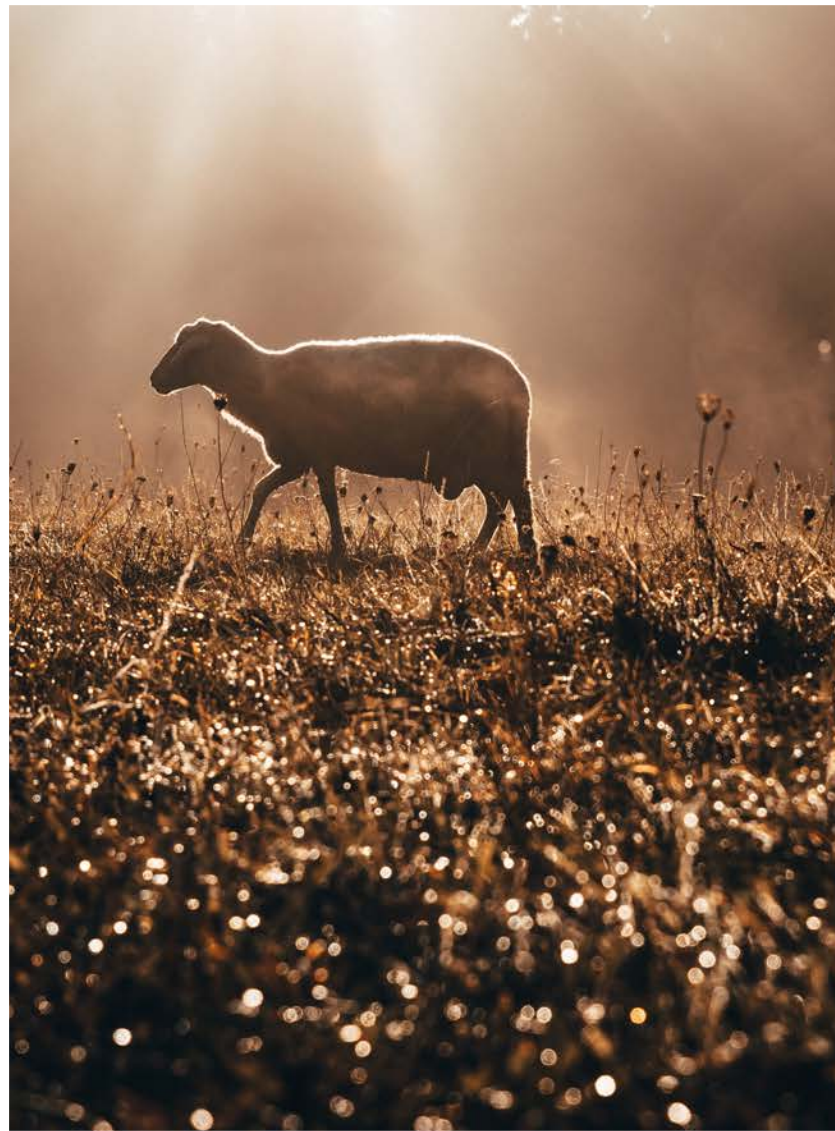


Transcendentals
Sharing the
Transcendentals

A DIGITAL CATHOLIC JOURNAL



JANUARY 2021 • ISSUE 1 • VOLUME 2

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**SPECIAL GUEST
CONTRIBUTOR**

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NEWS FROM THE FRONT

Happy 2021 and welcome to January's publication of *Transcendentals*. We are excited with the momentum this project is gaining and participation from our readers.

We would like to emphasize the call to you: if you, or if you know anyone who would desire to submit to the journal, please do so! The themes are more like guidelines so even if the piece you desire to submit does not perfectly fit with the month, don't hesitate to submit! For more information, please consult the Submissions page on our website.

This issue, we are very excited to share our thoughts on "Sharing the Transcendentals." Our Catholic Faith is evangelistic in its core but it can often present challenges for its faithful to positively share what makes their life true, beautiful, and good. How do we share our faith without getting

bogged down in the weeds of apologetics or move past our anxieties of possibly stepping on other people's toes?

Angèle Regnier, co-founder of Catholic Christian Outreach, will generously share how evangelization is a call to share Jesus Christ; the embodiment of the transcendentals. In her reflection, she will discuss how Catholics can move past any anxieties they may have about sharing their faith, and use a Christocentric approach in a clear and simple way.

From all of us on the *Transcendentals* team, thank you for your support and please pray for us as we continue this amazing project.

Transcendentals

SHARING JESUS: THE EMBODIMENT OF TRUTH, BEAUTY, AND GOODNESS

ANGÈLE REGNIER

How does one introduce the transcendentals in a coffee shop with a friend struggling through life and unable to see life as beautiful, good, and true? The most appropriate Christian answer is to introduce them to Jesus Christ, who does not simply have the attributes, but by His very nature, is the good, the beautiful, and the true.

For our friend captured by the worldliness of the world, who is surrounded by all these distractions and disordered messaging, where does the conversation about Jesus begin? The first step is to understand that the way we see things is not the way the world sees things. For those of us who are aware of the transcendentals, we are able to look upon the natural order of things, reflect upon them, and come to a greater understanding



Image taken by Catholic Christian Outreach

of the meaning of life. Our thoughts and imagination transcend beyond and above the natural world. What we see and experience in the transcendentals is an image of God's presence in the world around us. When we identify His good, truth and beauty, it inspires us to be more and more like Him. Each time we look upon the true, the good and the beautiful with eyes of faith, we are drawn more deeply into the life of God. One could say that the transcendentals have an evangelical end as it leads us more and more into conversion and

metanoia: a new way of seeing things and a new way of living our lives for God.

The Church recognizes in the testimony of those who have had a personal encounter with Jesus Christ that they experience an inner transformation, a new way of thinking, a new way of relating to God, a new way of seeing the world around them, and how they see themselves in light of his beauty, truth and goodness.

Image taken by Catholic Christian Outreach



EVERYTHING IS DIFFERENT AS A RESULT OF METANOIA, THAT IS, THE STATE OF CONVERSION.

*INSTRUMENTUM LABORIS THE NEW
EVANGELIZATION FOR THE
TRANSMISSION OF THE CHRISTIAN FAITH.
XIII ORDINARY GENERAL ASSEMBLY,
2012, 19*

The grace that flows from conversion keeps us from being seduced by a lesser or fool's gold transcendental. Through the Holy Spirit alive in us, we have eyes to see that the real good is so much more than a hip, ethical coffee brand. We can navigate and discern truth which is obscured by secular ideals trumpeted in headlines. When we have the mind of Christ, beauty comes to our vision announced and clothed in dignity, not exploited and pushed on our sensibilities.

As humans, we are all attracted to beauty, goodness, and truth. As Christians, we consider the transcendentals to be objective realities rooted in the nature of God. Post-moderns, on the other hand, universally see our beloved transcendentals in an utterly subjective and fluid way. And here is the rub for us as evangelizers

in a secular culture; how do we bring Jesus, who is *the Way, the Truth and the Life* to such people? Evangelistic principle #1: let's meet people where they are. It is precisely here in the *subjective*, where we can meet men and women of this age. It is, in fact, modelled to us by the Master himself.

**THROUGH HE WAS IN
THE FORM OF GOD,
DID NOT REGARD
EQUALITY WITH GOD
AS SOMETHING TO BE
EXPLOITED.**

~ PHILIPPIANS 4:16

We read in the Gospels that Jesus approached man with subjective questions like how do you feel or think about this or that? What is it that you are looking for or desiring? Who do you say I am? [Mt 8:26, Mt 9:28, Mt 11:7, Mt 18:12, Mt 20:21, Mt 20:29-34, Mt 22:42, Mk 8:29, Mk 10:51, Lk 9:18-20, Lk 24:17, Jn 18:24]. He asked people what they think and about what they want. He asked what they think about Him and what He can do for them. In these kinds of subjective questions, people are not triggered to react but invited to reflect on what they think and feel about the question and their perspective. The subjective gateway invites a rational response.

In evangelizing conversations, we ask these people about their thoughts, experiences, and beliefs. We can go further to find out what speaks to them and inspires them. Our questions asked in love, care, interest, and with the gaze of Christ in us, can touch, intrigue, witness and invite them towards God's love. God's love is the first point of the *kerygma* (the basic points of the message of salvation). We may further share God's love and our experience of Him. Personal testimony is a powerful tool in proclamation.

An honest sharing of (new) friends will sooner or later reveal the aches and regrets of the heart. Everyone has pain. Even if they may reject the concept of sin, they do feel its effect, burden, and broken relationship. As evangelizers, we must be confident in the knowledge that there is no real healing for this kind of wound outside of Jesus Christ. He is the Good News to the pain they are confiding to you. We share the hope, freedom, new life, fresh start, healing, and love that Jesus offers for this life and the next. Sin and salvation offered in Jesus are the second and third points of the *kerygma*.

And here, the objective truth of our faith tenderly kisses the subjective need of our friend. "What might

you think of Jesus now?" "Would you like to meet him?" "Do you need a Saviour?" "If you could know Jesus personally, would you want to?" "Would you respond to Jesus' invitation of love and salvation?" "What is the desire of your heart?" "Would you like to pray and invite him into your life?"

When a person is given the freedom to consider these truths, they are able to grasp the reality of this *truth*. They see how their sin has consequences in their relationship with God and with others. As the conversation proceeds with the idea of this love and mercy being directed towards them individually, it evokes a wonder and awe at something so *beautiful* that they are aware of their personal poverty. The invitation to open themselves to Jesus Christ, to have a new fresh start, and to live their life with a new purpose and meaning, is almost too *good* to be true.

You, my dear evangelizer, have lovingly led a friend from their subjective reality to the objective reality: Jesus Christ. For your part, you must not lose confidence. You must not succumb to your subjective challenges of fear, avoidance, and lack of confidence. Know that it is Jesus is whom they seek even though they could barely name Him.

It is Jesus that you seek when you dream of happiness; He is waiting for you when nothing else you find satisfies you; He is the beauty to which you are so attracted; it is He who provoked you with that thirst for fullness that will not let you settle for compromise; it is He who urges you to shed the masks of a false life; it is He who reads in your heart your most genuine choices, the choices that others try to stifle.

~ ST. JOHN PAUL II, WYD 2000 VIGIL



Yes please be heralds of the Gospel to this generation. Tread lovingly, sensitively, wisely, boldly and confidently. Launching from modern man's subjective viewpoint of goodness, beauty and truth, you propose the answer and fulfillment of all desires: Jesus. With the newborn eyes of faith, they will objectively see goodness, beauty and truth in Him.

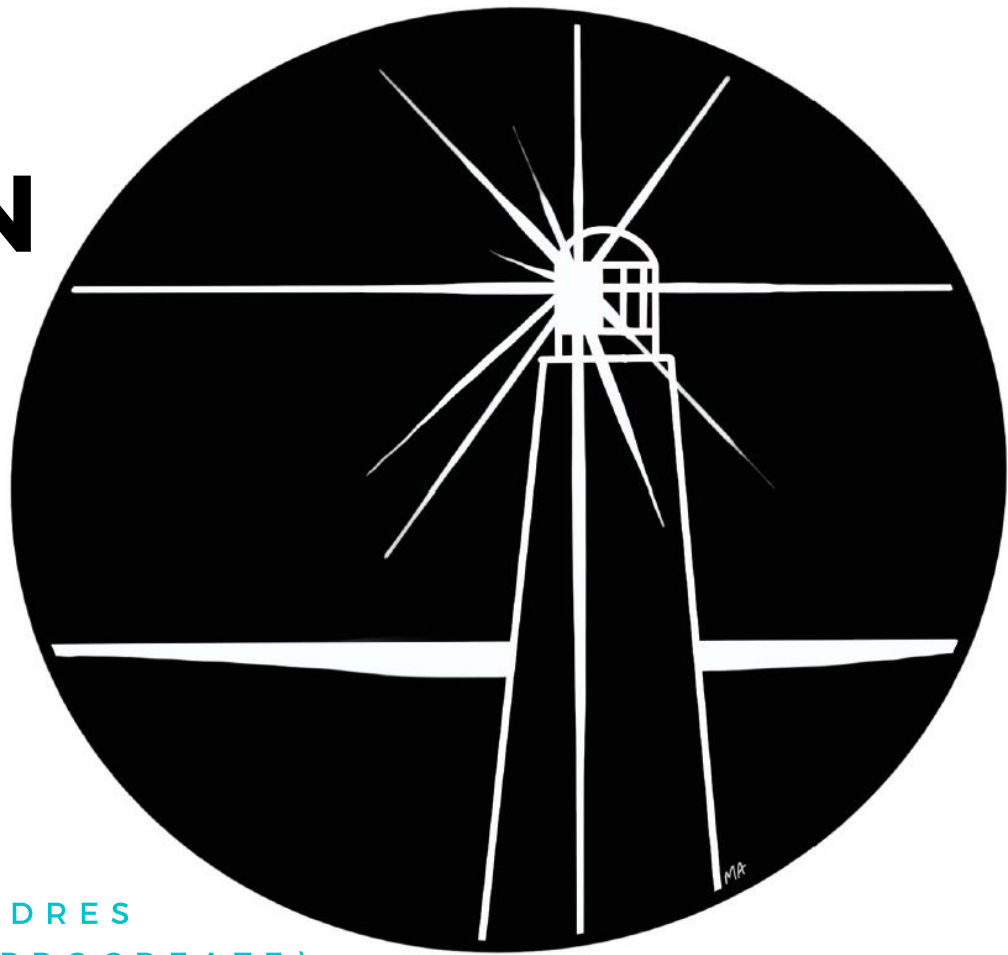


"In order to communicate the message entrusted to her by Christ, the Church needs art. Art must make perceptible, and as far as possible attractive, the world of the spirit, of the invisible, of God."



ST. POPE JOHN PAUL II
LETTER TO ARTISTS

BEACON



ARTIST: MIGUEL ANDRES
MEDIUM: DIGITAL (PROCREATE)

When I think about sharing the transcendentals, I think about how we see God and how He presents Himself to us.

The image that came to mind is the image of a lighthouse. A lighthouse is a beacon for those out at sea in the middle of the night. Often time, the light that shines from a lighthouse is the only light a ship can see. Similarly, the transcendentals are ways in which we see God and what attracts us to Him.

When we encounter God and start to grow in a deeper relationship with Him, we can start seeing ourselves as the lighthouse. It shines and cries out to those out

in the darkness; "I am on solid ground." Similarly, those who have a relationship with God are invited to share His truth, beauty, and goodness in the world. Like a lighthouse, they invite others to see God in the darkness. The image reminds me of the following verse; **"Now, I stand on solid ground, and I will publicly praise the LORD." Psalm 26:12**

As I was creating this piece, I realized that the light shining from the lighthouse forms a cross, and the other rays of light reminds me of a monstrance. The cross is a beautiful symbol of how Jesus pursues us even as we find ourselves in the darkness as well as our invitation to His mission to pursue others so that they may also encounter Christ.



On Dec. 9, 1531, the Virgin Mary appeared to a man named Juan Diego on Tepeyac Hill in Mexico City. Juan Diego was an indigenous Mexican peasant and Aztec convert to Catholicism. The Virgin spoke to him in Nahuatl and asked him to build a church there in her honour, so she could give all her love, help, and protection to the Mexican people. Juan Diego then went directly to the Archbishop of Mexico City, Fray Juan de Zumárraga, to tell him about the miraculous event and ask for a shrine to be erected.

The Archbishop was skeptical of the account and did not believe Juan Diego, but that same day, the Virgin appeared to Juan Diego again and encouraged him to persist. The next day, Juan Diego went back to the Archbishop, insisting on what he saw. The Archbishop told him to return to Tepeyac Hill and ask the woman for a sign to prove her identity, before he would approve the construction

OUR LADY OF GUADALUPE, STAR OF THE NEW EVANGELIZATION, PATRONESS OF THE AMERICAS

ARTIST: IRENA VÉLEZ

**MEDIUM: WATERCOLOUR WITH
FINELINER**

ORIGINAL SIZE: 22.9 X 30.5 CM

construction of a church. Accordingly, Juan Diego returned to Tepeyac Hill and was met by the Virgin yet again.

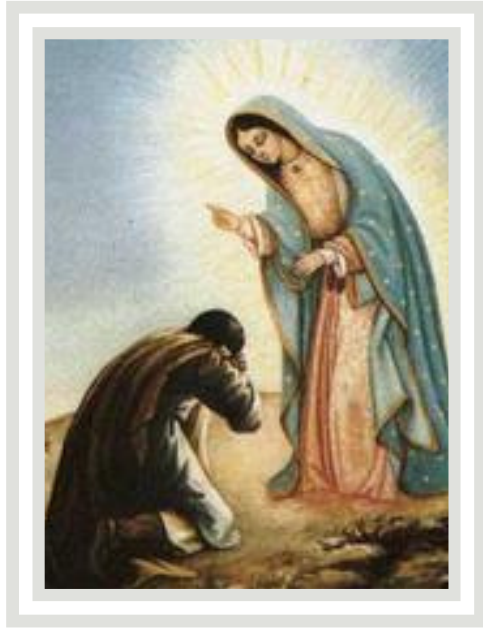


Image from <https://www.olg-parish.com>

He told her of the Archbishop's request for a sign, and she promised to provide one the following day. The next day, Juan Diego's uncle, Juan Bernardino, fell very ill, and Juan Diego chose to take care of him. Juan Bernardino's condition quickly worsened overnight, and in the morning, Juan Diego sought out a priest in Tlatelolco to hear his uncle's last confession and prepare him for his death.

Juan Diego was ashamed of failing to meet the Virgin on the day they had agreed on, so he avoided Tepeyac Hill and took another route home, but the Virgin still appeared to him. Juan Diego

explained what had happened and the Virgin responded, "Do not fear that sickness, nor any other sickness or anguish. Am I not here, I who am your mother? Are you not under my protection?" She told him that Juan Bernardino had recovered and instructed him to gather flowers from the top of Tepeyac Hill, which was normally barren in the month of December. Juan Diego carried out her words and found Castilian roses blooming on the summit, a flower not native to Mexico. He placed the roses in his *tilma*, which was an outer garment worn by Aztec men in central Mexico.

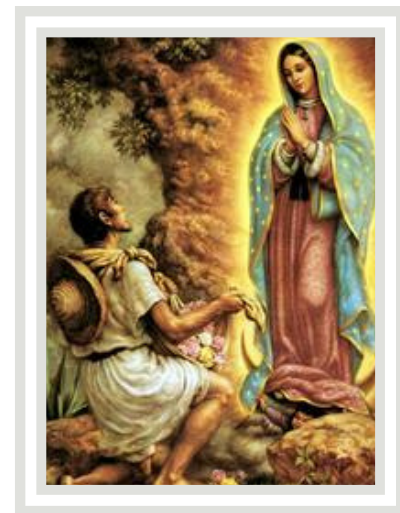


Image from <https://www.olg-parish.com>

Juan Diego made his way to the Archbishop with the sign of the Virgin, and when he unfolded his *tilma* before him, the roses fell to the floor, revealing upon the fabric the image of the Virgin of Guadalupe. The next day, Juan Diego found his uncle healthy and fully recovered. He told Juan Diego

that the Virgin had appeared to him too, at his bedside, and that she had told him to tell the Archbishop of her apparition and of his miraculous recovery, saying she wanted to be known under the title of 'Guadalupe'. Afterwards, the *tilma* was put on display in the church and later moved to the newly-built chapel on Tepeyac Hill.



Image from <https://www.olg-parish.com>

In the image, the Virgin stands exactly as she appeared, dressed like a native Aztec princess. Tepeyac Hill was the site of a former Aztec temple to the goddess Tonantzin, Mother Earth. The image is an Aztec pictograph, which natives of the time probably could have easily interpreted. The Virgin stands in front of a blazing sun, rays shooting out from behind her, showing she is greater than the Aztec sun god Huitzilopochtli. Her head is bowed and her hands are joined in prayer; she prays to One who is even greater than her.

On her cerulean blue cloak, the colour of royalty, the stars correspond to the constellations in the sky during her apparition. She stands upon a crescent moon, a symbol for the Aztec deity Quetzalcoatl, indicating that she is greater than the serpent. She repeatedly presents herself as greater than any Aztec god, without being God herself. She wears the black Aztec Maternity belt, showing she is with child. Her hair is loose, which was an Aztec sign for virginity. An angel with eagle's wings is seen below her feet because the Aztecs believed an eagle delivered the hearts and blood of sacrificial victims to the gods; the angel lifts the Virgin, pregnant with God's ultimate sacrifice.

And Juan Diego's *tilma*, a garment woven from cactus fibers and normally lasting 30 years at best before disintegrating, remains miraculously intact nearly five centuries later without any protective varnishes. The image shows no evidence of either sketch or brush marks. Microscopic examination reveals minuscule images reflected in the eyes of the Virgin, believed to be the people she saw when she appeared in 1531.

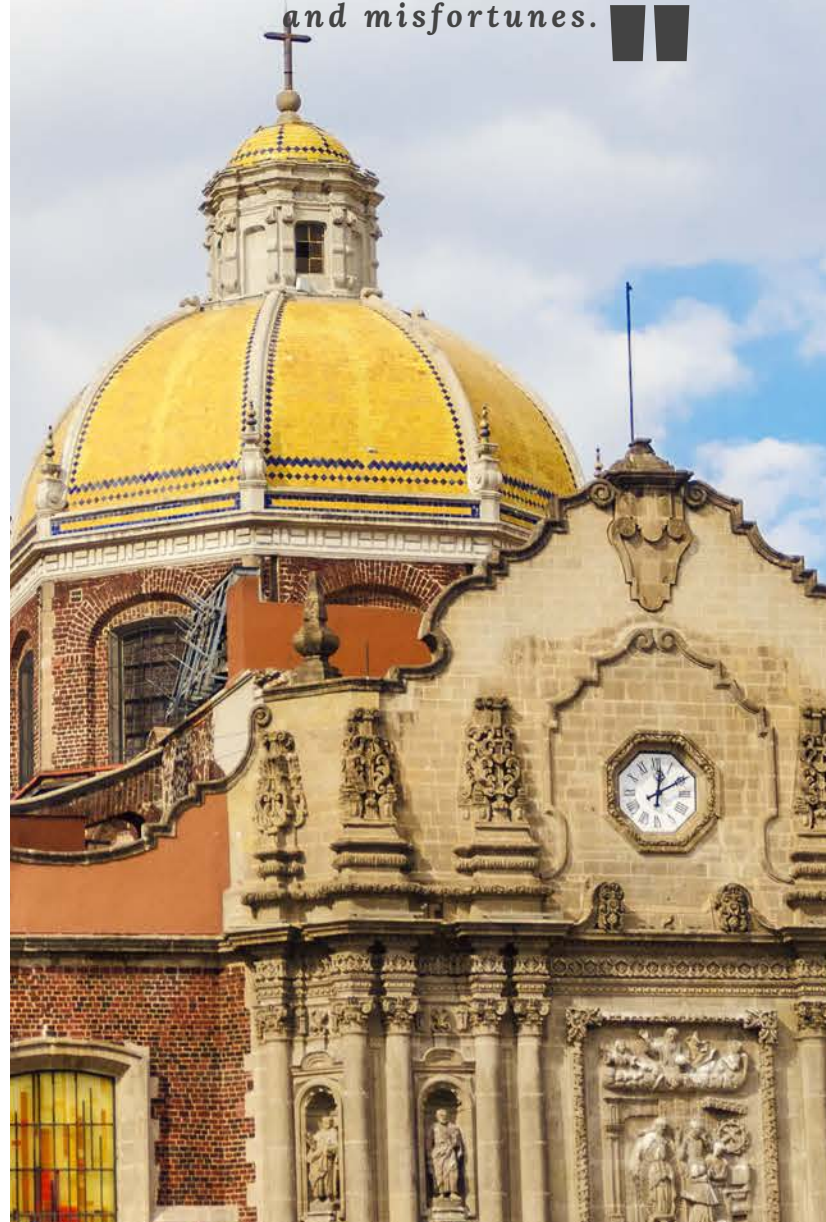
In 1785, a worker accidentally spilled 50 percent nitric acid solvent on the right side of the *tilma* but neither fabric nor the

image was affected. In 1921, an anticlerical radical named Luciano Perez Carpio detonated 29 sticks of dynamite hidden in a bouquet of roses and placed underneath the *tilma*. The explosion shattered the windows of the basilica, destroyed the marble alter and floor, twisted a metal crucifix, but the *tilma* itself and the ordinary glass around it were left unblemished.

Today, the Basilica of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Mexico City is the most visited Catholic shrine in the world; as many as 10 million people travel to her image every year. Millions of miracles and healings have been granted in her name, and the petitions to her never end. Our Lady of Guadalupe is an emblem of evangelization to all peoples, her love has no bounds. Mary is the Mother of the Church, a uniting force among us all. Christian life flourishes under her guidance. Our Lady appeared to Juan Diego, a poor widowed peasant, because she knew his dignity and worth as a child of God. May we see the same in every human being we meet.

*Our Lady of Guadalupe,
Pray for us!*

■ ■ *I am your merciful mother, the merciful mother of all of you who live united in this land, and of all mankind, of all those who love me, of those who cry to me, of those who seek me, of those who have confidence in me. Here I will hear their weeping, their sorrow, and will remedy and alleviate all their multiple sufferings, necessities, and misfortunes.* ■ ■



SACRED

HEART



ARTIST: JOSHUA TERPSTRA

MEDIUM: PROCREATE

ORIGINAL SIZE: 2048X 2048PX

Prayer of St. Gertrude to the Sacred Heart

Sanctity of the Heart of Jesus, consecrate my heart; providence of the Heart of Jesus, watch over my heart; unchangeableness of the Heart of Jesus, strengthen my heart; purity of the Heart of Jesus, purify my heart; obedience of the Heart of Jesus, subjugate my heart; amiability of the Heart of Jesus, make Thyself known to my heart; Divine attractions of the Heart of Jesus, captivate my heart; riches of the Heart of Jesus, do ye suffice for my heart; floods of grace and blessing that flow from the Heart of Jesus, inundate my heart. O Heart of Jesus! be Thou my joy, my peace, my repose in this world and in the next. O Heart of Jesus! adored in Heaven, invoked on earth, feared in Hell, reign over all hearts, reign throughout all ages, reign forever in celestial glory. Amen.

Our Lord did not come to establish an intellectual tradition, nor did he come to found or promote a code of morality. Throughout salvation history, the greatest Catholic thinkers have helped to develop a mighty, intellectual understanding of our faith so that we can be “prepared to make a defense to any one who calls you to account for the hope that is in you” (1 Peter 3:15b, RSV). But the imperative of the life in Christ leans on the ordering of not only our minds, but also of our hearts and our wills. If we know anything of Church history, we can understand that Jesus established His Church as a living body of persons - an organic, growing community of believers who confess His Resurrection and His humanity and divinity. It is a community of believers responding to the call in Matthew 28: to go and make disciples of all nations.

Sharing the transcendentals must mimic this. It is an act of the will that is grounded in right reason and with the understanding that the good, beautiful, and true have the capacity to speak to the heart in a profound way. It is for this reason that the Sacred Heart is so fundamental. Our Lord provides the model we are called to follow when sharing those things ordered unto Him. Everything is ordered ultimately towards the One who is Beauty, Truth, and Goodness.



Pope Benedict XVI talks of the Sacred Heart bearing representation of God's boundless and passionate love for mankind, which I think is well captured by St. John Henry Newman's episcopal motto: *cor ad cor loquitur*, or, “heart speaks unto heart.”

Remember back to the first time you ever encountered the Lord in the silence of prayer. Jesus speaks to us through peace, through gentleness, and in reference to our hearts. Our affirmations of identity are ultimately rooted in the heart: we are the adopted sons and daughters of God. Just as a child genetically inherits the unity of the chromosomes of his parents, we as God's children are made in His image. Our hearts were made so that we might turn to our heavenly Father with love and love Him who loved us first. The relational questions of love, connection with our Creator and son or daughtership, are best

experienced not through theoretical understanding, but through the Heart speaking unto the heart. Our work, whether it is in artistic pursuits, writing, teaching, poetry, or the trade in which you find yourself, must seek to mimic this approach. Our theology must be informed by the fundamental truth of God molding us to live as we were intended: in the freedom of the garden He has prepared for us.

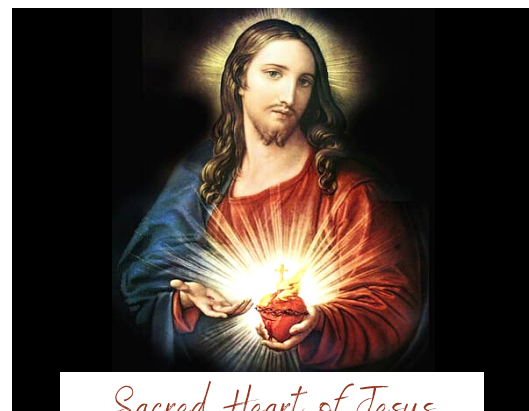


Image of Catholic holy card depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus, ca. 1880. Auguste Martin collection

The inspiration of this piece comes from a holy card depicting the Sacred Heart of Jesus from 1880, from the Auguste Martin collection. The placement of the spear is a reflection on the devotion to the Sacred Wound. The light emanating from the Wound comes from the prayer of St. Gertrude to the Sacred Heart, in which she writes of the "floods of grace and blessing that flow from the heart of Jesus." The image bears the crown of thorns and the spear, as these are the means by which Jesus was able

to demonstrate his abounding passion for us whom He sees in the vision in the Garden of Gethsemane.

The Sacred Heart is also intimately linked with the sacrifice of the Mass, for this is where we can encounter the true presence of Jesus in his Body and Blood. The green circle surrounding the heart is represents that true life ultimately surrounds the mystery of the Passion of Christ. Surrounding the green circle, we see a brown circle from which the spear is connected. This represents that, despite Christ giving us life, it is all of us through our sinfulness who condemn Jesus. The red and gold that surrounds this, however, are colours of love and divinity. In fact, it is because of our concupiscence that Christ is able to redeem us. It is because of our weakness that we are made strong, that we can be prodigal sons and daughters to an all-loving and all-merciful God.



*Sacred Heart of Jesus.
Have Mercy on us!*



"At difficult moments in the Church's life, the pursuit of holiness becomes even more urgent. And holiness is not a question of age; it is a matter of living in the Holy Spirit, just as Kateri Tekakwitha did." ~ St. Pope John Paul II

Let Go & Let God

ARTIST: LAURA BELL
MEDIUM: ACRYLIC ON
CANVAS

When praying about what it means to “share the transcendentals,” two things came to mind: my high school art class and St. Kateri Tekakwitha. Sharing the transcendentals essentially means to share Who is true, good, and beautiful. Art class in high school was the first time I realized I could use this gift of art to share who Christ is with others. The painting above is a fruit of that.

For this assignment in Grade 12, we had to study a mentor artist,

and paint an original piece in a similar style to that artist. I chose René Magritte, a Surrealist painter. The concept of painting realistic objects in unrealistic places (*Surrealism*) fascinated me. Although painting objects realistically was challenging, presenting the piece and sharing its meaning (to “let go and let God”) to my class was even more difficult, but necessary.

Magritte is known for his wispy clouds, attention to detail, and covering subjects’ faces with objects – all of which I wanted to portray in my piece. The clouds symbolize God in Heaven, and the willow tree symbolizes God’s protection and guidance. The person’s body morphed into the waterfall represents the concept of trusting in God. Water is a common

symbol in our Catholic Faith that represents the Holy Spirit, specifically in our Baptism. It is solely because of our Baptism and the Grace we receive through the Holy Spirit that we are able to share the transcendentals – that we are able to authentically and courageously share the greatest love story ever told. It would not make any sense to share this story unless we fully immerse ourselves in Love, allowing Love to transcend through us (starting at our Baptism), letting Love take control even if we cannot see its end.

The lily flower is another common symbol in our Catholic faith, specifically among the Saints. It is a symbol of purity in St. Joseph’s staff, with St. Dominic as a symbol of chastity, and St. Catherine of Siena as a symbol of her virginity.



St. Kateri Tekakwitha is another saint depicted holding lilies, and is known as *Lily of the Mohawks* for suffering bravely. At the age of 19, St. Kateri made the decision to be baptized regardless of what other people thought, including her family. They did not support her decision, so much so that they refused to feed her if she did not work on Sundays. St. Kateri received a death threat from one of the villagers if she did not renounce her Christian faith. She risked her life and ran 200 miles away from home to a Christian village known as the *St. Francis Xavier Mission*, on the Saint Lawrence River so she could live her Faith freely. The lily in the painting represents St. Kateri Tekakwitha.



Her story is the epitome of what it means to live out truth, goodness, and beauty. It is not easy, but as St. Pope John Paul II said, “holiness is not a question of age; it is a matter of living in the Holy Spirit.”

Let us pray for St. Kateri Tekakwitha's intercession that God give us courage and bravery like hers to fight for Christ just as He fought for us.



*St. Kateri Tekakwitha,
Pray for us!*



"I count myself one of the number of those who write as they learn and learn as they write."



ST. AUGUSTINE



Abraham's God

BY CLIF CLEMOTTE

I was recently reading some papers in contemporary ethics. Several of these papers chose to point out the flaws in the so-called Divine Command theory of ethics, which holds that ethics is not something we can know by studying human nature, but rather must be uniquely revealed by God. It's generally easy to dismiss, and the Catholic tradition has long preferred natural law theories instead. However, I was concerned by the ways in which many authors repeatedly used Abraham as a negative example in their arguments against the theory, so I decided to briefly write about Abraham. "No distrust made him waver concerning the promise of God," writes Paul, "but he grew

strong in his faith as he gave glory to God, fully convinced that God was able to do what he had promised" (Romans 4:20-21). I think it is safe to say Paul was right.

When contemporary ethicists talk about Abraham, they rarely seem to read more than Genesis 22:1-14. This is part of the passage in which Abraham is called by God to sacrifice Isaac, his only legitimate son, and Abraham responds by actually planning to sacrifice his son. Isaac is only replaced last-minute by a ram provided by God to spare Isaac. The standard analysis goes something like this: i) if morality is dependent on divine whims, then even apparently awful things could be good, and external

observers would never know the difference; ii) any God who makes commands like these is awful, and should not be an authority on ethics anyway.

I am certainly not advocating a system of ethics dependent on oracles, nor am I hoping to legitimize violence, but I really think it is a mistake to think of Abraham as a would-be murderer. In addition, it seems important to state that the Bible is not an attempt to establish a system of ethics. Ethics is the field of philosophy in which we analyze human action and the good or evil consequences that arise, as considered by reason alone. Ethics is not synonymous with being a good person – it means the systematic and reason-based conceptual analysis of natural goods. ('Natural' is not a synonym for 'biological', at least when speaking of human persons.) This is not what the Scriptures are providing! These texts do not provide standards of human action contrary to ethics, but the establishment of principles for analyzing human action towards natural goods is simply below the radar – at stake instead is the drama of human proximity to or distance from God, a supernatural good whose possession can only be attained by supernatural assistance, i.e. grace. Ethics is important to living human life,

and it is important to theology insofar as a theology which blatantly contradicts reason is unsound – but ethics is not the point of Scripture, and the Bible should not be interpreted as providing norms of behaviour. (As an aside – it seems somewhat restrictive to describe ethics as merely providing norms of behaviour... it is probably more useful to think of ethics as the accurate characterization of human goods.)

If Scripture is about grace and the extraordinary – in the sense of: that which is beyond the pale of the normal (and 'normal,' in turn, implies the patterned, the normative, the rule-based) – then we should not assume that even the great patriarchs of the Old Testament are meant to be models for our own actions, except insofar as they respond to grace.

One more step before returning to Abraham: death in Scripture. In the Old Testament, a lot of people are killed. A few times, this is directly because of a divine command, as when entering Canaan. Isaac is nearly another example. Many rightly find these actions concerning, and wonder how they could be reconciled with the God of the New Testament (who is, after all, the same God). But again, Scripture is not setting up rules for action. The Ten Commandments

are not the pinnacle of the Old Testament; they are rather the beginning of the drama of the nation of Israel, and form a prerequisite for further covenanted action. Hence, these actions - none of which we should imitate, even though they are specifically commanded by God at those times to those persons - were not meant to be viewed as ethical, but rather as part of the drama of setting up a covenant in the preparation for a Messiah.

Scripture is permeated with mystery. Not all is clear, the details are often fuzzy, and there are many distractions from the movement towards grace. God is the creator of all things, including each and every person. Every person will die at some point; God knows and ultimately directs the causal chain, including each person's death. If God actually did command someone to participate in that causal chain- something that could not happen today - then in



I said that a theology is unsound if it contradicts reason. We can know by reason alone that murder is wrong. The above explanation of the Old Testament killings seems to disrupt the harmony of theology and reason, because it attempts to justify something we know by reason is unjustifiable! A partial reconciliation can be accomplished, however.

a sense the normal circumstance remains; God still oversees the causal chains which often produce human deaths, and many factors play an instrumental role in His agency. The crucial detail would be whether one could ever know what God's will is. Today, one could never receive a divine command to enact those same actions, because the coming of Christ has completed revelation - there is no need for

for further demonstration of the drama of redemption. God's will is perfectly revealed in Jesus.

The early Old Testament, in particular, is an unusual time; the picture painted is generally one of human chaos and clouded reason, such that perhaps ethics was not even practically possible at that stage. A divine intervention to directly command actions could make sense in that specific circumstance, since it is unclear that there really were any clearly articulated normative standards in some recognized sense. Now, from her earliest days, the Church has held that God does not command anything known by reason to be evil; and in fact, humanity today generally has a basic understanding of the natural law. (This is debatable, I suppose; but it does not matter, because the completion of revelation suffices. Whenever we sin, we can and should know better.) So we could never find ourselves in a situation like that of the patriarchs, because those commands - now - could not come from God. They were unique, *ad hoc* commands, and therein the mystery lies. The point is that individual people could plausibly become instruments for God's purposes, but only if He made His will clearly known - which now is done through reason and the gifts of the Holy Spirit. (This is not a sneaky attempt to say, 'Well, yeah,

it was ok back then - but not now! Things are different now!' The reason things are different now is because revelation has ended.)

This is the only reading I know of which can provide a useful spiritual sense of Scripture in these instances (for more on the four senses of Scripture, see in particular Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine*). The real point, then, is not the actions so much as the human effort to be faithful to God. It is also worth noting that it is entirely consistent with this reading that the suffering of the victims in these troubling cases could plausibly be sufficient penance for their sins (something we are taught every human commits), such that they too may well have been offered redemption. If all humans must suffer the cross to be saved, then being given a cross you did not know you needed may (eschatologically) be a blessing in disguise. But it must again be repeated that only God could ever give such a cross legitimately.

Is Abraham a would-be murderer? Not really. Nor is he a liar, as the contemporary ethicists often claim. The key is reading the story teleologically, as something which the author intended to point to something beyond the immediate story. The book of Genesis, along with the other books of the Pentateuch, situates humanity in

the drama of sin and repentance, and Abraham is a key part of this. Abraham was given a very concrete promise from God, and Isaac was essential to that promise. So when Abraham tells Isaac that "God will provide himself the lamb for a burnt offering," he means it (Gen. 22:8). He obeys the command, all the way up to the point of beginning the sacrifice – yet does so with the confidence that God will still uphold His promises to both Abraham and Isaac. Abraham also acts in the knowledge that both he and Isaac belong to God, and not really to themselves, which seems to me an important detail to emphasize.

Kierkegaard views this as proof that faith transcends and also overrides reason, such that the willingness to act *contrary* to reason becomes the proof of faith. I disagree; there is a long and venerable tradition in the Church of trying to reconcile the dictates of natural law with the puzzles of Scripture, and I doubt I have anything new to contribute. I simply want to suggest that it is a mistake at the onset to read Genesis in the hopes of gaining ethical insight. I also want to suggest that the primitive state of humanity at the time probably makes ethics irrelevant to analyzing the actions of the peoples at that time – they do not seem to have conceptualized actions in this way.

The passage of Genesis concerning Abraham is not meant to be read in textbooks as an example of ethics gone wrong, nor is it meant to be read as an isolated story. Its meaning is entirely dependent upon its role in furthering divine intervention in human history, and is part of the interplay between sin, imperfection, divine compromise (in the sense of, God starts with humans so as to make saints) and genuine repentance. All these elements are present in this story, when it is taken as a whole and not as a short snippet; and they reveal a merciful God who systematically blesses those who receive His love.





LUMEN AD REVELATIONEM GENTIUM

FR. STEPHEN BRUZZESE



Simeon took him in his arms and praised God, saying, "Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled: my own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel"
(Luke 2:28-32).

These words spoken by Simeon took place when, after 40 days, Mary & Joseph brought Jesus up to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord, as was customary under the law. In just a few days, February 2nd, the church will celebrate this great feast of the Presentation of the Lord (traditionally called Candlemass). The theme for this

month's edition is *Sharing the Transcendentals*, and I immediately felt drawn to the Canticle of Simeon, as it is a prayer I say every night during the Office of Compline.

For most of us, like Simeon, we can honestly say that our own eyes have gazed upon salvation – for of course our salvation is Jesus Christ. The most obvious example of this would be Eucharistic Adoration, in which we simply bask in the presence of our Lord and Saviour. As the Psalmist says,

"The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?"

Like Simeon, we know that at the very depth of our being, everything is oriented towards finding our salvation. The Psalmist continues,

"'Come,' my heart says, 'seek his face!' Your face, Lord, do I seek. Do not hide your face from me."

We are constantly searching for His holy countenance, and once we have found it, we do not want to leave it. However, we know that we can also experience salvation in a few other ways; namely, the Seven Sacraments of the Church.

The Catechism defines the Sacraments as, "*efficacious signs of grace, instituted by Christ and entrusted to the Church, by which*





divine life is dispensed to us” (1131). Perhaps a simpler definition that I have often used is, “*a personal encounter with the living God*”. What do I mean by that? For example, when a child is baptized, it is Christ who regenerates and offers salvation through His priest. When we receive absolution in the confessional, it is Christ who restores us to grace and offers His mercy to us through His priest. When we attend Holy Mass, it is Christ who feeds us with His own body and blood from the altar of sacrifice through his priest. These are just a few examples in which we encounter Christ the living and true God. However, it is not enough for us to selfishly keep these encounters to ourselves. We are called to share this transformative experience with all those we meet, which is the work of evangelization!

When we Catholics recite the Nicene Creed, one item we confess is, “*I believe in one, holy, catholic and apostolic Church.*” What do we mean when we say the Church is Catholic? The Catechism says,

“She proclaims the fullness of the faith. She bears in herself and administers the totality of the means of salvation. She is sent out to all peoples. She speaks to all men. She encompasses all times. She is ‘missionary of her very nature’.”

(868)

The Catholic Church by her very nature then is transcendental; for she is the bride of Christ, who is the author of the transcendentals: beauty, truth, and goodness. As an extension of this principle, if we have become a new creation in Christ through baptism, we are also a reflection of his beauty, truth, and goodness. And by this regeneration and configuration to Christ, we too, are missionary by our very nature. Through our profound encounter with Christ, we must allow others to encounter Christ through us.

Many people are searching for the “thing or person” that will make them happy. As Simeon knew, the only one who could satisfy this desire was the Messiah. We are called to be Christ’s light, to reveal Him to the nations, which includes: our families, our friends, our communities, our government officials, and ultimately anyone we meet. Is this always going to be easy? The answer is most definitely no! However, that does not mean that we should not try to be a beacon of hope to others. When we truly have the flame of faith alive in our hearts, as the baptismal liturgy says, we reflect St. John's image,



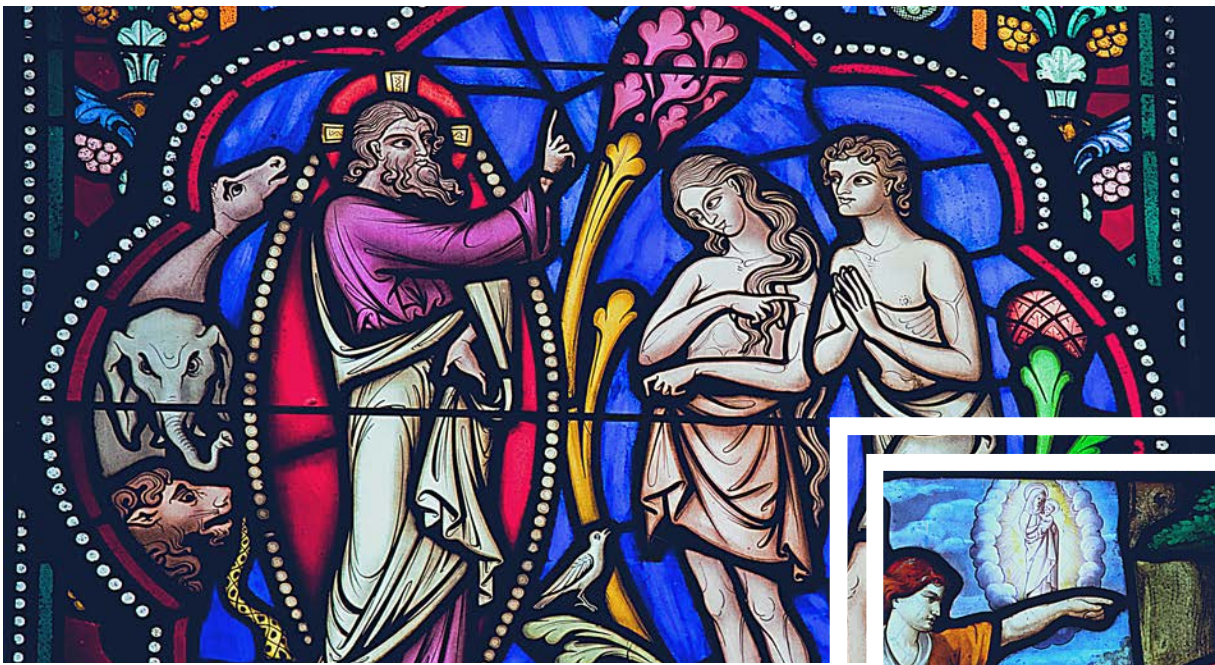
“The light shines in the darkness” (1:5)

The Prophet Isaiah reminds us,
“The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined.” (9:2)



Therefore, as we approach the feast of the Presentation of the Lord, let us always remember that we have been called by name and given a mission. Our mission, as is the Church’s mission, is to bring the light of salvation to the ends of the earth and to baptize all nations (cf. Matthew 28:19). Jesus tells us, “You are the salt of the earth...You are the light of the world...In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven” (Matthew 5:13-16). At the end of our earthly pilgrimage, when the day is far spent, may we, like St. Simeon, say,

“Lord, now you let your servant go in peace; your word has been fulfilled: my own eyes have seen the salvation which you have prepared in the sight of every people: a light to reveal you to the nations and the glory of your people Israel.”
(Luke 2:28-32).



REARTICULATING THE DOCTRINE OF ORIGINAL SIN

Megan Joseph

The doctrine of original sin is significant in understanding the Christian faith, but is also a point of conflict for believers. For modern-day Christians, the story of Adam and Eve seems to be at odds with Darwin's theory of evolution. The stories of Genesis "were written to describe the relationship of a good and just God with the rational creatures who came forth from his hands" (Henri Rondet, SJ). If the book of Genesis ought to be read as a metaphor,

then that leaves theologians the task of articulating a theory of original sin that is compatible with scientific discoveries. This paper will address the concept of original sin in light of evolution. In other words,

“Is it necessary to believe in the existence of Adam and Eve to understand the doctrine of original sin?”

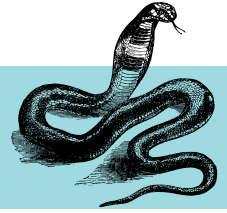


The Articulation of Doctrine

Before discussing original sin in its many contexts, it is important to first understand the articulation of doctrine. The Catechism of the Catholic Church understands original sin through Genesis, explaining that “by his sin, Adam, as the first man, lost the original holiness and justice he had received from God, not only for himself but for all human beings” (CCC 416). It goes on to state that “as a result of original sin, human nature is weakened in its powers; subject to ignorance, suffering, and the domination of death; and inclined to sin (called concupiscence).” There is a distinction here between a doctrine’s meaning and its formulation. Most theologians today would agree that “while the meaning of a dogma does not change, the expression of that meaning is culturally-conditioned and must be carefully interpreted” (Jerry D. Korsmeyer). In the case of original sin, the fundamental meaning found in the Catechism is not in question. The theological truth of original sin and its effects on humanity cannot be changed. Rather, the way in which the doctrine is articulated needs updating. Genesis, the Catechism, and Augustine *articulate* the unchanging truths of original sin through the story of humanity’s first parents. They represent “the effort of a prescientific culture

to give an account of the mystery of iniquity” (Thomas Raush). These efforts were undisputed for centuries until the theories of Darwin surfaced.

Augustine’s Articulation of Original Sin



Saint Augustine was one of the first to formulate an articulation of original sin in the fifth century, and the church has held his work in high esteem ever since. Augustine took the Genesis account quite literally; he would have assumed that Adam and Eve existed in history, were the first humans, and were ancestors to all other human beings. Augustine believed that when Adam sinned, all of human nature was inherently harmed and that these negative effects were passed on through sexual intercourse. In other words, Augustine believed that the condition of original sin is “transmitted by propagation, not imitation” (William E. Mann).



Following this line of thinking, “Augustine argued that Christ was born free of original sin precisely because there was no carnal intercourse involved in his conception.” Augustine’s view is that all of humanity does not just share in the sin of Adam through personal sin (transmission by imitation), but rather, all humans share an inclination to sin from birth. For this reason, Augustine advocated for the importance of infant baptism.

The church and Augustine recognize that “the wages of sin is death” (Romans 6:23a), both physical and spiritual. In other words, “Adam’s and Eve’s fall ushered into the world original sin, which is not an event but rather a condition... imposed by God as punishment on [them] for disobedience” (Mann). This condition resulted in many bodily symptoms including “dispossession from a naturally perfect environment, the loss of natural immortality, and the acquisition of susceptibility to physical pain, fatigue, disease, aging, and rebellious bodily disorders, especially sexual lust” (Mann). These symptoms are revealed when Adam and Eve are expelled from the Garden of Eden, become subject to hard labour, and cover their bodies in shame. These effects of original sin are physical.

In a similar way, Augustine also believed that original sin caused two major spiritual infirmities on the soul. The first is described as ignorance, which can be defined as the reality that “humans now lack the kind of noetic intimacy with God enjoyed by Adam and Eve” (Mann). This ignorance is not “inborn stupidity,” but rather, it is another way of thinking about the distance created between humans and God after the fall. Augustine names the second spiritual infirmity as “difficulty, not impossibility.” Spiritual difficulty means that after original sin, it became difficult for humans to always choose the moral good, but not impossible. Augustine taught that the human soul became tainted, but not entirely corrupt after original sin. The church calls this state of being concupiscence, or the inherent inclination to sin. Grace, or divine aid, is necessary to overcome concupiscence, but its effects can never be completely removed until death.

Augustine’s framework of original sin became the primary interpretation of the church unofficially for several centuries. Later, the Council of Trent reinforced Augustine’s teachings that all humans inherit original sin via propagation, not imitation. However, there is a tension. Augustine and Trent’s view of

original sin and concupiscence is understood within the context of the Adam and Eve story of Genesis. Unless there is belief in a set of primordial parents, also known as monogenism, this interpretation falls apart quickly. Without the ability to trace one's lineage back to Adam and Eve, the theory of transmission by propagation cannot apply to all people. The problem is that Augustine's literal interpretation of the creation stories seems to contradict modern science. Therefore, a new articulation of original sin may be required.

Possible New Articulations of Original Sin **Adamic Theory**



Some theologians take a more traditional approach. Henri Blocher is a theologian who suggests that perhaps the first *homo sapiens sapiens* were 'Adamic.' He interprets the language of Genesis as symbolic without disregarding the importance of what is revealed through Scripture. Instead of thinking of Adam as the first historical man, Blocher calls him the first "theological man" who represents all people. Blocher argues that the ancient artists who painted the Lascaux caves were clearly sophisticated despite being primitive *homo sapiens*. The point is that technological advancement does not necessarily indicate moral

advancement. He insists that although humanity's earliest ancestors may have been less developed technologically, they still had the mental capacities to understand sin and free will. Therefore, the first beings to evolve into *homo sapiens sapiens* can be considered Adamic and the instigators of original sin.

However, this articulation of original sin is not without its gaps. For one, Blocher does not account for polygenism. Scientific evidence proves that *homo sapiens sapiens* evolved at a similar rate around the world, sometimes in isolation from each other. This data cannot reconcile the transmission of original sin via propagation because not all humans share a single common ancestor. His theory, and others like it, are built upon a theologically-rich but scientifically-weak foundation. For many Christians, this articulation of original sin is unsatisfactory.

Situationist Theory



In contrast, other contemporary theologians have rearticulated the doctrine of original sin in ways that do not depend on the historical existence of Adam and Eve. One of the most popular theories is known as the "situationist approach," developed by Peter Schoonenberg. This approach is concerned with the



Kin-Selection Theory

socialization of human beings as they are “assimilated into a family, the local community, and the wider social sphere” (Korsmeyer). The theory suggests that “humans find themselves thrust into a world where sinful people, activities, and structures are already in place, and influencing and training the mind long before it is capable of making fully free moral decisions.” The situationist approach understands the physical and spiritual effects of original sin as results of a sinful society. When children are raised in an imperfect society (as all societies are), they become susceptible and inclined towards sin. This theory is the situationist’s explanation for concupiscence.

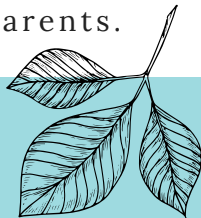
The trouble with this articulation of original sin is that it presents a “chicken and egg” scenario. All cultures, societies, communities, and families are made up of people. If these structures are imperfect and inclined to sin, then the people who formed them must have been influenced by other cultures and societies. The question of which came first remains unanswered. Moreover, the situationist approach assumes that whether sinful culture or sinful people came first, then all of God’s creation cannot be good. This idea is in conflict with the Christian faith. In this way, the situationist approach is a convenient, but not comprehensive articulation of original sin.

Another articulation of original sin developed by theology professor Nicholas Olkovich integrates sociology and biology. Olkovich identifies behaviours in organisms that are both altruistic and egoistic. For example, “the theory of kin selection is a form of natural selection in which close kin help one another.” This behaviour is altruistic and ensures that an organism’s relatives will be successful. Kin-selection theory accounts for the reality of “helping behaviour between close relatives.” The theory predicts that while organisms in nature will feel strong feelings of love and concern for their relatives and offspring, they will also feel “indifference or malevolence towards non-relatives.” The kin-selection theory suggests that organisms will display altruistic and egoistic behaviour simultaneously. In other words, human beings are inclined to egoistic behaviour by sociology and biology.

In a similar way, Olkovich explains that for some individuals, their altruistic acts are not reciprocated, causing them to be preyed upon. As a result, “individuals with reputations for cheating tend to be socially ostracized.” For the sake of their own survival, individuals who feel cheated will develop “emotions such as anger, suspicion, and/or

distrust.” These emotions predispose an individual to “undermine cooperation in favour of serving their own self-interest” or egoism. Through these two examples, Olkovich suggests that original sin and concupiscence can be thought of as a result of evolution. All human beings carry innate egoistic qualities due to the process of evolution. In humanity, this becomes sin. This articulation also accounts for the transmission of original sin because all humans evolved and adapted these characteristics even without the existence of primordial parents.

Pastoral Implications of Olkovich’s Kin-Selection Theory



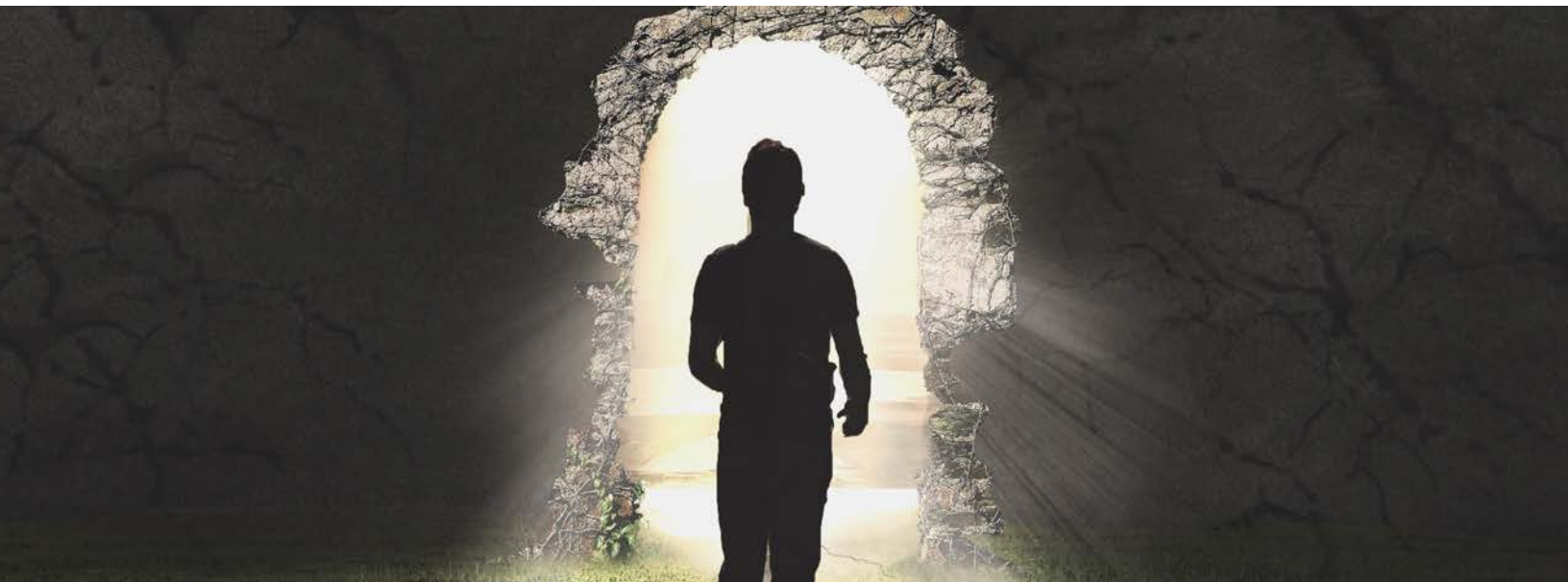
After The Fall, Adam and Eve become aware of their nakedness and cover their bodies with fig leaves in shame. Many scholars interpret this detail to represent “the loss of human and social dignity.” However, within the context of evolution, the opposite is true. As human beings evolved over many millennia, their intellect, reason, and culture developed radically. Humans gained social dignity over time and developed clothing as a result.

In this mindset, “Paradise was not lost at the beginning... it is at the end.” Through the Holy Spirit and “under the creative action of God, humanity evolved from lower life



forms and was made with a desire for God.” Using science to interpret original sin leads to a better understanding of the whole salvation history story. This is to say that, “the concept of original sin needs to be understood from the perspective of our redemption in Jesus Christ, not the other way around.” With a Christological orientation, the doctrine reveals that “the Father did not send the Son to patch up some broken divine plan for humanity. God’s self-communication in love points us toward the kingdom ahead, not paradise lost.” The narrative of Adam and Eve does not describe the failure of two individuals who are ancestors to all people. Rather, Genesis illustrates the pattern of human sin, God’s mercy, and our reconciliation with God - time and time again. Parables like ‘the rich young man’ or ‘the prodigal son’ tell the same story in every generation.

Despite comprehensive speculation of original sin, one “should not expect to reach full intelligibility, since it is, after all, only a rationalized myth about the mystery of evil.” However, Christians ought to see grace in both the processes of salvation history and evolution. Evolution should be viewed through the lens of salvation history. In contemporary articulations of original sin, the two are not opposed. In fact, evolution and salvation history are complementary interpretations of humanity. For this reason, Genesis does not need to be thrown out because of science. Rather, the doctrine of original sin can be rearticulated in a manner that explains the problem of evil in humanity without depending on the historical existence of Adam and Eve.



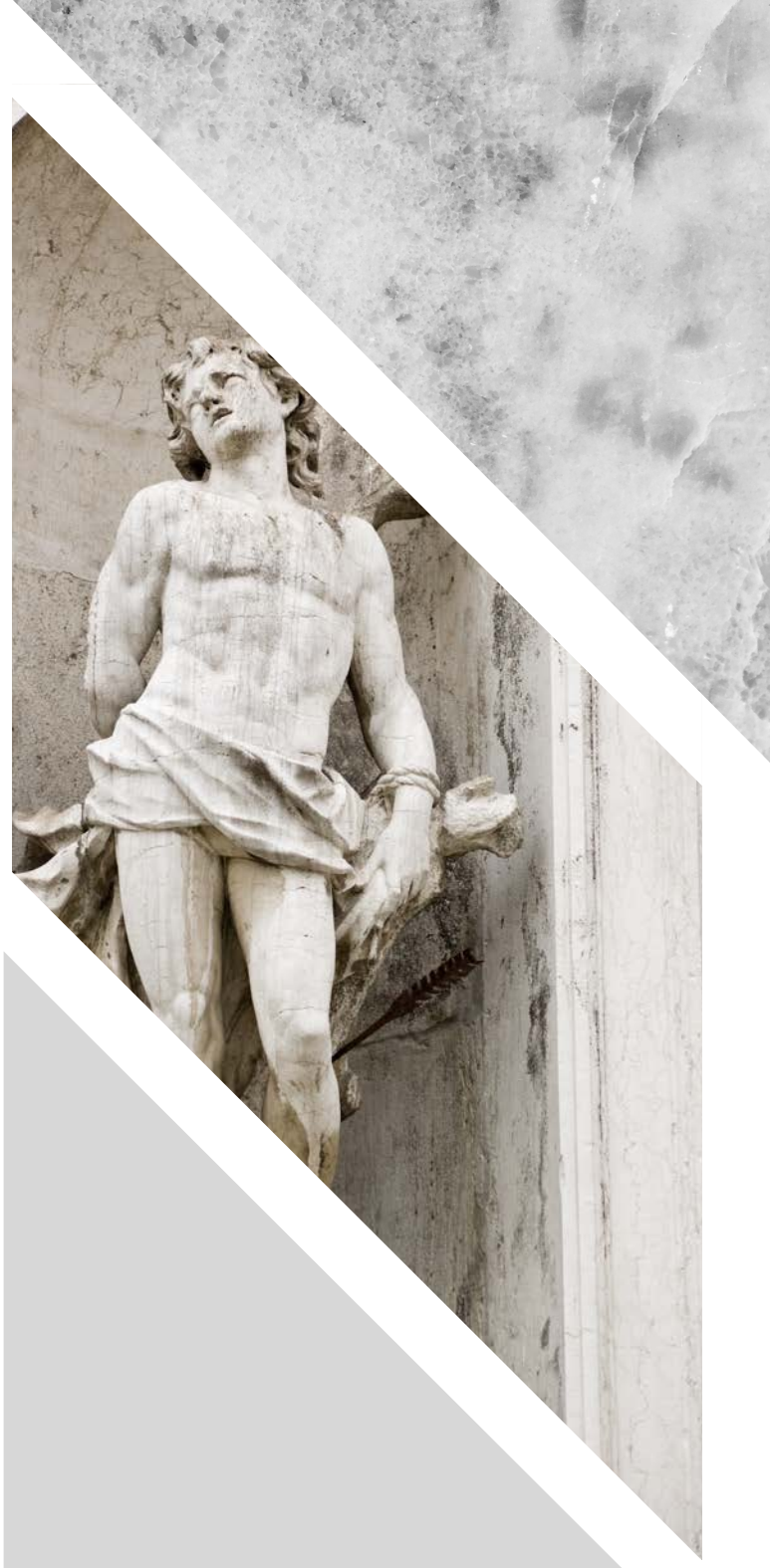
OF MARTYRS AND REVOLUTIONARIES: SHARING TRUTH WITHOUT WATERING IT DOWN

NOLAN TOSCANO

One of the hardest things growing up, and continually growing in love with the Lord, was the temptation to compromise. I heard different messages about how to express Christian love in high school from our chaplain and from the parish priest at the church I went to. This confusion ultimately bred clarity, as I had asked myself “who is truly pointing towards God?”

The answer was my parish priest. He was (and is) a brilliant and compassionate man. A man of prayer, love for the Lord, and love for others. When we chatted about the confusion I was having about what my chaplain was saying and its contrary message to what I was hearing in church, he illuminated the truth to me with patience and gentleness.

You see, my time in high school highlighted the disparity between how Catholics share the Gospel and



its transcendentals in a way that can be so watered down, and at times, desecrated.

What spoke to my heart, and what I have seen brings about power to turn this world towards the One who who made it, is a bold sharing

of the transcendentalists. My high school was an example of sharing transcendentalists (specifically truth) in a way that was both domesticated and incorrect, all in the name of ensuring that students were not offended by the rather difficult things the church teaches.

This is all to say that the transcendentalists can certainly be compromised if sharing them is motivated by anything other than love of God. Without this foundational love in Love Himself, beauty is watered down, truth is domesticated, and goodness is confused.

The Fruits of Domesticated Truth

I will draw from a historical example to highlight what I am trying to get at. The French Revolution was a period of radical ideas and actions to match. The monarchy and aristocracy of France were targeted by revolutionaries with a secularist republic in mind. What was divided

was the Catholic Church, as clerics took up both for and against the Revolution. Clergy during the French Revolution had a few options in how to deal with the unprecedented wave of violence and upheaval. In truth, there were already camps that had emerged in those who supported the revolution, and those who didn't.

For those who supported the revolution, the time afterward saw their faith, and the truths that Catholicism professed about God, His Love for humanity, and the sacrifice of Jesus, perverted in two ways: secularism and reformism, which respectively target faith and tradition.

In the Revolution's secularizing efforts, the Catholic faith was twisted in its desire for truth into a cult of reason and philosophy. It saw truth, or perhaps the human ability to seek it out, as an end in itself. It lacked morality beyond a general sense of utilitarianism. It was ultimately transformed into a discipline of philosophy – stripping Catholicism of its humanity and ironically putting humanity on a pedestal for its ability to reason. The massacres and persecutions that left faithful Catholics to either flee, fight, or die for truth. In short, Catholicism became a humanist philosophy that fit with the agenda of the revolutionary government.



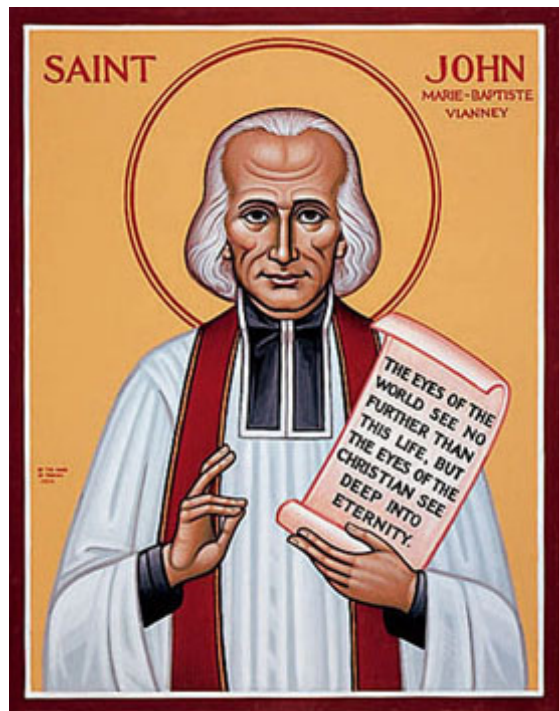
The other way that the faith was corrupted was that it was made into a Catholicism that had its authority rooted in the revolutionary government, rather than guided by apostolic links to Rome. It was Gallicanism, the idea of a French Church. Rather than holding the catholic (universal) element of the faith for which it is named, the Gallican Church sought to maintain most traditions of Catholicism except those which disagreed with the vision of the emerging republic. This was more a deception to win Catholic support, and surrender the institutions that the Church had responsibility over into the hands of government – schools, charity, etc. Even this form of reformism was eventually persecuted by the more radical wing of the French Revolution, which sought to eradicate all vestiges of the Catholic faith from society.

Aggressive secularism and reformism are both the bitter fruits of a truth separated from love.

They are the fruits of watered-down teachings and compromises at every level of the hierarchy – laity and clergy.

Looking Towards the Saints and the Future

Yet, individuals, societies, and nations have the potential to be transformed and inspired by those people who are uncompromising in what God commissioned His Holy Church to do: to make disciples of every nation. One of the saints that came out of the period of the French Revolution was St. Jean Vianney, the patron saint of priests. He was known for his uncompromising love for his flock as well as his obedience to his superiors. History is full of saints who boldly and uncompromisingly shared and defended the Truth of the Gospel, even unto death.



St. Jean Vianney. Pray for us!



St. Stephen, the first martyr, professed Jesus as the Christ to the mob and was stoned, all while begging God to forgive his persecutors. Saul, who was among his persecutors, would later become the apostle Paul.



St. Stephen. Pray for us!

St. Romanus, a deacon of Rome in the early Christian period, proclaimed to the Emperor Diocletian that the pagan gods of the Roman Empire were false, and that Jesus was the One True God. For his witness, he suffered beating, the severing of his tongue, and finally death by strangling.



St. Romanus. Pray for us!

St. Thomas More, who was Chancellor of England, and Cardinal St. John Fisher both lived during the Protestant Reformation. They stood against the wishes of a licentious and delusional king to recant their Catholic faith; preferring death than renounce the truth of the authority of Christ's One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic Church. Among St. Thomas More's famous last words was the phrase, "I am the King's good servant, but God's first."



St. Thomas More. Pray for us!

Blessed Clemens August von Galen was consecrated to the Episcopacy as the Nazis solidified their power in Germany. He became known as the 'Lion of Munster,' who roared against the Nazi programs of secularization and euthanasia for the mentally ill and elderly. Even as the Nazi war machine was at the height of its expansion, von Galen decried Nazism as a New Paganism, and held that death would be preferable to any deviation from the Truth of the Gospel roaring "death before sin."

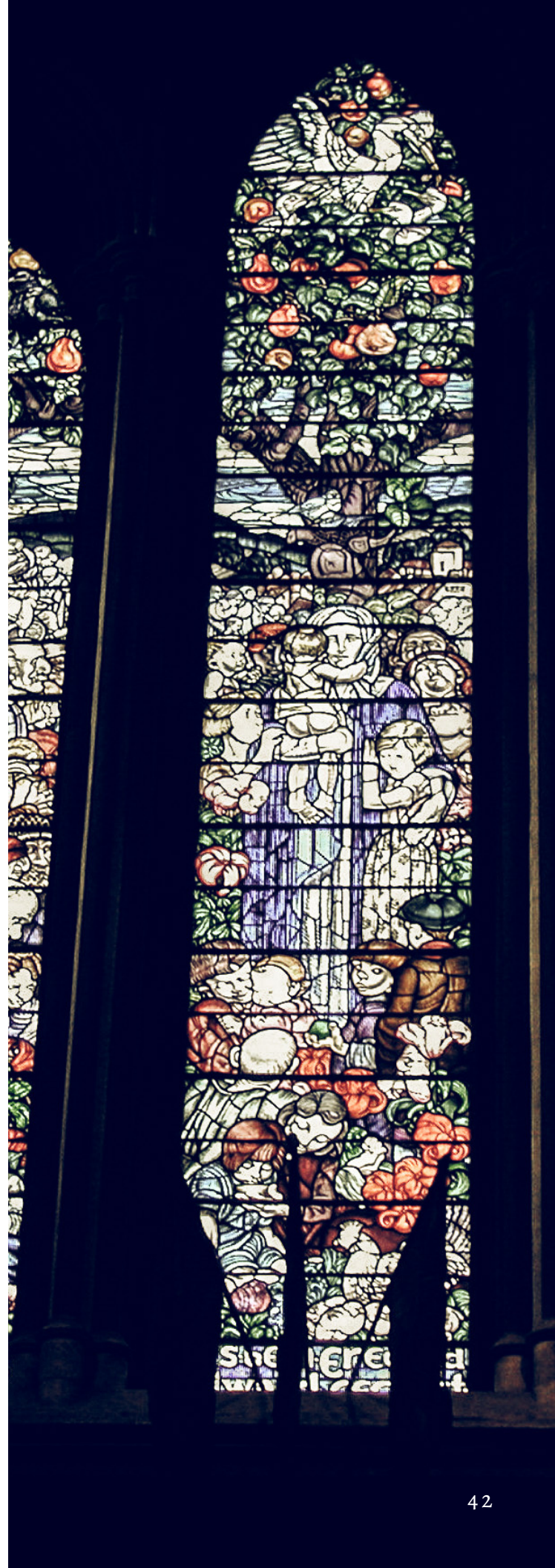


Blessed von Galen. Pray for us!

Blessed von Galen's motto was *nec laudibus nec timore*, "neither by the praises nor the fear of men." He would not be swayed by fear of speaking the truth, nor comforting temptation to water it down in return for approval.

We live in an age where we need to be bold like these predecessors before us. People hunger for truth in an age where truth is not only philosophically challenged by relativism and materialism, but also censored and dismissed. What will cut through these fragile barriers is a sharing of truth that is both compassionate and uncompromising towards others, uncaring of the losses we bear in exchange.

It is what Jesus did for us, it is what the saints did for Him and His love of us, and it is what we must now take up according to our charisms and circumstances.





**"Helped by Thy Cross, I mount the rocky crest;
Oh, come to guide me on my heavenward way.
To be like Thee is my desire;
Thy voice finds echo in my soul."**



ST. THERESE OF LISIEUX
I THIRST FOR LOVE

GO

TYLER BROOKS

Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand,
Take up your pallet and go home.
Pray so that the heart may truly understand,
Believe that life is fully known.

Love the Lord your God with all your heart,
Love your neighbour as yourself.
Worship in the temple that His grace He'll impart,
Listen to the Word, the One Himself.

Go make disciples of all nations,
Teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.
Proclaim the life of the Incarnation,
Baptize for the many and not for the few.

DANCING

BETHANY LAU

They will look at this and see
Nothing but an empty dream.
Some childish, mindless foolery,
A fiction made to comfort me.
For who has learned to understand
What does not fit inside the mind?
Yet when I gaze upon your face,
What is possible is redefined.

For as this moment passes on,
And fades into eternity,
A drop in the vast sea of time,
But I know this with all certainty:
Each drop somehow becomes the sea,
For you have made it beautiful-
Immortalized by your love for me.

Just as the sun with golden rays
Ignites the east to blazing fire,
And burns the fear of night away,
And teaches eagles who they are,
You awaken wings designed to fly,
You shine as my unfailing star,
You are the light I steer me by.

These dying things, they cannot stay,
For mountains crumble and cities fall,
But when the dust has cleared away,
I know this will stay true:
As certain as the rising sun,
It was all a dance with you.



X MARKS THE SPOT

EMILY MILLAN

Maps.

Directions.

Treasure.

Life tells me to:

- Take two steps south.
- Turn north-easterly and spin 6 times.
- Pass the rabbit-shaped rock.
- Cross the bridge and turn to your left's left.
- Five steps forward.
- Twelve skips towards the setting sun.
- Illegal u-turn.
- In 500m, turn right.
- Recalculating.

Never reaching my destination.

Unclear.

Lost.

Frustrated.

How am I supposed to get to where I'm going

If the instructions are muddled?

The map is riddled with confusion.

The directions are laced with contradiction.

The treasure seems unreachable.

I give up.

You don't.

You show me the path.

You tell me to follow You.

You are

The Way.

Clear.

The Truth.

Discernible.

The Life.

Attainable.

The treasure unburied.


The treasure found.

The treasure?

You.

BARNABAS NEY

BATTER OUR HEARTS AGAIN



Batter our hearts again, three-person'd God.
For we have placed the stones of our fears
To bar the entrance to Your dwelling.
Or shut the doors of our trust,
To the presence of Your love.
We seek to keep ourselves from Your House
But perhaps we keep You from our homes.
So break our doors that hold us captive
Snap the iron fetters of our follies
Shatter the glass prison of our pride
And burn. From the tabernacle light
To every sin-soaked crevice of our hearts
Every corner of Your creation.
Fan the flames by the winds of Your *ruah*.
That we may again eat of Your flesh.
So that You may consume all of us.

BIOGRAPHIES



Miguel Andres

Miguel is a son, a brother, a friend to many, and a fiancé to one. He currently lives in Ottawa, where he serves the Lord as a missionary with Catholic Christian Outreach. He loves anything beautiful, especially his lovely fiancée Megan. You will often find him with a coffee in one hand and his iPad in the other.



Laura Bell

Laura is first and foremost a beloved daughter of Christ, second, a daughter of the Bell family, and third, a student of the Arts. This June, she will be graduating from Ryerson University with a Bachelors in Radio and Television of the Arts: Media Production. Now, as she finishes her education, she is beginning a new chapter in her life by helping Transcendentals; a community in which she can fully engage and combine her two true passions in life: her love for Jesus Christ, and her love for creating art.



Tyler Brooks

Tyler is a faithful Roman Catholic, student at heart, and passionate nerd. After recently obtaining an Honours Bachelor of arts with a major in History and minor in Political Science at UOttawa, he is now in the Master of Divinity program at Saint Paul University. He can be found reading history books, hanging out with his friends, and probably discussing theology.

BIOGRAPHIES



Fr. Stephen Bruzzese

Father Stephen Joseph Bruzzese was born October 11th, 1989. From an early age, he always wanted to be a priest and found great joy in being an altar boy. Between 2009 and 2012, he earned a Baccalaureate in Thomistic Thought from St. Philip's Seminary, & between 2012 and 2017, he earned a Baccalaureate in Sacred Theology and a Master of Divinity from St. Augustine's Seminary. Father Stephen is currently serving the people of God at Our Lady of the Scapular.



Clif Clemotte

Clif is a student of philosophy, currently pursuing graduate studies and living on Vancouver Island. He holds two undergraduate degrees from liberal arts colleges, institutions that fostered his love of reading, research, and stimulating conversation. For a year after graduation, he taught at a private elementary institution; now, a student once again, he plans to conduct research on the human mind and the process of knowledge.



Megan Joseph

Megan has lived across North America, but calls Vancouver, BC home. She has always loved seeking the truth, which led her to graduate in 2019 with a Bachelor of Theology and Culture from Saint Mark's College. Megan is currently a campus missionary with Catholic Christian Outreach in Halifax, NS. She is also a seasoned equestrian, avid rollerblader, and now - an amateur writer!

BIOGRAPHIES



Bethany Lau

Bethany Lau is many things: a psychology student, a missionary disciple, an amateur artist and poet, but she receives all that she is from the gaze of Jesus, her soul's first love. She is captured by the mysterious beauty of life, the human person, the heart of God, and her creations are born from these moments of encounter. She has a passion for ministering to hearts and loves nothing more than a good spiritual conversation. Her dream is to raise up great saints for the renewal of the world, so that everywhere Jesus would be known and loved.



Emily Millan

Emily is a born, raised, and chosen Catholic whose missionary zeal has taken her across both Australia and Canada. She is a seasoned evangelist, and has served with NET, CCO, and various other ministries in her mission to see hearts return to the Lord. She is unashamedly in love with the Eucharist, dancing barefoot, sunshine, and the ocean.



Barnabas Ney

Barnabas is a beloved beggar of the Most High King. He enjoys adventuring in the wilds of his native Vancouver Island, but is even more excited to be serving Christ and His Church as a campus missionary for Catholic Christian Outreach. While he holds an MA in Economic Policy, his real joy is in pursuing and contemplating beauty and its One true source.

BIOGRAPHIES



Joshua Terpstra

Joshua was raised in Belleville, Ontario, where he was received by a loving Catholic community in some of his formative years. His years in youth ministry coincided with a developing love of the arts, both in the theatre and in his sketchbook. Since beginning his studies at the University of Ottawa in 2017, not only has he found a community where he has been able to thrive, he has been led to travel across the world to Singapore, Cameroon, and Mexico to serve and to learn. As he finishes his psychology and theatre degree, he is teaching visual arts, drama, french, and english to elementary students at a private Catholic school.



Nolan Toscano

Originally from Pickering, Ontario, Nolan has a passion for history, writing, mixology, and puns. A jack of all trades, he has done everything from life-guarding to landscaping, professional cooking to political staffer, youth camp counselor to long-term care social worker. Currently, he serves as the Mission and Discipleship Director for St. George's Parish in Ottawa, Ontario. You can find him pondering life's silly paradoxes, exercising, engaging in debate, and above all, pursuing the Love of his life: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.



Irena Vélez

Irena is a passionate Ottawa-based artist working mainly in watercolour. Her art inspiration and ideas come largely from her Catholic faith and her desire to share it with others. When Irena is not painting, she is either at church, reading a good book, studying journalism and history, training in martial arts, or spending time with family and friends.