



# *Institute For Theological Encounter* *With Science and Technology*

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## Opening Message

As I begin my role as Chairman of ITEST, I reflect upon what an honor you have bestowed upon me. The idea that anybody could follow in Father Bob Brungs' footsteps is a colossal challenge, not to be taken lightly. I am reminded of a line in the Canon of Mass that addresses God the Father, saying "We thank You for counting us worthy to stand in Your presence and serve You." A similar feeling of awe pervades my thinking.

In the last issue of the bulletin, Sister Marianne told readers how great I am, so I need not dwell too much on "Am I good enough?" Simply stated, I will do my best to provide ITEST with the leadership needed to carry Father Brungs' dreams onward. But I'll need lots of help from my friends, especially those of you who are skilled in the disciplines of theology, philosophy, and in the life sciences. We are shifting now to a more collaborative working model for ITEST.

The ITEST conference this September takes a look at how the interface between science and religion has changed over the 40 years of ITEST's existence. The tremendous advances in the life sciences have elevated words like "cloning" and "stem cells" well above science fiction; it is fair to ask how our religious principles bear upon this new scientific knowledge. There are some strident atheists who assert that Darwinian evolution negates God; we shall take a closer look behind such assertions at the conference—among other things.

Fr. Brungs recognized quite well the great importance of the rapid changes in the life sciences, and a high fraction of our ITEST conferences have dealt with life-science-related topics. Throughout all our exchanges over these four decades, one central principle that Fr. Brungs recognized is that we need to have our religion and our science integrated. Centuries ago that was always the case, but in modern times there has evolved a compartmentalization of science "versus" religion, and today many people assume science and religion are enemies. ITEST completely rejects such a viewpoint.

At ITEST, we approach faith and science with the belief that the two forms of knowledge are complementary, and will not be in opposition when properly understood (this notion goes all the way back to St. Augustine). Again drawing upon Fr. Brungs' wisdom, the way to start this off right is by dealing with the very young. That is why ITEST initiated the educational program for early grades "Exploring the World, Discovering God" (EWDG). Fr. Brungs began this program with the confidence that teachers and children alike would respond favorably to lessons that display the parallels between faith and science. This is simply part of the normal human quest to unify knowledge.

EWDG is now completing the third year of its "pilot" phase, and evaluations from actual classroom experience have been consistently positive. We have every hope of turning EWDG into a national program; doing so entails seeking grants from other charities, and that will be a major effort for us in the time immediately ahead.

I greatly appreciate, much more than mere words can acknowledge, your prayers for the continuing success of ITEST.

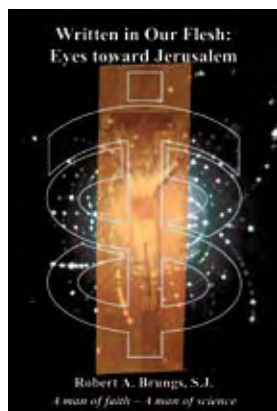
Thomas P. Sheahen, PhD  
ITEST

### *In This Issue...*

Opening Message.....	1
Announcements.....	2
Gaudium Et Spes and Biological Advance - <i>Part 2</i> - Fr. Robert A. Brungs, SJ.....	3
Music Therapy Graduate Program at New York University - Therapy Principles - Meredith Bradley.....	11
Thomas F. Torrance & Scientific Culture - Dr. John McKenna.....	14

## Announcements

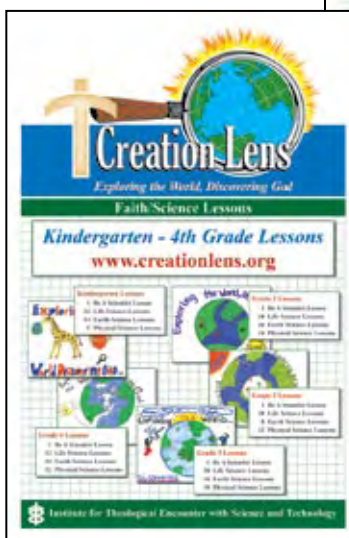
1. Mark your calendars for the 2009 conference at Our Lady of the Snows Conference Center, Belleville, Illinois, September 18-20, 2009. The topic, the environment, which occupies most headlines daily should interest all ITEST members. We welcome your ideas about an approach to this conference topic that would be inclusive yet at the same time not disparate in focus. Some suggested titles/topics are: Eco-Justice and Stewardship; Global Stewardship; Caring for the Environment: Artisans and Stewards in Eco-Justice; Footprints on the Environment: Human Innovation or Human Arrogance? A vital part of any ITEST meeting is the overarching theological “piece” as that relates to our “living in the world as it is”, a phrase that Father Brungs, our late director often used. Echoing the theme of our 1991 ITEST workshop entitled, *Some Christian and Jewish Perspectives on the Creation*, we are planning to engage a Jewish scholar as one of our presenters to broaden our theological view. Again we welcome suggestions for speakers for this conference. ... the sooner the better.



2. *Written in our Flesh: Eyes toward Jerusalem*, (left) the book on Father Brungs’ writings, lectures, letters is nearing completion. In fact we plan to have it available and ready for distribution as a gift to members in September as part of our celebration of the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of ITEST. This book has been “in the making” since June, 2006 and the gestation period has been

long and sometimes painful, mainly because of the amount of material from which we had to choose in order to bring this to birth. Credit for the professional appearance of the book goes to Bill Herberholt, designer of Graphics Masters; credit for the “readability” of the book goes to Sandy Ashby, copy editor *par excellence*.

3. *Exploring the World, Discovering God (EWDG)* Progress Report. Evelyn Tucker, our program manager, is working on the teacher/student evaluation section of the third and final phase of the pilot program: science/faith interfacing educational modules K–4<sup>th</sup> grade, funded mainly by the *Our Sunday Visitor Institute (OSV)*. The Advisory Council will convene at Our Lady of the Snows in September to review these evaluations and make recommendations. In the meantime, Bill Herberholt, our web designer, and Ms Tucker are preparing many of the “web-ready” lessons/modules (Christian and Catholic versions) for the stand alone web site, [www.creationlens.org](http://www.creationlens.org). (This site will also be linked to the ITEST web site.) All lessons will be available free of charge to teachers and students accessing the site. As soon as that site is on line, we will notify you so that you can see what tremendous work has been done in a short time. We have a sub-committee working to secure funding for the next



phase or tier of the project for grades 5 – 8. We welcome your assistance, suggestions and monetary contributions. Shown are the display posters used for publicity at a recent education fair. A bookmark with the web address was also distributed to attendees.

### In Memoriam

We also recommend to your prayers those who have died in the Lord this year.

**Leo Hohnstedt**, one of the original incorporators of ITEST (June, 2007)

**William J. Monahan Jr.**, long-time ITEST member and professor of sociology and criminal justice at St Louis University (August, 2008)

We also ask your prayers for ITEST members who are ill. May they feel the restoring hand of the Lord.



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## Gaudium Et Spes and Biological Advance

Father Robert A. Brungs, SJ

### Part Two

*At the invitation of the editors of the Antonianum, in 1995, Father Brungs wrote this article on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the encyclical's promulgation. The ITEST editorial board decided to reprint this article because it still has much to say about the issues confronting the Church and culture almost 15 years later. Because the essay is a lengthy one, we are publishing it in two parts: Part One in the recent Summer issue (Volume 39, No. 3); Part Two in the present Fall issue (Volume 39, No. 4). Cited with permission from Antonianum, Via Merula, 124 Roma, Italia 70 (1995).*

### Abstract

#### Gaudium et Spes

The special interest of Gaudium et Spes (GS) is particularly culture. It examines science and technology as one of the most important aspects of this culture. Actually, if it does not do it in detailed fashion, GS is nevertheless an important declaration from the Magisterium, for it is essentially open to scientific progress and to technological development. The Council document, although avoiding detailed treatment of science, particularly biology, takes specifically into consideration scientific endeavors as a good in itself and at the same time as a crucial element of cultural maturation. Avoiding specific discussion offers little assistance in judging cultural effects of scientific progress; on the other hand, it protects the Constitution from rapid obsolescence.

Opening a dozen years after Watson and Crick discovered the double helix structure of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA), the Council most likely underestimated the rapidity and extent of biological developments. But it was not alone in this miscalculation: Political leaders too understood only very slowly the revolution about to happen. On the other hand, the Council Fathers knew prophetically how to see in the family a central element of culture. It is actually the family, together with an understanding and appreciation of sexuality, which was seen as a privileged object of biological discoveries and biotechnological applications.

Moral theology (and bioethics) is perhaps still inadequate in keeping abreast of such progress, while marvelous discoveries and their utilization properly demand a common effort by scientists and theologians. Moral questions will only find satisfactory solutions when theologians develop a theology more focused *on the body*. This requires the involvement of the whole Church, in cooperation with the scientists. One may forgive the Council for a lack of foresight, but, as for us, we cannot escape responsibility.

*[Abstract translated from the original Italian to French by Father Angelo Serra, SJ and from French to English by Dr. Jean-Robert Leguey-Feilleux.]*

### Part Two Doctrinal Implications

This section is built on three assumptions. First, like every other intellectual discipline, theology is a quest, a *quaerens* — from *fides quaerens intellectum*. In graduate school one of my physics professors began each class with the statement: “Gentlemen, you will not get the correct answer until you have asked the correct question.” In many ways theology is simply an exercise in asking the right questions of Scripture and Tradition. Science, as well as all other disciplines, at its best is a process of asking better and better questions of the natural universe. Every advance should allow us to ask more penetrating questions. This can perhaps be seen even in the broad scope of the great theological struggles over the millennia: the “nature” of God, the “nature” of the Church and the role of the sacraments and, now, the “nature” of the human both individually and communally.

A second assumption is that the only creation that concerns the Christian is the creation-as-it-is. That creation is created in Christ, redeemed in the Incarnation of the Word and led forward by the Spirit toward the final fulfillment of God’s work. It includes the physical parameters within which God’s creative and redemptive gifts exist, grow and develop. Our understanding of that creation includes primarily the Revelation — Scripture and Tradition — and secondarily the authentic discoveries of science.

*Gaudium et Spes*’s “individual and collective activity, that monumental effort of man through the centuries to improve the circumstances of the world, presents no problem to believers: considered in itself, it corresponds to the plan of God. ... (33)” represents a step between Pope Leo’s statement in *Providentissimus Deus*<sup>1</sup> and Pope John Paul’s more recent statements.<sup>2</sup> In 1965, the Council’s statement about science and technology was significant. It was a statement with conciliar

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authority declaring the intrinsic goodness of scientific effort and achievement. Thus, science and technology were seen in the Church as more than rhetorical tools with which to defend the Faith. They were seen as valuable in themselves.

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Finally, I am assuming that the ultimate root of Catholic morality and thought is Revelation, not philosophy. Natural law as it has been used is not adequate to today's issues, especially those, both individual and communal, coming from advances in the life sciences. Natural law, however, has been based on an entirely new, Eucharistic, base by Pope John Paul II in *Veritatis Splendor*.<sup>3</sup> Again, as before, *IVF* can be considered as a paradigmatic case.

In its statements to the world, the Church should call attention to the growing technologization of the human with its threat of further depersonalization. *IVF* is a hinge of major importance in this technologization. The Church would do well not to concentrate on the morality of *IVF* in itself, separated from the movement of which it forms a major component. When speaking to Catholics, however, the Church has much more than that to say and it must be said. To those for whom marriage is a sacrament, the Church must proclaim that human existence requires human love. When love is removed from the intimate association of a husband and wife for purposes of convenience, greater success, or whatever, the laboratory solution represents an ultimately destructive desacramentalization, one erosive precisely of the love-inspired good intentions that led to the use of the procedure. It is an interruption in the communication of love between the partners at least in the sense that a third person, the technician, translates and interprets this communication. So viewed, *IVF* is alien to the sacramental sign of conjugal love. It seems to substitute for the symbol rather than supplement or perfect it.

This above statement looks to objective malice or non-malice. The laboratory is a place where history is frozen, where all the free variables of human life are eliminated. In human affairs, especially those relating to love and its expression, there is a contradiction between the control needed in the laboratory and the indispensable spontaneity, the free exercise of personal responsibility which living in history demands. This does *not*

make the laboratory a place of immorality, but it suggests that in actions intrinsic to the worship of God, of which sexuality (in marriage) is one, Catholics must exercise care, since, insofar as a process or an action dehistoricizes, it *eo ipso* desacramentalizes.

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Christians must enter fully into the creative pattern which is the mission of Christ in the world; our entire reality is our response to this mission. This is the matrix of *Gaudium et Spes*. Our existence in Christ must be patterned on the paradigm of creation itself. In this context, *IVF* is merely manipulative of this creative pattern. It is often supposed that, because it is possible to intervene technologically, it is permissible insofar as we see no harm done. The problem with such consequentiality is that we do not very often see very far. Insofar as we do not serve the growing creation that sacramentally signs the Kingdom of God, whatever we do is an alternative to that sacramental creation — the new creation that St. Paul mentions in 2 Corinthians — and is therefore destructive. Sexual immorality is immoral precisely because it is a departure from the history of salvation. It contains an ahistoricity, a failure of that exclusivity which is the very pattern of the coming-to-be of the created order: the relation of Yahweh to Israel, of Christ to Church. Is this failure verified in *IVF*? Is *IVF* an aid to the marital symbol or is it a substitute for it?

If the heart of the sacramental marital symbol is sexual intercourse between husband and wife, then *IVF* - a substitute for intercourse in propagating a child — is not acceptable. On the other hand, if the essence of the sacramental marriage is the life together of husband and wife, it would seem *prima facie* possible that *in vitro* processes might be considered as an aid to the fulfillment of the blessings of matrimony. Is it possible that *IVF* of a wife's egg by her husband's sperm can be considered as a technological *aid* to that complex of relationships between husband and wife which is summed up in the biblical phrase "two-in-one-flesh"? This point is not an area for the extension of already existing casuistry so much as it is for the Church's deep, prayerful meditation on the meaning of the matrimonial symbol in its relation to God's saving will.

Argumentation in much of the moral theological consideration of reproductive biological technologies has relied more on

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some abstract theory of natural law than on the sacramental nature of marriage. Moral argumentation on sexual issues law is to some extent dependent on a prior understanding of what is natural in the area of reproductive biology. Moral theologians, however, rarely argue that the use of artificial limbs or pace-makers (soon brain interventions?) is to be condemned as “unnatural.” This strictness in reproductive matters certainly arises out of the Church’s intuitive understanding that sexual difference and sexual activity is intimately linked to worship of God in history. If this is true, emphasis should be placed far more heavily on this worshipful character than on some putative violation of the “natural.” Many Catholics see the basing of moral teaching primarily on natural law theory, as it has been used over the years, as reactionary. Contemporary mankind more often than not understands “unnatural” to mean “artificial,” as if the product of human technological genius somehow stands apart from the rest of “nature.” The “two-in-one-flesh” statement of Revelation provides us with a surer base from which to approach these new questions arising from reproductive technologies.

The Church has long taught that a sacrament is a sign which *effects* that which it symbolizes. What does Christian matrimony symbolize? St. Paul tells us (Eph 5) that Christian matrimony symbolizes Christ’s relationship to his Church. Since Christian marriage is a sacrament, it effects that relationship between Christ and Church. Matrimony does not create the relationship of Christ and his Church — that pertains to Christ’s continued and continual presence to his Church in the Eucharist — but it does effect it by strengthening it, making it deeper and

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more fruitful. The relationship between a man and a woman in Christian marriage is an image of the already existing relationship between Christ and his Church. As such, it must be patterned on Christ’s relationship to the Church. Christian marriage, in which the mutual self-surrender to each other images the mutual self-gift of Christ and his Church, strengthens the Christ-Church relationship. Therefore, the decisive norms and characteristics of Christian marriage are theological, not the social customs of any particular time.

The relationship between Christ and his Church is inevitably fruitful; the Church is already the fruitfulness of Christ and, united to him, the Church bears fruit. The union of husband and wife is fruitful physically (the procreation of children) and spiritually (the deepening and strengthening of mutual self-surrender to each other). The physical and spiritual fruitfulness of marriage form an unbreakable unity (like the union of body and spirit in an individual). Neither aspect can dominate at the expense of the other. Neither can be ignored, down-played or denied without seriously damaging a relationship which images and effects the union of Christ and his Church.

*IVF*, looked at in terms of the unitive and procreative aspects of marriage, is the inverse of contraception in which the unitive aspect of marriage is detached from the procreative aspect. In *IVF*, the procreative aspect is removed from the unitive. The physical “fruitfulness” occurs even in the absence of the partners, thus reducing it to mere mating. Since the mating of the gametes is separated in time and space, human procreation becomes merely functional, indistinguishable from animal mating. To suppose that human sexuality in marriage can be submitted to such use is to treat it, not as a sacrament symbolic of Christ’s love for his Church, but as something that is of no more overall significance than, say, digestion. This can be shown by an extreme case at present (we think), but one which *can* occur. Suppose that a husband and wife should decide in their reproductive years to have a child born a hundred years from now. Suppose they’re wealthy enough to ensure that this will be done. In what sense is that child a “fruit of their love?” Thus, in what way can *in vitro* procedures be considered a technological aid to the fruitfulness of their love? Even when sperm are gathered from sexual intercourse and immediately used to fertilize the already prepared egg, the mating of the cells represents an event separate in time and place from an expression of mutual love.

Even taking *in vitro* procedures as a neutral technology, unconnected with any kind of eugenics, this technological mating of two cells destroys the sacramental unity of the unitive and procreative aspects of marriage. Perhaps we can form a rough analogy from the Church’s reaction to the growth of technology in the case of other sacraments. The Church does not allow sacramental confession and absolution by telephone. The Church teaches that sacraments require people present to each other physically. A televised Mass does not satisfy the obligation to attend Mass on Sundays and Holy Days. The comparison is not perfect, but it is helpful to our understanding that sacraments are historical events involving people present to each other and to God. It has been objected that in special

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circumstances the Church will allow “proxy” marriages. The proxy is a person, not a technological procedure. Moreover, and essentially, the proxy is only a proxy who will not live the sacramental union he or she witnessed as a proxy. In brief, the technologies involved in *in vitro* procedures separate the couple’s mutual love from the fruitfulness of that love. Thus it is to be expected that the Church will not (and cannot) countenance this method for those who live a sacramental marriage.

As *Gaudium et Spes* teaches, we live in faith and look ahead in hope to our fulfilled lives when we shall be with God. This faith, while setting practical limitations on our activity, opens our minds and hearts to the richness of God’s Kingdom. That faith, hope and love entail a will to engage totally, not partially, in following Christ; it involves a constant willingness to remove the barriers we erect to Christ’s action in our lives and a willingness to live in conformity to God’s will for his creation as he has revealed it in his Church.

Clearly the above is *not* a final word on biological topics. An immense amount of dogmatic theology remains to be done, especially on our bodiedness. We have not achieved a truly adequate understanding of any part of the revelation. *Gaudium et Spes* states this in somewhat different terms:

These difficulties [in the way of harmonizing culture with Christian thought] do not necessarily harm the life of faith, but can rather stimulate a more precise and deeper understanding of that faith. In fact, recent research and discoveries in the sciences, in history and philosophy bring up new problems which have an important bearing on life itself and demand new scrutiny by theologians. Furthermore, theologians are now being asked, within the methods and limits of the science of theology, to seek out more efficient ways — provided the meaning and understanding of them is safeguarded — of presenting their teaching to modern man: for the deposit and the truths of faith are one thing, the manner of expressing them is quite another. . . .

. . . . Let the faithful incorporate the findings of new sciences and teachings and the understanding of the most recent discoveries with Christian morality and thought, so that their practice of religion and their moral behavior may keep abreast of their acquaintance with science and of the relentless progress of technology: in this way they will succeed in evaluating and interpreting everything with an authentically Christian sense of values. (62)

I believe, however, that I am saying more than the above when I discuss the “development of doctrine.” That phrase should include more than a better way of stating “of expressing the truths of the faiths.” Development of doctrine does not carry the notion of introducing absolutely new material or contradictions into the deposit of faith. It does mean that new information and new approaches may well shed greater light on aspects of that faith which we have not yet understood adequately. I mention only one here — the discovery in the nineteenth century of the ovum in females and in the twentieth the genetics of the ovum.

That discovery showed that the mother contributed positively to the genetic inheritance of the child. She was far more than an “incubator.” In the case of the Incarnation, all of Jesus’ human inheritance came from Mary — as best we know. She was his only physical link to Israel, his only earthly connection to salvation history. His earthly relatives were from “her side of the family.” While we do not know in detail how God effected the Incarnation, we can say with probability that all of Christ’s physical characteristics were from her — except for his gender. In the Incarnation the Son of God did not assume some generalized kind of humanity; he did not become human in a “one-size-fits-all” body. His body was specific, one particular enough to locate him uniquely in time, in space, in the history of Israel and of the human race. This is to say that his body was completely appropriate to his time, to his place and to his relatives — as our bodies are appropriate to our time, place and relatives. In that conformity of his body to its natural and historical environment, he became a member of our race. Born in another time or place, the incarnate Son of God could not have become Jesus of Nazareth — no more than we could have been born at another time or place and have remained ourselves.<sup>4</sup>

The discovery of the existence of the ovum and its special role in inheritance also sheds light on the reality and extent of God’s Providence. Only one ovum in the history of the universe, combined with one particular sperm, could have resulted in you, in me. Multiplying the likelihood of the uniting of this particular egg and particular sperm over the thousands of generations of history, factoring in all that might have gone wrong over that span of time, one can say that he or she is either totally trivial or the recipient of God’s very special providential care. That kind of understanding of Providence was not possible until the discovery of the ovum

Another area needing a development of doctrine is St. Paul’s notion of the New Human:

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Christianity, starting with the Letters of St. Paul, has always proclaimed the advent of the New Human, now in sacrament and, with the return of Christ, in its integral reality. In contrast to the promises of scientific/technological advance, the Christian vision of the new human is eschatological and transcendent. The doctrinal question facing the church now is the relationship between the immanent “new human” of scientific/technical development and the eschatological “New Human” of Christian tradition. The question can be made more specific: is the immanent “new human” a part of (even an indispensable part of) the transcendent eschatological “New Human” to whom God has committed himself? This is certainly an issue worthy of doctrinal development. The rapidity of the scientific development makes this an immediate and urgent concern of the theological community and of the church. Can these two visions of the “New Human” be made to serve each other in order to bring about the deeper unity of the created world?

The human body, and hence the human person, is going to be “transfigured” one way or another — through the power of God and/or through the power and genius of human beings. We human beings are in a position to choose our bodied future. We Christians have the obligation to apply our view of that bodied future to the developing capacity to “re-do” ourselves according to some controlling vision of the meaning of creation and of humanity.<sup>5</sup>

Part of the contemporary theological crisis is our now centuries-long inattention to the covenantal character of God’s relation to us and to all of creation. This inattention extends to what might be called a “Christomonism;” namely, a theological consideration of Christ apart from his relationship to Mary and through her to creation. Only in her acceptance of a two-in-one-flesh covenant does the Son become “one of us.” It is in her covenantal “yes” that he has human relatives, a human genealogy, a human face. Overstressing the hypostatic union at the expense of the two-in-one-flesh covenant (between two *integral* persons) with Mary renders the Christian reality poorer. It is, seemingly, to make sacramentality practically meaningless, to render covenant incomprehensible and theology impossible.

A fertile area for future theological insight can be found in an emphasis on the “two-in-one-flesh” theme. Since the *Una Caro* represents a central statement of the “new and eternal covenant” in the Body and Blood of Christ, it is worthy of investigation. It provides a strong focus for many aspects of our contemporary scientific-technological society. Consider, for example, nuclear

transplantation (“cloning”) as a proposed mode for human reproduction. Nuclear transplantation escapes the “giftness” of the masculine-feminine relationship. It is essentially a monistic negation of the covenantal relationship of man and woman, and ultimately of Bridegroom and Bride. It touches the heart of the revelation of God’s marital relationship to his people, and through them to creation. It is blasphemous in that (as a “one-in-one-flesh” relationship) followed to its conclusions, it would posit a monism in God, a unity that would negate the Trinitarian processions.

While technologically the advance in the life sciences is raising novel moral issues, the science can be a springboard for the development of our understanding of the living world and of ourselves and God’s will for us. The investigation of the two-in-one-flesh theme requires development along many lines of doctrinal thought: Christology, Mariology, ecclesiology, sacramental theology and eschatology. Biological advance also requires such development; it is needed if we are to face this new challenge coming from science and technology. A development of the doctrine of the “two-in-one-flesh” theme may be a most appropriate unifying theme for the needed doctrinal explicitation of a “theology of bodiliness.” It is my conviction that all the major issues agitating the church today

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***...all the major issues agitating  
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meaning of our bodiedness.***

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revolve about the meaning of our bodiedness.<sup>6</sup> This clearly includes all questions which relate to our sexual being as well as those regarding the nature of the church as the Body and Bride of Christ. The scientifically and technologically based issues surrounding our being bodied are among the most crucial facing the Church. For an historical (bodied) religion like Christianity this advance in knowledge of living systems and a growing ability to manipulate them will have a staggering impact (both challenge and opportunity). We have both the opportunity and the need for a major doctrinal development “on the body.”

When we proclaim the Creed we profess our faith in the resurrection of the body. In almost all of the earliest of the creeds the resurrection is not proclaimed as the *anastasin nekrôn* of the Creed of Constantinople but as *anastasin sarkos*. St. Paul says in Romans 8 that we who possess the first-fruits of the Spirit groan inwardly as we wait for our bodies to be set free. He

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does not say that we are waiting to be set free from our bodies. In Philippians 3:21 he returns to the same theme stating that the Lord Jesus Christ will transfigure these wretched bodies of ours into copies of his glorious body. Irenaeus clearly stated that the flesh is good, being prepared now in the Eucharist for the incorruption of everlasting life. For two thousand years the singular newness of the Good News has been the resurrection of the flesh. It is strange that the Church does not have an adequately structured doctrine *de corpore* to cope with the revolutionary developments in the biological sciences and technologies. Although such a structured doctrine was not as necessary before the questions which now face us were asked, it is unfortunate that the questions about our bodiedness are now so difficult to formulate theologically.

Looking at the tremendous sweep of advance in the life sciences, technologies and industry since the publication of *Gaudium et Spes*, we can legitimately ask which of the advances will enhance our conformity to the Body of Christ and which will be destructive of it. That set of questions should be a major aspect of our theological future. The answers will not come primarily from bioethics. I suggest five questions which might serve as a *beginning* of a doctrinal conversation on the meaning of the body in salvation and glorification. These are not the only questions which can be asked, nor are they completely developed. Nonetheless, they can be of service in sharpening the doctrinal issues raised by the burgeoning biosciences and biotechnologies. I shall simply list them here; more detailed development can be found elsewhere.<sup>7</sup>

1. Does a particular biological alteration enhance the innate, internal dignity (which involves the sacramental and covenantal character of the body) of the human or does it set up external criteria by which a human being is to be judged? Does our perceived human dignity derive from being who we are or does it derive from success in functioning in society? We have already seen the beginnings of this situation in couples conceiving children in order to provide organs or tissue (e.g., bone marrow) for transplantation to older siblings who need them (it).
2. Tightly tied to questions of human dignity are questions of personal freedom which flow from innate human dignity. Does a particular enhancement foster personal freedom or does it lead to the establishment of expectations, the fulfillment of which will be coercive?
3. This question (probably the most important) is more difficult to address because the tradition is not as richly

articulated in this area: does the proposed biological alteration preserve (and increase) some form of “bodily integrity”? This concept and the multiple questions it raises need serious attention. The concept of a bodily integrity necessary for salvation and glorification sounds strange to us, accustomed as we are to think of salvation as something “spiritual;” it is difficult even to pose the question convincingly. It seems, however, especially in view of the cumulative theological expressions of the Fathers of the Church, that there is a traditional intuition of its importance. It is precisely here that there is need for a significant development of doctrine.

Thirty years ago the concept of “bodily integrity” was broached only (if my memory is accurate) in discussing mutilation which involved such issues as surgical amputation as well as deliberate maiming and in questions about the state of Adam’s body before sin. This latter was hardly an issue crying out for contemporary treatment. The central moral issue of “bodily integrity” was how much one might take away from the human body and still have a human body. Of course these were concerns before organ transplants, recombinant DNA, the new reproductive technologies and the developing neurotechnologies, before organs and fetal tissue became marketable commodities. That today’s questions about “bodily integrity” revolve more about how much can be added to the human body without disturbing its human character shows how much the theological times have changed in the last quarter of a century.<sup>8</sup>

4. As a specification of the third question, it may be asked whether the proposed biological alteration promotes a closer integration into the human community. Even more important for the church, does it promote a closer entry into the sacramental living and growing of the covenantal community? Or does it, on the other hand, tend to isolate its recipient from the community or reduce that person to a cog in some social machinery? More likely than not, the “new biologics” will be used to develop exotic characteristics (like the denizens of the cantina in *Star Wars*) or uniformity (like square tomatoes that can be more easily packaged).
5. Does the proposed enhancement tend to promote the sacramental and covenantal worship of God, or does it lead away from that worship? Issues of marriage and reproductive biology naturally come to mind.

Continues on page 9



To add to the difficulty of this whole situation, the Church and the theological community are not at home in the world described by science. The sweep of contemporary discovery and the aspects of the physical creation (including the human) it has uncovered are not yet a part of the Church's understanding. In our present position we are especially subject to two temptations: either accepting totally and uncritically all that contemporary science says, does and proposes in order to "catch up and be open to the world," or to ignore such discovery and its applications to "preserve the purity of the faith" — or to avoid the necessary hard work. St. Gregory Nazianzen would have called the former approach "reckless" or "unscientific," and the latter course "unfaithful."

The United States Bishops at the Fifth Synod of Bishops submitted a message on the relationship between the Church and the scientific community.<sup>9</sup> This message should be read as at least a postscript to *Gaudium et Spes*. Scientific discovery and its technological application, especially in its intervention into the human, will have to be integrated into our theological understanding of creation. Moreover, some kind of open and positive set of limitations will have to be placed on its applications. This is no simple task since it demands a far greater theological understanding of creation than we now have. It also demands a basic, but critical, openness to scientific progress. This is a task for the whole theological community, working together with all the members of the Church, and especially with the scientific community, on the meanings of these discoveries. The time still available for us to form a real partnership with the scientific community in the quest for meaning is short.

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***It is impossible to overestimate the impact that bioscience, biotechnology, and bio-industry will have on the faith.***

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It is impossible to overestimate the impact that bioscience, biotechnology, and bio-industry will have on the faith. We probably would have to look all the way back to the fourth century for a theological upheaval of the magnitude that science and technology are forcing on us. It is a scandal that so few Churchmen and so few theologians are aware of what is happening. A British Bishop, when asked about the birth of Louise Brown, remarked that he didn't see anything wrong with it. Undoubtedly this is an accurate statement: he didn't see anything wrong with it. But this is a "teacher in Israel" and the "Israelites" deserve better than this.

## Conclusion

Finally, let me note a statement in *Gaudium et Spes*:

Those involved in theological studies in seminaries and universities should be eager to cooperate with men versed in other fields of learning by pooling their resources and their points of view. Theological research, while it deepens knowledge of revealed truth, should not lose contact with its own times, so that experts in various field may be led to deeper knowledge of the faith. Collaboration of this kind will be beneficial in the formation of that sacred ministers; they will be able to present teaching on God, on man, and on the world, in a way more suited to our contemporaries, who will then be more ready to accept their worlds. Furthermore, it is to be hoped that more of the laity will receive adequate theological formation and that some among them will dedicate themselves professionally to these studies and contribute to their advancement. . . . (62)

It is always easy to state that seminarians be taught this or that. Ideally, it may be true, but there are still only 24 hours in a day. I would propose that seminarians, in the course of training, spend a total of two or three weeks learning (from practitioners) about the broad advance of science and about the obligation of the laity to evangelize the Church and the world. These are explained well (and at length) in the Council's *Constitution on the Laity* and in Pope Paul VI's encyclical *Evangelii Nuntiandi*.

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***One thing that should be emphasized for all in the Church is the worshipful character of human learning.***

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One thing that should be emphasized for all in the Church is the worshipful character of human learning. The clergy and laity must realize that worship is a far more expansive notion than cult or liturgy. Clearly, learning can be used for evil, but so can every other created thing. Learning about God's creative and redemptive goodness and praising him is worship. All Catholics (clergy and laity) should be fully aware of this worshipful aspect. We are all called in baptism to be evangelists; it is our Christian duty. Being a scientist or a technologist is as important an evangelical state as being a theologian. Seminarians, clergy and laity alike share in the obligations and graces of preaching the word, in season and out. We should all be aware of the work and the vocation of the other.

*Continues on page 10*

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As Pope John Paul has written:

Contemporary developments in science challenge theology far more deeply than did the introduction of Aristotle into Western Europe in the thirteenth century. Yet these developments also offer to theology a potentially important resource. Just as Aristotelian philosophy, through the ministry of such great scholars as St Thomas Aquinas, ultimately came to shape some of the most profound expressions of theological doctrine, so can we not hope that the sciences of today, along with all forms of human knowing, may invigorate and inform those parts of the theological enterprise that bear on the relation of nature, humanity and God?

... For science develops best when its concepts and conclusions are integrated into the broader human culture and its concerns for ultimate meaning and value.

... By devoting to these issues something of the energy and care they give to their research in science, they can help others realize more fully the human potentialities of their discoveries. They can also come to appreciate for themselves that these discoveries cannot be a genuine substitute for knowledge of the truly ultimate. Science can purify religion from error and superstition; religion can purify science from idolatry and false absolutes...<sup>10</sup>

Steeping ourselves in the spirit of *Gaudium et Spes* will lead us all to work together to integrate our daily activities, including our research activities, into our faith lives. Thus, one fundamental call of the Council will be lived and the Church will grow in holiness.

**Endnotes:**

1. "There can never, indeed, be any real discrepancy between the theologian and the physicist, as long as each confines himself within his own lines, and both are careful, as St. Augustine warns us, 'not to make rash assertions, or to assert what is not known as known (Augustine, *In. Gen. op. imperf.* ix. 30).' If dissension should arise between them, here is the rule also laid down by St. Augustine, for the theologian: 'Whatever they can really demonstrate to be true of physical nature we must show to be capable of reconciliation with our Scriptures; and whatever they assert in their treatises which is contrary to these Scriptures of ours, that is to the Catholic faith, we must either prove it as well as we can to be entirely false, or at all events we must, without the slightest hesitation, believe it to be so (Augustine, *De Gen. ad litt.* i. 21, 42).'" *Providentissimus Deus*.
2. One example of the mind of Pope John Paul II is a citation from a Letter to Father George Coyne, S.J. on the occasion of the tercentenary of the publication of Newton's *Principia* (1988). See Endnote 7 for publication data.
3. In an article, "The Moral Doctrine of *Veritatis Splendor*," Father Donald J. Keefe, S.J. states: "Rather, *Veritatis Splendor* simply transcends this contemporary scholastic debate between the relativists in their several guises and the defenders of the natural law tradition. The dissenting moral theology has been put out of court by this document, and this for reasons which undermine as well much of the *theology* which has been summoned to the explanation, and lately to the defense, of natural law tradition... 'Human nature' in *Veritatis Splendor* is the primordially good creation, the free nuptial unity of man and woman which 'in the beginning' is integral and unfallen, which fell in Adam, which is redeemed in Christ, an which, in union with Him as the second Adam, its Head, is raised to the right hand of the Father." Father Keefe then quotes, among others, section §50 of *Veritatis Splendor*: "At this point the true meaning of the natural law can be understood: it refers to man's proper and primordial nature, the nature of the human person, which is the person himself in the unity of soul and body, in the unity of his spiritual and biological inclinations and of all the other specific characteristics necessary for the pursuit of his end." Keefe's article will be published in an upcoming issue of *Rivista de Teologia Morale*.
4. See, Robert Brungs, S.J., "Biology and the Future: A Doctrinal Agenda," *Theological Studies*, 50 (1989), p. 706.
5. *Ibid.*, p. 706.
6. This is my understanding of Pope John Paul II statements, beginning as early as 1978, in *The Original Unity of Man and Woman*.
7. For a more detailed treatment, see: Robert Brungs, S.J., "Biology and the Future: A Doctrinal Agenda," *Theological Studies*, 50 (1989) and Robert Brungs, S.J., *You See Lights Breaking Upon Us: Doctrinal Perspectives on Biological Advance*, St. Louis, 1989, pp. 225.
8. Cf., Brungs, *Theological Studies*, 701-702.
9. Cf., "The Church & Scientists — Synod '77," *Origins*, 7, 21, November, 1977, pp. 330-331.
10. John Paul II, "Message of His Holiness John Paul II" in *Physics, Philosophy, and Theology: A Common Quest for Understanding*, ed. R. Russell, W. Stoeger, SJ and G. Coyne, SJ. Vatican City: Vatican Observatory, 1988), pp. M12-M13.

## Introduction

Because young and enthusiastic Christians in various professions are the lifeblood of ITEST, they have long been a focus of our recruitment. Our late director, Father Brungs, saw this emphasis as a vital part of our continued existence as he worked with campus ministry groups around the country and most recently launched our latest project, *Exploring the World, Discovering God (EWDG)*. We seldom receive submissions for publication from young people, but the following article has the ring of integrity and sincerity – straight from the heart kind of exposition — that evokes a positive response. This article, written by Meredith Bradley who will complete her Masters in Music Therapy in December, 2008, shows how her deep Christian faith has imbued her ministry in music therapy with a purpose that embraces the spiritual as well as the physical in relating to her clients.

## Music Therapy Graduate Program at New York University Therapy Principles

By Meredith Bradley

*As an assignment in one of my graduate Music Therapy courses, we were asked to write about our therapy principles, or what we believe is at the heart of therapy. In addition to taking classes, I have been a music therapy intern at a short and long-term rehabilitation and skilled nursing home facility. My professor, Susan Feiner, and my internship supervisor, Benedikte Scheiby, have helped me develop the following ideas. As I began this exploration, my personal philosophy of life kept creeping in. Through the process of sketching and writing about my principles, I have discovered that my spiritual beliefs and practices are at the very core of my thinking. As a Christian, I feel that my relationship with Christ shapes the way in which I work and relate to others. The following therapy principles are shared by others and could be derived from many different thought processes, beliefs, and backgrounds. So, one could say that the following are not necessarily “Christian therapy principles”, but I would like to suggest that these principles derive from the very heart of the Christian message: “This is my commandment: love one another as I love you.” (John 15:12) I want to share this with you just so that you know from where I am coming. Thank you for allowing me to do so.*

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***As a Christian, I feel that my  
relationship with Christ  
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### **Therapy is Relational. It is not a formula.**

Through my internship and personal growth, this is probably the most valuable lesson I have learned. Related to my faith, I have been reading a book by Donald Miller (2004) called “Searching for God Knows What”. In this book, Miller describes the Christian life as a deep relationship with Jesus, not a formula of “do’s and don’ts.” Miller writes that many scholars believe the book of Job was the first book written in the Bible. Miller (2004) then shares:

...so the first thing God wanted to communicate to mankind was that life is hard, and there is pain, great pain in life, and yet the answer to this pain, or the cure for this pain, is not given in explanation; rather, God offers to this pain, or this life experience, Himself. Not steps, not an understanding, not a philosophy, but Himself. (p. 216)

While I believe we can never offer ourselves to each other the exact way God offers himself to us, perhaps offering ourselves to each other as much as we can is what loving each other means. In therapy, we offer our time, our empathy, our humanness, and our openness. While the client shares him/herself with us, we receive him/her with an unconditional love. Love is a difficult word to define, and many languages have several words for the various dimensions of love. However, I believe that the love found in therapy is the selfless love that God wants us to share with each other. The Greek word “agape” is often used to describe this kind of Christian love. Because of this love,

### **Biography of Meredith Bradley**

Meredith earned a BA in Music from Loyola University, New Orleans in 2005 and is working on her Masters in Music Therapy at New York University. She has completed fieldwork requirements at Hackensack Hospital and The Other Place, a day program for homeless men and women. She most recently completed an internship with the music therapy department at Beth Abraham Hospital. Currently, Meredith is focusing on the completion of her thesis.

our shared humanness, and our uniqueness as individuals, there could never be a formula. The way in which we work depends on the client and ourselves. The relationship that develops is at the heart of therapy, and there are actually several relationships to consider.

Ken Bruscia (1998) discusses the various relationships present within the music therapy context. He states that there are relationships between people, between components of one person, between objects, etc. He further adds that these relationships emerge in therapy, in the music, and in one's way of being. In my opinion, we are always working with relationships in therapy. Now, what is a relationship? The Oxford American Dictionary (1980) defines "relation" as "the way in which one thing is related to another, a similarity or correspondence or contrast between people or things or events" (p. 762). I like this definition because it reminds us that a relationship can be experienced with many things and a relationship may be described in a variety of ways. Many times in therapy we are working on relationships that upset, challenge, encourage, or inspire. The way we are in the world is defined by our relationships.

This focus on relationships is not a new idea. Interpersonal and relational psychology is well established and considers the environmental influences and relationships we develop throughout life. It also takes into account the relationship that emerges between client and therapist in the therapy context. Several forms of therapy find their roots in relational psychology. In the music therapy setting, the client and therapist each enter with his/her own set of relationships. Each has a relationship to other people (family, friends, enemies), to music, to parts of oneself, to God or the spiritual, and to one's world/environment/culture. We share our humanness with each other, and so we share our relationships with each other. While the client and therapist each have very different roles with clear, defined boundaries, the experience of these various relationships together and the relationship developing between client and therapist can be therapeutic. There are many more ideas, concepts, and terms that could be discussed within this first principle, but I will move on. I began with this relational principle because I believe the following principle stems from it. Further the following principle has others that stem from it. So, it really feels more like a waterfall effect.

**Because therapy is relational, therapy is "active being".**

When we are in a therapeutic relationship, we are being with each other in the moment and from moment to moment. I

have struggled with this particular principle, so I'd like to first address the concept of "being". In a conversation with my internship supervisor, Benedikte Scheiby (personal communication, April 2008), we discussed the difference between "being" and "doing". Being could be thought of as one's existence or presence in a room, while doing involves engagement in an activity. I'd like to add to this and say that being encompasses all of one's relationships in the moment. This might include one's relationship to the bed, to the wheelchair, to the breathing machine, as well as more sophisticated relationships such as to one's self, family, and God. Doing maybe engagement in conversation, music, and even silence. Sometimes the most active and therapeutic

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*Sometimes the  
most active and therapeutic  
moments are  
within silence.*

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moments are within silence. In therapy, we are in a state of being and doing. When these two come together at their highest potential, we are in a state of what I call "active being". Active being requires that we are in the moment, and this ultimate presence brings awareness of our authentic, or true selves. It is in these authentic moments that I believe we can feel God working through us.

Gestalt Therapy, developed by Fritz Perls, addresses the importance of being in the "here and now" moment and gaining awareness of oneself. Awareness is necessary before change can occur. As therapists, we have our own issues, challenges, themes, and reactions to our clients. Hopefully, we are continuously working on these through various outlets so that we gain a sense of awareness about ourselves. We then bring this awareness of ourselves into our therapy sessions. When we are aware of ourselves, we can be aware of others. As the therapist, it is so important to acknowledge our counter-transference, or what we are feeling from the client. Sensations in our bodies or emotional responses to our clients give us clues into our client's world. Our active being allows us to experience our client's being. This can especially be useful if a client is non-verbal. So, in the therapy session, one hopes to be in a state of active being together, experiencing each other in the moment in authenticity. This idea of active being further propelled my thinking into other principles.

**Because therapy is being, therapy is flexible.**

When one is in a state of active being, one is in the moment and accepts what is in the moment. To be able to accept what is in the moment one must be flexible and able to adapt. It is so important for us as therapists to be flexible and willing to open ourselves to new perspectives so that our clients may do the same. At my internship I have truly seen the value of processing my own counter-transference so that I can enter into an active being state with my clients. In therapy, we explore options with our clients because the world is a series of actions and reactions. The world requires that we are flexible in order to survive. Because therapy is flexible, we may be required to share different sides of ourselves with our clients depending on what arises in the moment. We may have to use various and new tools, experiment, and challenge ourselves. In order for this sense of flexibility to

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***Music is a wonderful therapeutic tool because it offers inherent structure while also allowing for creativity and new ideas.***

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be felt, trust and a safety must first be established. Music is a wonderful therapeutic tool because it offers inherent structure while also allowing for creativity and new ideas. While experiencing flexibility, we hope that the client learns they are so much more than their diagnosis. They are people with resources, options, and potential.

**Because therapy is flexible, therapy may be holding, witnessing, listening, challenging, laughing, or sharing joy.**

When we are actively being with a client, we allow and accept what comes up in the moment. A client may begin to cry and may need a witness and a sense of holding to validate his/her emotions, to allow him/her to be in the tears and accept them as truth. A client may be stuck or limited by his/her pathology, illness, etc., and if we are being with him/her as therapists, we will more than likely feel this “stuckness” ourselves. The moment is calling on us to challenge, stimulate, present options, and witness flexibility with our clients. Part of this challenging is seeing our client’s potential, seeing the healthy within and giving the healthy an outlet. This is what true love really is. It is seeing the presence of Jesus in others, and it is never

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***This is what true love really is.  
... seeing the presence of Jesus in others, and it is never giving up on a person the way Jesus never gives up on us.***

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giving up on a person the way Jesus never gives up on us. So, active being is accepting, but it doesn’t mean doing nothing. It means accepting the person as a whole. If a client suffers from a debilitating diagnosis, we accept the client wherever he/she is, and as a result, we accept the whole person, understanding that the client is defined by his/her diagnosis. We accept the diagnosis, yes, because it is real, but we accept it as only a part of that person. There is more to him/her and perhaps part of this challenging principle is to help our client see this also. In addition, it is important to share moments of joy and laughter. This also helps the client see that he/she is more than the diagnosis.

Many of these therapy principles are still being defined, and I know that I am just beginning my journey as a music therapist. Perhaps the most valuable thing I have learned thus far is that therapy is a learning process for both the client and the therapist. It is a journey where mistakes are made, lessons are learned, and humanness is shared. We experience ourselves and we experience each other. Every single client with whom I have worked this past year at my internship has taught me something new. I cannot wait to see where God next leads me.

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## Thomas F. Torrance & Scientific Culture

By Dr. John McKenna

On December 2, 2007, the First Sunday of Advent, the Very Reverend Professor Thomas F. Torrance went to heaven to be with our Lord. He leaves behind him as a Christian theologian a distinguished body of work that will take theologians and scientists some decades to digest. He championed the Christian doctrine of the contingency of the world as created out of nothing by the Creator who has made Himself known through the Incarnation of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Revelation of the Father in the Spirit of the Almighty God. The Word of God become flesh in the space, time, motion, and matter of the universe is to be understood as an historical event in the Creation that is God's affirmation and confirmation of its Beginning. Christian Theology of the Triune Redeemer-Creator of the world cannot be divorced from the real nature of the Creation and our scientific enterprises to understand the Universe where mankind has its being and nature.

Professor Torrance was born to Presbyterian and Anglican missionary parents in Chengdu, China, August 30, 1913. He returned to his home in 1927 and became an ordained minister of the Church of Scotland in 1940. He served as a parish minister at Alyth until the Second World War, when he joined the 'Huts and Canteens' in the Holy Land and then became Chaplain to the King's Own Royal Rifles in Europe. In 1945, he resumed his work on his Ph.D. dissertation with Karl Barth and thus began his long career as an interpreter of the *Church Dogmatics* in the English-speaking world.<sup>1</sup> He married Margaret Spear in 1946 and they raised two sons, Thomas Spear and Ian, and one daughter Alison. During this long and distinguished career, Torrance served as Professor of Church History at New College, Edinburgh and Professor of Church Dogmatics (1952-79). He was Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, 1976-77, and steadily sought to proclaim the

Gospel with an ecumenical and evangelical spirit with devoted and excelling excellence.<sup>2</sup> Beginning in the 1950's, Torrance's concern for the relationship between science and scientific culture and Christian Theology grew into a body of work that created his interest in the great Sixth Century Alexandrian Grammarian John Philoponus, whose works captured his final arguments about our need to grasp in all of its depths the very real ground that allows Theology and Science to be, far from the enemies history often portrayed them as, but meant for the ultimate marriage that is bound up with eschatology and teleology envisioned in the biblical world.<sup>3</sup>

I met Professor Torrance in 1981 at Fuller Theological Seminary, where he came to deliver the Payton Lectures that year. The lectures became his *Reality and Evangelical Theology* and he also gave us a two-week intensive course entitled *Christian Theology in the Context of Scientific Change*. This time marked my conversion from a Ph.D. dissertation in Fuller's Old Testament Department to investigating the work of John Philoponus under Professor Bromiley in the Historical Theology Department. To say the least, it was quite a change for me, through which I continue to go to this day.<sup>4</sup> Torrance became a mentor and friend and, I must say, like a father to me in the Christian Faith, and I have tried to read and understand his books and articles with a commitment from which I am unable to escape. It appears to me that, in a world in need of great change, the direction to which Torrance would point both the theological and scientific enterprises of our churches and cultures possesses a solid and concrete ground upon which we may learn to stand and sing the praises of our Lord and God, our Redeemer and our Creator.<sup>5</sup>

In this short essay, I will seek, as best I can and as far as I may, the nature of the covenanted relationship I believe Torrance

### Biography of Reverend John Emory McKenna

The Reverend John Emory McKenna, Ph.D., is Doctrinal Advisor to the Worldwide Church of God, Glendora, California, Professor, Vice-President at the World Mission University in Los Angeles, and Adjunct Professor with Haggard Graduate School of Theology of Azusa Pacific University. He has published *The Setting in Life of 'The Arbiter' by John Philoponus* (Wipf & Stock: 1999) and numerous articles on the Alexandrian Theologian and Scientist with [www.quodlibet.net](http://www.quodlibet.net) and with Watani International, as well as with the Worldwide Church of God and the World Mission University. His works have been collected and published in Korean. He has also published, with his wife, Nancy McKenna, *The Burning Green*, a collection of their poetry. His recently published book entitled *The Great AMEN of the Great I-AM* is available from Wipf & Stock: 2008 Resource Books, Eugene, Oregon. He is a student of the late Right Reverend Dr. Thomas F. Torrance of Edinburgh, Scotland.

Degrees: Doctor of Philosophy in Historical Theology: Fuller Theological Seminary

Master of Divinity: Fuller Theological Seminary, Bachelor of Arts in Physical Chemistry: Princeton University. He is married to Nancy McVicker, a Roman Catholic believer.

understood as the ground upon which both theologians and scientists must learn to stand to send their very different enterprises in a direction that belongs to the will and wisdom of our Redeemer-Creator. To do this, I must ask my reader to understand, in the Grace and Truth of the Lord God of the biblical covenanted relationship, a concept of the contingency of the world that has not had an easy road to travel in the history of hermeneutical science.<sup>6</sup> By the contingent nature of created reality, brought into being out of nothing, is meant the substantial order and freedom of a universe that is not self-explaining. Independent of God's nature and being, the universe is a created reality whose nature and being is what it is as dependent upon God's will and wisdom for being what they are. Between these two realities, divine and created, exists no necessary, logical-causal relationship (the One is not out of nothing and the other is out of nothing), but this cannot and does not mean they are absolutely divorced or separated from each other. The relationship that does exist between them is to be understood then as a free and freely created and creative relationship posited absolutely by the will and wisdom of who the Creator is in His Freedom and Order, the uncreated freedom and the uncreated order of His Being and Nature. The only necessity that we may posit between the two is then a unique necessity that resolves problems of determination and arbitrariness the dialectics of which form much understanding about the contingency of the world. The Creation of the Creator is neither a necessary nor a random development from the Hand and Word of God. It is a free Creation whose freedom and order, as created realities, are what they are, independent of the Creator, while absolutely dependent upon Him who is the One He is as self-revealed and self-named in the Revelation to which the Holy Scriptures are witness. Torrance quotes, therefore, *nihil constant de contingentia nisi ex revelatione* ('nothing can be established about contingency except by revelation).

With this concept in mind, the Church has had to struggle against the dualist ways that seek to frame an understanding of the doctrine of *creation ex nihilo* in reductionistic manners that do not allow us actually to grasp the real relationship posited and sustained by the One who is who He is with us as our Redeemer-Creator.<sup>7</sup> We may learn much about this struggle by investigating the various marriages into which the Church has entered from the Middle Ages and its Sacramental Universe to the Age of the Enlightenment and the Mechanical Universe developed among us from the advance of Isaac Newton's *Principia* and finally, as it is with us today, to the Legacy of Albert Einstein of the 'Universe of Light' and the developments of our modern cosmology and epistemology. If the Sacramental Universe marks a reductionism upwards into a Greek Essentialism of our ways of thought and if the Mechanical Universe marks a reductionism downwards into

a modern instrumentalism in our times, then our post-modern search for a unified cosmology and way of understanding at once theory laden experiments and experienced verified theory has compelled out into the open, to the forefront of human consciousness, the concept of contingency as substantial and rational beyond the determinism-indeterminism dialectical ways of grasping reality in all of its depths. It is this concept of contingency that Torrance found first in the Sixth Century Alexandrian Grammarian, John Philoponus.<sup>8</sup>

The secret lies, of course, in the nature and being of the Incarnation. The Word become flesh in the world changes everything, God, Man, and the Creation. The Incarnation is an affirmation of the Creation. It is a confirmation of the 'Very Good' Creation confessed in the Beginning out of nothing by the Hand and Word of the Creator in His Sabbath Relationship with the heavens and the earth and mankind as His Image and Likeness in the world. It is its justification, sanctification, and the arrow of the power and glory of the Lord God of His covenanted relationship with what He has made and sustains in nature and being with Himself and for Himself as the Wisdom of the Creation. In the light of the Incarnation, we are to seek to understand the Creation, its subsistence, its intensiveness, its purpose, its meaning as the work and will of the divinely free Redeemer-Creator of the 'All' that is created reality, invisible and visible, the transcendent and the temporal, given a relationship of God that entails both the Incarnation and the Creation as His Glory and the Praise of Christian Faith. It is with these assumptions that Philoponus sought to articulate the Faith and its relational reality as the contingent rationality of the nature and being of created reality grasped in the Light of the Uncreated Reality of the 'All'.<sup>9</sup>

It is for this framework of thought, for this kind of transformation in our knowledge of God and the Universe that Torrance sought to champion with us, and I have tried to make him intelligible to many of our denominations.<sup>10</sup> The last times I saw and spoke with Professor Torrance were about John Philoponus, about the way he was happy with my understanding of him, about the direction he hoped I would seek to take his work in the future.

Beside his concerns for the relationship between the nature of Revelation and the nature of the Creation, for the relationship between Christian Theology and Scientific Culture, the Master Theologian remained clear about Barth's insistence that we are free as theologians to seek to hear the Word of God without reference to any particular cosmology open to our abilities to discover the nature and the laws of the universe where we have our being. Torrance liked to remember, however, that Barth had given him his blessing when he argued with them that, just as Einstein had to bring the Euclidian geometry of the Newtonian world into the heart of his General Relativity Theory for the actual gravity of the universe, where it became transformed

into 4-dimensional geometries, Christian theologians needed to bring our 'Natural Theologies' into the heart of the Revelation, where there it becomes transformed into a theory of Creation that belongs to the true service of the Creator, where all space and time and motions and matter/fields are bound up together by a contingent unity and rationality that comes from the created and creative power of the Word God is as the Lord Jesus Christ.<sup>11</sup> It was with this framework of thought that the Edinburgh theologian gave us his *Trinitarian Faith* (T&T Clark, 1991/97) and his *Doctrine of God: One Being Three Persons* (T&T Clark, 1996), works that definitely put the lie to those who believe that Dogma and Doctrine have nothing to do with the love for which so many cry out today. We may also point to his *Divine Meaning: Studies in Patristic Hermeneutics*, (Edinburgh, 1995) and his *The Hermeneutics of John Calvin* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1988) and his *Reality and Evangelical Theology* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic

Press, 1985) in order to refer to his work towards a history of hermeneutics. And finally, Torrance has produced article and papers, too numerous to mention here, that speak of the ecumenical spirit of this man and his evangelical concerns for the Church and her proclamation of the Gospel.<sup>12</sup>

Whenever I seek to write about the Very Reverend Professor Thomas F. Torrance, I always feel like my perspective on the Master Theologian hardly begins to provide that look which must matter most into the thrust of his works. His books are a call for a scientific theology with a theological science, a theological science with a scientific theology, whose future will come only with the kind of devotion and attention he was willing to give for the sake of knowing the good and great Lord and God of the salvation of our race. But even this look, such as it is, I hope will inspire my reader to seek to stand upon the ground where we will not fail to see Jesus, risen from the dead for our sakes, on our behalf, to whom my mentor and friend has now gone.

#### Endnotes:

1. With his friend Geoffrey W. Bromley, Torrance never ceased to gain a reading for the great Swiss theologian, whose work was very slow to be read and appreciated in both the United Kingdom and the United States of America.
2. See the special issue of *The Reformed Review*, Autumn, 1984, Volume 38, Number 1 and Elmer M. Colyer, *How To Read T.F. Torrance* (Downers Grove: IVP, 2001 for accounts of his life and works.
3. See his *Theological and Natural Science* (Wipf & Stock, 2002), essays collected by his son Thomas Spear Torrance about the relationship.
4. Unhappy with the modern critical methodologies I was having to learn from Old Testament scholars, Torrance seemed to me like a messenger from God, for he helped me begin to be able to learn to articulate the One who had saved in the Jesus Movement of Southern California and thus to read the Bible in the Spirit of that One. The change began to work within me cosmological and epistemological dimensions of knowledge of God and the world that continue to astonish me, grateful for His Grace and Truth for us.
5. My forthcoming book entitled *The Great AMEN of the Great I-AM* (Wipf & Stock, 2008) seeks to argue for the biblical basis for the covenanted relationship whose nature shapes and forms the substance and content of the Revelation's Reason taught as the Grace and Truth of the Great I-AM the Lord God is in His struggle to make Himself present and known with us and for us in our time.
6. See T.F. Torrance, *Divine and Contingent Order* (Oxford University Press, 1981).
7. Torrance argues in many of his works that we must come to see the Augustinian-Thomistic culture we inherit for the most part in the West, with its following of Boethius and his neo-platonic way of resolving the problem of the whole and the parts in our philosophical developments, intrinsic to the nature of the being of the covenanted relationship, as needing the kind of transformations we find in the thought of John Philoponus.
8. One can trace a steady development of Torrance's understanding of Philoponus in his interaction with perhaps the first Christian man to take seriously for the physics of the Cosmos that Word of God who works redemption of Mankind in His Creation. See my *The Setting in Life of 'The Arbiter' by John Philoponus* (Wipf & Stock, 1999) and Torrance's *Theological and Natural Science*, *ibid*, pp. i-iii, 1-6, 29-46, 52-57, 71-81, 83-104, 105-110.
9. We have from the teams of Richard Sorabji much of Philoponus now translated into English, when we can continue to expect the lifting of the Anathema from his efforts. Philoponus' *On the Creation of the World* has been translated by L.S.B. MacCoull (forthcoming) from a Coptic perspective and *The Arbiter* has been translated by U. M. Lang, *John Philoponus and the Controversies over Chalcedon in the Sixth Century* (Leuven, 2001). We cannot divorce the Christology of Philoponus from his understanding of the Creation. We cannot see the world except with the eyes of the One who made it. If we do not understand how to look through this lens, we will not understand Philoponus.
10. See my report to the 8<sup>th</sup> St. Shenouda Conference of Coptic Studies at the University of California at Los Angeles, September 8-9, 2006, my articles on Philoponus at [www.quodlibet.net](http://www.quodlibet.net), Volume 5 Number 1, January 2003, and the orthodox-physicist Stoyan Tanev from the University of Sherbrooke, Quebec, [stoyantanev@sce.carleton.ca](mailto:stoyantanev@sce.carleton.ca) for an account of Philoponus and the dangers of reading him through an Aristotelian/Neoplatonic lens, missing the power of the *new dimensions* by which the Alexandrian was compelled to grasp the relationship with such depths that it was not easy to understand what he was after in his time.
11. See Torrance's *Space/Time & Resurrection*, (Eerdmans, 1976) pp. ix-xiii.
12. But see, for instance, his support for women in *Touchstone: A Journal of Ecumenical Orthodoxy*, Fall, 1992, Winter, 1992/3 and his *Trinitarian Perspectives: Toward Doctrinal Agreement* (T&T Clark, 1994) for his efforts with Greek and Roman Orthodoxy.