Modelling the Method:
A Lonergan Approach to Christian Responsibility in Interreligious Relations

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STATEMENT OF SOURCES

This thesis contains no material published elsewhere or extracted in whole or in part from a thesis by which I have qualified for or been awarded another degree or diploma.

No other person's work has been used without due acknowledgment in the main text of the thesis.

This thesis has not been submitted for the award of any degree or diploma in any other tertiary institutions.

All research procedures reported in the thesis received the approval of the relevant Ethics/Safety committees (where required).

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ABSTRACT

My thesis is a practical contribution towards interreligious relations. Religious plurality is a major challenge facing church and society at the beginning of the third millennium. In Chapter One I set the context of developments and crises in the twentieth century, and propose that Bernard Lonergan's theological method provides a way to engage the complex issues involved in interreligious relations. Because he offers a cognitional theory and an epistemology that are empirically grounded in the believing subject, Lonergan's approach is firmly and securely rooted and yet is open to the concrete reality of the religious other.

In Chapter Two I summarise and refine elements of Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness and propose that they form a "common ground" on which believers from different religions might meet. I extend that to the construction and mediation of meaning in Chapter Three, and to religious meaning in Chapter Four. In particular, I use these dynamics to distinguish between "spirituality" and "religion". I conclude that spirituality forms the "common horizon" in which believers from different religions might meet.

In Chapter Five I show how these same dynamics underlie the structural relations between different religions, the personal relations built by dialogue between believers from different religions, and a theology of religious plurality.

In Chapter Six I show how familiarity with these dynamics enlightens our understanding of selected core themes in Christian theology. My innovative treatment of aspects of Trinitarian theology, in particular the divine missions, will underpin my argument for Christian involvement in interreligious relations.

In Chapter Seven I show how Christian revelation sheds light on the dynamics of human consciousness. Since these dynamics come to a particular personal clarity and intensity in Christian revelation, and since these dynamics underlie and constitute each of the religions and the relations between them as treated in the previous chapters, I conclude that Christians have a particular responsibility in interreligious relations, and sketch some preliminary indications of that responsibility

My thesis reassures Christians that quite traditional Christian doctrines, when appropriated in accord with contemporary appreciation of human subjectivity, become motive forces for engaging with and being genuinely open to learning from the religious other, while remaining authentic to their own tradition, and challenging the other to similar authenticity. By doing so they model the method of interreligious relations. Their example will encourage others to appropriate their religious traditions in a similar, critical way and also to engage with others creatively and responsibly. Thus believers from different religions can better collaborate with each other in transforming the world in accord with God's holy desire for human and planetary flourishing.

DEDICATION

In grateful and loving memory of my father,

Michael McInerney

"*Joseph … was a righteous man.*" (Mt 1:19)*

1 November 1911—13 September 2004

R.I.P.

* Joseph was my father's chosen patron saint for confirmation.

Image: <iStockphoto.com>

DECALOGUE OF ASSISI FOR PEACE

24 January 2002

1. We commit ourselves to proclaiming our firm conviction that violence and terrorism are incompatible with the authentic spirit of religion, and, as we condemn every recourse to violence and war in the name of God or of religion, we commit ourselves to doing everything possible to eliminate the root causes of terrorism.

2. We commit ourselves to educating people to mutual respect and esteem, in order to help bring about a peaceful and fraternal coexistence between people of different ethnic groups, cultures and religions.

3. We commit ourselves to fostering the culture of dialogue, so that there will be an increase of understanding and mutual trust between individuals and among peoples, for these are the premise of authentic peace.

4. We commit ourselves to defending the right of everyone to live a decent life in accordance with their own cultural identity, and to form freely a family of his own.

5. We commit ourselves to frank and patient dialogue, refusing to consider our differences as an insurmountable barrier, but recognizing instead that to encounter the diversity of others can become an opportunity for greater reciprocal understanding.

6. We commit ourselves to forgiving one another for past and present errors and prejudices, and to supporting one another in a common effort both to overcome selfishness and arrogance, hatred and violence, and to learn from the past that peace without justice is no true peace.

7. We commit ourselves to taking the side of the poor and the helpless, to speaking out for those who have no voice and to working effectively to change these situations, out of the conviction that no one can be happy alone.

8. We commit ourselves to taking up the cry of those who refuse to be resigned to violence and evil, and we desire to make every effort possible to offer the men and women of our time real hope for justice and peace.

9. We commit ourselves to encouraging all efforts to promote friendship between peoples, for we are convinced that, in the absence of solidarity and understanding between peoples, technological progress exposes the world to a growing risk of destruction and death.

10. We commit ourselves to urging leaders of nations to make every effort to create and consolidate, on the national and international levels, a world of solidarity and peace based on justice.

<http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/letters/
2002/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_20020304_capi-
stato_en.html>

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

A project such as this draws on the work of many scholars and theologians. Their names and publications are duly acknowledged in the list of references. However, I want to acknowledge in particular my indebtedness to Bernard Lonergan SJ. Dr Kathleen Williams RSM first introduced me in depth to his work. It was a mind-opening and deeply satisfying experience to discover how seemingly disparate things in my missionary life and ministry fitted together coherently in the framework that he offered. In my subsequent study and reflection the axiom about "standing on the shoulders of giants" is particularly apt. Lonergan's foundational work informs almost every page of this thesis. If I have travelled far, it is because he has mapped the way.

I acknowledge also the believers from the many different religions who have been engaged in building relations with believers from other religions over many years. Their efforts, lives, and witness provide the inspiration and the raw material for reflection by the academics referred to above. In particular, I am very grateful to the people of Pakistan among whom I lived and worked for many years. Their faith-filled lives, often lived in difficult circumstances, testify to the importance of interreligious relations in our time.

One recent outstanding example of interreligious collaboration is the *Decalogue of Assisi for Peace*, the official communiqué of the three hundred leaders from various religions who gathered together to pray for peace in January 2002. I have included this charter for committed action in these introductory pages, along with the icon of the different religions on the previous page. The words and the image challenge and inspire me to join with all believers who are working together for better understanding and collaboration among religions for the sake of a more effective witness to, and action for, God's holy purposes in our world. I offer my thesis as a small contribution to this urgent task, in the hope that it may be of some practical help to those who are trying to understand how interreligious relations are not only possible but desirable, and as an expression of my gratitude to the many believers from all religions who are already taking up the challenge and showing us the way. May our joint efforts serve the coming Kingdom of God. Amen.

All quotations from the Holy Bible
are according to the *New Revised Standard Version*
from <"http://bible.crosswalk.com/">
unless otherwise stipulated.

CONTENTS

ABBREVIATIONS

AG   *Ad Gentes Divinitus*: Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity

CCC   Catechism of the Catholic Church

CIC   *Codex Iuris Canonici* (Code of Canon Law)

CIV   *Caritas in Veritate*: Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth

CS   Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God

CSDC   Compendium of the Social Doctrine of the Church

DI   *Dominus Iesus*: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church

DM   The Attitude of the Church toward the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission

DP   Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ

DV   *Dei Verbum*: Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation

EN   *Evangelii Nuntiandi*: On Evangelisation in the Modern World

ES   *Ecclesiam Suam*: Paths of the Church

FABC   Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences

GS   *Gaudium et Spes*: Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World

LG   *Lumen Gentium*: Dogmatic Constitution on the Church

NA   *Nostra Aetate*: Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions

RM   *Redemptoris Missio*: On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate

SS   *Spe Salvi:* On Christian Hope

STh   *Summa Theologica*

TMA   *Tertio Millennio Adveniente:* As the Third Millennium Draws Near

UR   *Unitatis Redintegratio*: Decree on Ecumenism

UUS   *Ut Unum Sint:* That They May All Be One

USCCB   United States Conference of Catholic Bishops

WR   We Remember: A Reflection on the *Shoah*

CHAPTER ONE: THE CHALLENGE OF RELIGIOUS PLURALITY IN THE TWENTIETH CENTURY

As a Columban missionary priest assigned to Pakistan for over twenty years I have hands-on experience of Christian-Muslim relations at grassroots level. I have witnessed both the devastation wrought by violent communal conflict, and instances of wonderful cooperation and harmonious coexistence. How to confront and forgive the evil of the violence, knowing that it is an aberration of the tradition and not representative of the majority of the believers, while at the same time honouring the victims? How to acknowledge and learn from the goodness of the collaboration, knowing that its ultimate source is the one God in whom both Christians and Muslims believe, but without syncretism or devaluing either tradition?

After sabbatical studies I came to believe there is a way to engage these complex issues of religious plurality,[1] a way that is grounded in human experience and reaches to the heights and depths of philosophical and theological enquiry. That way was charted by Bernard Lonergan, and follows the dynamics of human consciousness.

From these opening paragraphs, it is obvious that I am not a remote observer of interreligious relations from a distance, but am in the middle of the fray. Moreover, I engage in those relations from a committed stance, as a Roman

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[1] I use the words "plurality" (or "diversity") to indicate the *de facto* historical multiplicity or variety of religions. I reserve the word "pluralism" to refer to the stance taken towards that plurality which considers the different religions to be, in principle, equal.

Catholic Christian, a missionary priest, who is dedicated to building better relations between Christians and Muslims. Rather than detracting from my objectivity, my personal commitment enhances and shapes my particular contribution, pushing my subjectivity out of its narrow confines to expand into a greater knowledge and appreciation of reality.

It is also significant that interreligious dialogue is not an academic task as such, but an apostolic activity, "a part of the Church's evangelizing mission." (RM, 55) By subjecting that activity to the rigour of academic analysis, in this thesis I formulate a reasoned argument that will support and encourage fellow Christians who are already involved in interreligious relations, and hopefully also draw other Christians to become involved. Since my approach is informed by Christian and specifically Catholic faith, I acknowledge that not every element of my thesis will be immediately credible to those who do not share this faith horizon, but I hope that the model of reasoned argument and the ideal of human authenticity will be readily accessible to them, so that secularists and believers from other religions alike can adapt it in terms of their respective traditions.

Given that Christian involvement with other religions has an apostolic purpose, much of the literature on interreligious dialogue is written from an ecclesial perspective (though other religions and even civil society do have a vested interest in promoting harmonious relations between believers from different religions). Some of that literature precedes interreligious dialogue. It is explanatory and motivational, explaining what interreligious dialogue is,

what it is not, and encouraging Christians to be involved. Other literature follows interreligious dialogue. In the light of the lived experience of and reflection on interreligious dialogue, supplemented by further information acquired from studies of religion, it seeks to formulate a Christian theology of religious plurality. My thesis draws on both sets of literature, but its practical purpose is situated between them. Modelled on Lonergan's approach to receiving and handing on the Christian tradition, it provides a method for engaging with and processing the wealth of information about other religious traditions. More particularly, since dialogue in the full sense of the world always involves personal encounter with the other, and since persons become through risking the adventure of knowing and loving others, and of being known and loved by them, my approach seeks to go beyond the many beliefs and creeds of the different religions, to encourage openness to the believers themselves, to the persons who hold these beliefs and whose lives are shaped by them, to meet them, to engage with them, to learn from them, to be challenged by them and at times to challenge them, so that together we all grow in following God's purposes for promoting human and planetary wellbeing.

For the rest of this introductory chapter, I will briefly sketch the global, ecclesial and theological context in which this project takes shape. I will then introduce Bernard Lonergan and the intentionality analysis basic to his theological method. Finally, I shall give an overview of my thesis and its component chapters, throughout which I develop and apply this analysis in the

service of interreligious dialogue and clarifying Christian responsibilities in this respect.

Accordingly, the following headings will structure this introductory material:

1. The Global Context Today;

2. The Ecclesial Response;

3. Theological Responses;

4. Lonergan and His Method;

5. Overview and Chapters of the Thesis.

1. The Global Context Today

Relations between believers from different religions became increasingly controversial during the twentieth century. On the one hand, following phenomenal expansion in the eighteenth and nineteenth century missionary movements in Asia, Africa, Latin America and the Pacific, in the early nineteen hundreds some expected the twentieth century to be "the Christian century". It was predicted that many would abandon other religions to embrace Christianity.[2] On the other hand, some secularists and humanists expected that advances in scientific knowledge of the world would render appeals to transcendent sources for explanation redundant. The credulous would no longer have need of a creed, and all religions would cease to exist.

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[2] See John Hick, "The Non-Absoluteness of Christianity", in *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. John Hick and Paul F Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987).

As the century unfolded neither scenario eventuated. Far from capitulating to a triumphant Christianity, other religions actually experienced a revival. They contributed to the struggle for independence from colonial rule and to the forging of national identities. This gave them status in the newly independent states that sprang up in the middle of the century, as for example in Israel and Pakistan. As a result these religions experienced renewal and a resurgence of influence across the world.

While the Christian Churches experienced a decline in status and influence in the postmodern (or paramodern[3]) world in Europe, North America and Australia, there is a burgeoning popular interest in spirituality, meditation, prayer and New Age phenomena, as evidenced in the vast array of titles available in bookstores. Although the number of those practising Christianity in its traditional form, especially among the younger generation, has declined in the countries just mentioned, there are still many loyal adherents. They constitute a significant bloc of opinion, especially in the United States of America. However, across the world there is marked growth in Pentecostal-style communities. For both these reasons, secular politicians have learned to court the religious vote. Moreover, while Christian influence and values are no longer assumed in the secularised "West" and are subjected to contestation in the marketplace of public opinion, the rapidly increasing numbers of Christians in Asia, Africa and Latin America, in both the evangelical and more traditional

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[3] For treatment of modernity, postmodernity and paramodernity, see "Cultures: Some Insights", in Gerald A. Arbuckle, *From Chaos to Mission: Refounding Religious Life Formation* (Homebush NSW: St Paul Publications, 1996), 42-57.

forms of Church life, is remarkable. In this respect, Christianity has undergone a demographic "shift to the Global South".[4]

While no Christian hegemony eventuated, neither were the imperialistic ambitions of secularism realised. Modernity's promises of technological advances leading to prosperity and wellbeing for all proved illusory. Unbridled technology and rampant consumerism, devoid of religious sanction and moral evaluation, only served to increase the divide between rich and poor, and precipitated disastrous consequences. The pollution of the earth, air, and water systems, the ecological crisis, and global warming, the loss of species diversity, all combine to threaten the very survival of the planet on which all depend.[5]

As a result of failed hopes and insecurity about the future, many people have abandoned religion; others seek solace in versions of religions that either look to a golden age in the past or to the promise of consolations to be found only in the future; and there are those who seek ways to bring their respective religious heritages to bear on the challenges of the present. To meet these various needs, an array of religions (and secular ideologies) jostles for consideration.[6]

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[4] For treatment of the demographic shift, see "The Rise of the New Christianity", in Philip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 93-124.

[5] For treatment of the dramatic challenges facing the contemporary world as a result of human injustice and disregard of the environment see "The Threat to Life on Earth" in Sean McDonagh, *To Care for the Earth: A Call to a New Theology* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986), 15-103.

[6] For a summary of the complexities involved from a Christian point of view see "The Dialogue of the Religions and the Relationship between Judaism and Christianity" in Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, *Many Religions - One Covenant: Israel, the Church and the World*, trans. Graham Harrison (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1999).

The world of today is characterised by waves of migrants seeking jobs in the industries of their former colonial masters. Refugees flee conflict, famine and ecological devastation. As a result, believers from different religions now live and work side by side in schools, factories, offices, universities, and suburbs. They play in the same sports teams, shop in the same supermarkets, and occasionally live in the same home—as when a family member converts to another religion or when interreligious marriages take place.

While religious plurality has always been a fact of life in most societies, relative geographical isolation ensured that the religious other was more the exception than the rule—either as a minority accommodated by the majority, or as a majority subservient to the ruling religious status quo. But now the exception is the rule. The status quo is the plurality of religions (and secular ideologies), each with its claims on personal allegiance and public space, time and resources. And if religious diversity is not the case in a particular country or city or suburb, then the modern means of instant global communication beam that reality onto the screens of the TVs in our living rooms, the computers in our offices and homes, and even onto our mobile phones. Today we are inescapably confronted by religious plurality on a scale unprecedented in history.

This bewildering variety of religions, the rapid pace and extent of change that modern technological advances have made possible, and the discovery of plurality within traditions that modern historical scholarship has revealed, have led to another twentieth-century phenomenon popularly known as

"fundamentalism".[7] Although its strands are many and varied, the basic motivation is a flight from personal and communal responsibility. Confronted by the vast array of choices available in the contemporary world, some people take refuge in an authority figure or institution and use this as a bulwark to defend traditional religious values from the corrosive effects of secularism and relativism. Rather than taking personal responsibility for shaping their religion in the present, they appeal to a sacred text, a sacred institution, or a sacred law, and attempt to recreate a supposed "golden age" from the past. This ideological trend cuts across all religious, denominational, and secular traditions.

Finally, there is the complex problem of interreligious conflict and violence. The absolute commitment that religion inspires may be channelled into less than transcendent ends, be they political, economic, social, ethnic or national. When this is intensified by any variety of fundamentalisms, the "other" is perceived to be the cause of felt injustice or grievance; this "other" then becomes a threat to be resisted, or even eliminated. The last decades of the past century have seen a dramatic rise in religiously inspired violence. Some examples are the communal violence that marked the birth of Pakistan and India, the seemingly endless conflict between Arabs/Palestinians and the State of Israel, the occasional spates of communal violence in Hindu-majority India against Muslims and against Christians, the ethnic strife in Sri Lanka, the turmoil of the Iranian Revolution and its ongoing repercussions in the Middle East, the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers and the Pentagon in the USA

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[7] For a summary treatment of fundamentalism, see John Locke SJ, "The Call to a Renewed Church in Asia and the Challenges of Religious Fundamentalism", in *FABC Papers* (2000).[cited 9 March 2009]; available from <http://www.ucanews.com/html/fabc-papers/fabc-92m.htm>.

on 11 September 2001, the Bali Bombings on 12 October 2002, the Madrid train bombings on 11 March 2004, the London Underground bombings on 7 and 21 July 2005, the terrorist attacks on Mumbai from 26 to 29 November 2008 … the bloody litany of religiously sanctioned violence between believers from different religions goes on and on—perhaps surpassed only by the fratricidal violence within the religious traditions themselves.[8]

The co-opting of religion for violence has its counterpart in the secular world—Lenin, Hitler, Stalin, Mao, Pol Pot and other leaders oversaw atrocities on a vast scale in the name of racial, nationalist and political agendas. Not to be forgotten are the deaths that daily continue to be inflicted on countless millions by poverty, injustice, and the lack of basic hygiene and medicine—all of which could easily be addressed with minimal cost by collective efforts from the wealthy nations.

The cumulative effect is that the twentieth century has been the bloodiest in human history, and religions have been a factor: for ill, when they have been used, abused and misused for ulterior ends; and for the good, when they have inspired believers to transcend differences, and to work for justice, peace, and reconciliation.

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[8] See Daniel A Madigan SJ, "A Common Word Between Us and You: Some Initial Reflections", in *Thinking Faith* (London: Jesuit Media Initiatives, 2008), 5-6.

2. The Ecclesial Response

Christians of all denominations have been confronted by this new global context of religious plurality. They have often experienced it as a challenge to long-held doctrines about the uniqueness and universality of Jesus Christ, and his identity and role as Saviour. The mediating role of the Church in the economy of salvation has also been called into question.[9]

In the early part of the twentieth century, the Catholic Church's position was basically reactionary. It manifested a defensive re-assertion of Christian and ecclesial identity in the face of the loss of status suffered under modernity. This attitude may be characterised by the ancient adage of St Cyprian: *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* ("outside the Church no salvation"). However, as the twentieth century unfolded, pioneering theologians, such as Karl Barth, Paul Tillich, Wolfhart Pannenburg and Jürgen Moltmann in the Protestant tradition, and Yves Congar, Jean Danielou, Henri de Lubac, Hans Urs von Balthasar and Karl Rahner in the Roman Catholic tradition, began to explore new ways of conceiving the Church's relationship to the modern world.[10]

Pope Paul VI captured this new spirit of openness in his programmatic encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*: "To this internal drive of charity which tends to become the external gift of charity, we will give the name of 'dialogue', which has in these days come into common usage" (ES, 64). This is the first time

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[9] For a summary history of the Church's attitude to believers from other religions, see Francis A. Sullivan SJ, *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1992).

[10] For a summary of these developments, see Jacques Dupuis, *Toward A Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1997).

that the word "dialogue" is used in Catholic magisterial teaching, and it occurs over eighty times in this encyclical. Paul VI calls it the "dialogue of salvation" (nn. 72ff), and envisages concentric circles of the peoples to whom it is addressed—all humankind (nn. 97-106), all religious believers (nn. 107-108), all Christians (nn. 109-112), all Catholics (nn. 113-118). Vatican II took up the same schema in *Lumen Gentium* (the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church) and in *Gaudium et Spes* (the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), but in reverse order:

> All are called to this catholic unity of the people of God which prefigures and promotes universal peace. And to it belong, or are related in different ways: the catholic faithful, others who believe in Christ, and finally all of humankind, called by God's grace to salvation. (LG, 13; see also GS, 92)

The very positive attitude in the documents of Vatican II is widely acknowledged as a watershed in relations with believers from other religions. The same Constitution states:

> Whatever of good or truth is found amongst them is considered by the church to be a preparation for the Gospel and given by him who enlightens all men and women that they may at length have life. (LG, 16)

> … whatever good is found sown in people's hearts and minds, or in the rites and customs of peoples, is not only saved from destruction, but is purified, raised up, and perfected for the glory of God, the confusion of the devil, and the happiness of humanity. (LG, 17)

Similarly in *Ad Gentes*, the Decree on the Church's Missionary Activity:

> So whatever goodness is found in people's minds and hearts, or in the particular customs and cultures of peoples, far from being lost is purified, raised to a higher level and reaches its perfection, for the glory of God, the confusion of the demon, and the happiness of humankind. (AG, 9)

The most positive assertion of the Council regarding God's effective salvific concern for believers from other religions is found in *Gaudium et Spes.* Speaking of salvation—and definitively overturning any fundamentalist appeal to the ancient Cyprian adage, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*—it states:

> All this holds true not only for Christians but also for all people of good will in whose hearts grace is active invisibly. For since Christ died for everyone, and since all are in fact called to one and the same destiny, which is divine, we must hold that the Holy Spirit offers to all the possibility of being made partners, in a way known to God, in the paschal mystery. (GS, 22)

The document that deals specifically with other religions is *Nostra Aetate* (the Declaration on the Relation of the Church to Non-Christian Religions). It describes the role of these religions as answering the deepest human questions (n. 1), and specifically names Hinduism and Buddhism (n. 2), Islam (n. 3), and Judaism (n. 4). That document states:

> The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. It has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from its own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men and women. (NA, 2)

It immediately affirms the Church's conviction:

> Yet it proclaims, and is in duty bound to proclaim without fail, Christ who is the way, the truth and the life (Jn 14:6). (NA, 2)

And it concludes the section with this exhortation:

> The church, therefore, urges its sons and daughters to enter with prudence and charity into discussion and collaboration with members of other religions. Let Christians, while witnessing to their own faith and way of life, acknowledge, preserve and encourage the spiritual and moral truths found among non-Christians, together with their social life and culture. (NA, 2)

To implement this new attitude, Paul VI established the *Secretariat for Non-Christians* on 17 May 1964.[11] He also established the *Secretariat for Non-Believers*.[12] The task of these two new offices was to research, study and promote this new attitude in the Church, and to engage with representatives from different religions and with atheists. Throughout the world, dioceses and national conferences of bishops also established commissions for relations with believers from other religions. Similar offices were established in other Christian denominations, in the World Council of Churches,[13] and in National Councils of Churches. These different organisations also established links with representative bodies from other religions and with each other. A myriad of activities, consultations, studies, reports, explorations, and meetings ensued.

However, implementing this vision of the Council gave rise to new questions. Had dialogue replaced conversion? Was it enough for Muslims to be good Muslims, Hindus to be good Hindus? Was mission still necessary? There were grave misgivings too. In this new climate of religious tolerance, the motivation for mission seemed to evaporate. Is dialogue a betrayal of the missionary mandate? What about the Great Commission to preach the

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[11] Pope John Paul II re-named it the *Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue* (PCID) on 28 June 1998. Their website is <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/interelg/index.htm>. N.B. Because of the special relationship that exists between Judaism and Christianity, relations with Jews are not treated by the PCID, but a *Commission of the Holy See for Religious Relations with the Jews* was established within the *Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity* on 22 October 1974. Their website is <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/sub-index/index_relations-jews.htm>.

[12] Pope John Paul II re-named it the *Pontifical Council for Dialogue with Non-Believers* on the 30 June 1988, and on 25 March 1993 he merged it into the *Pontifical Council for Culture*, which he had founded eleven years earlier on 25 May 1982. The Council's website is <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/cultr/index.htm>.

[13] Originally established in 1971 as the *Sub-unit on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies* it is now called the *Programme for Inter-religious Dialogue and Cooperation*. Their website is <http://www.oikoumene.org/en/programmes/interreligiousdialogue.html>.

Gospel message to all nations (cf. Mt 28:16-20; Mk 16:14-18; Lk 24:44-49; Acts 1:4-8; and Jn 20:19-23)?

To respond to these questions and anxieties, in 1984 the Secretariat for Non-Christians published *The Attitude of the Church toward the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission.*[14] It treated the origin and expressions of mission, the foundations and forms of dialogue, and concluded with reflections on the relationship between dialogue and mission. Unfortunately, both the title and structure of the document gave the impression that dialogue and mission were separate activities.

To clarify the role of dialogue within the mission of the Church, the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue (the Secretariat for Non-Christians, as re-named by Pope John Paul II on 28 June 1998) and the Congregation for the Evangelization of Peoples embarked on a joint process of consultation and drafting and in 1991 together published *Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.*[15] Terms were more carefully defined with a view to consistency. For instance, the word "proclamation" was employed rather than "mission" or "evangelisation" for inviting people to accept faith in Christ and to be baptised into the Church. In this way, the Church's position

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[14] Secretariat for Non-Christians, *The Attitude of the Church Towards the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission* (Strathfield, NSW: Columban Mission Institute, 2008).

[15] Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples, *Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ* (Strathfield, NSW: Columban Mission Institute, 2008). For a detailed analysis, see Jacques Dupuis, "A Theological Commentary: *Dialogue and Proclamation*", in *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading* Redemptoris Missio *and* Dialogue and Proclamation, ed. William R Burrows (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993).

was clarified and developed further. The document appealed to a scriptural and theological basis for dialogue, and affirmed its place in the mission of the Church. Different forms of dialogue were acknowledged, along with what favoured or impeded it. Moreover, this document affirmed the mandate of Christ, the role of the Church, its reliance on the Holy Spirit, and the content, urgency, and manner of proclamation. In a final section, the relationship between dialogue and proclamation was addressed. What was established clearly for the first time was that dialogue is not just a preparation for mission, but is itself already an integral part of mission.

> Proclamation and dialogue are thus both viewed, each in its own place, as component elements and authentic forms of the one evangelizing mission of the Church. They are both oriented towards the communication of salvific truth. (DP, 2)

> Interreligious dialogue and proclamation, though not on the same level, are both authentic elements of the Church's evangelizing mission. Both are legitimate and necessary. They are intimately related, but not interchangeable: true interreligious dialogue on the part of the Christian supposes the desire to make Jesus Christ better known, recognized and loved; proclaiming Jesus Christ is to be carried out in the Gospel spirit of dialogue. The two activities remain distinct but, as experience shows, one and the same local Church, one and the same person, can be diversely engaged in both. (DP, 77)

Responding to similar concerns about a weakening of the Church's missionary thrust towards non-Christians, on the twenty-fifth anniversary of *Ad Gentes*, on 7 December 1990, just months before *Dialogue and Proclamation* was published, John Paul II published the encyclical *Redemptoris Missio: On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate*.[16] Among other topics, he treated Jesus Christ, the Kingdom and the Holy Spirit. He went on

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[16] John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio: On the Permanent Validity of the Church's Missionary Mandate* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1990). For a detailed analysis, see Marcello Zago OMI, "Commentary on *Redemptoris Missio*", in *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading* Redemptoris Missio *and* Dialogue & Proclamation, ed. William R. Burrows (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1993).

to examine proclamation (nn. 44-45), conversion and baptism (nn. 46-47), and dialogue with our brothers and sisters in other religions (nn. 55-57). Though this encyclical contains the assertion "Proclamation is the permanent priority of mission" (RM, 44), the Pope went on to claim:

> … the Church sees no conflict between proclaiming Christ and engaging in interreligious dialogue. Instead, she feels the need to link the two in the context of her mission *ad gentes*. These two elements must maintain both their intimate connection and their distinctiveness; therefore they should not be confused, manipulated, or regarded as identical, as though they were interchangeable. (RM, 55)

John Paul II gave great impetus to interreligious dialogue through the themes he treated in this and other teaching—on the common origin and common destiny of all human beings, on the common salvation of all in Christ, on the universal role and action of the Holy Spirit, on the positive role of other religions in God's providence. To give one example, where Vatican II spoke of religions obliquely and indirectly in terms of "the rites and customs of people" (LG, 17), John Paul II spoke directly and boldly:

> God … does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, *of which their religions are the main and essential expression*, even when they contain "gaps, insufficiencies and errors." (RM, 55) [italics mine]

John Paul's commitment was also manifest in dramatic ways. He visited the Great Synagogue of Rome on 13 April 1986, the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus on 6 May 2001, met with religious leaders during his travels, and received them in the Vatican. And in Assisi on 27 October 1986 and again on

24 January 2002, he invited representatives of different religions to come together to pray for peace.[17]

It must also be acknowledged that leaders and theologians of other Christian Churches, their national and international organisations, and the World Council of Churches, had been making similar strides in facing the demands of the new pluralistic context of the day. Likewise, leaders of other religions have not only been responding to Christian initiatives but also making overtures of their own to the larger interreligious world.

3. Theological Responses

The intent of Vatican II and the subsequent teaching was clear—the Church wished to have a new relationship with believers from other religions—but it also raised many questions. Was this new attitude towards other religions a departure from the tradition? How could it be justified? What were the practical implications? Vatican II had pointed the new direction, but theologians had to scout the new territory. Vatican II had spoken positively of the salvation of individuals, but to avoid theological controversy which might split the Council, it had remained silent on the theological status of those religions. Were people saved despite their religions, or in and through them? Were the religions only a "preparation for the Gospel" (LG, 16) to be superseded by the Church? Or did the many religions have an enduring significance in the one divine plan of salvation?

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[17] The concluding statement of this gathering, *The Decalogue of Assisi for Peace*, is included in the introduction to this thesis, p. vii.

Since the beginning of the twentieth century Christian theologians had been considering models for a theology of religious plurality, with all the possible variations and emphases involved in the positions of exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism. Each has its strengths and weaknesses. Vatican II had clearly moved away from exclusivism, but avoided embracing either of the alternative models. It was left to the theologians to find a way forward. Feeling that the threefold model constrains religions in an alien framework, some, mindful of the Asian perspective that boasted millennia of religious coexistence, proposed a further model of "acceptance" or "friendship". However, no single model has won overwhelming acceptance and the issue continues to be debated.[18] To replace the older ecclesio-centricism, fresh and supposedly more inclusive paradigms were proposed. Recent literature reveals the variants of what has been termed Christo-centrism, logo-centrism, pneumo-centrism, theo-centrism, Reality-centred-ness (Hick), regno-centrism, and soterio-centrism (Knitter). As we shall see, all these proved to be, in one way or another, either too abstract to be of any practical use, or too concrete to be of any theoretical value. Theological debate continued.

In 1997 Jacques Dupuis published *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*[19] in which he reviewed the history of the Church's attitude towards other religions and proposed a modified form of inclusive pluralism. His work attracted the attention of the Vatican's Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, who were concerned that some theological speculation was

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[18] For an excellent summary of the different models, their variants, and their strengths and weaknesses, from a Christian perspective, see Paul F Knitter, *Introducing Theologies of Religions* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002).

[19] Henceforth: Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*.

undermining the traditional understanding of the role of Jesus Christ and the Church. In an attempt to set some parameters to the theological debate, in August 2000 they published the declaration *Dominus Iesus*: *On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church.*[20] Some months later they issued a *Notification* on Dupuis's book. Although they "recognized the author's attempt to remain within the limits of orthodoxy", they nonetheless concluded that "his book contained notable ambiguities and difficulties on important doctrinal points, which could lead a reader to harmful or erroneous opinions".[21] Not surprisingly, the chapter titles of *Dominus Iesus* and the chapter headings of the *Notification* more or less coincide.[22]

Other theologians exploring new ways of expressing the role and identity of Jesus Christ in this new context of religious plurality have also come under censure, notably Roger Haight, working from a postmodern perspective,[23] and John Sobrino working from a liberation theology perspective.[24] In 2004 Peter Phan published *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on*

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[20] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus: On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church* (Sherbrook, QC: Mediaspaul, 2000).

[21] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Notification on the Book Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism by Father Jacques Dupuis SJ,* (2001 [cited 29 May 2008]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20010124_dupuis_en.html>.

[22] For an account of the handling of this case, see Gerald O'Collins S.J., "Jacques Dupuis: His Person and Work", in *In Many and Diverse Ways: In Honor of Jacques Dupuis*, ed. Daniel Kendall SJ and Gerald O'Collins SJ (New York: Orbis Books, 2003).

[23] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Notification on the Book Jesus Symbol of God by Father Roger Haight SJ,* (2004 [cited 29 May 2008]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20041213_notification-fr-haight_en.html>.

[24] Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Notification on the Works of Fr Jon Sobrino SJ,* (2006 [cited 29 May 2008]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20061126_notification-sobrino_en.html>.

Interfaith Dialogue.[25] In 2007 the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Bishops sought clarifications from him on this work, and the chapter headings of their statement also echo the chapter titles of *Dominus Iesus*.[26]

The preceding summary shows that at the end of the twentieth century the role and identity of Jesus Christ and the Church in relation to religious plurality had become a contested area in Catholic theology. The basic issue was how to honour the integrity of the Church's tradition and at the same time to honour the integrity of other religions? How can this balancing act be done and at the same time provide for fruitful engagement between them? How can one balance fidelity to one's own tradition with creativity and genuine openness to the other? Not only Catholics, but Christians from other traditions, and believers from other religions, were struggling with the same issue of integrity to one's own tradition and genuine openness to the other.

4. Lonergan and His Method

(a) A Way Forward

As mentioned above, having been confronted by the lived experience of religious plurality, and having done further studies in theology, including the

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[25]Peter C. Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2004).

[26] Committee on Doctrine USCCB, *Clarifications Required by the Book Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue by Reverend Peter C. Phan* (2007 [cited 14 May 2008]); available from <http://www.usccb.org/dpp/StatementonBeingReligiousInterreligiously.pdf>.

theological method developed by the Canadian Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984), I became convinced that his provides a way forward to a deeper understanding and critical practice of interreligious dialogue. He developed a collaborative framework for appropriating and handing on the Christian theological tradition. He indicated that his method can also be applied to other spheres of human living.[27] In this thesis I will show how it can be useful in responding to the challenges and new questions that religious plurality poses at the beginning of the third millennium.

Although Lonergan did not undertake any detailed treatment of religious plurality as such, several of his articles address the topic,[28] and there are comments throughout his other works that are indicative of his approach. Other authors have taken up these hints and developed them, in particular Frederick Crowe,[29] and more recently Peter Drilling.[30] The most sustained treatment of religious plurality in English using Lonergan's approach is

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[27] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 364-366.
[28] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004); Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Future of Christianity", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Prolegomena to the Study of the Emerging Religious Consciousness of our Time", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985); Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Response of the Jesuit as Priest and Apostle in the Modern World", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).
[29] Frederick E. Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12, no. 2 (1994); Frederick E. Crowe, "Son and Spirit: Tension in the Divine Missions?", in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989); Frederick E. Crowe, "Son of God, Holy Spirit, and World Religions", in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1989).
[30] See "Interreligious Dialogue on the Divine" in Peter Drilling, *Premodern Faith in a Postmodern Culture: A Contemporary Theology of the Trinity* (Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc., 2006).

Lonergan, Spirituality and the World Religions by Vernon Gregson.[31] While Gregson adopts the perspective of human subjectivity as the ground for dialogue between religious believers, and between religious and secular, and develops this in terms of the psychology of the subject, I focus more on the dynamics of consciousness that are involved in these different relations as the basis for a methodological engagement between different religions. My refinement of Lonergan's analysis of these dynamics and their close correlation with the dynamics of interreligious relations is a new adaptation of his method. As such, it forms my original contribution to the field of knowledge in a way that is doubly missionary—it is on the frontier of the Church's engagement with believers from other religions, and also on the frontier of Lonergan's thought and applying it in a new way to this new issue.

The reason Bernard Lonergan's approach is particularly apt for building relations between believers from different religions is that his analysis goes beyond the concepts, outward expressions and structures of religions to their source and origin in the dynamics of graced human consciousness.[32] He proposes that this pattern of operations is normative, and invites his readers to discover those norms in themselves. He proposes that they are common to all people of all time, and that they are the generative source of all human societies, cultures and religions across human history. It is this claim of a normative dynamic common to all people across the divisions of religion that

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[31] Vernon Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and the Meeting of Religions*, vol. 2, *College Theology Society Studies in Religion* (Lanham, New York, London: University Press of America, 1985).
[32] For a critical grounding in Lonergan's approach to religion see Frederick E. Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", in *Developing the Lonergan Legacy: Historical, Theoretical and Existential Themes*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

suggests possibilities of its application for a fruitful approach to interreligious relations.

In the Preface to *Insight,* and repeated in the Epilogue, Lonergan writes:

> *Thoroughly understand what it is to understand, and not only will you understand the broad lines of all there is to be understood but also you will possess a fixed base, and invariant pattern, opening upon all further developments of understanding.*[33] [italics in original]

In *Method* he writes:

> There is then a rock on which one can build … The rock, then, is the subject in his [*sic*] conscious, unobjectified attentiveness, intelligence, reasonableness, responsibility.[34]

These dynamics of consciousness are the foundation of Lonergan's approach. I will summarise them briefly shortly below, and will refine and build on them in subsequent chapters.

(b) Biography

First, a brief biographical note on Bernard Lonergan.[35] He was born in Buckingham, Quebec in 1904, and raised in a Catholic household where he received a standard Catholic education. In 1922 he joined the Jesuits and did his initial studies in Guelph, Heythrop and Montreal. His early interests were in economics and history, but it was his subsequent work in foundational

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[33] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding*, vol. 3, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1992), 22. The exact phrase is repeated towards the end of the Epilogue (pp. 770-1).

[34] Lonergan, *Method*, 19-20.

[35] For a summary biography, see Frederick E. Crowe, *Lonergan*, ed. Brian Davies OP, *Outstanding Christian Thinkers Series* (Collegeville, MN: A Michael Glazier Book. The Liturgical Press, 1992). For a summary assessment of Lonergan's achievement, see Frederick E. Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise* (Cambridge, MA: Cowley Publications, 1980).

philosophical and theological issues that first won him a dedicated following. After studying theology in Rome he was ordained a priest in 1936. Following tertianship in Amiens and some teaching in Montreal, in 1938 he went to Rome for doctoral studies in theology. His stay was abruptly ended when he had to leave Rome at the start of World War II and was assigned to teach theology first in Montreal and then in Toronto. During this time in Canada he wrote his groundbreaking philosophical work, *Insight*.[36] The scope of the text was hastily rounded off when he was assigned to teach in Rome from 1953. He continued to publish theological material (in Latin) for his students in Rome and to pursue his interest in the foundational process of theology. In February 1965 he made his major breakthrough to the functional specialties. However, major surgery and prolonged recovery intervened, and it was not until 1972 that his second equally groundbreaking work was published, *Method in Theology*.[37] He continued to lecture and publish many articles over the subsequent years until his retirement. He died in 1984 and is buried in Guelph. The University of Toronto is publishing a projected twenty-volume series of *The Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan*.

(c) Method

Lonergan, in his method based on intentionality analysis, identifies four interrelated component activities within the self-transcending dynamism of

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[36] Lonergan, *Insight*. For a detailed biographical account of Lonergan leading up to and including the writing of *Insight* and the content and context of the book, see William A Mathews, *Lonergan's Quest: A Study of Desire in the Authoring of Insight* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2005).
[37] Henceforth: Lonergan, *Method*.

human consciousness.[38] I briefly indicate the intentional structure and component activities with the following observations:

1. When something catches our attention, we attend to the data of sense and consciousness. We advert to sights, sounds, smells, feel, taste, memory, and imagination. The first imperative for an alert and responsible existence is found in the imperative: "Be attentive!"

2. Then we spontaneously ask: "What is it?" We seek to understand what it is that has drawn our interest. We seek for insights, an intelligent understanding of the object, which we then formulate in a possible answer to the question. And we keep on asking questions, getting more and more insights, answering now this aspect and now that, combining the many insights and partial answers until we have a single comprehensive hypothesis that accounts for all the data of experience and overlooks nothing. The answer to the basic question could be anything at all, as there are no restrictions on the reach of human enquiry. In all this, the demand is: "Be intelligent!"

3. Then we ask: "Is it so?" Is my hypothesis correct? Is my theory accurate? Or is it just a bright idea without any substance in reality? Is it just a figment of my imagination, or is it real? To answer these questions, we search out the conditions which would confirm or deny the hypothesis, and test whether or not they are fulfilled in the data.

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[38] For a summary treatment, see Robert M. Doran, "Lonergan: An Appreciation", in *The Desires of the Human Heart: An Introduction to the Theology of Bernard Lonergan*, ed. Vernon Gregson (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1988).

This in turn leads to a judgment that what I have understood and proposed is or is not actually true, is or is not real. The answer to this basic question is not open-ended, as in the previous operation, but is either "yes" or "no" (or the appropriate degree of probability determined by the extent to which the conditions have or have not been fulfilled). The imperative here is: "Be reasonable!"

4. Finally, having determined the truth or reality of the object in question, we ask: "So what?" What is the appropriate response to what I have affirmed as true, real, good, holy? We engage those questions and come up with an answer, and if we act accordingly, then we enjoy the pleasure of a good conscience, and if we do not act accordingly, we suffer the penalty of a bad conscience. The relevant imperative at this point is: "Be responsible!"

Lonergan claims that every human enterprise is based on these four ways in which consciousness operates: we attend to experience; we understand that experience to form an intelligent hypothesis; we judge that hypothesis to arrive at a reasonable affirmation; we evaluate that judgment to arrive at a responsible decision or choice.

Lonergan readily admits that this process can and does go astray. He details four ways in which this happens, which he calls bias.

- Dramatic bias is the virtually unconscious motivation by means of which we shield ourselves from unwanted insights that if adverted to would challenge us to change, to grow, to become better persons. By avoiding these insights—by suppressing them so they do not rise to the surface of consciousness and repressing them when they do—we allow ourselves to settle for the already established routine, for the *status quo*, for mediocrity.[39]

- Individual or egoistic bias is selectivity in choosing only what serves one's own interests and refusing to consider its wider implications for others.[40] It is easily recognisable to others, but not to the one who is enmeshed in the centre of the narcissistic web.

- Communal or group bias is individual bias writ large. It is selectivity in choosing only what serves the interests of one's own group and refusing to consider its impact on others. The alienation that it causes eventually invites its own reversal, for the disadvantaged rise up in rebellion against the privileged to set up a counter system to benefit their own interests. The alternating dominance of the two groups is the shorter cycle of decline.[41]

- Common sense bias confuses the criteria that are proper to each of the two types of human knowledge. Common sense knowing is knowledge

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[39] For detailed treatment, see Lonergan, *Insight*, 214-227.
[40] For detailed treatment, see Lonergan, *Insight*, 244-247.
[41] For detailed treatment, see Lonergan, *Insight*, 247-250.

of things in relation to us and concerns the concrete, the practical, and the immediate. Theoretical knowing is knowledge of things as they are in themselves and in relation to each other, quite apart from our consideration of them. Common sense bias aborts the drive of consciousness to know things as they are by presuming omni-competence, that its own specialised methodology for knowing the concrete and immediate is all that is required. It settles for pragmatic solutions, no matter how ill-conceived they may be, and disparages the time and effort involved in rigorous scientific research that is required for unravelling complex problems. Common sense bias, since it is shared by all, is the most difficult to detect and to eradicate. Since this propensity for *ad hoc* common sense solutions over rigorous theoretical solutions affects the whole society rather than group interests, it condones, contributes to and prolongs the longer cycle of decline.[42]

Despite the cumulative havoc that these four biases cause, all is not lost. A new beginning is possible: the dynamism of consciousness seeking the true, the real, the good and the holy can be restored and even advanced through conversion. Lonergan details three types of conversion:[43]

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[42] For detailed treatment, see Lonergan, *Insight*, 225-242.

[43] Lonergan also spoke approvingly of Doran's proposal of "a fourth conversion: It occurs when we uncover within ourselves the working of our own psyches". (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Reality, Myth, Symbol", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004). Psychic conversion is the change from suppressing and repressing the energies of the psyche to releasing and acknowledging the insights they portend. It is a deliberate choice, opening ourselves to the affect-laden symbols in our own psyche that occasion insight at every level of operation of our consciousness. For detailed treatment, see Robert M. Doran, *Theology and the Dialectics of History* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 42-63. Late in his career, Lonergan also wrote of "affective conversion" (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985).Affective conversion is when we fall in love. I suggest it may

- Intellectual conversion is repudiating the popular myth that knowing is like looking and replacing it with the recognition that knowing is a compound of attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding and reasonable judging (and believing).[44]

- Moral conversion is changing the criterion of one's decisions and choices from mere satisfactions—from simple attraction to what feels good and avoiding what feels bad—to values. It is moving the criterion for choosing from mere sensation to objective value.[45]

- "Religious conversion is being grasped by ultimate concern."[46] It is the reach of our consciousness being fulfilled by Transcendent Mystery. It is the restlessness of our consciousness being brought to rest in the fullness of Being. It is the longing of our desire being satisfied in our belonging to Mystery. It is our self-transcendence caught up in Transcendence itself. This event makes us a new creation and provides us with an infinite horizon for growth and becoming in freedom, including the possibility of our coming to know and to witness to the Unknown Mystery who brought this transformation about.

Late in his career Lonergan also came to realise that the four ways in which consciousness works operate in the inverse sequence. In coming to know and appropriate the true, real, good and holy, we mount from experiencing,

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be distinguished from the other conversions which are direct and immediate; affective conversion is mediated.

[44] For summary treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 238-240.

[45] For summary treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

[46] For summary treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 240-241.

through understanding, to judging and deciding. However, we can be caught up into a new mode of valuing, as happens when one falls in love. That is a transformative experience: our whole conscious being is reoriented. We become more responsible in our deciding. That, in turn, tends to make us more reasonable in our judging, and more perspicacious in our understanding, so that our attentiveness is more focused and alert. These two sequences are usually named in Lonergan circles as the "upwards movement" and the "downwards movement". This quasi-spatial, directional language is obviously metaphorical. It does not refer to any physical movement, but to the sequence of operations of consciousness. The upwards movement is cognitional. It is our coming to know and appropriate the true, the real, the good and the holy. The downwards movement is volitional; it is our response to value, it is our embodying of value, our existential expression of the true, the real, the good and the holy in our lives.

Lonergan notes that the same inverse sequences apply also to the three conversions.[47] Logically, intellectual conversion comes first, followed by moral conversion and finally religious conversion. Chronologically, however, religious conversion is most likely to come first. It affects our appreciation of the values inherent in moral conversion. One such value is that of believing the truths of a religious tradition. That increases the probability of a genuine intellectual conversion.

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[47] For Lonergan's treatment of this, see Lonergan, *Method*, 243.

I will treat all these dynamics of consciousness in more detail in subsequent chapters. Here, I have summarised them to indicate how Lonergan provides a groundwork for addressing a wide range of issues.[48] In *Method* he calls this groundwork "Background" and the actual investigation "Foreground". In order to address the conflicting claims between the many religions and to build relations among their adherents, we follow Lonergan's methodological approach. Accordingly, we do not start with the founders, achievements, beliefs and practices of the various religions. It is not first of all a matter of comparing and contrasting a variety of religions, nor of attempting to negotiate a settlement between them.

Rather, the very first consideration is cognitional theory. Through his intentionality analysis, Lonergan offers a penetrating analysis of the dynamics of consciousness. Thus he opens the way to a deeper understanding of what knowing is. It is a compound of activities, a combination of attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding and reasonable judging. A responsible person who wants to know what is true or real cannot evade the imperatives: be attentive; be intelligent; be reasonable.[49]

Secondly, identifying what is involved in knowing leads to an epistemology, an explanation of why these compound activities yield knowledge.[50] By

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[48] For a recent summary of the relevance of Lonergan's approach, see Gerard Whelan SJ, "The Continuing Significance of Bernard Lonergan", in *Thinking Faith* (London: Jesuit Media Initiatives, 2008).

[49] For Lonergan's account see "The Basic Pattern of Operations" and "Transcendental Method" in Lonergan, *Method*, 6-13; 13-20.

[50] For Lonergan's account see "The Epistemological Theorem" in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan.* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 211-214.

respecting the three component activities involved in knowing, we become genuine knowers in a real world. It is not a matter of being spectators of phenomena merely as they appear to us, as Kant would imply. Lonergan invites us to a more thorough-going act of self-appropriation—thereby to find ourselves as real knowers of what is true and real and good and holy.

Finally, Lonergan's intentionality-based approach produces a solidly metaphysical outcome. His account of self-transcendence leads to a knowledge of reality, of what is—whether the object of concern be oneself, the world or what is beyond the world, and that knowledge is critically verifiable.

> From cognitional theory and epistemology one can go onto setting up a metaphysics, that is, to state in general what one knows when one does come to know. On this showing metaphysics ceases to be the first science on which all others depend. But ceasing to be the first science has its advantages, for now metaphysics can be critically established; every statement, it makes about reality can be validated by a corresponding cognitional operation that is verifiable.[51]

Particularly relevant to this thesis is that the method he identifies is how one can discern and weigh the claims of the various religions, to verify, modify, or counter them, to appreciate their respective beliefs and values, and to relate them to one's own and to each other's.

Thus the order of procedure is, in Lonergan's own words:

> The general science is, first, cognitional theory (what are you doing when you are knowing?), secondly, epistemology (why is doing that knowing?), and thirdly, metaphysics (what do you know when you do it?).[52]

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[51] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Revolution in Catholic Theology", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 236.
[52] Lonergan, *Method*, 316.

My choice of Lonergan's methodology as a framework for engaging interreligious relations might cause surprise. His works have a reputation for being daunting. Is it not adding unnecessary complexity to what is already a complex issue? Admittedly, his work is daunting. Even his closest followers acknowledge that his work is "formidable".[53] But perseverance does have its rewards. Hard-won familiarity with the terms and concepts that Lonergan uses renders his work luminous, and provides some very useful categories that I will exploit in this thesis.

Some critics charge Lonergan with being too "intellectualist".[54] I reply that what he articulates is so intimately close to us that it is often overlooked. He charts the way our minds and hearts work. It is our own lack of familiarity with analysing these operations that initially renders his account strange. However, in principle, anyone with a measure of attentiveness, understanding, reasonableness and responsibility can confirm these dynamics in themselves. Lonergan invites us to do precisely this, to obectify our consciousness, and everyone has to do it for him- or herself.[55] Following this act of self-appropriation, the previously unknown world of our own minds and hearts becomes familiar, and we can more easily follow the way that Lonergan charts.

Other critics charge that Lonergan's method is too confining, too restrictive, too culture-bound, that it cannot possibly encompass the wide variety of

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[53] Doran, "Introduction - Lonergan", 1.

[54] For critique of Lonergan's approach, particularly as given in *Method in Theology,* see the various articles in Patrick Corcoran, ed., *Looking at Lonergan's Method* (Eugene, Oregon: Wipf & Stock Publishers, 1975).

[55] Lonergan, *Method*, 14-20.

cultures and religions. I reply that this is a fundamental misunderstanding. Lonergan's approach is not a procrustean bed to which cultures and religions must be stretched to fit or lopped off when they overlap. Rather, it follows the creative dynamism of our minds and hearts. Precisely because these follow, go astray, and are restored, even converted, in the various ways that Lonergan identifies, there are identifiable common patterns. These account for the many commonalities that we can find among cultures and religions—for better and for worse. But because different peoples in different times and different places use their minds and hearts to process different content, they generate the rich variety of cultures and religions that make up our world. Since all human cultures and religions—including their failures as well as their achievements—are the products of human minds and human hearts, under the influence of grace or swayed by temptation, we must look to the human mind and heart if we are to relate them to each other, so that together we can promote their positives and counter their negatives.

Finally, yet other critics say that Lonergan's method is too rigid, too structured, not open to other possibilities. This too is a misrepresentation. I reply that precisely because the method is grounded in how our minds and hearts work, Lonergan's method is as flexible and adaptable and as creative as human intelligence and freedom allow. Moreover, by spiritual-religious conversion, the human mind and heart are set free into the infinite horizon of God's loving creativity. Hence, it is an ideal tool for identifying and relating the different cultures and religions that are the product of human ingenuity and divine

grace as I will show as I build and develop my argument through the successive chapters of this thesis.

5. Overview and Chapters of the Thesis

I will argue my case for Christian responsibility in interreligious relations through the following chapters. My summary of Lonergan's approach may be all-too-familiar to Lonergan scholars, but if my thesis is to makes sense to scholars of religion and interreligious dialogue who have not studied Lonergan then some basic familiarity is necessary. My presentation also serves to show where and how I develop the traditional Lonergan material. Besides, the categories that Lonergan develops are the tools I will be applying in new ways to the issues of interreligious dialogue in the later chapters of the thesis, so they do need introduction in the early chapters of the thesis.

In Chapter One, I have shown that during the twentieth-century relations between believers from different religions and their conflicting claims have become a contested topic in both the world and the ecclesial contexts, and that modern technology and communications have made the resolution of such conflicts all the more urgent. I have claimed that Lonergan's approach provides a useful methodology for engaging the complex issues involved in interreligious relations, and have summarised the basic points of his approach.

In Chapter Two, I develop key areas in Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness. I focus on the process of discerning the good, identifying an "intellectual" and a "moral" mode of consciousness, both based on the first three ways in which consciousness operates. This allows for further precision about the fourth level of personal responsibility and the different conversions we choose. Since these dynamics of consciousness are common to all people of all time, I adapt Lonergan's stated purpose from *Insight* to conclude that they are also a "common ground" on which believers might meet.[56]

In Chapter Three, I treat the dynamics of consciousness as involved in the construction of human meaning. I focus on the functions or dimensions of meaning, the mediation of meaning, the stages of meaning, and theories of knowledge, all of which categories I will apply in subsequent chapters. Similar to the previous chapter, I note that the dynamics of consciousness underpin all these categories, and that therefore the "common ground" to which I referred earlier extends to human meaning, including the different worlds of religious meaning.

In Chapter Four, I show how the dynamics of consciousness are involved in the construction and mediation of religious meaning. I exploit my development of the fourth level in the previous chapters to show how two fourth-level events form the basis for the proper distinction between spirituality and religion. I also present themes on religious expression, religious knowledge, and theological method. Similar to the previous chapters, I show that the

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[56] "My aim was … to seek a common ground on which men [and women] of intelligence might meet." (Lonergan, *Insight*, 7.)

dynamics of consciousness are involved in all these. However, while the religions are the products which grow out of this "common ground", spirituality is the "common horizon" under which they grow, and also the arena for interreligious dialogue.

In Chapter Five, I show how the dynamics of consciousness are operative in interreligious meaning. I apply categories derived from Lonergan's analysis to interreligious relations. I employ them for distinguishing and relating the different types of religions, for promoting interpersonal relations between believers from different religions, and for the construction of a theology of religious plurality. Lonergan's intentionality analysis and the method derived from it provide a fundamental frame of reference in which all these issues can fruitfully be addressed.

In Chapter Six, I treat the dynamics of consciousness in relation to Christian meaning. I consider what Christianity shares in common with other religions and what makes it distinct from them. After treating the stages of meaning, I then show how familiarity with these dynamics illuminates key themes in Christian theology and issues of Christian relations with other religions. My treatment of the Trinitarian the visible and invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit in particular will inform my subsequent treatment of Christian responsibility in interreligious relations.

In Chapter Seven, I argue that since the dynamics of consciousness come to a personal intensity and clarity in Christian revelation (Chapter Six), and that

since these same dynamics constitute and underlie not only each religion (Chapter Four), but especially the relations between them (Chapter Five), then Christians have a particular responsibility in modelling and promoting interreligious relations. I specify that responsibility as modelling the method for relating, and indicate five areas of particular responsibility.

Finally, in Chapter Eight, I summarise the contribution of my thesis. First, it builds on and in some instances refines Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness. Secondly, it encourages Christians to rise to the challenge presented by the transition from nations and religions living in relative isolation to the globalised world of interreligious living at the dawn of the third millennium. Thirdly, it gives confidence to Christians that engaging in interreligious relations does not involve any compromise of their faith convictions. Rather, the very resources of their tradition urge them to build relations with their neighbours from other religions. Christians thus have a responsibility to model new ways of relating and to give leadership in interreligious relations. Fourthly, it shows that interreligious dialogue does not involve any imperialism by Christians (or by adherents of any other religion). On the contrary, it respects and demands the integrity of every tradition, and includes both *mutual learning* and *mutual correction* by all partners in interreligious relations. Finally, although addressed primarily to Christians, this project invites believers from other religions to recognise the same dynamics of consciousness operative in themselves and in their traditions. In that way, the creative collaboration among all religious believers may be enhanced, and be more fully in accord with God's holy desire for human and planetary flourishing.

CHAPTER TWO: COMMON GROUND

As indicated in the previous chapter, the globalised world at the dawn of the twenty-first century is one of intense religious plurality. Even Russia and China who in the previous century prosecuted their secular ideology with religious zeal have had to yield to the religious aspirations of many of their citizens. Different religious and secular world views are impacting on each other in ways that are unprecedented in human history. Though happily there are convergences on many issues, the situation also occasions divisions, misapprehension and even violence. This thesis is written in the hope of promoting both a common basis for building better relations among believers from the great religious traditions of our humanity and the special responsibility of Christians in that urgent task. To that end, the work of Bernard Lonergan is a valuable resource.

In the Preface to *Insight* Lonergan states that his aim is "to seek a common ground on which men [and women] of intelligence might meet".[1] In this chapter I will begin to make my argument that the answer which Lonergan comes up with in *Insight* and develops further in *Method* and his later writings is also "a common ground on which believers from different religions might meet".

In Lonergan's view, that common ground is found in the dynamics of consciousness. For my present purposes, I take for granted a basic familiarity

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[1] Lonergan, *Insight*, 7.

with Lonergan's analysis of those dynamics summarised in Chapter One. I select for treatment only those areas where I refine his analysis and which are particularly relevant to interreligious relations.

For example, interreligious relations involve evaluating the particular truths and values that religions propose. It entails acknowledging, celebrating and appropriating those that are genuine, and correcting those that are inadequate or mistaken. However, to do that properly requires a critical account of how we come to know the good. To that end, I will make reference to the first three ways in which consciousness operates and apply them to our pursuit of the good to provide just such a tool for critical evaluation.

The above treatment will enable a more precise analysis of what Lonergan identifies as the "fourth level" of consciousness. I will show it to be the locus of relationships between the subject and object, between the subject and other subjects. But responding to the claims of the different religions, and building personal relations with the believers, is precisely what interreligious relations are about. Hence my analysis of the dynamics of the fourth level of consciousness lays the foundation for my treatment of interreligious relations in Chapter Five.

Recognising the "upwards" and "downwards" movements in the dynamics of human consciousness throws light on two motivations for interreligious relations: first, to know more about God who acts through the different religions "in many and various ways" (Heb 1:1) and, then, to embody the

values that God has revealed through them. As we shall see in Chapter Six, the ultimate grounds for these two movements are the invisible and visible missions of the Word and the Spirit, which in turn have practical expression in the Church's mission in the dual activities of dialogue and proclamation. In Chapter Seven I will also show how these cognitive and affective movements in consciousness sharpen our appreciation of the human being as *imago Dei.*

Finally, discussing what is sometimes referred to in Lonergan circles as a "fifth level" in human consciousness opens the way for a deeper appreciation of the human person. In the following chapter we present the high point in interpersonal relations as a process of mutual self-mediation. It involves a conscious self-revelation in the hope of a like response from the other. In Chapter Five we build on that analysis to present interreligious relations as mutual self-mediation between believers from different religions.

Accordingly, in this chapter I will treat the following four topics:

1. Coming to Know the Good;

2. The Fourth "Level" of Intentional Consciousness;

3. The Two "Movements" of Intentional Consciousness;

4. The Fifth "Level" of Intentional Consciousness.

1. Coming to Know the Good

From the functional point of view, all religions claim to mediate the ultimate good (however affirmed in different traditions), and that all other things are to

be judged in the light of this ultimate criterion.[2] This claim presupposes an ability to find the good in general, to evaluate different goods, and to order them accordingly. More importantly, no good can simply be asserted, no matter how sacred the authority that proposes it or widespread the number of people who benefit from it. Rather, it must be able to be intelligently and reasonably argued and debated in public and accepted as such. Since interreligious relations involves discerning what the religions propose, accepting what is genuine, correcting what is mistaken, and ordering the various goods appropriately, a critical account of how we come to know and evaluate the good is crucial to that enterprise. In *Method* Lonergan provides an elaborate account of the structure of the human good.[3] My limited focus in this section is on how we come to know the good.

Knowledge of what is good and valuable is related to our knowledge of what is true and real, yet it is a distinct question. I take Lonergan's account of how we come to know the true and the real, merge it with his developed appreciation of the good, and so provide a critical account of evaluation.

(a) Development in Lonergan's Approach

In Chapter Eighteen of *Insight* Lonergan gives a very intellectualist account of the good in terms of consistency between knowing and doing. In writings after 1965, following his breakthrough to the recognition of a fourth level of

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[2] "[F]aith has a relative as well as an absolute aspect. It places all other values in the light and shadow of transcendent value. In the shadow, for transcendent value is supreme and incomparable. In the light, for transcendent value links itself to all other values to transform, magnify, glorify them." (Lonergan, *Method*, 116.)
[3] See "The Structure of the Human Good", in Lonergan, *Method*, 47-52.

intentionality, he gives a more integrated and existentialist account of the good. By Lonergan's own admission: "In *Insight* the good was the intelligent and reasonable. In *Method* the good is a distinct notion."[4]

The key to Lonergan's more existential notion of the good is found in his new appreciation of the role of feelings in human intentionality.[5] Attaining the good involves a profound discernment of the deepest feelings underlying and shaping our conscious lives. As we shall see in Chapter Four, these feelings orient us towards the Supreme Good in terms of living religiously. As we shall see in Chapter Five, these feelings orient us to discover and acknowledge the good in other religions, something fundamental to interreligious relations. Hence, this summary of Lonergan's treatment of the role of "feelings" in discerning the good paves the way for these subsequent chapters.

Lonergan distinguished non-intentional feelings from intentional feelings.[6] Non-intentional feelings are either states or trends. As states, they have a cause in the past—for example, we feel hungry because we have not eaten for a long time. As trends, they have a goal in the future—for example, feeling hungry makes us want to eat something very soon. By contrast, intentional feelings are direct and immediate responses to an object that is present—as when appetising food is placed in front of us.

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[4] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "*Insight* Revisited", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 277.
[5] Doran treats the very different appreciation of the role of feelings in *Insight* and *Method in Theology* in Doran, *Theology and History*, 634-635. He quotes the former in note 3 (p. 718): "it will not be amiss to assert emphatically that the identification of being and the good by-passes human feelings and sentiments to take its stand exclusively upon intelligible order and rational value". (*Insight*, 629 [606])
[6] For treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 30-31.

Further, Lonergan distinguishes two kinds of intentional feelings. The first are a reaction to what is agreeable or disagreeable—as when food and drink looks, smells and tastes either good or bad. The attraction/repulsion here is on the level of satisfaction alone and is limited to sensitive or bodily needs. But there is a second kind of intentional feelings. These are registered in consciousness as attraction to what is truly valuable, and repulsion from what is truly reprehensible. This higher order of genuine value is not just a matter of sensate or bodily satisfaction/dissatisfaction, but involves the whole person. Such intentional feelings simultaneously effect the self-transcendence of the subject, and orient him/her to an object worthy of such self-transcendence.

While the attraction to values is ever reliable, the attraction of satisfactions is always ambiguous. What is perceived as an immediate satisfaction for the sensitive appetite may not represent a true good—too much chocolate will cause illness, no matter how delicious the taste. Inversely, what is sensed as bad may in fact be valuable on another level of discernment—unpleasant tasting medicine may lead to a cure. Thus, proper evaluation requires that we distinguish between satisfactions and values. Lonergan's later account of how we come to know what is truly good and valuable is precisely this. It is a matter of discerning intentional feelings.

(b) A Further Development of Lonergan's Approach

In the standard Lonergan account this discernment is presented as a fourth-level process of responsible decision-making.[7] However, while the attraction to the good is felt at every stage of our self-transcending intentionality, I suggest that the actual process of coming to know the good is not a fourth-level activity, but occurs through the same three basic sets of operations that we use in coming to know anything at all.

More specifically, the first stage of coming to know the good is adverting to and *experiencing* our intentional feelings as they engage directly and immediately with an object. This must take into account both the sensitive and the far more radical existential attractions/repulsions.

At a second stage we seek to *understand* these feelings. We try to sort out whether they are simply attracted to the promise of sensual satisfaction or whether they are drawn to genuine value, whether they are simply disgusted at the prospect of mere sensual discomfort or repulsed by genuine disvalue. Here it is a matter of generating more and more relevant moral insights into our intentional feelings until, eventually, we can posit an intelligent hypothesis regarding the possible value of the object in question.

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[7] Lonergan's most detailed account is Chapter Two "The Human Good" in Lonergan, *Method*, 27-55. A useful analysis of this development in Lonergan's thought is Frederick E. Crowe, "An Exploration of Lonergan's New Notion of Value", in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989).

The third stage is *judging*. We assess whether or not the conditions are fulfilled whereby that hypothetical good can be affirmed as truly good.[8] And the fourth stage consists in making a responsible *decision,* thereby committing oneself to the value affirmed (or rejecting its opposite). It entails an act of personal choice by which one becomes a moral agent responding to a good that has been reasonably affirmed. I will treat this fourth level in detail in the next section, but for the moment focus on these first three ways in which consciousness operates in discerning the good.

I argue that intentional consciousness operates in two modes. One mode is coming to know the true and real. I propose to call this *intellectual consciousness.* The other mode is coming to know the good. I propose to call this *moral consciousness.*[9] In distinguishing these two modes of consciousness, I do not wish to imply that moral consciousness is not intellectual, or that intellectual consciousness is not moral. To the contrary, moral consciousness is developed through the same sets of operations as intellectual consciousness. Hence, it is thoroughly intellectual. Similarly, intellectual consciousness is moved by a genuine concern for the true and the real, and so is thoroughly moral. The difference lies in that intentional feelings guide intellectual consciousness to determine what is true and real; but they do not form the content of that determination. However, once the truth or reality is established, the intentional feelings that guided the intellectual

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[8] In *Insight*, Lonergan acknowledges that, insofar as it is a knowing, reflection on the good can lead to a virtually unconditioned (see Lonergan, *Insight*, 634). This is evidence that my proposal is correct.
[9] The technical names correspond to two of the conversions that Lonergan treated. For my summary treatment of conversions, see Chapter One, under the heading "Lonergan and His Method", pp. 20ff.

pursuit of that object become the content which moral consciousness then evaluates to establish its genuine worth or otherwise.

Since Lonergan's casual references to further levels provoked controversy and debate, I clarify that I am not proposing that consciousness operates in six ways (or seven, if we add the fourth level). I hold that intentional consciousness operates in four ways only. But I am proposing that the first three ways operate in two modes, in an intellectual mode, and in a moral mode. These two modes are constituted by the same three same sets of operations, but in the intellectual mode they process the data of sense and consciousness, and in the moral mode they process the data of intentional feelings. The two modes of three sets of operations combined lead to the fourth level of personal responsibility.

A diagram is perhaps the easiest way to present my refined position. However, since diagrams about "levels" lend themselves to be interpreted in terms of stories in a building, one on top of another, and what we are talking about is the various ways in which consciousness operates, I present some some alternative diagrams to counter the multi-storey model. The point to get is that all the diagrams represent the one thing, the four ways in which consciousness operates, in intellectual mode seeking truth and reality, and in moral mode seeking goodness and value.
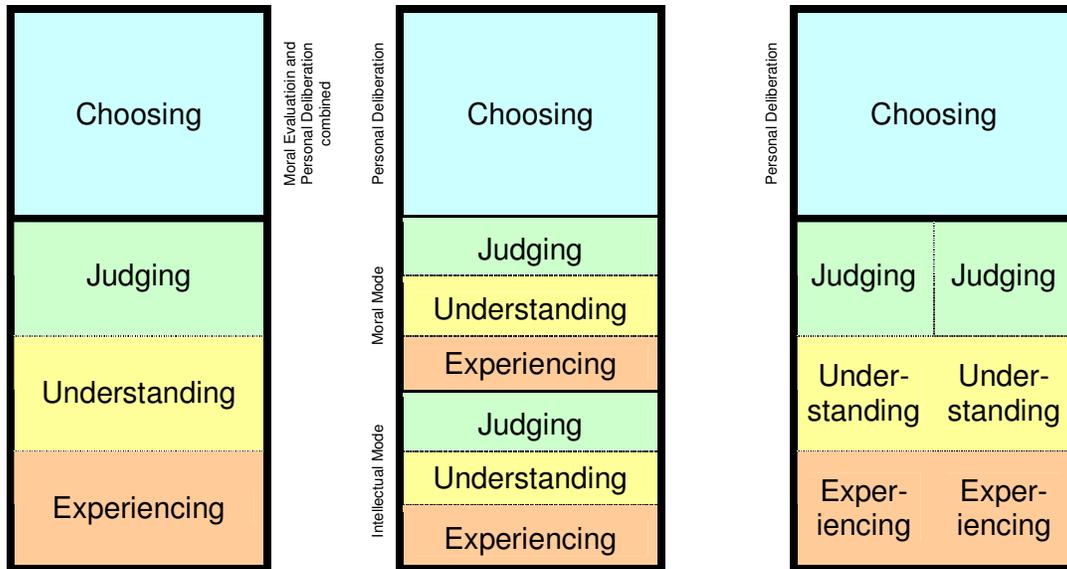
The standard Lonergan account of four ways in which consciousness operates.	The Intellectual and Moral Modes of Consciousness aligned "vertically" to show their distinction.	The Intellectual and Moral Modes of Consciousness aligned "horizontally" to show the parity of operations.

In introducing intentional feelings, Lonergan states:

> The feeling relates us, not just to a cause or an end, but to an object. Such feeling gives intentional consciousness its mass, momentum, drive, power. Without these feelings our knowing and deciding would be paper thin.[10]

In the light of his statement, a final set of diagrams shows the intellectual mode of consciousness as the two-dimensional aspect of consciousness, and the moral mode as the three-dimensional depth aspect of consciousness.

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[10] Lonergan, *Method*, 30-31.

| Choosing |
| Judging |
| Understanding |
| Experiencing |
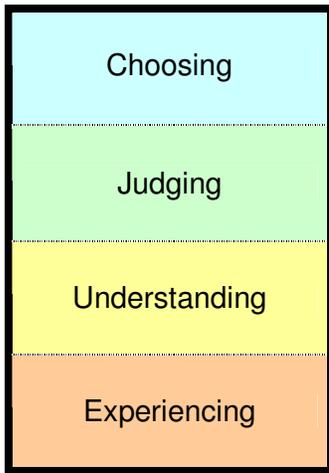
The intellectual mode of consciousness as the two-dimensional "face" of consciousness

| Choosing |
| Judging |
| Understanding |
| Experiencing |
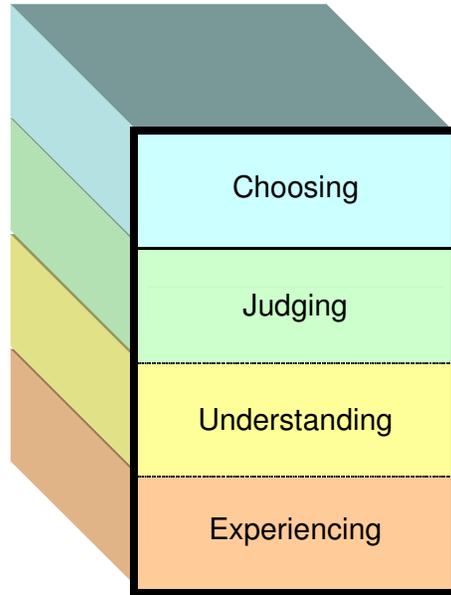
The moral mode of consciousness as the 3-dimensional "depth" aspect of consciousness, again showing the parity of operations.

This intricate interweaving of intentional feelings in the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness establishes both "the rationality of value" and "the value of rationality".[11] Recognising the rationality of value provides an important benefit. Knowledge of the value of any object is not just plucked out of the air at the fourth level, but is secured by attentiveness, intelligence and reasonableness. Thus, a moral judgment is grounded in empirical evidence. Moreover, as such, it is communicable. The evidence of its moral status can, in principle, be accepted by anyone who shares the same sensibility of intentional feeling. Therefore, appreciation of the moral good is not enclosed in a subjectivism that would reduce it to the relativism of individualistic feeling,

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[11] For "the rationality of value" and "value of rationality", see Neil Ormerod, *Method, Meaning, and Revelation: The Meaning and Function of Revelation in Bernard Lonergan's Method in Theology* (Lanham, MD: University Press of America, 2000), 268-269. See also Neil Ormerod, *The Trinity: Retrieving the Western Tradition*, vol. 48, *Marquette Studies in Theology* (Milwaukee, WI: Marquette University Press, 2005), 92-93.

taste or opinion. Rather, it is able to be presented and debated rationally so as to form a public consensus regarding the common good.

Mention of two modes of consciousness raises the question of priority: which comes first? Logically, common sense tells us that in the order of discovery we first have to know what something is before we can ask what is good about it; so from that perspective the intellectual mode comes first. However, from the motivational point of view, we can feel, understand and judge that something is worth knowing even though we know little or nothing about it; and that moral judgment then spurs us on to investigate the reality concerned (which may then lead on to its full and proper evaluation). From that point of view, moral consciousness comes first (and last). Whatever the more detailed questions possible as to the respective priorities, the intellectual and the moral modes are interrelated. Knowing the true and real, and knowing its value, may be distinguished but not separated. Both feed into the fourth level of personal deliberation and self-commitment.

As mentioned above, this account of how we come to know the good is not just a matter of refining a phenomenology of consciousness. It has practical application to interreligious relations. The case I have made for a distinct mode of moral consciousness provides a tool for critically evaluating and ordering the claims of different religions. Any assertion of the good and valuable, no matter what its supposed source, must be able to be verified empirically in the way that I have outlined in this section.

(c) Consistency with Lonergan's Approach

While this proposal adds to Lonergan's analysis of feelings in relation to the good, it is nonetheless consistent with his approach. Commenting on Pascal's celebrated phrase "the heart has reasons which reason does not know", Lonergan interprets "reason" as "the compound of activities on the first three levels of cognitional activity, namely, of experiencing, of understanding and of judging".[12] This is what I have named "intellectual consciousness".

Lonergan interprets "heart" as "the subject on the fourth existential level of intentional consciousness and in the dynamic state of being in love".[13] I agree that the fourth level of personal deliberation is "higher" than reason. But the point I wish to make is that intermediate between the compound activities referred to above and the fourth level is a further compound of activities—that of attending to, understanding, and judging intentional feelings in coming to come to know the good—which I have called "moral consciousness". These activities demand more involvement by the knowing subject and so are "higher" in the order of self-transcendence than those of knowing the true and the real, but they are still "lower" than the fourth level of personal responsibility. Thus, in proposing these two different modes of consciousness, I recognise the same order of self-transcendence that Lonergan identifies.

Lonergan states that "intermediate between judgments of fact and judgments of value lie apprehensions of value. Such apprehensions are given in

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[12] Lonergan, *Method*, 115.
[13] Lonergan, *Method*, 115.

feelings."[14] I have elaborated his statement more fully by pointing out that the first way in which moral consciousness operates consists in attending to the intentional feelings arising in relation to objects. The second way is seeking to understand those feelings to form a hypothesis about the possible value of the object in question. This is precisely what Lonergan refers to as "apprehensions of value", which are the necessary prelude to judgments of value.

I note the appropriateness of the word "apprehension". Although we affirm the truth and reality of objects in our world, we can never be sure of all the consequences of our proposed actions. Hence the ultimate proof of the worth of our efforts is what they achieve—"You will know them by their fruits" (Mt 7:16 and 20). Further, it is only the truly good person who can truly know the good, for the biased may be completely sincere in their evaluation and yet be completely wrong.[15] Only the disastrous outcomes of their unworthy actions may convince them otherwise.

As mentioned earlier, Lonergan's presentation of "The Notion of Value" in *Method in Theology* (pp. 34-6) and in his later writings is a significant advance on the clinical rationality of "The Notion of the Good" in *Insight* (pp. 619-30). By his own admission:

> In *Insight* the good was the intelligent and reasonable. In *Method* the good is a distinct notion. It is intended in questions for deliberation: Is this worthwhile? Is it truly or only apparently good? It is aspired to in the intentional response of feeling to values. It is known in judgement of value made by a virtuous or authentic person with a good conscience.

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[14] Lonergan, *Method*, 37.

[15] I follow Lonergan, who notes that Aristotle made the same observation. See note 14 in Lonergan, *Method*, 41.

It is brought about by deciding and living up to one's decisions. Just as intelligence sublates sense, just as reasonableness sublates intelligence, so deliberation sublates and thereby unifies knowing and feeling.[16]

I interpret Lonergan's statement through the following six observations:

1. the aspiration of intentional response of feelings to values refers to the level of experience;

2. missing in the above account are the "apprehensions of value"[17] to which he refers in the previous quote from *Method*, and which I interpret as referring to the level of moral understanding;

3. knowledge of value refers to the level of moral judging;

4. "deciding" refers to the fourth level of choosing, or personal appropriation, the culmination of the upwards movement;

5. "living up to one's decisions" refers to the further fourth-level choices of acting accordingly which initiate the series of operations in the downwards movement of doing the good.

6. "deliberation sublates and thereby unifies knowing and feeling" is the fourth level of responsibility which integrates what I have called intellectual and moral consciousness.

Thus the refinement to Lonergan's treatment of the good that I have proposed here is completely consistent with his description of the good as a distinct notion. However, the good so described is intelligent and reasonable. But the

[16] Lonergan, "*Insight* Revisited", 277.
[17] Lonergan, *Method*, 37.

ground of that intelligibility and reasonableness is not the intellectualism of *Insight.* It is the subject using his/her intelligence and reason to discern intentional feelings.

Lonergan puts judgments of fact on the third level, and judgments of value on the fourth level. But the use of the same word "judgment" on different levels is problematic. It seems to contradict the proper distinction between the different levels based on their distinct operations. Judging is the central operation, not of the fourth level, but of the third level. By distinguishing two modes of consciousness, the intellectual and the moral, I have preserved both the proper parity of operations in terms of levels of consciousness, and the proper distinction of "higher/lower" in terms of sublation.

Moreover, Lonergan considers that "Judgments of value differ in content but not in structure from judgments of fact."[18] Here, I expand his position, for, first, it is not just the structure of the single act of judgment that is the same, but the structure of all three sets of operations that is the same. Secondly, what is processed is different. Judgments of fact exclude intentional feelings from consideration. Judgments of value result from processing those intentional feelings.

In this context, Lonergan writes:

> In the judgment of value, then, three components unite. First, there is knowledge of reality and especially of human reality. Secondly, there are intentional responses to values. Thirdly, there is the initial thrust

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[18] Lonergan, *Method*, 37.

towards moral self-transcendence constituted by the judgment of value itself.[19]

And this is precisely my point. First, the three ways in which intellectual consciousness operates provide "knowledge of reality". Secondly, the first two ways in which moral consciousness operates is attending to and understanding our "intentional responses to values". Thirdly, the initial thrust towards moral self-transcendence is constituted by a "judgment of value" which concludes the third way in which moral consciousness operates. This leads to the further thrust towards self-transcendence which is the fourth level of personal deliberation and response, realising itself in appropriate action.

Admittedly, this account seems to differ from Lonergan, when, at one point in *Method,* writing about the ends proper to each level, he writes:

> … the apprehension of values and disvalues is the task *not of understanding* but of intentional response. … So evaluative interpretation pertains to a speciality, *not on the end of the second level of intentional consciousness, but on the end of the fourth level.*[20] [italics mine]

I reply that "the apprehension of values and disvalues" is an act of understanding, not of intellectual consciousness which excludes intentional feelings, but of the second-level activity of moral intelligence as it interprets and understands intentional responses. This leads to a third-level moral judgment of value. The fourth level of personal deliberation in respect of that moral judgment completes the process. In the next section, I will present a more refined account of this fourth level as concerning personal moral stature. This provides the personal evaluative criterion to which Lonergan refers.

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[19] Lonergan, *Method*, 38.
[20] Lonergan, *Method*, 245-247.

Hence, although I disagree with Lonergan and affirm that "the apprehension of values and disvalues" is the task of understanding, albeit of the higher moral order, I concur with Lonergan's conclusion that the evaluative speciality of dialectics does occur "on the end of the fourth level".

In summary, in the standard Lonergan account, knowing and responding to the good are both fourth-level operations. I have distinguished these two tasks according to different levels of operation, but retained their proper order. Coming to know the good is the role of the first three ways in which consciousness operates in processing intentional feelings. I have called this "moral consciousness". Distinguishing this moral mode of consciousness enables a more precise account of the fourth level, as we shall see in the following section.

2. The Fourth "Level" of Intentional Consciousness

The previous section highlighted the role of feelings in directing self-transcendence towards knowledge of the good. However, fully realised self-transcendence goes beyond mere knowledge of the good. It is achieved on the fourth level of personal responsibility where the good that one has learned leads to responsible action. Having distinguished the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness, we are now in a position to offer a more precise analysis of this fourth way in which intentional consciousness operates. Now, it is no longer a matter of evaluating an object (this has already been done by moral consciousness), but the even more challenging task of evaluating the

subject. What is at stake is the status of the subject in relation to what has been known and evaluated. It is how one establishes relations with objects, and with other subjects. As such, this dynamic is of foundational importance for engaging the claims of other religions, and for building better relations between believers from different religions. Hence, I offer a more detailed analysis in the following terms.

I note first of all that the one and the same subject is both knower and evaluator. Thus, I do not envisage an intellectual enquiry leading to a personal response to the object simply as known, followed by a moral enquiry leading to a second, separate, personal response to that same object as evaluated. Rather, there is only one, single, personal response to the object as both known and valued.[21] That is, the fourth level unites the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness. As Lonergan puts it, "deliberation sublates and thereby unifies knowing and feeling".[22]

Thus, the fourth level is not just one more level on top of the other three. It is the culmination and integration of the whole process of self-transcendence. Admittedly, the metaphorical language of four "levels" can be particularly misleading, giving the impression of a four-storey building. The first three ways in which consciousness operates in the intellectual and moral modes constitute, respectively, our knowledge and evaluation of reality. Through these, we affirm what actually exists—its truth, reality and goodness. The

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[21] Two separate personal responses would imply two complete sets of *four* operations. My position is that the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness refer to the first three ways in which consciousness operates. The fourth level unites these intellectual and moral concerns. Thus there is only one personal response to the object, not two.

[22] Lonergan, "*Insight* Revisited", 277.

fourth level of conscious activity does not add some new content "over and above" what has been known and evaluated. Rather, it is a matter of personal appropriation of what has been affirmed and valued. As such, it is an act of conscious self-determination, of conforming to what has been found to be true and real and good, of responding accordingly.

The proper question here is not "What is good about it?" nor "What should I do about it?" Technically, these are questions for second-level moral consciousness. I find confirmation in Crowe's observation: "If the question 'What are we to do?' is considered merely as an investigation in ethics, it reverts to a question for intelligence"[23]—though I would specify that it is a question for moral intelligence. Such questions could be rephrased as "What should be done?" That form of the question removes the subject from consideration without any loss of meaning. The answer to that reformulated question would take the form of a hypothesis of a possible moral evaluation. This would then be subjected to scrutiny leading to an objective moral judgment on the matter in question. But such considerations belong at the second and third levels of moral inquiry—as I have already insisted. However, what is distinctive about the fourth level of moral consciousness occurs only after such moral judgment has taken place. This fourth mode of consciousness is one of personal deliberation and responsibility; it involves a

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[23] Frederick E. Crowe, *Theology of the Christian Word: A Study in History* (New York: Paulist Press, 1978), Endnote 5, p. 172.

committed involvement of the subject as a personal agent.[24] The intellectual and moral character of the subject is thereby disclosed.

What all this amounts to is that on this fourth level the intellectual and moral integrity of the subject is tested. Here "consciousness becomes conscience"[25] as it is examined under the weight of such questions as, "Do I have the personal integrity to confirm what I, in the intellectual mode of consciousness, have affirmed to be true and real?" and "Do I have the personal integrity to confirm what, in the mode of moral consciousness, I have affirmed to be the proper response?" In other words, "Do I reach up to what I know to be true, real, and good? Or do I fall short of it?" When intellectual consciousness has established what something is, and moral consciousness has established what should be done about it, the fourth-level question is whether or not I will act accordingly.

Simply put, the question proper to the fourth level is *Quid mihi est?*—"What concern is that to me?" (Jn 2:4)[26] While the second-level investigative question *Quid sit?*—"What is it?"—questions the nature of an object, the fourth-level question probes the relation between subject and object. It can be argued that the first sensitive level is based on mutual *dependence*—the subject depends on data as the first step in coming to know an object, but

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[24] I note in passing that this implies the eminent role of the personal in the scale of values higher than all other values except the religious. For treatment of the five values of the human good, see Lonergan, *Method*, 31.

[25] Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

[26] It is significant that this question is found in John's Gospel. Given its traditional association with the physician Luke, the Lucan Gospel has a diagnostic concern for physical detail (experience); the Matthean Gospel has a concern for interpreting Jesus in terms of the fulfilment of Jewish expectation (understanding); the Marcan Gospel has an urgent concern for impending eschatological judgment (judging); and the Johannine Gospel has a concern for the personal transformation effected by the revelation of God in Christ (responding).

without a subject, the data is not registered. The classic Aristotelian and Thomistic formulation is *sensus in actu est sensible in actu*—the sense in act is the sensible in act. The second intelligent level manifests *codependence*, not in clinical psychology's pejorative diagnosis of the perpetuation of an imbalanced relationship between mutually needy people, but in the sense of mutual enabling. The classic formulation is *intelligibile in actu est intellectus in actu*—the intelligible in act is the intelligence in act. The third reasonable level advances to *independence*, whereby the self-transcending subject comes to affirm what really is so independently of the contingent event that he/she happens to know it is so.[27] The fourth existential level exhibits *interdependence*. It establishes the relation between the subject and the object.

In an ideal world the "that" in the fourth-level question refers to an object which has been fully investigated and properly evaluated by the first three ways in which consciousness operates in the intellectual and moral modes. In the actual circumstances of life, it is more likely to be one of several options that are known and evaluated to varying degrees. Since none of these contingent goods compels response, choosing one or other of the possible options becomes an exercise of freedom, of human self-determination. As Lonergan writes:

> … the process of deliberation and evaluation is not itself decisive, and so we experience our liberty as the active thrust of the subject terminating the process of deliberation by settling on one of the possible courses of action and proceeding to execute it.[28]

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[27] For Lonergan's nuanced treatment of the absolute objectivity of truth that intentionally is independent of the subject while ontologically it resides only in the subject, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Subject", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 70-72.
[28] Lonergan, *Method*, 50.

The answer to the question *Quid mihi est?*—"What concern is that to me?"—is given in an insight that captures the originating concern that instigated the enquiry in the first place, and has pervaded all the ways in which intentional consciousness operated in pursuit of that goal. As with all insights, this inner word seeks to be formulated into an outward expression. But here the proper expression is not a theory or a judgment, but action, a personally committed response, a personal appropriation of that truth, reality, goodness.

Lonergan's usual terminology refers to the crucial, paradigmatic fourth-level operation as "deciding". However, there is possible confusion at this point. In popular parlance, "deciding" inevitably carries the implication of "deciding to do something". In fact, we might not have to do anything outwardly at all. For example, acknowledging the recent downgrading by scientists of Pluto from a planet to a dwarf planet involves a more precise knowledge of our solar system, but it does not entail any consequent deed on the part of most of us— though teachers will have to change their presentations and editors will have to change their textbooks. Therefore, a better word to identify what is involved is "choosing". By choosing in accord with authentic value we show ourselves to be responsible—while by choosing only on the basis of indulging pleasure or avoiding pain, we show ourselves to be irresponsible.

Again, this more precise account of how the fourth level operates is not just a matter of refining a phenomenology of consciousness. It has implications for interreligious relations. The intellectual and moral modes of consciousness treated in the previous section provide for a critical knowledge and evaluation

of the claims of other religions. The fourth level goes beyond knowledge to personal responsibility. When we discover truths and values in our own and other religions, then the fourth-level question *Quid mihi est?*—"What concern is that to me?"—challenges us to acknowledge and appropriate those truths and values and live them out. Similarly, when we discover errors and disvalues in our own and other religions, then our responsibility is to acknowledge them and seek to eliminate them.

In summary, the fourth level establishes our responsibility towards objects, and towards other subjects. But when the fourth-level questions are reflexive, when they are addressed to the subject himself, to dimensions of her own being, they bring about a decisive self-appropriation or conversion, as we shall see in the next section.

(a) The Four Conversions

This extended account of the dynamics of consciousness makes possible a comparatively simplified account of the conversions summarised in Chapter One. Each is a fourth-level reflexive question and answer that is addressed to, and brings about, the personal appropriation of different dimensions of the self. It is a deliberate act of self-constitution, of self-determining freedom.

When the fourth-level question "What concern is that to me?" refers to what I have called intellectual consciousness, and when by direct insight and responsible choice we choose that nexus of interrelated operations as how we

come to know what is true and real, and act accordingly, that is intellectual conversion.

Similarly, when the fourth-level question "What concern is that to me?" refers to what I have called moral consciousness, and when by direct insight and responsible choice we choose that nexus of interrelated operations as how we come to know what is good and valuable, and act accordingly, that is moral conversion.

Both conversions are radical acts of self-appropriation. They are awakening to our personal status as both knower and valuer, respectively. Intellectual conversion is a new birth of ourselves as true knowers of the true and the real. It entails what Lonergan describes as a bloody passage "out of a world of sense and of arriving, dazed and disorientated for a while, into a universe of being".[29] Moral conversion is also a birth. It is an emerging from captivity to the world of sensation and coming to be of moral agents in a moral universe, wherein we are true valuers of the good and the valuable.

The relevance of intellectual conversion for interreligious dialogue is that, without a critical account of knowledge, the partners in dialogue will be at the mercy of personal opinions and confessional accounts of their own and others' religions. Though sincerely held, these may or may not be true, may or may not represent the authentic tradition. But intellectual conversion enables a critique of such claims. The self-transcending dynamics of the intellectually

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[29] Lonergan, "The Subject", 79.

converted become the criterion for establishing what is true and what is false, what is real and what is fanciful, what is authentic and what is not, what serves human growth and what restricts it.

Similarly, moral conversion releases dialogue partners from emotional manipulation and subjectivism. The critical grounding of evaluation in their own self-transcending dynamism gives them confidence to reach out to the other. It frees them to explore their respective religions in genuine openness. Moreover, there is no need for any abstract and external moral theory or ethical philosophy. The morally converted are themselves the criterion for evaluating the various claims of the different religions and establishing what is truly good and valuable and what is not.

There is another dimension of self-appropriation. The fourth-level question "What concern is that to me?" may refer to the affect-laden energies, images and symbols of the psyche. When, by direct insight and responsible choice, we choose not to suppress or repress these but to give them full play—instigating investigations, directing our enquiry, guiding our self-transcendence, facilitating communication between mind and heart, triggering insights at every level—that is "psychic conversion".[30] Admittedly, this is rarely achieved on one's own. Usually, the guidance of a counsellor, a psychologist, or spiritual director is needed to allay resistance and to help integrate these psychic resources.

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[30] Lonergan spoke approvingly of Doran's proposal of "a fourth conversion. It occurs when we uncover within ourselves the working of our own psyches …" (Lonergan, "Reality, Myth, Symbol", 390.) For detailed treatment of psychic conversion, see Doran, *Theology and History*, 42-63.

There is yet another dimension of self-appropriation which is often omitted. I refer to our bodily or physical natures, our belonging to the physical universe.[31] The fourth-level question "What concern is that to me?" may refer to our physical nature, to our embodied or incarnate selves, our being part of the material world. When, by direct insight and responsible choice, we choose our physical selves and accept our special responsibility in the physical universe, there is yet another type of conversion. The correlation with the physical suggests it be called "physical conversion". However, a more appropriate name is "ecological conversion".[32] I borrow the name from the teaching of Pope John Paul II who first introduced it to the magisterium as follows:

> Clearly, what is called for is not simply a physical ecology, concerned with protecting the habitat of the various living beings, but a *human ecology*, capable of protecting the radical good of life in all its manifestations and of leaving behind for future generations an environment which conforms as closely as possible to the Creator's plan. There is a need for an *ecological conversion*, to which Bishops themselves can contribute by their teaching about the correct relationship of human beings with nature. Seen in the light of the doctrine of God the Father, the maker of heaven and earth, this relationship is one of "stewardship": human beings are set at the centre of creation as stewards of the Creator.[33] [italics in original]

Ecological conversion is the repudiation of all that denies or overlooks our physical natures and the affirmation of our physicality, our materiality, our

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[31] More than a decade ago Panikkar had drawn attention to this cosmic dimension. See Raimundo Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience: Emerging Religious Consciousness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993).

[32] Psychic conversion is an analogue of intellectual, moral and religious conversions that Lonergan treated. I am indebted to Charles Hefling Jnr for this insight, shared during a Lonergan seminar in Boston in April 2006. I propose that ecological conversion is another analogue. All these conversions are appropriations of dimensions of the self. The three conversions that Lonergan treats concern conscious dimensions of the self. Psychic and ecological conversions concern dimensions that are preconscious or subconscious.

[33] John Paul II, *Pastores Gregis: Shepherds of the Flock* (2003), #70.

bodiliness, our sexuality. It accords with the integral scale of values.[34] As *longing* or desire drive consciousness, ecological conversion is recognition of our be-*longing* to the physical universe. In biblical terms, ecological conversion is the affirmation of our common heritage as children of Adam (and Eve), of our being fashioned from the earth, of our being "earthlings" (cf. Gen 2:7). Human beings are not pure spirits. We are incarnate spirits. As a composite of spirit and matter, the human is both "above" the rest of the material world and also integrally related to it. We are "children of the universe", and integral part of its 15 billion years of evolution. Indeed, we are that process become conscious, and therefore charged with a responsibility for the rest of physical creation—to care for it, cultivate it, and make it productive for all who live now and for generations yet to come.[35] Ecological conversion is relevant to the integration of spirit, psyche and body and so completes an integral treatment of our human constitution.[36] This new awareness of our belonging to the earth is so significant that Knitter identifies eco-human well being as a criterion for religious truth, and proposes that shared concern for the earth is a fertile ground for interreligious dialogue and cooperation.[37]

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[34] By the integral scale of values, I refer to the addition of physical, chemical, biological, and zoological values to the five human values identified by Lonergan. For treatment, see Brendan Lovett, *A Dragon Not for the Killing: Christian Presence to China* (Quezon City, Philippines: Claretian Publications, 1998), 98.

[35] For the story of the universe see Brian Swimme and Thomas Berry, *The Universe Story: From the Primordial Flaring Forth to the Ecozoic Era - A Celebration of the Unfolding of the Cosmos* (San Francisco, CA: HarperSan, 1992).

[36] For the theological and practical implications flowing from ecological conversion see the works of my Columban colleague, Sean McDonagh, *The Greening of the Church* (Maryknoll, NY and London: Orbis Books and Geoffrey Chapman, 1990); Sean McDonagh, *Passion for the Earth: The Christian Vocation to Promote Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation* (Quezon City: Claretian Publications, 1995); McDonagh, *To Care for the Earth*.

[37] For treatment see Paul F Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995).

Psychic conversion is of generic interest to interreligious relations in that the partner in dialogue who has achieved a greater psychic integration acts as a foil for the other, provoking them from their lethargy, encouraging them to achieve a similar integration, without however intruding on the role that is proper to mental health professionals. Ecological conversion has a much more direct impact on interreligious relations. It provides a criterion for authentic religious value. That which promotes human and planetary wellbeing is from God, that which is harmful to human and planetary wellbeing is not from God. This is often a particular gift of the traditional or indigenous religions, what I call the "cosmic religions", as we shall see in Chapter Five.

The above four conversions all have to do with appropriation of dimensions of the self. Because "religious conversion" concerns relations with the Transcendent Other, I leave preliminary treatment of it to the section on the fifth level below, and will provide detailed treatment in Chapter Four.

In intellectual and moral conversion, one's own self-transcending dynamism becomes the criterion for truth and value. But by far the most common way in which we arrive at truth and value is accepting the testimony of another person. It too is a type of "conversion". But rather than appropriating a dimension of the self, it is appropriating or entering into the world of another and making it one's own. Accordingly, in the following section we treat how the dynamics of consciousness are operative in the stages of belief.

(b) The Five Steps of Belief

The refined account of the dynamics of consciousness presented in this and the previous section enables a more precise location of Lonergan's account of the five steps of belief.[38] Beliefs are major components of religions. As Lonergan shows, they also comprise much of secular knowledge.[39] Since interreligious relations involves getting to know the beliefs of others, testing them for their veracity, and evaluating them for their worth, it is important to know exactly how beliefs are established.

1. The first step has nothing whatsoever to do with the believer. It is taken completely by the person to be believed. It is their coming to know something and to appropriate and to communicate that knowledge through the self-transcending dynamism of consciousness. The next four steps are taken by the person who is to believe.

2. The second step is recognition of the value of human cooperation in the learning enterprise, that the advantages of teamwork are much to be preferred to the primitiveness that would result from not learning from others but attempting to learn everything for oneself, that the benefits of collaboration far outweigh the risks of being duped. Lonergan calls it a "general judgment of value". [40] The value in question

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[38] For a summary account, see Lonergan, *Method*, 45-47. For a detailed account, see Lonergan, *Insight*, 725-740.

[39] See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Belief: Today's Issue", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 87-90.

[40] Lonergan, *Method*, 45.

is credibility, that there are sufficient grounds for the proposition to be believed. I suggest it is a third-level moral judgment.

3. The third step is establishing the genuineness of the person to be believed, of their self-transcendence in coming to know, of their reliability and trustworthiness, and of the reliability of the chain of transmission from the original source through subsequent witnesses. Lonergan calls it a "particular judgment of value".[41] The value in question here is *credentity*, that the evidence in this particular instance is so persuasive and compelling that the proposition not only may be but must be believed. Recognising this obligation is a further third-level moral judgment.

4. The fourth step is the decision to believe. It is being consistent with one's concern for the good: if believing in general is good, and if this person merits being believed in regard to this particular matter, then I should believe him/her. It is the core fourth-level act of choosing.

This choice is going beyond one's own world and entering into the world of the person to be believed, entering into their horizon, their world of concerns. This self-transcendence is an act of love, first for the person to be believed, and then for the belief in question. I note that the English word "belief" has Germanic origins and retains the word *lief* which means love. I note also that the Latin verb *credere*, "to believe",

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[41] Lonergan, *Method*, 45.

derives from the two words *cor* (heart) and *dare* (to give) so as to suggest, "to give the heart". These etymologies confirm that believing is a fourth-level choice of loving self-surrender to common concern with another.

5. The fifth step is the judgment of belief. It is the believer affirming the content of the belief. It is a third-level judgment of fact. It is personal appropriation of what the other first came to know so that the believer now knows it for himself. The believer's knowledge is not based on her own immanently generated knowledge but the chain of transmission which ultimately leads back to the one believed. This knowledge flows downwards in revised understandings and issues forth in concrete expression in words and deeds.

Lonergan makes the point that "only a minute fraction of what we know" is immanently generated, and the vast bulk of what we know consists of beliefs from others that we have learned and that have been handed down over the generations.[42]

The relevance of beliefs for interreligious relations is that religions involve beliefs about God, self, world, and others. However, beliefs differ. If these differences are to be resolved, then we must first find out what sort of

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[42] Lonergan, *Method*, 41-44.

differences they are,[43] and, if needs be, trace the fault to its origin in one or other of these five steps of belief.

(c) Relational, Interpersonal

The distinction between the third and fourth ways in which intentional consciousness operates can be suggested in the following table.

The first three ways in which consciousness operates yields:	**The fourth way in which consciousness operates yields:**
Affirmation of the true and real	Confirmation of the true and real
Assent to the good and valuable[44]	Consent to the good and valuable[45]
(Intellectual) Knowledge of the true and real	Acknowledgment of the true and real
(Moral) Knowledge of the good and valuable	Appreciation of the good and valuable
Theoretical knowledge of intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious facts	Personal appropriation of intellectual, moral, spiritual and religious facts = wisdom
Homo cognoscens	*Homo sapiens*[46]

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[43] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Five, under the heading "The Different Types of Differences", pp. 201ff.

[44] Assent is "based on Latin *assentire*, from *ad-* 'towards' + *sentire* 'feel, think' ". (Judy Pearsall, ed., *The New Oxford Dictionary of English* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001), 100.)

[45] Consent is "from Latin *consentire*, from *con-* 'together' + *sentire* 'feel' ". (Pearsall, ed., *Oxford Dictionary of English*, 391.)

[46] Or *homo stultans*, if we refuse to act in accord with what we have affirmed to be true, real, good and valuable!

Cognition   Recognition[47]

Science   Conscience[48]

The key words in the right hand column all have personal connotations. More importantly, they are relational words, expressing the subject's relation to self, to other objects, to other subjects. At the third level, an object is simply affirmed as a singular existent entity. At the fourth level, it becomes an object of concern and personal responsibility.[49] The transition from the third to the fourth level is thus moving out of solitariness and into solidarity, from existence to coexistence. It conforms to the implication of the etymology of the French word for knowing, *connaissance*—co-birth. It also suggests a human "Genesis", a "letting be" (cf. Gen 1:3, 6, 14), a withdrawal from self-concern that is exclusive of others, and the emergence of a concern that embraces others, that allows them to exist in their own right in the promotion of a shared world.

In summary, the fourth way in which consciousness operates is about relations between subject and object, and between subject and other subjects. Clarifying and making this fourth way precise has laid an important foundation

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[47] This is not a "second" knowing or a "re-knowing", as if the first knowing was inadequate, but a personal appropriation of the knowledge previously affirmed. The difference is captured in the contrast between the catechetical affirmation "Christ is risen from the dead" and the personal confession of faith "I know my redeemer lives."

[48] "But to speak of the fourth level of human consciousness, the level on which *consciousness becomes conscience*, is to suppose the context of intentionality analysis." (Lonergan, *Method*, 268. [italics mine])

[49] Lonergan asserts: "A life of pure intellect or pure reason without the control of deliberation, evaluation, responsible choice is something less than the life of a psychopath." (Lonergan, *Method*, 122.)

for my subsequent treatment of what is entailed in engaging with religious beliefs, both one's own and those of others, and for building relations between believers from other religions.

The cognitive challenge of getting to know and to value other religions, other beliefs, other believers, is achieved through what is called the "upwards movement" of intentional consciousness. But the affective challenge of responding to and appropriating the values inherent in them is achieved through what is called the "downwards movement". I now analyse these two movements and their implications for interreligious relations.

3. The Two "Movements" of Intentional Consciousness

Intentional consciousness operates in four distinct but related ways. Because these follow inverse sequences, they are often described as "upwards" and "downwards" movements. Frederick Crowe often commented on the importance of these two movements.[50] He conceded that Lonergan was slow to identify the downwards movement,[51] but once he had done so, treated them in a flurry of articles in the mid 1970s.[52] In his most sustained treatment,

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[50] He refers to "what I consider his most important later addition, making explicit what was very close to formulation in *Method*: the two directions in which one might move along the structure". (Crowe, *Lonergan*, 109-110.) For detailed treatment, see Frederick E. Crowe, "An Expansion of Lonergan's Notion of Value", in *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989), 345-355; Crowe, "Lonergan's New Notion of Value", 51-70.

[51] "This second direction has not been exploited. Lonergan himself came late to its formulation; we do not find it where it belongs, in the background chapters of *Method*, but in those post-*Method* papers which point the way but do not follow it to the end." (Crowe, *Lonergan*, 110.)

[52] Crowe provides references to Lonergan's treatment of the two movements in Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise*, endnote 37, p. 115. Two examples are: "Briefly, I may say that the basic principle seems to me to be that human development occurs in two distinct modes. If I may use a spatial metaphor, it moves (1) from below upwards and (2) from above downwards." (Bernard J.F. Lonergan,

Lonergan identified the upwards movement as creative, and the downwards movement as one of healing.[53] Crowe himself explored the ramifications of these two movements on numerous occasions, exploiting their potential in treating different topics.[54] He encouraged students of Lonergan to study them and make further applications.[55] Since the upwards movement of self-transcendence has already been treated, I will concentrate on the downwards movement, with special application to the fourth personal, deliberative level.

To anticipate: the upwards cognitional movement provides a paradigm for the "dialogue of experts", while the downwards motivational movement is most meaningful for the "dialogue of action", as we shall see in Chapter Six. Theologically speaking, as I will show, the ultimate ground of the upwards movement is the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit, while the downwards movement pertains to the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit (see Chapter Six). These different movements are manifest in the Church's mission of dialogue—correlated with the upwards movement—and

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"Questionnaire on Philosophy: Response", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 360.) "Again, the handing on of development may be complete or incomplete. But it works from above downwards: it begins in the affectivity of the infant, the child, the son, the pupil, the follower. On affectivity rests apprehension of values. On the apprehension of values rests belief. On belief follows the growth in understanding of one who has found a genuine teacher and has been initiated into the study of the masters of the past. Then to confirm one's growth in understanding comes experience made mature and perceptive by one's developed understanding. With experiential confirmation the inverse process may set in." (Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", 181.)

[53] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Healing and Creating in History", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985).

[54] For example, the two ways form the basic framework for Frederick E. Crowe, *Old Things and New: A Strategy for Education*, ed. Fred Lawrence, vol. 5, *Lonergan Workshop* (Atlanta, Georgia: Scholars Press, 1985). It recurs often in the articles in Frederick E. Crowe, *Appropriating the Lonergan Idea*, ed. Michael Vertin (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1989); Frederick E. Crowe, *Developing the Lonergan Legacy: Historical, Theoretical and Existential Themes*, ed. Michael Vertin (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

[55] "Finally, with all the emphasis I can command in this last brief piece of advice, I underline the need to appropriate one's interiority in two directions, which Lonergan calls 'the way up' and 'the way down'. … This double way is an important unexplored idea in Lonergan. Neglect of it is bound to result in distorted interpretations." (Crowe, *The Lonergan Enterprise*, 72-73.)

proclamation—correlated with the downwards movement. In Chapter Seven I will show that these cognitive and affective movements are the imprint in us of the *imago Dei,* which grounds the respect and honour that Christians teach is due to all persons. I will also show that the two movements lead to different emphases in the different religious traditions and in their different elements. A clear grasp of these two movements in consciousness lays the groundwork for all these subsequent applications.

(a) Upwards Movement

The dynamics of consciousness—attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding, reasonable judging and responsible choosing—constitute human knowledge and its personal appropriation. This cognitional sequence is often referred to as the "upwards movement". The description is metaphorical. It does not refer to actual physical movement, but to the functional relationship of sublation between the different operations. Lonergan explains as follows:

> I would use this notion in Karl Rahner's sense rather than Hegel's to mean that what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.[56]

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[56] Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

(b) Downwards Movement

In the course of his development, Lonergan came to realise that these same operations combine in an inverse sequence. Responsibly *choosing* a new value, or a deeper appreciation of a value we already hold, sets us in a new, broader, richer context. Within that new personal horizon, appreciation of other values is heightened and deepened. Accordingly, we are more likely to appreciate reasons that we might not have otherwise considered, and to question and even discount others that previously seemed compelling. As a result our reasoning is sharpened and our *judging* becomes more incisive. The new judgments of fact and value that this makes possible both buttress and challenge our *understanding*. Previous understandings may be supported and confirmed, while new contexts and connections may modify or overturn previous understandings. A greater understanding and sensitivity affects our ability to attend, to perceive, and so enriches our *experiencing*. Because we understand better what to look for, our attentiveness is more focused so that we are more likely to notice details we previously missed. We are less likely to be misled by mere appearances and to be receptive to the actual data. This inverse series of operations from choosing, to judging, to understanding, to experiencing is called the "downwards movement".

As with the upwards movement, there is a much greater degree of personal involvement as we advance from one set of operations to the next. Our integrity is increasingly exposed. The downwards movement culminates with ourselves being wholly invested in communicating or embodying the truth, reality, and value that we have discerned. The relation between the different

levels is the same sublation as explained previously. The apparent contradiction of opposite sequences both being instances of sublation is resolved as follows. Byrne observes that, for Lonergan, "sublation applies primarily to the subject as subject, and only derivatively to the acts of consciousness".[57] Thus the subject as learner is progressively enriched through, and more involved in, the different stages of the "upwards" learning process. Equally, the subject as teacher or doer ever more fully realises meaning and value in the different stages of the "downwards" process of teaching or doing.

Earlier I treated the fourth level as the culmination of the upwards cognitive movement that united mind and feeling. Here I again focus on the fourth level, but now as the beginning of the downwards movement.

(c) The Fourth Level

The downwards movement begins at the fourth, personal, existential, deliberative level. It begins in one of two ways. The first is choosing to act in accord with a known value. The second is choosing an unknown value. I shall treat them in that order.

The first way that the downwards movement begins follows the personal appropriation of knowledge, whether by one's own immanent process or by believing another. But knowing something is only half the story. If something is

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[57] Patrick Byrne, "Consciousness: Levels, Sublations, and the Subject as Subject", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995), 140.

truly worth knowing, then it is also worth making known. Thus the fullness of self-transcendence does not consist in appropriating the truth for oneself, but in making it known to others. The point is even clearer in moral matters. In *Method* Lonergan writes:

> … the fullness of moral self-transcendence … is not merely knowing but also doing, and man [*sic*] can know what is right without doing it.[58]

He makes the same point in a later paper:

> But self-transcendence has a still further dimension. For so far we have considered a self-transcendence that is only cognitional. Beyond that there is a self-transcendence that is real. When he [*sic*] pronounces a project to be worthwhile, a man moves beyond consideration of all merely personal satisfactions and interest, tastes and preferences. He is acknowledging objective values and taking the first steps towards authentic human existence. That authenticity is realised when judgments of value are followed by decision and action, when knowing what truly is good leads to doing what truly is good.[59]

However, while the upwards movement may be objectified, it is essentially private.[60] When someone discovers something new, that discovery remains a private affair until it is communicated to others. It is only by taking this further step of communicating what one has learned, of doing what one knows to be right, that we reach the fullness of self-transcendence.

Previously I showed that the upwards movement is completed by an answer to the fourth-level question *Quid mihi est?*—"What concern is that to me?" Here I suggest that the downwards movement is initiated by the further fourth-level question, *Quid tibi est?*—"What concern is that to you?" The "that" in the question is the same object that one has come to know and value in the

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[58] Lonergan, *Method*, 37.
[59] Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 151.
[60] Lonergan distinguishes between the original and the ordinary meaningfulness of language. He acknowledges that the ordinary meaningfulness is public but argues that the original meaningfulness of language is private. See Lonergan, *Method*, 254-257.

upwards movement, and the "you" in the question is anyone and everyone who might benefit from this knowledge or from this deed.

Already in *Insight* Lonergan had recognised the complexity of communicating ideas:

> By way of illustration let us suppose that a writer proposes to communicate some insight *A* to a reader. Then by an insight *B* the writer will grasp the reader's habitual accumulation of insights *C*; by a further insight *D* he [*sic*] will grasp the deficiencies in insight *E* that must be made up before the reader can grasp the insight *A*; finally, the writer must reach a practical set of insights *F* that will govern his verbal flow, the shaping of his sentences, their combination into paragraphs, the sequence of paragraphs in chapters and of chapters in books.[61]

In *Method* Lonergan treats communication as the final functional specialty in the process of appropriating and handing on a tradition. But even there it is the culmination of the downwards series of functional specialties.

Communicating a truth we have learned or believed, or carrying out a good deed, begins with responsible choice. Then comes judgment of the exact expression or precise action that is needed to convey that learning, to execute that value. Next, we ascertain how this teaching/deed can best be understood by the other, and how it fits in with, supports and challenges other understandings. The process culminates in the outward expression that conveys what was learnt, and in the concrete action that embodies the chosen value.

But the downwards movement may begin in a second manner. It may occur as a response to an unknown value, to a value that has not yet been tested

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[61] Lonergan, *Insight*, 579.

and confirmed. There is an element of the unknown, for what is being considered is not the end-product of a previous upwards cognitional movement. It is like the "*x*" in mathematics that stands for an unknown. Choosing it is a risk. But choosing nonetheless is trusting one's deepest intentional feelings as they respond to genuine value. Since this choosing primarily affects the self, rather than others, the primary question is no longer *Quod tibi est?* It is again *Quod mihi est*?—"What concern is this to me?"

Once the choice is made, the downwards movement unfolds and affects all levels of consciousness, as previously described. Surrender to the unknown value makes our choosing more responsible; our greater responsiveness makes our judging more reasonable; our greater reasonableness makes our understanding more intelligent, which leads us to embody the new value in our lives. And the new experience that results provokes a subsequent upwards movement of getting to know what previously had been discerned only obscurely.

The most common occurrence of this second way in which the downwards movement begins in response to an unknown is when we fall in love. A radical change of heart brings about new capabilities of loving, and new opportunities for learning. Hence we now consider affectivity and its transformative impact on our lives.

(d) Affective Conversion

Falling in love is not a reasoned decision. It is not dependent on knowing the object of our affection. But when the affections of love are ignited, the lover is radically reoriented around the beloved—whatever or whoever that may be—with the prospect of spending a lifetime in living out that concern and getting to know the beloved. In this common (and transforming) experience, the object of the lover's affection is not an already known or valued object, but is outside all previous categories and commitments. The lover is confronted with a choice, as if to ask, "Will I surrender to my heart?", "Will I follow where my feelings are leading me?" It becomes a matter of venturing into the unknown. In the event of falling in love, the lover's choosing becomes more responsive, his judgment open to new evidence, her understanding more complete—and for both, attention to detail endlessly fascinating. In all the love songs of the world, to fall in love is to experience oneself as a transformed self in a transformed world.

Late in his career, Lonergan wrote of "affective conversion".[62] He regularly identified three possibilities: "the domestic love of the family; the human love of one's tribe, one's city, one's country, mankind [*sic*]; the divine love that orientates man in his cosmos and expresses itself in his worship".[63] Our earlier treatment of four different kinds of conversion (intellectual, moral, psychic and ecological) indicated a radical appropriation of various dimensions of the self. By contrast, affective conversion concerns something

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[62] See Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", 179. See also Doran, *Theology and History*, 9, 52, 59, 85-90.
[63] Lonergan, "Healing", 106.

or someone other than the self. The other four conversions are first realised at the peak of the upwards movement. Affective conversion first becomes effective in the downwards movement. It is the ecstasy of the self embracing a new or higher value, affecting the whole of consciousness in a movement that flows outwards and downwards from that high point at which one is transformed in love.

The self-transcendence of the upwards cognitive movement precipitates the subsequent downwards practical movement of communicating what we have learned, of acting in accord with what we know to be right. Similarly, the self-transcendence of the downwards affective movement triggers a subsequent upwards movement of getting to know the beloved. Thus the two movements alternate as the deep rhythms of human living.

Familiarity with the two movements and what motivates them can guide our involvement in interreligious relating. If the need is to learn about the other, then the appropriate strategy is to seek experiences that will give rise to questions to initiate an upwards learning movement. If the need is to build affection, then the appropriate strategy is to present values that will inspire common action in a downwards movement. I shall treat this in more detail in Chapter Five.

(e) Priority of Upwards and Downwards Movements

The fact of two movements raises the question of priority. Which comes first?

In *Method* Lonergan cites the scholastic tag, "*Nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*, Knowledge precedes love."[64] He states that "ordinarily" fourth-level operations rely on the previous three levels of operations, and describes falling in love as a "minor exception", and God's love flooding our hearts as the "major exception".

However, in his later writings Lonergan reverses that priority, justifying it both in terms of intentionality analysis and also in terms of the tradition. I quote two examples:

> One might accord metaphysical necessity to such adages as *ignoti nulla cupido* and *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*. But while they assert the priority of knowledge as one ascends from the lower to the higher, they tend to overlook the inverse priority by which the higher sublates the lower. It is in the latter fashion that orthopraxy has a value beyond orthodoxy.[65]

> Such transforming love has its occasions, its conditions, its causes. But once it comes and as long as it lasts, it takes over. One no longer is one's own. Moreover, in the measure that this transformation is effective, development becomes not merely from below upwards, but more fundamentally from above downwards. There has begun a life in which the heart has reasons which reason does not know. There has been opened up the new world in which the old adage, *nihil amatum nisi prius cognitum*, yields to a new truth, *nihil vere cognitum nisi prius amatum*.[66]

It is evident that former so-called "exceptions" are now the rule, that the downwards movement of sharing the concerns of those we love is in fact the ordinary path of human development, and that the upwards movement of coming to know and to choose better alternatives is the exception. Better still,

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[64] Lonergan, *Method*, 122.

[65] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 31.

[66] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Christology Today: Methodological Reflections", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 77.

rather than "exceptions" and "rule", the two movements are, as Crowe recognises, a "dialectic".[67]

The downwards movement that begins in love has chronological priority. This is so because love moves us to a proper valuing of things. Among what is valued is our reasonableness. It assumes in principle everything that is understandable. Likewise, informed understanding makes one more attentive to details involved in concrete living, expressed in words and deeds.

The upwards movement has logical priority. It is how our minds and hearts work in coming to know the true, real, good and valuable, mounting upwards through experience, understanding, judging and responsible choosing. As mentioned above, to recognise the priorities of each movement offers guidance in choosing the relevant strategy to foster better relations between believers from different religions.

But these upwards-downwards movements do not exhaust the dynamics of consciousness. There is more—to be found in what Lonergan has on occasion referred to as a "fifth level of intentional consciousness".

4. The Fifth "Level" of Intentional Consciousness

In *Method* we read "be attentive, be intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible, be in love"[68]—the only instance in Lonergan's writings where he names five

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[67] Crowe, "Lonergan's Notion of Value", 354.

transcendental precepts. Following a lecture in 1972 Lonergan responded to a question about the state of being-in-love by the casual remark "You can say it is on the fifth level."[69] A couple of years later, he again identified "being in love" as a distinct stage beyond deliberating.[70] In 1976 he wrote of "quasi-operators" both underpinning and overarching the operations of consciousness.[71] Then, in a lecture a year or so later, after noting that the structure of consciousness is "open at both ends", he proposed six levels.[72] In subsequent years there was discussion among Lonergan scholars on these enigmatic references to a possible fifth level. Based on these asides, as well as interpreting other Lonergan texts on love, some scholars have variously affirmed a fifth level of operation, while others have affirmed only four levels.

Doran argues for a fifth level beyond the four levels of intentional consciousness on the grounds that the total giving of self in love to another is a higher level order of activity than other ordinary decisions.[73] Vertin challenges Doran's position, arguing that the word "level" is used analogically to refer to the highest or uppermost reach of the fourth level, and that there is

[68] Lonergan, *Method*, 268.

[69] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Functional Specialty 'Systematics'", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 193.

[70] The actual wording is to a *seventh* stage, but because the first two stages named are dreamless sleep and dreaming, what is intended is the fifth level. See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Self-transcendence: Intellectual, Moral, Religious", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 316.

[71] Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 29-30.

[72] While the actual wording is to *six* levels, the inclusion in those of the prior "symbolic operator" means that the "further realm of interpersonal relations" refers to the "fifth level". See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 400.

[73] Robert M. Doran, "Consciousness and Grace", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 11, no. 1 (1993).

no "level" above that of deciding.[74] Dunne argues that intentionality analysis operates through only four levels of consciousness, but that analysis of the vertical finality of being in love yields a further level of interpersonal relations.[75]

For my part, I argue that intentional consciousness operates in only four ways, but that the first three ways have an intellectual mode and a moral mode. However, I also hold that intentional consciousness is more than the four ways in which it operates. That "more" is summed up in the saying: The whole is more than the sum of the parts.

To elaborate this point, I note that Lonergan transposed the classic Aristotelian definition of nature into the terms of intentionality analysis as follows:

> Now Aristotle defined nature as an immanent principle of movement and rest.[76] In man [*sic*] such a principle is the human spirit as raising and answering questions. As raising questions it is an immanent principle of movement. As answering questions and doing so satisfactorily it is an immanent principle of rest.[77]

After presenting the standard pattern of questions and answers, Lonergan then posed a further question:

> … if what the several principles attain are only aspects of something richer and fuller, must not the several principles themselves be but aspects of a deeper and more comprehensive principle? And is not that deeper and more comprehensive principle itself a nature, at once a principle of movement and of rest, a tidal movement that begins before consciousness, unfolds through sensitivity, intelligence, rational

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[74] Michael Vertin, "Lonergan on Consciousness: Is there a Fifth Level?", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 12, no. 1 (1994).

[75] Tad Dunne, "Being in Love", *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 13 (1995).

[76] [Lonergan's note] Aristotle, *Physics*, II, 1, 195b, 21-22.

[77] Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", 172.

reflection, responsible deliberation, only to find its rest beyond all these. I think so.[78]

Lonergan goes on to conclude that the point beyond is "being-in-love". He interprets the whole movement as an ongoing process of self-transcendence. I interpret him to mean that the final principle is the self-transcending subject, the human person. Thus in my reading the so-called "fifth level" is not another level of operation. Just as the fourth level provides no additional content "over and above" the three ways that consciousness operates, the fifth level is not anything extra or additional to the four ways in which consciousness operates; but just as the fourth level unites the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness, the fifth level unites the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness.

The first four sets of operations are the four ways in which consciousness operates—the fifth level is the conscious operator. The first four levels are the ways in which consciousness acts—the fifth level is the conscious actor. The first four levels are how the person acts—the fifth level is the act of the person. The first four levels are what a person does—the fifth level is who he/she is. The first four levels are about doing—the fifth level is being. The distinguishing mark of the fifth level is pure openness and receptivity. Unlike the receptivity of the first level, which is intentional and always directed to specific ends, this is completely open-ended, even to the point of receiving its

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[78] Lonergan, "Natural Right and Historical Mindedness", 174-175.

very being from another. As such, the fifth level is the locus of the immediate creation of the human soul by God,[79] and of re-creation by grace.

Just as the other levels are a series of questions, insights and answers, the questions proper to the fifth level are: Who am I? Who are you? And, in the context of interreligious relations: Who are we together? Moreover, from a Christian point of view, there is the ultimate question that Jesus poses that reverberates throughout history to people of all times and places: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15; Mk 8:29; Lk 9:20).

This analysis of the fifth level yields a descriptive phenomenology of the human person. The person is the locus of cognition and affection—of knowing and being known, of loving and being loved. This corresponds to contemporary appreciation of the person as constituted by relationships with self, other persons, and ultimately with God. The alternation of the cognitive and affective movements is the process of human becoming which extends over a lifetime—*homo viator.*[80] This process of becoming is a realisation of the self that we already are in our orientation to the fullness of life—*homo vivens.*[81]

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[79] "The Church teaches that every spiritual soul is created immediately by God—it is not 'produced' by the parents—and also that it is immortal: it does not perish when it separates from the body at death, and it will be reunited with the body at the final Resurrection." (CCC, 366) For a metaphysical account, see William Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many: A Contemporary Thomistic Metaphysics* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 257-259.

[80] Cf. Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 305.

[81] I acknowledge my indebtedness to Anthony Kelly for proposing this phrase which echoes the wonderful aphorism of Irenaeus: "*Gloria Dei, vivens homo*" (The glory of God is the human being fully alive).

While the cognitional and affective movements have logical and chronological priority respectively, our being a person has *ontic* priority.[82] Personal value is neither a human product nor a logical construct. It does not depend on either the knowledge attained (the upwards movement), or the actions performed (the downwards movement). It is not a chronological event in time. The value of the human person is intrinsic to its being. It is *a priori*, simply given, and its ultimate source is the creative *fiat* of God.

This fifth level of personal identity is of central importance to interreligious relations, for the high point of interreligious relations is the meeting of persons. It is an event of self-revelation, of disclosing who we are, how our faith, hope and love have shaped what we have become. In the following chapter, I will treat this in terms of mutual self-mediation. It underlies all other expressions of interreligious living.

(a) Spiritual and Religious Conversions

Previously I treated intellectual, moral, psychic, ecological and affective conversions in relation to the upwards and downwards movements. I will now indicate briefly how "religious conversion" is related to the fifth level while leaving a more detailed treatment to Chapter Four.

Since our desires are for the infinite, the Divine Mystery is the only adequate object of our restless yearning. When God graciously fulfils our deepest

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[82] The "ontic" value of the person is mentioned in Lonergan, *Method*, 31, 50.

desires, the self is transformed, and a new self emerges. It is a fifth-level event.

Previously, there were two fourth-level questions, one culminating the upwards movement and one initiating the downwards movement. Here also two fourth-level questions stir. As Lonergan writes, in reference to God's love bringing the self to fulfilment:

> … now it is *primarily* a question of decision. Will I love him in return, or will I refuse? Will I live out the gift of his love, or will I hold back, turn away, withdraw? Only *secondarily* do there arise the questions of God's existence and nature, and they are the questions either of the lover seeking to know him or of the unbeliever seeking to escape him.[83] [italics mine]

The first question is different from those treated earlier. Here there is no categorical object as such. There is only the experience, be it felt as a gentle attraction or as a dramatic irruption, of being drawn into an unimaginable fullness of being. The primary question is existential: Will I surrender or will I refuse? Will I consent to the new self that beckons or will I reject it?

Having chosen positively, the subsequent question then combines the previous two questions into one: *Quid mihi tibi est?*—"What concern is that to me and to you?"[84] Here lies an ongoing commitment to learn to name the One who brought about this transformation, and to witness accordingly. This further commitment utilises all the four ways in which consciousness operates in both movements. It involves following the path of discipleship in coming to

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[83] Lonergan, *Method*, 116.
[84] This is the full text of the question that Jesus addresses to his mother at Cana; cf. Jn 2:4.

know God and to make God known. It demands surrender of the whole self to God's purposes, becoming, in terms of the Prayer of St Francis of Assisi, "an instrument" for God's purposes in the world.

An example of this double commitment in the Old Testament is the call of Isaiah. When he hears the voice of the Lord saying: "Whom shall I send? And who will go for us?" the prophet replies, "Here am I" (the existential commitment of the person), and then adds immediately "Send me!" (the practical consequences that follow) (Is 6:8).

A New Testament example is the Annunciation. After the angel's announcement of the divine summons to a unique place in the economy of salvation, Mary's first response is personal and existential: "Here am I, the servant of the Lord" (Lk 1:38); and then she immediately adds the practical corollary: "Let it be with me according to your word." (Lk 1:38)

The author writing to the Hebrews puts a similar double commitment on the lips of the Saviour: "Here I am, I have come to do your will." (Heb 10:9; New International Version)

Of course, one might refuse the invitation to a fuller life, and then the subsequent decision involves endless attempts to rationalise that refusal by deprecating all notions of transcendence beyond this world.

Lonergan describes this radical transformation of the self as "being grasped by ultimate concern" and calls it "religious conversion".[85] To refer to this same event, I will prefer the expression "spiritual conversion", for, as we shall see, that better conveys the numinosity and anonymity of the event. I will use the phrase "religious conversion" to refer to the second commitment, namely, the individual and communal effort to appropriate and communicate the spiritually converted self. It entails getting to know and to make known the Mystery who brought it about, living out its implications over a lifetime, and handing it on to subsequent generations through the different stages of history. It has the advantage that it conforms to the common sense understanding of religion.

In short, in my suggested terminology, "spiritual conversion" is God's direct and immediate action on the person (fifth level), while "religious conversion" is mediated through the dynamics of consciousness (the four levels). I will treat these two conversions in detail in Chapter Four.

Conclusion

Much more detail could be written about the different dynamics of consciousness. For example, they are operative in all communities, including the religious, for community exists through common experiencing, common understanding, common judging, and common choosing.[86] The transcendental precepts mentioned in Chapter One—be attentive, be

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[85] For treatment see Lonergan, *Method*, 240-241.

[86] For treatment, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning", in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988).

intelligent, be reasonable, be responsible—promote progress both in society and in religions.[87] Conversely, not to heed the transcendental precepts precipitates decline in society and in religious communities.[88] Further, while the account of these dynamics may be improved, the basic pattern is normative and, in principle, unrevisable.[89] Every attempt to refute the pattern will appeal to new data, or more comprehensive understandings, or more reasonable judgments, or more responsive choices—only to confirm the basic pattern.

All these assertions and more, along with the basic account and refinements I have presented, are sufficient for the limited purposes of my thesis, to establish that this dynamic pattern of operations that Lonergan has analysed is common to all people of all times. For that reason, the dynamics of consciousness are "a common ground on which men [and women] of intelligence might meet",[90] which was the stated goal of *Insight.* My refinement of how we come to know the good establishes that these same dynamics are "a common ground on which men and women of good will might meet". In the following chapter I will show how these same dynamics are the common ground for the construction and mediation of meaning. Subsequently, in Chapter Four, I argue that spiritual conversion forms "a common horizon within which men and women of faith might meet", and that their religions form the content of that interreligious encounter.

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[87] For treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 52-53.
[88] For treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 53-55.
[89] For treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 19.
[90] Lonergan, *Insight*, 7.

CHAPTER THREE: HUMAN MEANING

In the previous chapter I treated and refined key elements in Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness. I argued that since those dynamics are common to all people of all time, they form a "common ground" on which believers from different religions might meet. In this chapter I will treat Lonergan's analysis of the role of the dynamics of consciousness in human meaning. The natural world of which we are a part is mediated to us by meaning. The societies, cultures and religions which we create are constructs of meaning. The Transcendent Mystery beyond this world is mediated to us by meaning. But this construction and mediation of meaning are carried out through the same dynamics of consciousness we treated in the previous chapter. Therefore, the "common ground" that Lonergan identified, namely the dynamics of consciousness, extends to the whole range of human meanings.

Rather than attempting a complete account of meaning, I will select for treatment only those areas that are particularly relevant to my subsequent chapters on religious, interreligious and Christian meaning.[1]

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[1] For detailed Lonergan resources on meaning in chronological order, see "Time and Meaning" (September 1962), "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer" (24 September 1963), "The Analogy of Meaning" (25 September 1963), in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran, vol. 17, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004). "Dimensions of Meaning" (May 1965), in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, vol. 4, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988). "Meaning", Ch. 3 (1971— his most extensive treatment) in Lonergan, *Method.*, "The World Mediated by Meaning" (1972) in Lonergan, *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*.

Nostra Aetate states that the religions provide answers to the profound questions we ask:

> People look to their different religions for an answer to the unsolved riddles of human existence. The problems that weigh heavily on people's hearts are the same today as in past ages. What is humanity? What is the meaning and purpose of life? What is upright behaviour, and what is sinful? Where does suffering originate, and what end does it serve? How can genuine happiness be found? What happens at death? What is judgment? What reward follows death? And finally, what is the ultimate mystery, beyond human explanation, which embraces our entire existence, from which we take our origin and towards which we tend? (NA, 1)

Whenever the religions seek to explain the origin or destiny of this world, or interpret historical events as the providential actions of God in this world, or acknowledge particular people as God's agents in this world (prophets, priests, rulers and so on), or claim a communication or revelation of God from beyond this world, their various accounts are constructs of meaning. In this chapter we shall consider how the dynamics of consciousness are involved in the construction of meaning. This lays the foundation for treating religious meaning in Chapter Four.

Since the religions claim to mediate ultimate meaning and ultimate value, we shall consider exactly what meaning does, how it functions, and what dimensions it adds to human living. These functional categories will be used in the subsequent chapters treating religious, interreligious and Christian meanings.

Given that religions are constructs of meaning and value, interreligious relations involve believers from different religions communicating their

meanings and values to each other, cooperating where they align, recognising where and why they differ, and working to reconcile the differences. In this chapter I show how the dynamics of consciousness underlie the construction and mediation of meaning. In Chapter Five I build on that foundation to treat the structural and interpersonal relations between religions.

As human self-understanding has developed over history, greater self-knowledge has led to greater control over what and how we name things. In this chapter I will show how the four ways in which consciousness operates yield an analysis of the four stages of control over the expression of meaning. In Chapter Four I will apply those four stages to the development of religious meaning, and in Chapter Six to the development of Christian meaning.

Finally, interreligious relations involve coming to know the religious other, and to be known by them. It is sharing one's own meanings and values, and learning from the meanings and values of the other. In its highest form it is the meeting of persons. It involves the vulnerability of revealing the self that one has become, in the hope of a like response from the other, whereby both partners grow. This process will be treated in detail in Chapter Five. But knowing and being known, appreciating and being appreciated—carrying out these tasks successfully and accurately—requires a precise knowledge of knowing what knowing is and what it is not, and a clear appreciation of what appreciation is and what it is not. To conclude this chapter, I will give a summary of theories of knowledge and of evaluation. The critical realism that Lonergan has developed provides a criterion for testing and evaluating the

various claims of the different religions, which is crucial for all interreligious relations.

Accordingly, in this chapter I will treat the following five areas:

1. The Construction of Meaning;

2. The Functions of Meaning;

3. The Mediation of Meaning;

4. The Stages of Meaning;

5. Theories of Knowledge.

1. The Construction of Meaning

Any and every experience is a potential source of meaning.[2] Thus feelings, memories, insights, thoughts, imaginings, ideas and emotions in the data of consciousness are all potentially meaningful. The data of sense are potential sources of meaning about self, objects, events and other people in the material world. And conjectures about what transcends the natural world are potentially meaningful, inspiring feelings of fear, hope, awe and wonder. But how do these potential sources give rise to actual meaning?

In *Method* Lonergan states that: "[a]cts of meaning are (1) potential, (2) formal, (3) full, (4) constitutive or effective, and (5) instrumental".[3] Later in the same chapter he also treats the constitutive, cognitive, communicative and effective functions of meaning. It is obvious that his categories are fluid. The

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[2] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.
[3] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.

fourth act of meaning above combines the constitutive and effective functions of meaning, and the fifth instrumental act combines the cognitive and communicative functions of meaning.

I have found it useful to correlate the acts of meaning with the four ways in which consciousness operates. The potential, formal and full acts of meaning correspond to the first three ways. I will treat them in this section on the construction of meaning. The other acts of meaning correlate with the fourth way in which consciousness operates. They detail how meaning functions, how it works, what it does, and what dimensions it adds to human living. I will treat them in the following section on the functions of meaning.

(a) Potential Acts of Meaning

Potential acts of meaning refer to the communication of meaning that is direct and immediate in experience.[4] The example that Lonergan gives is the smile. The communication of meaning is direct and immediate in the experience itself, without being processed by the higher operations of consciousness. Because there has not yet been worked out the proper distinction between meaning and what is meant, the meaning is elemental.

(b) Formal Acts of Meaning

Formal acts of meaning refer to second-level ideas, theories, hypotheses, possibilities that have been imagined, thought, conceived, formulated and

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[4] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.

proposed for consideration.[5] What is meant is an interpretation of the original experience. The interpretation mediates the meaning of the experience. Thus there is a formal distinction between meaning and what is meant. However, the precise character of what is meant, the determination of the object of meaning, has not yet been clarified—whether what is meant is actual or fantasy, fact or fiction, real or imagined.

(c) Full Acts of Meaning

Full or complete acts of meaning are judgments that establish the actuality or otherwise of what is meant—that it is mere imagination or fantasy, or that what it refers to is or is not real.[6] The actual status of what is meant is fully and completely determined.

In the previous chapter I distinguished the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness. Here I simply note that a similar analysis applies in regard to meaning and value. Our positing of what is meant, as described above, involves the first three ways in which intellectual consciousness operates. Our evaluation of what is meant involves the same three sets of operations, but now processing our intentional feelings in regard to what is meant. It is the moral mode of consciousness. Simply experiencing those feelings indicates potential value; understanding and formulating a possible valuation yields formal value; and judging that formal value establishes whether or not what is

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[5] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.
[6] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.

meant is truly valuable. Thus meaning and value are both constructs that are isomorphic with the first three ways in which consciousness operates.[7]

But how do these acts of meaning (and value) become personal acts of meaning? How do they become personally meaningful? For that we appeal to the fourth way in which consciousness operates as refined in the previous chapter.

2. The Functions of Meaning

In the previous chapter I refined the fourth-level question as *Quid mihi (tibi) est?*—"What concern is that to me (to you)?" In the present context, that same question could be translated as "What does that *mean* to me (to you)?" What Lonergan variously calls "the functions of meaning" or "dimensions of meaning" describe what meaning does, how it functions, and the dimensions it adds to human living. I propose they are all fourth-level activities, either appropriating any of the above three acts of meaning for oneself, or offering them to others for their consideration.

(a) Constitutive [8]

Meaning is constitutive. Personal concern moves us to choose the elements that make up our world. Fourth-level personal choices incorporate meanings and values and make them component parts of one's world. In the process,

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[7] For isomorphism between knowing subject and known object, see Lonergan, *Method*, 21.
[8] Lonergan, *Method*, 78.

the person constitutes his/her world, and thereby constitutes him- or herself as the subject-author of that world. Depending on whether what is chosen is truly meaningful and valuable, those choices reveal the subject to be either responsible or irresponsible. Meaning thus forms, orders and integrates all that the subject knows and does and is. It sets the horizon of his world, of her concerns. What is meaningful is inside that horizon; what is meaningless is outside that horizon.

When those meanings and values are shared by others, together they form a family, a society, a culture, a religion. This is expressed in common familial, societal, cultural and religious customs, habits, attitudes, interests, orientations, and institutions. Though some identifiers are physical symbols like flags or buildings, the physical component is incidental and the meaning is what really matters. As constructs which have meanings as intrinsic components, such institutions can be changed simply by changing their meaning, or by changing the objects that inspire people's concern. Thus meaning as constitutive is *formative*: it forms individuals and societies and cultures and all their institutions, giving them their sense of identity.

(b) Cognitive [9]

Meaning is also cognitive. It enables us to attain knowledge. The infant lives only in the narrow world of immediate experience, of sense and feeling and affect, where there is no perceptible element of understanding or judgment or

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[9] Lonergan, *Method*, 76-77.

responsible choice. By contrast, the adult lives mostly in a world mediated by meaning, which includes the common sense and theoretical achievements of others in family, in society, in other places, in other times in history, in literature, in science, in scholarship, in meditation, in mystical experience. This vaster world is mediated by meaning. "It is not even the sum, the totality of all worlds of immediate experience."[10] For meaning goes beyond mere experience to what is meant. To immediate experience is added the further dimension of formal understanding of what is meant, and often enough a judgment that what is meant actually is so. Thus meaning as cognitive is *conformative*, enabling us to conform to reality. In contemporary language the word "conformity" often has pejorative overtones, implying external conformity to an artificial standard proposed by others. However, in this context the word denotes a more precise sense of conformity, for in the first instance the cognitive function is the subject's conforming to his or her own processes of knowing. This ensures that the knowledge attained conforms to reality.

(c) Communicative [11]

A third function of meaning is communicative. What one person means can be communicated to others who, by learning or believing, come to share that same meaning. The original meaning which was proper to the individual now becomes the common property of the group. It becomes common meaning. As the meaning is passed from generation to generation through training and education it becomes historical meaning, enjoys progress and flourishes,

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[10] Lonergan, *Method*, 77.
[11] Lonergan, *Method*, 78-79.

suffers decline and breakdowns and is deformed, by human ingenuity is restored, and by grace perhaps even redeemed and transformed. Meaning is thus *informative*, enabling us to learn from others their meanings and values and to share with them our own.

The cognitive and communicative functions are carried out by instrumental acts of meaning. Lonergan states: "Instrumental acts of meaning are expressions."[12] They externalise the acts of meaning and value treated in the previous section and make them available for scrutiny and action first of all by oneself, and then by others.

Some expressions derive from the level of empirical experience. For example, the names for the primary persons in our lives often derive from the infant's growing mastery of the basic phonetic sounds m, n, p and d. Thus we have أَمّ [*umm*] (Arabic), mum, mummy and mother (English), *mère* (French), *Mutter* (German), μάνα [*mana*] (Greek), *madre* (Italian), *mater* (Latin), *madre* (Spanish); and أب [*āb*] (Arabic), dada, daddy, dad and father (English), *père* (French), *Vater* (German), πατέρας [*pateras*] (Greek), *padre* (Italian), *pater* (Latin), *padre* (Spanish). Other names are physical descriptions, for example, "horseless carriage", which convenience and pragmatism then shortens to "car".

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[12] Lonergan, *Method*, 74.

Some expressions derive from the level of understanding. For example, they avail of etymology, as in "automobile" for a vehicle which is self-moving, and "telephone" for an instrument for speaking over distance.

Many names are arbitrary judgments—why "dog" instead of "cog" or "deg"? After all, the same creature is variously named كلب [*kalb*] (Arabic), *chien* (French), *Hund* (German), σκύλος [*skylos*] (Greek), *canis* (Latin), *perro* (Spanish). Originally all expressions for what is meant are private inventions by the individual. Then they became established and confirmed by public convention, by agreed usage.[13] As the examples I have given show, they are always culturally or linguistically conditioned.

Moreover, a person with highly developed differentiation skills may distinguish the same general object in ways that are impervious to another. For example, what to the less discriminating is simply ice, the Eskimo, because his life depends on it, differentiates with distinct names according to its colour, age, compactness, solidity, and weight-bearing capacity. What to others is simply a camel, the Bedouin, whose livelihood depends on it, differentiates with different names that distinguish its breed, variety, age, condition, and stage of growth.[14]

In the above examples different words refer to the same reality, and the one object is differentiated more or less finely by different people. In the context of

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[13] For Lonergan's treatment of the original meaningfulness of language as essentially private and only derivatively public, see Lonergan, *Method*, 254-257.

[14] Philip K. Hitti, *The Original Arab: The Bedouin* (1996 [cited 20 February 2008]); available from <http://www.oneworldmagazine.org/focus/deserts/hittstr1.htm>.

interreligious relations, it must be asked whether the expressions used in different religions are commensurable. For example, do the words الله [*Allāh*] (Arabic), God (English), *dieu* (French), *Gott* (German), θεός [*theos*] (Greek), יהוה [YHWH—read as *Adonai*] (Hebrew), *deus* (Latin), *Dios* (Spanish) and so on, all refer to the same reality? While all these expressions may intend the same Transcendent Mystery, there are different nuances in different languages and different cultural contexts, and there are often different conceptualisations of that object in the different religious traditions. Thus different words from different traditions may mean the same object, and the same word used in different traditions may mean different objects. Hence in any conversation, but especially in interreligious relations, it is very important to establish precisely what is meant. Lonergan's critical realism that I present at the conclusion of this chapter will serve that purpose.

(d) Effective[15]

A fourth function of meaning is effective. Since we are drawn to what seems meaningful and avoid what seems meaningless, meaning is motivational. Whatever means something to us, whatever we value, whatever matters to us, we are willing to think about, plan, weigh, choose and carry out. Moreover, as the adjective indicates, the instrumental acts of meaning treated above are only a *means* to express what is meant—"this expression means that object". For example, these marks on the page, or these articulated puffs of air, refer to that object—but the expressions themselves are not that object.

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[15] Lonergan, *Method*, 77-78.

However, effective acts of meaning actually *effect* what is meant, and without the expression the reality could not be mediated. Such expressions are not arbitrary or conventional, but proper to the object. The meaning is inherent in the expression. Thus the difference between instrumental and effective acts of meaning is the same as that between a sign and a symbol. A sign points to a reality; a symbol makes that reality present. Hence when someone says to another "I love you" and truly means it, those words convey that reality, and without that public avowal there would be something missing in the love. Effective acts of meaning execute or carry out what is meant. In doing so they change both our world and ourselves, for better and for worse. Meaning as effective is thus *transformative* or performative.[16]

In summary, the constitutive, cognitive, communicative and effective functions of meaning are respectively formative, conformative, informative, and transformative.[17]

Application to Interreligious Relations

First, it is impossible to write about meaning without including value. The practical reason for the conjunction between meaning and value is that we

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[16] Pope Benedict XVI writes: "the Christian message was not only 'informative' but 'performative'. That means: the Gospel is not merely a communication of things that can be known—it is one that makes things happen and is life-changing." (Benedict XVI, *Spe Salvi: On Christian Hope* (Strathfield: St Pauls, 2007), 2.)

[17] I acknowledge my indebtedness to the phrase "… preaching is informational, formational and transformational" in Carla Mae Streeter OP, "Preaching as a Form of Theological Communication: An Instance of Lonergan's Evaluative Hermeneutics", in *Communication and Lonergan: Common Ground for Forging the New Age*, ed. Thomas J. Farrell and Paul A. Soukup (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1993), 62. To her triad I have added "conformative", in the sense of conforming to reality.

only ever come to know or do anything if in some elemental way we first value that object, even if our motives are obscure; but if we consider an object absolutely worthless, then we do not bother with the effort. A further reason is that the four functions of meaning are all fourth-level personal acts. As we saw in the previous chapter, the fourth level unites the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness, unites intellect and feeling, so values are always involved. Moreover, personal value is always at stake in fourth-level acts. So values are always inherent in meaning, and what is meaningful is always valuable, at least to the subject for whom it serves some purpose—even as that purpose begs to be critically established and evaluated by attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding and reasonable judging, as we shall see below.

Secondly, the four functions of meaning are distinct but not separate. They reinforce and support one another. For example, because we name things (cognitive), we can talk about them with others (communicative). We communicate (communicative) more or less effectively (effective) what we know (cognitive) to be so (constitutive); and our knowing (cognitive) constitutes us (constitutive) to be more or less effective (effective) communicators (communicative) of that truth or reality (constitutive). That is, no one function of meaning stands completely alone, but all of them are operative in our different activities, with one being at the foreground while the others are in the background, and the primary and supporting roles constantly changing as our activities change.

However, I note that the choices we make about what we care to know and what we choose to ignore constitute both our world and ourselves as the authors of that world. So there is a close correlation between cognition and constitution. Similarly, the more we have personally appropriated the meanings and values that shape our lives, the more effectively we can communicate them to others. And the more effective our communication, the more readily those meanings and values can be appropriated by others. So there is a close correlation between communication and effectiveness.

This correlation between the two pairs of functions of meaning is connected to the upwards and downwards movements of the dynamics of consciousness treated in the previous chapter. The cognitive and constitutive functions, combined, complete the upwards cognitional movement in a decisive act of personal appropriation of what is meant. The communicative and effective functions, combined, initiate the downwards motivational movement in a decisive personal commitment to carry out what is meant. The same pattern of inverse movements underlies "the dialogue of experts" and "the dialogue of action" treated in Chapter Five. Their ultimate explanation lies in the invisible and visible dimensions of the missions of the Word and the Spirit treated in Chapter Six. These in turn have practical expression in the dual activities of "dialogue" and "proclamation" in the one evangelising mission of the Church, also treated in Chapter Six.

Thirdly, this complex of functions is how our personal and communal worlds— including our religions—are established, how they operate, how their

boundaries are set, how their dimensions are defined. The only way to ensure their integrity is attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding, and reasonable judging to establish what is truly meaningful and valuable, and then choosing that responsibly. This again underlines the need for a critical establishment of meaning and value—to be treated in the final section below.

Fourthly, Lonergan has described community in terms of the dynamics of consciousness. Community is "a matter of a common field of experience, a common mode of understanding, a common measure of judgment [including belief], and a common consent".[18] He has also stated that the constitutive and communicative functions of meaning combine in the notion of community, which he describes as an "achievement of common meaning".[19] Both descriptions coincide, for meanings and values are mediated or constructed by the dynamics of consciousness. This confirms that the dynamics of consciousness are the "common ground" underlying the many different linguistic, domestic, social, political, and religious communities or worlds of meaning.

Finally, the different objects that attract people's interests, and the different values that different people bring to their engagement with those objects, bring about what Lonergan calls "differentiations of consciousness". In different articles, he gives different lists, with different names, in different orders. Counting possible permutations and combinations, he proposes as

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[18] Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning", 234.
[19] Lonergan, *Method*, 79.

many as thirty-two differentiations.[20] To add to the complexity, he sometimes adds the presence, absence and degree of the different conversions. The five basic concerns that appear most consistently are the scientific, scholarly, modern philosophic, aesthetic and the religious.

These multiple differentiations of consciousness and their permutations explain in part the profusion and diversity of human meaning, as do the presence, absence and degree of the different conversions. However one engages the natural world, the human worlds constituted by meaning, the human subject, the arts, or the transcendent, the same dynamics are operative in every case. This confirms yet again that the dynamics of consciousness are indeed a "common ground" that unites the different fields of human endeavour.

Relevant to our concern with religious plurality, I add that not only is there a differentiation between secular and religious consciousness, but each religion involves its own specific differentiation of consciousness. This derives in part from the different objects that concern its adherents—the different prophets and holy men and women, rituals, forms of worship, institutions, laws, disciplines, attitudes to nature, and so on—and in part from the devotion that believers invest in them. For example, Christians and Muslims have quite different appreciations of the role and identity of Jesus Christ, and this inculcates a different attitude towards him, a difference in consciousness. Aboriginals and later migrants to Australia have quite a different

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[20] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Doctrinal Pluralism", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 98.

consciousness from each other in regard to the Australian landscape. However, the many differentiations of consciousness among different religions can be negotiated and navigated, for, as mentioned above, the same dynamics underlie them all.

3. The Mediation of Meaning

Since religions are largely constructs of meaning, and since building relations between believers from different religions is a matter of sharing those meanings, I will consider how meaning is mediated.

(a) Mediation

However, before treating the mediation of meaning, I will summarise Lonergan's ideas on mediation itself, his most detailed treatment of which is found in *The Mediation of Christ in Prayer.*[21] He treats simple mediation, mutual mediation, self-mediation and mutual self-mediation.

Simple mediation

Simple mediation refers to the single operation of any one simple factor (quality, property, feature) that has a *source* (origin, ground, basis) and

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[21] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996). This material is summarised in Robert M. Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2005), 53-56.

consequences (effects, derivatives, expression, outcome). That factor is immediate in the source, and mediated in the consequences. Lonergan gives mechanical, organic, psychic and logical examples:

1. In a watch, movement is immediate in the mainspring and mediated in all the other parts that it moves; control is immediate in the balance wheel and mediated in all the parts it controls.

2. In the body, the supply of oxygen is immediate in the respiratory system and mediated to the rest of the body through oxygenated blood; the flow of blood is immediate in the pumping heart but mediated to the rest of the body by the heart pumping it through the vascular system; nutrition is immediate in the digestive system but mediated to the rest of the body through nutrified blood, and so on.

3. In consciousness, anger is immediate in aggressivity and mediated through the whole person in the glaring look, the pugilistic stance, the jutting jaw, and so on.

4. In a purely logical system, truth, evidence, and necessity are immediate in first principles and mediated in the conclusions drawn from those principles.

Mutual mediation

Mutual mediation refers to the combined operations of any complex whole that is constituted by mutually mediating parts.[22] Lonergan again gives examples:

1. In a watch, the mainspring moves itself immediately and the balance wheel mediately; the balance wheel controls itself immediately and the mainspring mediately. The two functions overlap and affect each other in such a way that together they provide controlled movement. The two centres of operation mediate each other. Their mutual interaction makes the functioning whole, a watch that by its controlled movement can be relied on to keep time.

2. In an organism, the respiratory, digestive, nervous, muscular and other systems are each centres of operations whose operations affect themselves immediately and all the other systems mediately. Together their mutual interactions make up the functioning whole that is a living body.

3. In an angry person, the facial and bodily postures that are expressions of anger also stoke the fires of aggression. There is a mutual feedback from the results of anger into the causes of anger so that, unless checked, the anger grows, becoming all-consuming, leading to eruptions of violence.

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[22] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 165.

4. In empirical science, rigorous attention to data ensures that the project is wholly empirical, and the intellectual effort of attending, understanding, formulating, testing and verifying hypotheses about the data ensures that it is wholly scientific. The mutual interaction of the two sets of immediate activities—attention to data and intellectual effort—yields the single enterprise that is empirical science.

Self-Mediation

Self-mediation refers to "a whole that has consequences that change the whole".[23] Lonergan provides examples of self-mediation by physical parts, by consciousness, and by self-consciousness.

1. "The growth of an organism is a self-mediation. It originates itself by giving rise to physical parts within itself."[24] At any given moment the organism is a functional whole, exemplifying mutual mediation of the various component parts. But an organism grows through stages. In the process, some developments are relevant to a particular stage only and then disappear, for example, breastfeeding. Other developments are not particularly relevant at that time but are very useful later on. For example, the brain of an infant is disproportionate to its body but it does not grow as the rest of the body does. This organised structuring of present and future functioning goes beyond mutual mediation, which is only ever simultaneous. Also, the growth yields not just numerical increase (more

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[23] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 167.
[24] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 167.

and more cells) and not just increasing complexity (more and more functions and more and more combinations of functions in ever greater differentiation, specialisation and efficiency) but it is the creation and exploitation of new possibilities. There is what Lonergan calls a *displacement upwards* that transcends the constituent parts and functions to form a new synthesis that is the living organism. In fact, the cells can be replaced and the functions modified without any significant impact, for: "[t]he living of the organism is something quite different in kind from the living of the single cell or the multitude of single cells. It is the living of a whole organism".[25]

Besides the self-mediation of the individual organism, it can also be said that the species mediates itself through the individuals generating offspring. Also, the lower orders of nature and species mediate and sustain the emergence of the higher species, for example, soil quality, plants, herbivores, carnivores.

2. An animal is a conscious organism and so mediates itself intentionally. Consciousness involves what Lonergan calls a *displacement inwards* such that the animal is present to itself, making possible the summation of experience, learning, skills, and habits that make for successful living in its environment. It also involves an *extension outwards*, for where the tree can only respond to things that act on it, the animal can respond to anything it perceives or apprehends, including seeking prey, fleeing

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[25] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 168.

danger, and bonding with its own kind in the family, flock, herd, and group.

3. The human person is a self-conscious organism. Whereas animals live only by instinct, fulfilling physical, biological and species needs, the human subject lives also by free choice. Initially everything is done for the child, but soon the child wants to do things for himself, the youth wants to find out for herself, the adult makes decisions for himself. "Human development is the mediation of autonomy."[26] At first those decisions are all ostensibly about objects, but then the realisation dawns that the decisions are as much about becoming oneself. This is the existential moment that self-consciousness makes possible. There is what Lonergan calls a *deliberate transposition of centre.* Henceforth, the subject chooses what he/she is to be—"autonomy decides what autonomy is to be"[27]— and for better and for worse lives out those commitments of love, loyalty and faith in the communities of family, state and religion.

And just as the self-mediation of the species is through the individual, so the self-mediation of the community is first of all through its lived history and secondly through its reflection on that living, articulated in written history.

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[26] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 170.

[27] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "*Existenz* and *Aggiornamento*", in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988), 224.

Mutual Self-Mediation

Lonergan notes that the existential moment in which we discover that we are free to make ourselves occurs in community. However, this act of self-discovery and self-determination is wholly personal, private, and interior. It is not the property of nature, so is not common to others in the community. It is the act of the person.[28]

> It is known by others if and when one chooses to reveal it, and revealing it is an act of confidence, of intimacy, of letting down one's defences, of entrusting oneself to another.[29]

It is an act of self-revelation, of sharing who I am. And others too may likewise open themselves to us in return. When this occurs there is mutual self-mediation.

> One reveals one's self-discovery and commitment to another, and receives the self-revelation of the other. One opens oneself to be influenced at the depth of one's being and others open themselves to be influenced by us.[30]

Mutual self-mediation can occur between any two or more individuals in a variety of contexts, and to varying degrees. It occurs when people meet, fall in love, propose engagement, vow commitment in marriage and live it out in the relationships of spousal love, of parents and children. It occurs between siblings in the family. It occurs most commonly in friendship where people share intimately. It occurs in the teacher-student relationship in the education of child, youth, adult. Lonergan also notes that mutual self-mediation:

> … is also the imponderable in education that does not show up in charts and statistics, that lies in the immediate interpersonal situation

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[28] As such, it is the fifth level, the identity of the person as treated in the previous chapter.
[29] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 174-175.
[30] Doran, *What is Systematic Theology?* , 56.

which vanishes when communication becomes indirect through books, through television programs, through teaching by mail.[31]

It occurs in the matrices of interpersonal relationships in the neighbourhood, work, play, society, politics, religion; at local, national and international levels. Given that the vast field of mutual self-mediation is relational rather than analytical, Lonergan proposes that exploring and articulating it is perhaps the work of dramatists and novelists.[32]

In terms of religions, self-mediation is the model or pattern for growth of a single religion, including the propagation of its meanings and values, the incorporation of new members, the ongoing formation of existing members, and their exercise of the apostolate. Mutual self-mediation is the model or pattern for simultaneous growth in mutual understanding by believers from two or more religions. Believers from both communities reveal themselves to each other, sharing their religious meanings and values in a free, open, respectful exchange. The comparison and contrast in their respective personal horizons encourages all parties to modify their particular stances while remaining within their respective traditions. This model of mutual self-mediation is the basis for interreligious relations which I treat in Chapter Five.

(b) Carriers of Meaning

Since interreligious relations involve mutual self-mediation, I present a summary of Lonergan's account of the variety of ways in which meanings (and values) are communicated. He calls them "carriers of meaning".

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[31] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 176.
[32] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 175.

Intersubjectivity [33]

Lonergan asserts that intersubjectivity is the primordial sense of "we" that precedes the distinction of subjects into "I" and "thou" and survives their oblivion.[34] It is vital and functional. It is revealed in spontaneous concern for others. For example, when we see someone trip we instinctively reach out to prevent them falling, even if they are well beyond our reach. This act occurs spontaneously, without any prior thought or deliberation on our part, and we only advert to it as we are doing it. Another example that Lonergan often uses is the smile. We do not learn to smile. Smiling is automatic. Its meaning is direct and immediate and multiple. Not only in the smile but through the whole range of bodily presence—tone of voice, glance, gesture, facial expression, open welcome, closed withdrawal—human beings are transparent to each other. Body language reveals, or betrays, the self to the other, and the other to ourselves. Thus intersubjectivity is perhaps the first or primordial carrier of meaning.

Art [35]

As shown in Chapter Two, experience is the first component in the intellectual process of coming to know. Experience is also used for biological purposes— feelings of hunger, thirst, cold and heat move animals and humans to seek food and drink and shelter for survival; feelings of attraction move animals to seek sexual relations which enable the survival of the species; in humans

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[33] Lonergan, *Method*, 59-61.
[34] Lonergan, *Method*, 57-61.
[35] Lonergan, *Method*, 61-64.

sexual attraction has the added dimension of mutual self-giving in love. In human living some stimuli are programmed to ensure social order—Lonergan's example is the red light that moves drivers to brake, and the green light which moves drivers to accelerate. In these and many other activities of living, experience is subjected to various purposes.

By contrast, aesthetics celebrates that "experience can occur for the sake of experiencing, that it can slip beyond the confines of serious-minded biological purpose, and that this very liberation is a spontaneous, self-justifying joy".[36] As with the potential acts of meaning above, the meaning of such aesthetic experience is elemental. It is charged with aesthetic feeling precisely in order to enable the subject to experience his or her sensitivity engaging the sensibility of the world.

The artist attempts to capture the elemental meaning of such aesthetic experience, to put aside all that is incidental to it, to focus and intensify the central form, and to express it in a painting, or a piece of music or sculpture, or a dance. To describe this process Lonergan borrows Susanne Langer's definition of art as "the objectification of a purely experiential pattern".[37] The finished work of art is thus an invitation to the beholder to enter into that art form and to discover for him- or herself the originating experience. As such, art heightens our experience of experiencing, whether of space, or time, or

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[36] Lonergan, *Insight*, 208.
[37] Lonergan, *Method*, 61.

colour, or shape, or movement, or sound, or taste.[38] Rather than serving utilitarian purposes or pre-packaged stereotypes and societal expectations, art invites us to discover for ourselves the joy of experiencing, to experience experiencing anew and afresh, to experience our feelings being released in response to an object, and so to be transformed, as Lonergan says, "to explore possibilities of fuller living in a richer world".[39] So art too is an embodiment or primal carrier of meaning.

Religions avail themselves of the various art forms—sculpture, painting, music, dance—to express their religious experience. If we truly wish to get to know another religion, and to share our own, we must become adept in interpreting and communicating through the various media of art.

Symbols [40]

Lonergan defines a symbol as "an image of a real or imaginary object that evokes a feeling or is evoked by a feeling".[41] Having described feelings as related to objects and to one another, he then describes feelings as related to the subject: "they are the mass and momentum and power of his [*sic*] conscious living, the actuation of his affective capacities, dispositions, habits, the effective orientation of his being".[42] Having treated how symbols vary for different people and for different objects and how they operate in the affective

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[38] For full treatment, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Art", in *Topics in Education: The Cincinatti Lectures of 1959 on the Philosophy of Education (CWL 10)*, ed. Robert M. Doran and Frederick E. Crowe (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 208-232.
[39] Lonergan, *Method*, 64.
[40] Lonergan, *Method*, 64-69.
[41] Lonergan, *Method*, 64.
[42] Lonergan, *Method*, 65.

ways of image and feeling rather than logic, Lonergan then comes to the key point—that symbols are for internal affective communication between body and psyche and mind and heart.

Organic and psychic vitality have to reveal themselves to intentional consciousness and, inversely, intentional consciousness has to secure the collaboration of organism and psyche.[43] Most especially, our apprehension of values occurs in intentional responses, in feelings; here too it is necessary for feelings to reveal their objects and, inversely, for objects to awaken feelings in the subject. It is through symbols that body and psyche and mind and heart communicate with each other.

As with potential acts of meaning treated above, the meaning of feelings is elemental, immediate and direct. Were we to explain them, we would have to go to formal and possibly full meanings. We would have to resort to words and explanations which go beyond the affective images and the feelings that the symbols evoke, but it is precisely these feelings and images that our words would explain. Lonergan notes that while psychological therapists and social theorists interpret symbols in various ways, symbols, by their immediate affective relation to feelings, provide the dynamism or energy that fuels our self-transcending self-constitution in the world of meaning motivated by value. Because of their intimacy with the subject's sensitive affectivity, symbols are a vital and very important carrier of meaning.

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[43] Lonergan, *Method*, 66-67. This confirms the relevance of psychic and ecological conversion treated in Chapter Two, section 2(a) "The Four Conversions", pp. 62ff.

Like art, symbols are at the centre of religious worship and religious experience. They convey that "more" that could not otherwise be communicated, for example, in rituals that use water, oil, bread and wine, candles, light to convey realities that transcend the physical means by which they are communicated. If we are to learn about other religions, and communicate our own, we must become attuned to their symbolic significance. For example, monotheists must not simply dismiss the pantheon of Hindu "gods", but must look for their religious meaning, and polytheists must not consider monotheists religiously impoverished, but learn to appreciate the austerity of their rigorously disciplined affirmation.

Language[44]

I note that all of the above carriers of meaning have to do with feelings and so are direct and immediate. But the communication of meaning through language, whether oral or written, though it may express feelings, is not restricted to them. Also, communication through words is indirect, mediated instrumentally through vibrations in the air or through shapes on a surface. Because these signs are arbitrary conventions, they can be multiplied and mixed almost endlessly, and so can serve to convey a virtually infinite range of meanings. Thus Lonergan states: "By its embodiment in language, in a set of conventional signs, meaning finds its greatest liberation."[45]

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[44] Lonergan, *Method*, 70-73.
[45] Lonergan, *Method*, 70.

Language relates subject and object. It thus serves the double task of ordering our world and ordering ourselves. The more things we name and talk about the more we can order them in relation to ourselves and to each other, and also order ourselves in relation to them. Thus there is the ordinary everyday language of common sense that deals with things in relation to us; there is the technical language of theorists and specialists that uses logic and method to analyse, categorise and define things as they are in themselves and in relation to each other; and there is the refinement and artistry of literary language that goes beyond things as they simply are and draws us into the feeling and affective worlds of what could be, to explore what truly inspires us and what truly repels us, so that we can decide in what world we want to live and what we want to become.

Because of its enormous flexibility and because of its reflexive action on the one who speaks and/or writes it, language is at once both the most determining and most liberating of the carriers of meaning. My mother tongue is English. Accordingly I am an English-speaker, at home in the English-speaking world; but this very limitation enables me to engage freely in that English-speaking world (and forms a basis for learning other languages and so entering into other worlds of meaning).

The religions of the world have the high responsibility of speaking, writing, talking, and witnessing about God, and God's purposes, in the world. Their words relate God to people and people to God. I have already indicated above the difficulty of communication about things of this world, how the same words

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can mean different things, and how the same things can be differently named. How much more difficult when religions speak of the Mystery beyond this world! Theological discourse within and across different religious traditions is a very important dimension of interreligious relations, providing clarity and precision. However, it is only a small part of the exchange. Language is also important for expressing religious experience in poetry, worship, prayer, preaching, catechesis, dialogue, proclamation. Anyone genuinely interested in interreligious relations must learn to listen to the variety of ways in which language is used in different moments of religious living, and in different religions.

Incarnate Meaning [46]

Finally, Lonergan states that combining all or most of the above carriers of meaning, incarnate meaning is the meaning of a person. It is the significance of a person's life, his or her words, deeds, accomplishments, failures, victories, defeats, struggles, capitulations—of his or her being, or more accurately, of his or her becoming. Incarnate meaning may be particular to an individual (for example, oneself—one's personal vocation in life), to a representative of the group (for example, a leader or inspiration or model), or to the entire group (for example, our tribe or nation).

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[46] Lonergan, *Method*, 73.

Application to Interreligious Relations

The significance of the variety of carriers is that meaning is communicated by much more than words. While linguistic meaning may perhaps be the most common, the most liberating, the most creative, the preferred (and, even when inadequate, sometimes the only) option of leaders, scholars, prophets and theologians, in fact, language is only one carrier—and perhaps not the most important—of the whole spectrum of human meaning.

I suggest that insofar as intersubjectivity, art and symbol concern the elemental meaning of feelings, they are the intimate potency that comes to expression in words and deeds and personal becoming, and to that extent they merit prior and prolonged attention if we are to grasp the full depth and breadth and height of meaning. And insofar as every person is incarnate meaning, their individual and communal living is a much more accurate testimony to their lived meaning than their spoken or written words, even sometimes to the extent of contradicting them—for those who profess lofty ideals sometimes act contrary to their profession and so reveal their true selves as much less than their high claims; and those who profess little sometimes perform acts of great self-transcendence that contradict their modest profession and so reveal their true selves as much more than their minimalist claims. So, to relate properly with persons requires a respectful investigation of their actual living that goes beyond their outward professions.

In the context of interreligious relations, getting to know and appreciate the meanings and values of one's own or another's religion requires attention to

all the carriers of meaning. Words are important to clarify, to refine, to make precise, but the other carriers of meaning add depth and breadth and tone and feeling which enhance mutual knowledge and appreciation and hence mutual relations. To ignore the other carriers of meaning is to miss much of the reality of another religion. Not to avail of them in building relations with believers from other religions is to deprive the process of the energy needed to drive it and to leave each other short-changed.

One cannot know Christianity simply by reading and talking about the Bible and the Catechism, but must also ponder the heritage of paintings and music that Christianity has inspired through the ages; one must not only study the Christian saints and scholars, but also the goodness and decency it has inspired in ordinary people's lives in all walks of life and in all parts of the world, especially in service of the poor and the marginalised. Similarly, to know and talk about Islam requires more than familiarity with the Qur'an and Sunnah; one must also listen and be moved by the cantillation of the *Adhān* (the Call to Prayer), drink from the wisdom of the Sufi poets, be nourished by sharing the hospitality of *iftār* (the breaking of the fast during the month of Ramadan), and be edified by the educational, architectural, moral and spiritual advancements of the civilisations that were formed by Islam over the centuries and that continue to mould and shape the lives of more than twenty percent of the world's population today.

(c) Authenticity and Unauthenticity

Religions claim to mediate ultimate meaning and ultimate value, but are they accurate? Are they reliable? Lonergan readily admits that the human world mediated and constituted by meaning is unstable.[47] It does not have the supposed fixity and duration of nature. Not only do meanings change for the better, they also go astray. People mean well … but they may be biased and so intentionally or unintentionally represent fiction as fact, false as true, evil as good, giving rise to contradictions. This inherent instability of meaning raises the question of authenticity, which Lonergan shows to be of two kinds.[48]

Authenticity

There is the authenticity of the individual with regard to the tradition in which he or she was born and raised. It is his or her conformity with the meanings and values of that tradition. There is the authenticity of the tradition itself. It is the conformity of the community's meanings and values to what is truly real and good and valuable. "The first passes a human judgment on subjects; the second is the judgment of history and ultimately the judgment of divine providence upon traditions."[49]

Unauthenticity

Besides authenticity there is also unauthenticity. Lonergan explains that when an individual claims to be Catholic or Protestant, Buddhist or Muslim, scientist or scholar, and so on, and is perfectly correct in his self-description—this is

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[47] Lonergan, *Method*, 77.
[48] For treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 79-80.
[49] Lonergan, "*Existenz*", 227.

authenticity. But he or she may diverge on one or more points from what a Catholic or Protestant, Buddhist or Muslim, scientist or scholar truly is, and, through either ignorance of the difference or wilful perversity, still make that claim and so be incorrect. There is a gap, a discrepancy, an inconsistency, a lack of conformity between the language and the reality. By using the language of the tradition in ways that are inconsistent the individual waters down, distorts, and corrupts the tradition. This is minor unauthenticity.

When unauthenticity occurs randomly in scattered individuals it is tolerable because the mainstream reveals the contrast between the authentic tradition and the unauthentic individual (the judgment on the individual referred to above). Also, by its greater weight the tradition is able to maintain the momentum of progress despite the drag and the resistance of unauthentic individuals. But when unauthenticity occurs on a large scale then "the unauthenticity of individuals becomes the unauthenticity of the group".[50] This is major unauthenticity. Its particular tragedy is that "in the measure a subject takes the tradition, as it exists, for his [*sic*] standard, in that measure he can do no more than authentically realise unauthenticity".[51]

Reform

Lonergan explains that when a tradition has become unauthentic, the courageous reformer who wishes to restore it has to pay a double price.[52] He or she must overcome their own personal lapses in authenticity, and, more

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[50] Lonergan, *Method*, 80.
[51] Lonergan, *Method*, 80.
[52] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Religious Experience", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 121-122.

importantly, they must not only discover what is missing in their tradition through conversion to the relevant higher horizon, but they must also pay the price of resisting and overcoming the massive undertow of the unauthentic tradition. People who have been conditioned to be unattentive, unintelligent, unreasonable and irresponsible will not like being exposed, and will likely lash out against those who disturb their complacency. So the reformer intent on their healing must bear their hatred without retaliating in kind. It is precisely this quality of self-sacrificing love that authentic religion engenders, and is crucial for building better relations between believers from different religions.

If traditions of meaning and value are so problematic, would it not be better to get rid of them altogether? The answer is an emphatic "No!" Even our ability to recognise the problem of tradition is tradition-born. It is precisely because we belong to a tradition that we appreciate meaning and value and that we recoil when they are distorted. Even the pretence of abandoning tradition for the sake of avoiding the problem of tradition is itself an act of tradition, of seeking to establish an alternative tradition of meaning and value, so it is inconsistent with its stated intent. In reality, there is always tradition, "rich or impoverished, good and evil".[53] Belonging to a tradition is the limit condition which enables progress and without which there could be no progress. Lonergan states: "the problem is not tradition but unauthenticity in the formation and transmission of tradition. The cure is not the undoing of tradition but the undoing of its unauthenticity."[54]

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[53] Lonergan, "Religious Experience", 123.
[54] Lonergan, "Religious Experience", 121-122.

Application to Interreligious Relations

Religions claim to mediate ultimate meaning and ultimate value, but like all traditions they are a mixture of authenticity and unauthenticity. It is only by engaging with each other that the "rough edges" of unauthenticity will be exposed. In this process dialogue partners have the double responsibility of dealing with their own personal and communal unauthenticity and of caring for and promoting the authenticity of other traditions. At times the latter will involve bearing the animosity that exposure of unauthenticity will likely engender. I will argue that Christians have a particular responsibility in this task. Precisely because in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ they simultaneously confront the ultimate consequence of sin and the transcendent height of love, this encounter draws them to reproduce the same pattern of reconciliation in their own living, confident in the assurance of divine mercy (cf. Mt 10:38; 16:24; Mk 8:34; Lk 9:23; Rom 5:8-10; 2 Cor 1:5; Phil 3:10; Col 1.24).

4. The Stages of Meaning

Since meaning unfolds over time, it is possible to identify different stages in its development. Here I will explain the basis for those stages in terms of the dynamics of consciousness. This explanation lays the foundation for presenting the stages of development in religious, and in Christian, meanings in Chapters Four and Six.

In his articles and lectures on meaning Lonergan normally distinguished *three* stages.

> In the first stage conscious and intentional operations follow the mode of common sense. In the second stage besides the mode of common sense there is also the mode of theory, where theory is controlled by logic. In a third stage the modes of common sense and theory remain, science asserts its autonomy from philosophy, and there occur philosophies that leave theory to science and take their stand on interiority.[55]

Late in his career Lonergan wrote *Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon* in which he named *four* historical developments in the shift of meaning in relation to language. These are: "the linguistic, the literate, the logical, and the methodical".[56]

So there is one account with three stages of meaning, and another with four stages of meaning. How are we to reconcile these different accounts? Since the stages are about *control* over meaning, I propose that the three stages refer to facility in relating the *products* of meaning. As such, they are more concerned with the upwards movement and the cognitive/constitutive functions of meaning. On the other hand, the four stages are about control over the *process* of expressing meaning. Hence, they are more concerned with the downwards movement and the communicative/effective functions of meaning.

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[55] Lonergan, *Method*, 85.
[56] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", 404. For the provenance of these terms in Lonergan's earlier writings, especially the linguistic, see the editor's note 14 on the same page cited above.

(a) The Three Stages

The three stages are described in terms of the relation between the three different worlds of common sense, theory and interiority.

1.   The first stage is the world of common sense only, of things in relation to us. It is not bothered by theory, and is totally consumed with living in the immediate, the practical, the here-and-now.

2.   The second stage becomes possible when mind has been discovered and appropriated. The formal and full meanings allow greater control of meaning so that we are able to know things not just in terms of their relation to us but as they are in themselves and in relation to each other; this is the world of theory. So now the person inhabits, or, more accurately, "migrates" between, the two worlds of theory and common sense. This is the second stage of meaning. However, the two worlds exist in uncomfortable tension, each confident about its own competency, but ambivalent about the competency of the other.

3.   The only way to resolve the ambivalence is to enter into the world of interiority. It is being at home in one's own consciousness, knowing how it operates in our engagements with the worlds of common sense and theory, identifying and respecting the competencies of each world and of the criteria that are appropriate for each. Thus the two worlds are no longer in tension, but are related in such a way that we can

move from one to the other, adopting the methods and the criteria that are appropriate to each. This is the third stage of meaning.

(b) The Four Stages

The four stages are about degrees of control over the *expression* of meaning. In one respect they are similar to the functional specialties.[57] In both, the whole dynamism of consciousness is directed to an end that is proper to one or other of the different ways in which consciousness operates. However, the functional specialties mark the stages in the whole process from data to results. Accordingly they include both learning the tradition (= the upwards movement) and handing on the tradition (= the downwards movement), so that there are eight specialties. However, the stages of control over the expression of meaning concern only the communication of what is meant, so there are only four. I summarise Lonergan's account.

1. Linguistic Stage

The original appropriation of any learning or belief is wholly private and interior. However, when the choice is made to express that outwardly, the whole person is involved in generating the expression.[58] It probably begins as a bodily orientation or attitude towards the object,[59] possibly augmented by pointing indicatively,[60] perhaps including some symbolic expression, and

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[57] For my summary treatment of the functional specialties, see Chapter Four, under the heading "An Adequate Theological Method", pp. 192ff. For Lonergan's treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 126ff.

[58] For Lonergan's account see "Early Language" in Lonergan, *Method*, 86-90.

[59] This highlights the importance of body language.

[60] This highlights the importance of sign language.

finally emerges as the puff of air impelled by diaphragm and shaped by voice box, tongue and lips that is the spoken word that interprets the gesture/symbol and names the object. This is the instrumental act of meaning treated earlier, where the spoken word signifies or represents what is meant. It marks the transition from the infant's world of immediacy concerned with what is immediately present, tangible, sensible, to the adult's world that is mediated and constituted by meaning.[61]

As facility with language developed—as different types of words such as nouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs coalesced to form complete sentences, with tenses and moods other than the simple indicative—people came to name and express more and more of their world, thus exercising control over it and in the process making themselves responsible for it.[62] This is the first, linguistic stage—the control of meaning by fixing it with a word, thus stabilising it.

In this stage of meaning, the subject expresses what is meant at the level of experience, but does not advert to the other operations of consciousness that are operative in the process. This does not denote any lack of intelligence or reasonableness or responsibility on their part—Lonergan avers that early humans were attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible in living in their world.[63] However, for the earliest practitioners of language those higher operations of consciousness remained compact and undifferentiated.

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[61] Lonergan, *Method*, 76, 89.
[62] This is the significance of the first human's naming of things in Gen 2:19-23.
[63] Lonergan, *Method*, 89, 93.

2. Literate Stage

The advent of literacy marked a definitive new stage.[64] Pictures or symbolic representations of what was meant emerged first, followed by an elementary alphabet, and finally a complete format for writing. Literacy further stabilised the control of meaning. No longer did a listener have to be physically present to receive the learning. Messages could be written and sent to readers in other places. Learning could be passed on from one generation to the next in written form. Lonergan puts it succinctly: "The spoken word objectifies transiently. The written word objectifies permanently."[65]

This ability to write and reflect on formal propositions not only gave greater control over meaning, but enabled the beginnings of a reflexive understanding of the writer and the reader.[66] Accordingly, in this second, literate stage the formal operations of intelligence become more accessible and are written

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[64] For the impact of literacy, see the chapter entitled "Creativity: The Imperative of Education" in Jonathan Sacks, *The Dignity of Difference: How to Avoid the Clash of Civilizations* (London, New York: Continuum, 2002), 125-141. Sacks identifies four great information revolutions that have transformed "habits of mind, structures of the imagination, and the way we order our common life" (p. 136). They are:

1. the invention of *writing* in the fourth millennium BCE: "the birth of writing was the genesis of civilization. For the first time knowledge could be accumulated and handed on to future generations in a way that exceeded, in quality and quantity, the scope of unaided memory" (pp. 129-30);
2. the development of the *alphabet* in the second millennium BCE that transformed a social order of rulers and ruled, where only the former had time and opportunity to master the myriad pictographics of early writing: "it heralded far-reaching social and political possibilities. For the first time the entire universe of communicable knowledge was reduced to a symbol-set of between 20 and 30 letters, small enough to be master, at least in principle, by everyone" (p. 131) which led to the democratisation of knowledge;
3. the invention of *printing* in the fifteenth century CE that multiplied literacy and hence access to and dissemination of knowledge and ideas (see pp. 125-8);
4. instantaneous global communication made possible in the twentieth century CE by modern electronic technology whose far-reaching effects are impossible to estimate (see pp. 136-41).

[65] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", 406.
[66] For Lonergan's account of the significance of the development of language see "The Greek Discovery of Mind" in Lonergan, *Method*, 90-93.

about, but the higher operations of reasonableness and responsibility, though operative, still remain compact and undifferentiated.

3. Logical Stage

As facility with writing developed, different genres of literacy developed. To fix the meanings of words even more, dictionaries and rules of grammar were developed that stabilised the meanings even further. The third, logical stage enabled a further control of meaning by applying the clarity, coherence and rigour of logic. It involves the shift from the world of common sense to the world of theory.[67]

This process of clarifying, sorting, and identifying enabled a greater reflexive self-appropriation that now included the activities of reason and judgment, but the higher operations of personal choosing and responsibility, although operative, are not yet appropriated.

4. Methodical Stage

As facility with a system develops, dawning recognition of the variety of systems seeks to relate them to each other and so integrate them.[68] But that integration is only possible by entering fully into the world of interiority and seeing how the different products and stages of meaning are constituted by

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[67] For treatment of this shift in terms of "the scientific differentiation of consciousness" see Lonergan, "Doctrinal Pluralism", 78-79; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy of God", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004).

[68] For an account of the transition from the logical to the methodical stage see "From Logic to Method" in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Religious Knowledge", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 137-140.

the series of operations of consciousness. Thus we are able to distinguish and relate the different systems, move backwards and forwards from one to the other with ease, use the criteria that are appropriate to each, see how they are intelligently related, correct any mistakes in the earlier stages that could not have been recognised due to the elementary tools available at the time, and develop the full potentials of all stages with the complete tools now available. This is the fourth, methodical stage: the further control of meaning that we achieve by interiority, by recognising and accepting personal responsibility for our own meanings and values and those of the tradition that formed us. In this stage the construction of systems remains, but the permanently valid system has become an abandoned ideal; any system is presumed to be the precursor of another and better system; and the role of method is the discernment of invariants and variables in the ongoing sequences of systems.[69]

In this methodical stage, the person must appropriate fully all four ways in which consciousness operates in mediating and constituting meaning and value. The person is challenged to become fully autonomous, an originator of meaning and value in his or her own right, and responsible for the reform and further development of the tradition which formed, nourished and guided him/her to this high point.

Application to Interreligious Relations

The significance of the three/four stages of meaning to interreligious relations and its most immediate and practical application is that the products and

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[69] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", 405.

expressions of religious meanings (and values) are different at different stages. As Lonergan writes:

> "[In] its linguistic stage religion will manifest itself as myth and ritual. In its literate stage it becomes religion of the book, of the Torah, the gospel, the Koran. In the logical stage it may reduplicate itself with the reflection on itself that would end dissension by dogmatic pronouncements and would seek overall reconciliation by systematic theologies. In the methodical stage it confronts its own history, distinguishes the stages in its own development, evaluates the authenticity or unauthenticity of its initiatives, and preaches its message in the many forms and styles appropriate to the many social and cultural strata of the communities in which it operates.[70]

Failure to appreciate the meaning, value and purpose of these different expressions will lead to believers from different religions using the same language but talking at cross purposes.

Of particular relevance to interreligious relations is that the fourth, methodical stage of meaning is only made possible by the complete appropriation of all the operations of consciousness. Especially significant is that the answer to the quintessential fourth-level questions—*Quid mihi/tibi est?*—establish the relation between subject and object, between the subject and another subject. But the relation between the subject and the beliefs, meanings and values of other religions, and between the subject and believers from other religions, is precisely what is at stake in interreligious relations. As Jacques Dupuis puts it, the new question being asked concerns "what positive meaning the religious traditions themselves have in God's single overall plan of salvation".[71]

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[70] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon".
[71] Jacques Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions: From Confrontation to Dialogue*, trans. Phillip Berryman (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002), 4.

The stages of meaning also situate this new question in the broader context of world history. In Chapter One I summarised the new situation of religious plurality that challenges humanity at the beginning of the third millennium. I now interpret the novelty of this new moment in human history, sometimes referred to as an "axial age", in terms of a world cultural transition from the third, logical stage of meaning to the fourth, methodical stage of meaning.

This transition provides an explanatory framework for much of the violence and conflict that is going on in the world. In reaction to the plethora of options, opinions, ideas, meanings, values, and choices that the modern world makes available, the so-called "fundamentalist" temptation avoids personal responsibility by insisting on traditionalist, third-stage formulae. This reaction is evident in all traditions, religious and secular, but it will ultimately prove futile and ineffective in a world culture which is in the fourth, methodical stage of meaning. Fascinated with all that the modern world offers, the liberal romantic temptation is to embrace the new opportunities headlong. However, such romanticism will only end in dissipation, for it too is another way of avoiding responsibility. It is refusing the hard labour of really getting to know and to evaluate the many possible options in order to make an informed and responsible choice.

The only lasting solution is to undergo the transition by being authentic to one's traditional meanings and values while yet appropriating and expressing them in a way that is appropriate to this new, methodical stage. To do that effectively requires knowledge of meaning, it functions, its stages, and so on.

That can be had only by appropriating the operations of consciousness that generated the meanings and values in the first place, and then transposing each of those meanings and values individually and collectively in ways that are responsive to the new world-situation. That is the enormous challenge facing our religiously plural world at the beginning of the third millennium and to which Christians are called to make a particular contribution.

5. Theories of Knowledge

Interreligious relations involve getting to know believers from other religions, and allowing oneself to be known by them. It includes communicating the meanings and values of one's own tradition, and appropriating the authentic meanings and values from other traditions. But to do this requires knowledge of knowledge, that is, knowing what knowing is, and choosing it. It also requires knowledge of evaluation, valuing what valuing is, and acting accordingly.

In Chapter Two I presented Lonergan's account of the process of coming to know the true and the real as the combined operations of attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding, and reasonable judgment. I refined that to add that our knowledge of the good and the valuable involves the same three sets of operations processing intentional feelings. In this chapter I have shown that the same dynamics are involved in the construction and mediation of meaning and value. We can now affirm that all human knowledge of the real and valuable—whether of the natural world, the human world constituted

by meaning, or the transcendent world—is mediated through true judgments. I conclude by summarising Lonergan's presentation of various counterpositions on knowing and his own position on critical realism.[72] While my treatment is limited to Lonergan's account, I am confident that when secular universities and other institutions of learning take up the challenge of self-appropriation to which Lonergan invites us in *Insight*—"more than all else, the aim of the book is to issue an invitation to a personal decisive act"[73]—the methodical approach that this makes possible will help resolve the issues underlying the seeming philosophical impasses between disciplines, and integrate their many achievements in the linguistic, phenomenological and other currents of postmodern philosophical thought in their proper historical context.

(a) Naïve Realism

The naïve realist is concerned with knowing reality, but for him or her the real is the already-out-there-now, and knowing is only a matter of taking a good look and seeing exactly what is there and not seeing what is not there. This mistakes one part of knowing, namely experience, to be the whole of knowing. In particular, it takes the ocular experience of "looking" as the model, so that knowing must "bridge the gap" from the looking subject "in here" to the looked-

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[72] For detailed treatment, see Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 211-221; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Is it Real?", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 126-127; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Origins of Christian Realism", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 240-244; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions with Regard to Knowing", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 214-243.
[73] Lonergan, *Insight*, 13. Also, "*Insight* may be described as a set of exercises in which, it is hoped, one attains self-appropriation." (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Understanding and Being: The Halifax Lectures on Insight*, ed. Elizabeth A. Morelli, et al., vol. 5, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1990), 3.)

at object "out there"; and what does not bridge that gap cannot be knowing. Although the naïve realist engages the world mediated by meaning, he thinks he does so just by looking. She ignores the role of intelligent understanding, reasonable judgment and responsible choosing in coming to know and to value, and so cannot give a proper account of the world constituted by meaning.

(b) Empiricism

The empiricist is also concerned with knowing reality, and for him or her the real is also already-out-there-now, but it is restricted to sense data.[74] The conscious activities of intelligent understanding, reasonable judging and responsible choosing "in here" are considered to be "merely subjective" in the pejorative sense and have nothing to do with "objective reality" sensed "out there". So logically the strict empiricist must discount all that cannot be empirically sensed, including the entire world constituted by meaning.

(c) Idealism

Challenging the above counterpositions, the idealist correctly asserts that knowledge is more than the data of sense only, or of the combined data of sense and consciousness. Correctly, he adds understanding of the data, but unable to break cleanly from naïve realist and empiricist notions of the "already-out-there-now" real, she mistakenly presumes that the process of knowing cannot reach the real "out there" but is restricted to an ideal understood "in here". Such is a Platonic understanding of the ideal as the real.

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[74] Lonergan, *Method*, 238-239.

(d) Phenomenalism

A more refined and widespread version of this counterposition is critical idealism or Kantian phenomenalism. This asserts that all that we ever see are appearances-to-us but not reality-in-itself (and so, similarly, for all our other senses of hearing, touching, tasting, and smelling), and that, similarly, consciousness can only ever be aware of presentation-to-self and not of actual reality. That is, we can never get beyond the *phenomena* subjectively apparent to our senses and to consciousness to arrive at the *noumena,* to the objective reality of what actually is. What we sense and are aware of are appearances; what we think about and understand are appearances; what we weigh and judge are appearances—thus we only ever know appearances and not reality. But as Lonergan observed:

> … in fact, our senses give us neither appearance nor reality. It is a judgment to say that something is not apparent but real, and it is just as much a judgment to say that something is not real but apparent. Both are matters of judgment.[75]

Thus phenomenalism is inconsistent with itself. Nominally it restricts itself to appearances only, yet that restriction is itself a judgment not based on any appearance.

(e) Critical Realism

The critical realist includes all that is correct in the above counterpositions but corrects their mistakes by including what they omit. For him or her, knowing is not a single operation but a compound of three sets of operations (as outlined

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[75] Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions", 233.

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in Chapter Two), and the corresponding objectivity of what is known is also a compound of three components.

First, like all of the above, the critical realist depends on sense experience. With the naïve realist and the idealist she too depends on consciousness. But unlike their presumptive judgments, what sense and consciousness provide is neither appearance nor reality but *data*.[76] By data's sheer given-ness—by its not being derived from the subject but by simply being given to the subject— data provides the *experiential component* of objectivity, without which our attempts to construct knowledge would be sheer fantasies not grounded in reality.

Secondly, the data of sense and consciousness must be interpreted intelligently and weighed reasonably. Negatively, any proposed account of the data cannot be inconsistent or self-contradictory, and, positively, it must be wholly consistent with the exigencies of intelligence and reasonableness. This is the *normative component* of objectivity, without which our attempts to know would stray from intentional consciousness's directedness towards reality.

Thirdly, any proposed assertion invites an absolute judgment of its truth or falsity: is it actually so? Yes or no? The drive of intentional consciousness thus strains for a virtually unconditioned, a conditioned whose conditions have been fulfilled. If we judge that the assertion is only *probably true*, then there

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[76] Lonergan also named his approach "generalised empirical method". The adjective "generalised" refers to the addition of the data of consciousness to that of sense. See Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 150.

are still conditions in the cognitional process that remain unresolved. If we judge that the assertion is only "*true for me*" (the relativist position), then the cognitional subject remains an enduring condition. In neither of these cases is the assertion a virtually unconditioned. That absolute requirement is met only "when the subject's normative operations correctly confirm that the given experiential data meet all the conditions to make the judgment that X is so".[77] This is the *absolute component* of objectivity. It is the subject bowing to or conforming to reality as it is. It is the subject going beyond himself to what is. It is the self-transcendence of human knowing come to its intended term in a virtually unconditioned, in what actually is, quite independently of the subject contingently happening to know that it is.

Critical realism conforms to Aristotle's understanding of truth as a correlation between what we affirm and what is, and corrects his theory of knowledge by identity. At the level of experience "the act of the thing as sensible is the act of sensation"[78]—there is a complete coincidence of the sensed with the sensor. At the level of understanding "the act of the thing as intelligible is the act of understanding"[79]—there is a complete coincidence of the intelligible with intelligence. However, the theory breaks down at the level of reason. Lonergan argues that because "the act of the thing as real is the *esse naturale* of the thing, and except in divine self-knowledge, that *esse* is not identical with

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[77] Tad Dunne, *Bernard Lonergan: Generalized Empirical Method in Ethics* ([cited 7 September 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/GEM-Ency.htm>.
[78] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, vol. 2, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1997), 83.
[79] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 83.

knowing it",[80] Aristotle's theory is incomplete. Therefore, in nearly all human knowing there is no identity of the known object and the knowing subject.

However, there is one, and only one, exception in human knowing. In the reflective act of self-knowledge, in knowing oneself as a knower, there is complete identity of the known and the knower. Once we acknowledge that we are *real* knowers, then we are already in the *real* world. We don't have to cross over an imaginary bridge into reality.[81] "There is no problem of a bridge."[82] With this one act of self-knowledge Lonergan heals the split between the subject and the object that has bedevilled philosophy since René Descartes's famous *cogito ergo sum*, and unites Kant's separation of *phenomenon* and *noumenon*. Finally, because we are real *knowers*, our knowledge of all other things is mediated through our true judgments.

I add that the same applies to our knowledge or evaluation of the good. The one and only thing we can value directly and immediately is ourselves as valuers. Because we are *real* valuers we are already in the world of value— there is no bridge to cross over. And because we are real *valuers*, the real value of all other objects is mediated through our true judgments of value.

Whether concerning our knowledge of truth and reality, or goodness and value—of the natural world mediated by meaning, of the intentional world

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[80] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 83.
[81] For treatment of the knower as a subcategory of all knowables, see Tad Dunne, *Moral Objectivity* (2002 [cited 28 March 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/MorlObj.htm>. For an account of objectivity, see Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions", 236-237.
[82] Lonergan, *Understanding and Being*, 172.

constituted by meaning, of the world of transcendence—critical realism establishes the criterion for all knowledge: *the real is the verified*. This critical grounding of knowledge in the operations of consciousness enables us to relate all fields of human endeavour, including the different religions, and the secular and the religious.

(f) Romanticism

There is a further counterposition on knowing. In 1964 Lonergan wrote of the reversal in the valuation of the word "subjectivity" from being pejorative (suggesting opposition to objectivity) to being positive (suggesting the right of self-determination).[83] He agreed that intersubjectivity transcended objectivity "as misconceived", but gave the counter-assertion that it did not reject objectivity "as correctly conceived". He affirmed the validity of interpersonal relations lifting people to more responsible living, but cautioned against any elevation of subjectivity that implied a downplaying of objectivity. He noted that intersubjectivity is restricted to a very small group and that to break out of it requires a more sophisticated treatment of objective knowing.[84] In another article at that time he developed the same point by noting that: "It is quite true that objective knowing is not yet authentic human living: but without objective knowing there is no authentic living."[85] He elaborated that such authenticity is not achieved merely by managing people through techniques but by treating them as persons, and: "to treat them as persons one must know and one must

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[83] See "Knowing and Living" in Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 219-221. See also "Knowing and Intersubjectivity" in Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions", 234-236.
[84] Lonergan, "Philosophical Positions", 235.
[85] Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 220.

invite them to know".[86] In both articles Lonergan vigorously defended the objectivity of knowledge against any exaggerated subjectivism.

I note that both articles were written some months before his 1965 breakthrough to what he variously called the fourth moral, personal, deliberative, existential level. In his subsequent writings the proper relationship between objectivity and subjectivity—neatly captured in his oft-quoted "Genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity"[87]—is resolved by the proper distinction and relation of all the operations of consciousness in processing the data proper to each.

However, the failure to distinguish the fourth level from, and to relate it properly with, the other three levels does lead to the pitfalls of subjectivism and immanent personalism of which Lonergan was rightly cautious. To this counterposition I give the name romanticism.

Romanticism is a choosing which is not grounded in a critically objective knowledge or evaluation. The refinement I proposed in Chapter Two is crucial. Romanticism occurs when the object of the basic fourth-level question "What concern is that to me?" has not been properly affirmed and evaluated by the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness through the cumulative combination of attentive experiencing, intelligent understanding and reasonable judging processing the data of sense and consciousness and the data of intentional feelings. As Lonergan observed: "When knowledge is

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[86] Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 220-221.
[87] Lonergan, *Method*, 292.

deficient, then fine feelings are apt to be expressed in what is called moral idealism, i.e. lovely proposals that don't work out and often do more harm than good."[88]

Application to Interreligious Relations

The significance for interreligious relations of these counterpositions—naïve realism, empiricism, idealism, phenomenalism, and romanticism—and the position of critical realism, is threefold.

First, inadequate accounts of knowing lead to confusion. The naïve realist, the empiricist, the idealist, the critical realist, the romanticist may all be using the same words, but they refer to different objects. "Empiricism, idealism, and realism name three totally different horizons with no common identical objects. An idealist never means what an empiricist means, and a realist never means what either of them means."[89] This applies to all our supposed "knowledge" about ourselves, others, and the Transcendent Other. As a result, we talk at cross-purposes. And what is worse, we are ignorant of our ignorance, and we cannot recognise that or remedy it until we learn what knowing is and act accordingly.

The naïve realist, whether in relation to the Hindu "gods", or the Christian Bible, or the Muslim Qur'an, will always end up in some form of literalism, investing these objects of devotion with more reality than they can bear. The

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[88] Lonergan, *Method*, 39.
[89] Lonergan, *Method*, 239.

idealist will be one step removed from these same objects, locked into his or her own idea about them but never able to go beyond that to engage with their actual reality. It is only the critical realist, whether Hindu, Christian or Muslim, who can truly know and evaluate these objects for what they truly are.

Secondly, an accurate account of knowing enables us to know ourselves, others, and the Transcendent Other, accurately and confidently. This enables us to promote authenticity and to eliminate unauthenticity first of all in our personal and communal living; to recognise and promote authenticity in others; to recognise and avoid the unauthenticity we find in others and to help them overcome it. On the relevance of the distinction between authenticity and unauthenticity in religious studies—and I add interreligious relations—Lonergan writes:

> The distinction is relevant both to the object of religious studies and to the subject. It is relevant to the object, for the followers of a given religion may represent it authentically or unauthentically to provide contradictory evidence on the nature of the religion under investigation. It is relevant to the subject carrying out religious studies, for they may be humanly or religiously authentic or unauthentic and so offer contradictory interpretations of the same data.[90]

Thirdly, especially during the crises of transition from one stage of meaning to another, the various counterpositions on knowledge re-emerge and gain popular appeal. As Lonergan observes:

> But there are other problems that … keep recurring in one guise or another no matter how much the context is changed by ongoing research, discovery, discernment. Their source does not lie in the data but in the investigators. The discovery to be made is not a better understanding of the data but a better understanding of the investigators.[91]

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[90] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", 402.
[91] Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods", 158-159.

The self-appropriation to which Lonergan invites us leads from authenticity in the subject to objectivity in our knowing and valuing. Thus, in the present moment of transition from the third, logical stage to the fourth, methodical stage of meaning, only critical realism can refute false claimants to knowledge and provide clear guidance. This critical appropriation of knowledge and evaluation applies equally to secular and religious fields of learning, and will guide my presentation through the remaining chapters of this thesis.

Summary

In this chapter I have summarised selected key themes in Lonergan's account of human meaning. I have treated the construction of meaning, and the cognitive, constitutive, communicative and effective functions of meaning. I have presented different types of mediation, the carriers of meaning, and authenticity and unauthenticity in traditions. I have provided an analysis of the stages of ever increasing degrees of control over the products and expressions of meaning. I presented a final section on theories of knowledge. Where other theories stumble on the status of meaning, Lonergan's presentation of critical realism provides a secure foundation for growing in knowledge and evaluation of reality, whether of the world of nature, the world of human meaning, or the world of transcendence.

My analysis has shown that the operations of consciousness underlie all of the above. Therefore, I conclude that dynamics of consciousness are

"common ground" on which people may meet to share their respective meanings and values, including their religions.

In the following chapter I will build on these foundations to present the construction and mediation of *religious* meaning and how it functions in constituting and forming religions and their mediating role in informing and transforming human societies and cultures.

CHAPTER FOUR: RELIGION, SPIRITUALITY AND THE COMMON HORIZON

After the more general considerations of meaning in the previous chapter, we now move into the specifically religious-spiritual context. After describing and distinguishing spirituality and religion, I will call on previously explained categories to examine them in more detail and the types of conversion they entail. I have selected the following six topics for special consideration in this chapter so as to prepare the ground for treating interreligious relationships in the following chapter:

1. Religion and Spirituality;

2. Varieties of Religious Expression;

3. Religious Knowledge;

4. The Dialectical Character of Religious Development;

5. The Distinction between Faith and Beliefs;

6. An Adequate Theological Method.

1. Religion and Spirituality

In this section, I will present the following:

1. The different forms of the God question inherent in the intentionality of self-transcendence;

2. The fulfilment of self-transcendence in the gift of God's love;

3. The notion of "spirituality" in relation to this fulfilment;

4. The notion of "religion" as the public, communitarian expression of "spirituality".

(a) The Different Forms of the God Question

As Lonergan's intentionality analysis shows, human consciousness is actualised in a series of operations, expanding through empirical, intellectual, rational, moral and affective self-transcendence.[1]

The scope of self-transcendence is in principle unlimited. It is manifest in our raising questions about ourselves, the world we live in, the meanings and values we live by, the past and the future, and what is beyond this world. The answers we find are each a moment of fulfilment, but the reach of our questioning is without limits. The human being is, in Augustine's phrase, *capax dei.*[2]

Lonergan explicitly relates our capacity for self-transcendence to the question of God.[3] I summarise his three correlations. First, inquiring, in all its forms, implies that the universe is intelligible. But each successful effort to raise questions and find answers raises the further question of whether the universe could be intelligible without having an intelligent ground—but this is the question of God.

Secondly, the fact that the mind can reach a judgment that something actually is so means that the evidence is sufficient to compel the affirmation of a virtually unconditioned—a conditioned all of whose conditions happen to have

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[1] Lonergan, *Method*, 104-105.
[2] Augustine, *On the Trinity, Books 8 - 15*, ed. Karl Emeriks and Desmond M. Clarke, trans. Stephen McKenna, *Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy* (Cambridge, New York, Melbourne, Madrid, Cape Town: Cambridge University Press, 2002), Bk 14, Ch. 18, p. 148.
[3] Lonergan, *Method*, 101-103.

been fulfilled. But positing a virtually unconditioned raises the further question as to whether there is a strictly unconditioned. This would mean a necessary, absolute, reality beyond all the finite conditions that shape the familiar world of contingent being. Here, too, is the question of God.

Thirdly, to deliberate is to ask whether something is worthwhile, including the deeper question of whether deliberating itself is worthwhile, whether there is any ultimate meaning and value. For instance, we praise progress and deplore decline, but what of the universe as a whole? Is it with us or against us? More particularly, is our sense of moral responsibility consonant with the universe or alien to it? Are we the primary instance of moral consciousness, or is the emergent world necessarily grounded in a transcendent moral source? Again, this is the question of God.

Lonergan clearly correlates these three forms of the question of God with the intellectual, rational and responsible levels of intentional consciousness. However, his relating deliberation with the God question is somewhat awkward. For example, in this context he asks: "Does there or does there not necessarily exist a transcendent, *intelligent ground* of the universe?"[4] But this question has already been asked at the level of intelligent enquiry when he writes, "there arises the question whether the universe could be intelligible without having an intelligent ground".[5] The question of intelligibility does not fit this context of moral evaluation.[6] Though he raises the issue of moral

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[4] Lonergan, *Method*, 102-103. [italics mine]
[5] Lonergan, *Method*, 101.
[6] The statement has perhaps a trace of his former "intellectualist" account of the good.

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consciousness, he does not in fact ask about a specifically moral ground of the universe as the reader might expect.

I suggest that the distinction I proposed in Chapter Two between the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness provides a better explanation of the third form of the question. I further suggest that there is not one but there are two moral questions, and these are correlated not to the fourth level, but to the second and third levels of moral consciousness.

For instance, when our intentional feelings are drawn to some things and actions and repulsed by others, this already implies a moral quality to the universe. The deep satisfaction we feel in the enjoyment of the good and our relief at avoiding evils would suggest as much. At this point, a question of the moral grounding of the universe—which is a God question—is implicit.

Secondly, a judgment of the good presupposes sufficient evidence for a virtually unconditioned, a moral assessment whose conditions happen to be fulfilled. Here, too, the question of the ultimate grounding of conditionally affirmed goods arises, the question of the absolute unconditioned good—which again is a God question.[7]

With this refinement, there are not just three forms of the question of God as Lonergan posits, but two sets of two forms of the question. Asking and

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[7] Lonergan admits the possibility of a virtually unconditioned in ethics: "For it is a knowing that leads to doing. Insofar as it is a knowing, it can reach an internal term, for one can grasp the *virtually unconditioned* and thereby attain certitude on the possibility of a proposed course of action, on its agreeableness, on its utility, on its obligatoriness." (Lonergan, *Insight*, 634. [italics mine])

answering any of these four questions is potentially within the realm of human capability. In other words, there is the possibility of natural knowledge of God.[8] Such knowledge is mediated by finite creation, and can affirm the basic facts of God's existence and various divine attributes, such as intelligence, goodness, knowledge and power. Such affirmations are the basis for a natural religion.

However, beyond the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness is the fourth interpersonal level. In agreement with Lonergan we emphasise that the ultimate reality of God occurs on this level as an existential question that requires an answer of another kind, an answer not the result of human enquiry, but the God-given answer that brings forth faith.

(b) Self-Transcendence and the Gift of Love

In Lonergan's terms, the gift of self-surrendering love is the God-given answer to the human quest. Through this gift, our capacity for self-transcendence is fulfilled, and our deepest consciousness becomes a state of being-in-love. Such love becomes the first principle from which flow all our desires, fears, hopes, anxieties, and actions.

Lonergan sets the notion of such self-transcendence in the context of three different kinds of being-in-love.[9] There is the love of intimacy, as between

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[8] For an account of the context for this issue from early in Lonergan's career, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Natural Desire to See God", in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1988). For an account of the question from later in his career, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Natural Knowledge of God", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996).
[9] Lonergan, *Method*, 105.

husband and wife, parents and children, and between friends. There is the love of neighbour expressed in the many activities that serve human welfare. And there is the love of God with all one's heart, soul, mind and strength (cf. Mk 12:30).

Loving God is "being in love in an unrestricted fashion",[10] as the fulfilment of our intentional being. It is not the product of our knowing and choosing, for it "dismantles and abolishes the horizon in which our knowing and choosing went on and it sets up a new horizon in which the love of God will transvalue our values and the eyes of that love will transform our knowing".[11] This peak of self-transcendence is experienced as a conscious, dynamic state of love, peace, and joy. Though conscious, it is not yet known, "for consciousness is just experience, but knowledge is a compound of experiencing, understanding, and judging".[12] Lonergan locates this kind of conscious experience on the fourth existential level of freedom, responsibility and choice.[13] It is that consciousness as transformed and fulfilled. It occurs as an event affecting the whole person: "the gift of God's love occupies the ground and root of the fourth and highest level of man's [sic] intentional consciousness. It takes over the peak of the soul, the *apex animae*."[14] As such, it corresponds to what I have described earlier as the fifth level.[15]

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[10] Lonergan, *Method*, 105.
[11] Lonergan, *Method*, 106.
[12] Lonergan, *Method*, 106.
[13] For a good explanation of the distinction between first-level "experience" and fourth-level "experience", see Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and Religions*, 60-61.
[14] Lonergan, *Method*, 107.
[15] For my treatment, see Chapter Two, under the heading "The Fifth 'Level' of Intentional Consciousness", pp. 84ff.

This experience describes a new self-awareness, or, more accurately, an awareness of a new self.[16] Who brought about this new experience, this new self, and how, remains unknown, for knowledge concerns the first three levels only, while this experience of being acted on, so to speak, occurs on the fourth (or fifth) level. With this experience of being transformed, accepted and valued comes a summons to respond, to love in return.[17]

The experienced fulfilment of self-transcendence, in Lonergan's terms, "may be objectified as a clouded revelation of absolute intelligence and intelligibility, absolute truth and reality, absolute goodness and holiness".[18] In that moment, the self is drawn to an unimaginable fullness of being. At that point, the question of God occurs in an intensely personal manner. It is no longer a question for intelligence or evaluation that seeks an answer, but is "primarily a question of decision":[19] will I accept this gracious invitation, or will I refuse it? Acceptance leads to fullness of life and appreciation of the genuinely good; refusal leads to dissipation, trivialisation and the devaluing of life. It is a fourth-level decision of self-bestowal, of self-determination.

Previously I argued for two questions about God, one each for the ground and end of both intellectual and moral consciousness. Here also there are two

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[16] This experience is not a change in God, as if God one day decided, "Today I will flood 'x' with my love." God is an eternal act of love, and loves eternally. Because we matter to God, the very matter of which we are made is charged with God's love. So there is no change in God, but the change is in us. It is a change in our awareness, in our consciousness. It is our becoming aware of God's eternal love. The change is not a result of our choice, as if we first give consent and then God acts on us, but it is God's acting on us that is the condition of the possibility of our subsequently giving consent.

[17] The same passive construction is in the titles of two of Alison's books. See James Alison, *On Being Liked* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2003); James Alison, *Undergoing God: Dispatches from the Scene of a Break-In* (New York and London: Continuum, 2006).

[18] Lonergan, *Method*, 116.

[19] Lonergan, *Method*, 116.

questions. I have already provided a preliminary indication of them in Chapter Two. There I presented them in relation to the other "levels" of consciousness. I argued that the primary question, the personal existential question detailed above, is consent to the transformation of the person, that is, of the fifth level, and to the Unknown Mystery who brought it about. I argued that the secondary question *Quid mihi tibi est?* is the subsequent personal appropriation of and witness to that transformation, including learning to know and name that Mystery. It is the deployment of all four ways in which consciousness operates in both movements. It is getting to know the new self and the Transcendent Mystery who brought it about (upwards cognitional movement); and witnessing and living accordingly (downwards affective movement). In the following sections I will give a more descriptive account of these two questions and answers in terms of spirituality and religion.

(c) Spirituality

The personal act of consent to this gift and the transcendent Giver acknowledges this new mode of relating, this new personal mode of being. It is surrender to the Transcendent Other as the ground and end of one's whole being. The relational self becomes the self turned towards that Other, as converted. Lonergan uses Tillich's phrase of "being grasped by ultimate concern"[20] to define the transforming event, but favours a more affective linguistic expression to describe the consequent state: "being-in-love" with Holy Mystery.

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[20] Lonergan, *Method*, 240.

Lonergan describes this experience and the conversion to which it invites as "religious". However, given their immediacy and the intimate interiority and anonymity in which they are shrouded I suggest they are better described as "spiritual",[21] while the term "religion" is best reserved for the outward, public manifestation of the interior transformation concerned, as I will now explain.

(d) Religion

With spiritual conversion there arises the need for a new self-appropriation of the transformation that has occurred, and to objectify its implications. The spiritually converted grow together in understanding, naming, and responding to the source of the transforming gift. There are new meanings and values to discover and appropriate, and to share with others, including the generations to come. These are mediated to oneself and others in attitudes, rituals, deeds, words and doctrines and all the variety of what Lonergan has called the carriers of meaning: intersubjectivity, art, symbols, words, incarnate meaning.[22] Thus a particular religious tradition takes shape.

Religious experience, from this point of view, is a felt resonance or affinity with a particular way of living as a realisation of spiritual conversion. It is the desire or attraction either to establish or to participate in that particular way of life. It follows that religious conversion is choosing to act accordingly. However, in spiritual conversion the personal surrender to God is direct and immediate; in

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[21] I use the word in a generic sense. I am aware that there are "brands" of spirituality, e.g. Ignatian spirituality, Franciscan spirituality, missionary spirituality, Muslim spirituality (especially in the Sufi Brotherhoods). I consider that these brands are structured systems of accessing but not generating the generic core that I have called spirituality.

[22] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Three, section 3(b) "Carriers of Meaning", pp. 118ff. For Lonergan's treatment, see Lonergan, *Method*, 57-73.

religious conversion the surrender to God is mediated through the actions of the founder and the subsequent followers. Where spiritual conversion is wholly private, religious conversion is public. It is the outward expression of spirituality that either founds a new religion which invites followers to form a community around that founder, or seals one's acceptance of or belonging to the community of an existing religion.

Such an understanding of religion is in clear contradiction to the post-Enlightenment version of religion as a purely private and subjective matter, without any objective basis in reality, and with no role in the public domain.

Lash has described religions as "schools whose pedagogy has the twofold purpose—however differently conceived and executed in the different traditions—of weaning us from our idolatry and purifying our desire".[23] In Lonergan's terms, it is a matter of detaching our elemental desire for the Infinite from appeasements that are limited, and freeing it for its proper object in Transcendent Mystery.

Admittedly, there are linguistic problems in describing religion in this way. For some, "religion" connotes institution, structure and authority, and hence a disregard of the personal. But such negative connotations have more to do with theoretical abstractions without regard for a methodological respect for subjectivity. Once this has been recognised, the term "religion" can function in a more experientially grounded way, for spirituality and religion are both

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[23] Nicholas Lash, *The Beginning and the End of 'Religion'* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 21.

grounded in the self-transcending dynamics of the subject. Spirituality is the chronologically prior, fourth/fifth-level personal surrender to the gift of God's love as the fulfilment of our intentionality; religion is the subsequent fourth-level personal appropriation of that which initiates both the quest for knowledge and public witness in word and deed through the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness.

Another source of confusion is that traditionally the word "religion" has to do with God, and for this reason alone adherents of atheistic and agnostic traditions prefer to use an alternative name. However, while not wanting to impose the name "religion" on traditions against the instincts of their adherents,[24] I interpret the word in its broadest and most generic *functional* sense.[25] My concern is not, in the first instance, the narrow dogmatic sense of the *formulae* of expression, theistic or otherwise, or the objects to which they refer, but what religion does. It serves to express ultimate meaning and ultimate value, or, as Lonergan puts it, "the function of religion is not to make man [*sic*] self-centred, but to complete his self-transcendence".[26]

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[24] I am mindful of Panikkar's regulation: "Now the golden rule of any hermeneutic is that the interpreted thing can recognize itself in the interpretation. In other words, any interpretation from outside a tradition has to coincide, at least phenomenologically, with an interpretation from within, i.e., with the believer's viewpoint." (Raimon Panikkar, "The Rules of the Game in the Religious Encounter", in *The Intra-Religious Dialogue* (New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 30.)

[25] In a book that influenced Lonergan, Whitson argued for a much broader interpretation of the "revelatory" dimension of religion. He makes his case on the basis of the religious experience of the founders, of what actually happened in their lives, rather than on the traditional conceptual accounts of those experiences. See Ch. 4, "The Revelational in Religion", in Robley Edward Whitson, *The Coming Convergence of World Religions* (New York, Paramus, Toronto: Newman Press, 1971), 147-165.

[26] Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 159.

Spirituality, too, is a nebulous concept. Kelly identifies three ways in which the word is used.

> Generally, it connotes the fundamental self-transcending orientation inscribed into human existence. It also refers to the ways such an orientation is actualised in human lives. Increasingly, too, it refers to the way such a dimension is studied and the ways in which it might be promoted.[27]

For the purposes of this thesis, I intend the first, most generic use of the word. The second refers to particular ways within religious traditions, for example, Ignatian and Franciscan spirituality in Christianity, the various schools of Sufism within Islam, and so on within other religions. The third is the rigorous academic study of this depth dimension of human living.[28]

David Ranson, in his aptly named booklet *Across the Great Divide: Bridging Spirituality and Religion Today,* offers a phenomenological definition which echoes this same sense.

> Spirituality is a certain attentiveness to life – an attentiveness which contains within itself a certain desire, a certain hopefulness, a certain anticipation. *Spirituality is attention combined with intention.*[29] Attention animated by desire, or attention become intention, awakens within us the awareness of a deepened relationship with ourselves and with other, with the world and with some greater sense of meaning.[30] [italics in original]

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[27] Anthony Kelly CSsR, "Reflections on Spirituality and the Church", (Australian eJournal of Theology, 2006), 2.

[28] For a still valuable account see Sandra Schneiders, "Spirituality in the Academy", *Theological Studies* 50, no. 4 (1989).

[29] [Ranson's note] 'Attention combined with intention' is a phrase first used by the Cistercian monks, Thomas Keating and Basil Pennington, in their description of 'centring prayer', a simple form of mediation.

[30] David Ranson, *Across the Great Divide: Bridging Spirituality and Religion Today* (Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls, 2002), 17.

Tacey, a literary critic, provides a sociological analysis of the distinction between religion and spirituality.[31] For him, spirituality is the sense of the sacred in life, in human beings, and in the cosmos. It is existential, accessed by personal experience, and remedies the alienation of people too long constrained in excessively rigid secularistic and mechanistic understandings of the human. Religion, on the other hand, is the formal, institutionalised, and creedal way in which the originating spiritual impulse has been handed down. In the present moment of society in transition, the vital connection between the two has been severed, so that the spiritual quest is pursued outside of the religions, and the religions feel threatened by the tumult of spiritualities.

Ranson's stated intention is to "to transform the current *division* between 'spirituality' and 'religion' into a *distinction* between the two so that the experience of both might be enriched."[32] I agree with his intent, and his account of how each is impoverished without the other. He appeals to Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness, and locates the distinction between the first two and the last two ways in which consciousness operates.[33] However, he identifies the core activity of the third level as "interpreting", which I consider is proper to the second level of understanding, whereas the activity proper to the third level is judging. The lack of proper distinction between the different levels renders his solution problematic.

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[31] David J Tacey, *Re-enchantment: The New Australian Spirituality* (Pymble, NSW: HarperCollins, 2000); David J Tacey, *The Spirituality Revolution: The Emergence of Contemporary Spirituality* (Pymble, NSW: HarperCollins, 2003). See also Ranson, *Across the Great Divide*.
[32] Ranson, *Across the Great Divide*, 13.
[33] Ranson, *Across the Great Divide*, 19.

For my part, I have grounded the distinction—and the relation—between spirituality and religion between the fourth and fifth levels. Spirituality is consciousness transformed in its awareness of Transcendent Mystery. Occurring as it does on the fifth existential level of consciousness, it affects the person, the whole self in all its relationships. Religion, for its part, is the personal appropriation of that inner transformation and its mediation into the world of human meaning—now viewed in the light of ultimate meaning and motivated by ultimate value—by dynamism of the upwards cognitive movement and downwards communicative movement of the other four levels. In short, spirituality is God's inner transformation of the self; religion is appropriation of and witness to that inward transformation.

Kelly offers an insightful suggestion. He states that:

> Christian communication, especially in the Catholic tradition, is a highly specialised discourse when it comes to cognitive meaning, but has lagged somewhat in the other dimensions …. The rhetoric of spirituality, on the other hand, is very attentive to the constitutive, consciousness-affecting types of meaning, but often indetermined, in least in a methodological sense, about the cognitive content.[34]

His comment can be extended to religions in general. Thus spirituality is more immediately concerned with the constitutive dimension, with the *that* of the God-wrought transformation of the human subject by grace; whereas religion is more concerned with the cognitive dimension, with identifying, naming and witnessing to the *what* that has occurred and living out its implications under grace.

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[34] Kelly CSsR, "Spirituality and the Church", 6.

This distinction between spirituality and religion has several advantages. First, the adjective "spiritual" better conveys the anonymity and numinosity of the presence of Transcendent Mystery to human consciousness in comparison with the more institutionalised expression of a religious tradition. Secondly, this adjective resonates better with the human search for ultimate meaning and ultimate value, and provides a profound connection with those traditions which identify themselves as "spiritualities" rather than religions. Thirdly, it specifies religious experience and religious conversion in more usual, but nonetheless precise, language at a point where Lonergan's choice of vocabulary is potentially confusing. Finally, by distinguishing, but not separating, spirituality from religion, the inner and outer spheres of experience are better respected. The private domain of spiritual experience and spiritual conversion is the interior source of religious living. For its part, the public sphere of religious experience and religious conversion are formed by human cooperation, mediating and outwardly expressing the grace of God. Thus spirituality and religion are intimately connected and related.

However, the peculiarly postmodern phenomenon of "believing without belonging" also testifies to the felt dissonance between outward religious institutions and their inner spiritual core.[35] Whether religion and spirituality are consonant or dissonant depends on the authenticity of the individual believer and of the tradition as a whole. Any perceived discrepancy poses deep questions for believers. They are challenged to appropriate in an authentic manner the meanings and values they profess. This issue of the proper

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[35] Grace Davie, *Religion in Britain Since 1945: Believing Without Belonging* (Oxford; Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1994).

relation between spirituality and religion is one of the major challenges of our time—for each religion individually, and for all the religions collectively.

In this regard, the distinction between spirituality and religion requires a nuance in Lonergan's account of the scale of human values. Lonergan identifies vital, social, cultural, personal and religious values, in that order of preference.[36] However, for "religious" I substitute the word "spiritual", meaning the ultimate level of value, and retain the word "religious" in the sense I have defined it in this thesis. Now, the place of "religious" in the scale of values is ambivalent. As the expression of people's orientation to the Transcendent, religion is higher than the cultural in the order of preference, but as a product of human ingenuity, it is lower than the personal. It merits respect but does not command obedience. For example, I may admire the devotion of Muslims who fast rigorously during the daylight hours of the month of Ramadan, but as a Christian I am not obligated to join them in fasting. The classic instance of this priority of the personal over the religious is the Gospel observation, "The sabbath was made for humankind, and not humankind for the sabbath" (Mk 2:27).

However, to the degree that the individual believer and the tradition are authentic, they are transparent to the Mystery that possesses them. The religious value they mediate more or less coincides with the spiritual. Now, religious value is higher than the personal in the order of preference. It merits not only respect but commands obedience. This is the role of prophets in

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[36] Lonergan, *Method*, 31-32.

every age. Thus, the commandment of God mediated through the religious tradition takes precedence over human tradition, no matter how elevated the reasons we adduce (cf. Mk 7:6-13; Mt 23:16-31).

In terms of interreligious relations, spiritual experience and spiritual conversion are the inner core of all the great world religions (and also of all people of good will). This inner core is the common horizon within which relations between believers from different religions are established. We now consider the variety of outward expressions that constitute the different world religions.

2. Varieties of Religious Expression

Lonergan insists that "before it enters the world mediated by meaning, religion is the prior word God speaks to us by flooding our hearts with his love. That prior word pertains, not to the world mediated by meaning, but to the world of immediacy, to the unmediated experience of the mystery of love and awe."[37] This is what I have called "spirituality".

However, spirituality requires outward expression if it is truly to occupy the real world of meaning. As the objectification of the spiritual realm in history, the expressiveness of religion is subject to numerous variations in the world mediated by meaning. In regard to this "outer word", we stress that such an objectification is not incidental, for it has a constitutive role for the meaning of

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[37] Lonergan, *Method*, 112.

religion itself. Lonergan here appeals to the analogy of a couple in love.[38] As long as the love is undeclared there is something missing; but when they openly avow that love, only then do they enter into the situation of being-in-love with lifelong implications. Similarly, the interior surrender to God requires outward expression in the form of religion.

Lonergan locates the variety of religious expression in relation to the different realms of meaning.[39] The *world of transcendence* drawing us into the spiritual experience of mystery and awe is the source and core of all religion. Becoming familiar with this experience in the *world of interiority* provides the basic terms for appropriating and articulating religious meaning and religious value. The *world of theory* provides the technical exposition of the principles and dynamics of the religion in theology. In the *world of common sense*, religion is lived, preached and practised as incarnated in the lives of believers.

But religious expression is also subject to varieties deriving from the four stages of meaning. The first, *linguistic* stage is typified in the preaching, teaching and witness of prophets, seers, and holy men and women. These witnesses speak from experience and in their different ways dare to speak in God's name. Their utterances identify the holy in terms of sacred times, sacred places, and sacred persons—the god of this mountain, the God of Abram, and so on. In a second, *literate* stage, believers write down the prophetic utterances and narratives. They reflect on the texts, and develop coherent accounts which express fundamental religious truths in the literary

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[38] Lonergan, *Method*, 112-113.
[39] Lonergan, *Method*, 114.

forms available to them.[40] So we have "religion of the book", of the Scriptures, of the Torah, of the Bible, of the Qur'an. In a third, more *logical* and theoretical stage, believers seek to answer questions arising from the inconsistencies and misunderstandings inherent in the clash of different literary styles, as they grow in the ability to distinguish the literal and symbolic meanings of the sacred texts. Differing interpretations begin to be reconciled through the construction of a consistent system, or *summa*, of religious beliefs and practices. In a fourth, more critically aware, *methodical* stage, reflective believers come to recognise the plurality of the different systematic accounts that have emerged in the usually long course of their respective traditions. In that awareness, religious thinkers must meet the challenge of understanding the variety of expressions and contexts in order to communicate in their historical present the essential meaning and value of the faith they profess.

There is a further aspect of this fourth, methodical stage, namely religious plurality. The fact that there are other faiths, other traditions, other religions raises questions as to the religious significance of this plurality. Responses will vary, with some asserting that their particular religion is the only true faith, while others will embark on the way of dialogue, even to the point of asserting

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[40] Throughout his writings Lonergan contrasts myth with science. Thus myth was nearly always pejorative, a deformation of knowledge, rather than a bearer of truth. He later admits that in chapter seventeen of *Insight* his usage of the word "myth", although justifiable in that context, is out of line with the current technical meaning. See Lonergan, "*Insight* Revisited", 275.

that "the only way to be religious is to be interreligious",[41] a situation that will demand the development of an "interreligious theology".[42]

Given the complex variables in religious expression arising from the different realms of meaning and from the different stages of meaning, a reconciling point of discernment is to be found only by going behind the variety of expressions to the originating spiritual experience and, there, deploying a critical methodological awareness based in the realm of interiority. Thus, one is able to distinguish and relate the different worlds of common sense and theory, and also to discern the intelligible pattern of development in the different stages of religious meaning—within each religion, and in its relationship to other traditions.

3. Religious Knowledge

Inherent in each religious tradition—and even more acutely in its relationship with others—is the question of religious knowledge and its bearing on the attainment of the truth. We have already examined in the previous chapters how knowledge of the true, the real, and the good are attainable only by following the dynamics of consciousness.[43] In religious knowledge the self-transcending imperatives in regard to experiencing, understanding and judging continue to be basic, but now they operate within the new spiritual-

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[41] World Council of Churches, *Fortresses into Wellsprings, Soothing the Thirst for Spirituality, Affirming Human Dignity* (2005 [cited 7 March 2008]); available from <http://www.wcc-coe.org/wcc/what/interreligious/forbetterorforworse-wellsprings-e.html>. See also Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously*.
[42] See Claude Geffré, "From the Theology of Religious Pluralism to an Interreligious Theology", in *In Many and Diverse Ways: In Honor of Jacques Dupuis*, ed. Daniel Kendall SJ and Gerald O'Collins SJ (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003).
[43] See Chapter One, under the heading "Lonergan and His Method", pp. 20ff. and Chapter Two, under the heading "Coming to Know the Good", pp. 41ff.

religious horizon. The believer has the experience of the newly converted self to attend to and explore. Clearly, too, a new understanding of the meaning of what has happened is possible. Consequently, there are new judgments of fact and value to be made in the light of what is so understood. All this leads to a new self-appropriation in the light of the ultimate truth and goodness that have been revealed, a new self and a new belonging for which to give account.

As already mentioned, different forms of the question of God as the ground and end of intellectual and of moral consciousness lead to a natural knowledge of the existence and attributes of God. But, in this spiritual-religious perspective, more than such natural knowledge is at stake. God has acted. As Lonergan puts it:

> The divine initiative is not just creation. It is not just God's gift of his love. There is a personal entrance of God himself into history, a communication of God to his people, the advent of God's word into the world of religious expression.[44]

Not only is the Divine Mystery revealed through the love given in the depths of human interiority, but through its self-expression in human history. Lonergan insists further:

> … a divine revelation is God's entry and his taking part in man's [sic] making of man. It is God's claim to have a say in the aims and purposes, the direction and development of human lives, human societies, human cultures, human history.[45]

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[44] Lonergan, *Method*.

[45] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology in its New Context", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 62.

He gives a lapidary summary of his position:

> Then not only the inner word that is God's gift of his love but also the outer word of the religious tradition comes from God.[46]

His conclusion points to a precise understanding of the word of God as personally communicated within "a privileged area" and with a "specific meaning":

> … the word of religious expression is not just the objectification of the gift of God's love; in a privileged area it also is specific meaning, the word of God himself.[47]

To a Christian reader, it is obvious that Lonergan is alluding here to the incarnation of the Word, a topic I will treat in Chapter Six.[48] However, apart from that privileged and specific meaning, the knowledge that derives from the spiritually-religiously converted self, including the articulation of the Divine Mystery in the preaching, teaching and miracles of Jesus of Nazareth, is a divine word as it has entered into the world of human words.[49] It is, therefore, a God-given knowledge. Although it is consonant with the "natural" capacity of the human mind and heart, it is "supernatural", that is, pertaining to the realm of a specific and personal divine self-revelation.

I have already outlined how moral knowledge is attained by the attentive, intelligent and reasonable operations treating the data of intentional feelings. This establishes both the "rationality of value" and the "value of rationality". Religious knowledge is likewise attained by those same attentive, intelligent and reasonable operations, but now operating within the unlimited horizon of

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[46] Lonergan, *Method*, 119.
[47] Lonergan, *Method*.
[48] See Chapter Six, section 4(a) "Christology", pp. 276ff.
[49] In the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation we read: "… in sacred scripture, God speaks through human beings in human fashion …" (DV, 12)

ultimate meaning. The fact that religious knowledge is attained in this way conveys the further notions of the "rationality of faith" and of the importance of "faith in rationality".[50] Similarly, the fact that these same operations processing our intentional feelings for what has been revealed yield a revealed knowledge of its transcendent value affirms both the "value of faith" and the importance of "faith in value".[51]

4. The Dialectical Character of Religious Development

For empirical evidence of his model of religion based on self-transcendence, Lonergan appeals to Professor Heiler's analysis of world religions and identifies seven common areas—namely, that there is a transcendent reality; that it is immanent in human hearts; that it is supreme beauty, truth, righteousness, goodness; that it is characterised by love, mercy, compassion; that the way to union with this ultimate is through repentance, self-denial, and prayer; that it demands love of one's neighbour, even of one's enemies; and that the bliss of ultimate fulfilment is conceived as knowledge of God, union with him, or dissolution into him.[52]

Lonergan relates each of these areas to an aspect of being in love in an unrestricted way.[53] Thus, to be in love is to be in love with someone, and to be in love without qualifications, conditions, reservations or limits is to be in love

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[50] These are the themes of the encyclical of John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio: Faith and Reason* (Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 1998).
[51] These are in the background of the encyclical of John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor: The Splendour of Truth* (Strathfield, NSW: St Pauls Publications, 1993). It is a sustained reflection on the good from the religious context of Catholic Christianity.
[52] Lonergan, *Method*, 109.
[53] Lonergan, *Method*, 109.

with someone transcendent, so that the transcendent object of one's love becomes a presence immanent to human consciousness. Further, when that love is the fulfilment of my unrestricted thrust to self-transcendence through intelligence and truth and responsibility, the one that fulfils that thrust must be supreme in intelligence, truth and goodness. Since he chooses to come to me by a gift of love for him, he himself must be love. Since loving him is my transcending myself, it also is a denial of the self to be transcended. Since loving him means loving attention to him, it is prayer, meditation, contemplation. Since love of him is fruitful, it overflows into love of all those that he loves or might love. Finally, from an experience of love focused on Mystery there wells forth a longing for knowledge, while love itself is a longing for union; so, for the lover of the unknown beloved, the concept of bliss is knowledge of him and union with him, however they may be achieved.

Lonergan's account of religious love admits that religious development is not a matter of the dynamics of consciousness unfolding serenely under the impulse of loving unreservedly. Self-transcendence is involved—with the implication of the self-to-be-transcended resisting the self-as-transcending: "So human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals."[54] Hence, religious development is always a dialectical process of withdrawal from one or other restrictions on loving and surrender to ever greater loving; of moving

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[54] Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

from conditional loving to loving unconditionally; from reservations in loving to loving unreservedly.

Accordingly, Lonergan acknowledges that each of the seven common areas of religious living in Heiler's list has its opposite.[55] For example, when mystery is overemphasised the transcendent personal reality to be known is overlooked or even named nothing at all. If transcendence is overemphasised and immanence overlooked God becomes remote, irrelevant, forgotten. When immanence is overemphasised and transcendence overlooked, symbol, ritual and recital are robbed of their proper reference to transcendent intelligence, truth and goodness, and reduced to idol, magic and myth; or God is simply identified with the cosmic process of which all are part. When the love of God is not fully acknowledged the awe and terror induced by God's transcendence slip into the demonic, into terrorism, into destructiveness of self and others in God's name. When love is not strictly associated with self-transcendence it easily falls into the self-indulgence of the erotic, the sexual, the orgiastic. When love is not firmly directed to the good it easily falls into disregard of the neighbour's and one's own best interests. When the possibility of knowledge and union with God are denied, then human life loses its deepest meaning and highest purpose and settles for the stultifying distractions of superficiality, the exploitative cruelty of ideology, and destructive despair about human welfare.[56]

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[55] Lonergan, *Method*, 110-112.
[56] Lonergan, *Method*, 110-111.

These seven corroborations and seven aberrations of religion are correlated with consent or refusal to love unreservedly as required by the ultimate in self-transcendence. They provide criteria for discerning authenticity and its lack in religions. Lonergan's blunt assertion of these two sides of religion is confronting to those who lack self-critical awareness of the light and the shadows of their tradition.

> Religion is conversion in its preparation, in its occurrence, in its development, in its consequents, and also, alas, in its incompleteness, its failures, its breakdowns, its disintegration.[57]

For believers at least, religion is defensively associated only with the best in human aspirations—selfless dedication to God and to the service of human welfare—and the bad behaviour of believers at different times in history is judged to be the failures, not of the religion as such, but of its adherents, thus preserving the revered status of the religion. Kofi Annan, the former Secretary General of the United Nations captures this well: "I have often said the problem is never the faith—it is the faithful, and how they behave towards each other."[58]

But there is Lonergan's more negative observation: "religion is conversion … in its incompleteness, its failures, its breakdowns, its disintegration". In other words, religion has its own evils, and must be able to account for them.[59] Indeed, the ability to account for both the best and the worst of human behaviour must be placed amongst the criteria for authentic religion. The

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[57] Lonergan, "New Context", 67.
[58] Kofi Annan, *Press Conference* (2006 [cited 10 September 2008]); available from <http://www.un-ngls.org/site/article.php3?id_article=170 >.
[59] I note that Lonergan does not say that religion causes evil, just as he does not say that religion causes good. It is God who brings about the good, and sinful humans who bring about the evil. Religion in both cases is simply the instrument that is used, and the outcome depends on whether the human operator is under the influence of sin or grace.

tendency to exalt the best in one's own religion and to highlight the worst in another's religion indicates a lack of authenticity—the inability to recognise good or evil wherever it appears.

In concluding this section, I note that Lonergan never argues that religion causes conversion, nor, for that matter, that it is the cause of evil. What he does consistently allow for is the ongoing struggle inherent in all human existence, including the religions. The summons is to an ultimate form of self-transcendence—and no easy acceptance of what is called for is to be presumed.

We have seen that religious expression differs according to context and mentality. We have just considered how religious practice is not without its ambiguities and contradictions. To round out the picture, we now pass on to the consideration of another distinction vital to our understanding of religious identity, our own and others.

5. The Distinction Between Faith and Beliefs

We begin with the obvious remark that at the level of beliefs, different religions are often incompatible. Hence, as we saw in Chapter Two, if we are to build relations between people from different religions, to discover where their beliefs overlap and where they diverge, to assess which are correct and which need to be corrected, it is important to specify exactly what beliefs are and how they are formed. Now we go one step further. By distinguishing faith and

beliefs, Lonergan opens a way to locate more precisely the sources of both religious unity and religious division.

Lonergan refers to a 1968 lecture by W.C. Smith in which the latter describes faith as a total, personal engagement with religious symbols quite distinct from "the imperatives, rituals, traditions, beliefs that inspire faith or are inspired by faith".[60] Smith's sustained reflections on the topic were published a decade later in his seminal work *Faith and Belief.*[61] Panikkar also addresses the issue raised by Smith of the distinctiveness of faith.[62] For Panikkar, faith is an "existential openness toward transcendence".[63] It is "a constitutive human dimension" by which all peoples, cultures and religions are ontologically related to the Absolute.[64] Belief is "an intellectual, emotional, and cultural embodiment of that faith within the framework of a particular tradition".[65] Hence his assertion that "beliefs divide, faith unites".[66] The specific contribution that Lonergan makes to this issue is that he grounds the distinction—and relation—between faith and beliefs in the dynamics of consciousness, as I will now show.

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[60] Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs", 31.

[61] Wilfred Cantwell Smith, *Faith and Belief* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1979).

[62] For treatment, see Raimon Panikkar, "Faith and Belief: A Multireligious Experience", in *The Intra-Religious Dialogue* (New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999); Raymond Panikkar, "Faith as a Constitutive Human Dimension", in *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-Cultural Studies* (New York, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1979); Raymond Panikkar, "Metatheology as Fundamental Theology", in *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-Cultural Studies* (New York, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1979).

[63] Panikkar, "Faith as Constitutive", 207.

[64] Panikkar, "Faith as Constitutive", 190.

[65] Panikkar, "Faith and Belief", 12.

[66] Gerard Hall SM, *Interreligious Dialogue and Religious Harmony: A Christian Perspective* (Australian eJournal of Theology, 2006 [cited 3rd February 2009]); available from http://www.acu.edu.au/acu_national/faculties/theology_and_philosophy/theology/ejournal/aejt_12/aejt_editorial/.

(a) Religious Faith

Lonergan defines faith as "the knowledge born of religious love".[67] He explains this in terms of Pascal's observation that "the heart has reasons which reason doesn't know".[68] He identifies "reason" as the combined operations of the first three levels of intentional consciousness. The "heart" signifies the person on the fourth existential level and in the dynamic state of being in love. Consequently, the "heart's reasons" are found in intentional feelings responding to value, for besides factual knowledge, "there is another kind of knowledge reached through the discernment of value and the judgments of value of a person in love".[69]

In Chapter Two I distinguished the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness. Each is constituted by the first three ways in which consciousness operates, the intellectual processing the data of sense and consciousness to arrive at knowledge of the true and the real, and the moral processing the data of intentional feeling to arrive at knowledge of the good and the valuable. This led to a refined appreciation of what Lonergan calls the "heart", of the fourth way in which consciousness operates. It is how we establish relationships with objects, and with other subjects. We now apply that refined appreciation of the fourth level to the issue of faith and beliefs.

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[67] Lonergan, *Method*, 115.
[68] Lonergan, *Method*, 115.
[69] Lonergan, *Method*, 115.

The transforming power of God's love constitutes "the eye of love".[70] It is that further "knowledge" or personal appreciation that is made possible only by the Transcendent breaking into our lives and fulfilling our conscious intentionality—which Lonergan calls "religious conversion" and which I have named "spiritual conversion". The personal appropriation of that transformation is what I have called "religious conversion". It enables a heightened appreciation of self, others, the world and God which is not available to the purely secular. Faith, then, is that transcendent valuing.

In Chapter Two I summarised Lonergan's general treatment of belief.[71] Here I treat religious beliefs in the context of faith, the evaluative knowledge arising from religious love.

> Among the values that faith discerns is the value of believing the word of the religions, the judgments of fact and judgments of value that the religion proposes. Such belief and acceptance have the same structure as other belief already described … But now the structure rests on faith.[72]

There are the same five steps. The first has nothing whatsoever to do with the believer, but is centered on the authority of the one to be believed—in this case, the self-revealing God who disposes the believer and then makes himself known through inspiration and through providential events in history.

Secondly, there is the general judgment of the value of cooperating in coming to know. In this case, it is the value of learning about God from others, the

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[70] Lonergan, *Method*, 117.
[71] See Chapter Two, section 2(b) "The Five Steps of Belief", pp. 68ff.
[72] Lonergan, *Method*, 118.

prophets, sages, gurus, and holy men and women. This knowledge is normally mediated through the religious traditions.

Thirdly, there is the particular judgment of value. It concerns the reliability of the person to be believed and the reliability of the chain of transmission. In religious terms, it entails recognition of the supreme trustworthiness of God, and the divinely guaranteed trustworthiness of the particular religious tradition, at least in regard to the particular religious object, fact or value to be believed.

Fourthly, there takes place the decision to believe. It is choosing to go beyond one's own limited world, and entering into the further horizon that the religion has opened up for us. It is personal appropriation of that transcendent horizon of valuing that God makes possible, if not completely, then at least to the extent in which the particular religious object, fact or value in question can be properly appreciated. This fourth-level choice is a particular act of faith, a particular instance of the general horizon of faith.

The fifth step is the judgment of belief in regard to that particular religious object, fact or value. It is a third-level judgment. In this personal affirmation of what God has revealed and the tradition has handed on, there occurs genuine religious knowledge. Though it is not immanently generated, it is guaranteed by the assurance of faith—that horizon of transcendent valuing in which these five steps unfold.

Thus, faith operates at the fourth interpersonal level of choice; religious beliefs are third-level judgments of fact and value. Thus faith and beliefs are distinct but related, and the relationship is the same bi-directional sublation that operates between the third and fourth ways in which consciousness operates. Within the one religious consciousness, faith calls forth belief, while belief makes faith concrete. Thus beliefs are expressions of faith, and faith is expressed in beliefs.

In its definitions the Catholic magisterium acknowledges the dual dimensions of faith, but does not make the precise theological distinction between faith and beliefs that is presented here. For example, in Vatican II's Dogmatic Constitution on Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, we read:

> By faith one freely commits oneself entirely to God, making "the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals",[73] and willingly assenting to the full revelation given by God. (DV, 5)

In the Catechism of the Catholic Church we read:

> Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man [*sic*] to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a *free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed.* (CCC, 151) [italics in original]

In both texts Christian faith is described as (1) a personal entrusting of oneself to God, and (2) assent to what God reveals. In the not so distant past the latter was popularly referred to in Catholic circles as "the faith", and more technically it is still called "the deposit of faith". Hence the one word "faith" applies to both the personal surrender to God who reveals, and to the content

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[73] [*Dei Verbum's* note] Vatican Council I, Dogmatic Constitution the Catholic Faith, *Dei Filius*, ch. 3: Denz. 1789 (3008).

of what is revealed. But this content is more properly identified as the nexus of

beliefs that make up the religion.

However, distinguishing faith and beliefs has wider implications than simply

making distinctions in the Catholic or Christian account of faith. It establishes

a profound relationship with other religions. As Lonergan claims:

> … by distinguishing faith and belief we have secured a basis both for
> ecumenical encounter and for an encounter between all religions with a
> basis in religious experience. For in the measure that experience is
> genuine, it is orientated to the mystery of love and awe; it has the
> power of unrestricted love to reveal and uphold all that is truly good; it
> remains the bond that unites the religious community, that directs their
> common judgments, that purifies their beliefs. Beliefs do differ, but
> behind this difference there is a deeper unity. For beliefs result from
> judgments of value, and the judgments of value relevant for religious
> belief come from faith, the eye of religious love, an eye that can discern
> God's self disclosures.[74]

Faith as personal adherence to God who reveals is a fourth-level choice. The

contents of what is believed are third-level judgments of religious facts or

values. Within a particular religious horizon, the transcendent value of faith

enables the adherents of that religion to establish correct beliefs, to arrange

them in an order of priority, and to correct mistaken beliefs—thus faith is the

over-arching horizon for ecumenical encounter to which Lonergan refers.

Between the many different religious horizons, the transcendent value of faith

enables believers from different religions to carry out those same tasks in

relation to their own and each others' beliefs—thus faith is the basis for

encounter between all religions to which Lonergan refers.

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[74] Lonergan, *Method*, 119.

From this analysis, a form of faith is common to all the world religions, even if it is elementary and lacks the specificity that is proper to Christian faith. Moreover, it is commonly accepted that God wills the salvation of all, as attested in 2 Timothy 4. Further, the letter to the Hebrews states: "And without faith it is impossible to please God, for whoever would approach him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him." (Heb 11:6) Such a basic attitude of openness to the Transcendent constitutes the elementary conditions referred to above. It follows then that God's disposition for the salvation of all includes bestowing the gift of faith.

Faith is the fourth-level choice of personal adherence to God which brings about a horizon of transcendent valuing. Hence, the different religions are properly named faith traditions—Aboriginal faith, Buddhist faith, Christian faith, Hindu faith, Muslim faith, and so on.[75] And building mutual understanding and cooperation between the different religions is properly named "interfaith relations" or "interfaith dialogue". This position contrasts with Vatican practice, which prefers to speak of "other religions", rather than "other faiths", and of "interreligious relations" and "interreligious dialogue", rather than "interfaith relations" and "interfaith dialogue". I will take up this issue in detail in Chapter Six.[76]

However, this does not imply that the faith is identical in every believer, or in every religion. There are stages in the growth of faith, so that it varies at

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[75] The World Council of Churches commonly refers to other religions as "faiths" cf. World Council of Churches, *Guidelines on Dialogue with People of Living Faiths and Ideologies* (Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1979).

[76] See Chapter Six, under the heading "*Dominus Iesus* and Other Religions", pp. 310ff.

different times in the lifetime of an individual, and few grow into the more mature adult form of what Fowler calls "Universalizing Faith".[77] Further, the particular fourth-level conscious appropriation of faith may fall short of the spiritual transformation that has taken place, may be inadequate in one or more areas to that transcendent horizon of valuing. Such discrepancies make for different faith horizons. As a result our faith valuing is thrown off balance, such that besides facts we also believe some errors, besides disbelieving errors we also fail to believe some facts, and we prioritise some of our beliefs wrongly. Hence, the different beliefs in the different religions.

However, so long as we persevere in being authentic to the originating spiritual experience, such errors and disordered priorities will eventually be exposed and corrected in the light of a more finely tuned transcendent valuing. The "deeper unity" and the "eye of religious love" to which Lonergan refers is the transcendent valuing that comes from what I have called "spirituality", the inner core of all the world religions. This process of discerning and discriminating according to ever more adequate appropriations of transcendent value is how we settle the correct status of religious objects, including our own and others' beliefs. It is working out their proper place in the scale of human values to which I referred earlier, whether they are merely human constructs that merit our respect, or whether they mediate God's revelation and command our obedience.[78]

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[77] The classic work in this regard is James W Fowler, *Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning* 1st ed. (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1981).
[78] See the paragraph in Chapter Four, section 1(d) "Religion", commencing "In this regard …", p. 169.

Given this complexity, the Panikkar statement quoted earlier "beliefs divide, faith unites"—with which, as indicated above, Lonergan would agree—is not to be used as a slogan. A nuanced treatment is required.[79] While the transcendent dimension of faith (spirituality) does unite the different religions, within each religion beliefs provide cognitive unity among the believers: the Apostles' Creed and the Niceno-Constantinopolitan Creeds unite Christians, the Pillars and the ^{c}Aqīdah (creed = six articles of faith) of Islam unite Muslims, and the Four Noble Truths and Eightfold Path unite Buddhists. Moreover, some beliefs unite across the religions: Jews, Christians, and Muslims (and other monotheists) all believe in the one God (but articulate that belief in different ways). Further, while faith does unite believers from different religions, the different faiths are not commensurable: theists and Buddhists have quite different appropriations of faith, and even among the Abrahamic faiths, Jews, Christians and Muslims have quite different appropriations of faith. Moreover, within Christianity, it was precisely the nature of faith that was at the heart of the division between Catholic and Protestant in the sixteenth-century Reformation. It is my contention that Lonergan's account of the dynamics of consciousness provides a nuanced way for distinguishing and relating these different particular faiths and the different beliefs that express

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[79] Admitting the risk of misunderstanding, Lane offers the following summary of the distinction between faith and beliefs:

> Faith unites, beliefs divide;
> Beliefs are diverse, faith is one;
> Faith is objective, beliefs subjective;
> Beliefs are symbolic, faith is transcendent;
> Faith is personal, beliefs propositional;
> Faith is God-given, beliefs community-made;
> Beliefs are theoretical, faith is practical.

(Dermot A Lane, *The Experience of God: An Invitation to Do Theology* (New York, Ramsey: Paulist Press, 1981), 78.) Each of these statements is problematic, because the distinction is pushed beyond limits and becomes separation. The appropriate relation between the two descriptions is not maintained.

them, all within the transcendent faith horizon of what I have called "spirituality".

Having treated faith in this section, it is appropriate to consider hope and love in the following sections. In the following chapter I will show how these three are operative in interreligious relations, and in Chapter Six I will show how the theological virtues of faith, hope and love are motive forces for Christian engagement in interreligious relations.

(b) Religious Love

Spiritual conversion is personal surrender to Transcendent Mystery. In Lonergan's terms, it is our loving response to our first being overwhelmed by other-worldly love, such that our very being becomes being-in-love. The text in the Christian Scriptures to which Lonergan most often refers to capture this experience is: "God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit that has been given to us." (Rom 5:5). This love is God's own love. It is divine love. As Lonergan argues:

> … according to the thirteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians, charity is necessary for salvation. Again, by common consent, charity is sufficient for salvation. But, as theologians argue from the First Epistle to Timothy (2:4), God wills all men [*sic*] to be saved. Accordingly, he wills to give them all the necessary and sufficient condition for salvation. It follows that he gives all men the gift of his love, and so it further follows that there can be an element in all the religions of mankind that is at once profound and holy.[80]

Religious conversion is personal surrender to Transcendent Mystery as mediated through a particular religion. It too is an act of love, a particular

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[80] Lonergan, "Philosophy of God", 170.

realisation of the total surrender of the whole self that is spiritual conversion. The result is a particular, religious being-in-love that is the source, the horizon, the context and the motive force for living out that committed loving relationship in all our subsequent actions. It forms, informs, conforms, and transforms the believer more and more into the revealed likeness of the Mysterious Beloved. The ever present particular actualisation of this personal self-donation in and through a given religious tradition is religious love.

(c) Religious Hope

Spiritual conversion is the Transcendent Mystery condescending to fulfil our self-transcending orientation towards the fullness of truth, goodness, being, life. While consciousness of that graced fulfilment becomes knowledge through attention, understanding and judgment, the limited knowledge so attained is but an anticipation of the fullness of knowledge and love when all will be revealed. This seed of expectation that has been sown in our present life by God may be called divine hope.

The ongoing process of religious conversion is discipleship. It is growth in faith and love. That growth looks forward to complete fulfilment. It anticipates a future fullness when knowledge will replace faith, and when the present timidities and compromises of loving are subsumed in a final, complete, definitive giving of the self in response to Absolute Love. In that ultimate transformation the whole of life will be gathered up into a total spiritual communion with the Transcendent Other. That anticipated and longed-for future final consummation reaches into our present and into our past to gather

them up into the coming wholeness. Its felt touch on our lives that draws us ever onwards on the journey of discipleship within a religious tradition lifts us up after failures, encourages us in the face of difficulties, and transcends the limits that this world and this life impose, is religious hope.

I will return to these themes of religious faith, religious hope and religious love again in the context of interreligious relations in Chapter Five. I will also provide a Christian specificity of these virtues in Chapter Seven.

6. An Adequate Theological Method

For the most part believers live out their religious faith, hope and love in the world of common sense. However, for some there is the scientific or scholarly appropriation of religious living in the world of theory through theology. Theology thus connects religious living with the wider cultural, social, political, and economic fields of human endeavour. In Lonergan's concise description: "A theology mediates between a cultural matrix and the significance and role of a religion in that matrix."[81]

As previously explained, the only way to relate the two worlds of common sense and theory is by seeking the foundation of both in the world of interiority. Intentionality analysis discloses the same conscious operations at work in both domains, so that they can be interiorly related. As Lonergan refined his analysis of intentional consciousness after his February 1965 breakthrough discovery of the fourth level, he came to see theological method

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[81] Lonergan, *Method*, ix.

as unfolding in eight functional specialties: they marked "distinct and separable stages in a single process from data to ultimate results".[82] His methodological achievement introduces a new collaborative conception of theological work—one which can also be exploited in the interreligious context.

Lonergan's method envisages two phases in theology.[83] The first phase is directed towards the past, and is concerned with the appropriation of the tradition. It is, in this regard, *oratio obliqua* ("indirect speech") as it seeks to arrive at a comprehensive grasp of the past in terms of the meanings, values, doctrines and practices that have shaped its witness to divine revelation. As the past is mediated to the theological present, Lonergan calls this phase the "mediating phase" of theology.[84]

The second phase of theology is directed from the past to the present and the future. It is handing on the tradition in "direct speech", *oratio recta*. Having appropriated the tradition, theology can communicate its meaning and value within the ongoing movement of history. In Lonergan's terms, this is the "mediated phase" of theology, as what has come down from the past is now communicated to the emerging world of the day.[85]

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[82] Lonergan, *Method*, 136.
[83] Lonergan, *Method*, 133.
[84] Lonergan, *Method*, 144, 267.
[85] Lonergan, *Method*, 144, 267. I note the ambiguity of the active and passive moods in these descriptors. The first active "mediating phase" is actually the tradition "*being* mediated" to the theologian; and the second "mediated phase" is the theologian actively "mediating" to the future what has *been* mediated to him or her. This ambiguity corresponds to the double moods of the movements themselves: to know is to have been loved (that is, someone lovingly provided the objects that we come to know); and to love is to allow oneself to be known by another (that is, when we care about things and people in our world, we reveal ourselves to be loving, caring persons).

In terms of intentionality analysis, the first phase proceeds according to the four ways in which consciousness operates in the upwards cognitional movement. The second phase is the downwards movement, as previously explained. Both phases are anchored in the consciousness of the believer-theologian. The first phase mounts to the decisive personal question of "What do you say?"[86] Answering that question is not a theological act as such, but the personal religious event of taking one's own stance in regard to the tradition: "in what manner or measure am I to carry the burden of continuity or to risk the initiative of change?"[87] It is a fifth-level event of personal becoming. The second phase flows downwards from that personal commitment. It is the response, working out its implications and challenge and then expressing them in words and deeds and embodying them in one's living.

The two phases of theology are each further divided into four.[88] Lonergan explains that the basis for the division is the four distinct ways in which consciousness operates, each directed to its own proper end. On the first, empirical level the proper end is apprehension of data; on the second, intelligent level the proper end is a comprehensive insight that accounts for all the relevant data; on the third, reasonable level the end is judging the acceptability or otherwise of the hypothesis proposed by understanding; and on the fourth, existential level the proper end is choosing responsibly in accord with the known good.

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[86] In the Christian tradition the decisive question is posed by Christ: "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15; Mk 8:29; Lk 9:20)

[87] "That decision, however, is primarily not a theological but a religious event; it pertains to the prior more spontaneous level on which theology reflects and which it illuminates and objectifies." (Lonergan, *Method*, 135.)

[88] Lonergan, *Method*.

Ordinarily in daily living we do not attend to these distinct ends of each of the operations of consciousness but only to the end result of the entire process. However, in a rigorous scientific or scholarly endeavour in the world of theory the whole of consciousness may be directed to a particular end in each stage of the process. Functional specialisation occurs when the single end proper to any one of the ways in which consciousness works is sought by all the combined operations of consciousness. Since there are two phases each divided into four levels, there are eight functional specialities. [89]

I summarise Lonergan's account of the four functional specialties of the first phase:

Research uncovers all the relevant data. It gathers all the information relevant to a particular theological question or to a general area of theological inquiry.

Interpretation "understands what was meant".[90] It grasps the intended meaning through analysing the original historical context, the form of expression, and the mind of the writer. It is thus a hermeneutical exercise.

History in its basic form answers the questions: who did what? where? and when? Special history investigates the rise, achievements, limitations and fall of particular cultural, social, doctrinal, or institutional movements. The ideal of a general history works towards a comprehensive account of a whole era.

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[89] For Lonergan's summary of the functional specialties, see Lonergan, *Method*, 127-133. For a more detailed summary, see Ormerod, *Method, Meaning and Revelation*, 103-121. For Lonergan's detailed account, see Chs 6-14 of Lonergan, *Method*.
[90] Lonergan, *Method*, 127.

More particularly, history seeks to identify what was going forward at any given time and place, the breakthroughs and the breakdowns, the new possibilities and directions of development.

Dialectic deals with "the concrete, the dynamic, and the contradictory".[91] It aims at providing a comprehensive viewpoint or base from which one can compare, contrast and relate the variety of viewpoints that have surfaced in history. Comparison shows precisely where differences are irreducible, and where and how they are complementary or may be considered as successive stages in a single process of growth. Critique seeks to uncover the reasons for the differences, the inconsistency or biases at their root that make for radically different horizons. The purpose is to identify and work on resolving the more important inconsistencies.

Moving now to the four specialties of the second phase:

Foundations is concerned with the new horizon resulting from religious, intellectual and moral conversion. It objectifies the basic standpoint from which the variety of possible horizons can be judged, and thus works as a principle of selectivity and discernment for the subsequent functional specialties.

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[91] Lonergan, *Method*, 129.

Doctrines are the principal judgments of fact and judgments of value which structure the new religious horizon. They concern not only dogma, but all major areas of theology.

Systematics is concerned with answering the further questions that arise concerning doctrines and their relations to each other and to other areas of human knowledge. It works out the appropriate conceptual formulation and systematisation to remove apparent doctrinal inconsistencies and provides understanding of transcendent realities from their inner coherence and from analogies with more familiar human experience.

Communications is theology's address to the external world. It involves interdisciplinary relations with other fields of human learning. It transposes theological ideas from the world of theory to the minds and hearts of people and cultures, adapting the available media of communication.

Just as the four ways in which consciousness works are distinct yet functionally related, the functional specialties represent eight distinct tasks, each with their own proper end, but each functionally related to the others. The functional specialties thus provide a framework for collaboration among theologians, each working in their functional specialty, but each relating that work to their colleagues in the other functional specialties. This thesis extends the application of Lonergan's method to the possibilities of collaboration between believers from different religions.

While Christian theology was the particular context in which Lonergan worked out the functional specialties, they apply equally to the theology in other religions. In Chapter Seven I suggest that appropriating the functional specialties across the range of religions would greatly enhance the collaboration between them.[92] In Chapter Eight I make some tentative preliminary suggestions in that regard.[93] In the following chapter—Chapter Five—I will apply the functional specialties to a Christian theology of interreligious relations.[94]

I add that Lonergan himself declared that the functional specialties can be applied and adapted to other areas of scholarly and scientific endeavour.[95] Moreover, the parallel dynamics in theology and in secular studies provide "a method … for integrating theology with scholarly and scientific human studies".[96] This important addendum challenges interreligious relations not to build an interreligious ghetto that isolates itself from the secular world. The whole point of interreligious relations is to ensure better combined service to transforming the world in accord with God's holy desire for human and planetary flourishing.

Conclusion

I have already appealed to Lonergan's analysis of the operations of consciousness as the *common ground* on which people of intelligence and

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[92] See Chapter Seven, section 3(e) "Critical Realism and Theological Method", pp. 361ff.
[93] See Chapter Eight, under the heading "Specific Contribution", pp. 370ff.
[94] See Chapter Five, section 4(c) "Methodological Framework", pp. 251ff.
[95] Lonergan, *Method*.
[96] Lonergan, *Method*, 366.

good will might meet. This chapter has developed the context for interreligious relations by specifying spirituality as the *common horizon* within which adherents of different religions might meet and communicate on the level of faith.

However, since religion as I have presented it is the concrete, social and historical expression of spirituality, and since religious expressions are many, varied, and sometimes contradictory, it is obvious that the religions themselves are not a common ground for meeting. Rather, they are the concrete traditions and institutions that meet, or fail to meet, often overlap, and sometimes clash, but the question remains: on what grounds do they do this? Since the religious truths and values that form and inform the different religions are constituted and mediated by the very same dynamics of consciousness that are the theme of the previous chapters, I can now claim that these operations are also the *common ground* on which people of faith might meet to discover their commonalities and explore their differences.

In this chapter I have treated religion generically. The next chapter will be concerned with the many different species of religion. It will treat of the varied particular horizons of religious meanings and religious values. By examining how these differing horizons are constructed, and the different ways in which they converge and diverge, the paths of communication and reconciliation will be opened up.

CHAPTER FIVE: INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

In this chapter I continue my application of Lonergan's intentionality analysis and generalised empirical method to the phenomenon of religion. Whereas in the previous chapter I applied it to religion as a single *genus*, I now apply it to the many different *species* of religion, that is, to the many different religions. As treated in the previous chapter, I use the word "religion" in the generic functional sense as that which completes human self-transcendence.[1] Hence I include in this category those traditions which prefer the designation "spiritualities" or "ways of life".

After a preliminary account of the different types of differences, I will treat the different types of religions and the structural relations between them. I will then treat personal relations between believers from different religions in terms of "dialogue", its different forms and dynamism. This will be followed by a critique of current approaches to a theology of religious plurality, and an alternative approach based on Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness.

I will present this material under the following headings:

1. The Different Types of Differences;

2. Structural Relations between Different Types of Religions;

3. Interpersonal Relations between Believers from Different Religions;

4. A Theology of Religious Plurality.

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[1] See Chapter Four, section 1(d) "Religion", pp. 162ff.

1. The Different Types of Differences

As a prelude to discussing different religions it is important to know exactly what differences are. Here Lonergan's categorisation of genetic, perspectival, complementary and dialectical differences is very helpful. This will prove an essential basis for any genuine dialogue among religious traditions. We all know religions are different, but we need to be precise about the nature of those differences.

(a) Genetic Differences

Genetic differences are "successive stages in some process of development".[2] In its most elementary form it is the beginning, middle, and end of a process. In evolutionary terms it is the emergence through schemes of probability and survival of ever greater levels of integration and complexity in creation. In biological terms it is the stages of growth from foetus, to infant, to child, to youth, to adult, to elderly. In history it is the origin, flourishing and decline of societies. Each subsequent stage presupposes the preceding stage but is a development of it, so normally the stages are not simultaneous but successive.[3] While genetic differences between parties at different stages of growth often occasion misunderstanding, they can also inspire hope. The greater achievements of the more advanced motivate others to emulate their achievements; and the more advanced have a responsibility to assist the less developed in growing to their full stature.

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[2] Lonergan, *Method*, 236.
[3] The exception is immature human development, as when adults exhibit childish behaviour. Clinical psychologists identify this as unresolved childhood issues manifesting themselves in later life.

(b) Perspectival Differences

Perspectival differences are the result of people who share the same horizon all treating the same object properly and accurately, but each from a particular point of view based on individual variations arising from the limitations and selectivity of their respective approaches.[4] Because the differences arise from the variety of approaches to the same object, unlike regular genetic differences (above), perspectival differences can be simultaneous.

The delight of perspectival differences is that when people identify them correctly, all tension over disputed claims about right and wrong dissolves and is replaced by a sense of mutual enrichment, as each of the parties grows in knowledge and appreciation of the object in question.

(c) Complementary Differences

Complementary differences arise when people working within the same general horizon all treat different objects properly and accurately, but recognise and rely on each other's respective competencies for the good ordering of the whole.[5] The differences do not arise from the time sequence, or from perspectives, or from mistakes. Rather the combination of particular objects or tasks and personal interests contributes to the wellbeing of the social whole. It is an appropriate division of labour such that each contributes, no one has to do everything, and each benefits from the others' contributions. The joy of complementary differences is that when people identify them correctly, all tension over disputed claims of priority or pre-eminence

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[4] Lonergan, *Method*, 214-220.
[5] Lonergan, *Method*, 236.

disappears and is replaced by an appreciation of the other's contribution. Collaboration thus promotes the good ordering of society.

(d) Dialectical Differences

Dialectical differences are radical. They arise when people treat the same object yet come up with conclusions that are mutually exclusive: "What for one is true for another is false. What for one is good for another is evil."[6] The positions are diametrically opposed. Such differences arise from the very way that horizons are shaped. They do not derive from the object, but from the subject. They derive from inattentiveness, or mis-understanding, or irrationality, or irresponsibility, or any combination of two or more of these. These failures result in fundamental epistemological, existential and religious contradictions.

Such basic differences cannot be resolved by attempting a new stage of development. Unless the original problem is squarely faced and resolved, it will be carried over into the further stage. There is no pretending that the problem resides simply in different viewpoints—for there is a radical contradiction of viewpoints involved. Nor is it a matter of complementary differences within a common horizon, since they deal with the same object.

Hence, the only way forward is to get to the root cause of the conflict. This involves a conversion from inattentiveness to attentiveness, from mis-understanding to understanding, from irrationality to rationality, from

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[6] Lonergan, *Method*, 236.

irresponsibility to responsibility. When the fundamental flaw, or permutation of flaws, is corrected, a completely new horizon or frame of reference results in which the error can properly be identified and corrected.

Though religious differences remain the cause of tension, their proper diagnosis prepares the way for resolving conflicts, promoting reconciliation among religious believers, and facilitating greater collaboration.

If the differences are genetic stages in the religious development of humankind, then the religion that is less developed can learn from the more developed—even though just which religion is the learner and which is the teacher will vary from one area of expertise to another. I treat the relations between different types of religions in the next section. For the moment it suffices to say that later religions have much to learn from the cosmic sensibilities of the indigenous religions, just as these, in turn, can learn from the more self-critical precision of the later religions.

If the differences are perspectival, all religions can learn from each other. For example, believers from other religions bring different sensibilities that yield different nuances in understanding the sacred texts of the Bible, the Holy Qur'an, the Bhagavad Gita, and so on. Similarly, believers from differing religions provide nuances in understanding Jesus, Muhammad, the Buddha, and other sacred personages.[7]

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[7] This is an area where comparative theology can be so fruitful, for example, the work of Francis X. Clooney, *Theology after Vedanta: An Experiment in Comparative Theology* (Albany: State University of New York, 1993).

If the differences are complementary, both religions can learn to collaborate better with each other. For example, Christians can learn from the vast contemplative experience of Hinduism and Buddhism, just as these can learn from the Christian concern for active pursuit of social justice. Christians can learn from Islam's insistence on the public role of religion in society, just as Muslims can learn from Christians' insistence on interior conversion and personal responsibility. And all religions can help each other in confronting the challenges posed by modernity and postmodernity. The same mutual benefit applies to the religious/secular divide. By acknowledging and building on the genuine achievements of the Enlightenment, the various religious traditions can develop a contemporary expression of their ancient meanings and values. And those same meanings and values can be a corrective to the limitations and failures inherent in the Enlightenment's anti-religious bias, however scientific it may pretend to be.

But if the differences between religions are dialectical, then the only way to resolve tension is for believers from the different religions to work at finding and eliminating its root cause. An example is the different understandings of the identity and role of Jesus Christ as he is variously appropriated by different religious traditions (I will treat this from a Christian point of view in Chapter Six). Other examples are the Unicity of God in both Judaism and Islam in contrast to the Trinity in Christianity, and the contrasting positions of monotheists, polytheists and atheists. Here, one must always be careful to appreciate precisely what these names supposedly deny or affirm. Dialectical differences can be resolved only through a conversion to the greater horizon,

be it intellectual, moral or religious. There, the cause of previous knockdown conflicts can be properly identified and corrected.

Having explained the various kinds of differences, I will now apply this to different religions and to the relations between them.

2. Structural Relations between Different Types of Religions

Lonergan's analysis of the empirical, intellectual and rational levels of consciousness in shaping community, along with his account of the stages of meaning, provides grounds for identifying three basic types of religion, and throw light on how they can be related. While the whole gamut of intentional operations is taken to be present in believers of all kinds, I suggest that each objectification of spiritual conversion in a particular religion tends to emphasise one of the first three levels of consciousness. The differentiation between the three types of religions is similar to that between the functional specialties, where the operations of all four ways in which consciousness operates combine to focus on the end that is particular to one of them.[8] I readily admit that the types I suggest here need to be filled out with critical and empirical studies of the different religions (and of the many denominations within each of them). My limited purpose is to suggest how different types of religions can be "located" on the "map" of consciousness, and thereby find a method for relating them to and distinguishing them from each other.

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[8] For my summary treatment of the functional specialties, see Chapter Four, under the heading "An Adequate Theological Method", pp. 192ff.

(a) Three Different Types of Religions

The "cosmic" type of religion is associated with the empirical level of consciousness and with an early "common sense" stage of the religious development of meaning.[9] The "mythic" type is more akin to the second level of consciousness and more easily correlated to a stage of meaning when theory begins to emerge within common sense experience. The "prophetic" type, with its sense of objectivity and truth, can be related to rational consciousness, and to that stage of meaning when differentiations of consciousness emerge in a more self-reflective and interior fashion.[10] This typology does not presume a strictly chronological development, though it does presuppose the growth of a greater proficiency in objectivising spiritual experience and differentiating its various components: God, the self, the world, and so on.[11]

Under the term "cosmic religion" I include the immense variety of primal and aboriginal forms of religious expression. Here the focus is on the empirical, that is, on the perceived physical order of the universe, on the essential interrelatedness of all things. These religions inhabit an enchanted universe, a milieu of sacred times and places. They find expression in sacred stories and sacred rituals. These recount, re-enact, and celebrate primordial events that

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[9] For a seminal account of cosmic religiosity, see Mircea Eliade, *The Sacred and the Profane: The Nature of Religion*, trans. Willard R Trask (New York: Harper & Row, 1961).

[10] Panikkar also uses the categories of *mythos* and *logos*, adding a third category of symbol. However, for Panikkar these do not refer to typologies of different religions, but to different types of religious communication. For treatment, see Gerard Hall SM, *Intercultural and Interreligious Hermeneutics: Raimon Panikkar* (2002 [cited 5 February 2009]); available from http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ghall_panikkar.htm#_edn1.

[11] I follow Lonergan, who makes the same point about stages of meaning in *Method*, 86.

shape the world as it is.[12] The question of advance or progress or development clearly does not arise. The intent is basically preservative, namely, to maintain the sacred order against the threat of impending chaos. The emphasis is an undifferentiated present continually manifesting a primordial cosmic order. The aboriginal cosmic order is continually being re-enacted in the present conditions of time and place. For example, Australian Aboriginal corroborees re-enact ancestral events of the "Dreaming" and so preserve the cosmic order.

Compared with the vast panoply of cosmic religions, the number of mythic religions is comparatively small. They have achieved a limited degree of cognitive separation from the world of nature, making possible some highly sophisticated speculation about the world, life, meaning—as is the case with Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Taoism, and the Eastern wisdom traditions generally. Their mythic narratives are designed to explain the origin and end of the universe, the journey of life, the motion of the stars, the recurrent patterns of day and night, and the cycle of the seasons. This explanation is not abstract or theoretic but pragmatic, providing the assurance of meaning and value for human existence. Unlike the cosmic believers who preserve the primordial stable universe against the destabilising threat of change, the concern of mythic believers is to maintain poise and equanimity in the face of a constantly changing world. Good and evil come and go as time

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[12] For a penetrating account of how mimesis brings about the nexus between violence and the primitive sacred, see the writings of René Girard and his followers. For a useful summary of the analysis, see Michael Kirwan, *Discovering Girard* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 2004). The book contains a bibliography of works by Girard, as well as applications of his work by other authors. Among the latter, with specific reference to its application to Christianity, I recommend the works of James Alison, Gil Bailie and Raymund Schwager.

unfolds in the great circles of life, and release from the endless cyclic repetition is movement inwards, so as to occupy the still point of time's changing world.

Prophetic religions, such as Judaism, Christianity and Islam, are fewer in number still, testifying to the historical difficulty of attaining genuine knowledge. Prophetic believers live with a special tension arising from the cognitive commitments inherent in their transcending undifferentiated experience and understanding of the world. They are marked with a basic impulse to identify in an objective manner the distinct realities of God, the world of divine creation, and their place within it. Hence, their concerns are not simply pragmatic, but committed to the truth of what they believe in order to distinguish truth from error, reality from appearance, good from evil, and sin from holiness. In this regard, their direction is linear, a progression towards ever greater knowledge of God and of themselves in the world of divine creation and providence.

Is there a fourth type of religion corresponding to the fourth way in which consciousness operates? My answer is No, because each of these three types of religion is constituted by the believers' fourth level of consciousness in appropriating and expressing the Transcendent Mystery that has first grasped them. However, comparing and contrasting the fourth-level personal horizon that is so constituted is crucial to my treatment of personal relations between believers from different religions. I will take up this question in section three of the present chapter.

Having identified three different types of religion, and having located the source of difference in emphasising one or other of the first three ways in which intentional consciousness operates, Lonergan's analysis provides a secure basis for working out the relations between them and holds out the promise of a greater collaboration among them.

(b) Relations between the Three Different Types of Religions

We now move on to argue that that these types of religions can be related in the way that the different levels of consciousness are related. Because each subsequent level of consciousness subsumes what precedes it, Lonergan's model of "sublation" is illuminating. He describes it in the following words:

> … what sublates goes beyond what is sublated, introduces something new and distinct, puts everything on a new basis, yet so far from interfering with the sublated or destroying it, on the contrary needs it, includes it, preserves all its proper features and properties, and carries them forward to a fuller realization within a richer context.[13]

In this perspective, the move from one type of religion to another does not destroy or diminish the previous religious meanings and values. Rather, it includes them, perfects them, and sets them in a new horizon.

From the theoretical point of view, the different types of religions are genetic stages in the religious development of humanity. Cosmic religions gravitationally tend towards, and call forth, mythic religions to deliver a fuller interpretation of their lived experience in the universe. In turn, mythic religions tend towards and call forth prophetic judgment on the truth of their mythical

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[13] Lonergan, *Method*, 241.

understanding. The immense psychological distance between the cosmic and the prophetic types of religions can result in mutual incomprehension. This happened between the technologically advanced sixteenth- to eighteenth-century European "Christian" colonisers and the indigenous peoples of Asia, Africa, Latin America, North America, Australia and Pacific Oceania. Such mutual incomprehension illustrates the need for deliberate efforts to promote some form of dialogue and exchange to mediate mutual understanding between the two types.

From the practical point of view, the grasp of revealed religious insights and values in prophetic religion challenges mythic religions to a deeper understanding and appreciation of their universe, while the formalised understanding of mythical religion pushes cosmic religions to a broader, deeper, more integrated involvement in life. Again, the psychological distance between the prophetic and cosmic types of religion requires mediation if practical mutual benefit is to be promoted.

Whether in theory or in practice, the exchange between these types of religion are instances of sublation. One type of religion subsumes what is true, good and holy in the other, and sets it in a richer context. As with the different ways in which consciousness operates, this sublative movement between religions must not be conceived unilaterally and hierarchically, but in a functional and bi-directional fashion. For example, mythic religion needs the experience of cosmic religiosity if it is to understand itself fully, and cosmic religion needs the articulation of mythic religion to express itself. Prophetic religion needs the

mythic for much of its symbolism and language, even as it passes judgment on the reality communicated in mythic language. Prophetic religions find in their cosmic counterparts an invitation to a contemplative awareness of creation, while the cosmic religions find in the prophetic a sense of time and history as moving forward to a final revelation of goodness. Thus, each type of religion provides its distinctive component, while benefiting from the distinctive contribution of the other types. Each is deficient without the others, while all of them together make up the whole of religious meaning and value in human history.

Complete sublation between types of religions is an ideal model, and so occurs rarely. When it does, an individual or a particular community or an entire tradition moves from one type of religion to another. It involves a radical change of horizon; so it is a religious conversion. However, the incorporation of earlier religious sensibilities into subsequent religious developments through passive absorption and active inculturation explains how cosmic, mythic and prophetic strands occur in the one tradition. One example is Christianity's adopting pre-Christian traditions of light and fire and giving them new Christian meanings in the paschal liturgy. Another is Islam's adopting pre-Islamic rituals and giving them new Islamic interpretations in the Hajj.

But the change need not be so radical, and may be more a matter of mutual influence. Thus what usually happens in the encounter between different types of religions is the integration of religious truths and values from one religion into the other, involving an incremental change in horizon. The two

religions retain their respective identities, although subject to inner modification in the light of their encounter with the other. Positively, each witnesses to enduring religious truths and values that, for whatever reason, could not be subsumed into the other religion. Negatively, they each witness to a failure to achieve a new religious synthesis—but even this can act as a stimulus to a larger world of religious reconciliation.

There is a third possibility, the acknowledgment of some degree of simultaneous multi-religious belonging—though I caution that this cannot be at the expense of compromising essential elements of either tradition.[14] Aboriginal Christians, the indigenous people of Australia who have accepted Christianity yet continue to observe compatible elements of Aboriginal spirituality, are one example of this phenomenon. Similarly, Christians who practise Buddhist meditation or Hindu yogic disciplines are another, so long as doctrinal integrity is not compromised.

(c) Relations between Religions of the Same Type

With regard to relations between religions of the same type, there are two preliminary points to make. First, the greater personal investment involved in the move from empirical through intelligent to rational consciousness leads to a greater likelihood of conflict arising at the subsequent levels. These levels form the basis for the distinction between the three types of religion. It is to be

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[14] For an account of this phenomenon, see Catherine Cornille, ed., *Many Mansions? Multiple Religious Belonging and Christian Identity*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2002). See also Peter C. Phan, "Multiple Religious Belonging: Opportunities and Challenges for the Church", *Theological Studies* 64, no. 3 (2003). See also "Multiple Religious Belonging", Ch. 4 of Phan, *Being Religious Interreligiously*.

expected, therefore, that relations between different religions of the same type will become more problematic in the ascent from the cosmic to the mythic, and then to the prophetic religion.

Secondly, I note what Kirwan regards as being "crucially important" in Girard's analysis of differences, namely, that the cause of violence is not difference itself, but rather the erosion of differences:

> We are used to thinking that conflict arises from difference—different religions, tribes, or nations at loggerheads with one another—but in fact Girard here insists that it is the *erosion* of differences which is the dangerous trigger for violence. It is the fear of sameness, the loss of distinguishing characteristics which catalyses conflict (the very opposite of what a certain famous but annoyingly banal song by John Lennon would have us imagine).[15] [italics in original]

Bearing these two points in mind, we now consider relations between different religions of the same type.

Relations between cosmic religions are the least problematic. The cosmic religions are responses to the order of the universe in its many physical and climatic manifestations. They are as many and varied as the environments to which they respond. Practically speaking, comparative geographic isolation ensures little conflict. Following Girard, a psychological reason for absence of conflict is the manifest differentiation of these religions. In Lonergan terms, they represent complementary differences. They are different responses to their respective geographical situations. They pose no mutual threat. The likelihood of violent conflict is *within* the cosmic religions, especially according

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[15] Kirwan, *Discovering Girard*, 48.

to Girard's analysis of sacred violence, expressed in the sacrifice of victims for the maintenance of sacral identity.

With mythic religions the possibilities of violence increase, owing to the greater personal and communal investment involved in the construction of their respective identities. Practically speaking, where mythic religions arose in geographical separation from each other—in the Mediterranean, in the Indian subcontinent, in China—there was no chance of conflict between them. When they encountered each other in later history, so long as the expansion was "organic", there was little or no conflict. However, when that expansion was militarily and politically enforced conflict did arise. When their differences are recognised as being perspectival or complementary there is no need for conflict and a ready accommodation may prevail. However, as Girard would have it, when a new understanding of life, meaning, world, God arises that is more inclusive than that of the tradition from which it emerges, it may seem likely to dominate or even swallow and supplant its parent tradition. This tendency towards the supersession of one religion by another of the same type is not the sublation operating between different types of religions. Mimetic rivalries and the threat of being overwhelmed are the seed for violent conflict. Thus, it is not surprising that conflicted mythic religiosity fractures into separate religions that protract a history of witness to their different understandings. Examples are Jainism and Buddhism, which emerged from the Hindu world; and Taoism, which emerged from the Confucian context. A similar process happens *within* a religion, when it separates into different strands or denominations.

The differentiations within this type of mythic religion can be further specified. Marcus helpfully identifies three different modes of self-consciousness: (1) the "Western" emphasises the self-aware individual subject or agent; (2) the Indic emphasises disassociation from all the accumulated accretions of psyche and conscious ego to arrive at the pure conscious self; (3) and the Sinic emphasises relationship, connectedness, balance, the harmonic integration of the self with nature, with family, with ancestors, with heaven.[16] These three modes are the psychic soil out of which different mythic religious identities are constructed. I propose that they can be interpreted in terms of Lonergan's analysis of the structure of intentional consciousness as follows: (1) "Western" religions emphasise the intentional (for example, the Egyptian, Greek and Roman gods as external projections of human behaviour); (2) Indic religions emphasise consciousness and the purgation of extraneous elements to arrive at a purified inner self; (3) Sinic religions emphasise the virtue of maintaining balance and harmony between these dual orientations. When these different emphases are properly respected, mythic religions can enrich each other with their different understandings. When these different emphases are seen to overwhelm or cancel out the other, the result is conflict.

Prophetic religions demand the greatest level of personal and communal investment, with the result that relations between them can be the most problematic. They each claim to know the truth of the Word of God as it has been revealed. To the extent that their judgments concur there can be ready cooperation between believers of different prophetic religions. But, to the

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[16] John T. Marcus, "East and West: Phenomenologies of the Self and the Existential Bases of Knowledge", *International Philosophical Quarterly* XI, no. 1. (1971).

extent that their judgments contradict each other, their differences are not perspectival or complementary, but dialectical. They are set in a position of terminal opposition which can be resolved only by conversion to that higher horizon in which the error can be recognised and corrected.

Given the high level of commitment involved, and the corresponding high level of resistance to change, it is not surprising that there are deep conflicts between the prophetic religions. Following the Girardian analysis, I suggest that the origins of these religions manifest elements of mimetic rivalry and violent separation or expulsion. Thus Christianity and (Rabbinic) Judaism are both the rivalistic offspring of ancient Israel, while Islam presents itself as succeeding both Judaism and Christianity. Sikkhism was born in the violence of the failed reconciliation of Hinduism and Islam. Baha'ism is a sometimes persecuted breakaway from Islam. All these ruptures witness to the fissiparous nature of relations between prophetic religions, and to the likelihood of an underlying residual animosity.

Just as differences between mythic religions can be analysed in terms of the dual orientations of consciousness, the same applies to the prophetic religions. Islam, since its primary sources of Qur'an and *Sunnah* are external to the Muslim believer, is led to emphasise intentionality, and to insist on an objectivity quite apart from the believing subject.[17] Christianity, with its

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[17] The very words are instructive. *Islam* means submission (to the definitive word of God revealed through the Prophet Muhammad), and *Muslim* means the one who so submits. The positive fruits of these commitments are seen in the moral and spiritual-religious lives of Muslims and the flowering of Islamic civilisations. However, the shadow side of this emphasis on intentionality to the detriment of consciousness is that, in distorted versions of Islam, the human subject is seen to be expendable. This attitudes condones and promotes the destructive violence of terrorism and suicide bombing.

external word of revelation and the inner gift of the Spirit, is challenged to maintain both orientations simultaneously, and thus to correlate the subjective and the objective. Judaism, with its profound sense of being chosen from amongst the nations for divine purposes, tends to emphasise the consciousness involved in its sense of election.

The differences between these three religions can also be assigned according to the three theological virtues.[18] Muslims are called to testify to faith, looking back to a golden era of revelation in the past.[19] Christians are called to embody love, incarnating the love of God and love of neighbour in the present. Jews are called to witness to hope, looking to the fulfilment of divine promise in the future. This typology is admittedly a caricature, for, in fact, the theological virtues are proper to all three religions. However, like all caricatures, it emphasises some features at the expense of others, and has a recognisable validity in that these religions do exhibit the above emphases.

A further typology uses the three biblical-theological categories of prophet, priest and king. Islam emphasises prophethood—the definitive role of the Prophet Muhammad in Islam and his status as seal of the prophets (cf. Qur'an 33:40). Christianity emphasises priesthood—the central role of Jesus Christ as the one mediator between God and humans, and among humans (cf. 1 Tim 2:5), and as the great high priest (cf. Heb 3:14ff). Judaism, for its part,

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[18] Fr Peter Hans Kolvenbach, the then Jesuit Superior General, presented this insight to Catholic religious during his visit to Lahore, Pakistan in the mid 1990s.

[19] This typology demolishes the medieval, pejorative caricature of Muslims as "infidels" (without faith), which derives from the hostility of the Crusaders.

emphasises kingship—the servant role of Abraham's posterity in being a blessing for all the nations of the earth (cf. Gen 22:18, 26:4).

From these different typologies it is easy to see how the different religions can mutually benefit each other. For example, Islam's public religiosity challenges the post-Enlightenment privatisation of Christianity and Judaism; Christianity's personalism challenges the pre-occupation with external observance typical of Islam and Judaism; and Judaism's sense of being called and chosen challenges Islam's and Christianity's temptation to activism.

My remarks on the structural differences and relationships between religions have inevitably been rather abstract and general. However, the lived reality of personal relations between believers from different religions is more concrete and personally engaging, as we shall see in the following section.

3. Interpersonal Relations between Believers from Different Religions

Previously I addressed structural relations between religions whose differences derive from an emphasis on the end proper to one or other of the first three ways in which consciousness operates. Here the focus shifts to the end proper to the fourth way in which consciousness operates. This is where the conflicts, irresolvable on the previous levels, move toward some practical interpersonal reconciliation—where, in Lonergan's words, "dialectic becomes dialogue".[20] It is no longer just a meeting of ideas, but a meeting of persons.

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[20] Lonergan, "The Ongoing Genesis of Methods", 159.

Panikkar makes a similar distinction.[21] For him, the aim of dialogue is "convergence of hearts, not just coalescence of minds".[22]

(a) Personal Encounter

The personal meeting of believers from different religions at this level can lead to a productive encounter in which a field of mutual learning—including mutual criticism—is opened up. As Lonergan describes it:

> Encounter … is meeting persons, appreciating the values they represent, criticizing their defects, and allowing one's living to be challenged at its very roots by their words and by their deeds … encounter is the one way in which self-understanding and horizon can be put to the test.[23]

There are always differences in the content and range of different religious horizons. These differences are occasions of learning, as John Paul II readily admits:

> Other religions constitute a positive challenge for the Church: they stimulate her both to discover and acknowledge the signs of Christ's presence and of the working of the Spirit, as well as to examine more deeply her own identity and to bear witness to the fullness of Revelation which she has received for the good of all. (RM, 56)

However, as every religion is a product of human meaning, there will always be "gaps, insufficiencies and errors" (RM, 55). Personal encounters between believers from different religions will bring these to light. The context will

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[21] "Dialogue seeks truth by trusting the other, just as dialectics pursues truth by trusting the order of things, the value of reason and weighty arguments. Dialectics is the optimism of reason. Dialogue is the optimism of the heart. Dialectics believes it can approach truth by relying on the objective consistency of ideas. Dialogue believes it can advance along the way to truth by relying on the subjective consistency of the dialogue partners. Dialogue does not seek to be primarily *duo-logue*, a duet of two *logoi*, which could still be dialectical; but a *dia-logos*, a piercing of the logos to attain a truth that transcends it." (Panikkar, "Faith as Constitutive", 243.).
[22] Panikkar, *Invisible Harmony* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1995), cited in Gerard Hall SM, *Intercultural and Interreligious Hermeneutics: Raimon Panikkar* (2002 [cited 5 February 2009]); available from <http://dlibrary.acu.edu.au/research/theology/ghall_panikkar.htm#_edn1>.
[23] Lonergan, *Method*, 247.

determine which believer is the teacher and which believer is the learner. For example, cosmic believers will be more attuned to the physical environment, mythic believers will be more astute in making connections between objects, while prophetic believers will be more adept at making distinctions that respect the proper transcendence of God and the integrity of creation. Because each believer has a particular standpoint, others are challenged either to agree or disagree, and to learn or to teach, as the circumstances require.

The shortcomings and distortions inherent in any religious horizon are exposed by personal encounter with the more inclusive and open horizon of another. That exposure has two possible outcomes. One can learn from the contrast and seek its cause in bias, oversights, misunderstandings and irresponsibility. As a result, one's personal horizon is stretched to a new openness through encounter with the other. Alternatively, the reaction may be that of resentment and of refusal to acknowledge the greater horizon of our partner, and thus inspire scapegoating tactics to cover our mediocrity. Whichever path we follow, a fourth-level personal choice is at stake, either for life and growth, or for stagnation and decline.

When both partners in interreligious encounter risk personal exposure and enter into the reciprocity of learning, there occurs that mutual self-mediation referred to earlier.[24] The mutuality of this exchange is important. No one community of believers can claim a monopoly on the truth, goodness and

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[24] See Chapter Three, section 3(a) "Mutual Self-Mediation", pp. 117ff.

grace they seek to mediate, for God, not the believers themselves, is the ultimate source of what is so given. Only when believers acknowledge themselves to be the beneficiaries of gifts from above can they truly be mediators of what has been given. As a result, no religious community of faith can impose its own set of religious meanings and values on others. Personal choice and responsibility are at issue. A personal, responsible act of self-determining freedom is required.[25]

But this mutual self-mediation is not for the benefit of the religions concerned only, as if building relations between religions ignored the situation of the larger world or suggested some escape into an unworldly kind of spiritual awareness. On this point, Gregson offers a word of warning: "the development in the dialogue among religions of a defensive enclave of religion would be ultimately self-defeating for religion as well as useless for humankind".[26] The mutual self-mediation of believers must make them better informed and more empowered for a more effective and responsible stewardship of the world, and for promoting the wellbeing of human and all other creatures.

There are risks in such interreligious encounter. Personal exposure of this kind can be met with rejection and ridicule. At that point, the test of authenticity is patience and compassion—even for one's persecutors who are enclosed in a limited or distorted horizon. The ultimate determinant is a love

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[25] Among the many possible New Testament texts on the free, personal response of the Christian, we read: "For freedom Christ has set us free. Stand firm, therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery." (Gal 5:1) One of the cardinal principles of Islam is: لَا إِكْرَاهَ فِي الدِّين "There shall be no compulsion in religion." (Qur'an 2:256)
[26] Gregson, *Lonergan, Spirituality, and Religions*, 7.

that keeps on being love even in the face of persecution, misunderstanding and rejection, and even unto death.

(b) Dialogue

In the negotiation of this process of personal witness and communication, the key word is dialogue. In popular parlance, dialogue is a conversation between two or more people. Its opposite is monologue, when only one person is speaking, often in an oppressive manner, unconcerned for the views of hearers. Given this popular connotation, it is illuminating to consider the etymology of the word.[27] The Greek numerical preposition for two is *di-,* as in dichromatic (having two colours), dioxide (an oxide containing two atoms of oxygen in its molecule), and ditheism (belief in two gods). On the other hand, the Greek preposition *dia-* is instrumental or relational, with the meaning of "through, across, by means of". Thus we have, for instance, *dia-gonal*, that is, cutting through the *gonios* (angle) as "diagonal", and *dia-phanes*, that is, showing through a material which is thus "diaphanous" or transparent. Therefore, according to correct etymology, "dialogue" (*dia-logos*) is reaching through one's *logos* or worldview. It is engaging responsibly with the other in a way that is consistent with one's *logos* or rational standpoint, and hence demands deep personal authenticity. The term expresses a self-mediation to the other through responsible self-disclosure. It seeks to meet the other at the point of each one's core identity, and so to arrive at mutually acceptable consensus on issues. Amjad-Ali summarises:

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[27] I am indebted to conversations with Dr Charles Amjad-Ali, Director of the Christian Study Centre in Rawalpindi, Pakistan, for challenging my populist understanding of the word dialogue. His position, which I summarise here, is published in Charles Amjad-Ali, "New Directions in Dialogue and the Role of Ecumenical Study Centres", *al-Mushir* 33, no. 3 (1991), 59-62; Charles Amjad-Ali, "Towards a New Theology of Dialogue", *al-Mushir* 33, no. 2 (1991), 89-93.

> Dia-logue thus means "a passage" through one's own horizon, in order to deal with questions and problems raised by the very presence of the other on one's own horizon, or from within another's horizon itself.[28]

Dialogue in this proper sense confirms the present understanding of the human person as called into being through relationships with others, and thus, a process of shared, self-transcending becoming.

As dialogue is "going through" one's *logos*, Amjad-Ali shows that its opposite is not monologue but *meta-logue* or "going beyond" one's *logos*. It is not self-transcendence as such, but overreaching oneself. It is irresponsibly going beyond one's reasonable self-possession. It is taking stances with regard to objects that have not been attentively, intelligently, reasonably and responsibly posited and evaluated. In Lonergan terms, it is arbitrariness, and as he writes: "Arbitrariness is just another name for unauthenticity."[29]

Interreligious dialogue, then, is far from being a smorgasbord approach to the plurality of religions. It is not a meeting of religious dilettantes casually picking up positions from here and there. Rather, it requires profound engagement of the whole self, demanding both authenticity to one's own religious tradition, and an attentive, intelligent, reasonable and responsible approach to the other.

(c) Four Forms of Dialogue

Following experience in interreligious dialogue by members of the World Council of Churches and by Catholics after Vatican II, it has become common

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[28] Amjad-Ali, "New Directions in Dialogue", 93.
[29] Lonergan, *Method*, 122.

to refer to four types of interreligious dialogue. These are described in the

document *Dialogue and Mission*[30] and further elaborated in the later

document *Dialogue and Proclamation* as follows:

(a) The *dialogue of life,* where people strive to live in an open and
neighbourly spirit, sharing their joys and sorrows, their human
problems and preoccupations.

(b) The *dialogue of action*, in which Christians and others
collaborate for the integral development and liberation of people.

(c) The *dialogue of theological exchange,* where specialists seek to
deepen their understanding of their respective religious
heritages, and to appreciate each other's spiritual values.

(d) The *dialogue of religious experience,* where persons, rooted in
their own religious traditions, share their spiritual riches, for
instance with regard to prayer and contemplation, faith and ways
of searching for God or the Absolute. (DP, 42)[31]

These four forms of dialogue can be correlated with the dynamics of

consciousness and aligned to Lonergan's three worlds of common sense,

theory, and transcendence, as follows.

The dialogue of life concerns believers' daily conduct in the world of common

sense.[32] Religious believers live, work and celebrate within the milieux of

everyday life in the local, regional and even international context. Although

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[30] Secretariat for Non-Christians, *The Attitude of the Church Toward the Followers of Other Religions: Reflections and Orientations on Dialogue and Mission* (Bombay: St Paul Publications, 1984).
[31] Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue and Congregation for Evangelization of Peoples, "Dialogue and Proclamation: Reflections and Orientations on Interreligious Dialogue and the Proclamation of the Gospel of Jesus Christ", in *Redemption and Dialogue: Reading* Redemptoris Missio *and* Dialogue and Proclamation (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1991).
[32] For detailed treatment of common sense, see Lonergan, *Insight*., Ch. 6, "Common Sense and its Subject", pp. 196-231; Ch. 7, "Common Sense as Object", pp. 232-69.

their respective religious convictions are integral to these social and professional engagements, they usually remain in the background.[33]

The dialogue of theological exchange arises from the world of common sense, unfolds in the upwards movement of intentional consciousness, thus contributing to the world of theory. Mutual learning and teaching result as a consequence of attending to each other's religious lives and convictions and exploring them critically and responsibly to find both commonalities and differences.

The documents *Dialogue and Mission* and *Dialogue and Proclamation* describe this form of dialogue as the domain of "specialists". But there is room for less specialised communication as when anyone might inquire: Why do you fast? How do you pray? Why do you wear that garb?—and genuinely learn from the answers given. This is not the dialogue of life where religious issues lie in the background, for here they are brought into the foreground of exchange and discussion. As a result, anyone, specialist or not, can participate in this form of dialogue and grow in understanding and commitment.

This is not to say that specialists—the rabbis of Judaism, the Catholic magisterium, the *^culama'* (scholars) of Islam, the *swamis* of Hinduism, the monks of Buddhism, and the "priests" of Sikkhism, Taoism, and so on—have no particular role. Theologians in every religion have a particular responsibility

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[33] The difference between the dialogue of life and the dialogue of experts corresponds to the difference between common sense and theory. Common sense is knowing in order to live, and the world of theory is living in order to know.

to their coreligionists in communicating the meanings and values, of both their own religious tradition and other religious traditions. By so doing, they indicate the authoritative status of such doctrines in the various traditions, and mark the limits beyond which the authenticity of a particular tradition is compromised.

The dialogue of religious experience concerns the dynamics of consciousness operating in the world of transcendence.[34] It is an intimate personal sharing between believers of different traditions regarding the spiritual/religious transformation they have undergone and the salvation they have received. This ideally involves a mutual disclosure of the sacred meanings and values, texts, people, and holy places inherent in their respective religious traditions. It may even lead to some degree of appropriate participation in the prayer and religious customs of those of other faiths, without, of course, compromising their own religious integrity. While one may attend the religious ceremonies of other religions, normally it is not appropriate to participate in their formal worship. However, other forms of some shared observance may be possible and even desirable.

The dialogue of action descends in the downwards movement of intentional consciousness. It originates in the joint recognition of common values and the shared decision to implement them. It involves structural consequences of mutual adaptation, collaboration and consensus in forming the society of which all are participants.

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[34] For treatment of the world of transcendence, see Lonergan, *Method*, 257, 265-266.

These four forms of dialogue can be progressively interrelated. The dialogue of life is the fertile ground that provides the shared experience that gives rise to interreligious reflection. The dialogue of specialists is the upwards movement of withdrawal from the world of common sense into the world of theory. It uncovers the religious significance of that shared living. The dialogue of religious experience, looking beyond daily living and present knowledge, calls for a greater intensity of religious living in terms of both knowledge and commitment. It discloses the fruits of entering more unreservedly into the world of transcendence. The dialogue of action is the downwards movement, a return from the worlds of theory and transcendence to the world of common sense, in order to transform that world in accord with the religious meaning and values that are held in common. The transformation occasions further experience, further enquiry, and further reflection. No one type of dialogue has absolute priority, for all are necessary. Dialogue that is only talk and does not lead to action is sterile, but common religious action that is not properly informed is rash. The dialogue of life is the most common form in which all can participate, but the dialogue of religious experience transforms our mundane lives into sacred space. Thus, the four types of dialogue form a wheel of interreligious cooperation which moves forward as a form of social progress.[35]

By contrast, the refusal of interreligious dialogue in all of the above interrelated forms leaves religions isolated from each other. Their individual

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[35] For Lonergan's account of progress, see Lonergan, *Method*, 52-53.

and joint creativity and transformative potential are stultified, with a resultant social decline.[36]

Teasdale uses the more organic image of parts of the human body to refer to five different types of dialogue.[37] The dialogue of the head corresponds to the dialogue of theological exchange, the dialogue of the heart to that of religious experience, the dialogue of life is the same in both typologies, the dialogue of the hands corresponds to the dialogue of action—and the dialogue of friendship or love is the spiritual communion that develops between dialogue partners through years of engagement, trust, and encounter at all the previous levels (as such, it corresponds to Lonergan's fifth level of consciousness[38]).

(d) Other Dialogues

Other forms of dialogue provide a larger and richer context. Integrity demands that interreligious dialogue be accompanied by dialogue of an *intrareligious* kind, that is, with one's coreligionists.[39] If this does not happen, dialogue only with believers from other religions veers toward exoticism, whereas the lack of interreligious dialogue moves toward sectarianism. The most common form of intra-religious dialogue is ecumenical, intent on building visible unity between

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[36] For Lonergan's account of decline, see Lonergan, *Method*, 53-55.
[37] Wayne Teasdale, *Catholicism in Dialogue: Conversations Across Traditions*, ed. Robert A Ludwig, *Catholic Studies Series* (Lanham, Boulder, New York, Oxford: Rowman & Littlefield, 2004), 28-34.
[38] For my treatment of the fifth level, see Chapter Two, under the heading "The 'Fifth Level' of Intentional Consciousness", pp. 84ff.
[39] Panikkar uses this expression to mean "an inner dialogue within myself, an encounter in the depth of my personal religiousness, having met another religious experience on that very intimate level". (Raimon Panikkar, *The Intra-Religious Dialogue*, Revised ed. (New York; Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 40.) I use the phrase to denote engagement with coreligionists, to share the fruits of interreligious dialogue.

the different denominations, groups, and sects that divide a given religious tradition.

There is also *religious-secular* dialogue. As mentioned previously, interreligious dialogue is not conducted for the exclusive benefit of religious believers, but as an encounter designed to enable these believers to contribute more effectively to the wellbeing of the world.

One aspect of both interreligious dialogue and religious-secular dialogue is *intercultural dialogue*.[40] This includes how one religion has been incarnated in different cultural contexts, as well as how one culture has been variously influenced by different religions. It gives rise to dialogue between the different ethnic and historical cultures of the five continents, and among the more specific cultures of faith, science, politics and art. The aim throughout is a deeper communication on the meanings and values that animate all cultures and promise a richer comprehension of what is held in common, namely, truth, justice, the common good and the experience of the beautiful.

Another important dimension for religious concern is dialogue with the poor. This has been highlighted especially by documents of the Federation of Asian

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[40] For example: "Interreligious and intercultural dialogue between Christians and Muslims cannot be reduced to an optional extra. It is in fact a vital necessity, on which in large measure our future depends." (Benedict XVI, *Meeting with Representatives of Some Muslim Communities,* (2005 [cited 4 April 2008]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2005/august/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20050820_meeting-muslims_en.html>.)

Bishops' Conferences in what has come to be known as "the triple dialogue with the poor, with cultures and with other religions".[41]

There is also the global dimension, of dialogue with the exploited earth. This is consistent with my presentation of ecological conversion.[42] As noted there, Knitter suggests that the earch provides a common story with religious and ethical implications, and even proposes "eco-human well being as a criterion for religious truth."[43]

There is the *dialogue of personal prayer*, by which one intentionally places oneself in the presence of God, however conceived, invites God's scrutiny, mercy and grace, and lifts one's heart and mind to God's concerns.

The fruits of the above dialogues are harvested in an *intrapersonal dialogue*,[44] perhaps more accurately, an "intrapersonal soliloquy",[45] whereby one ponders in one's heart and conceives and brings to birth in one's life the truths and values that one has learned in the other dialogues. The paramount New Testament example is the proactive attitude of Mary following the Annunciation (cf. Lk 2:19).

Finally, underlying, sustaining and nourishing all of the above dialogues is the age-old dialogue of God with creation that looks to historical and

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[41] Oscar V Cruz, *A Renewed Church in Asia: Pastoral Directions for a New Decade* (FABC Papers, 2000 [cited 6 August 2009]); available from <http://www.ucanews.com/html/fabc-papers/fabc-95.htm>. For detailed references see footnote 18 in Peter C. Phan, *In Our Own Tongues: Perspectives from Asia on Mission and Inculturation* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2003), 19.

[42] For my treatment see Chapter Two, section 2(a) "The Four Conversions", pp. 62.

[43] Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*, 118.

[44] I use the term "intrapersonal dialogue" in the same sense as Panikkar's "intra-religious dialogue".

[45] Panikkar, *The Intra-Religious Dialogue*, 10.

eschatological realisation. Paul VI taught that this is the "the transcendent origin of the dialogue" (ES, 5) and described it as "the dialogue of salvation". (ES, 6) The appropriate human response is prayer and action to bring about God's purposes.

Given that all these forms of dialogue, whatever their content, operate through the same dynamics of consciousness, they are interrelated and support each other. Dialogue in one area provokes dialogue in all other areas as well.

(e) The Content of Interreligious Dialogue

We now turn to a consideration of the content of interreligious dialogue, approaching it from the perspective of the three theological virtues: faith, hope and charity.

Interfaith Dialogue

We appeal to Lonergan's distinction between, on the one hand, faith as a fourth-level personal response to God, and, on the other, beliefs as third-level judgments of religious meanings and values.[46] Since faith in this precise sense is the responsible acceptance of spiritual conversion and is specified in religious conversion, it is common to all religions. However, the particular faith horizons of the different religions are not commensurable, with the result that their beliefs differ. Because there is a dimension of faith in all religions,

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[46] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Four, under the heading "The Distinction Between Faith and Beliefs", pp. 180ff.

dialogue between believers from different religions is properly described as *interfaith.* However, interfaith dialogue is more than an exchange of faith statements, or more accurately, of religious beliefs, that is, of third-level objective judgments. It is primarily an interpersonal encounter between the faithful on the fourth level and is thus radically intersubjective. Pertinently, Lonergan refers to:

> … the imponderable in education that does not show up in charts and statistics, that lies in the immediate interpersonal situation which vanishes when communication becomes indirect through books, through television programs, through teaching by mail.[47]

In interfaith dialogue that same elusive quality is present. Though it includes a mutual sharing of religious beliefs, it is sharing them not primarily as information, but in terms of what they mean to the believers concerned, and how they affect the whole outlook or horizon of the believer.[48] This kind of interpersonal encounter discloses the respective achievements and limitations of the religious worldviews in question.

Inter-Hope Conversation

But there is more than faith involved. As Kelly writes,

> The wounds of the past and the problems of the present certainly demand interfaith dialogue. Yet there is the often forgotten dimension of hope, and along with that, "the way known only to God" of bringing all to share in eternal life.[49]

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[47] Lonergan, "Mediation of Christ", 176.
[48] Lonergan makes a similar point in relation to doctrines. People "are not unwilling to believe. They know what church doctrines are. But they want to know what church doctrines could possibly mean. Their question is the question to be met by systematic theology." (Lonergan, *Method*, 345.) However, interreligious dialogue is not the academic exercise of systematic explanation, but the apostolic exercise of sharing personal meaning.
[49] Anthony Kelly CSsR, *Eschatology and Hope*, ed. Peter C Phan, *Theology in Global Perspective* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2006), 26.

He thus introduces the eschatological range of what he calls "inter-hope dialogue".[50] In explanation, he writes,

> … for our present purposes, I would suggest replacing the usual term "interfaith" dialogue with "inter-hope" encounter. … A new openness or sympathy comes into play when the encounter between different faiths and spiritualities is set within a horizon of hope and its expectation of an ultimate communion in eternal life. Inter-hope dialogue would highlight the unimaginable "otherness" of eschatological fulfilment. It looks beyond what is, to what is to come.[51]

Undoubtedly, the sharing of hopes adds new dimensions to interreligious encounter. Nonetheless, a more apt word than dialogue or encounter might be "conversation", with its etymological roots in *con* ("with") and *versare* ("to turn towards"). Conversation suggests a "turning together" toward some engaging topic. It is not so much sharing what we already know, but rather turning to something new, initiating the process of becoming more conversant with a previously neglected dimension of life. It is also significant that the words, "conversation" and "conversion" are cognate in their common implication of new horizons of learning. In the interreligious context, sharing what we already know is more properly interreligious dialogue. Inter-hope conversation is sharing the hope that our desires will be fulfilled by God in ways beyond our present knowledge, to bring out new facets of the God-given future.

From this point of view, inter-hope conversation complements interfaith dialogue. Both are needed, as Kelly observes:

> … interfaith dialogue must continue to work for greater mutual comprehension and collaboration among all peoples as they turn toward one another in reverence. Inter-hope dialogue is more a matter of all looking toward a promised future of communion in eternal life.[52]

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[50] Kelly CSsR, *Eschatology*, 15-17.
[51] Kelly CSsR, *Eschatology*, 16.
[52] Kelly CSsR, *Eschatology*, 17.

Inter-Love Communication

Kelly's reflections on the contribution of hope to interreligious encounter prompt a consideration of the third theological virtue, of love. In a sense, faith looks to the past, to what God has revealed, and hope looks to a future consummation (cf. 1 Cor 13:12); but love is a present reality. While full communion is the hoped-for future, there is nonetheless already an incomplete communion through the shared gift of God's love as the source of radical spiritual conversion.[53] All religions have that gift in common. The most telling term here may be "communication". Again, etymology is illuminating. The Latin *communicare* means to "to share", or "to be one with". Hence, communication is the process of making something common to several recipients, and so uniting them with one another in what they share. In the interreligious context, inter-love communication includes sharing of common knowledge and common values and common purposes. But even more, it is acknowledgment of the transcendent common source of personal transformation and conversion. It anticipates a full communion with God and with each other in a common destiny. The Johannine author's testimony is apposite:

> Beloved, we are God's children now; what we will be has not yet been revealed. What we do know is this: when he is revealed, we will be like him, for we will see him as he is. (1 Jn 3:2).

Inter-love communication is based in the present reality of "being God's children now", however that is expressed in the different religious traditions.

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[53] For my treatment, see Chapter Four, section 1(c) "Spirituality", pp. 161f.

In summary, interfaith dialogue shares how spiritual transformation has been mediated to us from the past; inter-hope conversation looks to its future fulfilment; and inter-love communication appreciates the reality actualised in the present.

Interreligious Relations

To bring all three dimensions together I suggest the phrase "interreligious relations". In doing so I eschew the Vatican rationale for preferring this name over "interfaith dialogue", namely *Dominus Iesus'* seeming reluctance to concede faith to other religions.[54] "Interreligious relations" is a concrete description that includes all three dimensions of faith, hope and love, and avoids the impression of anything too abstract or technical or analytical. It has the added advantage of the personal and interpersonal resonances that are appropriate to the fourth level and to mutual self-mediation.

Having used Lonergan's analysis of consciousness to treat the structural and interpersonal relations between religions, in the following section, I employ his larger methodological framework in outlining a comprehensive theological approach to religious plurality.

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[54] For my treatment of this issue, see Chapter Six, under the heading "*Dominus Iesus* and Other Religions", pp. 310ff.

4. A Theology of Religious Plurality

The intensification of interreligious contacts in the globalised world of today has made an adequate theology of religions an urgent concern. Each religious tradition is being forced to give its own account of the plurality of religions. Given the avalanche of publications on such matters, I limit my treatment to a Christian theology of religious plurality.[55]

(a) Existing Models

Theological accounts tend to refer to three current and widely used categories or models: exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism. *Exclusivism* claims that only one religion is true and good; that all other religions are at best a merely human construct, and at worst a diabolical hindrance to human wellbeing; and that all these other religions are to be replaced by the one true religion. *Inclusivism* is more irenic in its claims that only one religion is wholly true and good, but that all other religions share in that truth and goodness to some degree. Thus, the definitive truth of that one religion "includes" the partial but genuine truths of other religions, and fulfils them. For its part, *pluralism* is marked by the tolerance that claims that all religions are equally true and

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[55] Some books on this topic in English are: John Hick and Paul F Knitter, eds., *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness: Toward a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1987).the critical response given in Gavin D'Costa, ed., *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); Paul F Knitter, ed., *The Myth of Religious Superiority: A Multifaith Exploration*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005). Some other Christian authors are Michael Amaladoss, S. Wesley Ariarajah, Michael Barnes SJ, John Borelli, Francis X. Clooney SJ, John B. Cobb Jr, Catherine Cornille, Jacques Dupuis SJ, Michael L. Fitzgerald, James L. Fredericks, Claude Geffré OP, Bede Griffiths, S. Mark Heim, Hans Küng, John D'Arcy May, Raimon Panikkar, Peter C. Phan, Aloysius Pieris SJ, and Leonard Swidler.

good; that no religion has any precedence over any other, and that each enables its adherents to achieve their respective destinies.

These three models are often presented in terms of historical phases or stages. Some autobiographical accounts of religious development may begin with a confession of exclusivism, moving to some inclusivist form of faith, and end with the candid recognition of pluralism.[56] The implication is that these three models are genetic in that each is an advance on the previous stage, and that this development is a sign of progress.[57] However, each model is in fact a tool for relating vast terrains of faith and historical religious experience. Viewed in that light, each of these models exhibits strengths and weaknesses—so that none of them has proved adequate to the complexity of the interreligious situation.[58]

Frustrated by the inadequacies of this threefold typology, other models have been proposed in the interests of further progress.[59] Thus, authors refer to an "acceptance model" or "comparative approach" to meet the challenge of

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[56] For example, Knitter begins his book on the ecological imperative of dialogue with a section entitled "My Dialogical Odyssey: An Autobiographical Introduction" (Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*.)

[57] For example, Alice Priest writes positively about "the slow historical progression from exclusivism to inclusivism … and stepping hesitantly, but inevitably, upon the threshold of pluralism". See Alice Priest, "The Catholic Church's Theological Approach to Other Religions: From Conversion to Conversation", in *Australian eJournal of Theology* (2007).

[58] Schmidt-Leukel argues for the enduring validity of these three types. (Perry Schmidt-Leukel, "Exclusivism, Inclusivism, Pluralism", in *The Myth of Religious Superiority: A Multifaith Exploration*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005).)

[59] Dupuis presents "Shifting Paradigms", mentioning Ecclesiocentrism, Christocentrism, Theocentrism, Regnocentrism, Soteriocentrism, Logocentrism, Pneumatocentrism, Beyond Western Categories. See Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*, 185-201.

religious plurality.[60] This approach accepts that all religions are radically incommensurable, and that no one system can accommodate the radical diversity of religions. The pluralist claim is deemed inconsistent with itself in that it subjects all the religions to a single system. The only possible course of action is for religions to accept each other and learn from their differences, but with no expectation of the realisation of unity or reconciliation in history.

Paul Knitter, long immersed in the theory and practice of interreligious relations, gives an impressive account of Christian approaches to religious plurality in his *Introducing Theologies of Religions*,[61] and further refines the basic models to which we have referred, giving the strengths and weaknesses of each, and the different nuances by different proponents of each position. In his presentation he names the approaches in terms of their intended impact on other religions, the exclusive becomes the "replacement" model;[62] the inclusive becomes one of "fulfilment";[63] and pluralism is understood as mutuality in dialogue;[64] while the acceptance model remains as I have just suggested above.[65]

For purposes of this thesis, I suggest that these four models can be correlated with emphasis on one or other of the four ways in which consciousness

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[60] For example, see "Experimenting with Comparison" in James L. Fredericks, *Faith Among Faiths: Christian Theology and Non-Christian Religions* (New York/Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 1999), 139-161. See also Clooney, *Theology after Vedanta*. The most radical of these, as the title of his book suggests, is S. Mark Heim, *Salvations: Truth and Difference in Religion*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1995).
[61] Henceforth: Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*.
[62] Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*, 17-60.
[63] Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*, 61-106.
[64] Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*, 107-169.
[65] Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*, 171-237.

operates.[66] Obviously, the construction of any theology of religions uses all four ways in which consciousness operates. However, just as appropriation of successive levels led to different stages of control over the expression of meaning,[67] and just as emphasis on one or other of the ways in which consciousness operates led to different types of religions,[68] a similar emphasis here yields the different models of approaches to religious diversity.

Each model contains what Lonergan called "positions" and "counterpositions".[69] The ability to ask and answer all the relevant questions indicates the positive strengths of the model, with the resultant affirmation of genuine truths and values that invite further development.[70] However, failure to do so leads to their respective weaknesses. The resultant failure to attain genuine truths and values indicates the need for further conversion—if an adequate theology is to emerge.

As a preliminary, and to avoid any misunderstanding, I clarify that I refer primarily to the positions themselves, rather than to the persons who hold them. The models are stances in relation to other religions, and involve value judgements. I will argue that they involve preferencing one way in which

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[66] I first presented this proposal to the Lonergan Seminar at Boston College on 21 April 2006. I am grateful to the participants for their feedback and observations, which challenged me to be refine my case and be more precise in formulating and presenting it.

[67] For my account see Chapter Three, section 4 "The Stages of Meaning", pp. 131.

[68] For my account see Chapter Five, section 2(a) "Three Different Types of Religion", pp. 207.

[69] I acknowledge my indebtedness to Frederick Lawrence for this insight. "Positions are formulations that can be retained unchanged within the new way. Counterpositions are formulations that have to be recast before they can be made coherent with the new way." (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Method in Catholic Theology", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 37.) For a very summary treatment see Lonergan, *Insight*, 413.

[70] I acknowledge my indebtedness to Patrick Byrne, who highlighted the pivotal role of asking and answering all the relevant questions at each level.

consciousness operates against the other three ways, and so they are in fact pre-judgements, or prejudices, or, in Lonergan terms, biases.[71] More specifically, because they are stances held in common by a number of people, they are an example of "communal bias" rather than "individual bias", which confirms that I am referring to the position rather than to the person who holds it. However, given the strength of communal bias it is almost inevitable that the person who holds this position will not advert to the questions and the data that could lift him or her out of this particular stance.

Bearing the above considerations in mind, I now present each of the four models in terms of intentionality analysis.

Exclusivism emphasises personal experience to the detriment of understanding, judgment and responsible decision. Moreover, it tends to privilege one's own experience, and to discount the experience of the religious other. It is as if the *experience* of the religion in which one has grown up is so all-absorbing, or the *experience* of conversion to anther religion so dramatic, that one cannot countenance any other possibility, that no self-criticism worthy of the name is possible, or that one can learn anything from anyone else. Though reflection on this particular experience may lead to genuine religious knowledge and commitment, the *a priori* exclusion of the potential worth of the experience of the other results in a form of self-enclosure. Consequently, the religious horizon remains fundamentally limited. This exclusive attitude makes other religions appear alien and unrelated to one's particular religious identity

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[71] For my summary account see Chapter One, section 4(c) "Method", pp. 24.

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and therefore possibly expendable, if not in this life, then in the life to come (that is, they are destined for hell). While many people may hold this position about the status of other religions and yet still live decent, moral lives of loving God and neighbour, this attitude taken to its extreme fuels the atrocities committed by fanatics in the name of their religion.

Inclusivism emphasises understanding to the detriment of attention to detail, reasonable validation and responsible choice. It is as if one's religion, either by upbringing or conversion, is considered so comprehensive that one is not inclined to challenge it or to consider alternatives. It is open to larger religious evidence, but only up to a point, and always on one's own terms. Therefore the inclusivist's knowledge of and sense of responsibility towards the other is limited. There is an ideological suppression or neglect of further data relevant to the whole (inter)religious context. In particular, it privileges one's own understanding, and domesticates the understanding of the religious other. For example, both Buddhists and Christians place great emphasis on meditation. But the inclusivist is liable to understand that both are engaged in the same activity. What is not noticed is that, while the skills and techniques of meditation may be interchangeable, the inner intentions are polar opposites. The Buddhist regards desire for and questions about the ultimate as distractions from enlightenment; while the Christian is seeking the personal God who fulfils desire. Likewise, Christians and Muslims both practise fasting. But the inclusivist might mistakenly conclude that it is for the same purpose. However, although the spiritual benefits may be similar, the Muslim's fundamental concern is correctly observing a legal obligation to fulfil God's will

(cf. Qur'an 2:183-5), while the Christian is intentionally involved in a form of spiritual self-purification for greater openness to God as faith, in biblical terms, awaits the return of the bridegroom (cf. Mt 9:15). Thus, where the exclusivist refuses to reach out to the religious other, the inclusivist falls short by not allowing the other to be truly other, but rather an imperfect reflection of oneself.

Pluralism emphasises the first three ways in which consciousness operates, and so makes correct judgments of religious facts and values, but it fails to follow through to responsible decision. It is as if absoluteness that is proper to judgements of truth and value about one's own and other religions is so intimidating that it precludes any attempt at a personal evaluation and deliberation which would prioritize and relativise those same judgements. Content to assert the variety of religious meanings, the pluralist does not seriously engage the quintessential fourth-level question: *Quid mihi est?*— "What concern is that to me?" This refusal to engage the question of appropriate response indicates a poorly developed appreciation of the personal in the scale of values, with the consequent inability to discern properly. This entails a failure in personal appropriation of what is true, real, good and holy in one's own and in other religions, and also a denial of responsibility for correcting what is mistaken, false or evil in them. The various religious traditions simply float haphazardly without being integrated into a comprehensive personal viewpoint or horizon. By not making this radically personal connection with the meanings and values of the religious other, the

pluralist in fact is content to live apart from the religious other. The religions are consigned to inhabit different worlds of mutual incompatibility.

The acceptance model counters the pluralist emphasis on an exaggerated objectivity by accentuating personal responsibility. But, since it downplays the first three ways in which consciousness operates, this responsibility is uncritical. Its subjectivity is so enthralled by the evident sincerity of the religious other that a truly critical evaluation of the religious meanings and values concerned is impossible. It results in a somewhat romanticised view of other religions in the guise of benign tolerance. On the one hand, a generous feeling of intersubjectivity is inclined to find more in common with other religions than is actually the case, and to obscure differences by absolutising sincerity as the primary value. But if we are genuinely concerned about truth and authentic goodness then sincerity alone is not a sufficient criterion. On the other hand, an exaggerated respect for the autonomy of the other tends to absolutise differences such that the other remains wholly other—there is nothing at all in common—now or in the life to come.[72] Any similarity between the different religions is purely incidental, and cannot be used to posit a real relation between them. Again, if we are concerned about reality, truly critical engagement transcends the subjectivities of the dialogue partners and will acknowledge both "radical otherness" and "radical relativity".[73] Both go together. There cannot be otherness without relativity, and there cannot be relativity without otherness.

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[72] This seems to be the position of Heim, as indicated in the title of his book. See Heim, *Salvations*.
[73] I borrow the terms from Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience*.

To summarise: each of these models of approaches to religious plurality utilises all four ways in which consciousness operates. This accounts for their strengths, their ability to generate "positions". However, each of them emphasises one of the ways in which consciousness operates to the detriment of the others. This creates an imbalance that leads to their weaknesses so that they also generate "counterpositions".

The explanation attempted above of the strengths and weaknesses of each of the models conforms to Newman's basic theorem in *Idea of a University*, to which Lonergan refers:

> Positively, Newman advanced that human knowing was a whole with its parts organically related, and this accords with the contemporary phenomenological notion of horizon, that one's perceptions are functions of one's outlook, that one's meaning is a function of a context and that context of still broader contexts. On the negative side, Newman asked what would happen if a significant part of knowledge were omitted, overlooked, ignored, not just by some individual but by the cultural community, and he contended that there would be three consequences. First, people in general would be ignorant of that area. Second, the rounded whole of human knowing would be mutilated. Third, the remaining parts would endeavour to round off the whole once more despite the omission of a part, and, as a result, they would suffer distortion from their effort to perform a function for which they were not designed. Such was Newman's theorem.[74]

One may argue, therefore, that the strengths of each model derive from the operations of consciousness insofar as they are fully distinguished and integrated; their respective weaknesses lie in the exaggeration of one operation and its dissociation from the others. This results not only in a

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[74] [Lonergan's note] For this theorem I am indebted to Fergal McGrath, *The Consecration of Learning, Lectures on Newman's* "Idea of a University", Dublin, 1962. (Quoted in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology and Man's Future", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 142.)

distortion of that function, but also in diminishment of (inter)religious consciousness as a whole.

The inadequacy of these different models rests on an inadequate theory of knowledge. The first three models tend to be based on the naïve realism of conceiving reality as "already-out-there-now".[75] This is an ocular version of knowledge in which "objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there, and that the real is what is out there now to be looked at".[76] Accordingly, the exclusivist, inclusivist and pluralist models of religious plurality can be presented visually as different hoops representing the different religions. When one predominates at the centre and pushes all the others to the edges we have exclusivism; when none predominate we have pluralism; when they overlap in part we have inclusivism. It is as though the relationship between the different religions is manipulated exteriorly, in the realm of what is "out there", quite apart from the consciousness of the religious subject "in here", as it were.

The acceptance model follows what I have called "Romanticism".[77] It takes its stand on the subjective side of the supposed "bridge" between the interior religious subject "in here" and the exterior other religions "out there". Despite its positive appreciation of the religious subjectivity evident in the different religions, it sustains itself with a romanticised version of the religious other

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[75] For my summary account of naïve realism, see Chapter Three, under the heading "Theories of Knowledge", pp. 142f. For Lonergan's account of the naïve realist see Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 214-215. For "already-out-there-now", see Lonergan, *Method*, 263.

[76] Lonergan, *Method*, 238. Incidentally, Knitter explicitly endorses an ocular vision of reality, using the analogy of telescopes as both enabling us to see further, and at the same time limiting our scope. See Knitter, *Theologies of Religions*, 11ff.

[77] For my account, see Chapter Three, section 5(f) "Romanticism", pp. 148f.

without any critical grounding in reality, conceding either an excess of familiarity or an excess of alterity.

Lonergan, in arguing for critical realism, proposes that "the real is the verified".[78] In his analysis, "Knowing … is not just seeing; it is experiencing, understanding, judging and believing."[79] It is knowledge by identity, where, in this context, the one making sense of religious plurality is a real knower who is a part of, and not apart from, the multi-religious reality concerned. There is no need to build a bridge between the subjectivity of the "in here" and the objective reality of the "out there". His position on knowledge is neatly encapsulated in the phrase: "genuine objectivity is the fruit of authentic subjectivity".[80]

Distorted by the inadequate theory of knowledge on which they are based, the four models of approaches to religious plurality are caricatures in that they emphasise some features at the expense of others. Lonergan's critically grounded intentionality analysis promises a way of keeping all four levels of intentional consciousness in proper relation in the interests of an integrated theology of religious plurality.

Moreover, these four models are static, fixed, rigid. They cannot adapt to changing circumstances as religions change and develop, but force the religions to adapt to their closed system. By contrast, Lonergan' method is

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[78] Lonergan, *Insight*, 230, 277. For my account, see Chapter Three, section 5(e) "Critical Realism", pp. 144ff.
[79] Lonergan, *Method*, 238.
[80] Lonergan, *Method*, 292.

dynamic, flexible, and adaptable. Also, it is open-ended, and can respond to emerging new developments.

(b) A Lonergan Approach

Clearly, religions are not commensurable at the level of beliefs, rituals, customs, and conduct. To give one example, religions can be variously atheistic (no belief in god), monotheistic (belief in only one god), di-theistic (belief in two gods), henotheistic (belief in one god out of several, especially for a particular social unit), and polytheistic (belief in several gods by the same social unit). These positions are mutually exclusive and contradictory. But for Lonergan, all such beliefs, along with their respective rituals, conduct and customs, pertain to the suprastructure. What he would have us attend to is the infrastructure.[81]

All religions are human constructs expressing ultimate meaning and value. That expression is mediated through the dynamics of consciousness, what I have termed *common ground*.[82] The ultimate source of meaning and value is manifest in the spiritual conversion that has transformed human consciousness to form a *common horizon*.[83] Because believers from all religions share this common ground and common horizon, the different religions are always in some sense commensurable. For example, the Islamic refusal of any image of God, and the Hindu predilection for multiple images of God, are well known. These positions are mutually exclusive and

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[81] Lonergan, "Prolegomena", 57. See also Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 113ff.
[82] This was the theme of Chapter Two.
[83] This was the theme of Chapter Three.

contradictory in the context of the suprastructure.[84] As a result of this mutual contradiction, the history of Muslim-Hindu relations has often been antagonistic. But what needs to be appreciated is that, on the level of infrastructure, the religious instinct behind "iconoclastic" Islam and "idolatrous" Hinduism shows a deep convergence. Muslims reject images of God in the name of God's inexpressible transcendence. For their part, Hindus, also in the name of the absolute transcendence of God, consider that their multiplication of images is the only adequate response to the inexhaustible transcendence of the One.[85] Thus, although their outward expressions are polar opposites, their most intimate intent is the same acknowledgment of divine transcendence.

Lonergan's approach to religious plurality is to get behind the various outward religious expressions to the dynamics of consciousness that produce them. It entails entering empathetically into the horizon within which these expressions have meaning and value. Each religion must be known and appreciated in all its historical concreteness. The only form of such critical investigation is the dynamic process of attentive experiencing, intelligent exploration, reflective judgment and responsible decision. The ideal is for all religious believers to be fully informed and appreciative of the meanings and values of their own and others' religions. Inspired and motivated by transforming love, this appreciation overflows into joint action on common values, which in turn affects one's own and others' religious identities, and their relations with all in the world they share. These two tasks, appropriating the richness of the

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[84] For Lonergan's detailed treatment of "suprastructure" and "infrastructure", see Lonergan, "Prolegomena", 57-59, 70-71.

[85] I came across this idea in reading twenty years ago, but have not been able to locate the source.

interreligious situation, and transforming the world through shared religious love, are ongoing and dynamic. The process discovers and actualises the religious meanings and values that are held in common, enhances relationships between religions, and identifies their differences. As mistakes and errors are remedied, different areas of development come to light. All this emerges from a method that is the self-correcting process of learning.[86]

As I have argued in this thesis, because of their common ground and common horizon, religions have many common meanings and values. However, because of their emergence in response to different founders and different foundational events at different times and places in history, and because of their different forms of mediating meaning and value at different stages in history in different societies and different cultures, the inevitable fact of their many differences must be faced.

Genetic differences are indicative of stages of growth. Perspectival and complementary differences are occasions of celebration and of growth through mutual affirmation and learning and through enhanced cooperation. Given that humans are subject to biases, there will also be dialectical differences which result in conflicts of a radical kind.[87] These may well occasion further understanding and mutual purification in the measure that the partners in dialogue discover the sources of error and acknowledge their blind

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[86] For the self-correcting process of learning, see Lonergan, *Method*, 159-160, 208-159, 303.

[87] Thus, while Lonergan is generally positive in his attitude towards other religions, his evaluation of them is cautious, as when he writes: "I am inclined to interpret the religions of mankind [*sic*], in their positive moment, as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit, though diversified by the many degrees of social and cultural development, and distorted by man's infidelity to the self-transcendence to which he aspires." (Lonergan, "Response of the Jesuit", 174.)

spots. Being confronted by incomprehension can motivate further learning of how better to express meanings and values that had previously been communicated inadequately. Despite the best efforts, differences may remain unresolved and provide the impetus to a conversion and reconciliation at ever deeper levels.

A Girardian analysis of what happens in situations of unresolved conflict would remind believers of the possibility of being victimised by those, whether within or outside their religious tradition, whose more limited horizons are threatened. By bearing the violence and not retaliating in kind, authentic believers give costly witness to the greater truth and love that has possessed them.

This brief outline of a theological approach to religious plurality based on Lonergan's intentionality analysis will now be filled out by considering his larger methodological framework.

(c) Methodological Framework

If my application of Lonergan's method to a theology of religious plurality is correct, it must be able to be instantiated in the eight functional specialties. Accordingly, I now present this framework of collaboration and its potential for interreligious relations. I will do this by naming the areas of speciality, and then identifying significant scholars working in such areas.

First, there are the four specialties designed to lead into a critical appreciation of the diversified world of religious living.

1. *Research:* The task of research is gathering, collating and presenting data. In the current situation of religious plurality, this is the mostly unsung work of both the secular and religious scholars who gather and publish texts, and record customs, rituals, and beliefs of the different religions. They are usually specialists in one or other of the religions. Working in Christian-Buddhist relations, there are, for instance, John B. Cobb Jnr,[88] James L. Fredericks,[89] and Aloysius Pieris.[90] Among the contributors in Christian-Hindu relations are Francis X. Clooney[91] and Bede Griffiths.[92] In Christian-Muslim relations there are Karen

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[88] John B Cobb Jr., *Beyond Dialogue: Toward a Mutual Transformation of Christianity and Buddhism* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1982); John B Cobb Jr., *Transforming Christianity and the World: A Way Beyond Absolutism and Relativism*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999); John B Cobb Jr. and Christopher Ives, eds., *The Emptying God: A Buddhist-Jewish-Christian Conversation*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991).

[89] James L. Fredericks, *Buddhists and Christians: Through Comparative Theology to Solidarity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2004).

[90] Aloysius Pieris SJ, *Fire and Water: Basic Issues in Asian Buddhism and Christianity*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); Aloysius Pieris SJ, "Interreligious Dialogue and Theology of Religions: An Asian Paradigm", in *Fire and Water: Basic Issues in Asian Buddhism and Christianity* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996); Aloysius Pieris SJ, *Love Meets Wisdom: A Christian Experience of Buddhism*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1988).

[91] Francis X. Clooney, "Dialogue not Monologue: Benedict XVI and Religious Pluralism", *Commonweal* CXXXII, no. 18 (2005); Francis X. Clooney, "Reading the World in Christ", in *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered: The Myth of a Pluralistic Theology of Religions*, ed. Gavin D'Costa, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); Clooney, *Theology after Vedanta*.

[92] Bede Griffiths, *The Cosmic Revelation: The Hindu Way to God* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1983); Bede Griffiths, *The Marriage of East and West* (London: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, 1982); Bede Griffiths, *A New Vision of Reality: Western Science, Eastern Mysticism and Christian Faith* (Springfield, IL: Templegate Publishers, 1989); Bede Griffiths, *Return to the Centre* (London: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, 1976); Paul J Griffiths, *An Apology for Apologetics: A Study in the Logic of Interreligious Dialogue*, ed. Paul F Knitter, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991); Paul J Griffiths, *Problems of Religious Diversity*, ed. Michael L Peterson, *Exploring the Philosophy of Religion* (Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 2001); Paul J Griffiths, ed., *Christianity Through Non-Christian Eyes*, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990).

Armstrong,[93] John L. Esposito,[94] Paul Jackson,[95] and Christian Troll,[96] and many more. There are also scholars who specialise in researching interreligious relations, such as Buhlmann[97] and the early Knitter.[98]

2.   *Interpretation:* The focus of interpretation is on understanding the connections between particular religions, and the role of religions individually and collectively in shaping culture and history. The works of Clooney, Fredericks, Griffiths flow over into this area. Another more recent author is Michael Barnes.[99]

3.   *History:* The intent of this speciality is to reflect on what is moving forward, and so to come to some judgment on what is happening. It identifies breakthroughs and advances in relations between religions. The early work of Jacques Dupuis on traditional sources for Christian

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[93] Karen Armstrong, *The Battle for God: Fundamentalism in Judaism, Christianity and Islam* (London: HarperCollins, 2001); Karen Armstrong, *Islam: A Short History*, *Universal History Series* (London: Phoenix Press, 2001); Karen Armstrong, *Muhammad: A Prophet For Our Time*, ed. James Atlas, *Eminent Lives* (New York: Atlas Books and HarperCollins, 2006).

[94] John L Esposito, *Islam: The Straight Path*, 2nd ed. (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991); John L Esposito, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?* (New York, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1992); John L Esposito, *Unholy War: Terror in the Name of Islam* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); John L Esposito, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Islam* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003).

[95] Paul Jackson SJ, *In Quest of God: Maneri's Second Collection of 150 Letters* (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2004).

[96] Christian W. Troll, *Muslims Ask, Christians Answer*, trans. David Marshall (Anand: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 2005); Christian W. Troll, ed., *The Akbar Mission and Miscellaneous Studies*, vol. 1, *Islam in India: Studies and Commentaries* (New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1982).

[97] Walbert Buhlmann, *All Have the Same God: An Encounter with the Peoples and Religions of Asia*, trans. B. Krokosz and A.P. Dolan (Slough: St Paul Publications, 1979); Walbert Buhlmann, *The Search for God: An Encounter with the Peoples and Religions of Asia*, trans. B. Krokosz and A.P. Dolan (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1979).

[98] Paul F Knitter, *No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Toward the World Religions* (London: SCM Press, 1985).

[99] Michael Barnes, *God: East and West* (London: SPCK, 1991); Michael Barnes, *Religions in Conversation: Christian Identity and Religious Pluralism* (London: SPCK, 1989); Michael Barnes, *Theology and the Dialogue of Religions*, ed. Colin Gunton and Daniel W. Hardy, vol. 8, *Cambridge Studies in Christian Doctrine* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).

engagement with others is an example,[100] while the work of Cardinal Cassidy is a remarkable summary of more recent developments.[101]

4. *Dialectic:* The task of dialectic is to identify conflicts and inconsistencies, trying to get to the root of divisions in the minds and hearts of the people who make up the traditions. Where politeness in interreligious relations is the norm, such robust encounter is barely possible, but believers can at least be bold in critiquing their own tradition, even if not that of others. The works of Amaladoss[102] and D'Costa[103] are good examples. Troll's work is an example of engaging the mindset of Muslims which affects their receptivity to the Christian message.[104] Cornille's analysis of the attitudes that make dialogue possible and render it impossible is another example.[105]

The upwards theoretical exploration now switches to a personally committed and practical downwards movement. It leads to action in accord with the religious meanings and values that are held in common. Paul Knitter merits special mention in this regard. His urgent appeal on behalf of the suffering

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[100] I refer in particular to Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*.

[101] (Cardinal) Edward Idris Cassidy, *Rediscovering Vatican II. Vol 1, Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue: Unitatis Redintegratio, Nostra Aetate*, 8 vols. (New York; Mahwah NJ: Paulist Press, 2005).

[102] Michael Amaladoss, *Beyond Inculturation: Can the Many Be One?* (Delhi: ISPCK, 1998); Michael Amaladoss, *Faith, Culture and Interreligious Dialogue*, vol. 2, *Ideas for Action* (New Delhi: Indian Social Institute, 1998); Michael Amaladoss, *Making All Things New: Dialogue, Pluralism and Evangelization in Asia* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990); Michael Amaladoss, *Walking Together: The Practice of Inter-Religious Dialogue*, *Jesuit Theological Forum Reflections* (Anand, Gujrat: Gujarat Sahitya Prakash, 1992).

[103] Gavin D'Costa, *The Meeting of Religions and the Trinity* (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 2000); D'Costa, ed., *Christian Uniqueness Reconsidered*.

[104] Troll, *Muslims Ask, Christians Answer*.

[105] See Catherine Cornille, *The Im-Possibility of Interreligious Dialogue* (New York: Herder & Herder, Crossroad Publishing, 2008).

poor of the world and pressing ecological issues accords with this practical and personally committed priority.[106]

5. *Foundations:* Foundations concern the newly established horizon. In the present situation of religious plurality, it is that vaster horizon of interreligious meaning and value in which authentic believers operate. For example, the writings of Raimon Panikkar go beyond the boundaries of traditional frontiers and explore new horizons of thought.[107]

6. *Doctrines:* Doctrines focus on judgments of fact and value. In the context of religious plurality, it identifies the religious meanings and values that are held in common, as well as the points where differences are clear. One of the roles of the Catholic magisterium is to identify the boundaries of Catholic theology, within which further exploration is encouraged, and beyond which Christian authenticity is compromised.[108]

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[106] I refer in particular to Knitter, *One Earth Many Religions: Multifaith Dialogue and Global Responsibility*. However, while Knitter's prioritising and practice is exemplary, I find some of his theorising inadequate, such that he merits a curiously inverse compliment. Jesus instructed the people: "The scribes and the Pharisees sit on Moses' seat; therefore, do whatever they teach you and follow it; but do not do as they do, for they do not practise what they teach." (Mt 23:2-3) I would say: "Do as Knitter does, follow his exemplary personal and motivational praxis, but take a critical approach to the theory that he teaches."

[107] Panikkar, *The Intra-Religious Dialogue*; Raimon Panikkar, *Myth, Faith and Hermeneutics: Cross-Cultural Studies* (New York, Ramsey, Toronto: Paulist Press, 1979); Raimon Panikkar, *The Silence of God: The Answer of the Buddha*, ed. Paul F. Knitter, trans. Robert R. Barr, *Faith Meets Faith Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1989); Raimon Panikkar, *The Unknown Christ of Hinduism* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1964); Panikkar, *The Cosmotheandric Experience*; Raimundo Panikkar, *The Trinity and the Religious Experience of Man* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1973).

[108] I would note especially the following: Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Dominus Iesus*; International Theological Commission, *Christianity and the World Religions* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1997); John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio*.

7. *Systematics:* The concern of systematics is understanding key doctrines. In working toward a comprehensive account of religious plurality, this specialty seeks to express the connections between the religions at their most basic level. Jacques Dupuis argues that the "new question" of our age is "what positive meaning the religious traditions themselves have in God's single overall plan of salvation".[109] His later works are an attempt to answer that question within an authentic Christian framework.

8. *Communications:* Here, the concern is to communicate and apply the fresh understanding that has emerged. In a situation of religious plurality, this specialty employs all the carriers of meaning to make the shared religious meanings and values known to contemporaries. It is mostly the work of ordinary believers, motivated by shared religious concerns, cooperating in the daily affairs of life. But specialists (theologians, preachers, and teachers) have their respective roles in sharing what they have learned from interreligious relations, and so in promoting dialogue in all its forms. Particularly worthy of mention is Pope John Paul II's grasp of the impact of the symbolic gesture, for example, his visit to the Great Synagogue of Rome on 13 April 1986, the first time in many centuries that a pope had entered a synagogue, and his visit to the Umayyad Mosque in Damascus on 6 May 2001, the first time a pope had entered a mosque.

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[109] Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions*, 4.

The above schema is indicative only. It is not intended to be so specific that the work of those referred to is to be categorised in a restrictive, specialist fashion. There are many other scholars, particularly from Asia, that could be mentioned in each specialty. There are also those writing in other languages, and from familiarity with other religions. Even with regard to those mentioned, I would add that the quality of their work varies according to whether it is focused on the end proper to a particular specialty or peripheral to it, and also whether it strays into other specialties. Despite its incompleteness, this schematic outline is an indication of the vast specialised fields involved in the theological response to the developing situation of religious relations and how they can be harnessed in this framework of collaboration.

Lonergan gives four reasons for distinguishing these eight functional specialties: they specify different tasks; they relate the varying activities; they curb the totalitarian ambitions of the practitioners of these activities; and they limit responsibilities to a manageable field of enquiry.[110] While accepting the validity of his observations, within the interreligious context we might add the following ten advantages:

First, this methodological framework works to integrate the differing models of exclusivism, inclusivism, pluralism, and acceptance into a much larger context of collaboration. It benefits from their strengths, overcomes their limitations, and sets them on a firm philosophical and theological foundation.

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[110] Lonergan, *Method*, 136-138.

Secondly, this method is personal. It respects the integrity of individual believers and their religions. It does not impose on them an arbitrary method, but, by making room for each contribution, encourages a personal and communal growth beyond present achievements.

Thirdly, this method deals with the concrete and the particular. It engages each religion on its own terms, in all its particularity, concreteness and historicity. It does not allow for unwarranted assumptions, but demands solid intellectual investigation based on empirical evidence.

Fourthly, it encourages positive expectations. Because it conceives the relations between the religions to be functional rather than ideological or apologetic, believers can expect to find positive meanings and values in other religions. It is less a matter of right and wrong, good and bad (though that does apply to dialectical differences), but more a matter of the self-commitment of the fourth-level question: "What concern is that to me?"

Fifthly, such a method encourages collaboration. Each religion has its own distinctive contribution to make for the benefit of all and for their joint service to the world.

Sixthly, this method suggests different strategies for building relations between different types of religions, and between religions of the same type. It recognises the specific giftedness of each type, and complements each specific contribution with the support and witness of all.

Seventhly, this method suggests appropriate priorities and strategies in accord with the relation between the four forms of interreligious relations as treated earlier. If the need is to overcome mutual ignorance, then the appropriate strategy is to provide lived experience and personal encounters that will provoke questions for learning. If the need is to change the social situation, then the appropriate strategy is to promote those common religious values that will inspire and motivate joint action. The touchstone is always concrete (inter)religious living, but openness to new spiritual-religious experience ensures that believers are not confined to present achievements nor condemned to repeat past failures.

Eighthly, this method encourages patience, since it is not detached from the passage of time nor from the course of history. When embittered conflicts have taken shape over centuries, it will take time to salve the bitterness by unravelling the truth of accusations and counter-accusations, and identify the real roots of the conflict and distorted perceptions of the other. The possibilities of reconciliation cannot escape the demands of patience.

Ninthly, this method requires its own humility. The reconciliation of differing religions is not something to be produced by human planning and control alone. Each religion seeks to serve God as the loving source and end of all, working through the Providence guiding human history. The humanly theological contribution is to assist in the clarification, application and

promotion of religious meanings and values, and so to work for historical forms of reconciliation and collaboration.[111]

Tenthly, this method embraces all the carriers of meaning, not just theological linguistic expressions alone. It includes an appreciation of the symbolic carriers of meaning for the communication of feeling, for example, music, art, song, poetry, and dance.[112] Likewise, intersubjectivity, the fellow feeling that bonds us to others in elemental ways, has its proper part to play as the basis for genuine interpersonal relations founded on the objective knowledge of self and other. Most important of all is incarnate meaning—the faith, hope and love of a religion embodied in believers, without which any theology would be paper-thin.

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter, by first treating the variety of differences, paved the way for a consideration of structural relations between different religions. This meant identifying three different types of religion, and different religions of the same type, based on the first three ways in which consciousness operates and on its conscious and intentional dimensions.

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[111] Lonergan writes: "The apologist's task is neither to produce in others nor to justify for them God's gift of his love. Only God can give that gift, and the gift itself is self-justifying. People in love have not reasoned themselves into being in love. The apologist's task is to aid others in integrating God's gift with the rest of their living." (Lonergan, *Method*, 123.)

[112] I mentioned earlier John Paul II's ability to use symbolic gestures (his visits to synagogue and mosque). Cassidy mentions another initiative of John Paul II, the concert held in the Vatican City on 7 of April 1994 to commemorate the *Shoah,* and twice mentions the concert held on 17 January 2004 for reconciliation among Jews, Christians and Muslims. See Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 211, 231, 257.

With specific reference to the fourth way in which consciousness operates, I then treated personal relations between believers from different religions in terms of dialogue. The different forms of religious dialogue were correlated with the dynamics of consciousness, and their content further elaborated in terms of faith, hope and love.

This led to a critique of the four standard approaches to a theology of religious plurality in terms of an emphasis on one or other of the four ways in which consciousness works. Consequently, I proposed an alternative approach which would be methodologically attuned to every level of conscious intentionality. I concluded by sketching the components and the benefits of such a collaborative method.

In all of this, Lonergan's intentionality analysis and the method developed from it have been the fundamental frame of reference. In the following chapter, I will apply this same reference to selected themes in Christian theology.

CHAPTER SIX: CHRISTIAN MEANING AND VALUE

In Chapter Four I treated religion in a generic manner. Chapter Five dealt with relations between different religions. In this chapter I treat Christianity and a selection of its key theological themes. Here, as throughout this investigation, I will be calling on Lonergan's intentionality analysis to illuminate the specific area of our concern. This will enable a comparison and contrast between Christianity and other religions. The chapter will be divided according to the following main headings:

1. Commonalities;

2. The Uniqueness of Christianity;

3. The Stages of Meaning;

4. Selected Themes in Christian Theology;

5. *Dominus Iesus* and Other Religions.

1. Commonalities

I begin with what Christianity has in common with all religions—thereby applying what was presented in the previous chapters.

Common to all people are the bodily, psychic, intellectual, and moral dimensions of life. As previously argued in Chapters Two and Three, here lies the "common ground" for the meeting of all human beings of intelligence and good will.[1]

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[1] A New Testament account of how all people have knowledge of God and the obligations this imposes is found in Rom 1:19ff.

Common to all "spiritual" people (in the precise sense explained) is a sense of an ultimate Truth and Goodness that has summoned us to fuller living. Whether or not that summons is dramatically experienced or almost imperceptible in grasping us, the Unknown Mystery radically transforms those so called, affecting all their attitudes and actions. As such, it forms the "common horizon" within which they may meet and engage with each other and with the world, as argued in Chapter Four.

Common to all "religious" people (in the precise sense explained) are their various attempts to name this ultimate reality, to discover its demands, and to live accordingly. This goes beyond spiritual experience alone, for experience is awareness only, and knowledge is a combination of experiencing, understand and judging (and believing).[2] It is the personal and communal appropriation of and witness to that Ultimate Mystery in scriptures, doctrines, liturgies, theologies and moral directives. This expressed response, the outward expression making the inner experience explicit, constitutes the specific historical reality of the particular religions.

Given this provenance as an informed response to divine summons, all religions must contain some degree of revelation. Approaching this point, Lonergan writes:

> … a divine revelation is God's entry and his taking part in man's [*sic*] making of man. It is God's claim to have a say in the aims and

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[2] I paraphrase Lonergan, *Method*, 106, 238.

purposes, the direction and development of human lives, human societies, human cultures, human history.[3]

Since Lonergan does not refer to any particular society, culture, or history, his words presume that revelation may occur in any or all of these social, cultural and historical contexts. He does, however, offer a more qualified comment:

> The divine initiative is not just creation. It is not just God's gift of his love. There is a personal entrance of God himself into history, a communication of God to his people, the advent of God's word into the world of religious expression. Such was the religion of Israel. Such has been Christianity. Then not only the inner word that is God's gift of his love but also the outer word of the religious tradition come from God.[4]

Crowe does not hesitate to extend his mentor's remarks to a universal application.[5] Though Lonergan makes specific reference to Israel and Christianity, what he affirms is applicable to other religions. And so Crowe argues that the characterisation of "a personal entrance of God into history, a communication of God to his people, the advent of God's word into the world of religious expression" could also apply to Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam—in fact, to all other religions.

Crowe finds confirmation of this universalist position in the sentence from *Method* which runs: "God's gift of his love has its proper counterpart in the revelation events in which God discloses to a particular people or to all mankind [*sic*] the completeness of his love for them."[6] Clearly, the phrase "a particular people" is generic, and could refer to any particular people—

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[3] Lonergan, "New Context", 62.
[4] Lonergan, *Method*, 119.
[5] Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 131.
[6] Lonergan, *Method*, 283. Cited in Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 131.

Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, and so on. Crowe himself comments on Lonergan's statement:

> … 'all mankind' [*sic*] could be reached either through particular revelations to each religion, or through one revelation made to one religion but meant for the whole human race. As far as these statements go we might conclude either to one word of God spoken for everyone, or to various words of God spoken, one for Judaism, another for Islam, another for Hinduism, and so on.[7]

But Lonergan himself is usually cautious in his references to other religions. He sometimes refers to "high" religions (leaving open the question of other presumably "lower" religions),[8] and makes careful qualifications. For example:

> So I am inclined to interpret the religions of mankind [*sic*], in their positive moment, as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit, though diversified by the many degrees of social and cultural development, and distorted by man's infidelity to the self-transcendence to which he aspires.[9]

Nonetheless, Lonergan's intent is clearly universalist. Though he assumes that God's gift of love is basic to Christians, he often invokes Heiler's seven characteristics of religion as being in love without restriction as offering "a reason for thinking that the same may be said of religious involvement in all the world religions".[10] Crowe draws attention to the questions with which Lonergan concludes his remarks on religions:

> But may not one extend this view to the more elementary forms of religion? Can one not discern in them the harvest of the Spirit that is love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, fidelity, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22-23)?[11]

In other words, the unstinting character of God's self-giving love means that all people are offered sufficient grace for salvation, even if a discerning

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[7] Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 131.
[8] Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 150, 151; Lonergan, "Man's Future", 146.
[9] Lonergan, "Response of the Jesuit", 174.
[10] Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs", 40. [italics mine]
[11] Lonergan, "Faith and Beliefs", 42. Cited in Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 124.

appreciation of God's providential guidance of human history remains necessary to sift the genuine word of revelation from bias, distortion and error. Hence, Lonergan's comment:

> This doctrine is relevant to religious studies; it makes them studies of the manifold ways God's grace comes to men [*sic*] and operates as the seed that falls on rocks, or amidst thorns or by the wayside or on good ground to bring forth fruit thirty or sixty or a hundred fold.[12]

By way of summary, common to all people of intelligence and good will is what Lonergan termed "the infrastructure".[13] This is the normative dynamics of consciousness itself. Further, common to all spiritual people is that infrastructure brought to fulfilment through the interior experience of divine grace. Finally, common to all religious people only is what may be termed "the suprastructure". The process of constructing this is the same in all religions as it follows the same dynamics of spiritually converted consciousness to which we have referred, but its design, form or "content", so to speak, will vary according to the ways in which the outer word of revelation expresses the inner word of grace.

Whereas the inner word or interior gift is immediate, the outer word of religion is mediated by the believers themselves, as, for instance, when God inspires the founders, prophets, sages and saints and the followers of the various religions to interpret and proclaim the deep significance of providential events as they occur in different contexts, societies, places and times.

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[12] Lonergan, "Man's Future", 139.
[13] For Lonergan's detailed treatment of "suprastructure" and "infrastructure", see Lonergan, "Prolegomena", 57-59, 70-71.

This mediation of the outer word cannot escape human limitations, for human words inadequately express the inexpressible. Not only must different stages in the capacity to express meaning be recognised, but possible distortions of religious meaning, both in the original reception and throughout the subsequent transmission, must also be acknowledged. A religious tradition cannot but be affected by the presence, absence and degrees of the various conversions, both in the originating religious figures themselves, and in the believers that follow them. Still, the process of reception of revelation and its historical transmission is a feature common to all religions. What, then, is unique to Christianity?

2. The Uniqueness of Christianity

To ask what is specific to Christian faith is not to find the answer in terms of God's interior gift of grace, for God's saving action embraces all. Neither may we seek the answer in terms of revelation, for, despite differences in content and expression, all religions claim as much. Rather, what is specific to Christians is the specific medium through which revelation occurs. On this point, Lonergan is explicit: "What distinguishes the Christian, then, is not God's grace, which he [*sic*] shares with others, but the mediation of God's grace through Jesus Christ our Lord".[14] In other words, what is specific to Christianity is its particular suprastructure, the outer word of revelation that God speaks and acts through his Word and Son, Jesus Christ. As previously mentioned, Lonergan allows for this personal divine self-revelation when he observes that the world of religious expression is not just the objectification of

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[14] Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 156.

the gift of God's love, but "in a privileged area it also is specific meaning, the word of God himself".[15] Here, we touch on the uniqueness of what in the language of Christian faith is termed the Incarnation. The Word of God is incarnate in Jesus Christ.

In learning and communicating the height and breadth and depth of God's self-expression in the Word incarnate in the earthly career of Jesus of Nazareth—who he is, what he stands for, what he calls to—we need to avail of the whole range of carriers of meaning.[16] His meaning is intersubjective. It is conveyed through his personal relations with people of all kinds—the just and sinners; men, women and children; Jews and Gentiles; his disciples and members of his own family, and so on. His meaning is symbolic in his gestures of healing and forgiveness, and the manner in which he employs familiar realities such as water, bread and wine as symbolic of other and higher realities. His meaning is artistic in devising startling parables that challenge the status quo and bring about shifts of consciousness. Clearly, the meaning of his identity and mission is linguistic through his teaching and preaching. Finally, his meaning is incarnate in his whole life, culminating in his passion, death, resurrection.

The meaning of Christ is extended into history through those who came to be called "Christians"—his disciples and followers. They make up the Church which understands itself as "the Body of Christ". All four functions of meaning are involved:

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[15] Lonergan, *Method*, 119.
[16] For my treatment, see Chapter Three, section 3(b) "Carriers of Meaning", pp. 118ff.

Christianity … is mediated by meaning in its communicative function inasmuch as it is preached. It is mediated by meaning in its cognitive function inasmuch as it is believed. It is mediated by meaning in its constitutive function inasmuch as it is a way of life that is lived. It is mediated by meaning in its effective function inasmuch as its precepts are put into practice.[17]

The earliest Christian witnesses and believers gave expression to the faith of their communities in the writings of the New Testament. Further reflection on the Scriptures gave rise to the Church's doctrines as it sought to answer questions that arose in the course of its history and to preserve the integrity of Christian faith. Lonergan sums up this organic connection between Christ and Christianity with the following words: "In the Christian, accordingly, God's gift of his love is a love that is in Christ Jesus. From this fact flow the social, historical, doctrinal aspects of Christianity."[18]

Admittedly, the historical communication of the meaning of Christ was, and still is, subject to all the vagaries of contexts and conflicts within the history of Christian faith. As is the case with all other religious traditions, the Christian tradition is vulnerable to the possible distortions of human waywardness. However, faith rests on the ultimate guarantee of Christ's promise of his continuing presence and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. The appropriate response is a Spirit-inspired, ever deeper conversion to him, and an ever deeper participation in the Church and its mission.

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[17] Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 244.
[18] Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 156.

Lonergan highlights the interpersonal dimension that is specific to Christian faith, that is, of Christ's relationship with each believer and with the community gathered in his name:

> …religious conversion, if it is Christian, is not just a state of mind and heart. Essential to it is an intersubjective, interpersonal component. Besides the gift of the Spirit within, there is the outward encounter with Christian witness. That witness testifies that of old in many ways God has spoken to us through the prophets but in this latest age through his Son (Heb 1:2).[19]

He further emphasises the mediating role of Christ in the life of the Church, while once again remarking on this "essential … intersubjective, interpersonal component" in relation to both God's self-revealing action and the Christian response to it:

> [T]he Christian religion … knows God not only through the grace in its heart but also through the revelation of God's love in Christ Jesus and the witness to that revelation down through the ages of the Church. Christian love of God is not just a state of mind and heart; essential to it is the intersubjective, interpersonal component in which God reveals his love and asks ours in return.[20]

These concise formulations of the intersubjective relations between Christ and his followers must not be taken as bypassing the role of the Holy Spirit in this relational context. Lonergan seems to take for granted that the Holy Spirit alone is associated with "the inner word" of transforming love at the heart of all religions, and so he accounts for the uniqueness of Christianity only in reference to "the outer word" of Christ. On the other hand, as a number of commentators have remarked, the gift of the Spirit is of essential importance within Christianity.[21]

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[19] Lonergan, *Method*, 327.

[20] Lonergan, "Doctrinal Pluralism", 83.

[21] For example, Crowe highlights the missing role of the Holy Spirit. See Crowe, "Son and Spirit"; Crowe, "Son of God"..

The activity of the Spirit is implied in all four functions of meaning named above. The Spirit *constitutes* Jesus as the incarnate Word of God (Lk 1:35), and the Christian community as his witnesses (Acts 1:8). After the resurrection, Christ breathes the Spirit on his disciples to make them *effective* witnesses to the world (Jn 20:22-23). The Spirit inspires Jesus' actions and teaching (Mt 4:1; Lk 4:1) and reveals their *cognitive* significance to his disciples and to later believers (Jn 14:17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:13). By *communicating* his Spirit to his disciples, Christ unites Christians with him and with each other (1 Cor 6:17; 12:13; Eph 4:4). I defer a more detailed treatment of the interrelationship between the Spirit and Jesus to my consideration of the visible and invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit.

3. The Stages of Meaning

While the Spirit-inspired mediation of God's love in Jesus Christ distinguishes Christianity from other religions, Christian appropriation of this mystery has developed over time. Lonergan's account of four stages of meaning provides a framework for tracing that development. These stages of meaning are at once the basis for identifying similar developments in other religions, and—a crucial point in the context of my thesis—they help set the scene for the present historical moment that calls for new relations between Christians and other believers, and between believers from other religions.

The first, linguistic stage is the preaching, teaching, deeds, suffering and death of Jesus Christ—especially as these are recalled and pondered over in the light of the resurrection event and their meaning proclaimed to others. It

includes also the preaching, teaching and deeds of the apostles and the early followers of "the way" (Acts 9:2; 18:25, 26; 19:9, 23; 24:14) as they told of their association with Jesus and his continuing presence through the Spirit. What had originally been spoken and done within the sight and hearing of contemporary witnesses receded into the past with the passing of each decade. But the impact of those words and deeds was kept alive in the memories of the communities of faith. The significance of what had been once said and done was related to others. There was a telling and retelling, designed to instruct and confirm the faith of new generations of believers as they gathered for the Eucharist and experienced the trials and temptations of living Christian lives in a pagan world. This transmission of the original message was assisted by the composition of hymns in the Aramaic, Hebrew, Greek, Latin, Syriac and other languages of the time, throughout the Empire and beyond, which captured that meaning in rhyme and rhythm. Such was the oral tradition of the first decades of Christianity. It has continued down through the ages wherever Christians have gathered to proclaim the Word and celebrate the Eucharist.

The second, literate stage followed. It is found in the writings of the apostles, elders, teachers, bishops, priests, philosophers and patristic authors of the first centuries of the Christian era.[22] Their purposes were many: sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ, informing others, encouraging them, instructing them, and correcting the wayward. Of this literary profusion of the apostolic

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[22] For Lonergan's analysis of these early Christian writings, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea: The Dialectical Development of Trinitarian Theology (Pars Dogmatica of De Deo Trino, Gregorian University Press, 1964)*, trans. Conn O'Donovan (London: Darton, Longman & Todd, 1976).

era, only the twenty-seven documents of the New Testament were authoritatively confirmed as together comprising the authentic canonical testimony to Christ. Other Christian writings of that era reflect the issues, struggles and debates of that time, and remain an important source of information on the contemporary culture and philosophy.

Engaging with written texts enabled a more sustained analysis and deeper understanding of the Christ-event. Comparison of different writings brought to light inconsistencies in expression in the different authors. Also, anthropomorphisms that were acceptable in the common sense mode of discourse were found incompatible with the more theoretical statements of literature. Debate on such issues resulted in a more precise analysis of Christian thought. The prime examples are the conciliar definitions to be treated below.

Like the oral tradition, the written tradition also continues into the present. Scholars, preachers, teachers, bishops, popes and theologians publish their respective pastoral and scholarly reflections on Jesus Christ and his continuing relevance to faith and the moral life as history unfolds. One authoritative instance of the written tradition is the magisterium of the Church with its responsibility of guarding the authentic tradition and protecting it from error.

The third, logical stage of meaning occurs in the effort to shape this literary inheritance into a system of thought with its own inherent logic and

comprehensive world view. Lonergan detects some five steps in this systematising project:

> [P]rincipally it was in the medieval period that there was undertaken the systematic and collaborative task of reconciling all that had been handed down by the church from the past. A first step was Abelard's *Sic et Non*, in which one hundred and fifty-eight propositions were both proved and disproved by arguments drawn from scripture, the fathers, the councils, and reason. In a second step Gilbert of Porreta used Abelard to define the existence of a question; in this fashion Abelard's *Non* became *Videtur quod non* and his *Sic* became *Sed contra est.* To these were added a general response, in which principles of solution were set forth, and then particular responses to the arguments advanced on either side. A third step was the composition of books of sentences that collected and classified relevant passages from scripture and tradition. A fourth step was the commentaries on books of sentences, in which the technique of the question was employed to reconcile or eliminate contrary views. A fifth step was to obtain a conceptual system that would enable theologians to give coherent solution to all the questions they raised; and this coherence was sought partly by adopting and partly by adapting the Aristotelian corpus.[23]

The peak achievement of the logical stage of Christian theology can be recognised in the *Summae* of the Scholastics, particularly in the *Summa Theologica* of Thomas Aquinas. Though Lonergan acknowledges this as "a monumental achievement",[24] he is aware of the defects of the medieval scholastic system. The Aristotelian logic and metaphysics on which the Scholastics built lacked grounding in historical data.[25] As a result, their achievements were overshadowed by the speculative disputes that followed. Though the scholastic system endured as the bastion of Catholic thought for centuries, it was destined to collapse under the dual achievements of modern science and modern historicity.

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[23] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality: The Coherence of Christian Truth", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 245.
[24] Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality", 245.
[25] Lonergan, "Unity and Plurality", 246.

The fourth stage of meaning is methodical. The ideal of a single, overarching system has yielded to "system on the move".[26] Grounded in historical evidence, reflection on the Christian message advances from one system to the next in accord with the dynamism of intelligence. After the high theological achievement of the Scholastics, theology, in Lonergan's judgment, began to stagnate from the year 1680, for, as he writes,

> Then it was that Herbert Butterfield placed the origins of modern science, then that Paul Hazard placed the beginning of the Enlightenment, then that Yves Congar placed the beginning of dogmatic theology.[27]

Thereafter, modern science and modern humanities flourished, while theology retreated, creating an ever widening gap between the disciplines. It is not exaggerated to suggest that a new collaborative form of theology begins with Lonergan's February 1965 breakthrough and his elaboration of the eight functional specialties of theology. His method is based on a personal appropriation of the dynamics of consciousness. Since, as we have extensively argued, such dynamics are common to all fields of exploration, such a method promises a rapprochement not only between religions, but also between religion and science.

Though these four stages of meaning affect the articulation of Christian dogmas, this does not mean that their permanence is undermined. For that permanence resides in the truth that is not attainable by human reason alone, but that has been revealed by God. But permanence so understood is not incompatible with the historicity of the articulation of Christian truth as the

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[26] Lonergan, "Healing", 104.
[27] Lonergan, "New Context", 55.

expression of faith moves through the stages of meaning[28]—as I will now illustrate in the section following.

4. Selected Themes in Christian Theology

Since I cannot here attempt a full history of Christian theology, I will limit myself to a selection of key themes. The principle of selection is the degree of relationship of these themes to what most distinguishes Christianity, namely, mediation through the mystery of Christ himself.

(a) Christology

From the beginning, Christians experienced the salvific impact of Jesus Christ in their lives, and sought to express its meaning. The historical event of Jesus is what makes Christianity distinct from all other religions. Lonergan quotes Professor Moule approvingly:

> At no point within the New Testament is there any evidence that the Christians stood for an original philosophy of life or an original ethic. Their sole function is to bear witness to what they claim as an event—the raising of Jesus from among the dead.[29]

In effect, they had repeatedly to ask the question, "Who do you say that I am?" (Mt 16:15; Mk 8:29; Lk 9:20; and variant, Jn 1:20). Questions turning on the identity, nature and role of Christ gave rise to Christology, as Christian intelligence moved from the common sense mode of expression of scripture to the theoretical discourse of theology. The early expressions of faith in Christ

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[28] See "The Permanence of Dogmas" and "The Historicity of Dogmas" in Lonergan, *Method*, 320-326.
[29] [Lonergan's note: C.F.D. Moule, *The Phenomenon of the New Testament*, London, 1967, p. 14] Cited in Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 156.

were symbolic, affective, and designed for communication. In fact, this resulted in different Christologies, as evidenced in the different titles for Christ found in the New Testament itself.[30] But the discrepancies in these various expressions, each appealing to the emerging scripture and notable authorities, caused conflicts. It led to the discovery of the insufficiency of symbolic and allegorical interpretations, and the need for something more if the unity of faith was to be maintained. For the authenticity of that faith needed precise answers to specific questions about Jesus' role and identity.

Lonergan documents the main lines of what occurred in *The Way to Nicea,*[31] and in several related articles.[32] For present purposes, I will indicate the correlation between the stages of Christological development with the fourfold operations of consciousness.

An early attempt to express the identity of Jesus was that of the Adoptionists, who held that Jesus was only a man adopted by God. At the other extreme were the Sabellians and Patripassians who held that the Son and the Father were one and the same without distinction.[33] Tertullian, in refuting both these

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[30] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 248-250.

[31] Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea.*

[32] Brief summaries are found in Lonergan, "Christology Today"; Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 244-253; Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Origins of Christian Realism (1961)", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 247-269. More extended summaries are found in "The Origins of Christian Realism (1961)", in *Philosophical and Theological Paper , 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996); Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 247-69.

[33] For a detailed account, see Section IV "Adoptionists, Patripassians, Sabellians" and Section V "Subordinationism" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea,* 36-39, 40-42; Lonergan, "Theology as Christian

positions, argued that the Father and the Son were both God, basically because the Son emerged from the Father and "is made of the right stuff, he is made of the divine stuff".[34] Accordingly, since Jesus "emerged" from the Father at the time of his being created, he is not eternal. Similarly, the Father is the "whole" of God, but the Son is only a "part" of God, and hence subordinate to the Father. However, for Tertullian these two qualifications do not affect the Son's divine status: against the Adoptionists, Tertullian maintained the divinity of Jesus—because he is made of the same "divine stuff" as the Father. Against the Sabellians and Patripassions, Tertullian saw Jesus as distinct from the Father in his redemptive mission.

Tertullian's arguments followed from his Stoic way of thinking of all reality in material terms. Even if the divine material is different from earthly matter, it is still a material reality in some way. And if Jesus is to be confessed as Son of God, he must emerge from and be part of that divine "matter".

But a new stage of meaning emerged with Origen, a contemporary of Tertullian. He came up with an alternative solution to the twofold problem posed by the Adoptionists and the Sabellians/Patripassians.[35] Unlike Tertullian, Origen thought of God in strictly immaterial terms. However, he conceived of the Son in terms of the Platonic Idea in that the Son is the perfect exemplar of the Father's truth, wisdom, goodness and divinity. As such, the Son participates in the divine attributes, but in a derivative fashion.

Phenomenon", 248-250. For a detailed account of Tertullian's position, see Section VI "Of One Substance" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, 43-55.

[34] Lonergan, "Philosophy and the Religious Phenomenon", 255.

[35] For a detailed account, see Section VII "The Image of Goodness Itself" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, 43-55.

While Origen advanced beyond the organic materiality of Tertullian, the implications of his expression are still clearly subordinationist. His achievement and its defects are the product of the Middle Platonism of his time, in which the real is identified with the ideal, the thought, the conceived idea.

Tertullian's and Origen's expressions involved subordination of the Son to the Father. The Arians took this to its logical conclusion by asserting that the Son was a creature.[36] In opposition to this innovation, Athanasius defended his principle: *Eadem de Filio quae de Patre dicuntur excepto Patris nomine*[37]— "Whatever is said of the Father is also to be said of the Son, except the name of the Father". The divinity of Jesus was a truth to be believed, "not on the level of experience or on the level of understanding, but on the level of judgment".[38]

For Tertullian the real was a material body, and for Origen the real was the Platonic idea; but, for Athanasius, the real is what is believed and known by a true affirmation, a matter of judgment. It was this dogmatic realism that prevailed at the Council of Nicea (325 CE).[39]

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[36] For a detailed account see, Section VIII "The Arians and Semi-Arians" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, 68-87.

[37] [Lonergan's note: Athanasius, *Orat. III c. Arianos,* 4; *MG* 26; 329 A.] Cited in Lonergan, *Method*, 277, 307.

[38] Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 261.

[39] For a detailed account, see Section XI "*Homoousion*, Consubstantial" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, 88-104.

Even this brief summary clearly indicates how the appropriation of successive levels of consciousness enabled a more accurate theoretical knowledge of Christ. Lonergan spells this out:

> … I distinguished three components in human knowing: experiencing, understanding, and judging. As you compare Tertullian, Origen, and Athanasius or the Council of Nicea, you find (1) that Tertullian's thought is on *the level of experience*: the material is what we experience, what we put our hands on, what bears our weight—the sure and firm-set earth on which I tread, as Macbeth remarked, quaking with his fears; (2) on *the second level there is understanding*, and to understanding correspond the Ideas—the Platonist-idealist type of thinking, and so Origen's position; and (3) there is the level of statement: making the same statements about Father, Son, and Spirit, saying that Father, Son and Spirit are God in the same sense—and they are in the same sense because the same things are true about all three—is thinking of God on *the level of judgment*, of affirmation.[40] [italics mine]

Once the divinity of Christ was affirmed, further questions arose about his humanity, and the relation between them. These were dealt with by the same process of testing positions, and by proceeding to making judgments in clearly expressed statements. The formulation of Christological truth culminated in the definitions of two persons in one nature at the Council of Chalcedon (451 CE).[41]

However, Lonergan cautions that the Greek terms for person and nature used in these early Christological debates do not have a precise technical meaning. They were, rather, heuristic devices to name the distinct realities of Father and Son and their common divinity.[42] It was left to the mediaeval Scholastics to work out technical definitions in their metaphysical system.

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[40] Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 260-261. For a detailed analysis of the process, see Section X "The Structure of the Ante-Nicene Movement" in Lonergan, *The Way to Nicea*, 105-137.

[41] For a brief summary, see Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 262-266.

[42] See Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 251.

But this brings us to the contemporary problem. The metaphysical language of the Scholastics does not speak to the people of today, whose sensibilities are attuned to existentialist, phenomenological, psychological, and especially personalist forms of expression. Consequently, Lonergan readily admits that "the meaning of the term 'person' at Chalcedon is not what commonly is understood by the term today, and theologians at least have to take that fact into account". [43]

Lonergan's response to this challenge is indicated in the two essays, *The Origins of Christian Realism*[44] and (in more detail) *Christology Today.*[45] Predictably, his concern is to base his categories in an interiorly differentiated consciousness. Thus, he contrasts the individual as one numerical instance of the human species, with understanding this individual as subjectivity developing over a lifetime of growth and change, and the enduring identity of the personal subject in question. He is open to the modern perception of the person as constituted by interpersonal relationships.[46] In fact, as we shall soon see, he revises his psychological analogy of the Trinity in this light.

The intentionality analysis from which he derives the relevant categories leads him to conclude that Christ is a single subject and a single identity, namely, the eternal divine Person. But there are two subjectivities. The one is the eternal and changeless subjectivity that is proper to the divine Person. The other is the developing subjectivity of a genuinely human life. Thus, in the light

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[43] Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 260.
[44] Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 258-260.
[45] Lonergan, "Christology Today", 90-94.
[46] Lonergan, "Christology Today", 92.

of the refinements suggested in this thesis, the human subjectivity of Christ unfolds through the four ways in which consciousness operates, in both directions. These constitute his genuinely human development; he grows in knowledge and wisdom in a movement "upwards", even as his freedom and responsibility moves "downward" to affect every level of his consciousness. The "fifth level" of the person to which we previously referred, is the divine eternal subject who has assumed a human nature, and entered the world of time, change, limitation and suffering.

These necessarily limited observations are offered to illustrate how Lonergan's intentionality analysis, with appropriate refinements, not only suggests a pattern in the historical development of Christology, but also enables reflective believers to appreciate more keenly the mystery of the Incarnation itself, the Word made flesh who dwelt amongst us.

(b) Pneumatology

The stages in the development of Christology are similarly applicable to the Church's progressive understanding of the Holy Spirit. Here, since the process is the same as treated in the previous section, I will not give a detailed account but a precis only. There is discernible the same clarification as the intelligence of faith moves from symbolic and allegorical terms,[47] through the expressions of naïve realism,[48] to the idealism of Platonic participation.[49] Likewise, what is attained in the end is the doctrinal formulation of a true judgment. Thus, only a few decades after Nicea, its

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[47] See Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 254.
[48] Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 260.
[49] Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 260.

affirmations of the divine status of the Son in relation to the Father are applied to the Holy Spirit—in the First Council of Constantinople in 381 CE. Lonergan summarises the outcome: "*Homoousios,* consubstantial, means that the same predicates, the same predications, the same attributions are to be made about Father, Son, and Spirit."[50] Here, too, Lonergan's intentionality analysis is valuable in disclosing the pattern of the development that occurred.

(c) Trinity

The uniqueness of Christian faith is, as I have presented it, focused in Christ and necessarily expands to Trinitarian dimensions if that uniqueness is to be adequately confessed and understood. Trinitarian theology has been a lively area in Christian theology over recent decades.[51] Consistent with my limited purpose, I will focus on how Lonergan's intentionality analysis has brought fresh light to age-old questions, especially those related to the Augustinian and Thomist "psychological analogy". In the process, it has become a rich resource for the development of a theology of interreligious relations.

Divine Processions

Lonergan's earliest treatment of the psychological analogy is found in his Latin notes on the Trinity—now available in English translation, *The Triune God.*[52] His research is further documented in *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas.*[53]

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[50] Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 260.
[51] For a good summary of these developments see Anne Hunt, *Trinity: Nexus of the Mysteries of the Christian Faith*, ed. Peter C Phan, *Theology in Global Perspective Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2005).
[52] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics. Translated from De Deo Trino: Pars systematica (1964)*, ed. Robert M. Doran and H. Daniel Monsour, trans. Michael G. Shields, vol. 12, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2007).

Here, too, Lonergan highlights the foundational relevance of conscious subjectivity, without which there can be no genuine understanding of the doctrine: "… if the conscious subject has been excluded, it is not surprising that three conscious subjects are also excluded or at least omitted in the Trinity".[54]

There is no question of demonstrating the Trinitarian Mystery by unaided reason—even as it reflects on the divine intelligence itself. Lonergan states:

> It is the *dicens, dicere, verbum* of trinitarian theory that is analogous to conception; and *ipsum intelligere* is demonstrable by the natural light of reason, while trinitarian doctrine is not. Further, in trinitarian theory *intelligere* is essential act common to Father, Son, and Spirit, while *dicere* is notional act and proper to the Father.[55]

It is only from revelation in scripture and tradition that we know God as Father, Word and Spirit. But once this truth is revealed, only the spiritual nature of the human mind can provide a possible analogy for the processions of the Word and the Spirit. It is found only in those moments of self-constitution that involve a true judgment of value of what one is to be and by acting accordingly.[56] In this analogy, the Word proceeds from the Father as the inner word proceeds from insight.[57] It is not the formulation or expression of that insight in an outer word. That would mean a movement *from potency to act*.

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[53] Lonergan, *Verbum*.

[54] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Consciousness and the Trinity", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1958-1964*, ed. Robert C. Croken, Frederick E. Crowe, and Robert M. Doran, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 131.

[55] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 198. Emery makes the same point: "It is only by missing the difference between *to know* or *to understand (intelligere)* and *to speak (dicere)* or between *to love* and *to spirate love,* that one could find in Thomas an 'essential' comprehension of divine processions." (Gilles Emery (OP), *Trinity in Aquinas* (Ypsilanti, MI: Sapientia Press of Ave Maria College, 2003).)

[56] Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 177-178.

[57] It was Augustine who first identified the inner word and its relevance for an understanding of the Trinity. He refers to is as "that interior word belonging to no nation's tongue". (Augustine, *Trinity*, 147.)

This is not applicable to God, for in God there is no potency. The only possible analogy has to be movement *from act to act*, and that is found in the procession of the inner word from insight.[58] The inner word is the *actu*al content of the insight that is wholly and completely identical with the *act* of understanding, yet distinct from the act itself from which it proceeds necessarily on the basis of sufficient evidence. All that God is, and all that God could and did create, is contained in the one, single, eternal, perfect act of understanding—from which there proceeds only one, single, eternal, perfect, inner word.

The analogy for the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son is "the procession in the will of the act of love from the inner word in the intellect".[59] Again, since there is no potency in God; the only possible analogy is the movement from act to act. It is found in the act of love in the will that proceeds simultaneously from the inner word and the act of understanding in the intellect.

In each of these two processions there is the one from whom the other proceeds, and there is the one who proceeds from the other. Thus the two processions yield four relations of origin. These are traditionally named active generation (or paternity) and passive generation (or filiation), active spiration and passive spiration. Three of these are subsistent, and thus correlate with

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[58] For treatment of the inner word, see Chapter Two, under the heading "The Fourth 'Level' of Consciousness", pp. 49 ff.

[59] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 109. In the lengthy footnote to this quote there are repeated references to the priority of intellect over will. I assume that it was strong formation in this scholastic tradition that made Lonergan's later breakthrough to the inverse priority of love slow and difficult and all the more revolutionary.

Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I will refer to these technical names in the following chapter.

The abstract technical names are illuminated when one notes the correspondence between the four relations and the four functions of meaning: paternity corresponds to the constitutive function and filiation to the cognitive function, active spiration corresponds to the communicative function, and passive spiration corresponds to the effective function.

Lonergan later reworked the psychological analogy for the processions in the Trinity in more experiential terms, even though he never elaborated it in detail. Intentionality analysis does not need to posit metaphysical faculties of intellect or will as in the earlier, scholastic faculty psychology. He indicates his new approach to the psychological analogy in the following paragraph:

> The psychological analogy, then, has its starting point in that higher synthesis of intellectual, rational, and moral consciousness that is the dynamic state of being in love. Such love manifests itself in its judgments of value. And the judgments are carried out in decisions that are acts of loving. Such is the analogy found in the creature.

He then applies it to the Christian notion of God:

> Now in God the origin is the Father, in the New Testament named *ho theos*, who is identified with *agapē (1 John 4:8-16).* Such love expresses itself in its Word, its Logos, its *verbum spirans amorem*, which is the judgment of value. The judgment of value is sincere, and so it grounds Proceeding Love that is identified with the Holy Spirit.

He then proceeds to draw the following conclusion:

> There are then two processions that may be conceived in God; they are not unconscious processes but intellectually, rationally, morally conscious, as are judgments of value based on the evidence perceived by a lover, and the acts of loving grounded on judgments of value.[60]

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[60] Lonergan, "Christology Today", 93.

It is evident that Lonergan came to place the analogy of the two processions at the fourth existential level. I suggest that distinguishing the intellectual and moral modes of consciousness adds further precision to the personal and interpersonal nature of this fourth level, and so refines our analogical knowledge of the divine processions.[61]

The quintessential fourth-level question is: *Quid mihi est?*—"What concern is that to me?" When the object in question is the self as knower of the true, real, good, answering this question leads to the act of self-appropriation. Thus, the procession of the Word within God is an act of personal self-appropriation.

This analogy can be extended to the procession of the Spirit: God's eternal self-expression and self-appropriation overflows into the decision to act accordingly—without any implication of a transition from potency to act, as would be the case in any finite subject. Thus, the procession of the Spirit within God is an act of personal self-communication.

Doran perceptively observes that the first type of psychological analogy arises from accessible natural experience, while the second type is based in our participation in the supernatural life of grace.[62] He notes that commentators

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[61] For my presentation of a refined and more precise fourth level, see Chapter Two, under the heading "The Fourth 'Level' of Intentional Consciousness", pp. 56ff. This warrants some adaptation of the above quotation. In my proposed refinement, "judgments of value" are third-level judgments of moral consciousness, whereas what Lonergan intends by "judgments of value" are fourth-level, personal, existential choices.

[62] "Each of the analogies is found in the creature, but the earlier analogy is found in nature itself, in our natural powers of understanding uttering a word of assent and of love proceeding from understanding and word, while the created analogue in the second analogy is already in the supernatural order." (Robert M. Doran, "Ignatian Themes in the Thought of Bernard Lonergan: Revisiting a Topic that Deserves Further Reflection" (paper presented at the Lonergan Workshop, Boston College, 18-23 June

have remarked that "while the earlier analogy proceeds from below upwards in human consciousness, the later analogy proceeds from above downwards".[63] However, I suggest that the earlier and later analogies are *within* the second and fourth levels respectively. Thus, the upward and downward movements do not correlate to the processions of the Word and the Spirit *ad intra*, but to the missions of the Word and Spirit *ad extra*, as I will now show.

Divine Missions

The most important Trinitarian consideration for my thesis turns on the question of the divine missions. The inner constitution of the Trinity as the community of three divine Persons—and the divine "self-appropriation" that it represents—leads into a deeper grasp of God's self-communication to the world of creation. This is to say that God's self-communication *ad extra* is a created manifestation of the divine self-communication *ad intra*. God is self-giving love because God who is love has such a self to give. Thus, the procession of the Word from the Father overflows, as it were, into history as the Father "sends" his Son into the world. Similarly, the procession of the Spirit from the Father and the Son reaches into the world as the Father and the Son send their Spirit. On the subject of these "missions" of Word and Spirit, Lonergan writes:

> … besides the visible mission of the Son there is the invisible mission of the Spirit. Besides *fides ex auditu,* there is *fides ex infusione.*[64] The former mounts up the successive levels of experiencing, understanding, judging, deliberating. The latter descends from the gift

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2006), 19.) He refines the presentation in Robert M. Doran, "Being in Love with God: A Source of Analogies for Theological Understanding", *Irish Theological Quarterly* 73, no. 3 (2008).

[63] Doran, "Ignatian Themes", 19.

[64] [Lonergan's note: *Sum. Theol.*, II-II, q. 6, a. 1.]

of God's love through religious conversion to moral, and through religious and moral to intellectual conversion.[65]

Here, Lonergan clearly correlates *fides ex auditu* with the upwards movement of consciousness, and *fides ex infusione* with the transformative downwards movement of consciousness.[66] In so doing, Lonergan, and many expositors of his thought, relate only the visible mission of the Word to the outer word of revelation, and the invisible mission of the Spirit only to the inner conviction of faith.[67] However, besides the invisible mission of the Spirit and the visible mission of the Word, the classic Trinitarian tradition speaks also of the *visible* mission of the Spirit and the *invisible* mission of the Word.[68] Lonergan himself treats them in two paragraphs in *De Deo Trino*. There, the invisible mission of the Son is understood in terms of appropriation, and the visible mission of the Spirit in terms of the manifestation or outward symbolic expression of interior realities.[69] Crowe, too, is familiar with the ancient tradition.[70] But apart from passing acknowledgment, neither Lonergan nor Crowe treat in any detail the

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[65] [Lonergan's note: Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, Longman & Todd; New York: Herder and Herder, 1972) 122, 243.] Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 32.

[66] The distinction between *fides ex infusione* and *fides ex auditu* corresponds to the distinctions I made between spirituality and religion in Chapter Four, under the heading "Religion and Spirituality", pp. 154ff, and between divine or theological faith and religious faith in Chapter Four, section 5(a) "Religious Faith", pp. 182ff.

[67] For example, see Crowe, "Lonergan's Universalist View of Religion", 128-134; Crowe, "Son and Spirit", 305-309; Crowe, "Son of God", 328-333; Drilling, *Premodern/Postmodern Faith*, 150-151; Tad Dunne, *Experience* ([cited 7 September 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/Expernc.htm>.

[68] This tradition goes back to Augustine's *Trinity* Book II, 7-11 and Book IV, 26-32, Book XV, 46. These missions are also treated by Thomas Aquinas in *Summa Theologica,* I, Q. 43.

[69] Lonergan, *The Triune God: Systematics*, 499.

[70] "Augustine and Thomas Aquinas organized things a bit with their doctrine of the visible and invisible missions." (Crowe, "Son and Spirit", 304.) Where Lonergan wrote—"Without the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation. Without the visible mission of the Spirit, the Word enters into his own, but his own receive him not." (Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 32.)— Crowe, correctly in my opinion, corrects the text to read "invisible mission of the Spirit". (The text is cited and corrected in note 26 in Crowe, "Son of God", 339.)

invisible mission of the Word or the visible mission of the Spirit. Especially in the context of this thesis, such an omission needs to be critically re-appraised.

First of all, I suggest that this omission on Lonergan's part of the invisible mission of the Word and the visible mission of the Spirit can be remedied by a more precise correlation with the dynamics of consciousness.

- The first step is to affirm that each of the missions affects both the intentional and the conscious dimensions of consciousness. Here the intentional dimension signifies that consciousness is transitive, that it is directed towards objects.[71] The conscious dimension refers to self-awareness, not of ourselves as the objects of our own scrutiny, but such that when we intend any object, we are also aware of ourselves as intending that object, of ourselves as the subject of our intending.[72]

- The second step consists in understanding the invisible missions as God's direct and immediate action within the privacy of human consciousness, whereas the visible missions manifest God's mediated action in history in the words and actions of religious believers.[73]

- The third step lies in relating the mission of the Word to the intentionality of consciousness, and in relating the mission of the Spirit to the conscious dimension of consciousness.

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[71] For Lonergan's treatment of intentionality, see Lonergan, *Method*, 7.
[72] For Lonergan's treatment of consciousness, see Lonergan, *Method*, 7-8.
[73] The correlation of immediate and mediate conforms to my account in Chapter Four, under the heading "Religion and Spirituality", pp. 144ff, of the distinction between spirituality and religion.

In this way, each mission contributes to both upwards and downwards movements; and each has the required visible and invisible dimensions. This can be succinctly expressed by the following four points:

1. The invisible mission of the Spirit is operative in the *conscious* dimension of the upwards movement of consciousness in its awareness of being drawn to the fullness of Truth, Goodness and Love. It is the direct and immediate action of the Spirit in all holy lives— including that of Jesus of Nazareth.

2. The invisible mission of the Word is operative in the *intentional* dimension of the upwards movement of human consciousness in human striving for the fullness of Truth, Goodness and Love. It is the direct and immediate action of the Word in all disposed to receive it, including Jesus himself.

3. The visible mission of the Word is operative in the *intentional* dimension of the downwards movement of human consciousness in expressing the Truth, Goodness and Love that God wishes to reveal. This action of the Word is mediated through the words and deeds of all prophets and holy men and women of good will down the ages; and in a special way in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus and in the subsequent witness of the Church.

4. The visible mission of the Spirit is operative in the *conscious* dimension of the downwards movement of human consciousness in its express awareness of revealed truth and love. This action of the Spirit is mediated through the manifest holiness of all authentic religious believers and people of good will down the ages, and above all in Jesus and in the Church.

Thus, the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit operate jointly in the intentional and conscious dimensions of the upwards movement of human consciousness. Lonergan has identified this as the ongoing process of creating.[74] It includes the creation of nature, the creation of human meaning, and the re-creation of all things in Christ looking to eschatological completion. By including the invisible mission of the Word in the upwards movement I argue that the creative process is not blind, but intelligent and intelligible. Likewise, the invisible mission of the Spirit suggests that at the heart of human history there operates a transcendent energy of love. As Pope Benedict XVI states:

> It is not the elemental spirits of the universe, the laws of matter, which ultimately govern the world and mankind [*sic*], but a personal God governs the stars, that is, the universe; it is not the laws of matter that have the final say, but reason, will, love—a Person. … Life is not a simple product of laws and the randomness of matter, but within everything and at the same time above everything, there is a personal will, there is a Spirit who in Jesus has revealed himself as Love. (SS, 5)

Similarly, the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit operate jointly in the downwards movement of human consciousness. Lonergan has identified this

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[74] See Lonergan, "Healing"..

ongoing process as healing.[75] It is God's providential action guiding history towards its eschatological completion through the activity of religious believers and all people of good will, especially through the salvific activity of Christ. The inclusion of the visible mission of the Spirit in the downwards movement of healing adds an explicit awareness of God's redemptive activity. For its part, the visible mission of the Word ensures the intelligibility of this salvific action in history.

Lonergan succinctly correlates the two divine missions:

> Without the visible mission of the Word, the gift of the Spirit is a being-in-love without a proper object; it remains simply an orientation to mystery that awaits its interpretation. Without the invisible mission of the Spirit, the Word enters into his own, but his own receive him not.[76]

By adding to Lonergan's correlation the invisible mission of the Word and the visible dimension of the mission of the Spirit, I posit an even closer interrelation of the two missions. This accords with Crowe's appeal to maintain the simultaneous dual foci on the Word and the Spirit.[77]

This ostensibly technical analysis of the divine missions has profound missiological implications. For instance, in terms of cosmology, the invisible mission of the Word establishes that evolution is not blind, but is constantly being formed and directed by creative intelligence towards eschatological completion. It illuminates what Lonergan calls "the passionateness of being [that] underpins, accompanies, and reaches beyond" the subject's self-

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[75] Lonergan, "Healing".
[76] Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 32. with a correction of the last sentence of "visible mission of the Spirit" to read "invisible mission of the Spirit" as per Crowe, "Son of God", 339.
[77] Crowe, "Son and Spirit", 303ff.

transcending vertical finality.[78] This mediation of the invisible mission of the Word through human intelligence confirms the cooperative role of human beings in shaping creation and history, thus grounding human responsibility for ecological and environmental concerns.[79]

In the interreligious context, the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit suggest an expansive theology of revelation that illuminates the text: "God spoke to our ancestors in many and various ways" (Heb 1:1). They open the way for an appreciation of sacred writings and teachings of non-biblical religions as possible inspired "words" of God, even though the Christian theologian will not invest them with the same inspired character as the canonical books of the Old and New Testaments and will read them in the light of God's definitive Word in Christ.[80] With such a perspective, the documents of Vatican II can be read at a greater depth, when they speak of "a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men and women" (NA, 2); and of "elements of truth and grace which are found among peoples, and which are, as it were, a secret presence of God" (AG, 9). To appreciate the invisible mission of the Word is to be committed to a positive discernment of the "seeds of the word which lie hidden among [national and religious traditions]" and "the riches which a generous God has distributed among the nations" (AG, 11).

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[78] Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 29.

[79] For my treatment of ecological conversion, see Chapter Two, section 2(a) "The Four Conversions", pp. 62ff.

[80] This is a more nuanced treatment than the inspired/non-inspired approach taken in *Dominus Iesus*, n. 8. Moreover, it provides a theological justification for the conclusion of that section: "Therefore, the sacred books of other religions, which in actual fact direct and nourish the existence of their followers, receive from the mystery of Christ the elements of goodness and grace which they contain."

Crowe makes a case for the twofold mission of the Word and the Spirit in slightly different terms. He writes of "the one as sent into the world we meet through outer, objective data, and the other as sent into the world of interior subjective data".[81] Crowe goes on to reverse the order of the missions of the Son and the Spirit. He finds support for this by contrasting the cognitional and ontological orders: "what is first in our eyes is last in itself, and what is last in our eyes is first in itself".[82] While this general principle is acceptable, it must not be taken to imply that the late developing recognition of the presence of the Word in history means the absence of that Word from early history, but only that its early presence and action are not fully manifest. Similarly, Crowe's sensitivity to the presence and action of the Spirit in early history cannot imply that the Spirit is absent from later history—let alone that the invisible mission of the Spirit has been supplanted by the visible mission of the Word. Clearly, then, the order of the missions is not a matter of chronology. Throughout all history, the invisible presence and action and the visible manifestations of the divine missions are synchronous.[83] However, the ultimate criterion for discerning that presence and action is reserved to "these last days" (Heb 1:2) with the coming of Christ and the subsequent witness of the Church.

More recently, Dupuis distinguished "the Logos *asarkos* (the Word of God *in himself* and not yet incarnated) from the Logos *ensarkos* (the Word of God

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[81] Crowe, "Son and Spirit", 307. The same point is made in Dunne, *Experience* ([cited 7 September 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/Expernc.htm> and Tad Dunne, *Why the Christian Story Endures* (2002 [cited 7 September 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/XnStory.htm>.

[82] Crowe, "Son of God", 327.

[83] For the universal presence and activity of the Word, see RM, nn. 5-6. For the universal presence and activity of the Spirit, see RM, nn. 28-29.

precisely as incarnated)".[84] That formulation proved so controversial that he dropped it in later writings. However, he continued to argue for "a universal action and presence of the Word of God already in human history before the incarnation, as also the permanence of this action of the Logos as such after the incarnation of the Word and the resurrection of Jesus Christ",[85] claiming that this was consistent with Chalcedonian doctrine. Rather than making a chronological distinction between the mission of the Word *before* and *after* the Incarnation, recognising the invisible mission of the Word in the terms explained above provides a simpler and neater resolution of the issue.

We have been speaking up till now of the missions of the Word and Spirit. What, then, of the Father?

Technically speaking, missions follow processions of origin, and since the Father is the unoriginated origin of the other two missions, there is no mission of the Father. However, Lonergan several times writes of a threefold giving of God to humanity.[86] Crowe also insists that the gifts of the Son and the Spirit must be complemented "by the addition of the Father's self-giving; otherwise the picture will be distorted … [resulting in] the mutilation of the whole and the

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[84] O'Collins S.J., "Jacques Dupuis", 25. The original source is Dupuis, *Toward a Christian Theology*, 298-299.

[85] Dupuis, *Christianity and the Religions*, 143. He defends his position in Jacques Dupuis, "*Christianity and the Religions* Revisited", *Louvain Studies* 28 (1999), 366-369; Jacques Dupuis, "*The Truth Will Make You Free*: The Theology of Religious Pluralism Revisited", *Louvain Studies* 24 (1999), 236-241.

[86] "… there is a threefold personal self-communication of divinity to humanity, first when in Christ the Word becomes flesh, secondly, when through Christ men [*sic*] become temples of the Spirit and adoptive sons of the Father, thirdly, when in a final consummation the blessed know the Father as they are known by him". (Lonergan, "Mission and the Spirit", 26.) "… God gives himself in love, in the threefold giving that is the gift of the Holy Spirit to those that love (*Rom 5:5*), the gift of the divine Word made flesh and dwelling amongst us (*Jn 1:14*), the final gift of union with the Father who is originating love (*1 John 4:8, 16*)." (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Aquinas Today: Tradition and Innovation", in *A Third Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York, and Mahwah, NJ; London: Paulist Press; Geoffrey Chapman, 1985), 53.)

distortion of the remaining parts".[87] Although the Father is not "sent", since he is the source and goal of the missions of the Word and Spirit, there is a sending forth from the source, and a return to it.[88] Therefore it must be argued, following Aquinas (*STh* 1, q. 43, a. 4) that, by sending his Word and Spirit, the Father gives himself. However, unlike emanationist philosophies, Christianity affirms the flow and return as "a gracious free act of loving self-communication by a personal God".[89]

The self-giving of the Father can be analogically related to the highest (the "fifth") level of intentional consciousness.[90] At that point, the upwards movement comes to rest in contemplation, while the downwards movement finds its release in action. The restless dynamism of both movements comes to rest in simultaneous union of contemplation and action, within the identity of the person. In human beings this is a process of becoming. In God, it is eternal act, namely, the self-giving of the Father, the eternal origin and the goal of the missions of the Word and the Spirit. The self-giving of the Father consists in drawing us into intelligent and loving communion in the Tri-une God—in anticipation of that eschatological moment when we will see him "face to face", and so fully know what now is known only in part (cf. 1 Cor 13:12; 1 Jn 3:2).

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[87] Note 3 in Crowe, "Son of God", 326.
[88] For summary treatment, see Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 303-305.
[89] Norris Clarke, *The One and the Many*, 305. [italics in original]
[90] For my treatment of the fifth level, see Chapter Two, under the heading "The Fifth 'Level' of Intentional Consciousness", pp. 84ff.

(d) Ecclesiology

Consistent with my limited purpose, I will focus on how appropriation of the dynamics of consciousness illuminates a theology of the Church and shapes its mission. Lonergan offers a suggestive definition: "The Christian church is the community that results from the outer communication of Christ's message and from the inner gift of God's love."[91] Like any community, the Christian community is formed through the effective communication of common meanings and values—in this case it is the fulfilment of God's promise to Israel in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus and through the Christian witness that results. As Lonergan puts it:

> Through communication there is constituted community and, conversely, community constitutes and perfects itself through communication. Accordingly, the Christian church is a process of self-constitution, a *Selbstvollzug*.[92]

This process of "self-constitution" involves the four functions of meaning to which I referred earlier:

> Christianity … is mediated by meaning in its communicative function inasmuch as it is preached. It is mediated by meaning in its cognitive function inasmuch as it is believed. It is mediated by meaning in its constitutive function inasmuch as it is a way of life that is lived. It is mediated by meaning in its effective function inasmuch as its precepts are put into practice.[93]

In another summary statement, he writes:

> The message announces what Christians are to believe, what they are to become, what they are to do. Its meaning, then, is at once cognitive, constitutive, effective. It is cognitive inasmuch as the message tells what is to be believed. It is constitutive inasmuch as it crystallizes the hidden inner gift of love into overt Christian fellowship. It is effective

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[91] Lonergan, *Method*, 361.
[92] Lonergan, *Method*, 363.
[93] Lonergan, "Christian Realism", 244.

inasmuch as it directs Christian service to human society to bring about the kingdom of God.[94]

First, then, the meaning and value of Jesus Christ is *communicative*. Christians witness to a distinctive sense of themselves, others, and the world as eternally loved by God in Christ. Such a communication informs the life and mission of the Christian community. Secondly, Christian faith expresses a particular *cognitive* focus of meaning and value. It lives from the revelation of God's identity and saving purpose. Such faith conforms Christians to the truth and love that have been made known in Christ. Thirdly, what is thus communicated and made known is *constitutive*. It forms Christian consciousness as a shared personal knowledge of being eternally loved, forgiven, reconciled and given new life by God in Christ. Christians thus share a consciousness of being the Body of Christ and the Temple of the Holy Spirit, and embody God's invitation for others. Fourthly, the Gospel inspires a limitless range of *effective* meaning. Christians are summoned to participate in Christ's saving mission of transforming the world. In this, they collaborate with others who share similar values, and invite others to cooperate with them.

Then, employing specifically biblical categories, Lonergan expresses the mission of the Church in the following terms:

> United in Christ through the Spirit, Christians are to love one another (*koinonía*), bear witness to God's love (*marturía*), serve mankind [*sic*] (*diakonía*), and look forward to a future consummation when their love of God will not be just orientation to mystery, but coupled with a knowledge of God similar to God's knowledge of them (1 Cor. 13:12).[95]

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[94] Lonergan, *Method*, 362. In this quote the communicative function of meaning is not named. However, it is implicit in the call to Christian fellowship, and in the impetus towards the universal fellowship of all that is the Kingdom of God.

[95] Lonergan, "Response of the Jesuit", 174.

These biblical terms suggest the four functions of meaning already mentioned: *koinonía* is related to the communicative function, *marturía* to the cognitive function, and *diakonía* to the effective function.[96] While the constitutive function is not named explicitly, it is implicit in that the longed-for future consummation is the fulfilment of our already established Christian identity as the children of God (cf. 1 Jn 3:1-2).

Christians are called to incarnate the truth and love of God in their own persons, both individually and communally. In this, they witness to the unity to which all are called. As Vatican II states it: "… the Church, in Christ, is a sacrament—a sign and instrument, that is, of communion with God and of the unity of the entire human race …" (LG, 1).

The cognitive and constitutive dimensions of the Church's mission combine to give rise to the ecclesiology of *communio*.[97] This is patterned on the upwards movement of self-transcendence, and emphasises the centripetal force of the Church as the medium through which God is drawing all to unity in the Trinitarian life. The communicative and effective dimensions combine in a practical response that emphasises *missio Dei*.[98] This is patterned on the downwards movement of consciousness, and emphasises the centrifugal outreach of the Church's mission to the world.

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[96] *Diakonia* is the Christian specification of the generic issue that I raised earlier, that religions are not for themselves but at the service of society. As Lonergan noted: "Christians can come to think of their religion as an end in itself; they can become so devoted to the Christian cause as to forget its subordination to the cause of mankind [*sic*]." (Lonergan, "Future of Christianity", 158.)

[97] For a summary treatment of *communio* ecclesiology, see Neil Ormerod, "Recent Ecclesiology: A Survey", *Pacifica* 21 (2008), 59-60.

[98] For an account of *missio Dei*, see David J. Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, vol. 16, *American Society of Missiology Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 390-393.

Communio and *missio Dei* are both needed. Both are participations in the missions of the Word and the Spirit. As Ormerod notes, "Through both *communio* and *missio Dei* we share in the divine life of the Trinity."[99] The upwards movement of self-transcendence ends in contemplation characteristic of *communio*, whereas the downwards movement of self-realisation ends in action which is the feature of *missio Dei*. As both movements pertain to the integrity of personal consciousness, both belong to the corporate persona of the Church.

Let me conclude by indicating some further correlations of the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness and their integration in the fifth level. I suggest that these dynamics underlie the various elements that make up the Christian tradition, and the different denominations that make up Christianity. Thus, familiarity with these dynamics will help distinguish and relate those elements and those denominations, and help identity their particular purpose and contribution to the whole. This is particularly relevant to my thesis, as others can apply the same analysis to their own religions. Identifying similar directions in the different component parts of diverse religions will point the way to greater collaboration, and recognising similar dynamics in the different religions will assist believers to relate better to one another.

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[99] Neil Ormerod, *Creation, Grace, and Redemption*, ed. Peter C. Phan, *Theology in Global Perspective Series* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2007), 134. Ormerod argues that *communio* emphasises the integrative function of the Church, *missio Dei* emphasises the transformative function of the Church. See Neil Ormerod, "'*The Times They Are A-Changin'*: A Response to O'Malley and Schloesser", in *Vatican II: Did Anything Happen?*, ed. David G Schultenhover (New York, London: Continuum, 2007), 175.

- The Old Testament recounts the upwards human aspiration for God; the New Testament announces God's gracious downwards condescension towards creation; and both sets of scriptural writings together form the one Bible (cf. DV, 16).

- The four Gospels document the unfolding revelation in Jesus Christ, which for the disciples is an upwards learning curve; the Acts of the Apostles and the epistles teach the practical application of that revelation, a downwards movement; and both sets of documents make up the New Testament.

- Christian Scripture recounts the age-long divine pedagogy by which believers have slowly learned God's ways (upwards movement). For its part, Christian tradition witnesses to the appropriation of that and witness to that learning over the centuries (downwards movement). Thus Scripture and tradition together "make up a single sacred deposit of the word of God, which is entrusted to the Church". (DV, 10).

- The Eastern Churches, with their doctrine of *theodosis*, emphasise the divinisation of the human under grace (upwards movement). The Western Church, influenced by Augustine's recognition of the human need for grace, looks to God's gracious intervention (downwards movement). These two traditions function as the "two lungs" of the one Church of Christ (cf. UUS, 54).

- The Protestant Churches have emphasised Scripture as guiding the faith's upwards ascent to God, while the Roman Catholic Church has emphasised the downwards practical embodiment of tradition under the guidance of the authoritative teaching role of the magisterium. Together, they have formed the Christianity of the West.

In each of the above examples, the elements of tradition associated with the upwards movement look to integration of what has been learned. Conversely, factors in the downwards movement seek the transformation of human living. But at the higher, fifth level, there is the promise of a greater plenitude which oversees, completes and unites both movements and directs them to ever greater achievement.

(e) Dialogue and Proclamation

Against this background—and with precise aims of this thesis in mind—I will now attempt to clarify two ecclesiological terms which, at face value, appear to be mutually contradictory or opposed: dialogue and proclamation. The more the mission of the Church is understood as proclaiming the Gospel, the less it might appear is the role of dialogue; the more dialogue is emphasised as the form of the Church's mission in the pluralistic world of today, the less, it might seem, is proclamation the defining imperative of mission.

In addressing this issue, I will build on the analysis of interreligious dialogue presented in Chapter Five, and make a further application of intentionality

analysis to distinguish and relate these two elements integral to mission of the Church. But first, let us note the following two authoritative descriptive definitions:

> Dialogue means "all positive and constructive interreligious relations with individuals and communities of other faiths which are directed at mutual understanding and enrichment" (DM, 3), in obedience to truth and respect for freedom. (DP, 9)

> Proclamation is the communication of the Gospel message, the mystery of salvation realized by God for all in Jesus Christ by the power of the Spirit. It is an invitation to a commitment of faith in Jesus Christ and to entry through baptism into the community of believers which is the Church. (DP, 10)

At first glance dialogue and proclamation seem mutually exclusive. However, the teaching of both the Pope and the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue argue that they belong together in the Church's mission, and must be closely related, even if not interchangeable. John Paul II writes,

> [Proclamation and dialogue] must maintain both their intimate connection and their distinctiveness; therefore they should not be confused, manipulated or regarded as identical, as though they were interchangeable. (RM, 55)

And again,

> Interreligious dialogue and proclamation, though not on the same level, are both authentic elements of the Church's mission. Both are legitimate and necessary. They are intimately related, but not interchangeable. (DP, 77)

Magisterial discourse becomes more complex when it is further proposed that all Christian dialogue should witness to Christ, and that all proclamation should be dialogical:

> Dialogue is thus the norm and necessary manner of every form of Christian mission, as well as every aspect of it, whether one speaks of simple presence and witness, service, or direct proclamation (CIC 787 no. 1). Any sense of mission not permeated by such a dialogical spirit

would go against the demand of true humanity and against the teachings of the Gospel. (DM, 29)

Furthermore,

> … true interreligious dialogue on the part of the Christian supposes the desire to make Jesus Christ better known, recognized and loved; proclaiming Jesus Christ is to be carried out in the Gospel spirit of dialogue. (DP, 77)

Though the two seem to be equally essential concerns, the emphasis tilts towards proclamation with such statements as the following: "Proclamation is the foundation, centre and summit of evangelization" (EN, 27); "Proclamation is the permanent priority of mission" (RM, 44); "All forms of missionary activity are directed to this proclamation" (RM, 44); "The proclamation of the Word of God has Christian conversion as its aim" (RM, 46). This leads to the conclusion:

> ... dialogue … cannot simply replace proclamation, but remains oriented towards proclamation in so far as the dynamic process of the Church's evangelizing mission reaches in it its climax and its fullness. (DP, 82)

In the light of these statements, it is hard to see how dialogue is not being "manipulated" (RM, 55) to become a means to proclamation.[100]

Given the complex interrelationship of dialogue and proclamation, an application of the dynamics of consciousness points to a resolution of the problem. The two activities concerned are integral to the one mission of the Church, even while preserving the priority of proclamation. For the sake of brevity, I present the schematic outline commencing on the following page:

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[100] The Italian translation of "manipulated" is *strumentalizzati*, echoing the English "instrumentalised", which makes the argument even stronger. The translation is provided in brackets in Jacques Dupuis, "A Theological Commentary: Dialogue and Proclamation", in *Redemption & Dialogue: Reading* Redemptoris Missio *and* Dialogue & Proclamation, ed. William R. Burrows (New York: Orbis, 1993), 151.

Dialogue	**Proclamation**

Dialogue begins in God's gift to us of creation which manifests God's intelligence, goodness, and providential care for all.

Proclamation begins in God's gift to us of the fullness of revelation in the life, death and resurrection of the incarnate Word and the fullness of the means of salvation found in the Church.

Dialogue begins "from below" in empirical experience that prompts questions seeking answers.

Proclamation begins "from above" in sharing of religious experience that invites to new commitments.

Dialogue is motivated by the desire to learn about each other and about the many gifts that God has generously distributed among the nations, particularly in their religious heritage (cf. RM, 55).

Proclamation is motivated by the Christian's desire to share with the other the gifts that have been freely given in Jesus Christ and the Church.

Dialogue is oriented towards personal appropriation of the truth, goodness and love of God made known in creation and in the religions of the dialogue partners (cf. RM, 56).

Proclamation is oriented towards the Christian sharing the truth, goodness and love of God made known in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth and witnessed to in the Church (cf. DP, 83).

Dialogue is the partners engaged with each other in a process of mutual self-mediation with regard to the meanings and values of their respective religious traditions.

Proclamation is the Christian inviting the other partner to consider the transcendent meanings and values of Jesus Christ that are mediated through the Christian tradition.

Dialogue aims at uncovering the truth, goodness and grace, the fruits of the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit, wherever they are to be found in peoples, cultures and religions.

Proclamation aims at inviting others to accept the truth, goodness and grace of God that is made known in the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit that are preserved and made manifest in the life and mission of the Christian community.

Dialogue is directed towards conversion as an incremental change within the existing horizon of the partners' present religious commitments.	Proclamation is directed towards the religious conversion of the other as a radical change to the new ecclesial horizon of the Church's witness to the Kingdom of God inaugurated and fulfilled in Jesus Christ.
Dialogue unfolds as a self-transcending search for truth, goodness and love.	Proclamation begins with the self-communication of God in Christ in the love that has been revealed and that invites our participation in it.
Dialogue ends in God, for both partners have a greater appreciation of the truth, goodness and love of God mediated through the religious other.	Proclamation ends in God, for the Christian and the other are united in shared commitment to live out God's saving purposes in the world.

Dialogue is never complete, for there is always more to be learned about God's dealings with creation through dialogue with the other.	Proclamation is never complete, for there is always more to be received from God through a deeper receptivity to the grace that is proclaimed.

From this summary presentation it is evident that dialogue follows the upwards cognitive movement of the operations of consciousness, while proclamation follows the downwards movement. However, although they are laid out side by side in the above table, in reality the two movements interpenetrate one another. The appropriation of the truths and values learned in the upwards movement of dialogue are expressed and embodied in a downwards movement of witness and action. For its part, the downwards movement of Christian proclamation provokes questions that can be answered only in the upwards movement of learning through dialogue.

This approach goes a long way to resolving the felt ambivalence, and sometimes embarrassment, regarding the assertion of the permanent priority of proclamation. Indeed, dialogue and proclamation share the same priority as movements of consciousness. Proclamation has chronological priority—if nothing is proclaimed in regard to divine revelation there would be nothing about which to dialogue. But dialogue has logical priority, for it is how believers from different religions learn from each other the significance of what

has been revealed. To proclaim the self-giving God cannot but inspire the self-transcendence of love through dialogue.

Since dialogue and proclamation are grounded in the upwards and downwards movements of the four ways in which consciousness operates, they are distinct activities. However, they are united in the person of the Christian believer, the fifth level, who in turn is a part of the Body of Christ. From an authentically Christian standpoint, the proclamation of the Gospel takes priority over every other activity, not by any merit on the part of Christians, but because of their recognition of the "surpassing value" of Jesus Christ (cf. Phil 3:8).

The above application of intentionality analysis to these two dimensions of the Church's mission can be valuable in clarifying ecclesiological discourse, and in leading to a more integrated notion of the mission itself.

5. *Dominus Iesus* and Other Religions

Having treated Christian faith and the beliefs about the Trinitarian God of love that it makes possible, we can now compare and contrast Christian faith and belief with faith and belief in other religions. This builds on and develops the material in Chapter Four, where I presented Lonergan's account of the distinction between faith and belief based on intentionality analysis: faith is the

fourth-level horizon of transcendent valuing; beliefs are the third-level judgments of fact and value.[101]

Paragraph seven of *Dominus Iesus* distinguishes Christian faith from the beliefs of other religions, but does so in very different terms. Since these have profound implications for interreligious relations, I quote the relevant passage in full.

> The proper response to God's revelation is "the obedience of faith (*Rom* 16:26; cf. *Rom* 1:5, 2 *Cor* 10:5-6) by which man [*sic*] freely entrusts his entire self to God, offering 'the full submission of intellect and will to God who reveals' and freely assenting to the revelation given by him".[102] Faith is a gift of grace: "in order to have faith, the grace of God must come first and give assistance; there must also be the interior helps of the Holy Spirit, who moves the heart and converts it to God, who opens the eyes of the mind and gives 'to everyone joy and ease in assenting to and believing in the truth'".[103]
>
> The obedience of faith implies acceptance of the truth of Christ's revelation, guaranteed by God, who is Truth itself:[104] "Faith is first of all a personal adherence of man to God. At the same time, and inseparably, it is a *free assent to the whole truth that God has revealed*".[105] Faith, therefore, as "*a gift of God*" and as "*a supernatural virtue infused by him*",[106] involves a dual adherence: to God who reveals and to the truth which he reveals, out of the trust which one has in him who speaks. Thus, "we must believe in no one but God: the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit".[107]
>
> For this reason, the distinction between *theological faith* and *belief* in the other religions, must be *firmly held.* If faith is the acceptance in grace of revealed truth, which "makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently",[108] then belief, in the other religions, is that sum of experience and thought that constitutes the human treasury of wisdom and religious aspiration,

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[101] For my earlier treatment, see Chapter Four, under the heading "The Distinction Between Faith and Beliefs", pp. 180ff.

[102] [DI's note] SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL, Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Verbum*, 5.

[103] [DI's note] *Ibid.*

[104] [DI's note] Cf. *Catechism of the Catholic Church,* 144.

[105] [DI's note] *Ibid.,* 150.

[106] [DI's note] *Ibid.,* 153.

[107] [DI's note] *Ibid.,* 178.

[108] [DI's note] JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio,* 13.

which man in his search for truth has conceived and acted upon in his relationship to God and the Absolute.[109]

This distinction is not always borne in mind in current theological reflection. Thus theological faith (the acceptance of the truth revealed by the One and Triune God) is often identified with belief in other religions, which is religious experience still in search of the absolute truth and still lacking assent to God who reveals himself. This is one of the reasons why the differences between Christianity and the other religions tend to be reduced at times to the point of disappearance. (DI, 7) [italics in original]

Dominus Iesus quotes the same texts that we used earlier to identify the dual dimensions of faith as (1) adherence to God who reveals, and (2) assent to what God reveals. However, where Lonergan distinguishes these two dimensions as faith and beliefs, *Dominus Iesus* is so insistent on their intimate connection that it conflates them. Hence it describes "theological faith" as "the acceptance of the truth revealed by the One and Triune God" (but such truth is what Lonergan calls "Christian belief"). The declaration then goes on to distinguish this "theological faith" from "belief, in the other religions". However, when "the truth revealed by the One and Triune God" is properly identified as belief, then the declaration simply states that Christian belief is different from "belief, in the other religions". This is a truism, and adds nothing to what is obvious, that religions differ over beliefs.

But the status and origin of beliefs in other religions as presented in *Dominus Iesus* can and must be challenged. *Dominus Iesus* identifies belief, in the other religions, as "religious experience still in search of the absolute truth and still lacking assent to God who reveals himself". The implicit contrast is that

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[109] [DI's note] *Ibid,* 31-32.

Christian belief is "assent to God who reveals himself".[110] What is behind this proposed contrast between Christian belief and other belief can be related to the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness as follows. Belief, in the other religions, is identified with the upwards movement of the human aspiration towards God, but which has not yet attained God; and belief, in Christianity, is faith-based assent to what God has revealed which precipitates the downwards movement of embodying and witnessing to that revealed truth and value. Accordingly, a restrictive reading of *Dominus Iesus* concludes that other religions are bereft of faith.

However, such a minimalist reading is problematic. It contradicts the superabundant love of God which Christians confess; and it fails to account for the evident spiritual, religious and moral virtues that are found in other believers and in other religions. Intentionality analysis provides for a more generous reading that is both faithful to the intention of *Dominus Iesus* to reiterate Church teaching "on the unicity and salvific universality of Jesus Christ and the Church"[111] and also more respectful of God's presence and action in other religions.

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[110] This is the classic fulfilment theory, enunciated very eloquently in Paul VI, *Evangelii Nuntiandi: On Evangelisation in the Modern World* (Homebush, NSW: St. Paul Publications, 1975), n., 53. The same position is taken more recently by Pope John Paul II, who presents it through a Christocentric lens. "Here we touch upon *the essential point by which Christianity differs from all other religions,* by which *man's* [*sic*] *search for God* has been expressed from earliest times. Christianity has its starting point in the Incarnation of the Word. Here, it is not simply a case of man seeking god, but of God who comes in person to speak to man of himself and to show him the path by which he may be reached. This is what is proclaimed in the Prologue of John's Gospel: 'No one has ever seen God; the only son, who is in the bosom of the Father, he has made him known' (1:18). *The Incarnate Word is that the fulfilment of the yearning present in all the religions of mankind;* this fulfilment is brought about by God himself and transcends all human expectations. It is the mystery of grace. In Christ, religion is no longer a 'blind search for God' (cf. Acts 17:27) but the *response of faith* to God who reveals himself." (John Paul II, *Tertio Millennio Adveniente: The Third Millennium* (Strathfield: St Pauls Publications, 1994), n., 6. [italics in original])
[111] The phrase is part of the full title of the document.

The position throughout this thesis is that God has graciously condescended to encounter and transform human beings in the depths of their consciousness. Personal surrender to this spiritual conversion enables the fourth-level, transcendent valuing which is faith. This interior transformation is often appropriated and expressed outwardly in the further fourth-level choice of religious conversion. The transcendent faith horizon is more or less adequately appropriated in the different religions. These varying religious horizons are the contexts within which their respective religious beliefs are offered for assent. Beliefs are third-level judgments of fact and value, the basis of which is faith in God who reveals and who guarantees the religious tradition. The accuracy and adequacy of these beliefs and the authenticity of the religious traditions can be discerned and corrected where necessary by reference to the originating core spiritual experience.

Dominus Iesus is quite right to distinguish faith and beliefs. However, this distinction does not apply transversely to Christian faith and beliefs in other religions, as *Dominus Iesus* states. Rather, it applies equally to Christian faith and Christian beliefs, as it does to other faiths and their beliefs. In both cases the grounds of the distinction are not the supposed divine or human origins of the truths and values believed, as *Dominus Iesus* implies, but the different levels of operation. As we have seen, faith is a fourth-level personal response to God; religious beliefs are third-level judgments of religious facts and religious values. The provenance of the belief, whether it is from God or whether it is merely human, is a matter of the authenticity of the founding witnesses and the subsequent tradition. To the degree that they are authentic,

they are transparent and mediate the truth, goodness and love of God who has first possessed them. To the degree that they are not authentic, they obscure the revelation of God's goodness, truth, and love. Accordingly, I make a more nuanced distinction between faith and belief in Christianity, and faith and belief in other religions, in the following three steps.

First, as treated at the start of this chapter, what distinguishes Christianity is the mediation of God's grace in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus. In other world religions God's grace is mediated through the inspired lives, teaching, and example of their founders, often including, as Girard would insist, the manner of their deaths.

Secondly, because Christ is God—fully divine and fully human, the Second Person of the Blessed Trinity, as treated in the above sections on Christology and Trinity—he reveals God in a way that is complete and total and cannot be surpassed. Accordingly, the Christian faith that he inspires may properly be called *theological faith*, as in the text from *Dominus Iesus*, because its dimensions are divinely proportioned. However, the *religious faith* of individual Christians, and even of Christian traditions, may not be identical with the fullness of Christian faith as revealed by Christ and may need purification.

As for the other world religions, their founders are fallible humans who mediate divine inspiration. Insofar as these founders and the subsequent religious traditions are authentic they mediate God's truth, goodness and love, such that the faith responses which they embody, and to which they invite

others, coincide with theological faith. But insofar as those founders and followers are inauthentic they obscure the mediation of God's truth, goodness and love, such that the faith responses which they embody, and to which they invite others, fall short of theological faith.

Thus Christian faith rests directly on divine authority, on the Word of God, and as such has a definitive character that faith in other religions does not have. This distinction is not a cause for Christian self-aggrandisement, nor a put-down of others. Faith is a gift, and must be humbly acknowledged as such by the recipient. Although the fullness of revelation in Jesus Christ has been entrusted to the Church, the personal and communal appropriation of that gift grows towards the fullness of truth (cf. DV, 8), and, because of the human frailty of its members, it needs "continual reformation" (cf. UR, 6).

Thirdly, Christian faith leads to Christian beliefs; and faith in other religions leads to the beliefs of those religions. In Christianity, Christ guarantees the truth of the Church's beliefs in the very restricted and precise areas of faith and morals, though not of individual Christian believers; in other religions the truth of their beliefs depends on the authenticity of the founder and the subsequent tradition.

The key issue that concerns *Dominus Iesus,* the divine and human origins of the truths believed, is not located in the posited contrast between Christian faith and belief in other religions, but in the identity and the authenticity, or lack of it, of their respective founders. Thus the rigid either/or alternatives of

Christian faith coming from God and beliefs in other religions being merely human must give way to a more nuanced treatment. The dynamic Trinitarian model based on intentionality analysis that I proposed earlier is ideally suited for this purpose—the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit are operative in the upwards, cognitional movement, leading Christians and all other people alike to ever greater knowledge of God, forming and conforming them to the image and likeness of God, which comes to an unsurpassable climax in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus; the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit are operative in the downwards, affective movement, informing people and making their witness effective; both movements alternate as the religions individually and collectively advance through the course of history.

Dominus Iesus affirms Christian faith and the Christian beliefs that it makes possible, though it conflates rather than distinguishes them. *Dominus Iesus* also acknowledges third-level beliefs in other religions. However, it is silent on the fourth-level faith that makes those beliefs possible. Can that silence be interpreted as a denial of faith in other religions? I think so. However, such a denial makes it impossible to explain the divine provenance of the genuine truths and values that the beliefs of other religions contain. The more nuanced treatment I have presented of the different character of faith in Christianity and in other religions, making possible different degrees of knowledge in Christianity and in other religions respectively, assures the divine provenance of the truth and values in the beliefs of other religions without compromising the fullness of truth in Christian revelation.

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To deny the presence of faith in other religions is unnecessarily restrictive, is contrary to evidence, and contradicts the universal love of God. To pretend that the Church is a bastion of faith and other religions are non-faith can hardly be justified. Even Jesus recognised faith outside the boundaries of Israel ("Woman, great is your faith!"—said to the Canaanite woman [Mt 15:28]; "… your faith has made you well"—said to the Samaritan leper who had been cured [Lk 17:19]). In fact, there are only two times in the New Testament when Jesus is said to be amazed: one, when he found faith where he did not expect it, in the Roman centurion (cf. Mt 8:10, Lk 7:9), and the other when he did not find faith where he did expect it, in the Israelites of his hometown (cf. Mk 6:6). The faith-filled witness of people of other religions (and none) will challenge any exclusive ecclesial claim to faith, as Jesus himself learned.

Admittedly, the word "faith" is not univocal.[112] It can mean personal surrender to God who reveals, and assent to what God reveals. It means different things in different religions. It means different things even within the one religion—for example, different interpretations of faith are at the core of the sixteenth-century Reformation controversy between Catholics and Protestants. Because of the position taken in *Dominus Iesus*, whereby faith is reserved to Christianity, the Vatican prefers the expression "other religions" rather than "other faiths", and "interreligious dialogue" rather than "interfaith dialogue". Similarly, the Vatican sometimes prefers "intercultural dialogue" over

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[112] For my treatment of this see Chapter Four, under the heading "The Distinction between Faith and Beliefs", pp. 180ff.

"interreligious dialogue" and seems decidedly ambiguous about the latter.[113]

However, I have argued that the definitive character of Christian faith can be preserved without denying faith to other religions. Acknowledging different degrees of faith in Christianity and in other religions and their giving rise to different beliefs in the respective religions enables an acknowledgment of God's universal presence and activity. Hence I conclude that the expressions "other faiths" and "interfaith dialogue" are appropriate. However, to the latter I have added "inter-hope conversation" and "inter-love communication".[114] Thus I use the term "interreligious relations" to refer to the whole gamut of interaction between believers from different religions as they encounter each other in faith, hope and love.

A restricted reading of *Dominus Iesus* that denies faith in other religions is also problematic on other grounds. Our self-transcendence being brought to supernatural fulfilment in God surely includes the gift of faith, without which it is impossible to please God (cf. Heb 11:6)—anything less would be a contradiction of fulfilment. All religions witness to that God-given fulfilment to varying degrees. Religious beliefs are the expression of that faith. Given their supernatural origins, such beliefs are clearly inspired by God and cannot be

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[113] For example, in a letter which is the Introduction to Marcello Pera's *Why We Must Call Ourselves Christians*, Pope Benedict writes: "You explain with great clarity that interreligious dialogue in the strict sense of the term is not possible, while you urge intercultural dialogue that develops the cultural consequences of the religious option which lies beneath. While a true dialogue is not possible about this basic option without putting one's own faith into parentheses, it's important in public exchange to explore the cultural consequences of these religious options. Here, dialogue and mutual correction and enrichment are both possible and necessary." (NCR translation. Quoted by John L Allen, *"Interreligious dialogue impossible, Pope says, but intercultural dialogue good"* (24 November 2008) (National Catholic Reporter, 2008 [cited 9 February 2009]); available from <http://ncrcafe.org/node/2298>.) I reply that if dialogue about one's faith convictions is only possible within a religious tradition, and that it is only within that context that one's faith can truly be appreciated, that is intra-religious or ecumenical dialogue. Moreover, even if one's faith convictions cannot be fully appreciated by believers from other religions, still interreligious dialogue has its proper role precisely as a witness to those further dimensions of faith.

[114] See Chapter Five, section 3(e) "The Content of Interreligious Dialogue", pp. 232ff.

dismissed as being merely human: they are the fruit of the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit. Surely Vatican II intended such beliefs when it referred to "the many elements of sanctification and truth" (LG, 8), "whatever of good or truth is found amongst them" (LG, 16), "elements of truth and grace … a secret presence of God" (AG, 9), "seeds of the word" (AG, 11), "the riches which a generous God has distributed among the nations" (AG, 11), and "a ray of that Truth which enlightens all men and women" (NA, 2). The qualifying phrases such as "elements", "ray", "seed", and so on, are all diminutives. This indicates that these religious truths and religious values are derivatives whose origin is Christ, the fullness of divine revelation.

Admittedly, because beliefs in other religions (and in Christianity) are mediated by humans, who are prone to bias, they may be distorted and need to be corrected, or completely mistaken and need to be refuted. The Church's proclamation of the Gospel serves this remedial purpose:

> … whatever good is found sown in people's hearts and minds, or in the rites and customs of peoples … is purified, raised up, and perfected for the glory of God. (LG, 17)

Consequently, missionary activity has a purifying goal. It:

> … purges of evil associations those elements of truth and grace which are found among peoples … So whatever goodness is found in people's minds and hearts, or in the particular customs and cultures of peoples … is purified, raised to a higher level and reaches its perfection …. (AG, 9)

However, the process is not unilateral. John Paul II wrote of the benefit that other religions offer the Church.

> Other religions constitute a positive challenge for the Church: they stimulate her both to discover and acknowledge the signs of Christ's

presence and of the working of the Spirit, as well as to examine more deeply her own identity and to bear witness to the fullness of Revelation which she has received for the good of all. (RM, 56)

Dialogue and Proclamation also acknowledges:

But Christians too must allow themselves to be questioned. Notwithstanding the fullness of God's revelation in Jesus Christ, the way Christians sometimes understand their religion and practise it may be in need of purification. (DP, 32)

While keeping their identity intact, Christians must be prepared to learn and to receive from and through others the positive values of their traditions. Through dialogue they may be moved to give up ingrained prejudices, to revise preconceived ideas, and even sometimes to allow the understanding of their faith to be purified. (DP, 49)

This dialectic of faith and beliefs in and between Christianity and the other religions confirms the analysis I presented in Chapter Four, that interreligious dialogue is a matter of mutual self-mediation.

Even the admission of natural knowledge of God and the denial of supernatural knowledge in other religions needs to be qualified. In Chapter Four I treated natural knowledge of God in terms of the ground and end of both intellectual and moral consciousness. But Lonergan states that these questions only arise in the context of actual living, which is always under God's providential guidance.[115] In the same article Lonergan also establishes that Vatican I does not affirm the actuality of natural knowledge of God, but only the possibility of such knowledge. He concludes with the following reflection:

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[115] Lonergan, "Natural Knowledge", 133.

> I do not think that in this life people arrive at natural knowledge of God without God's grace, but what I do not doubt is that the knowledge they so attain is natural.[116]

His statement can be turned around. The very fact that other religions contain natural knowledge of God is evidence that God's grace is active in the lives of those believers and in their religions, even when their account of that activity falls short of the supernatural knowledge given in revelation. This acknowledgment of the presence of divine grace in other religions in no way diminishes the proper distinction between natural knowledge of God from creation and supernatural knowledge of God from revelation, a distinction which Lonergan upholds. But neither does it deny the possibility of some degree of supernatural knowledge in other religions. As John Paul II wrote:

> In Christ, God calls all peoples to himself and he wishes to share with them the fullness of his revelation and love. He does not fail to make himself present in many ways, not only to individuals but also to entire peoples through their spiritual riches, of which their religions are the main and essential expression, even when they contain "gaps, insufficiencies and errors."[117] (RM, 55)

In summary, acknowledging beliefs in other religions in this positive way challenges an over-simplistic and restrictive reading of *Dominus Iesus.* The contrast between faith in Christianity and non-faith in other religions must be replaced by a more nuanced appreciation of the different character of faith in Christianity from that in other religions, leading to degrees of knowledge of the Mystery. This allows the acknowledgment of some degree of genuine faith and knowledge of God in other religions without compromising the fullness of faith and the fullness of knowledge in Christian revelation.

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[116] Lonergan, "Natural Knowledge", 133.

[117] [John Paul II's note] Paul VI, *Address* at the opening of the Second Session of the Second Vatican Ecumenical Council, 29 September 1963.

Conclusion

This chapter continued to draw on Lonergan's method and a number of his theological positions in treating what Christianity has in common with other religions and also its distinctiveness. I have presented the stages in the development of Christianity, and selected key themes in Christology, Pneumatology, Trinity, and Ecclesiology. I have distinguished and related dialogue and proclamation. I have critiqued the overly simplistic contrast in *Dominus Iesus* between faith in Christianity and belief in other religions and offered a more nuanced treatment. In all of this I have demonstrated how familiarity with the dynamics of consciousness illuminates and refines the analysis of these themes. In the next chapter I will reverse that order and show how Christian revelation illuminates the dynamics of consciousness, and then draw out the implications of that for Christian responsibility in interreligious relations.

CHAPTER SEVEN: CHRISTIAN RESPONSIBILITY IN INTERRELIGIOUS RELATIONS

The previous chapter identified what Christianity has in common with other religions while indicating what is distinctive in Christian experience and belief. In presenting the distinctiveness of Christianity, I showed how familiarity with the dynamics of human consciousness serves to illuminate selected core Christian doctrines. They also provided the basis for a theological account of the presence and action of God in other religions. In this chapter I reverse that order. I show how Christian revelation illuminates, clarifies, intensifies and fulfils the self-transcending dynamism of human consciousness in a dramatic, personal way. I will then argue that, since these same dynamics constitute all religions (Chapter Four), and especially since they mediate the relationships between them (Chapter Five), Christians to whom this ideal has been revealed in the Person of Christ have a particular responsibility for leadership in interreligious relations. That responsibility is leading by example, modelling the method. Accordingly, I will present the argument of this final major chapter under the following three headings:

1. Christian Revelation and Intentionality;
2. Christian Responsibility and Leadership;
3. Five Areas of Responsibility.

1. Christian Revelation and Intentionality

(a) Jesus Christ as the Model of Self-Transcendence

Human self-transcendence is never fully realised. The self-to-be-realised is always in tension with the self-to-be-transcended.[1] There are, of course, occasions when a human being is rapturously caught up in wonder at the beauty of nature, in the delight of love, in the contemplation of truth and goodness, or in savouring spiritual-religious experience. Yet, even here, self-surrender to the demands of love and truth is never complete, for the conversion that is required is never fully realised once and for all. These instances of self-surrender, no matter how all-demanding they may be in that ecstatic moment, must be lived out over a lifetime. Compromise, the waxing and waning of fervour, and distractions of many kinds are all an inevitable part of the story. In other words, "self-transcendence is ever precarious".[2] Since at any given moment we are "works in progress", the Johannine statement, "what we will be has not yet been made known" (1 Jn 3:2), can be applied to any human endeavour.

In contrast to the fragmented experience of human personhood, and the limited attainments of human self-transcendence within a world affected by the problem of evil, Christian witness testifies to three remarkable extremes or "excesses" of self-transcendence. The first is the divine self-disclosure and

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[1] "Of itself, self transcendence involves tension between the self as transcending and the self as transcended. So human authenticity is never some pure and serene and secure possession. It is ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity, and every successful withdrawal only brings to light the need for still further withdrawals." (Lonergan, *Method*, 110.)

[2] Lonergan, *Method*, 110.

self-donation in the Christ-event: God does not act from some transcendent realm beyond the world, but through the reality of the Incarnation, by personally assuming a human nature; God is *Emmanuel*, "God-with-us". The second "excess" is the divine compassionate engagement with the power of evil. Though exposed to human violence and suffering to the point of death, God is not defeated by the forces of evil. Through the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ and the outpouring of the Spirit, God triumphs over and transforms the experience of evil, manifesting a love that counters evil while not contributing to it. Thirdly, implied in these two "excesses", is the unique "materiality" of Christian revelation. Through the Incarnation, God has entered into the material world; the world of matter is sanctified and definitively affirmed in its value. Christians celebrate the transformation of Christ's body in the Resurrection as the pattern and anticipation of the resurrection of all—and of the transformation of all creation. Consequently, the Church gives key expression to its faith through the sacraments in which material realities (water, bread and wine, human sexuality, and so on) are "signs" of the grace of God at work in human life.

Christian revelation as God's self-disclosure is a unique divine self-communication to the world. God is self-revealed in the freedom of self-giving love. God is self-communicating in this manner because God has such a self to give. For Christian faith, God is an eternal self-giving communion of three divine Persons. The life of the Trinity is constituted by self-giving relationships of each of the divine Persons to the others. In that limitless self-communication, the Father expresses himself fully in the Word, and the Spirit

proceeds from them both. In the relational life of the Trinity, each divine Person gives fully, each receives fully, and each is wholly divine. As outlined in the previous chapter, the self-communicating reality of God which is eternally realised in the divine processions, reaches into the created world through the divine missions. "The Word became flesh and lived among us" (Jn 1:4); and the Holy Spirit is given to inspire the response of faith, hope and love to what God has revealed and enacted out of love for the world. From this foundational Christian testimony we draw five consequences.

First, because Jesus Christ is, for Christian faith, the culminating self-expression of God in human history (as treated in the Christological section of the previous chapter), he is the fullness of God's self-revelation. In this regard, the revelatory experiences of other religions are not to be seen as additional or extra, or, for that matter, in any way complementary to the one definitive and complete revelation in Jesus Christ (cf. DI, 5ff; RM, 6, 55). Rather, these other instances of revelation share in the culminating truth of God's self-revealing activity. As Kasper puts it:

> If God has wholly, definitively and unreservedly poured himself out into the concrete person and history of Jesus Christ, then Jesus Christ is "*id quod maius cogitari nequit,*" that than which nothing greater can be thought (Anselm of Canterbury); for he is at the same time *"id quod Deus maius operari nequit,"* that than which God can no nothing greater. Next to the essential event of Christ, there can be no other religion or culture that can surpass or add anything to the Christian order of salvation. Everything true or good that other religions possess is a participation in what Jesus Christ reveals to us in its fullness.[3]

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[3] Walter Kasper (Cardinal), "Jesus Christ: God's Final Word", *Communio: International Catholic Review*, Spring 2001, 69.

A second conclusion follows: because Jesus Christ is the full and complete self-expression of God's love for the world in human form, he uniquely embodies the fullness of humanity. He is the living revelation of what it means to be human, of what we are all called to become. The self-transcending shape and goal of dynamics of human consciousness are uniquely configured in his life, death and resurrection. As Vatican II expresses it:

> In reality it is only in the mystery of the Word made flesh that the mystery of humanity becomes clear. For Adam, the first man, was a type of him who was to come, Christ the Lord. Christ, the new Adam, in the very revelation of the mystery of the Father and of his love, fully reveals humanity to itself and brings to light its very high calling. It is no wonder then that all the truths mentioned so far should find in him their source and their most perfect embodiment. (GS, 22)

Thirdly, although Jesus Christ reveals the absolute best to which humans are called, paradoxically he does this by exposing the absolute worst that human beings can do. Hence, in Chapter Four, being able to account for the failure of human self-transcendence was named as a criterion for authentic religion. Because Jesus Christ reveals the God-given form and goal of humanity, he introduces a crisis or judgment into the human condition. The mystery of God's self-giving love confronts the problem of evil. These contradictory trajectories converge in and constitute the terminal conflict disclosed in Jesus' passion, death and resurrection. In the face of the machinations that led to his condemnation, torture and execution, and despite the betrayal and abandonment he suffered from those closest to him, Jesus surrendered himself unreservedly to the will of his Father. When he prayed for the forgiveness of his executioners, he incarnated a love that not only keeps on being love in the face of evil, but also shows itself to be greater than the powers of evil that brought about his death. It is "the power of the cross, that

meeting of evil with good which transforms evil into good".[4] In this way, his unreserved self-surrender to the saving will of God revealed the consequences of the world's refusal of self-transcendence. The cross, in this perspective, is the historical expression of the rejection of the divine offer of love he embodied. Yet, in the face of rejection, love keeps on being love, showing itself as the excess that overcomes evil. When the Crucified One is raised, he breathes the Holy Spirit as the irrepressible energy of transforming love. In the light of this love, no longer do sinful human beings have to build their identities over against each other and God, but, by the gift of God's grace, they possess a new identity as loved, forgiven, and empowered by the Spirit to build a new community of reconciliation, with and for others, in God.

This new creation cannot be contained in the routines of a violent culture. The revelation of merciful love is recognised only in its being expelled from the sinful, death-dealing world through the crucifixion of Jesus. At the point where the eternal Word is broken open on the cross, the full extent of God's self-sacrificing love is revealed as the form of a new humanity. In the words of St Paul, "For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God." (2 Cor 5:21) This mystery of God's self-giving and reconciling love is enacted through the course of history in the witness, word and sacraments of the Church, the "Body of Christ". Animated by the Holy Spirit, its mission is to be a leaven in the world, as it continues Christ's own mission centred on the reign of God.

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[4] Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Absence of God in Modern Culture", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 113.

Fourthly, as fully divine and fully human, Jesus is the one, unique, universal mediator between God and humankind (cf. 1 Tim 2:5). The incarnate Word, by dying on the cross and rising from the tomb, not only reveals the heights and depths of the human condition, but is the one, unique, universal Saviour of the world (cf. Acts 4:12). As the Committee on Doctrine of the United States Conference of Catholic Bishops states:

> It has always been the faith of the Church that Jesus is the eternal Son of God incarnate as man. The union of humanity and divinity that takes place in Jesus Christ is by its very nature unique and unrepeatable. The person who is the eternal Son of God is the very same person who is Jesus Christ. Because humanity and divinity are united in the person of the Son of God, he brings together humanity and divinity in a way that can have no parallel in any other figure in history.[5]

Finally, as the one mediator and saviour of all humankind, Jesus Christ reveals that all are called to share in the one and the same destiny, namely, participation in the life of Trinitarian communion. Christ holds out to all human beings through the whole of human history the promise of fulfilment in eternal life. Thus, in the unique self-disclosure of God at the furthermost extreme of the world's evil, Christian revelation witnesses to a universal, healing love at work for the world's salvation. It expresses the intentionality of God as creative and self-giving love. Christian living—being drawn into this divine intentionality through union with Christ in his relationship to the Father, and through sharing in the Spirit of the Father and the Son—can be understood in terms of a transformed consciousness. As "God is light" (1 Jn 1:5), as Christ is "the light of the world" (Jn 8:12; 9:5), and, as in the Pauline phrase, Christians

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[5] Committee on Doctrine, USCCB, *Clarifications Required by the Book* Being Religious Interreligiously: Asian Perspectives on Interfaith Dialogue *by Reverend Peter C. Phan* (2007 [cited 14 May 2008]); available from <http://www.usccb.org/dpp/StatementonBeingReligiousInterreligiously.pdf>.

have become "light" (cf. Eph 5:8), Christian faith can be understood as an illuminated consciousness.

(b) Participation in Trinitarian Life

In his reflection on the illuminating power of intelligence, Aquinas taught that: *Lumen intellectus nostri est participatio quaedam creata lucis increatae*—"The light of our intellect is a kind of participation in uncreated light" (*Summa Theologica*, I, Q. 12, a. 11).[6] Lonergan, following Aquinas on this point, elaborated it in the following words: "… we know, we understand, we judge all things by a created light within us which is a participation, a resultant, a similitude, an impression of the first and eternal light and truth".[7] For human beings to grow in knowledge is to participate ever more deeply in the light of the divine intelligence.

However, Christian revelation goes beyond affirming the luminous character of our native intelligence. The God-given gifts of faith and love lead to a deeper "supernatural" participation in the divine consciousness. Believers share in the Trinity's own knowledge and love. I have appealed on many occasions to the metaphor of "levels" to express the unfolding dynamism of intentional consciousness in relation to both the "upwards" movement of self-transcendence and "downwards" movement of self-realisation. This led to drawing attention to a further, fifth "level" or dimension in which personal

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[6] The Latin text is quoted in Richard M Liddy, *Transforming Light: Intellectual Conversion in the Early Lonergan* (Collegeville, MN: The Liturgical Press, 1993), 175.
[7] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 95. See Lonergan's note no. 176 for references to this idea in the writings of Aquinas.

authenticity is constituted. We can now revisit these metaphorical designations of human intentionality in relation to Christian revelation.

In the light of Christian revelation, the "upwards" movement is theologically understood in the setting of the Father's generative activity. As the Son is eternally begotten of the Father, it is an inherent feature of Christian identity to share in that divine sonship. To be a Christian is to be regenerated in a filial relationship to God, that is, to become the adopted sons and daughters of the Father (cf. Rom 8:15-16; Gal 4:6-7). The upward vector of human self-transcendence thus terminates in being formed and conformed to the Son in his self-surrender to the Father. In the words of St Paul, "if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Cor 5:17). Thus, though Christian existence remains a journey through time, it is preceded and finalised by the Father's generative love.

Similarly, Christian revelation throws light on the "downwards" movement of self-transcending intentionality. Surrender to higher-level values elicits an ever greater and more penetrating responsibility, reasonableness, understanding and experience, culminating in the self-realisation of decisive action. The gift of the Spirit of love reaches downward to inform and transform Christian sensibility, imagination, intelligence, morality and relationships. Regeneration in Christ the Son cannot be understood apart from the transforming gift of the Spirit, eternally breathed forth by the Father and the Son. Because Christian life is necessarily related to the vivifying gift of the Spirit, the members of the

Christian community individually and collectively are described as the "temple of the Holy Spirit" (cf. 1 Cor 3:16; 6:19), united as a "we" participating in the "we" of the subsistent mutual love of the Father and the Son. As this God-given love affects all dimensions of human consciousness, Christians are empowered as witnesses to the world of the God who is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8).

To express the Trinitarian ambience of Christian consciousness with the technical precision of the theological categories treated in the previous chapter,[8] theologians may refer to the upwards vector of intentionality as a created participation in "passive generation", in that the Christian is conformed to the filial identity of the Son. Similarly, the downwards vector can be termed a created participation in "passive spiration", in reference to the eternal procession of the Spirit as "breathed forth" within the Trinity, and now extended into time as the all-transforming gift of love. These two dimensions of the life of grace, the filial and the pneumatological, find experiential and affect-laden expression in St Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Addressing Christian believers, the apostle prays that "you may be strengthened in your inner being with power through his Spirit and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, as you are being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph 3:16-17). Corresponding to what I have called the fifth level, he goes on to pray that Christian believers will awaken to the full dimensions of the revelation that has come to them: "I pray that you may have the power to comprehend, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all

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[8] For my summary treatment of "active and passive generation" and "active and passive spiration", see Chapter Six, section 4(c) "Trinity", pp. 283ff.

the fullness of God" (Eph 3:18-19). This prayer has as its object the transformation of Christian consciousness. It suggests the interplay of four themes: Christ, the gift of the Spirit, love and the culminating all-fulfilling extent of what has been revealed by God.

Any theology of Christian revelation's contribution to the transformation of Christian consciousness, especially in the contemporary context of interreligious relations, must meet the challenge of integrating the particularity of Christian intentionality into an all-encompassing vision of the human person. One way in which this might be done is to revisit the quite traditional notion of the *imago Dei.*

(c) Imago Dei

Christian revelation affects human consciousness in a personal, dramatic and climactic way. The new identity of the Christian believer is constituted by relationships to each of the three divine Persons, here and now anticipating an eschatological fullness of life and being. Cosmic religions, incapable of differentiating between Creator and creation, cannot articulate a personal relationship to the transcendent God and tend to immanentism. Hinduism asserts that Ultimate Reality is neither personal nor impersonal. Consequently it is ambivalent about whether the type of relation that obtains between God and human beings is personal, and so tends to expressions that are pantheistic in tone. For Buddhism, asking and answering questions about Ultimate Reality not only does not promise enlightenment, but is seen rather as a distraction from the immediate challenge of living with mindful, compassionate integrity. Sinic religions seek an earthly order that mirrors the

heavenly order in a philharmonic cosmic relationship—thus they perpetuate a radical separation between the two orders. While Muslims acknowledge the elevated status of human beings as *ashraf al-makhluqāt* (the most honourable of creation) and *khalīfat Allāh* (God's vice-regent) (cf. Qur'an 2:30), the Islamic tradition admits only natural beatitude as the fulfilment of human destiny, but nothing more. While Judaism gives us the expression *imago Dei*—as in "God created humankind in his image, in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them" (Gen 1:27)—the context of gender differentiation in which it is set suggests that the relationship between humans and God is "external" to the participants. Christian revelation alone discloses the intimate interior reality of the transcendent God as a community of three divine Persons, with human beings created and called beyond their natural capability to participate in this divine realm of life and love. Admittedly, Judaism and Islam, in common with the mystical dimensions of most, if not all, religions, clearly acknowledge a close interpersonal relationship between God and human beings. But no other religion evidences what Christian revelation expresses in terms of a personal intimacy with the Father through Christ in the Spirit, in an intra-Trinitarian participation in the divine life.

Admittedly, in the patristic and scholastic history of Christian theology, a rather thin description of *imago Dei* has prevailed. As a result, the human being was presented as made in the image and likeness of God only in terms of its spiritual capacities or in the faculties of intellect and will as described in metaphysical psychology. In contrast to these classic intellectualist formulations, contemporary theology is labouring to offer a more holistic and

integrated account of the *imago Dei*. For instance, the International Theological Commission considers that "the whole of man [*sic*] is seen as created in the image of God" (CS, 9).[9] It goes on to say: "The central dogmas of the Christian faith imply that the body is an intrinsic part of the human person and thus participates in his [*sic*] being created in the image of God" (CS, 28). Consistent with that position, it seeks to reintegrate the more Jewish approach as indicated in the Genesis quote cited above, so that human sexuality is also included in the *imago Dei*:

> In addition, the incarnation and resurrection extend the original sexual identity of the *imago Dei* into eternity. The risen Lord remains a man when he sits now at the right hand of the Father. We may also note that the sanctified and glorified person of the Mother of God, now assumed bodily into heaven, continues to be a woman. (CS, 35)

More expansively still, Vatican II highlighted the social dimensions of the *imago Dei* tradition:

> Furthermore, the Lord Jesus, when praying to the Father "that they may all be one … even as we are one" (Jn 17:21-22), has opened up new horizons closed to human reason by indicating that there is a certain similarity between the union existing among the divine persons and the union of God's children in truth and love" (GS, 24).

Finally, Lonergan has indicated the universal applicability of the *imago Dei* in a manner that reaches beyond any suggestion of religious exclusiveness. He observes, in his interpretation of Aquinas' treatment of the *imago Dei*:

> … on Aquinas's own testimony, the image of God is found universally in men [*sic*]. It is found in those without the actual use of reason; it is found in sinners; it is found, clear and fair, in those in the state of grace.[10]

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[9] International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* (2002 [cited 28 May 2007]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/cti_documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20040723_communion-stewardship_en.html>.

[10] [Lonergan's note: *Summa Theologica*, 1, q. 93, a. 8, ad 3m.] Lonergan, *Verbum*, 104.

The *imago Dei* of Christian revelation confirms and brings to ultimate expression the personal and communal dynamics of consciousness explored in this thesis. These dynamics are operative in the construction and mediation of religions and the relations between them. This allows for the conclusion that the divine image is humanly realised as the process of self-realisation. It is constituted through personal relations, and in the ongoing self-transcendence that reaches beyond the self in surrender to the demands of truth and love. Unfolding within a horizon of the ultimate truth and love found only in God, the transcendence of the self embraces all others, and, indeed, all creation. Ultimately speaking, the realisation of the *imago Dei* in the human creature can rightly be termed "deification". In their participation in the life of God, Christian believers come to acknowledge a God-intended destiny for all, namely, to become adopted sons and daughters of the Father, members of Christ's body, and temples of the Holy Spirit (cf. Rom 8:14-17; 1 Cor 3:16; 6:15, 19; Eph 1:5; 5:1, 30; Gal 3:26; Phil 2:15; 1 Th 5:5; 1 Jn 3:1-2; 5:19).

Inherent in this Christian understanding of *imago Dei* and its universal significance, is the pre-eminent place of the human in creation. As Vatican II succinctly expresses it, "human beings are the only creatures on earth that God has wanted for their own sake" (GS, 22). Consequently, it belongs to their unique vocation within creation, "to exercise, in God's name, responsible stewardship of the created world" (GS, 4). This human responsibility for the created world derives from an eschatological and supernatural destiny. Out of love, God has created human beings so that "we might enjoy personal communion with the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and with one another in

them" (GS, 4), now and fully in the life to come, in a "face to face" vision of God (cf.1 Cor 13:12).

The realisation of the divine image in the human has been remarkably elaborated through the Augustinian-Thomist use of what is referred to as the "psychological analogy", further refined by Lonergan. It suggests that the very same dynamics of knowing and loving that constitute the Holy Trinity are finitely realised in the constitution of the human subject. Since God is perfect knowledge and perfect love, Christian revelation adds an ultimate and eschatological depth to human knowing and loving. These activities constitute a created image of the Trinitarian life and of our participation in it, and suggest a particular Christian responsibility in serving God's purposes in the world.

2. Christian Responsibility and Leadership

Through the dynamics of consciousness, human subjects are drawn into communion with the Trinity. These same dynamics constitute each individual human subject and structure communication between all such subjects (Chapter Two). In Chapter Three, I showed how human meaning was dynamically constituted and mediated in this manner. I then proceeded in Chapter Four to extend this understanding of meaning to the realm of religious meaning. More specifically, Chapter Five argued that the mediation of meaning between different religions and the relations between them are structured on the same dynamics of consciousness. It follows that a contemporary articulation of Christian theology will profit from an appropriation

of these dynamics if it is to make its best contribution to interreligious relations, and exercise a responsible leadership in today's pluralistic world.

(a) Specifying the Claim

Given the democratic and egalitarian sensibilities of our age, any claim to a particular responsibility on the part of one religion in regard to all needs to be justified carefully, if misinterpretation is to be precluded, including by the members of that religion. To that end, there are three points to be made—in respect to the Christian experience of giftedness, the radical requirement of humility, and a critical theological understanding of the Church.

First, a special Christian responsibility in interreligious relations is not based in the moral or spiritual attainments of Christian believers. The Church's missionary task arises from what is confessed to be always God's initiative and God's gift, in accord with the divine design for the salvation of all. In this understanding, Christians are first the beneficiaries of the "surpassing value" of God's saving love in Christ (cf. Phil 3:8); and as recipients conscious of this culminating grace, their mission is to share that awareness with all others.

The second point follows: no Christian can truly confess Christ as crucified and risen Lord and Saviour without at the same time avowing complicity in the world of evil that brought about his death. In the cross of Christ, Christians are offered a stark disclosure of the consequences of sin. Sharing in the sin of the world and the history of personal guilt, Christian believers, though bearers of the fullness of revelation in Christ, cannot pretend to any moral or personal

superiority over believers in other religions. On the contrary, the more ardent their confession of Christ, the more humble must their confession of sin be. Thus St Paul, the great missionary apostle to the Gentiles, confessed himself to be the foremost of sinners (cf. 1 Tim 1:15). In this regard, Lonergan remarked, "it is the greatest saints that proclaim themselves the greatest sinners, though their sins seem slight indeed to less holy folk that lack their discernment and their love".[11]

The third and largest point concerns two different understandings of the Church. The Church, as a theological reality recognised by the eyes of faith, is "the bride of Christ, the heavenly Jerusalem, holy and sinless".[12] In contrast, the Church, from the anthropological or sociological perspectives of strictly empirical investigation, is made up of those who belong to it at any point in time. From this point of view, the Church is as holy or lacking in holiness, as sinful or as sinless, as those who make up its discernible historical form. The eminent ecumenist, Cardinal E. Cassidy, readily admits that this distinction between the theological and the empirical perspectives is one that "others may find hard to understand, but one which is essential to the church's understanding of herself".[13] Still he insists: "Catholic doctrine does not speak of the church as sinful, but of the members of the church as sinful."[14] John Paul II presumes the same distinction in *Tertio Millennio Adveniente*:

> Hence it is appropriate that, as the Second Millennium of Christianity draws to a close, the Church should become more fully conscious of the sinfulness of her children, recalling all those times in history when they departed from the spirit of Christ and his Gospel and, instead of

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[11] Lonergan, *Method*, 110.
[12] Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 207.
[13] Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 207.
[14] Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 207.

offering to the world the witness of a life inspired by the values of faith, indulged in ways of thinking and acting which were truly *forms of counter-witness and scandal.*

Although she is holy because of her incorporation into Christ, the Church does not tire of doing penance: before God and man [*sic*] *she always acknowledges as her own her sinful sons and daughters.* As *Lumen Gentium* affirms: "The Church, embracing sinners to her bosom, is at the same time holy and always in need of being purified, and incessantly pursues the path of penance and renewal" (LG, 8). (TMA, 33) [italics in original]

The acknowledgment of the sinfulness of the Church's members is poignantly expressed in the Vatican Commission's document on the *Shoah*:

At the end of this Millennium the Catholic Church desires to express her deep sorrow for the failures of her sons and daughters in every age. This is an act of repentance (*teshuva*), since, as members of the Church, we are linked to the sins as well as the merits of all her children. (WR, V)

This same attitude was expressed in a special penitential service presided over by Pope John Paul II in St Peter's Basilica on 12 March as part of the Jubilee Year 2000, the purpose of which was to ask forgiveness "for the sins, past and present, of the sons and daughters of the Church".[15]

Our citation of several ecclesiastical texts acknowledging the sinfulness of the members of the Church and their need for repentance is designed to counter any suggestion of meliorism, that is, the assumption that Christians are better than others.[16] If Christians are to accept a special responsibility in

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[15] John Paul II, Penitential Service, 12 March 2000, cited in Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 214.

[16] For an account of meliorism, see John D'Arcy May, *Interreligious Dialogue: The End of Ecumenism?* (2001 [cited 9 March 2009]); available from <http://www.melbourne.catholic.org.au/eic/documents/Interreligiousdialogue-theendofecumenism_000.doc>. [cited 9 March 2009]); available from <http://www.google.com.au/search?hl=en&q=May%2C+John+D%27Arcy.+%22Interreligious+Dialogue%3A+The+End+of+Ecumenism%3F%22+&btnG=Google+Search&meta=>.

interreligious relations, neither that acceptance nor that responsibility is based on the merit of the members of the Church. It derives, rather, from the theological reality of the Church as a God-given "sign and instrument" (LG, 1) of the salvation offered to all in Christ.

Understood in this way, the basis for the Church's responsibility in interreligious relations resides most formally in Christ, and not in the Church considered, as it were, apart from him. He is the Head, the Church is his Body. From this more Christ-centred point of view, the Church does not possess Christ, nor administer his Spirit, but, along with all others, is possessed by him, and empowered by his Spirit. The following citation from *Dialogue and Proclamation* makes this point powerfully:

> In the last analysis truth is not a thing we possess, but a person by whom we must allow ourselves to be possessed. This is an unending process. While keeping their identity intact, Christians must be prepared to learn and to receive from and through others the positive values of their traditions. Through dialogue they may be moved to give up ingrained prejudices, to revise preconceived ideas, and even sometimes to allow the understanding of their faith to be purified. (DP, 49)

(b) Specifying Christian Responsibility

After qualifying what is meant by a special Christian responsibility in interreligious relations with these three points, I am now in a position to be more specific as to what is entailed. It is worth noting that claiming a special Christian responsibility in interreligious relations is not entirely novel. In *Ecclesiam Suam*, the encyclical which introduced the word "dialogue" into the Catholic magisterium, Pope Paul VI stated:

> We should be eager for the opportune moment and sense the preciousness of time (cf Eph 5:16). Today, every day, should see a renewal of our dialogue. We, rather than those to whom it is directed, should take the initiative. (ES, 77).

Similarly, in September 1990, in his presidential address to the International Catholic-Jewish Liaison Committee in Prague, Cardinal Cassidy, made reference to a special Christian obligation in this regard. As he reflected on the role of Christians in fashioning a "civilisation of love" to overcome the injustices of the past, he made the personal observation:

> Indeed, it seems to me that as Christians, we have a particular obligation to take the initiative in this regard, for the faith that we profess is in a God of love, Who reconciles man [*sic*] to God and man to man. If we are to serve him we must love each and every one of those he has created; and we do that by showing respect and concern for our neighbour, by promoting peace and justice, by knowing how to pardon.[17]

The Cardinal's observation from its particular context in Catholic-Jewish relations may be extended to Catholic relations with believers from all other religions. We begin by endorsing the Cardinal's assertion of Christian faith in the God of love as the source and fount of Christian responsibility.

In the light of Christian revelation, the Church's role in interreligious relations is to reach out to others. This means, in general, to mediate God's love to the world, and, more specifically, to model new ways of relating appropriate to the present age of religious plurality. In view of what we have already suggested, any Christian modelling of interfaith relations will include the humility of sitting at the feet of others and learning from their experience of God. It will mean, too, as a consequence of the theology of the divine missions of the Word and

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[17] Cassidy, *Ecumenism and Interreligious Dialogue*, 194.

Spirit, assisting others to discern the depths and the riches of God's presence and action in their lives. The following three statements found in the documents of Vatican II make exactly this point:

> … whatever good is found sown in people's hearts and minds, or in the rites and customs of peoples, is not only saved from destruction, but is purified, raised up, and perfected for the glory of God. (LG, 17)
>
> So whatever goodness is found in people's minds and hearts, or in the particular customs and cultures of peoples, far from being lost is purified, raised to a higher level and reaches its perfection, for the glory of God, the confusion of the demon, and the happiness of humankind. (AG, 9)
>
> The Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions. It has a high regard for the manner of life and conduct, the precepts and doctrines which, although differing in many ways from its own teaching, nevertheless often reflect a ray of that truth which enlightens all men and women. (NA, 2)

Christian modelling of interfaith relations includes the humility of acknowledging the failures and mistakes of Christians in true repentance, as already mentioned. It means the readiness to ask forgiveness of those who have been injured by harmful attitudes and insensitivities. It expresses a firm purpose of amendment, sincere in itself, but in the hope that others too, by gracious provocation, will freely respond and do likewise. In this regard, the goal is not only reconciliation between Christians and other believers, but also facilitating better relations both among and between believers of other religions.

If Christians, therefore, are to offer a model of interfaith relations, they must proceed with an explicit intention of witnessing to the universal reach of God's love as it has been revealed in Jesus Christ. There can be no question of

imposition or manipulation if the love that Christians have received is to be realistically communicated to others. To the degree that the universal love of God is the guiding principle in interreligious relations (cf. RM, 60), the most profound dynamic of such interrelationships is best described as a mutual self-mediation.[18] This bears fruit in a mutual exchange of the God-given gifts that have been lovingly bestowed that they might be shared.

Should the extended hand of friendship and cooperation meet hostile or even violent rejection, patience and a larger compassion will be the only effective witness to the transcendent love at work.

In New Testament terms, the quality that most captures the essence of the Christian responsibility in interreligious relations is "wakefulness" (cf. Mt 24:42-3; 25:13; 26:38, 40, 41; Mk 13:35, 37; 14:34, 37, 38; 1 Th 5:6), or "watchfulness" (cf. Mt 16:6; Mk 8:15; Mk 13:34).[19] Such qualities suggest an alert readiness to respond to opportunities that open up, and a commitment to draw out the deeper meaning of the experience of people and events in the light of God's universal plan of salvation. This does not mean an overbearing imposition (cf. Mt 18:1-4; 23:11; Mk 9:33-36; Lk 9:46-8; Lk 22:24-26), but an attitude of humble service for the sake of the other. To the degree this responsibility keeps people and what affects them within the collective consciousness—so that no individual or group, religious or secular, is

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[18] For my treatment, see Chapter Three, section 3(a), under the subheading "Mutual Self-Mediation", pp. 117ff.

[19] Citing the New Testament—"Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has given you charge … " (Acts 20:28-31)—Lonergan notes "watchfulness" as the main function of the elders in the early church. From the interior matter of ministry within the church, I am extending "watcfulness" to the church's exterior role of reaching out to the society in which she is immersed.

marginalised—it amounts to the interreligious equivalent of an evangelical "option for the poor". It implies a commitment to the full range of human progress in history, through discernment of the ways of God and compassionate solidarity with the suffering and the poor.

In terms of the analysis presented in this thesis, Christian responsibility in interreligious relations is inhabiting the fifth level of personal presence to, with, and for the religious other. At that most personal point of consciousness, one dwells in the mystery of God's self-giving grace, and is drawn into the divine generosity to oneself and to all others. It risks the vulnerability of self-disclosure that invites but cannot demand a similar response. At this most personal point, one enters into the task of mutual self-mediation in a consciousness of the always ever greater gift of God.

3. Five Areas of Responsibility

Admittedly, despite its radical implications, this expression of a special Christian responsibility in interreligious relations is so generic as to be only of rhetorical value. But it is capable of being developed in more rigorous terms. Here, I will again express myself in terms of the dynamics of consciousness with specific reference to five topics, namely, the stages of meaning, Trinitarian relations, theological virtues, the dignity of the human person, and critical realism.

(a) Transition through Stages of Meaning

The claim to a special Christian responsibility at a critical juncture in history is not without precedent. At pivotal points in human history Christians have made a decisive contribution which helped the people of that time negotiate the crisis and laid the groundwork for subsequent developments. The world is currently undergoing a major cultural shift in the transition from a classicist to an evolutionary world view.[20] In the providential ordering of human history, Christian revelation can again inspire the followers of Christ to make a further decisive contribution at this critical juncture to help society navigate the stormy passage towards a new era in interreligious relations.

Lonergan's analysis describes four stages of control over the expression of meaning: the linguistic, the literary, the logical, and the methodical. Previously I applied that analysis to stages in the appropriation of the Christian message over the course of history.[21] I now revisit those stages, but this time from the point of view of how Christian revelation assisted the transition from one stage to the next, and how it laid the foundation for the subsequent developments that occurred during that further stage.

The Spirit-inspired preaching, teaching and witness of Jesus Christ and the apostles characterises the first, *linguistic stage* of the Church's history, as it moved from Jerusalem and spread around the Mediterranean. This linguistic stage has continued transforming lives through subsequent generations down

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[20] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Three, section 4(b), under the subheading "Application to Interreligious Relations", pp. 138ff.

[21] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Three, under the heading "The Stages of Meaning", pp. 131ff.

to the present. This stage will last until the Christian revelation is communicated as the Gospel of salvation "to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8) and "to the end of the age" (Mt 28:20).

We saw in the previous chapter how in the first centuries of Christian faith there occurred a struggle to articulate the Christological, Pneumatological and Trinitarian implications of the apostolic heritage. As this literary stage of Christian meaning developed, the dogmatic realism of faith challenged the Stoicism and neo-Platonism of the day, and transformed the classic Greek philosophical sense of ultimate reality. Thus, Christian revelation had a special transformative effect on this crucial transition from the linguistic to the literary stage of meaning.[22] The transformation had lasting effects, for this transformed Hellenism was the foundation for the varied achievements that shaped the early Middle Ages. For example, St Augustine, with his Neo-Platonic formation, is considered one of the formative influences for Western civilisation. This same Greek philosophy was translated into Arabic in ninth-century Baghdad and contributed to the flowering of Islamic civilisations over the following centuries. With the subsequent availability of Latin translations, the Scholastics of medieval Europe had a new resource. A new logical stage of meaning was initiated.

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[22] "The statement that Christ is God, that Jesus of Nazareth is God, created Christian philosophy; working from its presuppositions, you are forced to some sort of ontology. At Nicea, there was not an adequate basis provided by any Greek philosophy. The current philosophies of the time were Stoicism, and Platonism and Epicureanism, and none of them would bear the type of thinking represented by the *homoousion,* the *consubstantiale,* of Nicea. A new type of philosophy would have to be developed to enshrine, to be able to include, that notion, a philosophy in terms of existence in the medieval sense. It was not something ready-made that the Fathers borrowed from the Greeks; there was no Greek philosophy they could borrow to express what they concluded from revelation." (Lonergan, "Theology as Christian Phenomenon", 262.) For further hints, see Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The Dehellenization of Dogma", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 22-24.

When that Greek heritage was being translated from Arabic into Latin by Jewish, Christian and Muslim scholars during *La Convivencia* ("the Coexistence") in the eleventh and twelfth centuries in Sicily, Toledo, and Cordoba, medieval Scholastics were able to absorb and transform that learning into a logical stage in Christian meaning. Prominent among the Christian scholars was St Thomas Aquinas.[23] The systematic achievements of the Scholastics paved the way for the fourteenth- to seventeenth-century Renaissance in Europe, which led in turn to the eighteenth-century Enlightenment and subsequent developments. All these cultural achievements can trace their origins to the liberating impact of Christian revelation guiding scholars and thinkers through the transition from the literate to the logical stage of meaning.

The modern world has benefited enormously from the revolutions of modern science and modern scholarship, but it has also suffered the ravages of unrestrained rationalism. Lonergan, seeking to redress this imbalance, found in human consciousness the normative patterns of operation which critically ground all human reflection and action. Where attention to sense data only had led to the explosion of technical knowledge to the detriment of the humanities, Lonergan's generalised empirical method included, with the data of sense, another range of data, namely, the data of consciousness. In this way, the process of knowing was given a broader empirical base. The

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[23] "… the aim of the medieval theologian Thomas of Aquin was to *adapt* Aristotle to Christian living". (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "The World Mediated by Meaning", in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965-1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 115. [italics mine]) "… medieval theologians found in Arabic and Greek thinkers models for imitation and *adaptation*". (Lonergan, "The Functional Specialty 'Systematics'", 186.. [italics mine]) See also John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio*, 37-44.

transition from the abstract conceptualism and immobile philosophical systems to more empirically grounded methodical procedures had been long underway in the world of science. In his appreciation of the success of scientific methods, Lonergan offered a more thoroughgoing critical realism. It opened the possibility of applying the empirically grounded approach to the humanities. Because it is grounded in the diversified activities of human consciousness, Lonergan's method offers the hope of reconciling all fields of human endeavour, including religion. The logical stage of meaning had been proving inadequate to meet the challenges facing contemporary society. In responding to this inadequacy, Lonergan, alert to both the character of Christian revelation and the structures of human consciousness, opened a way forward—from the logical to the methodical stage of meaning. Lonergan's methodical approach has different applications. It can operate in the field of religion in general. More obviously, it has been a major resource for the critical articulation of Christian faith. In its structure, it is applicable to any tradition of religious faith. Because of its wide-ranging applicability, it is a precious resource in fostering interreligious relations.

Christian revelation has played a pivotal role in each of these transitions of meaning from one stage to the next, as evidenced in developments in the articulation of Christian faith and their impact on society. In the light of this history of contributing, the claim that Christians of our day have a special contribution to make in the current transition from the logical to the methodical stage of meaning is not so outlandish after all—especially given the resources and categories provided by Lonergan's work. To the degree that Christians

can develop, refine, model and apply a methodical reflection on their own faith and that of others, they will offer a particular service both in and to today's pluralistic world.

(b) Trinitarian Relations

Christian revelation is Trinitarian. As already stated, the mainstream theological account of the Trinity, employing the psychological analogy, considers the community of the three divine Persons as constituted in their mutual relations by the immanent divine processions of knowledge and love. Reflecting their Trinitarian origin, form and goal, human acts of knowledge and love can be understood as finite participations in Trinitarian life. For example, any knowledge of what is true, real, good and holy is a finite participation in the infinite knowledge of God expressed in the procession of the Word. This conviction inspires a Christian search for the truth of God wherever it is to be found. While the divine Word has been definitively and completely revealed in Christ, this does not mean that the full depth of divine revelation has been exhausted, or that it is possessed in its totality by the Christianity of any era (cf. DP, 32). A prime area in the search of Christian faith for a more inclusive manifestation of divine truth and wisdom is the religious experience of humanity as a whole. In this search, Christians can learn from believers and thinkers of other religious traditions. Vatican II repeatedly expressed the conviction that many elements of truth are found outside the confines of the Church, to promise in their turn a more expansive catholicity of faith and life (cf. LG, 8, 16, 17; AG, 9; NA, 2).

Hence, the more Christian faith contemplates the universal significance of the Word in the life of the Trinity, the more it comes to adore the divine Word manifested throughout human history. Because "all things came into being through him" (Jn 1:3), and because this Word revealed in Christ is "the true light, which enlightens everyone" (Jn 1:9), it is imperative for Christian theology to discern the manifestations of the Word in "all things" and in "everyone" to whom the Johannine Gospel refers. The upwards movement of consciousness has as its goal the full appropriation of the truth. In this way it is a created participation in the generation of the Word in the dialogical life of the Trinity, with positive consequences for a deeper Christian commitment to interfaith dialogue.

Similarly, all acts of human love are finite participations in the infinite love of God, which is the Spirit, the mutual love of the Father and the Son. To the degree Christians receive this divine gift and are conformed to the love of the Spirit, the limited attainments of Christian love occur in a limitless horizon, and are subject to the imperative of ever greater loving. Again, in Johannine language, they must be ready to follow wherever the Spirit blows (cf. Jn 3:8), especially given the manifest action of the Holy Spirit in the lives of all religious believers and people of good will.

By following the open paths of love, Christians become witnesses to the Spirit of love in the world. The gift of love penetrates downwards through all the activities of human consciousness to give it new energies and an ultimate assurance. In this regard, Christian existence is informed and transformed by

the divine Spirit of love breathed forth by the Father and the Son, in what has been termed the "We" of divine communion. To love, then, is to be embraced by this "We", and to extend its embrace to all. As Christian faith adores the active presence of the Holy Spirit in the lives and traditions of other religious believers, it has the character of inter-love communication.

Not only does a commitment to interfaith dialogue and inter-love communication find its basis in the revelation of the Trinity, it promotes also what we have called an "inter-hope conversation". In its hope for the full manifestation of what has been revealed, Christian believers must be intent on both a more adequate expression of what has been disclosed and promised, and a more inclusive realisation of the love that has been given them. The eschatological dimensions of Christian hope are expressed by St Paul as the consummation of history when "God will be all in all" (1 Cor 15:28). Because Christian hope does not limit itself to the salvation of Christians alone, and understands itself as witnessing to the Father's universal salvific will, it addresses the religious other as included, not excluded, from God's saving design. By thus expressing the universal reach of its hope, it prompts the religious other also to account for the universal inclusiveness of their hope—for themselves, for all believers, and for the whole of creation. In the context of this exchange, hope can be enriched and purified, in anticipation of what "eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the human heart conceived, what God has prepared for those who love him" (1 Cor 2:9). The Father, the source and end of the revealed Word and the given

Spirit, is experienced in human history as absence.[24] The ultimate divine self-communication lies in the future. With this sense of "already but not yet", relations between believers from different religions takes on the character of an inter-hope conversation.

This Trinitarian approach to the various qualities of interreligious relations can be conveniently summarised with reference to Lonergan's four dimensions of meaning. *Interfaith dialogue* engages with the various manifestations of the divine Word in history. Hence it has a particular affinity with the cognitive function of meaning. *Inter-love communication* recognises the Holy Spirit acting in the lives of all good people and is most easily aligned with the effective dimension of meaning. *Inter-hope conversation*, reaching toward the future vision of the all-inclusive mystery of the Father, has a special affinity with the constitutive function of meaning, for all are called to be his sons and daughters. Finally, just as the three Persons of the Trinity communicate in the one divine nature, so interfaith dialogue, inter-love communication and inter-hope conversation come together in *interreligious relations* as different aspects of the communicative dimension of meaning. By heeding the imperatives that flow from the Trinitarian revelation of God, Christians exercise their responsibility to guide the history of humanity as "a fraternal journey in which we accompany one another towards the transcendental goal which [God] sets for us". (DP, 79)

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[24] For treatment of the human experience of "the divine absence of the Father", see Frederick E. Crowe, "Rethinking God-With-Us: Categories from Lonergan", *Science et Esprit* XLI, no. 2 (1989), 176-179.

(c) Theological Virtues

In the previous section I correlated faith, hope and love with what was distinctive in the revelation of each of the three Persons of the Trinity. I will now take this further by considering the transformational and motivational significance of the three theological virtues for Christian engagement in interreligious relations.

The three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity are different expressions of grace. They point to a divinising transformation of human persons, in themselves and in relation to others. In reference to Lonergan's treatment of this classic theological topic, Dunne writes, "… wherever Lonergan discusses the religious virtues of faith, charity and hope, he explains how they function to dissolve ideology, enmity and discouragement".[25] As an instance of this, we find Lonergan himself writing:

> It is not propaganda and it is not argument but *religious faith* that will liberate human reasonableness from its ideological prisons. It is not the promises of men [*sic*] but *religious hope* that can enable men to resist the vast pressures of social decay. If passions are to quiet down, if wrongs are not to be exacerbated, not ignored, not merely palliated, but acknowledged and removed, then human possessiveness and human pride have to be replaced by *religious charity*, by the charity of the suffering servant, by self-sacrificing love.[26] [italics mine]

From this text we can draw three implications. First, by confessing faith in Jesus Christ as "Lord and God" (cf. Jn 20:28), precisely because that faith is divinely proportioned, Christians have a God-given capacity to conceive of a union or solidarity that can transcend all historical differences between

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[25] Tad Dunne, *The Next Evolution of Ethics* (2004 [cited 7 September 2006]); available from <http://www.wideopenwest.com/~tdunne5273/NxtEvEth.htm>.
[26] Lonergan, *Method*, 117.

themselves and believers from other religions. Christian faith is the knowledge born of the gift of divine love disclosed in the self-giving of the Crucified—marked by the excess of going "to the point of death, even death on a cross" (Phil 2:8). That transcendent love, so revealed, knows no limits. It is frustrated neither by human antagonisms, divisions, evil, nor by death itself. The revealed knowledge of this love is, therefore, a motive force for unity. Also, because Christian faith acknowledges the lethal consequences of sin as the refusal of God's love, it does not pretend to repressive optimism. Nor can it allow itself to be tempted into naïve irenicism—the evils of conflict and divisions are too evident. But what Christian faith does do, with its awareness of the love of God revealed in the crucified and risen Jesus, is address the presence of evil in all its forms in the light of the always ever greater mystery of love and mercy.

Secondly, by virtue of the express, God-given love in the Spirit, Christians are made potentially capable of bringing about a community of union and reconciliation. By participating in the power of divine love, Christians are impelled to the heights of self-transcendence (cf. 2 Cor 5:14). Following the way of Christ and guided by his Spirit, Christians are called to witness to the self-sacrificing love and forgiveness that introduces a distinctive element in restoring broken relationships and in promoting unity. It finds expression in courage and patience, despite the obstacles to the new possibilities in the history of peoples and religions.

Thirdly, in their hope for the universal fulfilment in the vision of God, Christians are freed to trust in the workings of a transcendent providence directing all to this end. Hope looks—beyond the gifts of God already present in the goodness and beauty of the world and in all its peoples—to the ultimate love that is their source. In its inevitable encounter with the presence of evil in the world, Christian hope inspires continual cooperation with God's love in its redemptive purpose to remedy the wounds of the world by inspiring an ever greater hope (cf. Rom 5:5).

Thus, we have correlated the Word, the Holy Spirit and the Father to the theological virtues of faith, love, and hope. These essential virtues of the Christian character work as motivations to counter ideology, passivity, and despair, respectively. Interfaith dialogue seeks to serve and clarify the religious meanings and values scattered throughout history in the light of the Word. Inter-love communication is intent on celebrating what the believers of different religions already hold in common through the action of the Spirit. Inter-hope conversation looks to the consummation of all the different expressions of religious longings for fulfilment in the One who will be "all in all", the Father, the source and end of all gifts. [27] These different dimensions of interreligious relations are, therefore, based in, and progressively illuminated and energised by, the theological virtues. By motivating Christians to a vigorous involvement in the service of the world of many religions, they are the source of a distinctive kind of leadership.

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[27] For my treatment of "interfaith dialogue", "inter-love communication" and "inter-hope conversation", see Chapter Five, section 3(e) "The Content of Interreligious Dialogue", pp. 232ff.

(d) The Dignity of the Human Person

Christian revelation is distinguished from other revelatory experiences in that it is mediated through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ in the Spirit. Because Christian revelation is focused on what it holds to be the uniquely personal self-disclosure of God in the Person of Christ, questions concerning the reality of personhood have had a distinctive influence in the history of Christian doctrine and theology, especially in the formation of its Christological and Trinitarian teachings.

In the patristic era, the term "person" was used as a heuristic device to answer questions dealing with multiplicity within the One God. What precisely were these three? In what did this threefoldness consist?[28] The subsequent theological effort to name the Father, Son and Holy Spirit as three divine "Persons" led to a deeper understanding of the significance and value of the human person. Aquinas' classic scholastic definition of a person in metaphysical terms is "a distinct subsistent in an intellectual nature".[29] In recent times, more psychological and interpersonal appreciations of personhood have prevailed. Phenomenologically considered, the person is a conscious subject constituted and developing through relationships. In its awareness of the long history of the notion of personhood, Vatican II

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[28] "What, then, is meant by a person? For Augustine the meaning was merely heuristic. The term 'person' denoted what there are three of in the Trinity. There are three: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. What are there three of? Well, there are not three Gods or three Fathers or three Sons or three Spirits. So the name "person" is employed when one desires to have an answer to the question, "Three what?" [Lonergan's note: Augustine, *De Trinitate,* VII, iv, 7; PL. 42, 939]" (Bernard J.F. Lonergan, "Philosophy and Theology", in *A Second Collection. Papers by Bernard J.F. Lonergan SJ*, ed. William F.J. Ryan SJ and Bernard J. Tyrrell SJ (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996), 199.)

[29] Quoted in Bernard J.F. Lonergan, *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran, trans. Michael G. Shields, vol. 7, *Collected Works of Bernard Lonergan* (Toronto, Buffalo, London: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 41.

expressed the conviction that "Christian revelation led to the articulation and concept of the person, and gave it a divine, Christological, and Trinitarian meaning". (GS, 42)

Already implied in our treatment of Christian revelation so far, salvation, along with its communitarian and cosmic dimensions, is radically personal. Each human person is drawn into a personal relationship with each of the three divine Persons, in order to participate in the life of the Trinity. In this regard, the ultimate destiny of the human person is to be deified, that is, to be conformed to the intra-personal life of the Triune God. As treated previously, the human person is created in the image of God, and called to a progressive realisation of that image throughout its history.

In the context of interreligious relations, it is of the utmost significance that Christian testimony acknowledges that all human beings, irrespective of age, sex, culture or religion, are persons bearing the divine image. Because the supreme value of the human person is central to Christian revelation, Christians, to the degree they reverence the value of the person, have a particular responsibility to see their mission as one of building relations between persons, and in promoting personal values in all domains of life.

Despite the early theological emergence of the notion of person, its full historical realisation in social structures has been a long time coming— including, we must admit, in the life of the Church itself. Yet, with its biblical roots in the *imago Dei,* and its theological foundations in Trinitarian and

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Christological doctrine, it remains a continuing provocation in culture, society, religion and the Church. The dignity of the person is the highest value in creation, recognised as such by God. It cannot be sacrificed to other concerns—be they economic, political or even religious.[30] Indeed, the inviolable dignity of the human person is the basis of the Catholic Church's social teaching, as the following quotations show:

> Men and women, in the concrete circumstances of history, represent the heart and soul of Catholic social thought. The whole of the Church's social doctrine, in fact, develops from the principle that affirms the inviolable dignity of the human person. (CSDC, 107)

> Therefore the duty most consonant with our times, especially for Christians, is that of working diligently for fundamental decisions to be taken in economic and political affairs, both on the national and international level which will everywhere recognize and satisfy the right of all to a human and social culture in conformity with the dignity of the human person without any discrimination of race, sex, nation, religion or social condition. (GS, 60)

> At the heart of our common European heritage—religious, cultural and juridical—is the notion of the inviolable dignity of the human person, which implies inalienable rights conferred not by governments or institutions but by the Creator alone, in whose image human beings have been made (cf. Gen 1:26).[31]

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* sums up the grounds for and implications of the inviolable dignity of the human person:

> The dignity of the human person is rooted in his [*sic*] creation in the image and likeness of God (article 1); it is fulfilled in his vocation to divine beatitude (article 2). It is essential to a human being freely to direct himself to this fulfillment (article 3). By his deliberate actions (article 4), the human person does, or does not, conform to the good promised by God and attested by moral conscience (article 5). Human beings make their own contribution to their interior growth; they make their whole sentient and spiritual lives into means of this growth (article

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[30] I use the word "religious" not in Lonergan's traditional sense, but in the precise sense defined in this thesis, that is, of a divinely inspired but nonetheless fully human expression of spirituality.

[31] John Paul II, *Address of the Holy Father John Paul II on the Occasion of the Commemoration of the Fiftieth Anniversary of the European Convention on Human Rights* (2000 [cited 29 September 2008]); available from <http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/john_paul_ii/speeches/2000/oct-dec/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20001103_convention-human-rights_en.html>.

6). With the help of grace they grow in virtue (article 7), avoid sin, and if they sin they entrust themselves as did the prodigal son to the mercy of our Father in heaven (article 8). In this way they attain to the perfection of charity. (CCC, 1700)

Given this tradition, one contribution that Christians can make to interreligious relations is a faith-based insistence on the inviolable dignity of the human person. This will mean setting a practical example by respecting all others in their personal dignity, and cooperating with them in the promotion of personal values, above all, in the world of religion.

(e) Critical Realism and Theological Method

I have had occasion to point out how all religions can derive great benefit from a theological method such as Lonergan's.[32] Admittedly, the method has been articulated by a particular Catholic theologian and in relation to the concerns of Christian faith. Yet he also indicated that it applies to any sphere of scholarly studies.[33] I have exploited this "framework of collaborative creativity" to further the theory and practice of interreligious relations. This has included suggesting some of the ways in which Christian faith can realise more fully its responsibilities in its encounters with believers and traditions of other faiths. There is no reason, however, why such a method might not be employed by theologians and religious thinkers of these other religions to critically establish, clarify, communicate and apply the meaning and values of their respective religious commitments—and thereby enhance their respective contributions to the religious world of humanity. Hence, even if only on this

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[32] See Chapter Six, section 4(d) "Ecclesiology", pp. 298ff. I show how analysis of the dynamics of consciousness illuminates elements of the Christian tradition, and suggest that a similar analysis is possible in other religions. I make some tentative preliminary suggestions in that regard in Chapter Eight, under the heading "Specific Contribution", in the final point, pp. 355f.

[33] Lonergan, *Method*, 364-367.

general level, the methodical contribution of Christian intelligence to the interreligious situation is significant. Theological dialogue would be greatly enriched if, say, Jewish, Muslim, Hindu or Buddhist theologians and religious philosophers adopted the structure and categories of Lonergan's method. Both the collaboration and the creativity envisaged in such a methodological framework need not be limited to a comparatively small number of mainly Catholic theologians specialising in Lonergan studies. It would begin to operate in a much larger field, to the benefit of all involved.

More specifically, a Christian contribution to interreligious relations is most fundamentally to be found in what is usually described as "critical realism".[34] Theology is faith seeking understanding by critically elaborating its procedures and terms, in order to express the realities that faith intends in a philosophically and scientifically respectable manner. This realist concern is not, in the first place, the result of adopting a particular philosophy or scientific outlook. It arises from the character of Christian revelation itself. The self-disclosure of the Trinitarian Mystery brings together both the inner and outer realms of experience, as the Spirit of love inspires faith to discern the objective reality of the Word made flesh amongst us. In an intensely compact statement, Doran, a leading authority on Lonergan's thought, surmises:

> Perhaps only a Christian theologian could have articulated critical realism, for only with the horizon informing such a theologian's tradition are the objects of intentional consciousness so obviously such as to require the understanding of analogous insight and the assent of unconditioned judgment as the exclusive medium of their truth. But prior to the emergence of that medium in the formulation and articulation of the doctrines believed, there is the manifestation to the eye of love of the splendour of God's truth. And only to one who has

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[34] For my summary treatment, see Chapter Three, section 5(e) "Critical Realism", pp. 144ff.

seen that manifestation is the word of its intelligent and reasonable proclamation available as something to which one can assent, and which one can continue to speak in ways that disclose ever new facets of the original beauty of the self-revealing and self-communicating God.[35]

Citing this comment, Ormerod notes that Doran is not claiming that critical realism is an exclusively Christian phenomenon. He gives the example of the philosophy of Aristotle as an instance of a critical realism emerging outside of a Christian context. But Ormerod goes on to argue that the reception of Christian revelation heightens the probability of the emergence and development of critical realism. He writes:

> … there is still the question of the probability of sustaining such a philosophical position so that it can generate a tradition of rationality, that is, a tradition of philosophical argument, debate, controversy and genuine achievement. This probability is greatly increased when critical realism is coupled with a Christian revelation which demands such a realism to explicate the reality of what has been revealed. It is further increased by a flourishing Christian community with its own social and cultural forms which can sustain such a tradition. In Lonergan's terms, revelation shifts both the probability of emergence and the probability of survival of the scheme of recurrence of the objective meanings we have identified as "critical realism."[36]

Some form of critical realism, whether or not it is explicitly formulated, is crucial to building interreligious relations. Communication in this context aims at getting to know other persons in their deepest commitments, and allowing oneself to be known by others in that way. This entails an exchange in regard to the meanings and values that inform the lives of all parties involved. But if that exchange is to be effective, it presupposes a critical grasp of what is involved in the compound process of knowing—either the other, or, for that matter, oneself. Otherwise such communication will be based on mere

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[35] Doran, *Theology and History*, 165.
[36] Ormerod, *Method, Meaning and Revelation*, 253-254.

impressions or bright ideas or noble ideals without any established basis in reality. On the other hand, to the degree there is a shared critical understanding of the process of knowing and becoming, believers can grow in coming to understand themselves, others, and ultimately, God, and bring forth the fruit of mutual love and appreciation. Lonergan, in fact, considers critical realism, with its aim in objective knowing, to be a feature of genuine interpersonal communication, beyond the mere management of others. He writes:

> It is quite true that the subject communicates not by saying what he [*sic*] knows but by showing what he is, and it is no less true that subjects are confronted with themselves more effectively by being confronted with others than by solitary inspection. But such acts by themselves only ground a technique for managing people; and managing people is not treating them as persons. To treat them as persons one must know and one must invite them to know. A real exclusion of objective knowing, so far from promoting, only destroys personalist values.[37]

In these ways, Christian revelation inspires critical realism. Because faith in Christ brings an awareness of being known and loved in our human reality, it implies a new transcendent and eschatological identity in the believer (cf. 1 Cor 13:12; 1 Jn 3:2). From this awareness flow new responsibilities: to build relationships of respect, freedom and love with all peoples in accord with God's universal salvific plan.

In the interreligious context, Christians exercise a beneficent form of leadership by modelling and facilitating communication based in the deepest form of self-appropriation for all involved. But without a shared critical realism, such self-appropriation will be the appropriation of a false, superficial or

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[37] Lonergan, "Cognitional Structure", 220-221.

alienated self, and so corrupt the respectful collaboration that is intended.[38] If, however, the self-transcending objectivity of critical realism comes into play, the self that is appropriated is the self that is ever reaching beyond itself, dispossessing itself of historical bias, confessing its sins and correcting the errors of its past. Not only is this self on the way to the realisation of its ultimate identity, but also it becomes an authentic source of truth and love.

4. Summary

In this Chapter I have argued that the culminating self-revelation of God in Christ sheds light on the dynamics of consciousness. Since these same dynamics constitute persons and religions, and mediate the structural and interpersonal relations between them—Chapters Two to Four—I proposed that Christians have a particular responsibility for leadership in interreligious relations. After justifying that specific claim, I filled it out by detailing five points: stages in the development of meaning, Trinitarian relations, theological virtues, the dignity of the human person, and critical realism.

What I have suggested in no way replaces a personal and direct engagement with people of other faiths. On the contrary, it actually requires and demands such exchange. The more such experience and engagement in interreligious relations grows, the surer and more refined will be the Christian theology it inspires in its service—in the hope that a similar development will occur in the other traditions as well.

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[38] For an account of the human subject, see Lonergan, "The Subject"..

In the next and final chapter, I will summarise the contribution of my thesis, and set it in the context of the contemporary world situation that was the point of departure for this project.

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CHAPTER EIGHT: THESIS CONTRIBUTION

Context

As a Columban missionary priest assigned to Pakistan over twenty years I witnessed both the best and the worst of Christian-Muslim relations. My personal experience of attraction to the ideals of religious cooperation and revulsion at its breakdown is a microcosm of what is happening in today's world.

At the dawn of the third millennium, believers from different religions are living and working side by side in ways that are unprecedented in human history. Christian Churches, organisations and theologians have engaged this new reality of religious plurality. Leaders, scholars and representative bodies from other religions have done likewise from their own perspectives.

The Second Vatican Council was a watershed in the Catholic Church's position on other religions, and is widely acknowledged as such by other Churches and other religions. The openness, positive attitude, and ideals enunciated in its documents inspired a range of interreligious initiatives at international, national, diocesan and parish levels. Representatives of other religions reciprocated and also made their own overtures.

However, the euphoria of high expectations mellowed and matured as participants experienced the complexities of interreligious relations—suspicion

that this was a covert strategy for conversion, historical baggage that hindered relations, finding appropriate translations from one language to another, and the same words in one language having different meanings in different traditions, and so on.

Moreover, as deeper explorations into one's own and each others' religions went ahead, interreligious relations became a contested area in Christian theology. Had dialogue replaced Christian mission? Was dialogue a betrayal of Christian mission? How could one be faithful to the Church's traditional teaching on Jesus Christ, the Trinity, the role of the Church and yet, at the same time, be open to the truths and values found in other religions? How could one be open to other religions without compromising core Christian teachings? Magisterial and papal teachings addressed these and other questions. Theologians continued to explore this new frontier. Models and paradigms were proposed, debated, refined. The magisterium monitored the process and set parameters. Theological opinions that were seen to transgress the patrimony of the Church were censured. And similar struggles were going on in other Christian Churches and in other religions.

Contestation was much broader than the theological academies of the different religions and flowed over into society. Believers and secularists both asserted contrary claims, and the role of religion in the public square became increasingly contested. As the twentieth century unfolded, fundamentalists of both secular and religious persuasion aggressively promoted their ideological positions. Whenever the absolute commitment proper to religion was used,

misused and abused for ulterior purposes it fostered fanaticism, even to the extent of condoning and sometimes perpetrating terrorist activities against perceived "enemies". Although violence, bombings, and hijackings violate cardinal principles of religion and misrepresent the mainstream of their traditions, extremists from several religions adopted these tactics to secure their aims. Secular leaders too committed atrocities in furthering their political, social, ethnic and economic agendas.

Christian Responsibility

At this critical juncture in human history, this thesis argues that Christians have a special responsibility to give leadership in interreligious relations. They are called to live their Christian faith with authenticity, to articulate it in terms that are compatible with this new stage in human history, and so model the method of religious living in a multi-religious world. Their example of self-critically appropriating their Christian heritage, confronting and confessing its ambiguities, promoting its achievements, learning from others, and promoting collaboration, cooperation, and critique will encourage and challenge believers from the different religions, individually and collectively, to do likewise, and together with Christians to bring their invaluable spiritual, religious and moral resources to bear on the social, ethical, moral and ecological issues of our day.

The argument of this thesis is based on the dynamics of human consciousness as articulated in Bernard Lonergan's intentionality analysis.

The dynamics of human self-transcendence structure the consciousness of every human person, and of every human community, including religions. Accordingly these dynamics are normative and form a "common ground" on which believers from different religions might meet. Moreover, when caught up in the gratuitousness of God's love freely given, the same dynamics form a "common horizon" within which believers from different religions might meet. Thus, identifying and describing these dynamics is a foundational contribution for promoting better relations between believers from different religions, and for their collective service to the world.

Further, by reflecting more specifically on Christian faith in terms of these same self-transcending dynamics, and the light that Christian revelation in turn sheds on these dynamics, I suggested a number of features of a special Christian responsibility in the promotion of interreligious relations in today's multi-religious context.

Specific Contribution

Building on the foundations that Lonergan laid, the contribution of my thesis is fivefold.

First, through over four years of sustained reading, reflecting, and writing on Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of human consciousness, by applying that analysis to the issues of interreligious relations, by correcting and re-correcting my application of that analysis over the several drafts of this thesis,

I have refined and developed that analysis in two significant areas. The first concerns moral knowledge. Lonergan had already identified the good as a distinct notion. By applying *Insight* into *Method* I have grounded coming to know the good in the same three-fold dynamic process that Lonergan had identified for knowing anything at all. This makes possible a critical establishment of the good. Thus identifying the elements that constitute the common good of particular societies and indeed the world is not subject to personal whim or the shifting moods of public opinion, but can in principle be attentively, intelligently and reasonably established—which begs the question that it then be responsibly implemented. The second area addresses that further challenge. By identifying the process of coming to know the good as a distinct moral mode of consciousness, the fourth way in which consciousness operates stands out in bold relief. It is the area of personal deliberation and responsibility, of relations with self, others, and God. It tests and confirms or disproves the intellectual, moral, psychic, ecological and religious-spiritual integrity of the subject. This is most clearly achieved in the the meeting of persons, in the interpersonal encounter of dialogue. The basic method identified by Lonergan, and the modest modifications to it that I propose, lay the foundations for the rest of my argument for a special Christian responsibility in interreligious relations.

Secondly, my thesis identifies the turbulence of this present moment in history and the sometimes violent contestations between religions and between religious and secular worldviews as the transition from the logical stage to the methodical stage, from a classical, static world view to an evolutionary,

dynamic world view, and it challenges Christians to rise to the level of the times, to appropriate their own tradition in accord with this new way of being human, and to develop new ways of relating with believers from different religions in today's world of religious plurality.

Thirdly, it invites Christians to engage in interreligious relations without compromising their genuine faith commitments. For example, popular wisdom finds the Christian confession of the Trinity a stumbling block in interreligious relations. However, applying Lonergan's method, I have drawn on traditional Trinitarian teaching as a motivational and transformational force for building new relations with believers from other religions, providing the specific contribution that Christians make to that enterprise. First, Christian revelation of the three persons of the Holy Trinity grounds Christian respect for the dignity of all persons, no matter what their religious beliefs.[39] Secondly, the recovery of the invisible missions of the Word and the Spirit suggest how God becomes present among all peoples "in a way known to God" (cf. GS, 22) without trampling the mystery of that divine intervention, while the visible missions of the Word and the Spirit—especially in the life, death, resurrection of Jesus and the outpouring of the Spirit—prolonged in history in the Church, patiently seek the unveiling of that hidden presence and celebrate its disclosure.[40] In this ecclesial and missionary enterprise, dialogue and proclamation, corresponding to the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness, operate in tandem, constituting a type of interreligious

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[39] For my account see Chapter Seven, section 3(d) "The Dignity of the Human Person", pp. 358.
[40] For my account see Chapter Six, section 4(c), under the subheading "Divine Missions", pp. 288.

progress in service of the global community.[41] Finally, my correlation of the theological virtue of faith with the Word, of love with the Spirit, and of hope with the Father,[42] gives added personal impetus to what I have described as interfaith dialogue, inter-love communication, and inter-hope conversation, all of which together constitute interreligious relations.[43] Grounded in their own Christian identity and vocation, and assured of the common destiny of participation in the inner life of the Trinity to which all are called, Christians can engage with believers from other religions freely and openly, with authenticity and integrity. This means an honest openness in learning from others, all the while compatible with a readiness to share the hope that is within them (cf. 1 Pet 3:15).[44]

Fourthly, I have shown that interreligious relations are not a covert strategy for a new Christian imperialism. Nor do they yield to any other hegemony, secular or religious, that might wish to impose itself. Rather than any particular content as such, which can only end up as being static and out-of-date, what I have proposed is a dynamism, a method, a way of processing the vast amount of information about different religions that contemporary critical

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[41] For my account see Chapter Six, section 4(e) "Dialogue and Proclamation", pp. 303.

[42] For my account see Chapter Seven, section 3(b) "Trinitarian Relations", pp. 351.

[43] For my account see Chapter Five, section 3(e) "The Content of Interreligius Dialogue", pp. 232.

[44] Confirmation of the Trinitarian grounds of the Christian motivation and contribution to interreligious relations is found in Pope Benedict's latest encyclical, *Caritas in Veritate*, on integral human development, published as I was finalising the manuscript of my thesis, where he writes: "The theme of development can be identified with the inclusion-in-relation of all individuals and peoples within the one community of the human family, built in solidarity on the basis of the fundamental values of justice and peace. This perspective is illuminated in a striking way by the relationship between the Persons of the Trinity within the one divine Substance. The Trinity is absolute unity insofar as the three divine Persons are pure relationality. The reciprocal transparency among the divine Persons is total and the bond between each of them complete, since they constitute a unique and absolute unity. God desires to incorporate us into this reality of communion as well: "that they may be one even as we are one" (Jn 17:22). The Church is a sign and instrument of this unity. Relationships between human beings throughout history cannot but be enriched by reference to this divine model. In particular, *in the light of the revealed mystery of the Trinity*, we understand that true openness does not mean loss of individual identity but profound interpenetration." [italics in original] (CIV, 54)

scholarship makes available, and in particular a new way for religious believers to relate to civil authorities and to each other on the basis of equality, respect and mutual cooperation in realising God's universal salvific will and for meeting the challenges inherent in this new age of global history. The mutual self-mediation implied in interreligious relations finds expression in mutual learning, and mutual concern, which includes also mutual correction. The goal is that all participants in the dialogue grow in understanding, knowledge and appreciation of themselves, of others, of the world and its history—and of the self-revealing God who is its origin and destiny.

Finally, since this thesis seeks to contribute to a Christian theology of interreligious relations, it is addressed primarily to Christians. Nonetheless, believers from other religions can also benefit. The principles that underlie my exposition, being drawn from Lonergan's intentionality analysis, are grounded in the dynamics of consciousness. Since these are common to all human beings—to all believers of whatever spiritual, religious or secular tradition—I expect all such others to be able to identify these dynamics in themselves and to trace similar patterns in their own histories and religions. For example, I have shown that the upwards and downwards movements of consciousness throw light on the distinctions made between the Old Testament and the New in the Bible, between the Gospels and the Epistles in the New Testament, between the Eastern and Western branches of the Church, between Protestant and Catholic in Western Christianity, and between Scripture and Tradition in Catholic Christianity.[45] In other religious or spiritual contexts, an

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[45] For my account see Chapter Six, section 4 (d) "Ecclesiology", pp. 298.

application of this kind of critical analysis can throw light on habitually employed distinctions. The Jewish distinction between the Law and the Prophets, the Muslim distinction between the Qur'an and Sunnah, the Buddhist distinction between Theravada and Mahayana, and the Hindu distinction between Vaishnava and Śaivite can all be treated in analogously similar ways. By identifying comparative patterns in the different religions, a mutually enriching discussion can be promoted. A shared critical realism makes possible a refined self-knowledge and thus supports the self-transcendence that leads to genuine collaboration in the interests of interreligious relations and world progress.

Conclusion

I am fully aware that the task I have outlined so summarily is in fact enormous. It involves the collaboration of many people, in each of the religious traditions singly (and of all their denominations) and all of them collectively, over many generations. However, Bernard Lonergan's analysis of the dynamics of consciousness underlying all these traditions is a valuable resource for the journey. Lonergan's method points to the way ahead and makes for good communication among one's fellow travellers. It is a dynamic tool that can be adjusted and fine-tuned in accord with new developments and to counter new obstacles. Lonergan's words serve as an epilogue for my own project that has so depended on his achievements, and as a prologue for the task that lies ahead of all believers at the beginning of the third millennium:

> There is bound to be formed a solid right that is determined to live in a world that no longer exists. There is bound to be formed a scattered

left, captivated by now this, now that new development, exploring now this and now that new possibility. But what will count is a perhaps not numerous center, big enough to be at home in both the old and the new, painstaking enough to work out one by one the transition to be made, strong enough to refuse half measures and insist on complete solutions even though it has to wait.[46]

As a Christian missionary committed to the challenging task of interreligious relations, to all believers in every religion and none, to all devout believers who feel confused and disoriented by the religious plurality of our day, to religious fundamentalists who take refuge in their religion and use it to avoid personal responsibility, to extremists who resort to violence and use their religion against others to cover their own insecurities, to non-believers who justify their non-belief by blaming religion for the divisiveness and violence infesting the human condition, I address the greeting and blessing of the risen Christ (Lk 24:36; Jn 20:19, 21, 26):

שָׁלוֹם עֲלֵיכֶם
(shalom aleichem)

εἰρήνη ὑμῖν
(eirēnē umin)

Pax vobiscum

السلام عليكم
(al-salām ᶜalay-kum)

السلام يكون معكم
(al-salām yakūn maᶜ-kum)

"Peace be with you."

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[46] Lonergan, "Dimensions of Meaning", 245.

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