

Faith, Reason and Love

Scholarship at the Cathedral Lecture

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The relationship between faith and reason and between love and reason is one of the perennial subjects in the intellectual life of the Church. Some twenty years ago this week John Paul II published his encyclical *Fides et Ratio* on the relationship between faith and reason. A then Fr Anthony Fisher organised a conference at the Melbourne campus of the Australian Catholic University to discuss the new encyclical. Neil Ormerod, one of Sydney's most well-known theologians and one of the world's leading Lonerganian scholars, began his paper at the Melbourne conference with the statement that 'the problem of the interrelationship between faith and reason is complex and tortuous'.¹ He further noted that from a theological perspective 'the faith-reason debate is subsumed within the grace-nature issue' (or, in other words, how a person understands the faith and reason relationship is dependent upon how they understand the nature and grace relationship) and that the difficulty is always one of how to overcome a false dichotomy between the two while recognising the distinction. Recognising distinctions while avoiding separations has been a Catholic intellectual habit since the fathers of the Council of Chalcedon in 451 AD relied on this kind of reasoning (that is, making distinctions without making separations), to explain the relationship between the humanity and divinity of Christ. I agree with Professor Ormerod that understanding the relationship between faith and reason, is complex and maybe even tortuous. I would add that it becomes even more complex when one adds other variables like the love and reason relationship.

In his book *Faith and Reason: From Hermes to Benedict XVI*, Aidan Nichols OP surveyed the many attempts to deal with the complexity of these relationships. He began with a summary of the ideas of the German philosopher Georg Hermes (1775-1831) – who was a kind of “Catholic Kantian” - and those of the Czech theologian Anton Günther (1783-1863), both of whose ideas were ultimately condemned. Nichols then combed through the positions of the French theologian and philosopher Louis Bautain (1796-1867), Pope Gregory XVI (1765-1846), Pope Pius IX (1792-1878), Pope Leo XIII (1810-1903), the German Jesuit theologian Joseph Kleutgen (1811-1883), the French lay philosophers Etienne Gilson (1884-1978) and Maurice Blondel (1861-1949), then onto the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-

1988), Karol Wojtyła (1920-2005) (John Paul II) and finally Joseph Ratzinger (Benedict XVI). Numerous other authorities such as Jacques Maritain (1882-1973) and Pierre Rousselot (1878-1915) are addressed in his commentary along the way and appear in the extensive footnotes. If you want a panoramic overview of the difficult territory I know of no better book than that of Nichols. Other helpful guides include *The Grandeur of Reason: Religion, Tradition and Universalism*, edited by Peter M Candler Jr and Conor Cunningham and *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: the 1930s Christian Philosophy Debates in France* edited by Gregory B. Sadler.

As the title of Sadler's work suggests, the faith and reason relationship was a hot issue in French Catholic circles in the 1930s and many of the contemporary debates take the form of siding with or opposing one of the factions that came to the fore in the 1930s. Sadler's work is helpful because it offers an introductory over-view of the 1930s factions along with English translations of the key papers which were originally delivered in French. The three significant factions were: (i) Neo-Thomist Opponents of Christian Philosophy, that is, the people who thought that philosophy would not be philosophy if it were brought into contact with Christian ideas. These types wanted a strict separation between faith and reason. (ii) Thomist Proponents of Christian Philosophy, that is, Thomists who believed that there are philosophies which are intellectually indebted to Christianity and that this is a good thing (for example, there are philosophies like personalism which draw on themes in Trinitarian theology) and (iii) Non-Thomist Proponents of Christian Philosophy, and here of course the obvious category are the neo-Augustinians.

In his classification scheme Sadler placed Étienne Gilson and Maurice Blondel as the leaders of the Christian philosophy camp, that is, those who wanted to read the relationship between philosophy and theology as intrinsic and symbiotic, while Emile Bréhier, Léon Brunschvicg, Pierre Mandonnet and Fernand van Steenberghen were identified as the leaders of the camp who thought that philosophy could not be contaminated by Christian Revelation without ceasing to be philosophy.² At a 1933 *Société Thomiste* meeting, Mandonnet made the following statement:

Certainly Christianity has transformed the world, but it has not transformed philosophy...Certainly Christianity has been a considerable factor of progress in humanity, but not progress of the philosophical order. Progress in the philosophical order does not take place by Scripture but by reason...Progress in philosophy therefore does not take place by the paths of religion. Even if there

had been neither Revelation nor Incarnation, there would have been development of science and of thought.³

In contrast, Gilson presented the faith and reason relationship in the following terms:

Both St. Thomas's philosophy and St. Augustine's philosophy are philosophies of the concrete, but their attitude to the concrete is not the same. St. Augustine always seeks notions comprehensive enough to embrace the concrete in its complexity. St. Thomas always seeks notions precise enough to define the elements that constitute the concrete. In a word, the former *expresses* the concrete, the latter analyses it. That is why, to the mind of an Augustinian, the notion of Christian philosophy offers no particular difficulty. He knows that faith is faith and reason is reason, but he adds that a man's faith and man's reason are not two unco-ordinated accidents of the same substance. In his view, the real man is the man himself, a profound unity, not dissociable into juxtaposed elements as fragments of a mosaic would be, a unity in which nature and grace, reason and faith cannot function each one on its own, like in a mechanism whose pieces would have been purchased as different parts.⁴

The point that Gilson was making is that while faith is faith and reason is reason, in what he calls 'the real man' there is an integration of faith and reason, because the human person is not put together in a mechanical way such that different parts of our bodies and souls can operate in isolation from one another.

In *Porta Fidei*, the Apostolic Letter announcing the Year of Faith in 2011, Pope Benedict XVI wrote that 'Knowing the content [of the faith] to be believed is not sufficient unless the heart, the authentic sacred space within the person, is opened by grace that allows the eyes to see below the surface and to understand that what has been proclaimed is the word of God'.⁵ Hans Urs von Balthasar made a similar point in his essay, 'Theology and Sanctity' and in the following passage taken from his book on *Prayer*:

If I am to hear properly . . . I must not come before the word with specially selected acts of reason and will: I must encounter the word with my whole conscience, or rather, with my whole person. For faith, the organ of hearing has to do with the whole person, not [with] the [individual] faculties of the soul.⁶

The primary importance of a pure heart for right reason was also emphasized by Blessed John Henry Newman. In his famous “Sermon 12,” Newman wrote:

What, then, is the safeguard [of faith], if Reason is not? I shall give an answer, which may seem at once common-place and paradoxical, yet I believe it is the true one. The safeguard of Faith is a right state of [the] heart.

Dr Peter McGregor, another Sydney theologian, has argued that for Joseph Ratzinger the heart is the “place” of the integration of the intellect, will, passions, and senses of the body and the soul and that this is consistent with the treatment of the heart in the thought of both Newman and Ratzinger’s early teacher Romano Guardini.⁷ The Newman scholar, Michael Paul Gallagher, also observed that ‘Newman always proposed the integration of rationality, heart and imagination, seeing the whole self as an instrument of truth’. Gallagher said that Newman offered an ‘epistemology of the imagination’ as a ‘key mediator between theology and spirituality’, ‘his pedagogy of faith does not begin with arguments but with paying attention to preconceived spiritual attitudes’.⁸

I don’t want to get side-tracked into Newman studies but the point of this is that one of the reasons why this territory is so complex is just as you think you have sorted one part of the puzzle another piece appears, in this case, we have not merely a two dimensional puzzle of faith and reason, but a three dimensional puzzle of faith, reason and love.

In *Fides et Ratio*, John Paul II argued that ‘truth is attained not only by way of reason but also through trusting acquiescence to other persons who can guarantee the authenticity and certainty of the truth itself’, adding that ‘the ancient philosophers proposed friendship as one of the most appropriate contexts for sound theological enquiry’.⁹ Similarly, in his book *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, Ratzinger remarked that ‘evangelisation is never merely intellectual communication; it is a process of experience, the purification and transformation of our lives, and for this to happen, company along the way is needed’.¹⁰ A whole other area of study that has barely begun is that of the study of the friendship networks among the saints. If you start to dig into the life of one saint you tend to find that behind them and around them are other very extraordinary people without whose friendship and love they would never have developed in knowledge and sanctity the way that they did. For example, it’s hard to imagine St Augustine without St Ambrose, and we know that St Philip Neri was a mate of St Ignatius Loyola, St

Francis Xavier and St Charles Borromeo. Closer to our own times, it's hard to imagine St John Paul II without the friendship of Jan Tyranowski, the tailor who taught him the basics of Carmelite spirituality, or without the guidance of Cardinal Adam Sapieha who head-hunted him for the priesthood and protected him from the Nazis or without the paternal leadership of Cardinal Stefan Wyszyński. The heart and intellect of Karol Wojtyła was not created in a vacuum but drew upon the wisdom of his friends and superiors.

Having almost got us bogged in Newman studies and now the forests of the Tatra mountains, I will try and return to what this lecture promised, an intellectual tour through the recent magisterial material on this subject. Before I do so however, I will flag the fact that academic commentators are in agreement that Ratzinger/Benedict XVI's preferred construction of the faith-reason relationship is strongly Gilsonian while Wojtyła/John Paul II's preferred construction was at least implicitly Gilsonian. Concretely this means that they see the relationship as one that is symbiotic and intrinsic, not extrinsic, and by extrinsic is meant a conception of the two as existing in completely different mental compartments unrelated one to the other.

When we track back to the Vatican I era however, the late 19th century, the popular construction of the faith-reason relationship would seem to be closer to that of Mandonnet than to Gilson and this was because the Catholic scholars of those years were trying to defend the faith from the charge of being irrational.

The First Vatican Council was convoked by Pope Pius IX on 29 June 1868. One of the problems it sought to address was that of the influence of 18th century forms of rationalism. Its dogmatic constitution on the faith which became known as *Dei Filius* became famous for two of its statements. The first is from chapter 2 on revelation. It reads:

The same Holy Mother Church holds and teaches that God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certitude by the natural light of human reason from created things; "for the invisible things of him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made" [*Rom* 1:20]; nevertheless, it has pleased His wisdom and goodness to reveal Himself and the eternal decrees of His will to the human race in another and supernatural way, as the Apostle says: "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners,

spoke in times past to the fathers by the prophets, last of all, in these days hath spoken to us by His Son" [*Heb* 1:1 f].

The second statement for which *Dei Filius* is known is the anathema statement: 1. If anyone shall say that the One True God, our Creator and Lord, cannot be certainly known by the natural light of human reason through created things; let him be anathema.

In several parts of the document the fact that faith and reason are not in competition with one another but ideally work together is affirmed.

By the 1930s the exact meaning of the phrase “the natural light of human reason” had become a big issue and divisions surrounding the interpretation had arisen within the ranks of both Jesuit and Dominican scholars along the lines Sadler described.

The best article I have found on this topic is by Fergus Kerr OP entitled ‘Knowing God by Reason Alone: What Vatican I never said’.¹¹ Kerr concluded that ‘it remained unsettled at Vatican I whether the natural light by which reason can attain knowledge of God should be equated with the prelapsarian light enjoyed by Adam in the Garden of Eden or the light in which someone in a state of grace might exercise his reasoning powers, or the light which someone might supposedly have independently of the effects of sin and grace’. During the debates at the First Vatican Council in response to a question from a bishop about whether anyone has ever actually achieved this knowledge, the response from the steering committee was that the proposition is only saying that it’s a capacity, not that the potential has always been exercised. In response to another question about what of the situation of the poorly educated and intellectually backward, the answer was that the statement is only saying that there is a possibility in human nature, not that every individual is in a situation to exercise it. Yet another bishop who argued that there is no religion and no morality without society (one might say, he was making a proto-MacIntyrean argument about human persons being dependent rational animals) was informed that the Council was not intending to say anything about the historical conditions required for the development of this capacity. Moreover, Kerr observed that while the First Vatican Council (1869-70) decreed that for Catholics it is a dogma of faith that we can have certain knowledge of God by the natural light of reason it was only in the Anti-Modernist Oath (1910) that this knowledge was defined as rationally demonstrable by cosmological arguments. In another of his works, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism*, Kerr drew attention to the fact that St. Thomas’s famous “five ways” of proving God’s existence had a different reception in 20th century Europe from their common reception in the

Anglophone world.¹² Whereas in the Anglophone world they were often taken as “proofs” in a strict scientific sense, in many Catholic academies in Europe this was not the case.¹³

By the time of the Second Vatican Council it was impossible for the Council fathers to ignore the elephant in the room. What exactly is natural reason? In the decades separating Vatican I from Vatican II people had become intensely interested in individuality or the uniqueness of each human person. Each one of us has a common humanity but we are also unique expressions of this common humanity. This interest in human uniqueness manifested itself in the philosophies of personalism and existentialism. St Thomas Aquinas had written about universal human nature but he had not written about how individual persons are affected by their place in history. In the middle of the twentieth century numerous Catholic scholars tried to address this problem by developing a more personalist Thomism. One of the more famous examples of this is Karol Wojtyła’s Thomism which is commonly called Thomistic Personalism or Lublin Thomism or sometimes Lublin Existential Thomism. Joseph Ratzinger once remarked that coming to an understanding of the mediation of history in the realm of ontology (which is what Wojtyła’s Lublin Thomism is all about) was the single greatest crisis faced by Catholic theology in the 20th century. In one way or another many mid-twentieth century Catholic scholars were contending with this problem.

We now know through rigorous scientific research that the human brain finds it easier to learn certain things at certain times in life. We know, for example, that it is easier to learn languages in early childhood and that if children are not exposed to good music when they are toddlers they can be tone deaf for the rest of their lives. Experiments on cats have shown that if a mother cat is too weak to groom her kittens after birth then when her female kittens grow up they have no idea of what they are supposed to do for their own kittens after birth. They just sit and look at their kittens in a ditsy sort of way and do nothing. Scientists are now getting interested in how certain skills and abilities of humans may be similarly time-line related. If we miss out on learning certain skills within a given window of time we may never develop those capacities later in life or only develop them with great difficulty. I mention this simply because those on the cutting edge of the field of catechetics are developing an interest in how different faculties of the soul are more receptive to development at different times in life and this becomes yet another dimension of the problem of the mediation of history in the realm of ontology.

By the middle of the twentieth century with the rise of atheism in Europe following two world wars in which Christian soldiers from one nation killed Christian soldiers from another nation a whole generation of Catholic scholars were in rebellion against the idea that all you need to do is to give people sound philosophical theses and they will immediately become theists. As a result, at Vatican II, an attempt was made to offer a more nuanced account of the work of the intellect and its relationship to atheism. In relation to the document *Gaudium et spes*, where atheism is treated in paragraph 21, Ratzinger observed:

[T]he aim was to limit the neo-scholastic rationalism contained in the formula of 1870 and to place its over-static idea of "*ratio naturalis*" in a more historical perspective. The text indicates...that the possibilities of reason in regard to knowledge of God should be thought of less in the form of a non-historical syllogism of the *philosophia perennis* than simply as the concrete fact that man throughout his whole history has known himself confronted with God and consequently in virtue of his own history finds himself in relation with God as an inescapable feature of his own existence.¹⁴

Ratzinger's interpretation of *Gaudium et spes* 21 is in accord with Kerr's reading of what the Fathers of the First Vatican Council really intended to assert in chapter II of *Dei Filius*. In his summary Kerr claimed that the Vatican I dogma does not say that knowledge of God's existence is a conclusion to be reached by a chain of inferences, let alone that the certainty depends on a "syllogism". Kerr concluded that human reason is capable by nature of attaining sure and certain knowledge of God's existence, but it's equally clear that Catholics were never committed by the First Vatican Council to the possibility of proving this by anything like the Five Ways of Thomas Aquinas.

The document which offered the most sustained treatment of the theme of reason and revelation was the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation known as *Dei Verbum*. It is generally interpreted as offering a much deeper theological epistemology than Vatican I's *Dei Filius* since it recognises the historical nature of revelation.

Cardinal Angelo Scola emphasised the significance of *Dei Verbum* for the contemporary Catholic understanding of the relationship between faith, reason and history in the following passage:

Dei Verbum proposes truth as an event. This consideration is, upon close examination, the fruit of the Council's Christological focus. In fact, in the language of Vatican II, truth and Jesus Christ are identified: in this way, Vatican II frees the notion of truth from the ahistorical pre-comprehension that tends to reify it, thus restoring truth to its identity as a historical event. Truth is in fact inseparable from event; otherwise we drift into formalism. The consideration of revelation as an "event which occurred in the past and continues to occur in faith, the event of a new relationship between God and man", presupposes a renewed approach to revealed truth.¹⁵

Thus after *Dei Verbum* the faith and reason relationship is understood to take place within an historical context. As Gregory Baum has argued, while *Dei Filius* did not address the issue of *how* knowledge of the true God based on human reason is related to the saving actions of God revealed in Christ, the 'profounder understanding of revelation' offered by *Dei Verbum*, 'introduces a new theological epistemology'.¹⁶ Baum summarises this epistemology in the following paragraph:

Vatican I affirms that "God, the beginning and end of all things, can be known with certainty from created reality by the light of human reason". In accordance with Vatican II, we can now say that if God allows Himself to be found – across whatever distance – through the works of His creation as understood by human reason, this does not take place because of an independent or sovereign act of man, but rather because of the appeal which the gracious God through His creation makes to the mind and heart of men. The "natural" knowledge of God is related to the history of salvation appointed for the whole human family, which is revealed once and for all in Jesus Christ.¹⁷

In short, *Dei Verbum* emphasises that the structure of revelation is Trinitarian and its form is personal.

Such an understanding of Revelation gives priority to the dialogue which take place between God and the human person and it pays due regard to the significance of each of the processions within the Trinity. The movement of revelation proceeds from God the Father to humanity through Christ, and admits the faithful into the fellowship of God in the Holy Spirit. The purpose of this dialogue between God and the human person is not so much the transmission of information but rather the transformation of the person in the life of the Trinity.

This deeper theological epistemology of *Dei Verbum* was not however integrated into *Gaudium et spes*, and notwithstanding the addition of the concept of “experientia” [human experience] which was a move in an anti-rationalist direction, Ratzinger regarded Article 21 of GS as an inadequate response to atheism. He suggested that in order to address the concerns of atheists, God's invisibility is something that has to be taken into account:

[Christianity] cannot be taken seriously if it acts as if reason and revelation present a smooth, plain certainty accessible to everyone; in that case atheism could only be a matter of evil will. In that case, too, the atheist could not consider that he was being taken seriously. He would feel little inclination to engage in discussion when his cause is declared from the start to be contrary to plain reason and he is treated merely as a sick man worthy of pity, the causes of whose malady are being inquired into so that he may be cured.¹⁸

The more extensive integration which didn't make it into *Gaudium et spes*, did however surface a few decades later in paragraphs 28 to 39 of the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, a document Ratzinger helped to draft. After acknowledging that the quest for God is never easy and involves the state of the heart as well as the head, paragraph 31 of the *Catechism* states:

Created in God's image and called to know and love him, the person who seeks God discovers certain ways of coming to know him. These are also called proofs for the existence of God, not in the sense of proofs in the natural sciences, but rather in the sense of converging and convincing arguments, which allow us to attain certainty about the truth.

In arriving at these converging and convincing arguments paragraph 33 refers not to logical analysis, but to the human person's openness to truth and beauty, his sense of moral goodness, his freedom, the voice of his conscience and his longing for the infinite and happiness. Logical analysis may have some place in all of this but it is not specifically mentioned.

Paragraph 35 of the CCC states:

Man's faculties make him capable of coming to a knowledge of the existence of a personal God. But for man to be able to enter into real intimacy with him, God willed both to reveal himself to man, and to give him the grace of being able to welcome this revelation in faith. The proofs of God's existence, however, can predispose one to faith and help one to see that faith is not opposed to reason.

Thus by the time we arrive at *Fides et Ratio* in 1998 rather a lot has happened since the promulgation of *Dei Filius* in 1870. One way to look at *Fides et Ratio* is to consider it as John Paul II's executive summary of the many nuances that had been highlighted in the theological literature over the past century. In a summary of the themes in *Fides et Ratio*, Kenneth L Schmitz, who was one of the leading Anglophone commentators on the scholarship of John Paul II, concluded:

Several of the high points in the development of Catholic doctrine over the past century are given expression in *Fides et Ratio*. Among them are: the recognition of the historical nature of faith and Revelation and the plurality of cultures in which the Word is received; a renewed biblical vision with especial attention to the Catholic significance of the Wisdom books; the recovery (through Tübingen, Newman, von Balthasar and others) of the Patristic spirit in theology; a new confidence in the capacity of human reason, gained in part at least from the fruits of *Aeterni Patris* and the freer, broader understanding of mediaeval philosophy and theology; an "ecumenism" and invitation to inter-religious co-operation that goes beyond itself in a non-defensive way to address the whole of humanity, with respectful acknowledgment of the wisdom contained in other religions; and, in particular with John Paul II, a fine grasp of the contemporary philosophical situation.¹⁹

The last item on this list, 'a fine grasp of the contemporary philosophical situation' included John Paul II's acknowledgement that today the problem is not so much 18th century rationalism which completely separated faith from reason and exalted the notion of 'pure reason' but contemporary post-modernism which in its rebellion from 18th century rationalism is completely suspicious and even hostile to the notion of truth and rationality. The typical post-modern will accept that there is an intrinsic link between different notions of rationality and different theological presuppositions, but he or she will deny that the human intellect has any capacity to discern which theological presuppositions are good and which ones are undesirable. Christian theological presuppositions are however routinely dismissed as undesirable and even oppressive, precisely because they have as one of their foundations, the notion that the human person has been created with a capacity to know the truth. Whereas in the 18th century Catholics were criticised for promoting irrational mumbo jumbo, today we are criticised for believing in timeless truths, for defending rationality. Reason has become politically incorrect. We see this in its most extreme form in the demand for so-called safe spaces at universities where people can be protected from hearing ideas they don't like. The corollary of this, of

course, is that other people need to be quarantined, that is, put in a place of isolation so that they can't spread their politically incorrect ideas.

Writing for the blog Voegelin View, a blog dedicated to scholarly reflections on themes associated with the works of the political philosopher Eric Voegelin, who was one of those scholars who had to flee to the United States from Nazi Germany, Brendan Purcell offered the following Voegelian reflection on *Fides et Ratio*. He said:

The emphasis of the encyclical is that our culture needs not faith alone or reason alone, as in that separation which has marked and marred modern culture, but for their reintegration. One way of understanding philosophy (which stands for the “reason” aspect of our existence) is to see in it *man's search for God*. And, drawing on a famous title by Heschel, we can see revelation as an expression of *God's search for man*. So the task of integrating reason and faith may be understood in terms of the intersection of these two quests.

The first search, of man for God, can be seen at its most profound and most anguished, in Christ. Because, if we try to understand the *Why* of the Incarnate Word at the moment of his most extreme suffering on earth, when he cried out to the Father, “My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?” we are perhaps touching the quest for truth, hidden in the heart of each human being, at its fullest. In the darkest of dark nights, more than a Nietzsche or a Sartre, Jesus experienced the anguish of a *Why* without an ultimate answer — an anguish that characterizes what elsewhere the Pope [John Paul II] has spoken of as the collective dark night of Western culture.

And what of the second search, God's search for man? *Fides et Ratio* explicitly refers to the *kenosis* of God in §93. Because He is incarnate Word, Jesus is also, in his mission as Second Person of the Trinity, God in search of each human being. And that search involves what poor human words have expressed as the dark night of God, in which the Divine Word, plunging towards the abyss of human weakness, in some fashion appears to “lose” His own divinity.

Of course, since there is only the one Person, divine and human, we can say, that in Jesus, both quests, of man for God, and of God for man, coincide. And that is perhaps the most profound basis for the unity and complementarity of faith and reason, revelation and philosophy, and the ground for the successful interaction and expansion

of both quests. For us, reliving by grace those two Whys of Jesus, the task is to ensure that the civilization of reason (and this century has amply shown the unlimited cruelty of reason without mercy) is grounded by a civilization of love.²⁰

Cyril O'Regan has similarly suggested that *Fides et ratio* is best characterised as an intervention in a cultural and ecclesial situation in which there exists a de facto either-or between faith and reason and an all but institutionalised separation of theology and philosophy. He reads the encyclical as an argument for a both-and rather than an either-or view of the relationship.

In relation to the cultural situation a common complaint of both recent pontiffs (Wojtyła and Ratzinger) and numerous other Catholic scholars is that in the last couple of hundred years reason has been reduced to discursive thinking alone (what the medieval called *ratio*) and to what is empirically verifiable, ignoring other dimensions of rationality such as intuition or what the medieval called *intellectus*. In his book *Leisure as the Basis of Culture*, Josef Pieper (1904-1997) put the problem like this:

The medievals distinguished between the intellect as *ratio* and the intellect as *intellectus*. *Ratio* is the power of discursive thought, or searching and re-searching, abstracting, refining and concluding whereas *intellectus* refers to the ability of “simply looking” (*simplex intuitus*), to which the truth presents itself as a landscape presents itself to the eye. The spiritual knowing power of the human mind, as the ancients understood it, is really two things in one: *ratio* and *intellectus*: all knowing involved both. The path of discursive reasoning is accompanied and penetrated by the *intellectus*' untiring vision, which is not active but passive, or better, receptive – a receptively operating power of the intellect.²¹

A problem with much contemporary philosophy, especially in Anglophone universities, is that it denigrates the role of *intellectus*.

Having reached something of a consensus in the final decade of the twentieth century that work needed to be done on the integration of faith and reason within Catholic academies, in the first decade of the twenty-first century we have the arrival of Pope Benedict's interest in the love and reason relationship which appears in his encyclical *Caritas in Veritate* (2009). In this document Benedict makes the claim that 'knowledge is never purely the work of the intellect'. While 'it can certainly be reduced to calculation and experiment', if it 'aspires to be wisdom

capable of directing man in the light of his first beginnings and his final ends, it must be “seasoned” with the “salt” of charity’. Moreover, Benedict emphasizes that charity is not an added extra, like an appendix to work already concluded in each of the various disciplines: it engages them in dialogue from the very beginning. In effect he argues ‘this means that moral evaluation and scientific research must go hand in hand, and that charity must animate them in a harmonious interdisciplinary whole, marked by unity and distinction’.

The work of the intellect is thus assisted by faith and love, and also by the theological virtue of hope. In paragraph thirty-four of *Caritas in Veritate*, Benedict wrote that hope encourages reason and gives it the strength to direct the will – ‘In every cognitive process, truth is not something that we produce, it is always found, or better, received. Truth, like love, is neither planned nor willed, but somehow imposes itself upon human beings’.

The faith, reason and love triadic relationship is also a significant theme in the encyclical *Lumen Fidei* which was drafted by Pope Benedict but settled and promulgated by Pope Francis. It completed Pope Benedict’s triptych of encyclicals on the theological virtues.

The first three chapters read as vintage Ratzinger/Benedict XVI. One of the gifts that he brought to the papacy was an extensive knowledge of the history of ideas and in particular a deep knowledge of German philosophy. As Kant is a key to deciphering the culture of modernity, Nietzsche is something of a Rosetta stone for post-modernity. Kant gave us the quest for autonomous reason severed from any association with theological presuppositions and Nietzsche gave us the critique of Christianity as an oppressive strait-jacket whose moral compass it fit only for the lower classes, otherwise known as members of the herd. Much of the encyclical is a broad-side against these German contributions to world history and their side-lining of the theological virtue of faith.

Benedict measures the light of autonomous reason against the light of faith and finds it wanting. This has been a consistent theme throughout his life. As far back as 1969 he wrote that ‘the organ by which God can be seen cannot be a non-historical "ratio naturalis" [natural reason] which just does not exist, but only the *ratio pura*, ie. *purificata* [purified reason] or, as Augustine expresses it echoing the gospel, the *cor purum*’. At this time he also emphasised that ‘the necessary purification of sight takes place through faith (Acts 15:9) and through love, at all events not as a result of reflection alone and not at all by man's own power’.²²

Lumen Fidei also reiterates earlier claims about the inseparability of truth and love. In paragraph twenty-seven we find the statements that ‘love and truth are inseparable’, that ‘love is an experience of truth’, and we also find an endorsement of Saint Gregory the Great’s maxim, - "*amor ipse notitia est*" – that love is itself a kind of knowledge possessed of its own logic. In other places Pope Benedict has used the expression ‘love and reason are the twin pillars of all reality’ to make the same point.

Lumen Fidei also drew attention to the importance of the faith and memory relationship. The sacraments are said to communicate ‘an incarnate memory, linked to the times and places of our lives, linked to all our senses’. In them the whole person is engaged as part of a network of communitarian relationships.

This paper began with the judgement that the relationship between faith and reason is complex and tortuous because it is a sub-field in the relationship between nature and grace. As we moved from the late 19th century when the Church was still trying to address 18th century attacks on the rationality of the Church’s teaching, to the twentieth century, wherein Catholic scholars had finally to confront the 19th century issues of individuality and history, or as Ratzinger describes it, ‘the mediation of history in the realm of ontology’, the degree of complexity increases as more variables, that is, faculties of the soul and theological virtues, and history and even sacramentality are brought into the discussion.

One of the major factors driving the research has been the problem of unbelief. In seeking to address this problem the contemporary thinking is that we need to look at all the faculties of the soul and not put all of our emphasis on any one particular faculty. We need to pay equal regard to the place of discursive reasoning and to intuition, to the work of the memory as well as the imagination, and to the love-reason relationship as well as the faith-reason relationship. This multidimensional analysis includes a place for the work of each of the faculties of the soul, the theological virtues and the three Persons of the Trinity, especially the Holy Spirit. With so many variables it becomes easy to understand why there is so much unbelief. There are so many operations of the soul that can be damaged, but on the other hand, there is no other system of thought which begins from such a richly complex anthropological foundation, which is so affirming of faith, of reason and of love.²³

¹ N. Ormerod, 'Faith and Reason: Perspectives from MacIntyre and Lonergan', *Heythrop Journal*, 46 (1), (2005): pp.11-22 (11). The published version of the paper substituted the adjectives 'long and troubled' for 'complex and tortuous'.

² G. B. Sadler, *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: the 1930s Christian Philosophy Debates in France* (Washington DC, Catholic University of America Press, 2011).

³ P. Mandonnet, 'La philosophie chrétienne', Deuxième journée d'études de la Société thomiste, Juvisy, 11 September 1933, 67-68, as cited in G. B. Sadler, *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation: the 1930s Christian Philosophy Debates in France* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 81.

⁴ G. B. Sadler, *Reason Fulfilled by Revelation*, 135.

⁵ Pope Emeritus Benedict XVI, *Porta Fidei* (2011), 10.

⁶ H. U. von Balthasar, *Prayer* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1986), 229.

⁷ P. McGregor, *Heart to Heart: The Spiritual Christology of Joseph Ratzinger* (Cascade Publishing, 2016),

⁸ M. P. Gallagher, 'Realisation of Wisdom: Fruits of Formation in the Light of Newman', in *Entering into the Mind of Christ: The True Nature of Theology*, edited by Deacon James Keating, (Omaha, The Institute of Priestly Formation, 2014), 127-128.

⁹ St. John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (1998), sec. 31.

¹⁰ J. Ratzinger, *On the Way to Jesus Christ*, 50.

¹¹ F. Kerr, 'Knowing God by Reason Alone: What Vatican I Never Said', *New Blackfriars* 91 (May, 2010), 215-28.

¹² F. Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism* (Oxford, Blackwell, 2002).

¹³ E. Sillem, *Ways of Thinking about God: Thomas Aquinas and some Recent Problems*, (London, Darton, Longman and Todd, 1961).

¹⁴ J. Ratzinger, 'The Dignity of the Human Person', *Commentary on the Documents of the Second Vatican Council*, vol. 111, ed. Herbert Vorgrimler (London: Burns and Oates, 1969), 153.

¹⁵ A. Scola, *The Nuptial Mystery* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2005), 348-49.

¹⁶ G. Baum, 'Vatican II's Constitution on Revelation: History and Interpretation', *Theological Studies* 28, no. 1 (March 9, 1967): 51-75 at 62.

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 64.

¹⁸ J. Ratzinger, 'The Dignity of the Human Person', *op.cit*; 154-155.

¹⁹ K. L. Schmitz, 'Faith and Reason: Then and Now', *Communio: International Catholic Review* (Fall, 1990).

²⁰ B. Purcell, Voegelin Blog, 'Reflections on Faith and Reason', <https://voegelinview.com/reunion-of-faith-and-reason-pt-1/>.

²¹ Pieper, J, *Leisure as the Basis of Culture* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 2009), 11-12.

²² J. Ratzinger, 'The Dignity of the human Person', 155.

²³ This paper was delivered as a public lecture and is based on previously published research in the author's books *The Culture of the Incarnation: Essays in Catholic Theology* (Emmaus Publishing, 2018) and *Catholic Theology* (Bloomsbury, 2018).