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June 18m 1981

Question: Our feelings orient us ‘massively and dynamically in a world mediated by meaning’ (*Method 31*). How is that a ‘vestigia trinitatis’ in us? Or is it?

Lonergan: Well, the list of vestigia trinitatis, the vestiges of the Trinity, is not sharply defined. If feelings as intentional and so coupled with other forms of meaning remind you of the Trinity, I imagine you may speak of them as vestiges of the Trinity. Rosemary Haughton speaks of the Holy Spirit as thanksgiving, and so feelings of gratitude can be related to one of the divine persons.

Question: Earlier this week you spoke of romantic love as ending the longer cycle of decline. But in *Insight*, drawing on Mario Praz, you spoke of romanticism as an ‘ooze of abnormality.’ Would you clarify the meaning of ‘romantic’ in each instance?

Lonergan: Well, they are united by Rosemary Haughton, who speaks a great deal of romantic love as what *may* be the height of perfection in love and it may be the pit of degradation. Both are possible. *Corruptio optimi pessima*.

Question: Is your critique of picture-thinking in ‘Cognitional Structure’ related to Walter Ong’s emphasis upon oral-aural thinking in *The Presence of the Word*?

Lonergan: It may be related, but I’m not aware of it. I haven’t read the book. But the difficulty about picture-thinking is that it can be used to induce a mistaken notion of objectivity or again to cover up a mistaken notion of objectivity. When Russell said he didn’t see an elephant in the room, that for him meant there isn’t an elephant in the room. He was covering up his intention not to discuss objectivity on the topic of an elephant being in the room.

Question: What is the function of humor, irony, and satire in fostering self-appropriation?

Lonergan: Well, they might be a help in discovering when the joke is on oneself.

Question: An act of knowing is a unity which includes experiencing, understanding, and judging. It seems that while many operations are performed to reach the final judgment, the judgment itself is a single act which incorporates the prior separate acts. It is at once a judging, understanding, and an experiencing. Do you agree? Is this what is meant by the distinction between *intentio intendens* and *intentio intenta*?

Lonergan: Well, the word ‘incorporates’ is metaphorical, I think. The actual relation is that judgment is rational because it rests upon sufficient evidence. And the sufficient evidence is grasped in the act of reflective understanding from which the judgment proceeds rationally, as a rational emanation, a reason being a cause in the finite intellect in which it occurs. And that’s why the psychological analogy of the Trinity is not causation. The Father doesn’t cause the Son. The Son is the same substance as the Father. They differ by their relations. And the relations are subsistent because they’re identical with the substance of God. Yet they’re really distinct from

one another. So the reason is grasped in the act of reflective understanding, which reviews the relevant prior acts. Judging is a distinct act. It's distinct from the prior acts. Its proper content is had when one opts for a yes or a no. The proper content of the judgment is the yes or no that it adds to the content of the other acts, which are included in the prior act of understanding, the grasp of the sufficient reason.

Intentio intendens is an act of meaning, meaning as an act. And *intentio intenta* is the content of an act of meaning, what is meant by the act of meaning as contained in the act of meaning.

Question: Is the word 'method' analogous, univocal, or equivocal when applied to theology, to an empirical science, and to classical, statistical, genetic, dialectical, and generalized empirical methods?

Lonergan: Well, I'm not very big on these distinctions. Theology as presented in *Method* is a methodical unification of distinct and multiply interdependent methods. Now the method of writing *Method in Theology* is generalized empirical method. The first instance of empirical science is physical science, and the second is scholarship, when history became a science. There were good historians like the Bollandists and the . . . , the Benedictines. They did first-class historical work. But it became a university subject in the nineteenth century. The method started in Germany and it spread throughout the world, doing historical work. It came into the history of religions, which *is* history. The classical method was physics up till 1926. Then statistical method came into physics. It had been employed, for example, in the theory of the gasses, the rare occasion when the law, the theory of gasses, does not work, the abstract theory of gasses. That's a statistical theory [I think he means 'classical'], and the probability of violation of that law is highly improbable [sic]. It is classical theory. Genetic method is used in biology and psychology, for anything that develops. They all differ in their own way.

Question: Can an unobjectified awareness of subjectivity occur without a corresponding awareness of sensibility? If such is the case, then can an unobjectified awareness of God's love occur without a corresponding awareness of God's redeemed creation?

Lonergan: Well, if the question is about the cloud of unknowing, as it seems to be, then it depends upon the intensity of that contemplation. The less intense phases need the support of some pious word or expression to keep out distractions. It's not what a person is doing, really, but it keeps the thing going, a sort of prayer wheel that prevents you from doing anything else. On the other hand, the more intense phases are like the feeling that leaves one speechless. The cloud of unknowing is the center of attention, but the person knows that these pious words and so on are not the whole story at all. The pious words are needed to keep other things out.

Question: Would you say a bit about your respect for and friendship with Thomas Aquinas?

Lonergan: Well, I made two voyages of discovery in the writings of Aquinas. My doctoral thesis appeared in four articles in *Theological Studies* and was re-edited by Fr Patout Burns in *Grace and Freedom* in 1971 or 1972. A similar trip followed in what were once known as the *verbum* articles in the same review and later were published at Notre Dame Press by David Burrell of the Holy Cross Fathers, who studied theology in Rome when I was teaching there. In

the first case I was working on Aquinas for about four years, and in the second for about five years. The writing was concomitant with teaching, but while I was teaching at the Immaculée I had only one semester a year to teach, and later on that was one of the ... doing the last part of the *verbum* articles while I was teaching all year long. Reading those two books have been voyages of discovery for hard-working readers who check what I say by reading the texts of Aristotle and Aquinas I refer to. There are a lot of references.

Grace and Freedom was a matter of following the development of Aquinas's thought from the *Sentences* through to the *Summa* and later writings. Several different developments were going on at the same time in that ... The first development: St Thomas was the first to make a distinction that today is named 'sanctifying' and 'actual grace.' In the *Sentences* there was only one grace in one man, and it was sanctifying grace. He hadn't got another category for actual grace. He talks about providence, but it isn't simply named a grace. In the *De veritate* there is added an actual grace that is cooperative and not operative. Sanctifying grace was both operative and cooperative. The reason for introducing it [in the *De veritate*] is that we pray that we be not led into temptation, so being not led into temptation is a grace, something we pray for. You don't pray for something you already have. Therefore, it's not sanctifying grace. You have to have something distinct, then, from sanctifying grace, and it helps sanctifying grace along, it cooperates with God operating, causing the actual grace, in addition to the sanctifying grace. In the *Summa*, actual grace may be both operative and cooperative. That's the ... I'd been taught Molinism as a student, and in a month or so of doctoral work I had no doubt whatever that Aquinas was not a Molinist. It's quite plain. I also figured out the distinction between efficacious grace and sufficient grace is a trap. As I said yesterday, Why did Adam sin? If there had been a reason, it wouldn't have been a sin. To know what sin is, you have to have an inverse insight. There's no intelligibility there to be grasped. It's a surd. And both efficacious and sufficient grace involve that inverse insight. So you're arguing about something that involves an inverse insight, and the thing to do is get rid of the inverse insights, to get clarity. And you drop the distinction. And you drop the controversy 'de auxiliis.' The same way a surd is treated by a mathematician. It's in a different category of numbers ...

Concomitant with the development on grace, Aquinas's thought kept moving on action, act, causation, will, liberty, God's operation on the will, his cooperating with the will, but there was no change in his reconciliation of our liberty with God's infallible knowledge, efficacious decision, irresistible action. That was the same from the *Sentences* right through to the end. But the other things, and especially operative grace – God operates on liberty. How is there room in liberty for God to do something to it? Well, it's simply that the superficial ideas of liberty are that it's a point of equilibrium, right there all the time. With that result, he couldn't possibly act on it. But the matter of fact is that one can have habits in the will, and they can be good or bad. That's what virtues and vices are. And the operating is a matter of removing the bad habits: 'I will pluck out the heart of stone and I will put in a heart of flesh.' Ezekiel has that comparison about three times. And Augustine uses it in his doctrine on God's operation. The will is always ... the reconciliation of grace and liberty. The ... of the thing was that the will is always free. Either it's free from sin, and then it's good, or it's free from grace, and then it's bad. [Stumbles a bit here, doesn't seem sure he had that right.]

In the work on *Verbum: Word and Idea in Aquinas*, as the book is entitled, I had to do self-appropriation. In other words I had to find in my own consciousness the operations and connections that Aquinas spoke of. So as soon as the last article on *verbum* in Aquinas was finished in 1949, I started to write *Insight*. I had the idea of doing that book, though, from about

four years earlier. The Thomas More adult education started in Montreal in the fall of 1945, when the Second World War ended. And that year I gave two hours a week a course on 'Thought and Reality' at that adult education center. And when that year ended, I knew I had the material for a book. There were 45 adults registered, and 41 were still coming at the end.

Question: What do you think should be the relationship between ecclesiastical authority and the work of the theologian?

Lonergan: Well, 'should be,' so ideally. Ideally, there would be no conflict. If theologians would grasp just what a method is, and what it implies, then the method would ordinarily bring about agreement between theologians without recourse to authority ... A difficulty would arise only when some power struggle was involved. And power struggles arise not only in theology but ... That's the point to a method, that you do a thing right. If you get competition between methods, well then you are in a different boat.

Question: Would you speak briefly on what you see as the most critical task in Catholic theology in the coming decade?

Lonergan: Well, I won't be around for the whole decade, so I can't say much about it. After Vatican II, there was a general loosening up among theologians, and a lot of things became free opinions in many peoples' eyes that hadn't been before. If theologians could pull themselves out of that it would be a good thing. There's an awful lot of work to be done in theology. I suppose the idea of method is to get things right, and getting theology right is something that probably needs method but that has been for a long time a problem in theology. The basic problem is of course that it depended so much on Aristotle, and Aristotle – so much has been replaced by modern science. Cosmology was for a long time a rearguard action against modern science and in favor of Aristotle. When I went to teach in Rome, I asked the professor of cosmology if he directed many theses, and he said, 'In cosmology?' No one wanted to do doctoral work in cosmology. Things have changed, and the change ... specific points. Taking a ... for the next ten years is difficult to say, because that means you're, what you like to ... never learn theology. (Mumbling)

Questions from the Audience

Question: Would you say something about the notion of intellectual conversion in terms of the tension between the historical Jesus and the risen Christ? The statement was made this morning that Jesus was not intellectually converted.

Lonergan: I said yesterday that intellectual conversion is something that's needed in a certain phase of culture. It's when philosophic questions are known to be disputed and there's no way of settling the disputes. You get the critical problem. It's obvious. Why can't philosophy be like the other sciences? In the other sciences disputes are settled, sooner or later, to everyone's satisfaction. There's no longer any doubt about the circulation of the blood. And so on for practically all sorts of things in the sciences. Now, Jesus had a very intense life of prayer, praying all night, going off to a mountain to pray at night. That life of prayer and the truths that he grasped and so on were grasped as true. When he was twelve he was able to say, according to

Luke, 'Did you not know that I must be about my Father's business?' So besides being one of the divine Persons he moved in a higher atmosphere than most people do. Is that OK?