

STUDY MATERIALS: Philosophy for Theologians

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PART 1: INTRODUCTION

Lesson 1: Theology Needs Reasoned Reflection on Human Experience

1) Pope John II's Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (Faith and Reason) defends the power of human intelligence to arrive by its natural powers at least some certain truths. This defense was made necessary because in today's culture the "information explosion" with all its discordant and self-interested voices has led to a widespread skepticism or relativism about objective truth. There is a "hermeneutic of suspicion" that undermines all trust and claims one opinion is as good as another. This is not a new phenomenon; since at the beginning of Western scientific culture among the Greeks there were also the Sophists who were relativists and the Skeptics who argued that no statement is certain, not even the statement that "No truth is certain." Such despair of reason, however, is not truly critical thinking, but simply abandonment of any real effort to think. Some Christians respond to this situation by granting that human intelligence is so depraved through sin that we must simply put blind faith in God. Catholic Christianity, however, although it also teaches that human intelligence has been clouded by sin and needs redemption through grace, has always defended the power of our God-given reason, when it is rightly used, to arrive at least a few truths with certitude. Faith is not irrational, but redeems and perfects human reason and human reason, because it is the Creator's gift, can be of great help both in preparing the way for faith and in deepening it. That is why St. Anselm wisely defined theology as "faith seeking understanding."

2) We should, therefore, distinguish between *human knowledge* achieved by our purely human powers of experience, our senses, imagination, and reason, from *revealed knowledge* given us through the inspired Sacred Scriptures as they express Sacred Tradition and are rightly interpreted and enriched by it. Today the term "experience" is often used in a very broad way to include both natural human experience and supernatural graced experience. Indeed in actual practice these are not always easy to distinguish. Christian faith, however, is not in the strict sense an "experience" since it is "the evidence of things not seen" (Heb 11:1), yet believers can experience the effect of faith in their lives through their growth in love of God and neighbor. Properly speaking, therefore, "experience" refers first to what we learn through our senses and the intellectual insight and reasoning by which we separate in this data the essential from the irrelevant for the practical and contemplative purposes we have in mind.

3) Because theology or "sacred teaching" (*sacra doctrina*) as St. Thomas Aquinas calls it, is "faith seeking understanding" it must somehow express and explain the Word of God in terms that come from this human experience. Only in this way can its mysteries that exceed human understanding be made gradually more and more meaningful to us.

As John Paul II says, this process of rational understanding particularly concerns the "ultimate questions" of human life: Is there a God? Is God personal? For what destiny did God make us and the world we live in? What must we do to attain that destiny? As we grow in this understanding we also have the responsibility to share this saving truth with others who perhaps are still in the dark. This means that theology must be able to speak to our culture and its people in terms that are familiar to them, yet without adulterating the Word of God. But why do we need "philosophy" to do that? Is it not the case that few people in our culture study philosophy or know enough about it to understand its complex and obscure concepts? This objection is sound if we take "philosophy" only in the narrow sense in which it is often understood today to mean either (a) "metaphysics," "the science of being as being," i.e. a very advanced kind of thinking whose validity is rejected by many of our contemporaries; or to mean (b) simply the "clarification of language" as many professional philosophers today use the term; or finally (c) simply as the history of disputes among schools of thought. In this course, however, "philosophy" will be used in the sense that the Greeks used it, and as was common up to about 1700 to mean *all kinds of human knowledge that are grounded in carefully examined basic assumptions*. If students of theology do not recognize the use or misuse by theologians of this type of knowledge how can they use rightly it to seek understanding of the Word of God?

Readings

Read John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* and Dulles, *The Craft of Theology*, pp. 119-133

Questions

1. What does the study of "philosophy" in its original, broad sense include?
2. What is the difference of philosophy in this broad sense from theology?
3. Is philosophy only "the clarification of the language of other disciplines"?
4. Are "metaphysics" and "philosophy" the same study?
5. Why is it a waste of time to study theology without adequate preparation in philosophy in this broad sense?

Lesson 2: Choosing an Epistemological Approach to Human Experience

1) Ours is a pluralistic culture in which there are many approaches to reality even among scientists. Hence it is helpful to make at least a broad classification of such approaches so as to be able to identify their different assumptions. This applies especially to reading works in theology, since different approaches to secular knowledge will affect the author's way of interpreting Gospel revelation. The most basic way to classify such approaches is by the *criteria of truth* that is used in each, since this affects the value of every conclusion an author makes. To identify and classify such criteria is the work of what is commonly called "epistemology." Every art and science has its own epistemology, since obviously its way of verifying its conclusions (or falsifying other hypotheses) must be part of its own foundations. It pertains to what is called "metaphysics," however, to compare and give a general critique of *all* these special epistemologies.

2) On the basis of difference in general epistemology three major traditions can be identified in the history not only of western but of world thought. (a) There is the difference between *materialist* and *spiritualist* worldviews. For materialists all truth must reduce to what can be observed by our senses or inferred from such observations to be material. Hence usually *materialists* recognize natural science as the ultimate science and the most reliably true form of human knowledge. Among the Greeks, the Stoics and Epicureans were materialists and in India also the Carvaka School. Today materialism is supported by the success of modern science and widely accepted by secularists. At the other extreme is (b) the *spiritualist* world that defends the existence of non-material or spiritual reality and either denies the reality of the sensible, material world or reduces it to an illusory or shadowy existence or at least puts no trust in the certainty of knowledge based on the senses. This was the position taken among the Greeks by Parmenides and by Plato. Plato's views were systematized by the Neo-Platonists such as Plotinus (third century AD) and strongly influenced Christian theology. Neo-Platonism holds that certain knowledge can be derived only from *innate ideas* recovered by introspection.

3) The middle position (c) between the extremes of materialism and spiritualism was taken by a pupil of Plato, Aristotle. He rejected Plato's innate ideas and agreed with the materialists that all valid human knowledge must be derived from and be tested by sense experience. On the other hand he also rejected the materialists denial of the existence of spiritual reality, because he argued that *natural science based on sense experience demonstrates the existence of a First Cause that is spiritual and of a human intelligence that is also spiritual, although it depends on the First Cause for its existence and requires the body and its senses to arrive at truth*. Thus for Aristotle natural science is basic to all human knowledge but it establishes its own limits by showing that reality includes both material and spiritual beings. Hence he developed *metaphysics* as the study of both material and spiritual beings and their relationships, while recognizing that

our knowledge of spiritual reality is only *analogical*, since it is based on reasoning from sensible effects to their ultimate immaterial causes.

4) When Christianity moved from its Jewish, Old Testament origins into Greco-Roman (Hellenistic) culture, Christian theologians had to interpret the Bible in terms of Greek thought. Since they could not accept the materialism of the Stoics and Epicureans, and since at that time the middle-of-the-road thought of Aristotle was little known (his major works were lost for many years) Christian theologians had to work with Platonism and Neo-Platonism. They could not, of course, deny the Biblical teaching that the Creator had made the material world "very good" (Gn 1:31) nor the bodily Incarnation and the Resurrection nor could they accept the Platonic belief in the cycle of "reincarnation of the soul." Yet the negative Platonic attitude to the body and the notion that truth can be arrived at only by introspection had a distorting tendency on Christian thought throughout Patristic (to about 600 AD) and Monastic (600 to 1200 AD) theology.

5) In the West in the medieval universities (1200 AD and after) Aristotle first became known through the Islamic Arab theologians who were Neo-Platonic in tendency. Due to the major influence of St. Augustine this Platonized use of Aristotle persisted in the Franciscan school with Bonaventure, Duns Scotus, and Ockham. The Dominican St. Thomas Aquinas first broke with Platonic epistemology. Aquinas' use of Aristotle's philosophy made it possible for him to give a more adequate account of certain essential Christian convictions: (a) God as creator and the reality of creation (the real distinction of essence and existence in creatures, their identity in God); (b) a non-dualistic anthropology; (c) "Grace perfects nature." In the Late Medieval period the Franciscan William of Ockham introduced Nominalism rooted in a Platonic epistemology and a radical Aristotelian logicism that had a fideistic tendency, that is, a gap between philosophy and revealed theology. This prepared the way for a radical Neo-Platonism (the Dominican Meister Eckhart) and the Protestant Reformation and religious wars between Catholics and Protestants and among Protestant sects. Protestantism generally rejected the use of philosophy in theology and returned to a radical and usually fundamentalist Biblicism. In the Catholic Counter-Reformation led by the Jesuits, Francisco Suarez, SJ, proposed a reconciliation of Thomist Aristotelianism and Scotistic Platonism, but one that was epistemology and metaphysically more Platonic. In this conception metaphysics becomes all of philosophy and is prior to all the other sciences that simply are its applications. With the Cartesian Leibnitz this Scotistic conception of metaphysics prevailed until attacked by Kant, but tended to color the Neo-Scholastic revival of Thomism.

Readings

Read: Bonsor, *Athens and Jerusalem*, pp. 3-100. Note diagram on p. 2.

Questions

1. What is meant by the "epistemologies of the special sciences" and "metaphysical epistemology?"

2. What are the extremes of materialist and Platonic epistemologies?
3. What was Aristotle's "middle ground" between these extremes?
4. Why was Christian theology Platonic until the rise of the medieval universities?
5. How has Platonism served Christian theology? How has it distorted it?

Lesson 3: The Intellectual Ambiguities of Contemporary Culture

1) What is now called "modern" thought and culture was initiated by the skepticism and irrationalism raised by the religious wars of the Reformation and Counter-Reformation. To escape this skepticism René Descartes (1596-1650) a mathematician and, along with Galileo, a leader in modern natural science, proposed a new version of the Platonist epistemology based on innate ideas (*Cartesianism*) according to which certitude comes not from sense knowledge but from "clear and distinct ideas" like those of mathematics. This is the "turn to the subject" basic to all modern schools of philosophy. Its slogan is *Cogito Ergo Sum* (I think, therefore I am). In other words, what we are most certain of is not the external "objective" world of the senses but our own introspective knowledge of our thoughts as self-conscious and free "subjects." This approach has been basic to all modern philosophy and in Continental Europe to this day is fundamental to philosophical education as is apparent in such Vatican II theologians as Karl Rahner, a "Transcendental Thomist" and the Canadian Bernard Lonergan for whom the starting point for theology is the human *subject* confronted by the world ("Spirit in the World"). In its more extreme forms, as in the philosopher Husserl (1859-1938), this is epistemologically *idealism*. Its roots are in the Platonic tradition, but while Plato was an *objective* idealist (he held the Ideas to be real beings independent of his thought), Cartesianism tends to *subjective* idealism (all we are certain of is our own thoughts).

2) In Great Britain there was a reaction against Cartesian idealism in favor of *empiricism* that tended to the materialist extreme. Yet this British empiricism did not really escape Cartesianism because with John Locke (1632-1704) it taught that what we know is only our sense *impressions* not the material realities themselves, and thus it did not clearly distinguish between concrete sense data and abstract intellectual analysis of that data as Aristotle had done. British Empiricism generally denies the possibility of a metaphysics of both material and spiritual reality and places its trust only in a natural science confined to the material world.

3) To save natural science and the validity of human reason Immanuel Kant (1724-1804) proposed a form of idealism that held that although we cannot know the

material world in itself, we can form general scientific natural laws about it as hypotheses that fit our sense experiences. These laws have universal validity in that they are based on *categories innate in all human minds* (these categories take the place of Plato's and Descartes' ideas). Thus truth is no longer "the conformity of the mind to things" as the ancients thought, but simply *consistency* in the model of reality that we mentally create. Kantianism has deeply influenced modern science that often contents itself with a hypothetical-deductive method that fits mathematical models to sense observations without claiming to describe reality itself.

4) Unfortunately this "turn to the subject" has led in our times once again to skepticism and deconstructionism. Among British Empiricists, David Hume (1711-1776) argued for skepticism even as regards natural science, since, he claimed, the notions of cause and effect simply reflect our expectation that things will go on as usual, but they are not based on any sense data, since our senses only show us that one thing happens after another, not that one is the cause of the other. It was against this skepticism that Kant proposed his idealistic systems, but in Continental philosophy this eventually led to a variety of philosophies (life philosophy, existentialism, phenomenology, structuralism) that reduced philosophy either to a mere clarification of the language of natural science or, as with *deconstructionism*, holds that philosophy is just rhetoric intended to manipulate others to serve our own hidden agenda.

5) Faced with this growing skepticism and anti-rationalism, Pope Leo XIII in *Aeterni Patris* (1879) recommended education in the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274) who had introduced the Aristotelian epistemology into Catholic theology. This revival of a middle course in epistemology prepared the way for Vatican II and John Paul II's *Fides et Ratio*. At the same time the popes urged the assimilation to this medieval thought of modern scientific and historical advances and openness to all thought that avoids the extremes of idealism and materialistic empiricism.

Readings

1. Dulles, *Craft of Theology*, pp.3 52.
2. H.D. Lewis, article "Philosophy of Religion, History of" and William P. Allston, "Philosophy of Religion, Problems of" in *Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed. by Paul Edwards, (New York: Macmillan, 1967). Vol. 6, pp. 276-288. The editor of this generally excellent encyclopedia has a strongly empiricist bias.

Questions

1. What is "the turn to the subject" in modern thought?
2. What are the differences and similarities between Cartesianism and Kantianism?
3. How is British Empiricism grounded in Cartesianism?

4. Why have the modern popes favored Thomism as a model for Christian philosophers and theologians?
5. Why must Thomism incorporate modern historical and scientific knowledge while preserving its middle-of-the-road epistemology?

PART II: THE THEORETICAL DISCIPLINES

Lesson 4: The Liberal, Hermeneutic Arts of Learning and Communication

1) Recent philosophy tends to be restricted either to an effort to clarify the language of the natural sciences (Logical Positivism) or more broadly to clarify ordinary language (Analytic Philosophy) or to be limited to the problems of the interpretation and exegesis of the various kinds of literature (Hermeneutic Philosophy, Semiotics, Critical Theory, Structuralism, Communication Theory, Deconstruction, etc.). This concern for the unavoidable ambiguity of human communication is not new in Christian theology and is especially important for ecumenical and multicultural dialogue.

2) This concern for hermeneutics (exegesis) was always very important for Christian theologians since they had to interpret the many different kinds of pre-philosophical literature found in the Bible in a more philosophical manner suited to the cultures, including our contemporary culture, that had Greek origins. St. Augustine recognized this in his important work *De Doctrina Christiana* in which he recommended that Christian theologians become skilled in the *liberal arts* that formed the basis of Greek and Roman education.

3) The traditional Seven Liberal Arts were divided into two groups: the *logical Trivium* (three ways) (1) arts of *grammar* (linguistics), (2) *rhetoric* (the art of persuasion or salesmanship), and (3) *poetics* (poetry, fiction, drama) and the *mathematical Quadrivium* (four ways) of (1) *geometry*, (2) *arithmetic*, (3) *music* (acoustics), and (4) *optics*. Thus the logical arts of learning and communication prepared a student to read and communicate; while the mathematical arts gave students tools for the study of natural science. These are still the basis of modern education, but are often very badly taught. Without the Trivium it is not easy to form a systematic theology based on a scholarly interpretation of the Bible or without the Quadrivium to relate theology to modern science and scholarship.

4) Aristotle developed a more exact theory of the logical arts that has become common in the theology of Aquinas. He first distinguishes the study of language ("grammar" in the traditional Trivium) from *logic* that deals not with language but with forms of thought. Then he distinguishes logic in this broad sense into two types of thought and expression:

(a) *Poetics* and *rhetoric* that make much use of imagery and appeal to our emotions as well as to our thoughts, such as the *Psalms* in the Bible. Poetics aims simply at entertainment or contemplation of the interesting and beautiful as in a poem, novel, or drama. Rhetoric, however, aims at persuasion to action as in *Proverbs* or the *Epistles of St. Paul*.

(b) *Logic* in the stricter sense is thought that deliberately seeks to be objective and free of emotion. This is either *dialectics*, that is, the logic of debate and research among various opinions and hypotheses, or *demonstrative* logic that seeks to prove a conclusion with certitude.

5) Aristotle denied that mathematics, as Plato thought, is a way to innate ideas of the spiritual world. He would also have denied that it is identical with logic, as Bertrand Russell tried to prove it was. Instead Aristotle considered pure mathematics a theoretical science that considers the quantity of material things but in an abstract way. He agreed, however, with Pythagoras, Plato, and modern science, that applied mathematics is a very useful tool in forming hypothetical models, but would have insisted that these models must be interpreted in concrete, physical ways to tell us about material reality.

Readings

Pierre H. Conway, O. P. and B. M. Ashley, O.P., "The Liberal Arts in St. Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* vol. 22, no. 4, 1959; also see on Internet, Ashley, *The Arts of Learning and Communication*, or Ashley, article in *New Catholic Encyclopedia* (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967): "Education, II (Philosophy of) Historical Development, Ancient and Medieval" (5: 162-166 and "Liberal Arts," (8:646-99).

Questions

1. Explain why "fundamentalist" interpretations of the Bible or any other text run the danger of misunderstanding the author's real thought?
2. Why does rhetorical moralizing ruin a novel or drama?
3. What is the difference between a "discussion" and a "demonstration"?
4. Illustrate how a theologian uses dialectical and demonstrative modes of discourse in systematic theology?
5. Do you think theologians need to know mathematics?

Lesson 5: Critique of the Foundations of Contemporary Natural Science

1) If a theologian is to "interpret the Gospel to our culture (or cultures)" the most difficult task is to make spiritual truth credible to our modern world that is dominated by modern science and its technology, since these are usually understood in an exclusively materialistic way. Until about 1700 this split between religion and science hardly existed and the originators of modern science, such as Galileo, Kepler, Harvey, and Newton supposed that by showing the wonders of creation they would lead people to the praise of the Creator. Yet as Cartesian idealism and British Empiricism developed in the Enlightenment they became antagonistic to all revealed religion. At first they continued to accept a deistic God who made the world like a perpetual motion machine and then left it to run on its own. Thus man's hope to control the world by technology took the place of reliance on the power of the Creator.

2) Was this divorce of religion and science inevitable? Modern historians of science have shown that it did not arise from the heliocentric theory of Copernicus and the Galileo Case, as is often alleged, though that scandal dramatized it. In fact Galileo's discovery through the use of the telescope of the sunspots was the major fact that exploded Aristotle's steady-state theory of the universe and its inalterable heavenly spheres. Unfortunately this scandal caused the abandonment not only of the steady-state theory that Aquinas had already shown to be merely a hypothesis but also of Aristotle's much better grounded analysis of the foundations of natural science in the nature of changeable being. This foundational part of natural science came to be replaced by a mechanistic view derived from the ancient materialist, Democritus, and favored by Descartes. This uncritical mechanistic view of the foundations of natural science has ever since left modern science open to the confusions of the extreme epistemologies of idealism and empiricism and placed science in opposition to belief in God as spiritual first cause of physical reality. (Note that the required reading from the text of Stanley Jaki gives a somewhat different account of this historical development but comes to the same principal conclusion).

3) The dilemmas that mechanism produced for modern science as it rapidly advanced in its detailed discoveries made possible by mathematization and the use of artificial techniques of observation and experimentation became evident at the end of the twentieth century with the new relativity physics of Einstein and the quantum physics of Heisenberg. It has become clear that the mechanistic notions of absolute time and space and of the absolute determinism of natural laws has produced such contradictory notions in scientific theory as the assertion that time is not real, that space is both empty and filled, that physical reality depends on the human observer, that an infinity of possible worlds are constantly being created, and that the universe "just happened." None of these absurdities need follow from the actual discoveries of modern science but are due to conceptual confusions about its foundational concepts and principles. The truth of these principles must rest on an analysis of natural sense observation of

changeable being prior to artificial observation, experimentation, or mathematization. If this foundational analysis is not sound, nothing else in natural science can be critically established. Theologians, therefore, should not naively build their views on the alleged results of modern science without understanding this foundational critique.

Readings

1. William A. Wallace, O.P. *The Modeling of Nature* (Washington, DC.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996) Chapter 6, "Defining the Philosophy of Science pp. 197-237.
2. Dulles, *Craft of Theology*, pp. 135-148, not identical with position taken in this course but helpful.

Questions

1. What did the founders of modern science think about the relation of science and religion?
2. What caused the break between modern science and religion?
3. What is meant by the "foundational principles and concepts" of natural science?
4. Are natural science and religion on such different planes that there is no contact between them?
5. How is the Biblical view of creation related to modern science and the theory of the Big Bang?

Lesson 6: Critique of Contemporary Understanding of the Human Person

1) We have seen that modern thought began with Descartes' subject-object dualism. He split the human person into the material substance of the body and the spiritual substance of the mind. For the Idealism of Continental European philosophy dominated by Kant this has led to the notion that the material world is a mental construction or at least that all we know of that world is the models that we impose on it. For Kant these were firmly rooted in universal mental categories. Today they are often seen as shifting pseudo-foundations created in the interest of special groups. Thus the human person becomes primarily a self-conscious "subject" opposed to the "objects" of the world that of themselves are without relation to human interests and purposes, mere stuff for human technological manipulation. For Empiricism this has led to the materialistic

"mind-body problem" and the assertion that the human mind is identical with the operations of the brain and will someday be replaced by "artificial intelligence." Analytic philosophy struggles to overcome these controversies but without much success.

2) In an Aristotelian epistemology what we are most certain of is the reality of the changing bodies evident to our senses as their nature is analyzed in terms of abstract, intellectual concepts by natural science. As this scientific study of nature unfolds it makes evident that what specifies animal and human behavior is the human ability to form abstract concepts and thus to distinguish the essential features of the changing world from its irrelevant and chance features. This is evident in abstract human language as distinguished from the concrete signaling of animals and in the very possibility of natural science and technology that depend on abstract thinking, as is evident in mathematics. Because we can think abstractly we also have *freedom* in the choice of possible means to ends as is evident in the variety of human cultures and inventions and our political and moral debates. Only when we find an animal that can do physics and invent a computer will we have to abandon our claim to be the only "*rational* animals" and hence the only *persons* in the visible world.

3) Yet in Aristotelian epistemology it is also evident that such specifically human intellectual behavior still depends on our senses that, though living, are bodily and material. Hence, contrary to Platonism and Cartesianism as well as Materialism, there is an essential interdependence and unity in the human person between body and soul as the spiritual form of the body. The brain, therefore, is only an *instrument* of our intelligence not its organ. The brain is only the organ of internal sensation that processes data from the external sense organs. Intellectual insight and reasoning, on the other hand, are spiritual functions that require this processed sense data but are not, as such, merely brain operations. As we use a computer to help us to think, so we must use our brains, yet as a computer does not actually think, neither do our brains.

4) Our free will, since it depends directly on our intelligence, is also a spiritual faculty; but just as we cannot think without sense organs and brain, so we cannot will without affective drives such as hunger, sex, aggression, etc., that are bodily functions involving nerves and hormones. Our "emotions" or "feelings" are bodily sensations that follow on changes in the body that result from the stimulating of these affective drives when certain images arise in our external and internal senses. I feel hunger in my body when I smell or imagine good food.

5) Modern psychology has taught us a great deal about the complexities of human behavior and human relationships, but idealism and empiricism in natural science have often led either to a dualistic or a materialistic conception of the human person that is inadequate to our experience of being human. Such psychology tends to split into an emphasis on the study of the nervous system and the use of drugs in treatment of nervous disorders on the one hand or an emphasis on psychoanalysis, existential therapy, or cognitive therapy on the other. The Biblical account of the human person is richer in its understanding of the human person in community than is much modern

psychology. Hence the theologian needs to find ways to relate these two pictures of what it is to be human.

Reading

Read Benedict M. Ashley, O. P. and Kevin D. O'Rourke, O.P., *Health Care Ethic: A Theological Approach* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 4th edition, 1996), Chapter 1, "On Being Human," pp. 3-21.

Questions

1. What distinguishes human persons from animals?
2. What distinguishes human intelligence from the human senses, interior and exterior?
3. What is the relation between the soul and the body in the human person?
4. Is the human intelligence identical with the operations of the brain?
5. What is the distinction between cognition and affectivity in the human person?

PART III: THE PRACTICAL DISCIPLINES AND THE UNITY OF HUMAN KNOWLEDGE

Lesson 7: Critique of Contemporary Ethics and Politics

1) The practical sciences differ from the theoretical sciences (natural science, mathematics, metaphysics) in that they deal with judgments about the relation of means to ends and thus concern not truth about factual situations but about what had better be done or avoided. Practical sciences, therefore, must be based on the theoretical sciences, the "ought" on the "is," since they presuppose knowledge of the factual reality that it is the business of theoretical science to discover and explain. The practical sciences are either *technological* (artificial, e.g. engineering, business administration) if they deal with ends that are freely chosen; or *ethical* if they deal with means that are freely chosen to ends that are fixed by the needs of human nature. Thus ethical truth is absolute, while technological truth is conditional and must conform to ethical truth, since skill in committing a crime can hardly be called a virtue, only skill in meeting genuine human needs. The ethical sciences are threefold, the ethics of individual life, of family life, and of social life (politics). Moral theology is that part of Christian theology that

deals with the direction of human life for the individual, the family, and the whole Christian community in its journey to union with God in Christ and the Holy Spirit.

2) Two types of ethical thinking can be distinguished. *Deontological* ethics (from Greek *deontos*, duty), or command ethics or legalistic ethics, reduces morality to obedience to the commands of a moral authority, although in Kantian ethics this authority is the person's own rational will (autonomy). Deontological ethics is *voluntaristic* since it claims that it is the will of the authority that makes the action good or bad. *Teleological* ethics, on the other hand, maintains that moral commands are valid only if they are based on the intellectual understanding of the relation of means to an end determined by human nature or (in the case of the technologies) freely chosen but in conformity with human nature. Thus a command contrary to its teleological truth is invalid. Teleological ethics must be distinguished from what John Paul II has called *teleologism* (proportionalism) that determines the morality of an act morality in terms of the proportion of positive and negative "pre-moral" values in an act and thus denies that some concrete negative norms are without exception (e. g. sexual intercourse against the will of the other is always wrong). The reason is that such exceptionless concrete moral norms are based on the fact that some means are contradictory to the ends of human nature and thus cannot be made moral by any circumstances or secondary intention (e.g. sexual intercourse with an unwilling partner is contradictory to the true purpose of human sexuality which is to express mutual love). Certain goals are fixed in human nature (the need for physical well-being, family, society, and the knowledge of God, other persons and morality). God's gracious calling of the Christian, however, elevates the goals of human nature to intimate and eternal life in the Trinity. Thus moral judgments must be made primarily in view of this supernatural end yet must include respect for the natural end of the human person.

Proportionalism is really a hidden form of legalism, since it seeks exceptions to laws rather than the true reasons for action or non-action.

3) As intelligent persons we have free will to choose to do what is naturally right in any particular situation; to do this consistently in changing and often difficult circumstances, however, as is necessary to attain our ultimate end, requires special skills or *virtues*. These are either (1) *intellectual* virtues, of which (a) the virtue of practical moral reasoning is called *prudence*, while (b) the technological skills are called the *arts*; or (2) the *moral* virtues that also include (a) *prudence* and in addition (b) *justice* or respect for the rights of others, (c) *fortitude* (courage) that moderates our aggressive drives and (d) *temperance* (moderation) that controls our desires for pleasure, so that these drives do not cloud prudence and our moral decisions. For Christians there are also the theological virtues of *faith*, *hope*, and *love*.

4) Political prudence is required by those who are in charge of the united action of a community for the common good and by the citizens of the community in cooperating to this end. It should be used according to the principle of *subsidiarity* that states that policy decisions should be made by those who are most affected by these decisions with the proviso that higher authority may correct these decisions for the sake of the

common good of the whole community but must seek to enable the lower unit to continue to make its own decisions in conformity with the common good. Authority and obedience are necessary in any community, since persons even of equal prudence and good will can honestly disagree in practical matters, yet the common good cannot be attained without common action. Hence *totalitarianism* is a false political theory because the common good must further the good of the members of the community not the good of the rulers or some fictitious "totality." *Anarchism*, or the theory of agreement by consensus without obedience to authority, is also false because it is utopian to think that agreement can always be reached simply by discussion. Thus the best practical form of government is a *republic* in which decisions are made by a president with the counsel of a representative body and the consent of the citizens. The common good that government must seek is to foster the virtuous life of its members in which the supreme good is knowledge of the truth of God, his creation, and the good life.

Readings

Benedict M. Ashley, O. P. and Kevin D. O'Rourke, O.P., *Health Care Ethic: A Theological Approach* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 4th edition, 1996), Chapter 7 and 8, pp. 137-226 on the logical and principles of ethics.

Questions

1. Is an action morally good because authority commands it, or should authority command something because it is morally good?
2. Why do we need not only a "decision-making ethics" but a "virtue ethics."
3. Why did John Paul II condemn "teleologism" or proportionalism in the encyclical "The Splendor of Truth" (*Veritatis Splendor*)?
4. Why must there be authority and obedience to just decisions by authority in any human community if it is to function well and survive?
5. What is the argument for a "republic" as ordinarily the best practical form of government?

Lesson 8: Critique of Contemporary Technology and Economy

1) Human life in community requires not only political prudence but also the arts or *technology*, that is, a skilled practical use of human intelligence in the modification of the material environment and even the human body (medicine, physical training) to serve human needs better. God has given us our intelligence for the *stewardship* or

wise conservation and perfection of our material world. God alone is the Creator, but in his work of creation he has made use of some natural forces that he has already created to complete his work. Thus he uses the chemical elements to produce chemical compounds and living parents to reproduce their species and in this way has brought about the universe in its present state by *evolution*. He has, however, given us a spiritual intelligence by *direct* creation (since only he can produce spiritual realities just as he alone could create material realities originally) to use to complete his evolutionary work. This means, however, that we must use technology in a way that respects his plan of creation, not in ways (such as contraception, artificial human reproduction, nuclear warfare, pollution of the environment, destruction of biodiversity) that contradict that plan.

2) The architectonic or guiding technology that coordinates all other technologies is what today is called *economics*, or the efficient use of natural resources to fulfill human needs. Too often economics is divorced from the virtue of social justice to which it, like every art, ought to be subordinated, since all technologies are subordinated to political prudence and prudence requires the observance of justice. In modern society there has been a controversy between *socialism* (communism, anarchism) that centralizes economic control in the state or anarchic community, promoted especially by Karl Marx and *private initiative* (capitalism, free market) that leaves it to free market competition, promoted especially by Adam Smith. The Catholic Church rejects both extremes, since socialism contradicts the right of private property and the principle of subsidiarity and has in practice led to totalitarianism and economic stagnation, while capitalism leaves the interests of the common good to economic "laws" that are supposed to balance supply and demand, but which in fact are used by the rich to exploit the poor for the sake of profit. The profit motive is justified only if it is controlled by concern for the common good and distributive justice. Hence there must be some governmental regulation of the free market to protect the less powerful competitors. Yet private property and free economic initiative (under proper control for the common good) is necessary for our economy to be sufficiently productive that it can overcome the scarcity of material necessities that has always plagued the human community.

3) The preservation of our environment is not only in order that we may have the resources necessary for a productive and just economy but also because the greatest of human needs is for contemplative truth, or meaning. We come to know God first of all through his creation and in doing so to know other created persons. Thus human *culture* is not merely practical, but above all contemplative. Hence society must promote the *intellectual virtues* (the pure sciences) and the *fine arts*, whose purpose is contemplative rather than practical. The fine arts (poetics) present the truth presented by the sciences in forms that appeal to the human imagination, senses, and emotions for a contemplative enjoyment.

Readings

Read John Paul II, Encyclicals, "On Human Work" (*Laborem Exercens*, 1981) and "The Hundredth Year Since Leo XIII's *Rerum Novarum*" (on the Church's social doctrine, *Centesimus annus*, 1991).

Questions

1. What are the two reasons for preserving and cultivating our material environment?
2. Why is economics the architectonic technology?
3. What is the role of the fine arts in life?
4. Why are both socialism and capitalism inadequate economies to achieve the common good?
5. Why is private property a human right but one subordinated to the common good?

Lesson 9: The Historical and Ontological Unification of Modern Knowledge

1) Today human knowledge is highly fragmented and we seek some way "to get in all together" in order to have a unified world view and value-system that gives meaning to our lives and guides us to live better and more realistically. This is what is meant by *wisdom*, the intellectual virtue that combines both insight and systematic scientific thinking into a whole view of reality. In the Platonic and idealistic epistemologies this was sought by reducing all truth to one supreme idea, the Idea of the One or Good. In the epistemology of materialism and empiricism, so dominant today, this unification of knowledge is sought by reducing all knowledge to natural science. However, since modern science with its confusedly materialist foundations is claimed to be "value-free," our value systems become various cultural constructions (Romanticism, cultural relativism) that are arbitrary. Aristotle, however, argued that knowledge cannot be reduced to a single master idea, since in fact there are many sciences and arts each with its own autonomy of principles, method, and value. Nor can it be reduced to natural science, although natural science is the first science in the epistemological order, since all our knowledge depends on sense observation because natural science demonstrates its own limits by proving that the material world has a first Immaterial Cause and that the abstract intelligence of the scientist itself cannot be merely the work of the material brain. Hence we need a First (in the sense of epistemologically ultimate,

but inclusive of the other special sciences that it presupposes) Science or Theology (because it studies both material and spiritual realities as related to the God, their First Cause). Such a First Science preserves the autonomy of the special sciences but *coordinates* them by comparing their basic principles and concepts according to their similarities and differences (analogy). This ultimate science came to be called *metaphysics* (after physics or natural science). For the Platonic tradition this metaphysics was always a reduction of all disciplines to the idea of the One or Good, but for Aristotelianism it was the coordination of all the other sciences whose autonomy it defends and presupposes..

2) The Muslims such as Avicenna and Averroes and the early medieval Christians understood Aristotle's *Metaphysics* in a Platonizing way and in the high medieval universities the Franciscan School, especially Duns Scotus, continued this interpretation. For Scotus metaphysics is epistemologically prior to the special sciences and treats of Being as a *univocal* concept that includes both the finite being of creatures and the infinite being which is God. Hence the special sciences became simply applications of metaphysics that concerns Being as a genus to particular kinds of being. This was the opposite of Aristotle's view, defended by St. Thomas Aquinas, according to which metaphysics is epistemologically last and presupposes the special sciences that it coordinates under an *analogical* concept of Being that does not include God, who is treated in metaphysics as the first Cause or principle of Being, thus saving this view from the modern charge of Heidegger that metaphysics is an "onto-theology" that would reduce God to merely the highest degree of Being. After Scotus, William of Ockham, leader of Nominalism, drew the conclusion from this Platonizing approach to metaphysics that the existence of God as Creator cannot be proved by reason. Both Scotus and Ockham so emphasized the freedom of God that only a voluntaristic, deontological ethics was possible. This Scotistic conception of metaphysics was supported (with modifications) by the Jesuit Francisco Suarez whose work on metaphysics had wide influence. Its acceptance by Descartes and by Leibnitz has thus dominated modern philosophy among the Idealists such as Schelling and Hegel and today among Transcendental Thomists such as Karl Rahner, although it had led Kant to reject the validity of metaphysics altogether, a position then followed by the Empiricists and most Analytic Philosophers at present. In the twentieth century Thomist metaphysics was also somewhat colored by this conception of metaphysics and only now has begun to fully recover the authentic Aristotelian metaphysics as further advanced by Aquinas in regard to a more explicit understanding of God as Creator and the immortality of the human soul.

3) Since so many modern philosophers, because they are either Kantian idealists or empiricists who doubt the possibility of reason proving the existence of God, reject the possibility of a metaphysics, how do they unify our fragmented "knowledge explosion"?

The Logical Positivists thought they could do this by inventing a formal logical language that would embrace all disciplines until this was proved to be impossible by the mathematician Kurt Gödel. Consequently, the only way this unification of knowledge can be achieved without a metaphysics is by *historicism*. Thus Martin Heidegger tried to

show that the essence of man is to be open to Being in the sense of an understanding of reality as this unfolds or is obscured by history. Following Darwin's theory of biological evolution, natural science explained all life forms as the result of a historical scenario of the "survival of the fittest." Recently quantum physics has developed a cosmology of the whole universe as a blind evolution from an initial Big Bang. Since (contrary to the idealist philosophy of Hegel and Marx) there are no *laws* of history as such, since natural laws only have a probabilistic working out in evolution the outcome of which is ultimately due to *chance*, historicism, as Heidegger realized, ultimately denies the possibility of a *rational* unification of knowledge and results in a kind of anti-rational mysticism similar to that of Hindu and Buddhist thought in which all finite reality is unintelligible and illusory. If we are to escape this kind of skepticism and cultural relativism we must return to a metaphysics grounded in a natural science built on the kind of foundation that Aristotle and Aquinas proposed.

Readings

Read Bonsor, *Athens to Jerusalem*, Chapters 10-15, pp. 101-172.

Questions

1. What is "historicism"? Illustrate the unification of knowledge by history.
2. What is the difference between an Aristotelian metaphysics and a Scotistic metaphysics?
3. Why have many modern philosophers rejected the validity of metaphysics and claim that metaphysical concepts are meaningless?
4. What is "onto-theology"?
5. How does an Aristotelian-Thomist metaphysics unify knowledge without a reduction of the autonomy of the special sciences and without falling into onto-theology?

PART IV: EXAMPLES OF PHILOSOPHICAL THEOLOGY

Lesson 10: Monistic and Creational World Views

1) Aristotle arrived at a valid First Science or metaphysics that could unify human knowledge by demonstrating within the foundational part of natural science that material

being is caused by the real existence of an immaterial First Cause, as well as showing in his psychology that the human soul is also immaterial. Yet his paganism and his adoption of the hypothesis of an eternal material universe seems to have prevented him from an explicit and full understanding of God as Creator and of the immortality of the human spiritual soul. St. Thomas Aquinas was able to show that these truths were the logical consequences of the Aristotelian foundations of natural science. Hence he was further able to perfect Aristotle's metaphysics or First Science of Being as the analogical concept that includes both material and immaterial being. This enables the Christian theologian to show that the principal Old Testament teaching that God is the Creator is in accordance with human reason and thus to overcome the pantheism and monism that is found in all the world religions except Judaism, and Christianity and Islam derived from Judaism. Without this rational world-view the Creation no longer speaks to us of the Creator. The efforts of some apologists such as Karl Rahner or Hans Küng to argue for the existence of God on *subjective* grounds ("religious experience," hope, etc.) are not false but are inadequate to meet the atheistic objections of modern science and culture.

2) While Thomistic metaphysics establishes the existence of God as Creator, some still object that this cannot solve the *problem of evil* in the world. Consequently some theologians try to meet this objection by adopting the *process philosophy* proposed by Alfred North Whitehead. According to process philosophy the existence of God is a *hypothesis* justified as probable by the historicist, evolutionary view of modern science. It hypothesizes that the supreme principal is not God but Creativity. This Creativity is supremely exemplified in God who has an *antecedent* nature consisting of an infinite number of "eternal objects" like Plato's eternal Ideas. Yet, unlike Plato's Ideas, these at first exist chaotically without order. God, therefore, in his creativity forms his actual *consequent* nature by the creating the material universe in which these ideas are realized in various combinations or "actual occasions" or events of history. These last only for a brief quantum of time and then perish, although their effects are taken up in other "actual occasions" and they survive in God's memory as the immortal historical ordering of objects in his consequent nature. God as the supreme actual occasion is the *only* Person. Human beings are *not* persons but only streams of consciousness made up of actual occasions each of which, even material events like an atom or molecule, have a conscious aspect (*panpsychism*). This process conception of God and the universe is thus supposed to solve the problem of evil because God only has the power to *initiate* or give a direction to the formation of actual occasions that, since they also are endowed with Creativity, then develop freely on their own, sometimes constructively sometimes deconstructively without God's control. While it is certainly true that Christian theology must today, as has been argued in previous lessons, take full account of the modern scientific and evolutionary view of the world, it is difficult to see how process philosophy can help do this since it solves the problem of evil only by denying God's power to help us overcome evil, reduces the human being to a non-person, and makes only God immortal and happy.

3) Much the same can be said for the thought of Teilhard de Chardin who tried to incorporate evolution into theology, but only on the basis of a mistaken view of what

science says about evolution, since Teilhard thought there is a "law" of evolution while modern science considers it a product of chance events. He also adopted panpsychism in order to explain how the spiritual emerges from matter without direct creation by God. Both Whitehead and Teilhard tried to explain the moral evil in the world philosophically, while Aquinas shows that it is a mystery that does not contradict the goodness of God, since he made us free to do evil as well as good and in his omnipotence can bring a greater good out of any evil creatures can produce. It is a mystery that cannot be fully solved by reason, but only by revealed doctrine of why God permitted original sin. Thus the problem of evil is only solved only by the revelation God permitted us to sin (*felix culpa*, the blessed fault) only because he knew that in his omnipotence he could bring a greater good into the universe, namely the Incarnation of his Divine Son, our Savior. Thus Thomist philosophy provides more satisfactory ways of proving by reason that God exists and that this truth is not contradicted by the moral evil in the world than does process philosophy or Teilhard's evolutionism that was based on the "life philosophy" of Henri Bergson.

Readings

Read Jaki, *the Savior of Science*, Chapters 1-3, pp. 1-88. NOTE: I warmly agree with Jaki's principal thesis in this brilliant work but in my opinion he relies too much on the view of Duhem that natural science only "saves the appearances." Hence Jaki assigns to metaphysics the proof of the existence of the First Cause that Aristotle and Aquinas assigned to the foundational part of natural science. Without such a basis in science, metaphysics is open to the many attacks that are made on it today and which Jaki does not adequately answer. The strength of Jaki's work, however, is to show how Christian faith in the Creator motivated the origins of modern science.

Questions

1. How does Thomist thought complete the foundations of natural science according to Aristotle and his metaphysics by establishing God as Creator of the universe out of nothing?
2. Why is process philosophy an inadequate instrument of a Christian theology?
3. Why is the evolutionism of Teilhard de Chardin also an inadequate instrument of a Christian theology?
4. How can the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas, who knew nothing of the modern scientific theories of biological or cosmological evolution, be shown not to contradict them but to enable theologians to make use of them?
5. What is "panpsychism" and what are the objections to it?

Lesson 11: Personhood and Incarnation

1) After Vatican II it was popular to construct Christology "from below" in order to emphasize Jesus' humanity and to overcome the popular *Monophysitism* (the heresy that absorbed Jesus' humanity into his divinity). But Christologies from below evade the real mystery, namely, that Jesus is truly human yet he is not a human *person*, but a divine person, the Son of God, who reveals the still deeper mystery that God is a Trinity of Persons. While reason can never demonstrate the truth of this mystery known to faith alone, it is the task of theology to prove that it is not absurd, that is, that it is not contradictory. This requires a critical, metaphysical understanding of spiritual existence. In the foundations of natural science Aristotle showed the necessary existence of a spiritual First Cause of all reality and hence the possibility of a valid metaphysics of both material and spiritual being. Since for this necessary First Cause or God existence and essence (nature) must be identical (otherwise it would not *necessarily* exist), essence (nature) and existence in the material and spiritual creatures that are God's effects, must be really distinct. Thus Jesus' human *nature* was really distinct from his personhood, since by "person" we mean the very existence of a being who has spiritual intelligence and free will. The metaphysical solution is to be found in the analogical concept of "person" as one *existent* with two essences or natures, total divinity and total humanity. Because the existence of the human nature is the existence of the Son of God in whom essence or nature and existence are identical while in humanity they are distinct, there is no contradiction in saying that Jesus' humanity as one of his essences is complete and perfect, yet that existentially he is not a human person but a divine Person, the Son of God. Thus it is literally true that God suffers as we suffer, although he suffers not in his divine nature but in his human nature, *analogous* to the fact that when I have a tooth ache it is in my body that I suffer not in my intelligence, since I may be quite confident that the dentist will soon fix that tooth and take away the pain; yet it is truly I who suffer that excruciating pain.

2) It might also seem absurd to say that God is truly One God in Three Divine Persons. That this mystery, utterly beyond our comprehension, still is not contradictory but very meaningful also becomes evident when metaphysics helps us to apply the *relational* implications of the analogous terms "person" to God. To be a human person is not only to exist but also to be capable of personal relations, since a person is intelligent and capable of love and what any person chiefly knows and loves are other persons with whom that person enters into relationship. When we know and love another intimately we enter into *community* with that other person, giving ourselves to that other and become, as it were, "of one heart and one mind." Hence it is not contradictory to see that in God who is supreme Intelligence and Love this self-giving of the Father eternally pours out into the Son, and between the Son and the Father there is a total equality of life, knowledge, and love in the Holy Spirit. In a human relationship such self-giving and receiving can never be complete, since each person retains its own limited existence, but in God there is no contradiction in this community being so complete that all Three Persons have one single existence and essence as God.

3) As Karl Rahner has pointed out, the *economic* (in the sense of the historical plan of God) Trinity reveals the *ontological* (inner life of the) Trinity, in that as the Father is manifest in Creation, the Son is manifest in the historic Incarnation, and the Holy Spirit is manifest in the historic work of the Church. Thus world history is a manifestation of the *eternal* outpouring of life and love within God. In this way the study of human history can assist theology in helping us to understand something of the mystery of God. The introduction of evolutionary biological and cosmological theories far from making this task more difficult for theology makes it easier. It helps us understand the whole plan of God in creation, its fall into disorder through sin, and its reordering through redemption by grace in a goal-directed, dynamic way instead of the static way that was fostered by Platonism or monism in which time becomes either an illusion or an eternally repeated cycle. While from a rational viewpoint, as was said in the last lecture, history is just "one damn thing after another" riddled with chance, its factual understanding when illumined by revelation and prophetic theological reflection begins to make sense.

Readings

Read Jaki, *The Savior of Science*, Chapters 4-6, pp. 89-241.

Questions

1. What is a Christology "from below"?
2. What in Christian doctrine is a "mystery"? Why isn't it logically contradictory?
3. Why must all our terms that refer to God and the order of grace be *analogical*? What is an analogy?
4. Is Jesus Christ a human person? If not how is he "like us in all things but sin" as the New Testament teaches?
5. Why are Father, Son, and Holy Spirit not three Gods?

Lesson 12: Christian Community and Organized Religion

1) The Church as the Body of Christ is the Kingdom of God *in via* (on the way, the pilgrim Church) or as Vatican II says, "the kingdom of God in hope" but it is not yet completed. During his life on earth before and after the Resurrection Jesus prepared his community and its future leaders and gave them the mission to continue his work. Hence after his Ascension to the Father he sent the Holy Spirit to be the soul of the Church and to make him present to its members in faith, hope, and love. Thus the

Church is Christ made visible in the world in his sacraments and preaching and it must complete his sufferings until he returns at the final judgment.

2) Christ's purpose in this is to enable his disciples to grow in faith and through cooperation with his saving work for the world. Today the individualism and subjectivism of our culture, fostered by the features of modern philosophy that we have studied, rejects "organized religion" and looks for a "spirituality" that is individualistic and subjectivist. If, however, the Church is a community of faith, hope, and love with a mission from Christ it must be able to act in a unified manner. This would be impossible if it were not organized according to sound political principles that apply to all human communities and which we considered in Lesson 7. There are important differences, however, between the organization of the Church and secular human communities because of their different goals. The Church has its goal the preparation of the eternal Kingdom of God; while human organizations have merely temporal goals. Thus the branch of theology called Ecclesiology can learn a great deal from ethics and politics about why Christ gave it the organization that he did. Thus neither an ecclesiology that fails to respect the principle of subsidiarity by centralizing all decision in the papacy nor on the contrary one that is anarchistic and denies the necessary authority of the pope and bishops can be correct.

3) The sacramental structure of the Church also requires philosophical analysis to bring out its full meanings, since the sacraments are symbols whose meaning requires interpretation. It is here especially that a "theology of the body" as developed by John Paul II using a phenomenological yet Thomistic method, has so strikingly developed. As Christ stretched out his hand to touch and heal, so in the sacraments we come into contact with the very flesh and blood of Christ, the Word Incarnate. The tendency of the Reformation to accent the preached Word to the neglect of the sacraments reduces the reality of the Incarnation. The fundamentalist-over-literal interpretation of the Biblical Word has intensified this tendency. These trends have affected Catholic theology as well and can only be overcome by a less Platonic and Cartesian philosophical understanding.

4) Since the Church is a pilgrim Church moving toward the goal of Christ's return in glory, Eschatology is an important part of theology. It can be distorted by certain philosophical errors. On the one hand the modern myth of inevitable "progress" can lead to the view that the plan of history is deterministic and that we have no responsibility for its outcome. But Jesus taught us to pray "Thy kingdom come...on earth as it is in heaven." While it is certain the Christ will return in triumph, the condition of the world when he returns depends on how faithful the Church is in its mission. He may find the whole world faithful or only a few who have persevered in faith. It depends on how open we are open to God's grace in the active use of our free will. On the other hand, that same myth of progress may lead us into supposing that we can save ourselves, when in fact our cooperation with grace itself depends on God's grace. Only by being open to that grace can we be empowered to make use of it.

5) Thus students of theology need to understand that to live by faith and by grace also requires them to make the best possible use of the natural gifts God has given them, including the accumulated sciences and wisdom of humanity, non-Christian as well as Christian, to enable them to understand their faith and interpret it to the culture of today. As John Paul II says in *Faith and Reason* (n.63). "For the reasons I have mentioned, it has seemed to me urgent to re-emphasize with this Encyclical Letter the Church's intense interest in philosophy--indeed the intimate bond which ties theological work to the philosophical search for truth."

Readings

Read Vatican II, "Church in the Modern World" (*Gaudium et Spes*) and reread "Faith and Reason."

Questions

1. Why do so many people today reject "organized religion?"
2. Did Jesus just initiate a "movement" or did he found an organized Church?
3. What principles of human political order must be respected in the life of the Church itself?
4. What is the relation of the ministry of the Sacraments and the ministry of the Word and how do human sciences assist in each?
5. What is the relation of secular history and Biblical eschatology?

Reading List

Texts for This Course

1. John Paul II, Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* (Reason and Faith), 1998 and *Gaudium et Spes* (The Church in the Modern World).
2. Avery Dulles, S.J., *The Craft of Theology: From Symbol to System*, (New York: Crossroad, 1992).
3. Jack A. Bonsor, *Athens and Jerusalem: The Role of Philosophy in Theology* (New York: Paulist, 1993).
4. Stanley L. Jaki, *The Savior of Science*, (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2000).

Additional and Reference Reading:

Robert Sokolowski, *The God of Faith and Reason* (Washington, DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1995).

Aidan Nichols, *The Shape of Catholic History of Theology: An Introduction to its Sources, Principles, and History* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1991).

William C. Placher, *A History of Christian Theology: An Introduction* (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1983) A Protestant perspective.

Jean-Pierre Torrell, O. P., *Saint Thomas Aquinas; Vol. I The Person and His Work* (Washington DC: The Catholic University of America Press, 1996).