no detached neutrality. Substantial disagreements will come out, and faith's bias may be more advantageous than others in accessing disputed truth.

While he shows sensitivity for fideists in other religious traditions, Evans is not a pluralist. Though simplistic at points, he has provided a clear and concise commendation of the view that (especially Christian) faith, in responsibly seeking a right understanding of truth, may be much more a vehicle of progress than of escape.

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***Faith and Reason: Encyclical Letter* FIDES ET RATIO *of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II on the Relationship between Faith and Reason*. Rome: Libreria Editrice Vaticana; Sherbrooke: Médiaspaul, 1998. ISBN 2-89420-164-8. Pp. 154**

Papal encyclicals are seldom hot news. Some are memorable or historic—the social statements of Leo XIII, or those of Vatican II defining a quiet revolution for the modern church. The present Pope has presented numerous works relevant to the Church of Rome and beyond; now he offers a timely monograph with special import for the Academy. It breathes the air of the old lecture rooms and libraries he once inhabited as theological professor.

"Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth" (3). In a prefatory note akin to Calvin's famous opening to his *Institutio*, itself echoing classical wisdom, the knowledge of God and oneself happen together. The introduction, "Know Yourself" (3–13), sketches this partnership between reason and faith, philosophy and theology. The search for truth begins in that wonder awakened "by the contemplation of creation," especially human being. This priority accorded to philosophical enquiry reflects a kind of "implicit philosophy" attained by reason when it follows its proper insight: *recta ratio*. An early warning is sounded: reason is biased in concentrating on human subjectivity, forgetting the higher truth beyond. This allows "pragmatic criteria based essentially upon experimental data" to let technology dominate. Modern philosophy has substituted knowing for being as its object. Hence the rise of agnosticism and relativism—and "undifferentiated pluralism" rather than "a legitimate plurality of positions." What is needed? *Courage*!

Chapter 1, "The Revelation of God's Wisdom" (14–26), draws on former statements from Vatican I and II: a knowledge "peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason" is posited, implying that faith and reason attain truths "neither identical nor mutually exclusive." This twofold order of knowing is familiar in historical theology, indeed it forms the bedrock of classical theism, and is set forth in paragraphs of biblical quotation and commentary. The Pope's careful and modest description avoids direct conflict with, say, Karl Barth's rejection of *analogia entis* in behalf of *analogia fidei*.

Since faith alone can "penetrate the mystery" of the incarnate Word, what stance can reason assume? In its finiteness it moves between the polarity established by revelation and the question of human being. The Christian claim that the latter is disclosed only in reference to the former confronts philosophy with "a universal and ultimate truth" as point of reference for both disciplines (23). Anselm of Canterbury is invoked: his famous definition "that than which nothing greater can be conceived" suggests the limit toward which philosophy must strive, and which only theology can touch. So "Christian Revelation is the true lodestar of men and women as they strive to make their way amid the pressures of an immanent habit of mind and the constrictions of a technocratic logic" (25).

Chapter 2, "*Credo ut intelligam*" (27–38), uses Wisdom literature to focus the quest of reasoning about nature, and hence beyond. Biblical anthropology is "being in relation," not through the wisdom of words but "the Word of Wisdom" in which the Cross challenges every philosophy (and theology?) to open itself to the universality of truth. Philosophy can recognize our transcendental orientation and faith can help it accept the Cross as critique and criterion, saving us from delusion and ideology. Chapter 3, "*Intelligo ut Credam*" (39–53), turns to the implicit theology in reason's question as to life's meaning. This is the question of ultimacy: is "universal and absolute truth" attainable? Just as science starts from intuition, so our intimations of transcendence pull us ever higher.

"The Relationship between Faith and Reason" (54–74), the fourth chapter, is a major review of sources of "the human search." The earliest poetry and theogony prepare for religion, "purified by rational analysis." The apostolic warning against "philosophy and empty deceit" (Col. 2:8) remains relevant, since old gnosticism has become the "esoteric superstition widespread today." A catena of Church Fathers—Justin, Clement of Alexandria, Origen, Augustine, Tertullian—illustrates the critique of sophistry, enabling reason to "find its way out of the blind alley of myth and open itself to the transcendent in a more appropriate way." In turn, scholastics such as Anselm of Canterbury explore the *intellectus fidei*: the intellect sees what it loves; knowledge is desire. Reason can attain certain perception of ultimate Reality, even if it "cannot penetrate its mode of being." The "enduring originality" of Thomas Aquinas involves his perception of a reconciliation of secularity with "the radicality of the Gospel," and of "the role of the Holy Spirit in the process by which knowledge matures into wisdom." Such "connatural" knowing shows the harmony disrupted by modernity: philosophy and the sciences required autonomy, but this becomes separation and then mere agnosticism. This process culminated in the nineteenth century: faith was transformed into dialectical structures available to reason, while atheistic humanism presented itself as new religion. We live with "a market-based logic" and "quasi-divine power over nature." Such a crisis of rationalism leads to *nihilism*: no definitive commitments are allowed. Reason is merely instrumental and goals utilitarian. This "rapid survey" reveals the growing separation of reason from faith. What is to be done?

John Paul turns to consider "The Magisterium's interventions in philosophical matters" (75–94) in chapter 5. "The Church has no philosophy of her own," he argues, "nor does she canonize any one particular philosophy in preference to others." This permits "a critical discernment of opinions and philosophies which contradict Christian doctrine." Here, of course, one sees the circular movement in which faith begins with revelation and approaches philosophy with its own authority secured. When it speaks of "reason wounded and weakened by sin" it can hardly expect all philosophers to agree. Perhaps any philosopher, Christian or not, must refuse to yield autonomy in behalf of an external criterion. So when the Pope speaks of "the unity of truth," he does so from a position in which, even if no philosophy is privileged, theology is. If the former harmony between the two disciplines has gone, the most one can ask is mutual respect and unity of desire. Not every philosopher can accept the term "mystery" as describing the goal.

Nevertheless, the encyclical is cogent in calling for coherence of thought, guaranteed by a joint effort—"distinct but not separate" as Maritain used to say. Beside the lure of rationalism is that of fideism. John Paul's predecessors warned against Modernism (Pius X: "philosophical claims which were phenomenist, agnostic and immanentist"), against Marxism (Pius XI), and against "mistaken interpretations linked to evolutionism, existentialism and historicism" (Pius XII). The present Pontiff struggles against "an uncritical" liberation theology and the distrust of reason heralding "the end of metaphysics." There is also a resurgence of fideism, marked by simplistic reading of scripture ("biblicism"). In philosophy there is "a widespread distrust of universal and absolute statements," abandoning the "passion for ultimate truth."

Chapter 6 features "the interaction between philosophy and theology" (95–116). "The human being is by nature a philosopher," implying the necessity for both disciplines to achieve their proper nature. Theology enjoys "a twofold methodological principle: the *auditus fidei* and the *intellectus fidei*." Philosophy's contribution is its study of language and knowledge, as recognized by *fundamental theology* (akin to Philosophy of Religion) and *moral theology*. Together they mount a critique of the cultures and histories that form the context of human being. These provoke the author to look East, in particular to the "great spiritual impulse" that directs Indian thought to a liberating experience. He bids us look for "fresh clues for fruitful dialogue with the cultures which will emerge as Humanity moves into the future."

A section follows on "different stances of philosophy." Pre-Christian philosophy displays a valid search for autonomy. *Christian philosophy* or a Christian way of philosophizing leads Paul, the Church Fathers, Pascal, and Kierkegaard to score philosophy's "presumption," to recall reason to humility, and to explore the rationality of beliefs. A third position is that of a philosophy "when theology itself calls upon it." Theology must presuppose "a reason formed and educated to concept and argument." The familiar stance of *ancilla theologiae*, so out of vogue today, is noted as descriptive of the use

Fathers and Schoolmen made of autonomous philosophies at their disposal (as Aristotle called experimental sciences "ancillary" to *prima philosophia*).

The final chapter, "Current Requirements and Tasks" (117–54), concerns today's "crisis of meaning" that stems from the fragmentation of knowledge, the proliferation of points of view. This leads to "a kind of ambiguous thinking" and an "ever deepening introversion." Locked within our own immanence, we are devoid of transcendental reference. Philosophy needs to recover "its *sapiential dimension* as a search for the ultimate and overarching meaning of life." It also needs to verify our capacity to know the truth. This appeal to the *adequaetio rei et intellectus* of scholastic lore runs counter to modern and postmodern theories of the relative and functional nature of human statements. A third need, therefore, underlines this point: of "a philosophy of *genuinely metaphysical* range, capable, that is, of transcending empirical data in order to attain something absolute, ultimate and foundational in its search for truth." This is a challenge "to move from *phenomenon* to *foundation*," to a metaphysical and ontological level. Otherwise we are confined to analysis of religious experience (students of "religious studies" please note the ambiguity of that very title!). The general nihilistic mood of much contemporary philosophy includes postmodernism, "where everything is provisional and ephemeral."

A brief Conclusion (145–54) recognizes the century-old encyclical *Aeterni Patris* of Leo XIII as precursor. Today's urgent task is to help people discover "their capacity to know the truth and their yearning for the ultimate and definitive meaning of life." Philosophy is a mirror reflecting a people's culture; John Paul appeals to philosophers and teachers of philosophy to "have the courage to recover...the range of authentic wisdom and truth—metaphysical truth included—which is proper to philosophical enquiry." (This recalls the philosophy taught in my student days—the forties!—before the "linguistic turn" lowered our horizon).

This booklet takes on a large task and with boldness rehearses centuries of tradition as well as contemporary issues. John Paul's own academic sensitivity shines through, evident in the even-handed way in which he treats the deepest conflicts. I mentioned above the problem of the circularity with which every discipline contends, seen most clearly in its assumptions or pre-judgements. Most importantly perhaps for students of religious studies, this text is a theological commentary on Tradition understood as *dogmata* or *data*. A postmodern philosophy that eschews absolutes and reduces language to functional description will find little of help. After all, here is a Pope bidding it repent and find humility! Again, students unfamiliar with the long tradition of patristic and scholastic philosophical theology will miss the subtlety of argument as John Paul explores and tests possible connections and relations. In the end, one's capacity to accept his theses and learn from his historical examples depends on whether the past holds enduring lessons and the present is more than language games. This papal gadfly deserves attention, to test the thesis about objective truth and reality in light of these bold theological tenets.

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