2015

2015 Summer Seminar - The Quest for God & the Good Life

Center of Catholic Studies, Seton Hall University

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2015 FACULTY SUMMER SEMINAR
CO-SPONSORED BY THE CENTER FOR VOCATION AND SERVANT LEADERSHIP WITH SUPPORT OF THE WILLIAM J. TOOTH ENDOWED VISITING PROFESSORSHIP

JUNE 2015

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9:30 AM — 12:30 PM
Faculty Lounge, UC

ABOUT THE FACILITATOR
MARK MILLER
UNIVERSITY OF SAN FRANCISCO

Mark T. Miller is Associate Professor of systematic theology and Associate Director of the St. Ignatius Institute. He also teaches in Catholic Studies and Philippine Studies. His interests focus on anthropology, soteriology, political theology, Trinity, and Christology. His Ph.D. is from Boston College with the dissertation title of "Why the Passion?: Bernard Lonergan on the Cross as Communication." His undergraduate degree is in International Studies from Georgetown University. Prof. Miller has taught at the Ateneo de Zamboanga, the University of Asia and the Pacific, Boston College, and Georgetown University.

THE QUEST FOR GOD & THE GOOD LIFE

This seminar will present the theological anthropology of Bernard Lonergan. His vision of the human person is one who is called to greatness, yet fallible and open to redemption. The seminar will be based on Mark Miller’s The Quest for God and the Good Life (Catholic University of America Press, 2013) as well as Bernard Lonergan’s “Existenz and Aggiornamento” and the chapter on “Religion” from his Method in Theology.

Since 1998, the Center for Catholic Studies has provided the opportunity for faculty to reflect in depth on topics central to the purpose of teaching and learning at Seton Hall. This seminar is open to all administrators and faculty. Faculty participants who write a short response-essay will receive a stipend of $300. These essays will be collected and made available online at http://scholarship.shu.edu/catholic-studies/. Limited to 25 faculty, preference given to those who have not participated previously in the Summer Seminars.

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The Quest for God & the Good Life

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The Issue of General Mayhem in Nigeria: What Will Lonergan Say?

Why is there so much violence and suffering in the world? Why do we hurt ourselves and each other? Why do we continue to do what we know is wrong? How can we stop this? How can we heal the damage? How can we start to live our lives in a way that promotes not mere survival, but full flourishing for everyone and everything? Are such lives possible? If so, what would make them possible?!

Introduction

These questions from the first pages of the book *The Quest for God & the Good Life: Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology* by Mark Miller were resounding in my head as I listened to the author during a three-day seminar on the book. The questions are so real to me because of my distressful Nigerian background. As a result, I paid particular attention to find out what answers this Lonergan scholar will give to them based on the teachings of his Master. I am very happy I got something at the end.

Miller started off by highlighting Lonergan’s teachings on the importance of questioning and the condition in which they arise when he said:

One thing he taught was that statements are answers to questions, questions arise in contexts, and to appreciate statements one needs to appreciate the questions they answer and the contexts in which the questions arose.²

Context for Lonergan is very important for anything to happen in the process of a study because it defines the uniqueness of any question(s) and the possibility of finding suitable answer(s) i.e. solutions in the case of a problem. He explained:
... context is a nest of interlocked or interwoven questions and answers; it is limited inasmuch as all the questions and answers have a bearing, direct or indirect, on a single topic; and because it is limited, there comes a point in an investigation when no further relevant questions arise, and then the possibility of judgment has emerged.  

So my context is Nigeria - the most populous country in Africa with almost 184 million people, and more than 250 ethnic groups, distinctive subgroups and communities. Echoing the opening quotation I have always asked and will continue to ask: why is there so much suffering in a country that is so blessed not only with human but also natural resources? It is hard to believe that “Nigeria holds the world’s 10th largest proven reserves as a result of being Africa’s biggest oil exporter,” still a major socio-economic problem plagues her is poverty.

Why is there so much violence, why do we hurt ourselves and each other in Nigeria? Sadly enough, every day, the stories that come out of that country are heart-breaking. An Islamic terrorist group Boko Haram has been operating in the northern part of the country in recent years carrying out senseless killings in the name of religion, frequent bombing of Christian churches, kidnappings and destructions. Like in most Islamic States, the main reason for the persecution of Christians in Nigeria is that Muslims equate Christianity and its educational (Boko – book) agenda to Western ideology and, therefore, they are “haram” (bad, forbidden). For this group the principle and practice of formal education is “Islamically obnoxious, seriously revolting, and totally unacceptable.” The chilling story of the abduction of almost 300 helpless school girls (mostly Christians) is still alarming to most people around the globe. To date, their fate is unknown as they are still in the hands of their captors, obviously going through dehumanizing sexual abuse to say the least. But to the dismay of many, the Nigerian government has not been doing much to bring those girls back. Instead it is using what is described as “carrot and stick approach” for such evil.

After the April 2015 presidential election, with the victory of a northerner, some of the hundreds of women, girls and children abducted for years by the group were freed but not the school girls. Sadly, it is reported that most of those released girls and women went home pregnant, obviously with a lot of transmitted diseases. The children’s heads are enlarged from malnutrition and dehydration; their wrinkled skins sag from the joints of their tiny, boney bodies. They are so emaciated, hollowed-eyed and too weak to cry.
Where in the world except in Nigeria can anybody imagine that the joy, cultural appreciation and brotherhood that the World Cup event brings to everybody around the world, instead brought a blood bath, lamentation and misery with the bombing of a viewing center in the northern part of the country during FIFA competition in 2014.

Why do we continue to do what we know is wrong? It might not be an overstatement to say that Nigeria is about the only country on the planet where there is a constant conflict between the leaders and the led. From the leaders one sees:

mismanagement, poor human relations, incompetence, arrogance and lack of consultation, privatization of state [assets], tyranny, vindictiveness, indiscipline, carelessness, impatience and impertinence, …, inability to work within the constitution and as a team, lawlessness, ignoring of due process, nepotism and cronyism, misuse of public resources and disregard for public opinion.12

As already mentioned, Nigeria is a rich country in the real sense of the word but her wealth is in the hands of “scattered” and unauthentic individuals13 who have institutionalized the above quoted unauthentic traditions in the country.

How can we stop this? Through “unrestricted love” is Lonergan’s answer because “it is a conscious dynamic state of love, joy, peace, that manifests itself in acts of kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control.”14 When one loves unconditionally, the person spontaneously functions not just for him/herself but for others as well. This means being “devoted to the pursuit of human welfare locally … nationally or globally.”15 This is why Lonergan made unrestricted love “both the fulfillment of natural human desire and the foundation for genuine human living.”16

How can we heal the damage? First of all, we need leaders with “permanent dedication” in the loyalty that makes a country,17 leaders who will love their citizenry unconditionally no matter their ethnic or religious background, leaders who will work for unity of the country not for division. This will make them authentic leaders because “authentic individual operation and authentic social cooperation drive progress.”18 Not only that, authenticity leads to “correct judgments and good decisions” and “affects everything. … It is an outstanding aid … for promoting progress.”19 For
Lonergan, “authenticity generates progress … unauthenticity … decline.” Nigeria has been on the wrong track since independence in 1960 because we have had inauthentic leaders.

**How can we start to live our lives in a way that promotes not mere survival, but full flourishing for everyone and everything?** When and if Nigerian leaders are authentic, they will automatically follow the four guidelines Lonergan proposed for good leadership that enhances technological, economic, political, cultural and religious development. He called them “the transcendental precepts”:

Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, and Be responsible. Being attentive includes attention to human affairs. Being intelligent includes a grasp of ... unnoticed or unrealized possibilities. Being reasonable includes the rejection of what probably would not work but also the acknowledgment of what probably would. Being responsible includes basing one’s decisions and choices on an unbiased evaluation of short ... and long-term costs and benefits to oneself, to one’s group, to other groups.

**Are such lives possible? If so, what would make them possible?** Yes, such way of life is possible when and if Nigerian leaders take Lonergan – the Grand Master – seriously by doing all he has instructed above. If they do, he gave the assurance that there will be progress that eventually will lead to change:

Progress, of course, is not some single improvement but a continuous flow of them... So change begets change, and the sustained observance of the transcendental precepts makes these cumulative changes an instance of progress.

**Conclusion**

My context – my world - Nigeria is connected to me and therefore I am worried about her degenerative state. As a result, I want to contribute to her development in any way possible. That is why I am a teacher – to start from the classroom to develop a sound mentality in the future leaders of that country. I strongly believe that we need leaders with “common sense” which is “indispensable for human progress ... because its specialty is to serve the community’s everyday needs and desires” especially “particular goods ... a person needs not once and for all but repeatedly and regularly, such as food and shelter.” Unfortunately, the majority of people in
Nigeria are deprived of these basic goods. In many parts of the country there is no clean water, no power (electricity), no medical, educational or social services. Nigeria needs “redemption” now. Her leaders need “conversion” – a positive change toward better possible choices and terminal values, which will free them from inauthenticity to greater authenticity. If this is done, Nigeria will become a redeemed community where “creative personalities” will work together to promote social change.

2 Ibid., p. 28-29.
15 Ibid., p. 289.
16 Miller, M. T., The Quest for God & the Good Life: Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology, p. xi.
18 Miller, M. T., The Quest for God & the Good Life: Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology, p. xv.
19 Ibid., p. 62-63.
21 Ibid., p. 52.
22 Ibid., p. 53.
23 Ibid.
25 Ibid., p.141.
26 Ibid., 149.
27 Ibid., 179.
Musical Meaning and the High Mass

In the 2015 SHU Faculty Seminar, Mark Miller used his book *The Quest for God & the Good Life* as the basis of his lectures. On each of the three days, he covered one of the three major issues, progress, sin, and redemption, as discussed in great detail by Bernard Lonergan and as elucidated in his own books. During the lectures, I kept thinking about music as a manifestation of meaning in Lonergan’s terms, which led me to ponder how Western music, in particular the Christian high mass, has evolved through the millennia as an expression of those three stages in human existence.

The high mass customarily consists of five sections: the Kyrie, Gloria, Credo, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei. One might argue that the mass articulates the three stages mentioned above. The Kyrie Eleison (Lord have mercy) asks for God’s mercy for one’s daily existence. The Gloria in Excelsis Deo (Glory to God in the highest and peace to all men) shows one’s belief in the greatness of God. The Credo (I believe in one God) originally serves as a profession of faith, despite one’s failings. But within the Credo are the story of Pontius Pilate’s sin and Jesus’ martyrdom to pay for the sins of the world, followed by the promise of baptism “for the remission of sins.”¹ The Sanctus (Holy...Lord God of Hosts) ends with the Benedictus (Blessed is He who cometh in the name of the Lord), God’s gift for redemption. The Agnus Dei (Lamb of God) concludes the mass signifying peace, “Dona Nobis Pacem.”²

Given the established architecture of the high mass, I was interested in how its meaning may or may not have remained constant as its musical manifestations evolved. Musical expression only has meaning when its listeners understand it in a historical and cultural context. Lonergan discusses how common meaning may develop both from below and from above—from below as manifested by common experiences and questions that become formal in common understanding, truth and value³—and from below upwards, “by the addition of new insights of creative people...,”⁴ demonstrating growth and change in values and taste.
Western music has reflected such changes as Christian music developed through the millennia, albeit a reflection of adjustments in values and taste. But a fear or avoidance of sin has also prevailed. For example, in the 3rd and 4th centuries, according to John Chrysostom, “musical instruments, along with dancing...was the ‘devil’s heap of garbage’.”

The earliest musical masses evoked humility in the presence of God. They were monadic—consisting of chants devoid of harmonic sound, melodic flourish, or musical instruments. The first gestures toward harmonic expansion in religious music had often been met with resistance and fear. Harmony slowly began to appear in European religious music in the medieval period. Its original manifestation was the diad—the simultaneous sounding of two notes sung generally at the fourth or fifth above an “idée fixe,” or fixed melody. With a common acceptance of increasingly complex musical composition, religious and secular music of the Renaissance was replete with triadic harmonies in masses and motets, sung by two or more in counterpoint to a “cantus firmus,” or a pre-existing theme, over the polyphonic setting. Through the centuries more complex but accessible harmonies became the norm, particularly in secular music.

In the nineteenth century, composers capitalized on the emerging romantic emotional sensibility. Berlioz’s and Verdi’s bombastic requiem masses contained sections designed to remind audiences about the wages of sin and the need for redemption. “In both works the sequence (no doubt more with theatrical than with theological intent) provides a memento mori of chilling intensity; solace is also evident in keenly felt music for the more meditative texts, notably the Sanctus in Berlioz’s and the Agnus Dei in Verdi’s.” Examples of such sonorities were the tritone (augmented 4th or diminished 5th; for example, C and F# or C and Gb sounded simultaneously), an ominous sound that was called the “diabolus in musica,” or the Devil’s music, and the Dies Irae, or wrath of God, which consisted of a 16 note, four bar musical pattern derived from the Gregorian chant. The fear that this plainchant melody evoked suggests that the intended meaning of the mass had indeed prevailed through the centuries.

In Lonerganian terms, the pattern of these sounds has specific meaning. Among individuals, the music is heard, experienced, interspersed with feelings, understood in the context of values of the era, and judged to be either embraced or rejected. If a group hears the music, then
the common reaction may prevail through “psychic contagion,” its meaning being “intersubjective” in that each hearer is a member of a community with shared values. It is symbolic in that it can be experiential, and thus fuse mind and body. If the body senses, the mind follows, it has meaning, it is understood and again can be either accepted or ignored.

Religious music, particularly the Catholic high mass, can thus effect visceral reactions that range from joy to horror, from sin to redemption and peace. Its purpose is to bring the listener closer to God. But that effect depends on the composer’s ability to convey meaning—to embody progress, sin, and redemption.

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Perspectives on Lonergan’s Method: Nursing

The Lonergan Method can be applied to the education and practice of Nursing. As a child I had the images of what a nurse was and that I wanted to be one. A nurse wore a white uniform, white shoes, a cap, and was a very important part of helping people get better; this was my image at seven years old. I dressed up like a nurse for Halloween and even had a nurse’s kit! How simple the image was, yet it was all I needed to satisfy what I hoped to become someday. The image, the insight, the meanings, and the values were all very clear for a seven year old child. It was enough for the moment, but as I grew, learned, understood, and saw the different roles of nursing, more questions evolved about this profession. What does it mean to be a nurse? What is nursing? Do I have what it takes to be a nurse? On a very elementary level questioning is the beginning, according to Lonergan, all statements answer questions because they lead to more questions and answers so we can understand the content and context from where they arise.

I became more attracted to the profession of nursing. My background had a great influence on my decisions. Being from an Italian-American Family, attending a Catholic high school, and the foundation of my faith provided more insights into who I was and the profession I was interested in. The natural desire to know is absolutely fundamental to Lonergan’s philosophy and theology. I became involved in the Future Nurse’s Club in high school and eventually was the president of the club. In addition to this, I was editor-in-chief of the yearbook. Images and feelings about what I wanted to do in my life began to change....I was becoming more of a caring person....family values and meanings were shaping my individuality, but now my insights were becoming more apparent, I was becoming my own person. According to Lonergan, insight is the fulfillment of basic human needs. We gain insight and understand when we grasp the relationship, the order, or the patterning of distinct elements into an intelligible whole. As an adolescent going through high school our individuality is developing, according to Erikson and Piaget, and this can be a time of conflict and turmoil. Lonergan feels that when things that seem disjointed are suddenly connected, then one has had an insight. When things that initially made no sense suddenly do, one has had insight and understands. Knowing
occurs through this process and begins with experience, but it is fully realized only in the further operations of authentic questioning, understanding, and judging.  

In my BSN and MSN programs my insights, knowledge, and understanding of the nursing profession began to evolve. The process by which life gives rise to questions, questions lead to answers, answers led to new ways of living, new ways of living lead to new questions, Lonergan calls the “self-correcting process of learning.” Due to our natural desire to know and to live well, we pursue answers to questions and solutions to problems until we are satisfied with them. As a nursing student this was the foundation of critical reasoning and critical thinking from the variety of courses in my BSN and MSN program, including but not limited to, anatomy and physiology, chemistry, physics, English, history, psychology, and sociology. According to Miller, the self-correcting process of learning, with insight at its core, is the basis for not only an individual’s progress, but also involves community. Human living is communal living because through communal living there is experimentation, discussion, and collaboration. Ideas are tested and refined. Therefore, there is a communal, self-correcting process of learning, and it produces a common fund of insights that have been tried and refined over time. Lonergan refers to this common fund as “common sense.” Common sense specializes in answering the particular, practical questions that people face in their everyday life.

As I grew into my professional nursing role, my insights about nursing and the desire to pursue a Ph.D. in Research and Philosophy of Nursing became my next challenge. As this part of my life evolved I see this as what Lonergan called the “Four Levels of Conscious Intentionality.” The four levels are: empirical, intelligent, rational, and responsible. These levels involved experience, understanding, judgment, and decision. I felt the “need for more knowledge” to take the next step to contribute to research for the nursing community. Lonergan uses the term “levels” because a person’s movement from one operation to another raises and expands that person’s consciousness. Movement from one level to another provides for personal growth and ultimately for social progress. My research through national and international presentations and teaching nursing students provided further understanding through the realms of meaning from common sense, theory, interiority, and transcendence. Transcendence means going beyond and becoming greater and richer in context and this was becoming more apparent as I continued my education and questions continued.
Another aspect of Lonergan’s Method that I related to was the notion of love and God. Love involves a new beginning in a relationship and is the fulfillment of human authenticity. It is the fulfillment of humanity’s unrestricted desire and its capacity for self-transcendence. It is the result of effective self-transcendence that surpasses both moral and intellectual self-transcendence. Love is the foundation for personal authenticity and social collaboration and has the ability to reverse the order of the operations in human conscious intentionality. Love can reorder the flow of the four levels of Lonergan’s transcendental method from experience, understanding, judgment, and decision to decision, judgment, understanding, and experience. Knowledge precedes love and there is a knowledge born of love. Man achieves authenticity in self-transcendence. Eternal rest in loving relationship with God is the ultimate aim of human self-transcendence. In this life God has given us a restlessness caused by an unrestricted desire, which is expressed as our free will. For Lonergan, love is the center point or crossroads of an individual person’s conscious intentionality and the society’s common good.

Lonergan’s *Method in Theology*, with the interpretations and insights according to Miller and Whelan, has enhanced my knowledge of how this philosophy can be applied to my role as a professional nurse.

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NANCY ENRIGHT

Grace and Conversion

Bernard Lonergan outlined three levels of conversion: intellectual, moral, and religious, according to Mark Miller, as he spoke on the last day of the Faculty Seminar. I watched this session on YouTube (as I missed the last day), and a phrase struck me: “Religious conversion is not an achievement, but a *receivement*.” The statement seemed to me to be very provocative because it is prevalent among Christians to fall into the trap of trying to earn salvation. Though there is definitely a human response necessary for grace to work in our lives, we can never think we are earning our salvation because we respond to God’s love. Grace is always a gift.

The first of three levels of conversion – the intellectual – may be more easily seen as a gift than the others because clearly our intellectual ability is not something we obtain and the use of it is not something we “achieve,” though we can develop it and use it (or not). Also it is clear that some individuals do view their own intellectual abilities as a kind of credential, by which they feel a self-satisfaction and perhaps a sense of earning God’s love. But this tendency may increase with the higher levels of conversion, the moral and the religious. The moral level involves action and value judgments. Our moral nature is converted when we recognize the demands of God’s law of love, His inward call toward charity and justice, and we repent of our deficiencies in this area, willing to fulfill them. Some may see this awareness as setting them apart from others, making them “more worthy” of God’s love.

Religious conversion is the next level. Of course, as St. Augustine realized, we are not able in our own nature alone to fulfill the demands of moral conversion. Intellectually converted, Augustine became clearly convinced that the moral demands of chastity were right. He desired to fulfill them and even prayed, “Grant me chastity and self-control, but please not yet.” But his full religious conversion occurred in the garden when he heard the child’s voice saying, “Take and read; take and read,” and he took up the book of Romans and read, “…not in carousing and
drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. But put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.” 2 Prior to this experience, Augustine had been prepared by a vision in which he saw Countenance, personified, promising him that God will give him all that he needs to fulfill the demands of grace. 3 Though it may seem contradictory, the idea here reflects the words quoted by Mark Miller: “religious conversion is not an achievement, but a receivement.” Augustine received the fullness of God’s grace in the garden in his deeply religious conversion.

Of course, this concept of “receivement” does not mean people are converted like robots, with no response to God’s call. Humans are agents of free will and can reject God’s overture or not. There is also the danger of self-deception. Lonergan defines this question of authenticity as dual in nature: “…there is the minor authenticity of the subject with respect to the tradition that nourishes him; there is the major authenticity that justifies or condemns the tradition itself. The first passes a human judgment on subjects; the second is the judgment of history and ultimately the judgment of divine providence upon traditions.” 4 Conversion involves a willingness to be open to God’s truth, God’s ways, and God’s action in our lives, and is part of that three-fold openness (corresponding to the layers of intellectual, moral, and religious conversion). If self-deception is a danger, we must be all the more open to God’s action in our hearts. Always deepening His call on our lives, God calls us to deeper levels of authenticity, including increasing awareness of His activity.

Mark began his talk on the third day by referring to Jesus’ parable of the workers in the vineyard. Those hired in the morning for a “fair wage,” received the normal day’s wage, a just recompense. When those hired later received the same wage, they felt cheated. 5 The parable of the prodigal son reflects a similar mistake in the resentment of the elder brother, the “good son,” who feels cheated by the father’s celebration of the younger, “prodigal son’s” return. 6 In both cases, the mistake involves viewing oneself as having earned something from God, reflected in the master and the father, respectively. As the father says to the elder son, “Son, you have always been
with me, and all that is mine is yours.” He had been gifted lavishly already; he was so busy working for his father’s love, he didn’t notice he was being gifted with it already, that even his life of working with the father was a gift. The workers in the vineyard also have been given the gift of being able to work in the vineyard. Though the wages may seem convoluted, the early workers miss the idea that even being able to work in the vineyard itself is a gift.

The “good life” that God gives us is a gift of His love that we can live out and share with others. God wants to bless us, and part of His blessing is to allow us and to enable us to be sharers in His work. The saints had this insight deeply; many of them longed even for martyrdom, for giving up their lives for the Lord, seeing this act of love not as a sacrifice, but as a great and glorious gift. The life of faith is a response to an offer of love that seeks to transform us deeply and completely, making us whole and free, joyful and full of love. We limit God so much in our narrow suppositions about what He “wants,” when He seeks to give, in joy and blessing, and longs for us to receive His offer of grace.

5 Matthew 20: 1-16.
Aristotle and Jesus on Friendship

Profound insights into human nature include Aristotle’s description of the human being as a rational and social animal. People are able to discover the order of the universe and “create social principles in harmony with this order, and live according to them,” together with friends.\(^1\) Bernard Lonergan means “the friendship Aristotle considered ‘genuine’ or ‘perfect,’ the kind that can be formed only by those with shared ‘virtue’ or ‘excellence’…” So Lonergan affirms that like friends who share other virtues, those in love treat one another as valuable.\(^2\)

In his presentation on the first day, Dr. Miller referred to the new commandment of Jesus and quoted the text which follow the second presentation of this ideal. “Greater love has no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends,” (John 15:13).\(^3\) He suggested that Jesus may have learned this idea from Aristotle. Certainly Jews constituted a minority in many Greek cities throughout the Mediterranean world, even before the Roman conquests, and Greek ideas reached Galilee. For example, Jews gave Greek names to their children (John 1:40, 43).\(^4\) Jesus ben Sira, a Jewish teacher in Jerusalem who flourished before 175 B.C., had traveled in his mature youth (see 51:13), perhaps to Alexandria in Egypt and other places where the Jewish community may have contacted those familiar with the great Greek philosophers. Teachings of Sira may have been integrated into the instructions on many topics given in classrooms of Judea and Galilee. The poetic sayings were designed for memorization and gems of his work are included in lists of passages that seem to be influential for authors of the New Testament. Contemporaries of Jesus need not have gone far afield to find teachings on friendship.

The Book of Sira (also called Sirach and Ecclesiasticus) has several reflections on friendship (6:5-17; 7:18; 11:29-12-18; 22:19-26 and 37:1-6). The commentary by Alexander Di Lella notes that Sira used “the earlier biblical literature… but also non-Jewish writings in order to create a Wisdom book that would inspire Jews of his day to remain faithful to their heritage….”\(^5\) Later this integration of wisdom from other traditions into a synthesis inspired by divine revelation will be called “taking spoils from Egypt.”\(^6\)
In his work Sira cautions against fair-weather friends and his examples of true friendship would include the virtues found in Dr. Miller's list from Plato and Aristotle: “wisdom, courage, moderation, generosity...” (p. 76).

Laudable self-love, in contrast to egoism, is discussed by Dr. Miller as the heritage of Aristotelian thought (p. 120-21). One should consider as well the command “Love your neighbor as yourself,” (Lev 19:18) in relation to the teaching that every human being is created in the image of God (Gen 1:26-28). A person who accepts and lives this doctrine should be a candidate for true friendship. After Sira cautions students to test relationships in order to find the “one in a thousand as a confidant,” (6:6), he concludes: “whoever fears the Lord makes firm his friendship, and his comrade will be like himself,” (6:17). Di Lella comments: “The point of v 17 is that the pious Jew ‘who fears the Lord’ will have stable friendships with persons who are like himself in personality and particularly in observance of the Law.”

Self-interest need not be antithetical to true friendship. “Make fast friends with a person while he is poor; thus you will enjoy his prosperity with him,” (22:23). Di Lella remarks: “The advice Ben Sira gives on friendship is quite pragmatic and self-serving... The teachings of Jesus on friendship and on the duties of Christian love (Gr agapē) is totally different; cf. Luke 6:27-38.

Defining agapē as love that does not count the cost or expect a return, we deal with the highest expression of the human experience, on a level above philē, the love of friendship giving mutual benefits. As a Christian theologian, Lonergan points to the Paschal Mystery of Jesus’ Death-and-Resurrection as the foundation for a new commandment, that of mutual agapē (John 13:34-35; 15:12). “Lonergan believes that the ability to overcome evil through self-sacrificial love is a fruit of our participation in the friendships of the Trinity as members of the mystical body of Christ,” (p 191).

Dr. Miller has dealt with the problem of human freedom and personal evil by showing that Lonergan has drawn upon the biblical and Christian heritage so that “Christian authenticity-
which is a love of others that does not shrink from self-sacrifice and suffering- is the sovereign means for overcoming evil,” (p 190).

“A good friend will fight with you against the alien foe; against your enemies he will hold up your shield” (Sira 37:5). Who are these foes? They may be human and spiritual. The exhortation of St. Paul “to put on the whole armor of God… against spiritual hosts of wickedness…” (Ephesians 6:10-17) places the gift of friendship in the context of the ultimate search for truth and goodness in human life. May people find the strength to stand firmly with their friends, even to the point of laying down their life to defend them!

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2 Ibid., p. 76.
7 Ibid., p. 189. See that the Letter of Aristeas (Alexandrian text from the late pre-Christian period) linked the commandment to honor one’s parents with “the honor due to friends, calling the friend an equal to one’s own self”(No. 228).
8 Ibid., p. 317.
MARIAN GLENN

Theological Anthropology, Integral Ecology, and Re-invention of the Human

Mark Miller introduced metaphorical scissors: the upper blade is theory, the lower blade is life experience; they work together to cut through ignorance and shape knowledge. But what if the two blades are mismatched? What if the theory doesn’t address the questions posed by one’s life experience? Or what if the whole cosmology, the theory of everything, seems askew? In this essay we acknowledge the theme that frames Miller’s book, *The Quest for God & the Good Life*, the schema of Progress, Decline, Redemption. The Papal encyclical, *Laudato Si*, describes the immense decline in our world, and offers hope that deep changes in our values and behavior can be achieved through religion. There are glimmerings of a difficult path toward redemption, and small groups making their way. Thomas Berry called for the great work of our generation to re-invent the human at the species level. His enthusiastic disciples have introduced a new story about who we are and whence we came, a new cosmology that places humans in the context of an evolving universe. Bernard Lonergan’s Generalized Empirical Method (GEM), his theory of cognition, explains how we come to authentic knowledge, and offers a method for reinvention of the human, at least on an individual level. The purpose of this paper is to explore and connect these pathways toward redemption.

Mark Miller shared this insight: to understand a statement, it’s important to know the question that is being answered. Even the big questions, those about meaning and purpose, are generally based on practical concerns. Religion, for example, is often aimed at how we can best live together. Today, finding a way to live together at all is proving to be a big concern, as rival religious, racial, and ethnic groups collide. As the human footprint on earth’s resources continues to grow, and the natural capital available to support human activities continues to decline, religions are challenged to address living together from a moral perspective that includes not only traditional social and economic justice but today, also ecological justice, often called care for creation. As cities and whole nations go bankrupt, and international banks impose financial austerity, many suffer, but the most vulnerable are those already poor. Technical experts on every aspect of the issues listed above propose solutions addressed to each issue, while theologians and the religious
cry out on behalf of the poor, yet the problems continue to fester; the metaphorical scissors don’t cut through the suffering to find a better world.

Lonergan’s GEM calls the failure of policy an inverse insight. The insight is that the solution doesn’t work the way an expert thought it would. To understand an inverse insight, it helps to think about the failure from a larger perspective. On the Forum for Religion and Ecology website (fore.yale.edu), Mary Evelyn Tucker and John Grim express the hope that world religions will leverage an ethics that encompasses this broader view.

A new “systems ethics” of part and whole, local and global, will assist the religions in articulating a more comprehensive form of environmental ethics from within their traditions. This is a major part of the development of religions into a dialogue with the sustainability movement. Humans are seeking an ethics to respond not only to suicide and homicide but also biocide and ecocide.⁵

The Papal encyclical, Laudato Si, answers this hope. Released at Pentecost, as a letter addressed to all people, Pope Francis is calling for an “ecological conversion” in anticipation of the United Nations climate change negotiations in December, 2015. Pope Francis is scheduled to address the U.S. Congress on September 24th, and the U.N. General Assembly on September 25th, at the opening of the U.N. Summit on Sustainable Development, called Adoption of the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Appropriately, these events take place on the coat tails of the Jewish Day of Atonement, September 23, 2015.

The concept of integral ecology is introduced near the beginning of the encyclical, in paragraph 11: “integral ecology calls for openness to categories which transcend the language of mathematics and biology, and take us to the heart of what it is to be human.” Integral ecology is a theme throughout the encyclical. Paragraph 110 addresses the challenge of achieving effective cross-disciplinary collaborations.

The fragmentation of knowledge ... often leads to a loss of appreciation for the whole, for the relationships between things, and for the broader horizon, which then becomes irrelevant. This very fact makes it hard to find adequate ways of solving the more complex problems of today’s world, particularly those regarding the environment and the poor; these problems cannot be dealt with
from a single perspective or from a single set of interests. A science which would offer solutions to the great issues would necessarily have to take into account the data generated by other fields of knowledge, including philosophy and social ethics; but this is a difficult habit to acquire today. Nor are there genuine ethical horizons to which one can appeal.

Scientific knowledge on its own has been unable to cut through the inertia of “business as usual” to awaken others, especially political leaders, to acknowledge the human-made causes of dire social, ecological, and economic predicaments around the world. The scientists’ knowledge is not presented in relation to people’s practical concerns, like protecting their children, paying bills, keeping in touch with friends and family, staying healthy, etc., even though these concerns are inter-connected to the social, environmental, religious, and economic events that the scientists study.

Bernard Lonergan’s Generalized Empirical Method (GEM) can unify disparate disciplines. The GEM’s transcendental precepts: Be attentive, Be intelligent, Be reasonable, Be responsible, Be loving, guide an attentive thinker through a process of reflection to form intelligent opinions, to test them against theory, to ask, “Is it so?” and thus to create human interconnections across disciplines. Experts in various areas of Integral Ecology, all practicing the GEM, can formulate synergistic policies such that solutions to one problem potentiate solutions to other problems. These practical applications of the GEM can go further, as specialized practitioners recognize the need for deep cultural and spiritual change to address the interconnected challenges of escalating violence: social, environmental, and spiritual.

Naomi Klein, in her manifesto, This Changes Everything, writes: “Climate change isn't an 'issue' to add to the list of things to worry about, next to health care and taxes. It is a civilizational wake-up call.” Paragraph 215 of Laudato Si describes interiority, such as the GEM, as key to effective civilizational change.

If we want to bring about deep change, we need to realize that certain mindsets really do influence our behavior. Our efforts at education will be inadequate and ineffectual unless we strive to promote a new way of thinking about human beings, life, society and our relationship with nature. Otherwise, the paradigm of consumerism will continue to advance, with the help of the media and the highly effective workings of the market.
By necessity humans, like all animals, ARE consumers. But by choice, through reflective thought, a human being may transcend reflexive behavior to become an intelligent, reasonable, responsible and loving consumer. Through reflective judgement, humans can reinvent themselves at the level of the individual.

Berry elaborates by considering how this might be done more generally, "to reinvent the human at the species level, reflectively, within the community of life systems, in a time-developmental context, by means of story and shared dream experience." As John Grim explains Berry’s radical concept, we see how it aligns with the GEM and with integral ecology.

... Reinvention is an act of purposeful search that acknowledges the historical action of human communities making themselves. Societies do not simply stumble forward in simplistic discovery of unknowns; rather, we have always invented ourselves according to preconceived notions drawn from our story of who we are. To undertake this reinvention reflectively refers to the responsible, critical capacity whereby humans realize that the remaking of the human demands recognition of our existence as species. We share traits that organize us, that allow us to see ourselves as different and unique from other life forms. Now we must extend our reflective powers beyond ourselves to the community of life systems in order to adequately understand the integral connection we have to this larger community. The time-developmental context of historical reflection has largely presented us with a picture of the isolated human community. Now we need to reopen the investigation to see how human life has interacted with the larger life community on the land.

Grim’s method, and Berry’s, involves integrating the human story into the larger cosmic story, which transcends the varied traditions of the world’s religions. Pope Francis, in the section on Ecological Conversion, addresses the resources of Christian tradition for motivating the faithful to undertake the practical necessities for redeeming our broken world.

216. The rich heritage of Christian spirituality, the fruit of twenty centuries of personal and communal experience, has a precious contribution to make to the renewal of humanity. Here, I would like to offer Christians a few suggestions for an ecological spirituality grounded in the convictions of our faith, since the teachings of the Gospel have direct consequences for our way of thinking, feeling and living. More than in ideas or concepts as such, I am interested in how such a spirituality can motivate us to a more passionate concern for the protection of our world. A commitment this lofty cannot be sustained by doctrine alone, without a spirituality capable of
inspiring us, without an “interior impulse which encourages, motivates, nourishes and gives meaning to our individual and communal activity.”

The Papal Encyclical, *Laudato Si*, calls upon all people of good will to heed the scientific evidence from around the world that shows deterioration in environmental, social, and economic conditions, and enter into dialogue to address the causes and restore authentic progress. Pope Francis calls for an integral ecology, a holistic approach to understanding the effects of human activities, acting to mitigate and repair the damages, and developing policies to prevent further harm. Thomas Berry called for “reinvention of the human at the species level” as the great work of this generation. Bernard Lonergan’s GEM applied to the insights of integral ecology may be the two metaphorical scissor blades cut out for this great work.

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5 *ibid*
Civilizational Analyses through the Prism of Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology

Three fundamental questions have guided inquiry in my “Introduction to Sociology,” “Social Change,” and “Catholicism and the Human Sciences” (Core III) classes in recent years: (1) Where are we now in civilizational development? (2) How did we get to this point? (3) Where are we going? The first two questions emphasize societal evolution. What trajectory have we taken to get to this juncture in human history? The third question is futuristic, having to do with the likely trajectory for our civilization moving forward. From the perspective of Lonergan’s Generalized Empirical Method, the answers to these questions require that knowers qua subjects be attentive to relevant data, be intelligent in the identification of key societal processes capable of accounting for the data, be reasonable in arriving at the best explanation or theory, and be responsible in acting on the theory.¹

Students in recent “Social Change” classes have reported on five “civilizational analyses” (my term) that attempt to address the three fundamental questions. Four other texts have been used in my “Introduction to Sociology” (SOCI 1101) in the past three years. One text has been used in my “Catholicism and the Human Sciences” course. It needs to be pointed out that these civilizational analyses involve both “judgments of fact” and “judgments of value.”² That is to say, integral to the search for a truthful (accurate and adequate) theory of the human societal trajectory is an assessment of the “good” of this trajectory. Is the civilization in a good place now? If yes, how can we account for it? If no, how can we account for it? Would the trajectory forecasted be good for humankind or not? In either case, what forces are moving us in this direction? What needs to be acted on now (acting responsibly) to change the trajectory that is likely to be realized if said forces are allowed to play themselves out?

What follows is a thumbnail sketch of each of the ten civilizational analyses that have been examined in my “Introduction,” “Social Change” and “Catholicism and the Human Sciences” courses. One of the ten is a Christian text, with the remaining nine being secular/scientific in orientation. One would expect the Christian text to draw explicitly on salvation symbolism
(creation, fall, redemption), and the secular texts to refrain from such a discourse. To what extent, we can ask, can these analyses be interpreted through the prism of Lonergan’s theological anthropology, which sees civilizational evolution in terms of progress, decline (or sin) and redemption?¹

Let’s begin with David Graeber’s Debt⁴ (one of the Intro texts). According to Graeber, economic relations in society can be based on the principles of “communism,” “hierarchy,” and “exchange.” Debt, which amounts essentially to what we owe or do not owe each other, takes on a very different meaning depending on the type of relationship involved (whether communistic, hierarchical, or mutualistic). He extends the analysis to what people think they owe God, with “sin” defined as not giving God His due, and “redemption” as restoring in a sense that which is owed. Graeber’s view of history (like Lonergan’s) is very much a “contingent” one, where perennially contested issues (like debt forgiveness) need to be continually debated and sorted out in each age. Next there is Richard Sennett’s Together⁵ (another Intro text), which deals with how cooperation has evolved over time. He presents a fascinating continuum of competition and cooperation, with interactions among strangers constituting the middle position. He talks about the decline of salon society which has contributed to the privatization of life. I took special note of the organization of his text, with Part One (“Cooperation Shaped”) focusing on progress, Part Two (“Cooperation Weakened”) on decline, and Part Three (“Cooperation Strengthened”) on redemption. “Progress,” “decline,” and “redemption,” for Sennett are secular categories and processes. The next text to be considered is Jared Diamond’s The World Until Yesterday.⁶ In this work, Diamond argues that societies based on personal relationships have dominated the human landscape, and that we struggle in social forms that are based on relationships with strangers. Without romanticizing hunting and gathering societies, Diamond clearly suggests that the movement away from such social forms constitutes a kind of social decline, requiring adjustment and accommodation of our part (“responsibility” in Lonergan’s terms). In The Tribal Imagination⁷ (another Intro text) Robin Fox argues that a “tribal imagination” rooted in our nature limits cooperative action. Fox clearly does not buy into the ideas of progress, decline, and redemption. For Fox, the savage mind can only be tamed, not fundamentally transformed. Lonergan’s “conversion” is muted if not rejected outright in Fox’s argument.
One text examined in my “Social Change” course was Steven Pinker’s *The Better Angels of our Nature.* In this monumental work, Pinker makes the case that contemporary civilization is less violent than its predecessors due to the growth of the Leviathan, the emergence of the human rights revolution, and the spread of global commerce, among other factors. He argues that changes in social institutions can shape human conduct in significant ways. Pinker would characterize societal development as “progress,” which is the result of an intelligent cluster of institutional and cultural practices being in place. The language of “sin” and “redemption” is not drawn upon. He does talk about how our “inner demons” can be controlled through the civilizing and pacification processes and through the cultivation of empathy and self-control. Jeremy Rifkin in his *The Empathic Civilization* analyzes the civilizational trajectory as one that is more and more other-regarding. In Lonergan’s terms, redemption is triumphant, leaving sin behind. A similarly optimistic view is put forward by Matt Ridley in his book, *The Rational Optimist.* In this work, Ridley argues that life is getting better and better due to specialization, exchange, and cumulative knowledge (“when ideas have sex”). What seems to be downplayed if not disregarded (from a Lonerganian perspective) is that such progress invariably has downsides and corruptible elements that need to be addressed. Ridley puts forward an unapologetic Enlightenment view—progress with no decline and therefore no need of redemption. *Pandora’s Seed* by Spencer Wells attempts to redress this hyper-optimism. In this book, Wells emphasizes the down side of technological development, and the steps that we need to take to get our civilization back on track. He focuses on the implications for health and environmental sustainability. Clearly, civilization has been in a state of decline since the hunter-gatherer period. But, “redemption” (Lonergan’s term, not Wells’) is within our power and grasp. The final work considered in my “Social Change” course is *Why Nations Fail* by Daron Acemoglu and James Robinson. An argument is put forward that prosperity (freedom from want) is possible if institutions are set up in such a way that incentives are created to reward innovation, everyone is allowed to take advantage of economic opportunities, and governments are accountable to citizens. Decline is seen as the absence of these conditions due to greed and the desire to control. Societal redemption is within the grasp of those able to discern the lessons of history.

The one Christian text (which I have been assigning in my “Catholicism and the Human Sciences” course) that can be seen as a civilizational analysis of sorts is *The Drama of Atheist*
Humanism\textsuperscript{13} by Henri de Lubac. The possibility of human progress is clearly acknowledged. Predictably, so is the inevitability of human sin and the potential for redemption. The project (Enlightenment and Marxian) that seeks human perfection here on earth is not only seen to be doomed to failure but pernicious as well, resulting directly in the derogation of the human person. De Lubac’s suspicion of utopianism and social engineering (what he calls “sociocracy”), which involves the creation of a new human being, is one that Lonergan shares. What both also share is the conviction that the measure of human civilizational progress lies in the degree to which we model ourselves and our institutions after the love which God has shown us and continues to show us, a love that is sparked by the Grace that only God can bestow, an animating Spirit that enables us to transcend the limitations, biases, and distorted outlooks of our human nature.\textsuperscript{14}

\textsuperscript{1} Lonergan, B., \textit{Method in Theology} (University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1971), Chapter 1.
\textsuperscript{2} Ibid, Chapter 2, Section 4.
\textsuperscript{3} Ibid, Chapter 2, Section 7; and Miller, M., \textit{The Quest for God and the Good Life: Lonergan’s Theological Anthropology} (The Catholic University of America: Washington, D.C., 2013).
\textsuperscript{7} Fox, R., \textit{The Tribal Imagination: Civilization and the Savage Mind} (Harvard University Press: Cambridge, 2011).
\textsuperscript{11} Wells, S., \textit{Pandora’s Seed: The Unforeseen Costs of Civilization} (Random House: New York, 2010).
\textsuperscript{13} De Lubac, H., \textit{The Drama of Atheist Humanism} (Ignatius Press: Ft. Collins, 1995 [1944]).
\textsuperscript{14} Miller, M., \textit{Op. Cit.}, Chapter 8.
DONNA HO-SHING

Love Thy Students

My experience as a minister has led me on a quest to be authentic in doing ministry. In listening to and watching ministers deliver sermons, I wish sometimes that I could be like them. What I have come to discover is that one’s delivery can incite exciting emotions but not necessarily a recollection of what was delivered. So rather than hope that I become like someone else, my desire is to be myself, to speak in my own voice which reflects my insights, that my delivery is simple and clear, so that those who hear will remember the content of the sermon and not the theatrics.

This transcendence from drifting to authenticity\(^1\) has as its ultimate goal the hope that parishioners will remember the content and then live the word in love with others. So my ministry has always been focused on helping others to realize that as God created us, he fashioned us like himself. With this in mind, as we look at each other we are looking at God, and as we interact with each other we are interacting with God; therefore if we say we love God, then we also must live in love with each other if God is in each of us. Living the good life.

What is the good life? The answer will be different based on one’s experiences, needs, and desires. And where does God fit into the realization of the good life? Love of God is captured in the mandate found in the bible. This mandate was central in the discussion Jesus had with an expert in the Law of Moses. The response to Jesus’ question of what was understood included, “The Scriptures say, ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind.’ They also say, ‘Love your neighbors as much as you love yourself.’”\(^2\) I thought about this sequence of loving. It seems to me that you cannot love your neighbor if you do not love yourself; and you can’t love yourself if you do not love God. The real question then for each of us to answer is, “Do I love God?” Being in love with God is enmeshed in self-transcendence. This being in love with God requires the utility of our entire being; and when this love is born and sustained, from it flows joy, peace, and a desire to live in love with others.\(^3\)
Living in love with others is not selective, it requires living in love with everyone, and desiring the best for them. This brings forth the image of the students I guide toward fulfilling their positive outcomes. My experience with my students is not unique. Most students do not believe that you have taught them if they do not get some form of lecture in class. There are a few self-motivated and proactive students who come to class prepared to ask questions that reveal the fact that they have spent the time investing in their desired outcome to succeed.

However, the majority of students continue to function at the primary education level. Their modus operandi is to not prepare for class, but to show up for class and have the instructor drone on while they Zen into open-eyed unconsciousness. The only knowledge they seek is what will be on the test, presented in a lower level format through lecturing. This mode of teaching allows the student to merely absorb information and places them at a disadvantage as they are only placed at the remembering and understanding level of learning. The result is that the student is unable to transition to the higher functions of learning, at the application level and above, thus they are unable to make good clinical judgments, and fail to see the insight into what their education really means. This is evidenced by their inability to pass their exams, and the professor is often evaluated as not teaching anything that was on the test.

The challenge for the professor is to decide whether or not to profess in an unconventional way, to flip the classroom. I must confess that to lecture to the students was much easier for me, but I started feeling very uncomfortable when students came to class, found a comfortable seat, ascertained if what I was going to talk about was on the power point slides, turned on their recorder and went to sleep. I was challenged to live in love with my students, to provide an environment that would facilitate positive outcomes for them, in essence willing the good for them.  

I wanted to find a way to engage the student in being responsible for his or her learning. How could I motivate students toward some level of self-transcendence in learning? To move them from open-eyed unconsciousness through the levels of consciousness would take a lot of work on my part. I would need to profess in a different way. The challenge would be initiating this sense of being present in the student during class toward achieving the goal of being
successful. Conscious intentionality includes four levels with a specific operation: empirical → experience, intelligent → understanding, rational → judgment, and responsible → decision.⁵

There has been a lot of discussion about flipping the classroom. This methodology of facilitating learning involves the use of a variety of resources. The hope is that through using unconventional methods of facilitating learning the student will move through these levels of conscious intentionality and experience transformational learning; the new learning experiences will facilitate intelligent understanding, which will facilitate rational judgment and lead to making responsible decisions that will provide academic growth for the students.⁶

I started with changing the students’ experiences of preparing for class. This preparation is embodied in the theory of constructivism that assumes that people construct their own understanding and knowledge of the world based on their own experiences and reflection or interpretation of those experiences.⁷ Students would normally be given a list of pages to read in preparation for class, but what usually happens is that they either don’t read or read without a sense of purpose. Classroom capture technology was used to provide audio files of the topics to be covered during class. The students were responsible for listening to the audios and come prepared to apply the information during class discussions. To motivate the students to fulfilling this requirement, a 10-question test was administered via an audience response system as soon as the students entered the classroom. This was done to assess their knowledge of the audiorecorded content. This test was graded and assigned a percentage of the final course grade.

Did the students like this methodology? Self-motivated students raved about this change in the process of learning because they believed it provided them the opportunity to be prepared before class, so that they had a strong foundation. The students who lacked this intrinsic quality were upset at having to spend the time to prepare and consequently did not do well because they did not view this methodology as enhancing their study habit. This also resulted in the best outcomes in the computerized assessment administered to students at the end of the semester. There were mixed reviews and negative comments on my evaluation, but I forge ahead because I am convinced that this is the beginning of student transformation in learning.
JOSEPH T. MALOY

Lonergan’s Transcendental Method as a Metaphor for Experimental Science

No doubt about it; when it comes to science, the big enchilada is experimental science. Cosmology is breathtaking and mysterious; evolutionary biology is presumptive yet confident; environmental science is perplexing but, in the minds of many, authoritative. Because these and the other observational sciences consume more barrels of ink and tie up more terabytes of RAM than all the experimental sciences combined, however, it is sometimes forgotten that it is experimental science that has delivered the goods necessary to establish modern living. Over the last two centuries the experimentally verified laws and theories of experimental science have allowed the planning that has produced virtually all of the products and most of the services - those of lawyers and academicians notwithstanding - that make up the current global GDP. Indeed, for better or worse, modernity itself has been made possible by experimental science. Perhaps more importantly, experimental science has provided the vocabulary and methodology that is used (with very little subsequent verification) in the observational sciences.

To an experimental scientist, then, it is somewhat perplexing that theologians and philosophers of science choose to dwell on the observational sciences rather than analyzing the methodology of experimental science when seeking a scientific method to get at the truth. The science and religion shelves in the library, with the notable exception for the one reserved for the works of Stanley Jaki, are filled with tomes on evolution and religion, cosmology and metaphysics, and the theological implications of descriptive quantum mechanics (sans equations, of course). Even Pope Francis now seems to be dabbling in the area of observational science with his recent encyclical on the environment. Clearly, religion is more closely linked to observational science than it is to experimental science; perhaps this avoidance of experimental science is simply due to the fact that most philosophers and theologians are more comfortable with the ambiguity of observational science.

Bernard Lonergan, however, is a theologian who is uncomfortable with ambiguity. In fact, throughout his highly productive career, Lonergan attempted to use scientific terminology, and his notion of scientific methodology, to give rigor to his theological understandings. In Insight he
developed cognitive theory, epistemology, and metaphysics to address such fundamental scientific questions as: “What am I doing when I am knowing? Why is that knowing? What do I know when I do it?” In *Method in Theology* he extended this idea of knowing to acting upon that knowledge in a moral fashion. (The goals of knowing and acting upon that knowledge, either to gain new knowledge or to exploit the knowledge already acquired are precisely the objectives of experimental science.) Lonergan identifies the process of acting upon acquired knowledge as self-transcendence. Operating at four sequential levels - empirical, intelligent, rational, and responsible – to achieve correct action, this process is also called the transcendental method. It is proposed herein that Lonergan’s transcendental method is a metaphor for illuminating the methodology of experimental science, a metaphor that can be used effectively by either science or theology to obtain fresh insight into the other. Thus, it is contended that Lonergan’s theological method, unlike those of the aforementioned philosophers and theologians, comports well with the methods of experimental science. Before this comparison is presented, however, a brief review of modern experimental science is in order.

An almost exclusive development of western civilization, modern experimental science traces its roots to the three centuries between the Resurrection and the Council of Nicaea. This was a highly fruitful yet somewhat combative period in church history when Christianity was not only deciding what Christians should believe – faith - but also why it was to be believed – reason. This legacy of faith and reason was passed on to Augustine who made it standard practice in his interpretations of both scripture and nature. So seminal was Augustine’s work to the development of modern science that it was given the title role in the encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, where John Paul II tells modern scientists that “faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.”

Since Augustine was a neo-Platonist, his reasoning tended towards the ideal, as did that of most theologians until the time of Thomas Aquinas. When Thomas rediscovered Aristotle in Arabic translation – Islam’s gift to Christianity – the idealism of Plato was replaced by the realism of Aristotle. Unfortunately, however, Aristotelian thought replaced both faith and reason, and the human spirit had to contemplate the truth on one wing until the time of the Reformation. During this period the scholasticism developed by Thomas prevailed as the preeminent educational methodology in European universities, and it was in opposition to it in the first century of the
English Reformation that Francis Bacon proposed what was to become inductive empiricism as the new scientific methodology. At the same time, René Descartes did his best to preserve those parts of scholasticism that he could still tolerate by proposing what was to become deductive rationalism as a competitive methodology. Thus, faith and reason were restored as empiricism and rationalism by Bacon and Descartes during the first century of the Reformation, but ne’er were the twain to meet again for nearly two hundred years. Empiricism and rationalism were maintained as separate competitive methodologies until the dawn of the 19th century when John Dalton proposed his new chemical version of natural philosophy.

Spurred on by competing methodologies and opposing theologies, the English empiricists prevailed during this interlude. Bacon’s mantle was passed on to Isaac Newton whose discovery of the laws of motion and gravitational attraction established empiricism as the scientific method of the day. So successful was this work that the notion that science is merely empiricism persists even today. Newton contributed to this belief by eschewing rationalism completely: “Hypotheses non fingo, - I feign no hypotheses … [because] … hypotheses … have no place in experimental philosophy.” In England and abroad, Bacon’s empirical method proved to be most effective in discovering the laws of nature. By the turn of the 19th century Robert Boyle and Jacques Charles had developed the gas laws bearing their names; Joseph Proust had noted the law of definite proportions in chemical composition; and Antoine Lavoisier had demonstrated the validity of the law of mass conservation in chemical reaction.

By this time, however, the industrial revolution had begun and the Enlightenment was in full bloom; mere knowledge of the laws of nature was insufficient. (Just as Augustine had concluded centuries before, faith alone was not enough to understand either God or nature; in addition, reason was necessary). Empiricism fell short when it came to explaining the causes of natural effects so that outcomes of newly developed industrial processes could be predicted. The establishment of causation from a scientific perspective, however, requires the development of testable theories and hypotheses. This notion of testable theories of causation appeared memorably upon the scientific scene for the first time when Dalton proposed his version of atomic theory in order to explain the laws discovered by Lavoisier and Proust. It took over a century to develop the methodology necessary to confirm the existence of entities that were too small to trigger any human sensory response in order to demonstrate the validity of Dalton’s theoretical claims. When
this had been accomplished, however, modern experimental science and modernity itself were well
on their way to fruition. Thus it is that modern experimental science employs faith and reason;
empiricism and rationalism; laws and theories in the paradigms of its practitioners. Any philosophy
that seeks to elucidate modern experimental science must be able to demonstrate the validity of
not only its laws discovered in nature, but also its theoretical concepts invented within the human
intellect. This work postulates that Lonergan’s transcendental method is up to this task.

As noted above, Lonergan’s transcendental method achieves an action by proceeding
through four levels of conscious intentionality: empirical, intelligent, rational and responsible.
Each of these levels has associated with it an operation: experience, understanding, judgment, and
decision. (Each level is more commonly known by the operation associated with it.) Here is how
Lonergan defines each of the levels and how Miller interprets each of them:

1) Empirical Level (Experience). There is the empirical level on which we sense, perceive, imagine,
feel, speak and move. For Lonergan experience simply yields the raw data. It does not necessarily
lead to knowledge, but it can be a first step.

2) Intelligent Level (Understanding). There is an intellectual level on which we inquire, come to
understand, express what we have understood, and work out the presuppositions and implications
of our expression. Understanding gives rise to questions. By our nature we wonder. Experience
is the source of a potentially endless number of questions.

3) Rational Level (Judgment). There is the rational level on which we reflect, marshal the evidence,
pass judgment on the truth or falsity, certainty or probability, of a statement. To make a judgment
one must gather the data (marshal the evidence) and compare it with the insight that resulted from
the understanding. If the data are sufficient to support the understanding, the insight is judged to
be correct, a “judgment of fact.”

4) Responsible Level (Decision). There is the responsible level on which we are concerned with
ourselves, our own operations, our goals, and so deliberate about possible courses of action,
evaluate them, decide, and carry out our decisions. Decision builds upon knowledge gained
through experience, understanding, and judgment. Now, one cares not merely about what is true
or good in theory, but what is true or good in the situation one is facing.
To reach a decision regarding a pending action, one would ordinarily proceed through these stages in the given sequence: 1) experience, 2) understanding, 3) judgment, and 4) decision. Lonergan refers to this preferred order as the “way from below upwards” to emphasize the fact that transcendence implies that each higher level lifts the level below it into a greater and richer context while preserving the context of the lower level.¹⁷

As an illustration of the use of the transcendental method in the development of a scientific law consider what is known as a search for regularities. Regularities, things that always occur, reside at the heart of the development any law. To keep it simple, consider the fable of the little boy, lost and alone, who is seeking combustible material for his campfire in order to keep warm on the long cold nights as he is waiting to be rescued. Fortunately, his campsite is located right next to a junkyard, so all he must do is gather the material, throw it on the campfire and determine whether or not it will burn. He keeps records and makes lists of items found in the junkyard that will and will not burn, and for a few days he takes these lists with him as he forages for fuel. Finally, he decides to seek some kind of regularity regarding combustible material so that he will no longer have to rely upon his lists. A second-year Lonergan student (having read both Insight and Method), the little boy decides to use the transcendental method in his search for regularities:

1) **Experience (the raw data).** Will burn – tree limbs, chair legs, flag poles, and pencils. Won’t burn – blackberries, rocks, marbles, and paperweights.

2) **Understanding (wondering).** Is there any connection between the shape of the object and whether or not it will burn?

3) **Judgment (weigh the evidence).** All of the combustible objects are cylindrical while the other objects are not cylindrical. Thus, “cylindrical objects burn” is the desired regularity.

4) **Decision (act upon the above).** The little boy decided to collect only cylindrical objects in the future.

Obviously, this application of the transcendental method led the boy to an erroneous decision. This stacking of the deck was done on purpose to illustrate the self-corrective nature of the transcendental method. The little boy would discover the error of his decision when he tried to
burn a lead pipe or a can of tomato soup, and even if he stuck to cylindrical branches of wood, he would miss combustible things like a bundle of newspapers or a rectangular wooden door. However, if he persisted with the transcendental method, and reconsidered the validity of each stage, he ultimately would find the most inclusive regularity. For example, if he wondered about the material rather than the shape at the understanding stage, he might make the judgment that “wooden objects burn,” and act upon that judgment accordingly. If, on the other hand, he included a lump of coal and a can of lighter fluid in the raw data of the experience stage, he might make the judgment that “all hydrocarbons burn,” and act on that understanding and judgment instead. The point is that the transcendental method is self-correcting, *i.e.*, corrigeable, and given enough iterations it will always lead to the most inclusive result.

Thus, Lonergan’s transcendental method is an exact metaphor for Bacon’s inductive empiricism. Repetitive observation of any given phenomenon will lead, after all things have been considered, to a tested regularity, a law of nature. For example, Lavoisier demonstrated that within instrumental reliability matter was conserved when solid red mercuric oxide was heated to produce liquid mercury and oxygen gas. He also demonstrated that mass was conserved (again within instrumental reliability) when charcoal was burned in air to produce carbon dioxide. Unfortunately, Lavoisier had to keep his appointment with the French revolutionary guillotine before he himself could study the mass relationships of many other chemical reactions, but the vast majority of the chemists who came after him have demonstrated that mass is always conserved in a chemical reaction. The laws of nature observed within the physical universe and obtained by this self-correcting inductive process represent the most general statement of fact that is possible for the phenomenon under consideration. Some students of Lonergan’s methods have likened the inductive transcendent method to the formation of a three dimensional spiral staircase that repeatedly passes through ever widening stages of experience, understanding, judgment and decision as it ascends to attain the broadest possible loop of at the top landing.¹⁹ Laws obtained by this method are most inclusive and knowledge of such laws can be regarded as trustworthy.

Theories present a special challenge to the transcendental method because they can never be regarded as being universally true. Einstein reminds us of this fact by addressing his own theories: “No amount of experimentation can ever prove me right; a single experiment can prove me wrong.”²⁰ Thus, a theory can only be verified by repeatedly carrying out experiments designed
to disprove the theory and repeatedly failing to disprove it. Once a critical experiment is performed that disproves the accepted theory, a new theory must be deduced. This new theory accommodates the results of critical experiment and as much of the prior theory as possible. Kuhn identifies this process as a scientific revolution and claims that normal science always proceeds by this kind of revolutionary process rather than by more tranquil evolutionary development as many would like to believe.21

The deductive process of theoretical development can be illustrated by considering the history of atomic theory. Dalton originally postulated that his theoretical atoms – which were too small ever to be seen – were imagined as hard, indivisible, uniform, homogeneous spheres. While all atoms of the same element were thought to be identical, the atoms of different elements were all assumed to be different. Chemical reaction and mass conservation took place by simple rearrangement of the atoms present in the original reacting compounds into product compounds. Hard, indivisible, uniform and homogeneous, Dalton’s atoms could not be disassembled into smaller subunits, and early atomic theorists lived with this belief for nearly a century.

In 1904 the physicist J.J. Thomson designed an experiment that if it had failed might have confirmed the prevailing belief that atoms are indivisible. He applied a high voltage across two metal electrodes sealed in the ends of a glass tube containing along the tubular axis a rectangular glass strip coated with a phosphor capable of detecting cathode rays. (A modern cathode ray tube – such as an old-fashioned black & white TV – has such a phosphor coating the interior of the display screen). When he evacuated the tube and applied a high enough dc voltage across the electrodes, a strip of light appeared on the phosphor coating; the light appeared to emanate from electrode attached to the negative high voltage electrode. Thomson performed a number of additional experiments using this apparatus. He varied the polarity and the magnitude of the high voltage, and he also demonstrated that the beam of matter emanating from the negative electrode (and tickling the detector screen into phosphorescence) could be deflected by magnets and by applied external voltages. He called this matter cathode rays (later to be identified as electrons) and he assigned it a negative charge on the basis of his deflection experiments. Because he demonstrated that he had been able to disassemble the atoms in the electrode material into negative and positive parts, he concluded that he had been able to disprove that part of Dalton’s original theory. No longer could it be maintained that atoms were hard and indivisible. Now, at best, atoms
could be made up of distinct positive and negative bits of matter uniformly distributed throughout the atom.

The idea that positive and negative subatomic particles were uniformly distributed throughout the atom came to an end in 1911 when Ernest Rutherford sought to verify Thomson’s contention by directing a beam of alpha particles (He$^{2+}$ ions) through a thin gold foil. Using a detector screen not unlike the one used by Thomson, Rutherford was able to follow the trajectory of the alpha particles after they passed through the gold atoms in the foil. He expected to confirm Thomson’s uniformity contention by observing a uniform pattern of alpha particle induced emissions on the detection screen. Instead, he found that the atoms in the gold foil scattered some of the alpha particles significantly. In a couple of instances the gold atoms were able to reverse the trajectory of the alpha particles almost completely. Since the alpha particles were positively charged, repulsion of the kind that Rutherford observed could only be attributed to regions of high positive charge contained within the atoms of the foil. No longer could it be maintained that charge was uniformly and homogeneously distributed throughout the atom. While the negative atomic charge might be uniformly distributed, the equal and opposite positive charge was localized in a region later to be known as the atomic nucleus. This required additional modification in Dalton’s original theory.

These examples of theoretical development illustrate the difference between the verification of a law and the verification of a theory. Because laws are empirical, they may be discovered by a self-correcting inductive process, and verification takes place automatically. Lonergan’s transcendental method in its conventional way from below upwards is an ideal metaphor for the discovery of a law. Theories, however, are rational and invented within the human intellect using deduction. There is a critical experiment in that development, but the critical experiment only serves to disprove the previously held theory. Laws describe effects observed in the physical universe, but theories assign causes to those effects within the human intellect. Laws exist in the world, but theories exist only within the human intellect where, among other things, love resides. How, then, is it possible to apply Lonergan’s transcendental method to theoretical development?
Once again, love is the answer. Because love represents the fullness of human authenticity for Lonergan, it surpasses both moral and intellectual self-transcendence. Noting Pascal’s remark that the heart has reasons which reason does not know, Lonergan tells us that there is a knowledge born of love. Being in love we have preconceived knowledge of our beloved. In love we no longer must go through experience, understanding, judging and deciding (the way from below upwards) to determine action; instead, we know what to do because we are in love. Thus, love reverses the order of operations in conscious intentionality. Instead of performing the transcendental operations from below upwards, love reverses the order to make it from above downwards: decision, judgment, understanding, and experience. And only when the final experience fails to comport with the lover’s preconceived knowledge is the validity of the love affair questioned. This is precisely what takes place in the conception and development of a scientific theory.

Every scientist falls in love with his or her theories, and more than a few scientists have gone to their graves holding theories that were later demonstrated to be false. Scientists know how a given experiment is going to turn out because of this knowledge born of love, and when the result is what was expected, the theory remains unquestioned. Only when the result of the critical experiment is unexpected is the theory rejected. This describes the thought process of Thomson, Rutherford, and every other scientist who has questioned or confirmed an existing theory. All have been engaging in acts of love. However, due to the fact that love – though necessary - is sometimes unrequited, knowledge that is born of theory is not as trustworthy as knowledge born of law.

Anyone who hopes to utilize the fruits of experimental science to assess the validity of an observational science should be aware of this distinction. While laws and theories must necessarily coexist within the experimental paradigm, truth born of law is superior to truth born of theory. Thus, truth born of repeated observation is more valid than truth born of repeated speculation, no matter how convincing any given speculation may appear. Lonergan’s transcendental method clarifies this distinction by showing that laws are developed from below upwards while theories are developed from above downwards. In this way Lonergan’s transcendental method serves as an ideal metaphor for experimental science and its application to the observational sciences.


9 *Method*, p. 5

10 *Quest*, p. 49.

11 *Method*, p. 5.

12 *Quest*, p. 49.

13 *Method*, p. 5.

14 *Quest*, p. 55.

15 *Method*, p. 5.

16 *Quest*, p. 58.

17 *Quest*, p. 47.


19 Joseph T. Merkt, *personal communication*.

20 Reported by BrainyQuote.com, *et. al. without attribution*.


22 *Quest*, p. 78.

23 *Method*, p. 115.

24 *Quest*, p. 79.
ELIZABETH McCREA

The Quest for God & the Good Life:
An Application to Principles of Management

This year’s Faculty Summer Seminar, “The Quest for God & the Good Life” provided a wonderful opportunity to pause and reflect at the end of a busy academic year. Dr. Mark Miller, based on his study of Catholic theologians—especially Father Bernard Lonergan—as well as ancient and modern philosophers and other writers, called us to “integrate the best of secular and sacred teaching in order to further the on-going Catholic tradition of using both faith and reason to promote the common good…” This fits well with Seton Hall’s vision to provide opportunities for students to develop their whole person: Mind, Heart and Spirit.

The seminar’s readings and discussions inspired me to think about how I can facilitate students’ growth in the mind, heart and spirit while simultaneously fulfilling the mission of the Stillman School of Business, which is “to enrich each student’s life through an ethics-centered education focusing on transforming concepts into business practice.” How can I encourage my students to not just memorize and regurgitate business theories and concepts to get good grades on their exams and papers, but to actually put their learning into practice? How can I inspire business students to expand their horizons beyond the pursuit of their personal economic gain? How can I help them embrace their roles as global citizens whose choices and actions matter to them and to all of God’s creation? How do I help them develop their spirit as well as their capacity to earn a living? As I pondered these questions, I realized that I can address these issues through a few minor modifications to what I already do in my Principles of Management (PoM) course.

Several years ago I created a semester-long service learning project, which I call the Servant Leadership project, for my PoM course. In this assignment, student teams select a local nonprofit, and then complete a thorough analysis of the organization—its mission and vision, organizational structure, funding sources, service provided, and so on—using both secondary and primary data. As part of the assignment they interview an organization member, visit its location, as well as collect published information on the nonprofit. From their analysis, the team then
determines an unmet need or an unaddressed opportunity and then designs and executes a project that at least partially addresses the situation in an appropriate way. The goal is to leverage the students’ talents and interests in a way that benefits the community. After implementing their project, students reflect on how the project helped reinforce and apply the management concepts we have been learning all semester. They discuss how the project allows them to enact Stillman’s mission by “transforming concepts into practice.”

From several different perspectives, the assignment is very effective. First, as a result of their efforts, students have raised money for various organizations they care about, such as the Community FoodBank of NJ, Autism Speaks, UNICEF, the Valerie Fund, Mt. Pleasant Animal Shelter, and many other worthwhile nonprofits. Other student teams collected interview clothing for a nearby youth homeless shelter, pet supplies for a local animal shelter, toiletries for the homeless, school supplies for students in Haiti, and nonperishables for various food banks. Still other student teams produced a video to encourage people to volunteer at a local animal shelter, organized a school dance for severely handicapped high school students, built a website for a local opera company, wrote a strategic plan for a proposed performing art center to be located at Bridgewater High School, designed a brochure targeting Seton Hall alumni for the Valerie Fund, raised student awareness of organ donation for the Musculoskeletal Transplant Foundation, among many other endeavors. Thus, there are direct, tangible benefits to our community.

Second, when asked what they learned about management from their projects, it is clear that students have discovered firsthand that what we discuss in class is not just “academic,” but is practical and useful (i.e., it is “transformable” into practice). They see how the knowledge and skills they learn in the course helped them to both set and achieve their goals. To be successful in the project, they must apply the management and critical thinking skills they have learned in this and previous classes to make decisions and judgments. They need to use management tools to plan, lead, organize and control their projects, and they need to use management vocabulary to communicate with one another. As such, the project helps students develop their minds in both academic and practical ways.
Finally, as part of the assignment, students are asked to reflect on their feelings about their project outcomes. Many have explicitly noted the personal satisfaction they gained from doing more than they thought possible to address the real needs of underprivileged people and animals. They enjoy working on a project with tangible outcomes, rather than writing yet another paper for the professor’s file cabinet. For example, students could not hide their joy and enthusiasm when describing the dance they held for the severely handicapped students at the Horizon School in Livingston. Others expressed similar reactions to helping at a hospice organization, a homeless shelter, a foodbank and other nonprofits. Many indicated, unprompted, that they plan to continue volunteering for their chosen organization because they derived great satisfaction in helping with the good work the nonprofit is doing in the world. It is clear that, for many, their projects touched and perhaps even expanded their hearts and helped them to experience the joy of sharing their love and talents with others in their community.

However, my participation in the Faculty Summer Seminar this year has brought to my attention that the assignment has some as-yet untapped potential to teach other important lessons as well. While I explicitly ask students to reflect on the intellectual outcomes of the project, and while the projects’ impact on their hearts often emerges when they are asked to reflect on their feelings, there is potential to draw out spiritual “learning objectives” as well.

In the past I did not feel qualified to raise the spiritual implications of the assignment, given my lack of theological training, but after perusing “The Quest for God & the Good Life” and reading the discussion prompts posed at the ends of the chapters, I realize that I do not have to be a theologian to pose introspective questions on spiritual issues. By prompting students to reflect on the spiritual dimensions of the project, I can help them see the “biggest picture” of this assignment, and I may thereby provide additional fodder for their own evolving spiritual journeys.

I plan to update the assigned reflection prompts to include such questions as: How does your Servant Leadership Project relate to what you learned in “Journey of Transformation”? How does the project relate to the call to do good in our community? Did it enable you to appreciate the human in others in the face of our differences involving gender, sexual orientation, religion,
linguistics, ethnic, social, political, and economic status? What spiritual insights, if any, did you experience as a result of the project?

In conclusion, I am grateful to the Center for Catholic Studies, the Center for Vocation and Servant Leadership, and the generous support of the William J. Toth Endowed Professorship for the opportunity to pause and reflect on my role as a faculty member at Seton Hall University. I am optimistic that the insight I gained from the Faculty Summer Seminar will enable me to revise this critical component of my Principles of Management course to further increase its alignment with the mission of both the Stillman School of Business and Seton Hall University.

Genevieve Pinto Zipp

Should We Give People More Than They Deserve?

As a healthcare professional working with diverse patient populations often I encounter patients who possess different cultural beliefs and perspectives from my own. Frequently, patients use their cultural beliefs and perspectives to make healthcare choices rather than the evidence provided from the healthcare team. The patient’s decision not to use the available evidenced based practices to address their healthcare needs has always left me feeling uneasy as I believe we should give patients what they deserve, “evidence based healthcare.” Oddly, as I was reading Miller’s discussion on “Healing and Elevating Grace” in his book entitled, The Quest for God & the God Life, I began to reflect further upon why patients choose to use their beliefs and perspectives to drive their healthcare practices and my feelings regarding giving patients what they deserve.

Miller writes, “By grace we are given faith, which enables us to grasp truths we could not know by nature, and we are given charity and merit, which enable us to unite with God and to love as God loves.” Given that grace transcends nature then one’s faith supports their choices and as a healthcare professional recognizing this is important as it helps us to accept what we perceive patients need. In moving past what we believe people deserve, based upon what is just and right because of evidence (or nature) we move to a place of mercy and charity. It is by embracing mercy and charity that we can move past what we believe people deserve and learn to respect what they perceive they need.

Further clarifying mercy and how justice is transcended by the grace of charity is the parable of, “The Workers in the Vineyard” in the gospel of Matthew. In this story the full wage set for the day was given to all workers regardless of the amount of time worked. This was the landowner showing giving charity. Thus, as reflected in this parable God loves us so much more than we deserve such that his love is truly a gift. Miller describes that grace has a twofold effect. The first effect is that of healing and the second of elevating. Reflecting upon these two effects of grace further aided me in my insight into this issue. Miller describes Lonergan’s notions on healing grace as, “the liberation of human liberty,” which enables us to overcome our own
biases. Interestingly, as I reflected upon this definition I came to understand that it is this healing grace that enables the healthcare provider to accept the differing perspectives of our patients as they seek to address their healthcare needs. The second effect of grace is that of “elevating” one so that they can perform beyond, as Miller describes it “their own steam.”

It is in this elevation that faith, hope, and charity are introduced and enable one to know things as we know them. So for the patients we work with, I believe that it is in this elevating effect of grace that they know their healthcare needs. Through my acknowledgment of the effect of elevating grace, I have come to respect and appreciate their perceptions of what they know and believe they need even if it is different than my own.

So in trying to address the question of, “do we give people more than they deserve?” If we are merciful and give freely then grace guides our giving and is a gift much, much more than one deserves.

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LISA ROSE-WILES

God & the Good Life: Top Down, Bottom Up and What Is “Good Enough”?

Introduction

The 2015 faculty summer seminar “The Quest for God & the Good Life” closely followed the Praxis Rome Faculty Retreat, so it is unsurprising that I interpreted much of the material and discussion through the lens of my experiences in Rome. In particular the seminar helped me to develop an insight that I experienced there: the relationship between a personal struggle to achieve intellectual and ultimately religious transformation by following Lonergan’s Generalized Empirical Method¹, and the gift of God’s Grace. Coming from a background in ecology, I saw this in terms of the classic “top down or bottom up” debate, which might be simplified to mean whether the most important factors in an ecosystem are the “bottom” (so-called “lower organisms” – food supply, bacterial decomposers) or the “top” (top predators, ultimately energy from the sun). Ecologists have long recognized that both factors are important², and more recently acknowledged that there is a feedback loop between them³, but little attention has been paid to the importance of the tension between the two. That was the insight that I had half-formed in Rome and developed during the summer retreat: it is through the tension between seeking transformation through personal struggle (the “bottom up”) and recognizing and accepting the offering of God’s Grace (“top down”) that we achieve transformation and redemption.⁴ This was a personal revelation for me, but during the faculty summer seminar I came to see how this principle might also apply to our students.

Students and Satisficing: is it “good enough”?

As a faculty librarian and educator I have a keen awareness that many of our undergraduate students (and some graduate students) do not know how to conduct research. In particular they struggle with finding, evaluating, incorporating and citing relevant articles into their research papers.⁵ They typically use Google searches to locate sources, which are often neither scholarly nor relevant, and insert the top few results that seem to meet their need into papers after the fact of
writing them. Even those who use library databases and search tools or Google Scholar still struggle with identifying appropriate sources and incorporating them in a manner that shows they understand their relevance to their topic. As educators, we are appalled by this haphazard approach, but to many students it makes sense. They have many commitments to meet, are chronically pressed for time, and typically lack the experience to conduct literature searches in an efficient manner. No wonder they grab the first results that seem “good enough for the purpose at hand”, a decision making process for which economist Herbert A. Simon coined the term “satisficing.”

So is “good enough” a reasonable goal for our students, especially those who have no intention of pursuing an advanced degree and become professional researchers, but simply want to graduate and get a good job? From a library perspective, we can add that teaching such students how to use library resources efficiently likely will have limited value because they will not have access to those resources after graduation. But I argue there is a broader perspective here, which is teaching the methods of research and decision making, no matter what topics, situations or resources are available. This is what we aim to do through our Praxis initiatives, and it relates directly to a question that arose in our seminar: “what do students want from a college education?” In the seminar we discussed the tension between students’ desire for good grades and the greater goal of achieving wisdom, of understanding a method of learning, and of the instructor’s role in balancing teaching the essential material in a subject (top down) and having students take ownership of their own learning and explore and come to understand it (bottom up). Mark Miller spoke of this in poetic terms, which I quote loosely from my notes: “the mind is not only a vessel to be filled but also a fire to be ignited.” It follows that if the desire for knowledge, which is God-given in all of us, is ignited in respect to an academic (or any) subject, then “good enough” will fall by the wayside and a genuine tension between being “instructed” and “seeking knowledge” will be created. This may not be what students want from a college education, but – I can’t resist a Rolling Stones reference here: “you can't always get what you want / but if you try sometimes well you just might find /you get what you need.”

Conclusion

So what do we want for ourselves and our students – “good enough” satisficing or something more fulfilling, transcending if we will? My humble insight, which is yet to be applied,
is that moving beyond satisficing and achieving transcendence can occur (perhaps can only occur) in the area of tension between top down instruction and bottom up desire to learn; between bottom up struggling to experience, understand, judge and act in a search for self-appropriation and transcendence, and accepting the top down offering of God’s Grace. I conclude this brief essay with the question that Mark Miller posed in his seminar: “do we accept this gift of God’s love?” and live what he terms “the Good Life?” Or do we simply do what seems “good enough” to get by.

4 Mark Miller has a similar observation that “grace and human activity work together to achieve these further fruits of religious conversion, there is traditionally thought to be a “cooperative” type of grace”. Miller, M. T. Quest for God and the Good Life. (Catholic University of America Press, Washington, DC, USA, 2013), p. 154.
Human Restlessness, Natural Harmonic Dissonance, and the Quest for God

My participation in the 2015 Faculty Summer Seminar, The Quest for God & the Good Life, provided an opportunity for reflection and exploration of a resonance that exists between the restlessness of the human spirit and the natural acoustical phenomenon of the out-of-tune seventh harmonic of the musical overtone series.

While the restless human spirit, with its inclination toward sin, and the flatted seventh harmonic of the acoustical overtone series are viewed as imperfect in character, both phenomena mirror a primordial feature that is basic to the first Creation narrative as recorded in the Book of Genesis:

In the beginning, when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless wasteland, and darkness covered the abyss, while a mighty wind swept over the waters. Then God said, “Let there be... and God saw how good it was.”

If restlessness, like the natural primordial chaos that preceded Creation, were to be understood as an element that is intrinsic for human creativity which precedes a systematized ordering of events, then the restless human spirit, as is its musical counterpart in the flatted seventh harmonic, is a natural and necessary quality for the full expression of creativity and goodness. According to Lonergan, divine goodness has willed, not to do away with the evils of the human race through power, but to convert those evils into a supreme good according to the just and mysterious Law of the Cross.

The Second Vatican Council Document, Nostra Aetate, identifies the “restlessness of the human spirit” as that which draws people to religious practice. This recognition echoes Saint Augustine’s confession that “God has made us for himself, and that our hearts are restless until they find their rest in God.”
These reflections strongly imply that restlessness is a universal human experience, and that it only can be satisfied in God. Also implied is the idea that the very nature of restlessness is identified by an energy that is necessary to propel human beings forward towards the rest found only in the divine presence.

In the science of acoustics, every musical tone consists of a blend of the note sounded and higher overtones related to it. The actual note sounded is referred to as the fundamental tone. The other tones that emerge from the fundamental tone are called overtones. In the overtone series, a natural dissonance exists within the system due to the flatted seventh harmonic overtone.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Harmonic</th>
<th>Freq. Hz</th>
<th>Note</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>C3</td>
<td>Fundamental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>262</td>
<td>C4</td>
<td>1 Octave Higher</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>G4</td>
<td>A Fifth above C4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>524</td>
<td>C5</td>
<td>2 Octaves above fund.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>and a fourth above G4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>E5</td>
<td>A Third above C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>786</td>
<td>G5</td>
<td>A Fifth above C5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Harms. 4, 5 &amp; 6 form a major chord</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>917</td>
<td>almost B5b</td>
<td>An overtone to avoid</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While the natural, flatted seventh harmonic is an unchanging acoustical fact, adjusting the mathematical ratio between pitches to refine musical tuning, or adjusting other musical properties surrounding the out-of-tune harmonic makes it possible for the musician to play in-tune.

The existence of the out-of-tune flatted seventh harmonic has led musicians to make adjustments to the shape of instruments, to the length of instrumental tubing and strings, and to make adjustments in embouchure in order to play or sing in-tune. With these qualitative adjustments, a musical composition that, otherwise, would be out-of-tune, now can be played in-tune.

Making adjustments in musical tuning from dissonance towards consonance is, again, reflective of Lonergan's theological understanding that.. Divine wisdom ordained and divine goodness has willed not to do away with the evils of the human race... but to convert those evils into a supreme good.6

Lonergan's observation is a powerful proclamation of the Good News when, through conversion, a human being becomes an instrument in the "hands of God." With conversion, the human tendency towards dissonance and sin is transformed into a song of redemption and a life of goodness.

A further musical similarity to the restlessness that resides within the human soul is the dominant seventh chord (V7) which is characterized by tension, unrest, and the need to be resolved.

![Dominant seventh chord on C: C7](image)

[The Above Illustration: Dominant seventh chord on C: C7]

In Western classical music, the dominant seventh (V7) chord7 is the primary propulsive force which drives the harmony towards resolution to the tonic, the central tone and chord of the musical composition.
In music, as in life, tension and unrest seek resolution – from which new beginnings and new themes are made possible. Therefore, like the restlessness and the propensity for evil that lie at the heart of human nature, musical dissonance is not without purpose or value. Again, Lonergan’s words – [God] has willed, not to do away with the evils of the human race through power, but to convert those evils into a supreme good – affirm goodness as God’s ultimate will for all creation.

With the understanding that human restlessness and the out-of-tune flattened seventh harmonic are natural, neither the inclination toward sin, nor the flattened seventh harmonic are devoid of the potential for goodness and beauty. In life and in music, human beings have been given the gift of creativity, a desire for beauty, and a heart and mind that longs for rest that is found only in God. Finding that spiritual rest requires a conversion of the human soul through its acceptance of Divine Goodness as its “fundamental tone” from which its life’s activity flows.

2 Lonergan, B., De verbo Incarnato, Thesis 17, (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana: Rome, 1964)
3 The Documents of the Second Vatican Council, Nostra Aetate, (www.vatican.va/archives, 1965)
paragraph 2.
6 Lonergan, B. De verbo Incarnato, Thesis 17, (Pontificia Universitas Gregoriana: Rome, 1964)
YEOMIN YOON

Reflections on the 2015 Faculty Summer Seminar:
“The Quest for God & the Good Life”

When I mentioned to one of my business school colleagues that I would attend a seminar on the late Father Bernard Lonergan’s theological anthropology, he said: “I am puzzled that the Stillman School of Business pays a professor of finance and international business his salary to think about theological anthropology.” I confessed to him: “I have practiced economics and finance all my professional life. I feel suffocated both intellectually and spiritually in the silo of the conventional economics and finance. I feel as if I were a prisoner in Plato’s cave. If this seminar helps me to free myself from this silo, it will be good not only for myself but also for my students as well as my school.”

I approached the three-day seminar with a convoluted mixture of the following thoughts: “Life is fired at me point-blank. What should I do? What must I do to be saved? My orthodox economist colleagues keep saying, ‘Tell us precisely what you want and we shall tell you how to get it.’ The whole point is that I do not know what I want. Maybe all I want is to be happy? But the orthodox economists’ answer ‘Tell us what you need for happiness, and we shall be able to advise you what to do’ will not do, because I do not know what I need for happiness.” I was also curious about what kind of wisdom the seminar on the theological anthropology of the late theologian/philosopher/economist Father Bernard Lonergan would provide for this sometimes wayward soul, often called by some fellow economists by such names as a “misfit,” “gad fly,” and “ex-economist (meaning X-rated economist).”

It is gratifying to find through the three-day seminar that Father Lonergan looks at the world and sees it whole. His Transcendental Method which calls for transcending oneself on four levels – experience, understanding, judging, and deciding -- is highly instructive. And his counsel for us to “be attentive,” “be intelligent,” “be reasonable,” and “be responsible” appeals to both my heart and mind.
Father Lonergan provides discussions which are not only consistent with but also complementary to those of two economists I greatly admire, Adam Smith and E. F. Schumacher.

In his *The Theory of Moral Sentiment* (1759), Adam Smith, who is known to be the father of economics, shows us what it means to be human and how we can become a better, happier, and more fulfilled human being. According to Smith, “economics is about something more important than money.” Smith believed that we humans are deeply moral animals. In this seminal book, which he deemed better-written than *The Wealth of Nations* (1776), he provides two important discussions: how to follow a moral path and how to find true happiness. Smith wrote eloquently on the futility of pursuing money with the hope of finding happiness. What matters to him is wisdom and virtue, which is equivalent to Karl Jaspers’s and Lonergan’s call for “authenticity” — the emphasis of “being one’s authentic self — not the self dictated by unauthentic culture but the free creative self.”

E F. Schumacher, author of *Small Is Beautiful* (1973) and *A Guide for the Perplexed* (1977), points out that there are two types of problems in the world — “convergent problems” and “divergent problems.” Convergent problems refer to the problems that are distinct, precise, and certain beyond any reasonable doubt. To solve such problems we rely on geometry, mathematics, quantification, measurement, and exact observation. Most mainstream economists (albeit, naively) believe that economic problems are convergent problems that can be solved by quantification and cost/benefit analysis. Divergent problems are the problems that do not yield to ordinary logic: the pair of opposites such as *Liberté* and *Egalité* (the slogan of the French Revolution). Whoever coined this slogan must have been a person of rare insight; he (or she) added a third factor — *Fraternité*, brotherliness which comes from a higher level. Liberty and equality cannot be reconciled without the third “transcending” force — brotherliness (or sisterliness).

Schumacher points out that divergent problems cannot be solved by establishing formulae or mathematical models but they can be transcended. A pair of opposites like freedom and equality cease to be opposites at the higher level, the really human level where such higher forces as brotherliness, love, compassion, understanding, and empathy become available.
Divergent problems offend the orthodox economist's mindset of "a rational agent who optimizes his utility under the given budget constraint," in which the so-called *Homo economicus* cannot move against his utility function. Such a mindset reduces a human to a clever "economic animal." According Schumacher, this gross reductionism refuses to accept the divergency of divergent problems and causes higher human faculties to remain dormant and to wither away, and "when this happens, the 'clever animal' is more likely than not to destroy itself." It is revealing that a recent study finds that college students who take microeconomics become more selfish after taking the course. If the purpose of education (especially, university education) is to develop "the whole human," mainstream economists have become unsuspecting agents of destruction in accordance with corruptio optimi pessimo. As a heterodox economist and economics educator I couldn't agree more with Schumacher when he said: "There is no economic problem and, in a sense, there never has been. But there is a moral [emphasis added] problem, and moral problems are not convergent [but ...] divergent problems, which have to be understood and transcended [emphasis added]."

The three thinkers, Lonergan, Smith, and Schumacher, are outstanding representatives of all traditional wisdom, transcending ordinary and calculating logic, and define "the Good Life" as that which helps us to become truly human by developing our higher faculties. Without them, there is no humanity, and the question of what is "the Good Life" reduces itself to the utilitarianism of the greatest happiness of the greatest number where happiness rarely implies anything more than consumerism, hedonism or Bernard Mandevillianism. In different words and styles, each of these three great thinkers serves for us as "a finger pointing to the moon," -- pointing to how we should live in the world and work out our salvation. To be saved, however, we should look at the moon rather than the finger.

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1 Roberts, R. *How Adam Smith Can Change Your Life*, (Penguin, 2014.)
2 If he were alive today, Adam Smith would wholeheartedly concur to Pope Francis's view in *Evangelii Gaudium* that the prevailing world financial system "tends to devour everything which stands in the way of increased profits" and that the common people and their environment have become "defenseless before the deniled market." Smith would also embrace the Pope's holistic view of human beings, railing against one-sided reductionist economic orthodoxy where people are reduced to mere "economic animals."
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