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Editorial

Messengers of Hope

The tragic suicide of a French priest, Rev François de Foucauld, raised concerns about the state of the clergy after that. The great-grand cousin of Saint François de Foucauld (1858-1916). He had served in the diocese of Versailles, France, for 18 years as a priest and would soon turn 50. The brief press notice from the diocese, which is signed by Bishop Luc Crépy, states that his body was discovered last night in the Rambouillet forest before adding, “Following difficulties in the exercise of his ministry, he had no mission since September 2021.”

The press announcement from the diocese reads even shorter because Father François's passing has sparked a lot of discussion on social media. Many point to the deceased's column which *The Cross* published in December 2021 and that unexpectedly appears to be a posthumous letter. He outlines how his hierarchical superiors, as well as “a small circle of clergy and lay people around the bishop who assumes the ultimate word,” also engage in power abuse and the procedures that give rise to it.

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“Suicides are always tragic events. It throws us off balance. ...a priest is a messenger of hope, so the suicide of a priest is heart-breaking when that priest no longer sees a way out in his ministry, in his personal and ecclesial mission.”

On the social network Facebook, some criticize his struggles in his former parish and the complicated relationships with the diocese; others speak of the priest's complex personality, whose “René Poujol, a longtime friend of the priest and the former director of the weekly Pilgrim, writes on his personal blog that the priest had an intransigent temperament that did not lend itself well to compromises or concessions because he was convinced it was

his duty to help awaken a Church engulfed in deadly torpor. According to Luc Crépy, Bishop of Versailles, in a video posted on the diocese's website on Wednesday, July 6, “all, in any case, agree on the missionary zeal of Father François, endowed with many pastoral qualities, having the concern for a renewed, missionary Church, which has always sought to make the Church closer to others, more alive.”

The passing of François de Foucauld sparked grief and perplexity. It shocked many. “Suicides are always tragic events. It throws us off balance.” Luc Crépy further states in his film that “a priest is a messenger of hope, so the suicide of a priest is heart-breaking when that priest no longer sees a way out in his ministry, in his personal and ecclesial mission.”

Some Serious Questions

Father Vincent Siret, who serves as the superior of the French pontifical seminary in Rome has witnessed numerous priestly generations come and go. “Like in a family, it causes ripple effects throughout the body when one of us suffers to the point of making this choice.”

We ponder what we failed to do, what we overlooked, and how we may have stopped it. Unfortunately, clergy suicides are unfortunately not that uncommon. Everyone recalls the two incidents in 2018 that occurred only a few days apart in the dioceses of Rouen and Orléans and involved the young priests Jean-Baptiste Sèbe and Pierre-Yves Fumery.

Yann Vagneux, a priest of the Foreign Missions of Paris (MEP) currently serving in India and a fellow seminarian of François de Foucauld and also of the other priest, Jean-Baptiste Sèbe, asserts that if we could count the number of suicides among priests, men and women religious, monks and nuns, members of new and lay communities on ecclesial mission since the year 2000 and if we calculated the percentage of suicides in relation to the total number of priests (Vanhouten, 2022). The MEP priest does not think twice to invoke this phenomenon by using the adjective “structural.”

The same observation is made by Robert Scholtus, a former dean of the Carmelite seminary where Jean-Baptiste Sèbe and François de Foucauld, among others, were students. “On my tiny scale, I have counted four priest suicides and two religious suicides over the course of several generations of priests and religious.”

Suicide is taboo in society, and it is taboo even more in the church. There are no statistics, we never discuss it, and each death is handled individually. There is, of course, a fragility, a personal weakness that exists beforehand. However, I believe that the suicide of priests and other religious men and women is a widespread problem.”

Being Merely Pawns

However, the Metz diocese priest notes that there are numerous contributing factors. Vulnerability may be relevant, particularly given that being a priest necessitates a certain level of sensitivity. But Robert Scholtus notices several characteristics in common with the priests and religious who killed themselves close by: They possessed a broad view, tremendous pastoral and intellectual

ingenuity, and spiritual aspirations. But one day they realized they were at a dead end for a variety of reasons.

The former seminary supervisor spoke about men who thought their charm, singularity, and ability to work were being abused. These men felt their generosity and ability to work were not valued. the feeling that they are essentially nothing more than tools used to save a failing institution.

The experts emphasise the need of avoiding generalization. This network of 80 expert coaches has voluntarily assisted priests, bishops, congregational leaders, and their teams in the performance of their ministries since 2006. Many priests are encountered challenges in their ministry. Suicide is an extremely difficult topic. In an act of unbelievable savagery, something will always elude us. Anyone in severe agony may experience the want to die.

A Totally Different Ministry Practice

Every suicide has some element of mystery. It would be dishonest to create a pattern or hunt for a culprit because the requirements for acting are so complicated. On the other hand, it might be claimed that the requirements for performing priestly ministry are drastically different in a culture where religion no longer serves the same social function as it formerly did.

“To be a priest in today's society is nearly to be condemned... And unlike in the past, this priest does not have a small community, church, or garden. Robert Scholtus, who describes the priesthood as a career of management that throws you in the institutional, the organizational, depriving the priests of the personal link, of the contact, observes that he “nearly becomes the small bishop of an extensive region.”“

Luc Forestier, a theology professor at the Catholic Institute of Paris, who speaks about the episcopate's dilemma, maintains

that the connection to authority is likewise no longer the same. The only person who can connect the parish priest and the pope is the bishop.

The episcopate is the fullness of the sacrament of orders, according to the Second Vatican Council, and the bishop is required to act as a father, brother, and judge for his priests while staying on the lookout for abuse. But that's not feasible! The bishop is responsible for everything in the diocese!" Difficulties that they are aware of at the time of their appointment: The rejection rate for bishop appointments is roughly 50% (Vanhouten, 2022).

Others refer to dechristianization, the “man-sandwich” side between the bishop on one side and the parish community on the other, all in the context of synodal reform and the fight against clericalism; the ordination of men who are sometimes fragile and whose flaws reveal themselves in the exercise of the ministry; the loneliness and isolation of priests imposed by the extended territorial network; and.

Some priests, who possess enormous inner freedom, are able to avoid being overcome by all of this and make choices that allow them to take on a different role—that of a pastor. Robert Scholtus argues that inner freedom cannot be gained from literature. This forces us to think of the fall of the Christian system as a catastrophe in the etymological meaning, which forces us to shift course, view the Church in a new light, and create new, more modest and small-scale communities.

Psychological and Spiritual Help

How about the priests' psychological and spiritual support during these challenges? Only diocesan priests are advised to get spiritual accompaniment, which is required in religious communities. Many of them either don't use it to their advantage or don't take the time to do so.

According to Vincent Siret, “It all depends on the perception they have of the priest. They might see a superpriest who is a towering,

gorgeous priest. Realizing that you require assistance is difficult.” However, Vincent Siret asserts that the younger generations of priests are considerably more in need of spiritual and/or psychological help. This may be because the vast majority of seminaries provide psychological counseling for aspirants for the priesthood. “Young people are takers; everything that can be of assistance to them (Vanhouten, 2022).

According experts the spaces where priests can stay and express their unease are precisely what Father de Foucauld's departure calls into question. Given the demanding pastoral responsibilities, exhaustion, interpersonal dysfunctions, and, most importantly, the need to share even more, there is urgent need to help the priests, who could be better agents to help others. The consecrated individuals need to address issues of burnout and the pre-burnout, before it become tragic.

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The Indian Situation

It is very disheartening that there are some cases of suicide of priests and religious in India. We need to accept it as a problem, be transparent about it and try to resolve the problems faced by the priests and religious. The life of each one of the priests and religious, who are called to be messengers of hope, are precious and need to be protected and promoted.

Therefore, it is very important that we need to keep a list of such tragic cases, with a view to preventing such incidents in the

future. We need to provide them with psychological, pastoral and spiritual help, so that they can carry on helping others who are much more in need. We need to recognise the cry of our own brothers and sister – priests and religious – and respond to them with care and compassion! That is truly an urgent need! Nearly 800,000 people die or are injured by suicide attempts in the world each year, which is roughly one death every 40 seconds. Suicide is the 2nd leading cause of death in the world!

Every suicide is personal and tragic. But those of priests and religious, called to be messengers of hope and joy, is still more tragic.

The Editor

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The Path of Cross-Generational Faithfulness: Reading Joshua 23-24 as a Bridge-Text

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Abstract: Biblical research aimed at clarifying the hermeneutical complexities surrounding the book of Joshua has existed for some time. In effect, the book of Joshua occupies a crucial position in current exegetical discussions. The reception history and impact assessment of the Joshua corpus, especially in its relation to other (extra)biblical books and events, are multiple, as the book's possible unitary portrait remains intensely contested. This paper offers some hermeneutic and theological insights into the textual relational character of the book of Joshua from the perspective of its final chapters (Josh 23-24).

Keywords: Hebrew Bible, Josh 23-24, Exegesis, Theology, Bridge and Faithfulness.

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Preliminary Remarks

The book of Joshua occupies a crucial position in current exegetical discussions (See Dozeman 2017: 270 – 288 & Ballhorn 2020). The numerous impressions about the book emanate from the multi-layered interpretative receptions of its embedded messages. Several perceptions have emerged in the interpretive history of the book. First, the Joshua corpus is understood in Deuteronomistic terms (Noth 1991). Second, some literary analyses of the book have been carried out within the purview of the Ancient Near Eastern narratological and textual tradition, positing a synecdoche nomenclature of the book as a conquest/genocidal tale, treaty text, or identity construction myth (Baumann 2006: 84-99). Third, the book is perceived to have provided an initial geographical template of Israel’s map (Ballhorn 2011). As such, the book of Joshua appears as a *dice* whose understanding depends on its interpretive horizon.¹

The book of Joshua occupies a crucial position in current exegetical discussions. The numerous impressions about the book emanate from the multi-layered interpretative receptions of its embedded messages.

Objectives and Approach

As a result of the book’s multifaceted perceptions, the following questions seek elucidation: Is a unitary portrait of the book possible? What role(s) does the book occupy in the Hebrew Bible? What literary dynamics does the book demonstrate in disseminating its core message(s)? In other words, the study seeks to establish a possible holistic functional portrait of the Joshua corpus and determine the book’s embedded literary dynamics and its

¹ This short article is an adapted excerpt of a recent doctoral thesis (Commemoration, Choice, and Commitment: Joshua 23-24 as a Literary Bridge) submitted at the Catholic Theological Faculty of the University of Innsbruck, Austria.

implication for exegesis and theology. While one would expect the entire book to be investigated to obtain an appropriate response to the identified concerns, the study instead selects a significant passage within the book, namely Josh 23-24. Being the book's final section, these last chapters offer the Joshuarian author(s) the final chance to explicitly summarize and precisely pass across the book's core message(s). Methodologically, the study uses a narrative-critique approach.

Exegetical Outcomes

In approaching the examined text, the study engages Josh 23-24 in delimitation, contextual, and textual criticism. First, delimitation criticism helps establish boundaries through textual division or association for clear distinctions (Goswell 2009: 89-114). The book of Joshua consists of three distinguished sections: (i) appropriation of the land (Josh 1-12), allocation of the land (Josh 13-21), and (iii) life in the land (Josh 22-24). Josh 23-24 falls within the book's final section. However, Josh 23-24 passes for an independent literary section, demonstrating clear evidence of internal textual harmony as the section has its specific audience in view – all Israel. Second, the interconnectedness between Josh 23-24 and its bordering texts (immediate or remote) is evident. It captures the fulfilment of the book's set-out agenda in Josh 1,2-9, proffers a comprehensive résumé and interpretation of the book and the Pentateuch, and prepares the reader for Israel's future historical trajectory, which plays out in subsequent biblical books, especially in the book of Judges. Third, through an in-depth comparative evaluation of different biblical translations, textual criticism seeks to reconstruct the seemingly "original" text (Fee 1992: 827-831). The strong similarities between the Hebrew Masoretic Text (MT) and the Greek Septuagint version (LXX) of Josh 23-24 suggest they might have accessed a similar Hebrew *Vorlage*. However, while the MT seemingly engages in a re-copying exercise of its Hebrew *Vorlage*, the LXX

demonstrates interpretative and harmonizing redactional traits through textual additions and reshuffling, especially in Josh 24,29-33. The LXX translator of Josh 23-24 seems to have substantial knowledge of the Judges' textual tradition as his translation exercise (especially Josh 24,29-33) seeks to creatively establish textual harmony between the book of Joshua and Judges. At the end of the analysis, textual evidence attesting to the Bridge or Janus trait of Josh 23-24 becomes apprehensible, validating to an extent the hypothetical Pentateuch, Hexateuch, and Enneateuch interlace.

Moreover, a verse-to-verse analysis of Josh 23-24 further affirms the Bridge or Janus character of the book. As a closure text, Josh 23-24 references fulfilled promises, events, and motifs. For instance, Josh 23,3-4 summarizes the entire Joshua corpus. While Josh 23,3 proffers the summary of the first section of the book (Josh 1-12) concerning Israel's appropriation of the land, Josh 23,4 gives a resumé of the book's second segment on the allocation of the land. Also, Josh 24,29-33 displays a quartet closural character. On the one hand, it closes the final chapter (Josh 24) and section (Josh 23-24) of the book. On the other hand, it brings the book and Israel's foundational history, which began in the Pentateuch, to a substantial closure. Consequently, from a retrospective angle, Josh 23-24 re-butresses the fulfilment of the book's stipulated duo-goal in Josh 1,1-9 (i.e., possession of the land and service of YHWH) and promotes continuity, interpretation, and implementation of key Pentateuchal motifs, giving a comprehensive view of Israel's foundational history. In other words, Josh 23-24 is a summary, cumulative, and closure text, explicitly demonstrating the link between the book of Joshua and the Pentateuch (See Wenham 1971: 140-148; Koopmans 1990; Ederer 2017; Fischer 2020: 54-73 & Ballhorn 2020: 27-53). Joshua knows the Pentateuch and frequently refers to it from the *promise-fulfilment* perspective.

Josh 23-24 is a summary, cumulative, and closure text, explicitly demonstrating the link between the book of Joshua and the Pentateuch.

Nevertheless, beyond its resumé function, a closural text offers the author(s) the last chance to explicitly articulate his core message. In doing so, a new but recognizable idea may surface. Josh 23-24 displays such a literary trait. Typical of farewell speeches, Josh 23-24 foretells Israel's subsequent history in prophetic or parabolic phraseologies. For instance, the summon in 23,2 // 24,1 and the position of the Torah as Joshua's successor in Josh 23,6 hint at Israel's movement from a unitary to a confederation State (until 2 Sam 5,1-5), such that the Torah assumes the sovereign authority within Israel's religious and socio-political sphere. The casuistry formulations in Josh 23,12-16 and the expression – "You cannot serve the Lord" – in Jos 24,19 anticipate Israel's future unfaithfulness, which eventually and repeatedly plays out during the era of the Judges, Kings, and Prophets. Also, the claim in Josh 24,31 serves as a critique of the Judges' era (Judg 2,11-19), whereby faithfulness seems to have the same lifespan as the ruling Judge. Therefore, from a prospective perspective, Josh 23-24 portrays the Joshua corpus as offering the foundational rationale for several socio-religious phenomena during the judges, kingdom, and prophetic era. In other words, Josh 23-24 presents the Joshua corpus as a forward-looking, referential, prescriptive, and evaluative text in contrast to subsequent biblical books, including the deuterocanonical books (Sir 46:1; Macc 2:20).

Finally, through structural and dynamic investigations, the study apprehends Josh 23-24 as a single farewell event with two independent literary units dominated by speeches. Assuming its farewell hortatory character, Josh 23-24 adopts an expository (23,3-5.9-10 // 24,2c-13), imperative (23,6-8.9 // 24,14-15.23),

and cautionary rhetorical tones (23,12-13.15-16 // 24,19-22), corresponding with a thematic dynamics of commemoration, choice, and commitment. In other words, Joshua's farewell audience ought to gratefully consider their divinely orchestrated past to garner the confidence to freely choose and decisively commit to securing a future characterized by exclusive faithfulness to YHWH. Hence, Josh 23-24 presents the Joshua corpus as a historical bridge, linking Israel's Pentateuchal and prophetic, stiff-necked and faithful eras.

Theological Finesse

Josh 23-24 depicts YHWH as the central character of the book. YHWH is the first subject in the section (Josh 23,1), the most referenced personality, and the book's main focus. Of its 224 occurrences in the book, the Tetragrammaton YHWH appears 38 times in the examined section – 17 times in Josh 23 and 21 times in Josh 24. The frequent reference to YHWH in the book's concluding chapters, contextually characterized by farewell speeches, indicates the ultimate purpose of the farewell speeches. Joshua seems determined to establish, before his death, the proper perception and consciousness of YHWH among the people. In effect, Israel's response to the summon in Josh 24,1 (*they presented themselves before God*) gives the impression that the exodus out of Egypt does not only lead Israel to a place (promised land) but ultimately to a person – YHWH.

YHWH offers rest, conquers enemies, and gives the land, thus redefining the book of Joshua from the perceived chronicle of *Landnahme* (Taking of Land) to *Landgabe* (Giving of Land). In effect, Josh 23-24 exposes the correct and proper sense of the causal expression “for YHWH fights for you.” It corrects the book's erroneous genocidal impression and depicts the transition from conquest to co-existence with the nations as a sign of Israel's maturation. Instead of provoking spiritual trauma, the expression (*YHWH fights for you*) reinforces salvific hope. In other words, portraying YHWH as a deity who frowns at the oppression of the

feeble, the active role of YHWH in the conquest provides hope for victims of oppression and terrifies the victimizer (Nysse 1987: 192-201). Victims of oppression now have a justice system and a judge to trust.

Israel's decision and decisiveness towards faithful commitment to YHWH are overwhelmingly expressed through the Hebrew root word עָבַד (to serve). In effect, no chapter in the Hebrew Bible refers so often to Israel's ability to serve (YHWH) as Josh 24, where the verb עָבַד registers eighteen occurrences. Such repetitive reference emphasizes Israel's exclusive commitment to YHWH. Josh 24,31 clarifies

Consequently, Josh 23-24 reveals a pattern defined by covenantal faithfulness. YHWH is the first to be faithful, as manifested in the promise-fulfilment agenda on the one hand and the commemoration, choice, and commitment agenda on the other hand.

that Israel's divine service transcends Joshua's existence. Hence, to serve YHWH appears as a prerequisite, a theological bridge that enables Israel's passage from unfaithfulness (Josh 24,2.15) to cross-generational faithfulness (Jos 24,31).

Consequently, Josh 23-24 reveals a pattern defined by covenantal faithfulness. YHWH is the first to be faithful, as manifested in the promise-fulfilment agenda on the one hand (Josh 1,2-5 // Josh 23,1; 24,2-13) and the commemoration, choice, and commitment agenda on the other hand. YHWH gives rest, land, and fights for Israel. YHWH also recalls his covenantal history with Israel and his favourable choices for Israel (Josh 24,2-13) as he re-commits to the latter in the covenant ritual in Josh 24,25-27. Reciprocally, Israel also embraces faithfulness towards YHWH. Josh 23-24 twice explicitly attests to Israel's fidelity (23,8; 24,31). Such revelation establishes the book of Joshua first and foremost as a

theological piece before its historiographical considerations. In other words, YHWH's story of faithfulness entwines Israel's story so that the book's human hero is not only Joshua but also the people of Israel, as the latter fully partakes in the mission of the former (Josh 1,6-9). Hence, thanks to the provided summary in Josh 23-24, the book of Joshua demonstrates sufficient evidence of YHWH-Israel's history of *fulfilled faithfulness*.

Concluding Remarks

Based on its exegetical and theological considerations, Josh 23-24 portrays the book of Joshua as a literary bridge. In other words, the Joshua corpus displays a transitory function, facilitating the movement from legal legislation (Torah) to its historical implementation, from divine promise to covenantal fulfilment, and from past to future. The commemoration, choice, and commitment agenda embraced by YHWH and Israel appears as the core pillars of the transiting bridge.

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From Science to Wisdom: The Significance of Transcendental Philosophy

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Abstract: In this autobiographical essay, Prof Otto Muck, one of the pioneers of neo Thomistic, transcendental philosophy, outlines his philosophical search. He focusses on his search for meaning in life and its discovery in terms of the philosophical insights of Joseph Maréchal, Martin Heidegger, Johannes Lotz, Karl Rahner, Emerich Coreth, and Bernard Lonergan. Finally, he dwells on the transcendental conditions for the possibility of thinking, of being human and listening to God's revelation.

Keywords: Martin Heidegger, Johannes Lotz, Karl Rahner, Emerich Coreth, and Bernard Lonergan, Transcendental Reflexion.

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The Development

At the age of attending school, I was fond of experiments in the fields of physics and chemistry. This explains my interest for after finishing school enrolling chemistry, this at the technical university, with better chances for practical applications. But this one year after the ending of World War II was again a challenge for orientation. Questions concerning orientation for my life became virulent. I think this was it that let me change from technical studies of chemistry to philosophy and mathematics at the university.

The Challenge

The impression of the difference between intersubjective empirical sciences with enormous practical impact on life and the diverging personal views regarding orientations of life I found very provoking. Experiential sciences are reliable in teaching us in different fields how things are reacting and helping to solve also technical problems. But how is it with the *personal worldview*, a habit to think and decide, which people learn by growing into their culture to develop their way of living?

This is possible if we consider that the *relation to empirical facts*, which is important for our reasonable understanding, is different in reflection about personal worldviews and in experiential sciences, as experimental sciences are looking for *sufficient* conditions to describe expected events, while worldviews look for *necessary* conditions for the personal integration of different concerns that they must handle.

The Search for Meaning

An example of searching for necessary conditions for our cognition we may find in Aristotle. In our reasoning, it seems to be evident to suppose that we should not accept a situation to be the case and not to be the case. For someone, doubting this

might hinder to think, Aristotle shows that to try to negate the validity of the principle of excluded contradiction shows that even the one who tries to negate it, *uses it in the act of negating* – by this showing it as a *necessary condition* for thinking.

Such a critical vindication of what is contained in insight, studied under the name of “retorsion” by Gaston Isaye, does not replace *insight* but is rather a clarification of what is contained in insight and has two tasks: it should *defend* such insights against criticism and should *filter out unjustified generalizations* by showing which insights must be included in the act of thinking because they are operative in it. The determination of the *fundamental concepts* and the indication of the necessity of acknowledging the *principles* are possible because of their necessary connection with the act of knowledge. They are conditions for the possibility of our access to being by affirmation.

Integrating Dialogue

This draws attention to further examples of elements that we use reliably for our cognition of what there is. According to Aristotle, for the use of the principle of excluded contradiction, it is relevant that the affirmed or negated sentences are taken in the same meaning, not differentiated in their meaning by assumed differences of time, space, perspective, etc. Recognizing this can be very valuable for distinguishing different approaches and the presuppositions of the kind of apprehension by partners in a dialog in everyday life and scientific arguments. Finding a *common core* of the different positions can help to find *systematic coordination* of aspects, viewpoints, approaches – coordination of cognitions and the fields of divergent application.

Finding a common core of the different positions can help to find systematic coordination of aspects, viewpoints, approaches – coordination of cognitions and the fields of divergent application.

As one example you may remember my observation that the relation *to empirical facts* is important for our reasonable understanding (common core), but it is different in reflection about personal worldviews or in experiential sciences (systematic difference and coordination).

So, the difference of statements not only shows their incompatibility but also the reason why they differ: not in fulfilling common requirements for reasonability but by the different interests for the kind of relation to empirical facts, interest for different questions. One might call this an *integrating application of a dialog*.

Such an analysis of the rational structure of a dialog on worldviews can show dimensions relevant for the explication of understanding one's life in the light of religious faith.

Another application can be seen in the Aristotelian solution of antinomies arising in our language about changing things. The common core is here the *thing* about which one speaks and the different *impressions* it provides *at* different times. Special terms may then be used to prevent confusing contradictions or antinomies, e.g., *potency* and *act*. Their use should remind us of their methodological function!

Many terms of classic metaphysics serve this purpose! They prevent contradictions that are rooted in the neglecting integration of different relevant viewpoints.

Transcendental Reflexion

In centuries after medieval Christian culture and metaphysics, the dominant horizon of common publicity became changed, especially by changing to meet reality more by new sciences and their practical applications and economical aspects. This brought about changes in the way one asks for explanations – not metaphysical but astronomical, mechanical, biological, political.

These aspects became dominant for the integration of people into a culture and thereby into the commonly used language. Thus, the horizon of matters of communication has not much room for *personal* convictions, regarded rather as a personal affair, not of reasonable concern for others.

To this *Kant* contributed developing the *transcendental* reflection to help to evaluate special kinds of investigations about human life. One example for him was the question: How is a responsible human action possible given a naturalistic interpretation based on sciences like physics? So, by *reduction* he shows that physical experiments presuppose liberty, at least to change conditions in experiments. *Deduction* then pays attention to the fact, that a mechanistic explanation would exclude such liberty of a human person.

For Kant, such a *transcendental deduction* states an important qualification of the relation between a special science and the experienced activity of a human person. Transcendental reflection on the searching mind finds out how far the claims of spontaneous or scientific knowledge are justified and where their *limits* are. Thus, the content of direct knowledge is not to be *substituted* by the

For Kant, a transcendental deduction states an important qualification of the relation between a special science and the experienced activity of a human person. Transcendental reflection on the searching mind finds out how far the claims of spontaneous or scientific knowledge are justified and where their limits are.

reflection, but transcendental reflection serves by this critic to *reinterpret* the expression of the direct knowledge, showing the *limits* of special forms of cognition, the horizon of their validity.

Philosophers in the 19th century, developing this method further, applied transcendental criticism also on Kant's assumptions and his transcendental idealism.

It would be expected that the unlimited horizon of Being, making possible reflection, not only leads to paying personal attention to the special limited horizons of activity but especially to an evaluation of their contribution to the life of the searching person.

In a further development of phenomenology, this analysis became linked to typical forms of activity in correlation to the intentional content of the acts. For M. Heidegger an "existential analysis" of human attitudes should open a new way to open the philosophical question about being.

Heidegger criticizes the tradition of "metaphysics" as missing the concern for Being, as the grounding for beings, as known and as existing, thereby missing the resoluteness of persons concerning their life.

For Heidegger, "beings" of which we are aware in common experience, and "Being" as their grounding, are to be distinguished. This is described as an *ontological difference*. The aim is to develop attention for Being, through which beings are beings, leading to a *fundamental ontology*. Heidegger has missed such considerations in metaphysics up to his time. Attention to the all-embracing horizon of Being should help people on their way understanding their life, to form their actual personal *worldview*.

I think this is shown by Heidegger's existential phenomenology of the reaction of "Dasein", that is for him the reflecting person, to its enslavement by the care for many things, but at the same

time being uncertain about the lasting impact on the development of its Dasein.

According to his distinction between an “*ontic*” *description of beings* of everyday life in traditional metaphysics a human person should become aware also of the unlimited horizon of Being as “*ontological*” *grounding of beings*.

It would be expected that the unlimited horizon of Being, making possible reflection, not only leads to paying personal attention to the special limited horizons of activity but especially to an evaluation of their contribution to the life of the searching person.

Our awareness of Being will then influence our worldview with its integrating function for our life. It is, therefore, to be regarded as a common task for philosophy to be aware of it and its structures and encourages improvement by dialog, using reasonable argumentation.

Heidegger however was beyond hinting to “events of Being” very reluctant about speaking about contents of awareness of Being, anxious about a reversion to ontic understanding.

Such a difficulty is also seen by theologians speaking in ordinary language about the contents of religious Revelation, anxious for correct understanding.

You may see this *dynamism of our intellect* in experiencing beings and developing their integrating it into our presentation of the world in which we live and compare it with the focus of this dynamism with the Being as perspective and the heuristic elements with operative structures of the process of integration. These elements may be shown, reflecting upon the process, in their *operational* function. Insofar as they are structures of the integrating intention of Being, one may regard them as elements with *ontological* significance.

It is important to realize that *naming them* becomes dependent on the used language with associations of the current culture. If

philosophy succeeds in helping to become aware of the operative structures underlying such formulations, it can serve for a better understanding of fruitful involvement in a dialogue.

We can here also note that while the expression of the effect of such a necessary structure of our cognition is dependent upon language and culture, the human structure which is here operative is independent thereof. This should be kept in mind to understand the exposition of metaphysical concepts in the right way – not relying on obvious associations but on the relation to the relational structures, which they indicate.

For this view, after the critical discussion of Kant's approach in the 19th century, attention deserves the critical assessment of the transcendental method by **Joseph Maréchal** (1878-1944) in the 20th century. Inspired by a critical survey of the history of epistemology he noticed that in the tradition of Aristotle and Thomas the empirical and rational element in human cognition is linked by the capacity of intellectual understanding, which also coordinates the theoretical and practical function of cognition.

He sees spontaneous human cognition as the product of integrating the manifold contents of experience under the *dynamic orientation* of knowledge and decision towards the "Absolute of Being". Thereby the empirical and rational elements become linked by the capacity of intellectual understanding, which also coordinates the theoretical and practical function of the process. In this process necessary distinctions to avoid contradictions lead to heuristic elements that affect the further structure of the process as conditions of its possibility.

It would be expected that the *unlimited horizon of Being*, making possible reflection, not only leads to paying personal attention to the structures of special limited horizons of activity of everyday life but especially to an evaluation of their

contribution to the life of the searching person, the horizon of grounding being by Being and by reflection beyond beings open for revelation.

Some German-speaking philosophers emphasized a combination of retorsion with a phenomenological approach starting from reflecting upon acts of judgment or question.

Johannes B. Lotz (1903-1994) e.g., begins directly with the act of judgment. He examines its structural elements in a phenomenological way and shows how the affirmative synthesis points to absolute being as the ultimate condition of possibility for judgment. Then he starts the more detailed elaboration of conditions of possibility – in contrast to Maréchal, who first investigated these conditions, only at the end he showed by transcendental deduction the constitutive function of the relation to the Absolute.

K. Rahner (1904-1984), starting from the person asking for Being, recognizes the personal worldview as our spontaneous response to this question. In methodological reflection about the necessary conditions which make this process possible, he develops the fundamental connection of Being and cognition in reflection, and the limitation by being dependent upon asking. So, the horizon of asking is not only bound to worldly beings but also open for the grounding horizon of Being, even if the searching mind is not explicitly formulated as a question.

Emerich Coreth (1919-2006) starts his transcendental reflection at the general operational features of acts of questioning. He explores the implicit knowledge manifested by these acts. This is the basis to make explicit the orientation of human activity beyond special fields of concern to the all-embracing horizon of Being.

Guided by structures operative in the performance of questioning he makes explicit presupposed conditions in the asking person as well as in the investigated reality. In his *Metaphysik* (Coreth, 1980), he shows the extent to which these items can be correlated to topics of

classic metaphysic, reinterpreted as formulations of operative elements in human life.

I think that the view of making explicit the assumptions that are *operative* in the human mind can also be understood as an inquiry of the minimal conditions for the rationality of personal worldviews to comply with their integrative function in the view of the horizon of Being.

This could also help to *understand theological texts*, which are using philosophical terminology of former times and other cultures, to grasp their relevance for present-day life and intercultural and inter-religious dialogue.

This shows the *relation to systematic philosophy*, especially to metaphysics, as it is understood for instance by Johannes Lotz, Karl Rahner, Emerich Coreth, and Bernard Lonergan. I think that their views of making explicit the assumptions that are *operative* in the human mind can also be understood as an inquiry of the minimal conditions for the rationality of personal worldviews to comply with their integrative function the horizon of Being.

I consider these conditions to be of special relevance for intercultural dialogue. However, any application to these issues should keep in mind that the *explicit formulation* of these conditions is dependent on the special civilization of the partners. Therefore, in my opinion, one aim in teaching philosophy could be to become aware of the operative structures of the human mind which are intercultural despite the different ways of making them explicit.

Having in mind my observation of the connection of medieval philosophy with the religious culture of its time, today we notice the differences of present culture and personal orientation of life in the light of openness to Being. I think of Coreth's (1980) methodical exposition of *Metaphysics* and his critical

interpretation of classical medieval views and different approaches of modern times.

This is important for interpreting formulations of classical theology, especially where they use philosophical terms which have outdated associations. The interpretation considering the operational meaning helps to avoid misunderstandings of the intended formulations.

E.g., for Karl **Rahner**, “the transcendental method finds its deepest meaning in *theology*. We cannot avoid *thinking*, viz., doing philosophy, in theology. A theology, as *intellectus fidei*, must view its object through all the methods and within every horizon which it encounters in the intellectual activity of its time. The transcendental method can play an important role in such an approach to theology. This is true especially in “fundamental theology,” which, to be contemporary, must not merely demonstrate the “objective” authenticity of the event of divine revelation, but must come to understand man, much more precisely and reflectively than before, as the hearer of a possible revelation. This requires the reflection of the transcendental conditions of possibility of hearing a revelation.”

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The Book Ecclesiastes and Pessimism: Drawing Wisdom from Our Toils

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Abstract: ‘Thirst for wisdom’ drives human beings in the past, at present and in the coming future. In the history we could witness thoughts of wisdom of various times were collected together and named as wisdom literature. These literatures focus the practical aspects of how one should live, moral concerns through reflection on human experiences and to form a society filled with justice, righteousness, and equality. We also find in Bible wisdom books. Kings, priests, prophets and teachers were authors of these books. The book of Ecclesiastes observed the natural world as well as human’s life experience and shared some practical applications for people to live their daily lives. Many claims Ecclesiastes as a book of pessimistic thoughts. Nevertheless, a philosophical enquiry about

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the teachings of the book could unveil the optimistic teachings which is dealt with.

Keywords: Pessimism, Wisdom, Teacher, Unity, Literature, Hope, Book Ecclesiastes.

Philosophy deals with the problems of life and therefore it searches for a deep, clear and systematic reflection of our life questions. Almost all the cultures around the world have literature which deals with life questions. Such literature is called wisdom literature. In the Bible we find collections of literature dealing with the wisdom of life too. The book Ecclesiastes is one of them. This book contains a famous sentence: ‘All is vanity’. The word ‘vanity’ is repeatedly used in the book, and refers to human narcissism and pessimism. We agree with this idea. Naturally this theme provokes a rational enquiry into the theme of pessimism. In the Bible much of the wisdom is written in poetic form. The book of Ecclesiastes, one among wisdom literature uses this poetic form, and it is an acceptable form to repeat certain verses. We shall analyze the text to find a better answer for our search. In our query we would like to ask the following questions: 1. What is pessimism? 2. Does the book of Ecclesiastes speak only about pessimism? Or is there any other aspect dealt with in the book other than pessimism?

1. Understanding Pessimism

The English learner’s dictionary defines pessimism as follows “Feeling that bad things may happen and that something will not be successful.” This definition gives a general idea of pessimism as an expression of anxiety and fear.

‘All is vanity’. The word ‘vanity’ is repeatedly used in the book of Ecclesiastes, and refers to human narcissism and pessimism.

However, we would like to attempt to give a philosophical explanation. Britannica defines pessimism as: “An attitude of hopelessness towards life and toward existence, coupled with a vague general opinion that pain and evil predominate in the world.” We use this definition for our essay.

Though this definition points the attitude of hopelessness towards life as pessimism, the book Ecclesiastes advocates, “Whoever is joined with all the living has hope” (Ecc9:4). The Existentialists claim human existence is ‘conscious of our being’, but Ecclesiastes identifies whoever belongs to the living should also hope. In history as well as in psychology hope is very often identified with motivation in view of future achievement. Christian theology considers hope as one among the theological virtues. Immanuel Kant considers hope as a rational demand in a particular context and the object of hope is the highest good embedded with moral progress of the whole human race. Here I would like to specify that the book Ecclesiastes praises hope as the basis of all living beings and thus it deals hope not hopelessness.

Many philosophers in the past have made adequate discussions on pessimism. We would like to mention some of them here. Thomas Aquinas begins his Philosophy with nihilism, nevertheless he acknowledges an incontrovertible point that he is stuck with and further moves forward. He proposes the transcendent being, *esse* (the act of existing). Heidegger begins his philosophy with ‘angst (fear)’ but moves to discuss the horizon of being. At this incontrovertible point during the significant moments of life we are stuck with bare reality. Nevertheless, as Nietzsche puts it “He who has a why to live for can bear with any how.” In all these thoughts we could find the underlying aspect that pessimism has enriched their philosophical inquiry.

The book Ecclesiastes consists of the words of a teacher. It says: “Besides being wise, the Teacher also taught the people knowledge” (Ecc:11,9). “He wrote the words of truth plainly” (Ecc:11,10b). The teacher deals with the ultimate question of life and death. He

analyzes proverbs, connects them to day today life experiences and he finds suitable words to put them in black and white. As a teacher, he wants to communicate to his students (world) that there are contradictions in life. For example, “God made human beings straightforward, but they have devised many schemes” (Ecc7:29b). Furthermore, the teacher does not recommend that an individual should remain idle after knowing the probabilities of success are less, rather the first step is to acknowledge the plain truth. The situation should not make an individual get frustrated. The teacher proposes course of action from reflecting his life to accept frustrations and uncertainties of life. “Whatever your hand finds to do, do with your might” (Ecc9:10a). He adds further, “Whoever observes the wind will not sow; and whoever regards the clouds will not reap” (Ecc11:4). So, he recommends avoid anxiety from your mind to enter into action (Ecc11:10). It motivates the reader for personal reflection on life, rather than to reach premature and self-assured conclusions. The presence of injustice and unfaithfulness in the world are a big riddle for him to comprehend and to solve.

A common expression of pessimism is ‘The former (olden) days were better than these (now) days’ and many think it a wise saying. Ecclesiastes 7:10 condemns this expression and this expression only unfolds the ignorance one possesses. One should live in the present than to compare with the past. Thus, the Book of Ecclesiastics analyzes explicitly pessimism and explains well its relation to hopelessness. It admits also its reader ‘to live is to hope’. Let us now focus on the other aspects that are discussed in the book.

For the antique philosophers the question of how one can find happiness was also a central query. They claim that a wise person is not a philosopher, but the one who has achieved the natural goal of human existence and accomplished happiness for himself/herself.

2. Pessimism and the Book of Ecclesiastes

We find that the book analyzes the dimensions of life, death, joy and pain. These dimensions have been addressed by philosophers of various times. The search for an answer involves more puzzles. Like the philosophers, the book also delves into the puzzles in search for answers. For instance: humans meet vanity in concrete life experience, however it increases their striving for wisdom. This striving could be a starting point to open ourselves to a new world of hope overcoming pessimism. We shall expose and examine some ideas in the following focal points.

a. Search for Wisdom: As Socrates puts it: Philosopher is actually a lover of wisdom and someone who strives to attain wisdom. These words are applicable to the book Ecclesiastes. Though the book uses very often the word vanity but it never advocates any compromise to give up our search for wisdom. As a teacher of wisdom, the author proposes his readers to aspire to wisdom; for him wisdom is the highest virtue. He analyzes the characteristics of wisdom in detail. He says, “Wisdom excels folly as light excels darkness” (Ecc2:13).

Further in chapter 7:11,12 wisdom is equaled with inheritance and it gives life to one who possesses it. In addition, the teacher considers wisdom as greater than weapons used in war and he observes, “Wisdom helps one to succeed” (Ecc10:10b). Thus, it is explicit, wisdom as a highest virtue does not allow a person to be in a pessimistic attitude but leads the person to hope for right action.

b. Find Joy in the Toil: For the antique philosophers the question of how one can find happiness was also a central query. They claim that a wise person is not a philosopher, but the one who has achieved the natural goal of human existence and accomplished happiness for himself/herself. Philosophically speaking we are being with limitations, but always strive to know more, reflect and act. Chapter 5:18-20 of the book deals with this aspect. The book suggests to admit our limitation. We accept our situation (lot) as gift given by God and find enjoyment in our toil. Here, we may come to the conclusion that it is a way of taking refuge in God in our limitation. Nevertheless, Ecclesiastes finds it is good and fitting under the sun to find enjoyment in our toil. This is observed from concrete life experiences. This could be understood better in the following example: When people say that they want to learn music, they have to accept the reality that music tones come from the seven basic tones. Here, a pessimist would view that there are only seven tones. Whereas an optimist would view the same seven tones inspiring to create more than the basic ones. Thus, it is clear that the book Ecclesiastes admits human limitations, but motivates its reader in an optimistic way to toil under the sun to reap enjoyment.

c. Community and Unity: For the Greek Philosopher Aristotle human being is fundamentally a community being. Friendship is a transition from the individual to the community. It is also an essential virtue. The book Ecclesiastes also admires an ideal of having a friend and value it. We observe it in chapter 4:9-12.

The interdependency between two people in happy and trial moments could contribute to support one another and to lead a better life. The book does not define exactly how and what kind of rules and regulations should be followed in a friendship but it wants to indicate the communitarian aspect which involves interdependency and growing together. After Aristotle, in the late twentieth century we perceive many thinkers engaging themselves in the discussions of ‘communitarian’ aspect. Michael Walzer (1935) is also one among them. His political theory defends well pluralism and equality. The book Ecclesiastes also deals with the communitarian

The book of Ecclesiastes also deals with the communitarian aspect of human life. It holds further unity is strength through the classical analogy: “A threefold cord is not quickly broken”

aspect of human life. It holds further unity is strength through the classical analogy: “A threefold cord is not quickly broken” (Ecc4,12b). Hence, it is explicit ‘united we stand, divided we fall. Therefore, unity exists for the sake of a happy and good life. Then, the communitarian aspect is as an essential virtue, which strengthens interdependency and leads its members to a better life.

d. Be Responsible for Our Actions:

Holding ourselves as responsible for our actions and the consequences of actions is a fundamental moral practice. It involves the individual as well as the collective in an interpersonal relation. So also, at the end of the book the teacher speaks about the responsibility of everyone. “Fear God, and keep his commandments; for that is the whole duty of everyone. For God will bring every deed into judgement, including every secret thing, whether good or evil” (Ecc12:13b,14) This part of the book is considered as epilogue. Though it was added later, but still advocates as a teacher of wisdom that there is God to watch and to judge our actions. Through this piece of writing the author wants to give meaning and purpose to the life we live at present. He analyzes

the concrete life, which consists of our actions and deeds, plainly and finds vanity in life, but for him God gives the guarantee for meaning in life. Thus, when we take responsibility for our actions, by striving for meaning through concrete life experiences, God is there to reward us. The responsibility for our actions as a moral principle expresses our hope in God more than a hopeless pessimistic attitude towards our life experiences.

Conclusion

Finally, in our appraisal of the book of Ecclesiastes we have come to the point that the book addresses pessimism that prevails in the world perceived through concrete life experiences. The book does not stop here but as a response to pessimism, it suggests an optimistic attitude towards life. It proposes: to live is to hope, always aspire for wisdom as the highest virtue, live your life in a community and consider fear of God as the touch stone to engage in our concrete actions. The world with contradiction does not demand resignation (pessimism) from concrete actions, but deserves to live optimistically with hope in our search for wisdom. Find joy in our toil, united with the community and be responsible for our actions.

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The Virtues of Integral Ecology and the Environmental Crisis in India

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Abstract: There is an urgent need of an integral ecology in India. We cannot care for the mother earth without caring for the poor. We see in India that the gap between the poor and the richest is widening day by day. The lack of preferential option for the poor has caused this gap. There is no question of ecological justice without doing the social justice in India. Consumerism is an addiction to the accumulation of things which is connected with lack of mercy, solidarity and concern for the marginalized. It is one of the vices against the integral ecology that is seen in India. On the individual level, ecological conversion demands a change of attitude and a change of lifestyle. We need to realize that “being” is more important than

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“having.” If the world is based on having more and more there is no scope for the survival of the earth.

Keywords: Integral ecology, Justice, Solidarity, Common good, option for the poor, Indifference, mercy.

Introduction

This article inquires and reflects on the contributions of a theology of Integral ecology to the current environmental crises in India. Looking at multiple ecological concerns in India, we can assume that we are in an alarming situation. Within the last few years Delhi air-pollution and its consequences have become a major concern. Every Indian is aware that the problem is not confined to Delhi; it is also true with many parts of India though the intensity and the type of concerns may differ from place to place.

Looking at multiple ecological concerns in India, we can assume that we are in an alarming situation. Within the last few years Delhi air-pollution and its consequences have become a major concern.

We all are part of one or other green movements at a personal, communitarian and organizational level. We try to reduce the usage of plastic and, electricity and the wastage of water. We are also taking initiatives in planting more trees and are promoting recycling and waste management. All these steps are very important steps, but they do not deal with the root cause of the environmental crises that we face. We are turning away from challenging the real problems that cause water-air

pollution - the wastes from factories, coal mines, burning paddy residue, pollution from fireworks and pollution from vehicles. Whether it is pollution or deforestation or displacement, the major contributors to these alarming realities are capitalistic individuals or organisation or unwise government policies. Many of our current

environmental initiatives remain as only mouth sweetener which fail to nourish the body.

People first! Who are the people most deeply affected by the multiple ecological crises in India? I am sure that most of us will identify that the poor and the marginalized, including farmers as the worst hit victims of these crises. In the light of the encyclical letter of Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'* and the current situation in India, we will examine ways to promote integral ecology by caring for the poor while caring for the nature.

1. Brief Description of the Problem of Ecological Injustices

a. Victims and their sufferings from unjust environmental conditions

The worst affected victims of ecological injustices in India are the poor. They are affected in numerous ways. In India the ecological movement began with the protest of the poor and marginalized, they saw their dwellings, their land, life style and livelihood being threatened (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 218). In India, on one hand development comes by building many factories, dams and many other structures but all these, on the other hand, have lasting consequences in the ecology that directly affects the poor. Clement Campos CSsR (2017), in his article titled, “Laudato Si: An Indian Perspective”, highlights five major environmental concerns.

- a. Rapid depletion of ground water aquifers
- b. The impending or actual death of major rivers through household sewage and industrial effluents
- c. Excessive air-pollution in the major cities of India
- d. Excessive degradation of forest and the associated loss of biodiversity
- e. Unregulated disposal of chemical and toxic waste. (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 214)

Although it affects everyone, the poor are the worst affected ones. The following paragraphs will highlight some of the effects of ecological injustices in India in the form of pollution, water crisis, displacement and the effect of climate changes in India.

Like all the other ecological crises, the poor are the worst hit victims of the air pollution as well. The current air pollution in India, CHG emissions, chemical and oil pollution, etc. have many far-reaching consequences for its people. The main concerns that India is facing are high infant mortality rates and low life expectancy (Chandra, 2015: 3).

According to a study, published in the *Lancet Planetary Journal* nearly 740000 deaths in India can be attributed to abnormal variations in the temperatures due to climate change

According to Philip J. Landrigan, M.D., Professor of Biology at Boston College and the director of the Global Observatory on Pollution and Health, pollution causes 1.67 million premature deaths per year, more than from COVID-19. He warns the Indians that its consequences will be long-lasting without efforts to reduce air pollution in the nation of 1.35 billion people. According to Landrigan's research the current air pollution in India is also having a profound effect on the next generation of Indians. It increases future risk for heart diseases, diabetes, and respiratory disease for today's children when they become adults. He also sees the possibility that it might reduce children's IQ. He also warns that it will be very difficult for India to move forward socially or economically if no solution is found for the problem (BC News, 2022). It should become an eye opener for every Indians because we have started experiencing these side effects in many parts of our country, especially in Delhi.

As we know that India's water crisis is a persistent problem. Although India has 16 per cent of the world's population, the country possesses only four per cent of the world's freshwater resources. India is water-stressed due to changing weather patterns

and repeated droughts. Studies show that about 256 of the 700 districts in India have reported ‘critical’ or ‘over-exploited’ groundwater levels according to the most recent Central Ground Water Board data (from 2017). We can assume that getting water in these places has become more difficult as the water table has dropped. It is saddening reality that the three-fourths of India’s rural families lack access to piped, drinkable water and must rely on unsafe sources and India has become the world’s largest extractor of groundwater, accounting for 25 per cent of the total. Much of the waters sources in India are contaminated and our major rivers are dying because of pollution (Behal, 2021). Here also we find that the poor are the worst affected ones.

According to the reports in 2021, almost 1.4 crore people in India were displaced by environmental disasters (Jain, 2021). It once again underlines that the poor are the most vulnerable group such environmental crises.

According to a study, published in the *Lancet Planetary Journal* nearly 740000 deaths in India can be attributed to abnormal variations in the temperatures due to climate change (The Hindu, 2021).

George Kodithottam S.J. (2021) in his article titled “The Climate Crisis and Its Impact on the Environment and the Marginalized Population in the Indian Subcontinent.”, brings to our attention the humanly-caused ecological crises in India. He adds that the poor are the most affected by calamities or ecological crises. He brings to our attention earthquakes, floods, and other environmental damages that have taken the life of many poor people and have made many homeless and poor (Kodithottam, 2021:110). There is an alarming suicidal rate among the farmers and daily wage earners in India because of the debt caused by the crop failure and related problems.

The majority of Indians depend on agriculture for their living. According to George Kodithottam, Indian agriculture is highly climate-sensitive. Climate variations (floods, droughts, global warming, etc.) make farming very risky. Many of the farmers take loans for preparing the soil but because of the climate change, the crops mostly fail. George notes that farming has become a very risky and a dangerous project now. Studies show that rising temperature and other climate changes have lowered the crop yield which leads to income insecurity. Hence there is an increase of suicide rate among the farmers in India. Over 12000 suicides were reported in the agricultural sector every year since 2013 (Kodithottam, 2021:110). The farmers from different parts of India are affected by different consequences of ecological crises. In some places, crops are destroyed because of drought, in other places destruction comes from heavy rain and flood.

2. Moral/Cultural/Structural Causes of the Environmental Crisis in India

Two scholars Madhav Gadgil and Ramachandra Guha classify Indians into three major groups according to their ecological framework. Though it is not a universally accepted classification like the caste system in India; their classification is still persuasive. Their classification is as follows

- a. The omnivores,
- b. The ecosystem peoples
- c. The ecological refugees.

According to them the Omnivores are the beneficiaries of modern development in India. They have purchasing and controlling power. They are only six percent of the population; they enjoy a luxurious life style. Eco-system people are the bulk of poor and cannot obtain new goods in the market. They somehow survive with a bare minimum. Half of the Indian population belong to this group. Ecological refugees are the millions of peasants and tribal people

who have been displaced to make way for new dams, mines and industries (Gadgil and Guha, 1995:3-4). Ecological refugees are victims of the ecological crisis created by the topmost layers of India who have control. This classification makes clearer that the upper layer in this classification causes greater damage to the environment by their greed-based accumulation and capitalistic approach. As a result of their unjust behaviour the poor becomes worst hit victims of the ecological crisis in India.

3. Moral Lens: *Laudato Si'* and Integral Ecology

Integral Ecology is the term popularized by Pope Francis in the encyclical *Laudato Si'* in 2015. It refers to an integrated and holistic approach to political, social, economic, and environmental problems. It addresses current global environmental concerns in a sustainable way. The following insights from *Laudato Si'* develop the concept and the need of Integral Ecology.

Laudato Si' (139) explicitly brings into our attention that we are faced not with two separate crises, one environmental and the other social, but rather with a single crisis that is both social and environmental. The strategies for a solution demand an integrated approach to combating poverty, restoring dignity to the excluded, and protecting nature at the same time.

The human environment and the natural environment deteriorate together; we cannot adequately combat environmental degradation unless we attend to causes related to human and social degradation. In fact, the deterioration of the environment and of society affects the most vulnerable people on the planet. (*LS 48*) In future, there must be integral ecology.

The principle of the maximization of profits, frequently isolated from other considerations, reflects a misunderstanding of the very concept of the economy. As long as production is increased, little concern is given to whether it is at the cost of future resources or the health of the environment. As long as the

clearing of a forest increases production, no one calculates the losses entailed in the desertification of the land and; the harm done to biodiversity or the increased pollution. In a word, businesses profit by calculating and paying only a fraction of the costs involved. Yet only when the economic and social costs of using up shared environmental resources are transparent and fully borne by those who incur them, not by other peoples or future generations, can those actions be considered ethical. (LS 195)

4. Some Virtues Promoting the Value of Integral Ecology

Environmental Justice

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies. This goal will be achieved when everyone enjoys the same degree of protection from environmental and health hazards, and equal access to the decision-making process to have a healthy environment in which to live, learn, and work (EPA 2014). According to *Laudato Si'*, a true ecological approach always becomes a

Environmental justice is the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, national origin, or income, with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies.

social approach; it calls everyone to integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, in order to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.

Laudato Si' (106) stresses that the environmental injustices are based on the false assumption that there is an infinite supply of the earth's goods. Accepting this assumption leads to the planet being

squeezed dry beyond any limit. It is not only an exploitation of the nature but also of the poor.

What I have just pointed out brings to the fore that a key issue underlying the crisis of ecology is the issue of justice and equity. Providing horrifying statistics, Oxfam warned in 2015 that the combined wealth of the richest 1 percent will overtake that of the other 99 percent of people soon unless the current trend of rising inequality is checked (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 221). The social teaching of the Catholic Church is clear on this matter.

“John Paul II summed it up: On the other hand, the earth is ultimately a common heritage, the fruits of which are for the benefit of all . . . This has direct consequences for the problem at hand. It is manifestly unjust that a privileged few should continue to accumulate excess goods, squandering available resources, while masses of people are living in conditions of misery at the very lowest level of subsistence. Today, the dramatic threat of ecological breakdown is teaching us the extent to which greed and selfishness—both individual and collective—are contrary to the order of creation, an order which is characterized by mutual interdependence” (John Paul, 1990:8).

We can find many instances where a few people enjoying of the privileges at the cost of the majority. It is a visible ecological injustice in today’s India

Charity

We know from *Summa Theologiae* that Charity means love of God. Eberhard Schockenhoff, in his paper, “The Theological Virtue of Charity (IIa IIae, qq.23-46)” where the section titled “The Theological Definition: Charity as Friendship with God,” claims that friendship, for Aquinas, is the “most complete realization of ‘love’, which embraces both the desire for a friend as well as the corresponding benevolence and the readiness for

doing good to one.” Taking that understanding further, Schockenhoff applies it to God’s charity saying, “God’s charity is simply a friendship of human beings with God, in the same way that any friendship appears as an outstanding variation of love.” (Schockenhoff, 2002: 244-248, 246). In 1 John (4:20) we read that we cannot love God whom we have not seen unless we love our brothers and sisters who we have seen. Therefore, I consider charity as the foundation for integral ecology.

In the Gospel of Mark (12:30-31) we read about Jesus’ greatest commandments of love - that is to love God with whole heart and mind and to love neighbour as oneself. In other words, loving the neighbour is equal to loving God. In the Gospel of Mathew (25: 40), we hear Jesus saying when we do something good for least of our brothers and sisters, we are doing it for God. The awareness God’s presence in oneself and in others will lead us to love others and help the neediest with whole heart (selflessly). In other words, we can establish a true friendship with God on earth itself, which means we can see God face to face through our friendship on earth. This friendship is possible only through the deepest love which is the first commandment and the example of Christ’s life.

Love is the beginning of true concern for the other which inspires one to effectively seek for other’s good. He also explains that solidarity is the proximate expression of charity to the community which suffer whereas mercy is proximate expression to the individual who suffer.

Daniel Daly’s book titled, *The Structures of Virtue and Vice*, speaks about charity. He notes that love is the beginning of true concern for the other which inspires one to effectively seek for other’s good. He also explains that solidarity is the proximate expression of charity to the community which suffer whereas mercy is proximate expression to the individual who suffer. (Daly, 2021:210-211). Therefore, I consider solidarity and mercy as the essential element

of charity. Pope Francis emphasises more about mercy and solidarity that are at the service of the virtue of Charity. There will be a discussion about mercy and solidarity as the principles that lead to operationalize the virtues.

5. Operationalising Virtues

Some Principles that leading to operationalization of these virtues of environmental justice, charity and care for our common home

1. Option for the Poor

The option for the poor can be understood as an abiding commitment grounded in Scripture and tradition to support social justice by placing oneself firmly (as individuals or as a member of an institution) on the side of the vulnerable and the marginalized (Massaro, 2016:117). The words and deeds of Jesus were deeply connected with this option for the well-being of the least fortunate. The idea of preferential option for the poor is strongly emphasized in the opening sentence of the Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes*. It calls to our attention that the joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties of the (people) of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted should become joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ (*Gaudium Et Spes* no 1). The current environmental crisis invites us to relive firmly the charism of the preferential option for the poor.

2. Notion of Common Good

There are numerous proper goals in life beyond our own private benefits. As responsible people we are called to look for the opportunities to participate and contribute to worthy causes to improve the society. Everyone has the responsibility to promote the common good for the wellbeing of all (Massaro, 2016: 89). The promotion of the common Good is the responsibilities of all to build a just society.

According to David Cloutier, the common good is primarily about relationship. It only secondarily is about material. To be in solidarity means to have common moral cause with others. Solidarity facilitates friendship among the persons who are in solidarity (Daly, 2021:211). Every individual and every society or institution are supposed to promote common Good.

3. Acts of Mercy

Act of mercy can be considered as a suitable way to put into operation the virtues mentioned above. Pope Francis considers “mercy” as a major principle in this world of personal indifference to the poor and suffering. Without mercy there is no charity. In my opinion only a merciful heart can bring about beautiful virtues to support the victims of the ecological injustices.

According to Pope Francis; mercy is that “love which embraces the misery of the human person. Carrying the burden of others and helping them walk. Aquinas says that mercy is being affected by the sorrow and misery of another; as if it were one’s own (Daly, 2021:114). Only when we identify the suffering of others as our own suffering then only, we can really be merciful.

Mercy is a medicine in our age of the virus of indifference (greed, profit-oriented activities, etc.). Church of the Lord, nourishes the preferential love for the weakest (Daly, 2021:114). It is an invitation for all of us to open the eyes of mercy to see the sufferings of poor who are affected by the ecological and other injustices. James Keenan notes that without being merciful to others we cannot think about justice. Mercy leads us to justice. By encountering the other, we are able to be awakened to the call of justice (Keenan, 2010:134). It is a crucial time to be awakened to that call of Justice.

4. Principle of Solidarity

Solidarity is a word that contains multiple meanings. It calls our attention to the fact that people are interdependent. Human interdependence is not only a necessary fact but also a positive value

in our lives (Massaro, 2016:87-88). St. John Paul II repeatedly reminded us that solidarity is a necessary virtue. God not only allows people to depend upon one another, but absolutely wills that human live in the context of intimate as well as large groupings of our neighbours. Our destinies are linked to other people whether they are our friends in nearby or strangers distant from us (Massaro, 2016: 88). Solidarity begins from an inner attitude; when it has fully taken root within a person, it expresses itself through numerous activities that demonstrates a person's commitment to the wellbeing of others (Massaro, 2016: 88).

Pope Francis presents two sides of solidarity. It is a virtue that spontaneously produces actions that serve the poor and the common good. Secondly it consists of habits of solidarity, which need to be practised. It opens a way for structural transformation (Massaro, 2016:115). Therefore, the principle of solidarity a way to promote common good by caring for the weakest.

5. Exemplars: The Beatitudes (Matthew 5: 3 -12)

The beatitudes can be the best examples for practicing the virtues of Charity and environmental justice by the act of mercy, solidarity, option for the poor and so on. The insight from Lucas Chan in his book, *The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes: Biblical Studies and Ethics for Real Life* is a perfect way to approach in following of beatitudes. According to Chan, in the first beatitude, we all are invited to turn our gaze, on 'the poor in spirit' who are the poorest of the poor, economically deprived and socially alienated. Turning to the second macarism, "Blessed are they who mourn," we are actually recognizing those who already are mourning. In this second macarism, Chan considers those who mourn are therefore like "The Lord who is close to the broken-hearted" wanting to respond to "those who are crushed in spirit," as the Psalmist says (Psalm 38:14). It is a

call to have the preferential option for the poor (Chan, 2012: 151-200).

James F. Keenan, S.J, in his article titled, “Grieving in the Upper Room: Vulnerability, Recognition, Conscience and the Holy Spirit” affirms Chan’s insight on the beatitudes as an invitation or us to have the preferential option for the poor. According to Keenan, the third and fourth beatitude also helps us to respond to the poor in spirit in a deeper way. Likewise, the fifth beatitude is a call for us to be merciful because we have cultivated true mourning in order to feel with the other. Affirming Chan’s reflection, Keenan writes that being merciful makes us the other-centered persons with the purity of hearts. This openness will lead us to become peace makers who can respond to the works of justice, peace and wellbeing of poor (Keenan, 2021:9-10). The true understanding of the beatitudes will help us to see and responds to the injustices done to the poor with the eyes of Christ.

6. Evaluation of Ecological Justice in Indian Context

a. Ecological Justice: A Lens through Which to Judge Environmental Injustices in India

In the light of the first two parts of this paper, the environmental injustices in India have the following causes.

- i. The ecological injustices in India which lacks the notion of common good continue to help the rich in the accumulation of wealth and resources. Such injustices have widened the gap between the rich and poor. The six percent of the rich enjoy good and comfortable life at the expense of the basic necessities of the poor.
- ii. Environmental irresponsibility such careless disposal of wastes from factories and households, results many consequences. This is also a failure to promote the common good and care for our common home.
- iii. Corruption and manipulation of government policies that leads to deforestation, unsafe functioning of factories, mining, sand

digging, etc are also contributing to the ecological injustices in India.

iv. Remaining silent and walking away from injustices is an attitude too common in many Indians. A dangerous notion has entered into Indian minds, i.e., “as long as it doesn’t affect me, I don’t bother”.

v. The present model of industrial development in India has given rise to problems of health, economic, water, etc which affect our survival. It has an impact not only on urban area but also on rural areas. It takes an immediate-profit or result based development and ignores the long-lasting dangers.

These are some of the problems that need correcting in order to bring about ecological justice in India, which takes into consideration how they affect the poor. Pope John Paul Second emphasized in one of his homilies that the fruits of the earth supposed to be for the benefit of all. It is a clear injustice that a privileged group (few in number) accumulate excess good and squanders natural resources while the majority of the people are in a misery. The Both the individual and collective greed and selfishness give rise to such ecological breakdown which is contrary to the order of creation, characterized by mutual interdependence (John Paul, 1990:8). Conversion implies a turning away from the injustices mentioned above. The widening gap between the rich and poor are vividly seen in Indian society. We need to promote the values of common good, caring for the common home and preferring option for the poor in a more profound way.

“In an interview in 2008, Bishop Gianfranco Girotto, an official at the Apostolic Penitentiary, spoke about “social sins” and illustrated them with examples. Among those he mentioned were economic injustice, environmental irresponsibility, accumulation of excessive wealth, and genetic experimentation with unforeseen consequences (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 223).”

Consumerism is an addiction to the accumulation of things which is connected with lack of mercy, solidarity and concern for the marginalized. It is one of the vices against the integral ecology that is seen in India.

“It emphasizes the wants and desires of consumers while ignoring the rights and claims of the poor, of future generations and of the rest of the planet and leads us to forget that we are also sisters and brothers to all the other humans on the planet, and called to show a special regard for those on the margin. It is shameful that approximately a third of all food produced is discarded, and “whenever food is thrown out it is as if it were stolen from the table of the poor” (LS 50). This is where restitution comes in and the burden is squarely placed on the privileged countries and the elite within each country to restore to the victims of their pride and greed and consumerism that which was rightfully theirs (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 77-78).”

We see in India that the gap between the poor and the richest is widening day by day. The lack of preferential option for the poor has caused this gap. There is an urgent need of an integral ecology in India. We cannot care for the mother earth without caring for the poor. There is no question of ecological justice without doing the social justice in India.

b. A Way Forward to Build a Better Future

This section will deal with the possible individual and structural initiatives towards creating an integral ecology in India.

A Change of Attitude and Lifestyle

On the individual level, ecological conversion demands a change of attitude and a change of lifestyle. We need to realize that “being” is more important than “having.” If the world is based on having more and more there is no scope for the survival of the earth (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 78).

There is a need to identify the problem as my own and need to work for the resolution of this problem. Walking away from the structural vice is like walking away from Omelas- the evil remains unchanged (Daly, 2021:210). I consider the best way by which we can bring about the change is to start changing oneself - the life style and the attitude which blocks the integral ecology. The second way is to bring awareness to others and to challenge the oppressive systems to adapt the attitude and life-style that promotes integral ecology.

Practice of Solidarity

Practice of solidarity is not merely is an instrumental virtue capable of producing good effects but also contains an intrinsic component- the good of being in relation with others. (Daly, 2021:211). According to Pope Francis solidarity opens way for structural transformation (Daly, 2021:210). Therefore, solidarity calls us to share the burdens of the one another. In that sense, sharing the burden of others as my own leads me to the deeper solidarity and in turn will lead to individual and structural transformation. Solidarity is one of the means to promote the common good and ecological justice in India.

Caring for Our Common Home by caring for the Poor

As we have seen earlier the poor are the worst hit victims of ecological crisis. In that sense caring for our common home is also about caring for the poor and the marginalized. In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis expands the idea of the option for the poor by connecting it to the principle of the common good which now includes care for the earth. He considers the preferential option for the poor as an “ethical imperative” to promote our participation in the common good. This is an invitation for us to show solidarity and have a preferential option for the poorest of our brothers and sisters and to affirm their dignity and wellbeing (Martins, 2018: 410-424,419).

‘The option for the poor’ can be a principle to operationalize care for the common home, common good and integral ecology. I have seen many homes where mothers care for the weakest or sick child more in order to make the child healthy and strong. In that sense the option for the poor is way to make Indian society and world better. It should be noted that on 17th May, 2020 the Pope and the Dicastery for promoting the Integral Human Development announced a seven-year action plan in the light of *Laudato Si*. It is aimed at total sustainability and recommended to be practiced by all the families, organizations and institutions within the church (Daly, 2021:213). Such initiatives can be a model for promoting integral ecology in our own families and smaller communities.

The parable of the Good Samaritan portrays neighbour-love definitively as the practice of mercy. Fratelli Tutti challenges us to be good Samaritans; in a world which is indifferent to respond to the sufferings of others. We reject the prophetic call to be good Samaritans by turning away from the suffering of others (Fratelli tutti 65). We remember why Jesus tells this parable. By the end of the story, we are no longer looking at the neighbour who is wounded but rather at the neighbour who is caring. The scribe therefore answers that the neighbour is the one who shows mercy. In the beginning we think the parable is about whom we should assist. But the end it is really about who we are called to be. We are called to be like the Good Samaritan by becoming a caring neighbour (Keenan 2010: 118-119). Opting to become a good neighbour will be the right step towards integral ecology.

Conclusion

As these pages have argued, there is an urgent need of introducing and establishing integral ecology in India. Looking at the current scenario, we can see the option for the poor as the best way to promote integral ecology in India. As our theology is born out of human experience, so it must address the issues leading to human suffering. Virtues of charity, solidarity, mercy, compassion, and the promotion of the common good, the preferential option for the poor,

the practice of justice and equity must become the pillars of theology in responding to the victims of environmental crises in India. Clement Camposs CSsR writes eloquently of the suffering of the other that invites us to take a prophetic role against the violence and injustices and act with compassion in solidarity with the victims. According to him, our theology, which is born out of human experiences, does not seek primarily to explain evil but find ways in which evil and suffering can be resisted and transformed by our prophetic role as Christian community (Campos, 2017: 213-225, 219). It is a call for liberating the weakest.

It is important for us as a Christian community to reflect on our responsibility and to be more compassionate to the worst-hit victims of injustices that create the environmental crises. We know that romanticizing ecology can pose a danger in achieving integral ecology. *Laudato Si'* warns that our ecological culture should not be reduced to a onetime and partial response to pollution, environmental degradation, and depletion of natural resources by promoting temporary solution which only grab headline. Such romantic ecological initiatives fail to address the real issues related to ecology that unfairly harm the poor. Such an approach would be like building a wall to cover over the real problems. Ecological justice will have no meaning without looking at the justice for the poor. The way forward is focusing on the care for vulnerable people and promoting their common good, which, in turn, will benefit the environment.

There is an urgent need to educate and motivate future generations to practice integral ecology, that is to be aware that the earth has enough resources required for the needs of all human beings. These resource, however, must be shared and not be reserved for the few. Our education should give rise to a generation with compassionate and committed hearts who would understand the multiple struggles of those who are poor because of the unjust behaviour of the few.

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Prof Dr Subhash Anand (1943-2022): Passionately in Love with India and the Church

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Abstract: This article is a tribute to Professor (Emeritus) Subhash Anand, who was part of both Papal Seminary and Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy and Theology, for more than thirty years. His unexpected death urges us to recall his heritage, his love for India and devotion to Jesus. In this article, we first look into the person of Subhash and then explore one of his most significant books, dealing with the Eucharist. He was passionately in love with India and with the Church. Rooted in his Christian tradition, he tried to understand and reach out to the Hindu brothers and sisters.

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Keywords: Subhash Anand, Indian Philosophy, Church in India, Eucharist.

We are immensely saddened to hear of the demise of Rev Fr Subhash Anand who had been part of Jnana Deepa and Papal Seminary for more than thirty years both as staff and as a student. He was a man of deep conviction and commitment. A person of vision and values, he was critically and creatively committed to the Indian Church. He radiated a sense of fairness and calm in his undertakings. Forthright and articulate, he could put forward his views forcefully and articulate himself clearly.

The Person and His Vision

As a professor of Indian Philosophy and Religion at Pune, he cherished both the ancient Indian wisdom and their contemporary relevance. In his classes, he tried to make the Indian insights applicable to the modern times. He could perceive the larger story or vision of the Indian way of life, which is very valuable for the contemporary Church. His doctorate from Benares Hindu University helped him assimilate the Indian insights to the Christian experience. It was this experience of his Indian identity and profundity that made him change his name from Benedict Alvarez to Subhash Anand.

Subhash was very much concerned about the poor and cherished poverty as a way of life. He was very much supportive of the marginalised. He had a special commitment to the secular institutes in and around Pune and served them with devotion.

He was very much concerned about the poor and cherished poverty as a way of life. He was very much supportive of the marginalised. He had a special commitment to the secular institutes in and around Pune and served them with devotion.

After his retirement from Jnana Deepa and Papal Seminary in 2008, he developed a special devotion to the Bible. So he arranged for a large library on the Bible on his own and brought out the monumental work: *The WALD-BULCKE BIBLE*

BHASHYA ; in · Hindi. This 1192 page Biblical commentary which contains reflections on every book in the Bible and published in 2018 is a monumental contribution to the Indian Church. He managed to involve 75 scholars who worked on this volume.

He used to visit Papal Seminary every year after his retirement mainly to acquaint himself with the happenings in the seminary and also to make use of the Jnana Deepa library.

His publications include *The Local Church and Inculturation* (1985); *The Way of Love: The Bhagavata Doctrine of Bhakti* (1996); *Story as Theology: An Interpretative Study of Five Episodes from the Mahabharata* (1996); *Siva's Thousand Names: An Interpretative Study of Sivasahasranama* (1998); *Hindutva: A Christian Response* (2007); *Hindu Inspiration for Christian Reflection: Towards a Hindu-Christian Theology* (2004); *Major Hindu Celebrations: A Christian Appreciation* (2008); *The Eternal Stranger: An Interpretative Study of Five Siva Episodes in the Mahabharata* (2009); *A Preface for an Indian Christology* (2010), *May They All Be One: Towards an*

Ecumenical Theology of the Church (2012); *Postmodern Sage* *Premodern Wisdom* (2019); *The Divine Feminine* (2015) and *Seven Baskets Full : The All-Embracing Lord's Supper* (2021). The last book with 877 pages challenges the Church to live the Eucharist in the contemporary context.

He was a prolific writer. Even after his retirement, he continued to write and some of them were very provocative. The Church in India will miss him very much. Papal Seminary and Jnana Deepa, Pune, owe quite much to his contribution.

**The Book: Seven Baskets Full:
Genuine Sharing of Jesus' Presence**

What inspired Subhash to write his *magnus opus* on the Eucharist? He started by challenging the question: "Nego suppositum!" The Christian community as a whole is plagued by an almost irreversible original sin: the belief that Jesus instituted a new liturgy. Sharing food with others, especially the poor, was a foreshadowing gesture. Liturgy assumes an institution with its own tradition, which becomes increasingly centralized and communalized; more patriarchal and oppressive. A prophetic gesture is invariably subversive. This helps to explain the

Risen Lord can now be found throughout the universe. This is the ancient Church's belief. When humans meet in his name, in love, this presence becomes salvific for them. As the Risen Lord, He, the entire reality of Jesus the Christ, is present to them. That presence becomes real when people come together in love. It transforms into an interpersonal communion. We become Christ's one body. The Eucharist is not a metaphysical miracle, but rather a hermeneutical reminder.

conflict between priests and prophets. This explains Jesus' execution: the Good News was subverting Israel's official religion; the Good News will always subvert institutional religion. This explains why some theologians have been silenced, if not

excommunicated. The soteriological explanations are post-Easter constructions to deal with the first disciples' embarrassment: how could a good man die in such a horrible way? (Anand, 2021a).

His goal in writing *Seven Baskets Full*, a book on the Eucharist, (Anand, 2021b) was to demonstrate that neither the historical Jesus nor the earliest believers saw the breaking of bread as requiring a clear creedal, cultic, or canonical framework. The Last Supper was meant to represent the gathering of all, not by sharing a common creed, cult, or code, but by loving, caring for, and sharing as much as we can with one another. This is the clear message of the washing of feet and the subsequent discourse. We will unite if we truly believe that God first loved us. As a result, at the Last Supper, Jesus gathers the twelve for the final time: one will betray Jesus, the second will deny him, and the remaining ten will abandon him. Only the disciple who believed Jesus loved him, as well as a few women, would be with Jesus. No amount of solemn symbolic activity can replace genuine sharing. Real sharing does not necessitate priests, ritual texts, cultic garments, holy days, or locations; all of these can serve as convenient alibis. We don't need bulky missals and lectionaries, which may require hernia surgery for the poor undernourished sacristan. Rituals can be extremely soothing placebos. Genuine sharing is a truly universal sacrament as well as a uniquely salvific sacrifice. To the best of my knowledge, God expects no other sacrifice from us.

He wanted to make it clear that he did not believe the Eucharist was instituted by the historical Jesus. What he found particularly disheartening is that even young priests are unfamiliar with the current debate over the historical Jesus and its theological and pastoral implications. They do not appear to be comfortable with an open discussion of questions that some of our educated laity have. If they do not come to us for answers, it is possible that they believe we are incompetent or that we are

closed. Some of us believe that ignorance is bliss. It certainly ensures that we have the funds that the official Church always seems to require.

He suspects that, while most of us emphatically reject Doceticism, we build our theology primarily on Doceticist assumptions. God was Jesus. He knew everything and could do it all! But Jesus knew as much or as little about his future as John the Baptist did. For nearly three centuries, the Eucharist was commonly celebrated without the words of institution and the anamnesis mandate.

Subhash believes that the Risen Lord can now be found throughout the universe. This is the ancient Church's belief. When humans meet in his name, in love, this presence becomes salvific for them. As the Risen Lord, He, the entire reality of Jesus the Christ, is present to them. That presence becomes real when people come together in love. It transforms into an interpersonal communion. We become Christ's one body. The Eucharist is not a metaphysical miracle, but rather a hermeneutical reminder. The Risen Lord is the broken bread for humans. This breaking was not a reference to Jesus' passion and death, but to Jesus of Nazareth's actual praxis. Jesus could not have spoken of his passion and death as a certainty, but rather as a possibility. When we become the bread broken for our needy neighbours, the remembrance becomes real. That is the only acceptable sacrifice to God. When we are transubstantiated, this will occur. That cannot be realized through our liturgy. Only the experience of God's love has the power to transform us. We must transition from cult to contemplation.

The imposition of the transubstantiation dogma was a pastoral disaster. Previously, the Church meant a community as the body of Christ. The emphasis was on one-on-one pastoral care. That is now being overlooked. The pastor spends much more time in the church (building), presbytery—waiting for people to come and meet him, and occasionally supervising the gardener. He is no longer with the Church—the People of God; he is no longer a part of their life struggle. People are leaving the Church as a result.

The liturgy has evolved into its own institution. Commercialization and consumer glamour are all too common in our liturgical celebrations. Building expensive cathedrals, churches, and chapels have taken precedence over developing vibrant faith communities. Costly patens, chalices, ciboria, monstrances, vestments, altar decorations, and lamps are valued more than the authenticity of our pastors' and people's faith. We witness solemn liturgies but hear appalling homilies. Pastors are increasingly confined to their small church, where the Eucharist is kept. They imagine themselves as the stewards of Christ's body (Mt 27:65-66). As a result, they, like the first custodians, fail in their tasks and become like dead men.

With regards to epiclesis, According to our author, there are two accounts of Pentecost: the gifting of the Spirit and the birth of the Church, the body of the Risen Lord. The first is true, but not historically accurate: the resurrection occurs when Jesus dies (Jn 19.26-30). Here, John employs the verb *paradidōmi*, which means "handing over." As a result, *paradosis* refers to what is passed down, i.e., tradition. For John, the resurrection occurs when Jesus dies, and thus he is able to bestow his Spirit on his Church (Jn 7:37-39). The Church is now formed by gathering the disciples whom Jesus loved and the women who were close to Jesus even after his death. They are the Church that has been sent (*apostolos*). His presence in all of creation makes it sacred ground. The temple and its priests are no longer required.

The second account is dramatized by Luke. The twelve are back together (Acts 1:21-26) and this ushers the birth of the New Israel. The second account serves as a hermeneutical proclamation: Jesus fulfilled all of the promises made to the Israelites. Despite our unfaithfulness and sin, God remains faithful; he remains Emmanuel: God with us. Jesus' life, death, and resurrection represent God's transforming presence with us.

Jesus' resurrection is his final transfiguration by the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist becomes a symbol of the Risen Lord's vivifying presence, forming the Church. The two epiclesis could be interpreted as liturgical expressions of New Testament narratives. The epiclesis preceding the institution draws our gifts into the realm of symbols, while the second confers the symbolic character announced in the institution on the consecrated gifts. They are true representations of the truly risen Christ. As a result, for the majority of non-Roman Churches, the second epiclesis is far more important than the institution narrative.

Further, Subhash notes that we have removed the scandal from the Last Supper and Christ's death on the cross from our liturgy. Consider a priest celebrating the Eucharist with a concelebrant. This was something the latter had not anticipated. The former never misses an opportunity to make disparaging remarks about the latter. Nonetheless, before communion, he turns to give the latter "the kiss of peace." This is taking place! The primary reason for this is a shift in the semantic axis of Jesus' meal-sharing. Giving his best to the needy was a horizontal concern for Jesus, sustained by his Abba experience, through the hours he spent with the Father. He saw himself as a servant; he was not and could never be a ministerial priest. The vertical concern of our liturgy is worshipping God in a cult made possible by a human narrative: the ministerial priesthood. Because it is largely interpreted by ministerial priests and people brainwashed by them, not only our liturgy but also the New Testament have lost the foolishness of the Cross.

The Eucharist is said to be the church's attempt to make Jesus' body present even after his presence has been taken away. The Risen Lord's presence cannot be, in fact, taken away. If the real body of Jesus is not present to us, the Church – body of Christ – cannot exist. If we perceive him to be absent, it means that we do not love sufficiently. We must feel his presence as the Risen Lord. Only contemplation can help with this. Cult by itself is useless. When the

world sees Christians as truly loving and effective caregivers, the Risen Lord becomes truly present to it.

The enactment of Jesus' passion, death, and resurrection is called liturgy. According to Subhash, the word *leitourgia* (liturgy) is used twice in the New Testament to refer to the Old Testament temple cult (Lk 1:23; Heb 9:21). It is also used four times in a Christian context: the collection for poor Christians in Jerusalem (2 Cor 9:12); the risk of martyrdom faced by Paul and Epaphrodite was viewed as a service to the Philippians' faith growth. Because he "has obtained a ministry (*leitourgia*) that is as much more excellent than the old as the covenant he mediates is

Pope Francis has frequently lamented that arrogant clericalism is the Church's main problem. There can be no salvation from clericalism unless we radically rethink our worship. The Eucharist is supposed to make us more humble, open, loving, and caring. So, for Subhash, true sharing is the one-of-a-kind salvific sacrifice

better, because it is enacted on better promises," Jesus abrogates the Old Testament ministry (Heb 8:6). He wishes for us to be guided more by the New Testament than by Canon Law in understanding liturgy. Only then will our liturgy become more meaningful and contextualized. Canon Law represents the pinnacle of institutionalization. Christian worship must be liberated from its shackles. Without a doubt, some law and order are required. For that, we can rely on our common sense, especially those who claim to be elders (presbyter).

Unfortunately, common sense is a rare commodity among those who have been raised in a closed and protected environment for many years. When the Church is perceived as oppressive, bloody anti-clericalism ensues. This is supported by events in Western Europe, North and South America. Pope Francis has

frequently lamented that arrogant clericalism is the Church's main problem. There can be no salvation from clericalism unless we radically rethink our worship. The Eucharist is supposed to make us more humble, open, loving, and caring. So, for Subhash, true sharing is the one-of-a-kind salvific sacrifice (Anand, 2021a).

Subhash was deeply concerned that clericalism is so rampant in the church, and that serves as a formidable fortress protecting the clergy (Anand, 2017). The bishops of India too seem to be aware of this problem. The final statement of the 32nd Plenary Meeting of the CBCI lists "Shunning excessive institutionalization, clericalism and extravaganza" among its proposals (CBCI, 2022).

Some of the clergy believe they can do whatever they want with impunity; that they can even engage in criminal behaviour and get away with it. Clerics believe that the clergy will always support its man.

If we are to rid the Church of this cancer, we must first address its source. Postmodern thinkers have called our attention to the authoritarian and oppressive nature of even what we call theological truths. This is easy to see when we consider that the vast majority of Catholic theology, spirituality, liturgy, and law have been designed almost entirely by a small group of clerics.

Even stranger, theology, spirituality, liturgy, and law of marriage have been formulated by a small group of clerics who claim to be celibates and are far removed from the experience of married couples.

We can say that the discourse shaping the Roman Church – theology, spirituality, liturgy, and law – is of, by, for, and accountable to the clergy. As a result, if we truly want to free the Church of Jesus from the cancer of clericalism, we must engage in an alternative discourse. This is entirely feasible.

If some of us, priests and bishops, are guilty of serious wrongdoing and still get away with it, it is because our lay people have accepted

the awe and aura that we have successfully surrounded ourselves with. It is time for our lay people to engage with contemporary Biblical scholarship, keeping in mind that the majority of scholars are just as concerned about Jesus and his community as you and I are.

Contemporary Biblical and theological scholars are presenting some very profound new insights into the origins and development of Christianity. Their findings are published in theological journals that few bishops and priests read. There is a troubling gap between the advancement of knowledge and the stagnation of our pastoral

practice. This ignorance can be a source of great bliss and security for those in power, but it is a terrible disaster for the vast majority of God's people.

“The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant.” - Maximilien Robespierre

“The secret of freedom lies in educating people, whereas the secret of tyranny is in keeping them ignorant,” said Maximilien Robespierre, a pioneer of the French Revolution. As a result, we must bring theology to a wider audience, including people who may not have time to read lengthy scholarly articles, urged Subhash fervently.

Conclusion

His forthright approach and clear conviction sometimes border on arrogance and obduracy at least for some of his colleagues, who found it difficult to live with him. Some of them took his long emails with ongoing criticism as a form of harassment and requested to be removed from his email list. He could be a pain for many of the authorities with his persistent questioning and

criticism. But he did it with good intention. He really wished to reform the Church from within. He wanted the church to be a source of joy for the laity, and especially the poor. He wanted the Church to be deeply rooted in the Indian culture and reach out to the Hindus. He was a man of deep and unwavering conviction, which made him sometimes unyielding and provocative. He could come across as a demanding taskmaster, especially to his students.

Even his critics will agree that he was a man of concern, care, and compassion for the students he taught and the people he served. He struggled to meet the high ideals he had set for himself and the Church.

Finally, I want to end with an unexpected email I received from a well-known Catholic intellectual ad writer who knew Subhash personally and intellectually well:

I was indeed full of sorrow at the news of the sudden demise of Fr Subash. He was an honest man who was thoroughly misunderstood by many of his companions and close associates. He had certain deep impressions and convictions to which he returned time and again. I do not think the church in India did bother about him... I feel he was on the verge of madness, perhaps he had some direct contact with God which alone made man mad. Any direct access to God definitely will make you mad. The pity is that we simply close ourselves to such people lest such things bother us. The safest way to live is thoughtlessness, unconcerned with the way the world moves. We are not evil we live the banality of evil, which is numbness of the people

The safest way to live is thoughtlessness, unconcerned with the way the world moves. We are not evil we live the banality of evil, which is numbness of the people around us and the future of us. Subash rightly or wrongly was so concerned of the future of the church in India, he was mentally disturbed.

around us and the future of us. Subhash rightly or wrongly was so concerned of the future of the church in India, he was mentally disturbed. We are not even aware of the watchman in the tower. “Day after day, my lord, I stand on the watchtower; every night I stay at my post.” (Isaiah 21:8). I thank the Lord for the blessing which was He, RIP.

Subhash Anand loved the Church dearly, agonized over its shortcomings deeply, reached out to Hindus tenderly, and dreamt of an Indian Church that serves the nation and cares particularly for its poor and underprivileged. He was an erudite scholar, creative thinker, earnest seeker and committed pastor. He was an Indian who loved the nation, a Catholic who lived for the Church, and a priest who stood for the poor.

May God grant him the fullness of life he has been longing for!
May he inspire us to lead lives of commitment, devotion and conviction!

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Review Article Encounter, Experience, Enable: Towards an All- Inclusive World-Church

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“It is neither a culture of confrontation nor a culture of conflict which builds harmony within and between peoples, but rather a culture of **encounter** and a culture of dialogue; this is the only way to peace.” – Pope Francis

“God’s working in them tends to produce signs and rites, sacred expressions which in turn bring others to a communitarian **experience** of journeying towards God.” -Pope Francis, *Evangelii Gaudium* 254

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“Let us ask the Father of mercies to **enable** us to live fully the faith graciously ... and to bear witness to it freely, joyfully and courageously.
-Pope Francis

How do we visualize the Church of the future? How can the Church become more vitalized and vibrant? How will the world Church of the future look like? These are some of the questions posed in this book on the world Church, a theme very close to Prof Lothar Lies, SJ, University of Innsbruck, Austria.

The answer we believe has to do with genuine encounter and authentic experience with truly enables us. The encounter of the other as other with diverse religious, ethnic, political sociological and other identities is the stepping stone to encounter the Wholly Other, God. Such an encounter of people and God help us experience the breadth and depth of human relationship leading to an all-inclusive and enriching experience of God. This encounter-experience enables us as individuals and community to embrace the other who are constitutive of ourselves. The Church of the future could be visualised thus as one that encounters the world intimately, experiences the other warmly and in the process enables each other. That is a vision close to Pope Francis too.

This volume is a volume written by scholars who have close ties with the University of Innsbruck and Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy, Pune, India. It also attempts to remember Fr Lothar Lies and pay homage to the incredible contribution he has accomplished for the universal and local Churches in India and Austria. This volume explores Christian living as expiring and encounter the person of Christ and our fellow human beings as well as the whole of nature. The emphasis on encounter (*Begegnung*) with the others and the “Wholly Other” (“*ganz Andere.*”), it is hoped, will unfold deeper dimensions of our Christian spirituality.

Such an encounter is enabling and presupposed collaboration, networking, acceptance and understanding. The writers of this volume, inspired by Prof Lothar Lies, believes that such an ongoing dialogue, based on genuine encounter and mutually enriching experiences

among religious traditions is the need of the hour for the Church and for the world.

The Outline of the Book

The first part of the book looks at encountering the other as experiencing the other and oneself. So, the first article in this section by Dr Paul Raj Mariapushpam, Jnana Deepa, Pune, explores Paul's encounter with Christ and the Damascus experience and looks at its significance for contemporary men and women. This is followed by the article of Dr Alangaram Arockiam, Loyola College, Chennai, that explores encounter between God and human beings through the category of covenant and looks at the Eucharist as a covenant experience. Rev Joseph Cardozo, Jnana Deepa, Pune, studies encountering and experiencing from the perspective of Christ's standards, according to St. Ignatius of Loyola.

This is followed by Dr Richard Lopes, Jnana Deepa, Pune, who visualized the Church of the future and an enabling Church. The next article by Dr Herman Tirkey, Jnana Deepa, Pune, situates the encounter of the Gospel in the multicultural context of India.

The second section deals with the Church's mission in the plural-cultural context of both India and Europe. Dr Boris Repschinski, Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck, introduces this section by understanding pluralism as the foundational principle of the New Testament. Dr Andreas Vonach, also of Leopold-Franzens-Universität Innsbruck, studies the four existential questions connected to pluralism from Christian perspectives. In this context of plurality, Dr Joseph Lobo, St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Bengaluru, looks at the theological foundations of cross-credal encounter. This is followed by Dr Thomas Karimundackal who takes up the encounter between Jesus and the Samaritan woman as an illustration of cross-cultural encounter.

Such an encounter also enables and empowers all the partners involved. So the third section deals with the prophetic and

liberative aspects of genuine encounter. Dr VM Joseph, Jnana Deepa, Pune, looks on the mission of the Indian Church towards the tribal community providing them with dignity and liberation. Dr Jose Thayil explores the ecological concerns of today and relates them to our deep experience of nature. Rev Santhanam Clement Jesudoss studies the practical and epistemic authority as encountering. The next article by Dr Leonard Fernando, St. Joseph's College, Tiruchirappalli, deals with the person of Origen as a man of encounter and his significance for today. In the final article in this section Pudota Rayappa John, Vidyajyoti College of Theology, New Delhi, looks at the sacraments as means of encountering Christ and fellow human beings.

The final section deal with the need of dialogue for the world church and reflects on dialogue as a way of life for the Church. Dr Chacko Nadakkeveliyil, Chacko Nadakkeveliyil, Thrissur, looks at the world as a gratuitous gift of God and explores the universe as the ultimate free lunch, based on Stephen Hawking. Clement Valluvassery, Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy, Alwaye, then focusses on the need for dialogue for a meaningful and harmonious future both for the world and the church. Dr Kuruvilla Pandikattu, Jnana Deepa, draws inspiration from Bede Griffiths, who fostered active dialogue between Christianity and Hinduism. Rev Anthony Raj investigates experiencing as understanding, inspired by his encounter with Dr Lothar Lies and by the Ignatian spirituality. Finally, Rev Seraphim Stanley Tirkey pleads for an authentic dialogue between Church and cultures going beyond relativism and ethnocentrism. As a concrete experience, Re Bhausaheb Sansare, Papal Seminary, Pune, analyses the work of the German-speaking missionaries in the District of Nagar, Maharashtra, India.

This volume is also the product of the ongoing dialogue and collaboration between the Theology Faculty of the University of Innsbruck and Jnana Deepa, Institute of Philosophy and Theology. Even before entering into a formal Memorandum of Understanding between the two faculties in 1997, there have been quite a lot of interaction and exchange between the two institutes.

Persons like Julian Fernandes, the former Provincial of India, theologians of Jnana Deepa like Francis D'Sa, Kurien Kunnumpuram, Rui de Menezes, Sebastian Painadath and John Vattanky were closely connected to Innsbruck. Two German speaking professors, Felix Clausen after whom the Jnana Deepa (PG Block) Hall is named and Aloysius Schlegel, after whom Jnana Deepa Library is named, have contributed much to the growth and development of the lively exchange between these two institutes.

After the official Memorandum was signed there have been quite many exchanges between the two institutes at the level of the faculty and research students. Prof Andreas Vonach, Boris Repschinski and Noel Sheth were part of the exchange at the level of the faculty. About 100 students have gone from Pune to study in Innsbruck and about 40 from Innsbruck to Pune.

This book in honour of Prof Lothar Lies, SJ, is a contribution to the world Church where, ENCOUNTERING the Other, EXPERIENCING God's Love and ENABLING each other are significant in building a community of Christ's followers.

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"The heavens declare the glory of God; and
the firmament proclaims the work of his
hands." (Ps 19:1)

James Webb Space Telescope image



Papal Seminary congratulates the two new Indian Cardinals!
Archbishop Filipe Neri Ferrão of Goa and Damão
Archbishop Anthony Poola, of Hyderabad

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