior forces. Lust deceives the human heart in the perennial call of men and women; it separates body from its intimate

significance. Woman then becomes an object of concupiscence, rather than being Eucharist for the other person.[135]

Love is the dimension of interior truth in the human heart.[136] Purity is a Christian virtue a new 'capacity' centered on the body, brought about by gift of Holy Spirit. It has two dimensions: moral and charismatic. St. Paul calls the body "the temple of the Holy Spirit," and sins of the body are "profanations of the temple."

The body is integral to man as a person. Any devaluing of body devalues first of all man and woman in their personhood. From prophetic texts of Hebrew Scripture, in relation to God's Covenant with Israel, can be developed a concept of 'prophetism' of the body. In prophetic tradition, God's Covenant with Israel is expressed in terms of marriage and Israel's rebellion as adultery, in language of faithful love, and also language of conjugal infidelity or adultery.

Term 'sister', *Didi*, expresses, in many cultures, the deepest level of female person, both as person and in relation to male or any other. An experience of peace, of body is associated with the relationship of sister. It bespeaks a desire to embrace the other as a disinterested and reciprocal gift, and it is a sign of significance of body beyond sexual love.

'Freedom of gift' is also revealed in: "You are an enclosed garden, my sister, my bride, a fountain sealed."[137] This verse shows the female 'I' as master of her own mystery. As a spiritual subject, she is free to make the gift of self, thus revealing her personal dignity as a woman. This is very important for adolescent girls to understand.

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[135] Robert H. Bellah, "Religion and the Shape of National Culture," *America* July 31-August 7, 1999, Vol. 181, No. 3, p. 14.
[136] 1 Thes 4: 3-8: For this is the will of God, your sanctification: that you abstain from fornication; that each one of you know how to control your own body in holiness and honor, not with lustful passion, like the Gentiles who do not know God; that no one wrong or exploit a brother or sister in this matter . . . For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness. Therefore whoever rejects this rejects not human authority but God, who also gives his Holy Spirit to you.
[137] Song of Solomon 4:12.

The new ethos of Redemption enables persons to surmount reduction by lust in the human heart so that man and woman can find themselves in freedom of the gift.[138] The image contained in Ephesians seems to speak of the sacrament of Redemption as that definitive fulfillment of mystery hidden from eternity in God.[139] The sacrament of creation constituted the human person in the beginning, through grace, in the state of original innocence and justice. The new gracing of the person in the sacrament of Redemption gives the person above all remission of sins. Sacrament of Redemption - fruit of Christ's redemptive love – becomes, on the basis of spousal love for Church, a permanent dimension of life of Church herself, a fundamental and life-giving dimension.

Church united to Christ, as wife to husband, draws from the sacrament of Redemption all her fruitfulness and spiritual motherhood.[140] The mystery hidden in God, that in the beginning in the sacrament of creation became a visible reality through the union of the first man and woman in marriage, becomes in the sacrament of Redemption a visible reality in the indissoluble union of Christ with Church.[141]

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[138] Eph: 25-33: Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, in order to make her holy by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word, so as to present the church to himself in splendor, without a spot or wrinkle or anything of the kind – yes, so that she may be holy and without blemish. In the same way, husbands should love their wives as they do their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hates his own body, but he nourishes and tenderly cares for it, just as Christ does for the church, because we are members of his body. "For this reason, a man will leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two will become one flesh." This is a great mystery, and I am applying it to Christ and the church. Each of you, however, should love his wife as himself, and a wife should respect her husband; cf. Gen 2:24.

[139] Phil 3: 10-11; Col 1: 24; 1 Cor 15; cf. 1 Pet 4: 12-13. "All I want is to know Christ and the power flowing from his resurrection, likewise to know how to share in his sufferings . . . In my own flesh I fill up what is lacking in the sufferings of Christ for the sake of his body the Church. This corruptible body must be clothed with incorruptibility – death is swallowed up in victory. Thanks be to God who has given us this victory through Jesus Christ . . . When finally all has been subjected to the Son, he will subject himself to the one who made all things subject to him, so that God may be all in all . . . He who calls you will do it, because He is faithful."

[140] 1 Pet 1: 23: "You have been born anew, not of perishable but of imperishable seed, through the living and enduring word of God."

[141] John Paul II, "General Audience of October 13, 1982."

The struggle of human persons to liberate their minds of fables and superstitions caused them to abandon their religion only to become vulnerable to new myths, often dangerous and destructive ones.

CONCLUSION

Salvation applies to the common good of human persons individually and collectively. As human self-awareness developed, an inner orientation emerged that began to understand that the common good required more cohesiveness among human persons, individually and collectively. The change was from a religious to a more inclusive attitude. That change included not only spiritual souls, but also persons from all walks of life, spiritual and temporal, individual as well as collective, which are designated political. Persons were brought from life in the country to life in the *polis* – the city. Human persons are political animals. Politics demonstrated the person's natural orientation towards the common good, which reaches out to ultimate salvation of all human persons. The basis of all such organization is their social, relational, and solidary nature. From a political attitude human persons progressed to a more inclusive and expansive sociological attitude. That leads this study to Chapter two.

To be continued