

**PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY  
ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, MAYNOOTH**

**AN EXPLORATION OF VIRTUE ETHICS AND ITS RELATIONAL VALUE:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF ROMANUS CESSARIO,  
JAMES F. KEENAN, AND JOSEPH J. KOTVA.**

**Douglas John Zaggi**

**PhD  
2016**

**PONTIFICAL UNIVERSITY  
ST. PATRICK'S COLLEGE, MAYNOOTH**

**AN EXPLORATION OF VIRTUE ETHICS AND ITS RELATIONAL VALUE:  
A COMPARATIVE STUDY IN THE LIGHT OF ROMANUS CESSARIO,  
JAMES F. KEENAN, AND JOSEPH J. KOTVA.**

**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF THEOLOGY IN  
FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENT FOR DOCTORATE DEGREE IN  
THEOLOGY**

**BY**

**DOUGLAS JOHN ZAGGI**

**SUPERVISOR**

**REV. DR. MICHAEL SHORTALL**

## **DECLARATION**

I hereby affirm that this thesis is entirely the right product of my own work. I also declare that this dissertation has not formed the basis for the award of any degree in this or any other university. All sources have been accordingly acknowledged in accordance with academic rules and ethical conduct.

---

**Douglas John Zaggi**

**June 2016**

## **DEDICATION**

This thesis is dedicated to my parents Mr. and Mrs. John Zaggi, for their love and parental guidance over the years.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis marks another milestone in my life. I must acknowledge the efforts of some people that contributed to its success. God Almighty, my creator, the creator of people who have influenced me in life gets the first acknowledgment. I return all glory to Him.

I thank my Bishop, Most Rev. Dr. Joseph D. Bagobiri who conscious of the need for ongoing formation for priests, sent me for further studies. My unreserved appreciation to ArchBishop Duirmuid Martin and the Archdiocese of Dublin for providing me with room and board, may God bless you all.

My inestimable gratitude goes to my supervisor Rev. Dr. Michael Shortall for his insight, patience, understanding and time spared diligently and meticulously scrutinise every aspect of my work. It was enriching working under you. God bless you. I also acknowledge the effort of my Head of Department Rev. Prof. Padraig Corkery and all the staff of Theology office.

In a special way, I acknowledge my Sponsors Garry and Norma Gavigan, without who's support this studies would have been unrealizable. My appreciation to the Parish Priest Fr. Paul Taylor and all parishioners of Celbridge and Straffan for being very supportive. I acknowledge the efforts of Sr. Nuala O'Donnell who proof read my work.

With much emotions, I appreciate my friends who have been part of my life during the course of my studies, SMA Priests Cork, Frs. John Aikoye, Lazarus and Attanasius Barkindo, Frs. Emmanuel Abu, Yusuf Bamai, Jeremiah Markus, Paul Danbaki and Magnus John. Others are, Celestina Bature, Rev. Srs. Virginia and Josephine Shuaibu, Rev. Srs. Veronica Adeduro, Julie Doran, Constance Obinna and Loretto Okwaji, John and Elish Donegan, Josie Keane, Adrienne Ellis and her

Lauren, Aishling and Sophie, Carmel Hurley, Lidia D’Amiento and Mr. & Mrs. Shehu Garba. You are all amazing.

My special thanks goes to my family, Mr.& Mrs. John Zaggi and my siblings for being a significant part of my life. The names mentioned here are not in any way exhaustive, but I thank earnestly every single acquaintance of mine who has in one way or the other contributed to my reaching this level in my life. Thank you.

## ABSTRACT

Current moral theology is witnessing a significant renewal and retrieval of virtue ethics. It is not however without challenges; including the critique that it is too self-centred. The question this objection raises is whether the ethical framework proposed by virtue ethics has personal and communal concerns? The task of this thesis is to defend that position that virtue ethics unifies both the good of the agent and the good of others. To this end, the thesis employs a number of complimentary methods: diachronic, synchronic and comparative. Such methods are not self-contained but mutually enforce each other building towards a more comprehensive account.

Chapter One may be described as a “*status quaestionis*” or review of “the state of investigation.” It utilises a diachronic method, identifying the recent context, challenges and the historical traditions. It begins by situating the turn to virtue ethics in moral theology as a significant part of the renewal called by Vatican II. It outlines some reasons for the eclipse and retrieval of virtue ethics in recent decades. In particular it draws on the analysis of Alasdair MacIntyre and Joseph J. Kotva. The current reappraisal of virtue ethics is a recovery of a tradition of ethical reflection. The opening chapter therefore proceeds to outline some of the main developments and figures within that tradition. This overview is intended to provide an intellectual context for the types of reflection currently taking place in virtue ethics within the field of moral theology. It is primarily a history of ideas, focusing on the classical and Christian tradition, with particular attention to the pivotal role of Thomas Aquinas.

The synchronic method of following three chapters presents a close reading of three moral theologians: each representative of three noteworthy exemplars of the

centering of virtue ethics within moral theology, namely Romanus Cessario, James F. Keenan, and Joseph J. Kotva.

Chapter Two details the theological-anthropological approach of Romanus Cessario on the virtues. He characterizes his method as *ressourcement*-Thomist and a realist Thomist. Such an approach returns to “authoritative sources” of Christian faith in order to rediscover their meaning and establish a continuity with past. It considers particular themes like virtue ethics and human nature, development of virtues, virtue ethics with a personal and communal dimensions.

Chapter Three presents the approach of James Keenan. His method may be described as a revisionist-Thomist. Such an approach develops a progressive moral theology by weaving together personalist currents of contemporary philosophy with pastoral concerns and focusing on key place of the person within virtue ethics. Keenan explores other virtues and various contexts in which the relational value virtue ethics fits appropriately. He interlaces the virtues of justice, fidelity, and self-care with contexts like discipleship, and sexual ethics in order to create the relational model.

Chapter Four turns to virtue ethics within the Reformed tradition and in particular the work of Joseph Kotva. His approach is ... In particular, it focuses on Joseph Kotva, a neo-Aristotelian with a Thomist nuance, who, as a result, is marked by an ecumenical tone. The perspective of his schematization is very theological as he explains the dynamic interplay between, Christology, grace and the virtues. The chapter will progress to show the biblical connections with virtue ethics in order to elucidate that virtue ethics has both a personal and communal orientation.

Chapter Five draws together these different explorations of virtue. The comparative methodology employed in this chapter provides a means to categorise

divergences and convergences among the authors, and therefore commonalities and lacunae within the contemporary renewal of virtue ethics in moral theology. The themes addressed are: tradition, the nature of virtue, the development of virtue, and the use of scripture, the human person, and relationality.

It further suggests a foundational reason for the differences in approach, style and, indeed, the norms defended by each of the authors. Virtue ethics proposes that ethical reflection cannot be independent of a treatment of the human person. Therefore, drawing on Millard J. Erickson's typology of models of the human person – substantive, relational and functional – it proposes that each author aligns with one of the categories.

Central to each of the accounts of virtue ethics is the role of relationality and the consequent rebuttal of the charge of selfishness that opened the thesis. However, the authors restrict relationality to human-to-human interaction. Accordingly, an all-inclusive approach that encompasses the environment should be taken seriously by virtue ethicists.

## ABBREVIATIONS

Eph. – Ephesians

1 Cor.- 1 Corinthians

2 Cor.- 2 Corinthians

BK- Book

Gal- Galatians

Rom- Romans

Matt- Matthew

Phil- Philippians

Heb.- Hebrews

Gen.- Genesis

Wis.- wisdom

Prov- Proverbs

NRSV - *The New Revised Standard Version*

I Pet- I Peter

Col.- Colossians

EV- Ethics of Virtue

VE- Virtue Ethics

GS- *Gaudium et Spes*

Q- Question

QQ-Questions

NE- *Nichomachean Ethics*

ST- *Summa Theologiae*

CCC- Catechism of the Catholic Church

LG- *Lumen Gentium*

BCE- Before the Common Era

AD- *Anno Domini*

Deu- Deuteronomy

Ps- Psalm

Wis- Wisdom

Ez- Ezekiel

A- Article

AA- Articles

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

### DECLARATION

DEDICATION.....i

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT.....ii-ii

ABSTRACT.....iv-vi

ABBREVIATIONS.....vii-viii

GENERAL INTRODUCTION.....xv-xxiii

## PART I: HISTORY

### CHAPTER ONE: A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF VIRTUE ETHICS

#### SECTION 1: THE RETRIEVAL OF VIRTUE ETHICS WITHIN THE RENEWAL OF MORAL THEOLOGY

1.0 *Introduction* .....1-3

1.1 *Vatican II and the Renewal of Moral Theology* .....3-9

1.2 *Understanding the Eclipse of Virtue Ethics* .....9-13

1.3 *Reasons for the Retrieval of Virtue Ethics* .....13

    1.3.1 *Anthropological Moral Crisis in Society: A Moral Sense Argument* .14-17

    1.3.2 *The Rise, Challenge and Dynamism of Historical Consciousness* ....17-19

    1.3.3 *Failed Ethical Theories* .....19-21

1.4 *Towards a Working Definition and Understanding of Virtue* .....21-25

#### SECTION 2: A HISTORY OF THE THEOLOGY OF VIRTUE

1.5 *Historical Overview* .....26

    1.5.1 *Virtue in Classical Tradition* .....26

        1.5.1.1 *Plato and The Virtues* .....27-28

        1.5.1.2 *Aristotle and the Virtues*.....28-30

1.5.2	<i>Virtue in the Sacred Scripture</i> .....	30
1.5.2.1	<i>Virtue in Old Testament Literature</i> .....	30-33
1.5.2.2	<i>Virtue in New Testament Literature</i> .....	33-37
1.5.3	<i>The Patristic Accounts of Virtue within the Latin Church</i> .....	37-39
1.5.3.1	<i>St. Ambrose and the Virtues</i> .....	39-41
1.5.3.2	<i>St. Augustine and the Virtues</i> .....	42-45
1.5.4	<i>Scholastic Era: Systematic Approach of Virtue</i> .....	45-47
1.5.4.1	<i>Peter Lombard: Virtues in The Sentences</i> .....	47-50
1.5.4.2	<i>Thomas Aquinas and the Philosophical and Theological Synthesis of Virtue in Summa Theologiae</i> .....	50-51
1.5.4.2.1	<i>Categorization and The Relationship of the Theological and Cardinal Virtues</i> .....	52-54
1.5.4.2.2	<i>The Theological Virtues</i> .....	54-55
1.5.4.2.2.1	<i>The Virtue of Faith</i> .....	56-57
1.5.4.2.2.2	<i>The Virtue of Hope</i> .....	57-59
1.5.4.2.2.3	<i>The Virtue of Charity</i> .....	59-62
1.5.4.2.3	<i>The Cardinal Virtues</i> .....	62-63
1.5.4.2.3.1	<i>The Virtue of Prudence</i> .....	63-66
1.5.4.2.3.2	<i>The Virtue of Justice</i> .....	66-70
1.5.4.2.3.3	<i>Fortitude and Temperance</i> .....	70-75
1.5.5	<i>Virtue Ethics in the Modern Period</i> .....	75-78
1.5.6	<i>Contemporary Era: A Challenge for a New Approach</i> .....	78-83
1.6	<i>Concluding Remarks</i> .....	83-84

## PART II: DIALOGUE

### CHAPTER TWO: ROMANUS CESSARIO: A THEOLOGICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

2.0 <i>Introduction</i> .....	85
2.1 <i>Situating Romanus Cessario</i> .....	86-98
2.2 <i>Over-all Theological Structure</i> .....	98-101
2.3 <i>Understanding Virtue in Human Nature: Natural and Gospel Laws</i> .....	101-106
2.3.1 <i>Human Nature and Acquired Virtue</i> .....	106-109
2.3.2 <i>Human Nature and Infused Virtues</i> .....	109-112
2.4 <i>Understanding Christian Virtue Ethics</i> .....	112-127
2.4.1 <i>Virtue Ethics And Christian Faith</i> .....	117-121
2.4.2 <i>Virtues Ethics and Christian Tradition: A Biblical Connection</i> ..	122-125
2.4.3 <i>Virtue Ethics and Magisterial Teachings</i> .....	125-128
2.5 <i>Virtue/Habitus Development: A Dynamic Process</i> .....	128
2.5.1 <i>Habitus Development</i> .....	128-134
2.5.2 <i>Christian Conversion: The Growth of the Christian Virtues</i> .....	135-137
2.5.3 <i>Habitus and Personality</i> .....	137-142
2.6 <i>Virtue Ethics and the Human Person</i> .....	142-144
2.6.1 <i>The Human Person as Imago Dei</i> .....	144-150
2.6.2 <i>Relationship Between Person and Communities</i> .....	150-155
2.6.3 <i>Persons Networking within Communio</i> .....	156-162
2.7 <i>Concluding Remarks</i> .....	162

**CHAPTER THREE: JAMES F. KEENAN: A PERSONALIST AND  
PASTORAL APPROACH**

3.0 <i>Introduction</i> .....	163-165
3.1 <i>Situating James F. Keenan</i> .....	165-174
3.2 <i>An Over-all Theological Structure</i> .....	174-177
3.3 <i>Anthropological Vision of the Question of Identity</i> .....	177-178
3.3.1 <i>Who are We? Within the Context of Discipleship</i> .....	178-185
3.3.2 <i>“Who ought we Become?”</i> .....	185-191
3.3.3 <i>“How do we Get there?”</i> .....	191-195
3.4 <i>Virtues: The Habits of Being</i> .....	195-204
3.5 <i>Virtue Ethics and the Christian Call to Growth</i> .....	204-208
3.6 <i>Virtue Ethics and The Human Person</i> .....	208-217
3.7 <i>Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics: The Human Person and Relationality</i> <i>Considered</i> .....	218-221
3.7.1 <i>Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Human Person as Relational Being in</i> <i>General: Justice</i> .....	221-227
3.7.2 <i>Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Human Person as Relational Being</i> <i>Specifically: Fidelity</i> .....	227-234
3.7.3 <i>Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Human Person as Relational Being</i> <i>Uniquely: Self-Care</i> .....	234-238
3.8 <i>Christian Virtue Ethics: Providing A Communal Setting</i> .....	239-240
3.8.1 <i>The Eucharist: A Communal Setting</i> .....	240-243
3.8.1.1 <i>The Liturgy of the Word: Virtuous Moral Implication</i> .....	243-245
3.8.1.2 <i>Liturgy of the Eucharist: Virtuous Moral Implication</i> .....	246-247
3.9 <i>Concluding Remarks</i> .....	247-250

**CHAPTER FOUR: JOSEPH J. KOTVA: AN ECUMENICAL AND CORELATIONAL APPROACH**

4.0 *Introduction* .....251

4.1 *Situating Joseph J. Kotva* .....251-259

4.2 *The Nature of Christian Virtue Ethics* .....259-270

4.3 *Virtue Ethics: An Ethics of “Being” or “Doing”?* .....270-273

4.4 *Virtue Ethics: Ecumenical Perspective* .....274-276

    4.4.1 *Sanctification, Grace and Virtue Ethics* .....276-284

    4.4.2 *Christology and Virtue Ethics* .....284-290

4.5 *Theological (Christian) Anthropology and Virtue Ethics*.....291-296

4.6 *Virtue Ethics and Its Biblical Connections: Matthew and St. Paul*.....297-300

    4.6.1 *Internal Merits of Matthew Paralleled with Virtue Ethics* .....300-302

    4.6.2 *Matthew’s Personal and Communal Ethics* .....302-307

    4.6.3 *Internal Merits of Paul Paralleled with Virtue Ethics* .....307-309

    4.6.4 *Paul’s Personal and Communal Ethics* .....309-312

4.7 *Reformulating Virtue Ethics: Necessary Elements* .....312

    4.7.1 *Grace* .....312-314

    4.7.2 *Forgiveness* .....314-316

4.8 *Concluding Remarks* .....316-317

**PART III: ANALYSIS**

**CHAPTER FIVE: A COMPARATIVE READING BASED ON PARTICULAR KEY THEMES AND RELATED TRADITIONS**

**SECTION 1**

5.0 *Introduction* .....318-319

5.2 *Justifying Comparative Reading based on Traditions* .....319-322

5.3	<i>Convergences and Divergences based on Tradition</i>	322-332
5.4	<i>Convergences and Divergences based on Particular Themes</i>	332-333
5.4.1	<i>The Nature of Virtue Ethics</i>	333-338
5.4.2	<i>The Development or Acquisition of Virtue</i>	338-345
5.4.3	<i>Virtue Ethics and Use of Scripture</i>	346-355
<b>SECTION 2</b>		
5.5	<i>The Human Person as the Image of God: A Biblical View</i>	356-361
5.5.1	<i>The Substantive View</i>	361-364
5.5.2	<i>The Relational View</i>	364-367
5.5.3	<i>The Functional View</i>	368-370
5.5	<i>Convergences and Divergences on Substantive, functional and Relational Views</i>	370- 374
5.6	<i>Human Person and Points for Further Study for Moral Theology</i>	374-375
<b>SECTION 3</b>		
5.7	<i>The Relational Value of Virtue Ethics: Convergences and Divergences</i>	376-383
5.7.1	<i>The Human Relationality and Environment</i>	383-389
5.7.2	<i>An All-Inclusive Relationality</i>	389-391
5.7.2.1	<i>“Ecological-Justice”</i>	391-396
5.7.2.2	<i>“Ecological-Love”</i>	396-399
5.7.2.3	<i>“Ecological-Prudence”</i>	399-403
5.8	<i>Concluding Remarks</i>	403-405
5.9	<b>GENERAL CONCLUSION</b>	406-410
	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY</b>	411-454

## GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Over the centuries, moral theology and moral philosophy have been characterized by three major approaches, deontology, consequentialism and virtue ethics.<sup>1</sup> Unfortunately, history reveals that virtue ethics was in the shadows while other theories flourished. The past decades have witnessed a surge of both philosophers and theologians towards its retrieval. The pioneering works of Elizabeth Anscombe, Alasdair MacIntyre, Servais Pinckaers are pivotal. Today, the three approaches are often played off each other in moral theology: While the deontologists and consequentialists reduce morality to rules and obligations and sadly neglect the human person, virtue ethicists insist on the relevance of the human person and importance of character.

According to Christine McKinnon in *Character, Virtue Theories, and the Vices*, non-virtue theories “undermine the moral value of acts that are intended to benefit the agent himself . . . Virtue ethics is alone . . . in recognizing that the agent herself may be a legitimate object of benefaction.”<sup>2</sup> Through virtue ethics the human person is placed in dialogue with God, with oneself, with other humans and with the environment by de-emphasizing quandary ethics. In this sense, through virtue ethics people continue to shape themselves as individuals and the narrative of virtuous persons that make the community molds their communal self-understanding. However, virtue ethics has been challenged.

---

<sup>1</sup> Richard M. Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1989), 301. See also Charles E. Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition,” in *Readings in Moral Theology 16: Virtue*, ed. Charles E.

<sup>2</sup> Christine McKinnon, *Character, Virtue Theories, and the Vices* (Toronto: Broadview Press, 1999), 54.

## A. Some Objections To Virtue Ethics

The return to the approach of virtue ethics has stimulated oppositions and challenges from rival theories and theorists. This section shall acknowledge a few major objections. However, the *leitmotif* of this thesis is to answer only one of them. David Solomon classifies the objections as external and internal.<sup>3</sup> External objection comes from outside ethics itself, which raises epistemological and metaphysical challenges. According to this objection: “An EV [Ethics of Virtue] cannot be sustained because a necessary condition for the success of such a theory is a certain metaphysical or theological underpinning which, given the rise of distinctively modern science and the decline of classical theology, is implausible.”<sup>4</sup>

The internal objections come within virtue ethics itself. We shall briefly highlight three of these internal objections. Firstly, it is generally argued that virtue ethics fails to provide appropriate guides in particular moral situations. While deontology and consequentialism provide necessary frameworks towards actions, virtue ethics rather references virtuous persons, who may not be in touch with specific situation. Therefore, virtue ethics is beset by indeterminacy.<sup>5</sup>

Secondly, since different cultures express different virtues, virtue ethics embodies cultural relativity. This objection challenges the objectivity of some virtues. For example Roland Hursthouse in *On Virtue Ethics* explains the disagreement among philosophers on some virtues like compassion, modesty and humility. He writes that

---

<sup>3</sup> David Solomon, “Internal Objections to Virtue Ethics,” In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, ed. by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 430.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> Mark Timmons, *Moral Theory: An Introduction* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002), 235.

while other philosophers defend these virtues, Aristotle, Hume, and Nietzsche will reject them.<sup>6</sup> In this context, virtue ethics becomes relative. The argument continues that if virtues are based on cultural setting, then virtue ethics promotes sectarianism.<sup>7</sup>

The last objection which is very pertinent is that virtue ethics is a self-centered ethic. The objection goes that if the validity of acquiring a virtue is grounded in the agent's needs and desires, then the needs and desires of other people become insignificant. Writers like Thomas W. Ogletree, Bernard Williams, Wolfgang Schrage, Edward Lohse and Sarah Conly make such assumptions.<sup>8</sup> For example Thomas W. Ogletree in *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics* writes:

The attention to individual persons as privileged centers of meaning and value inclines such theories as *virtue ethics* to take insufficient note of the role relationships play in human selfhood. The social good becomes secondary to individual attainment . . . The aristocratic leanings of perfectionist thought may themselves be problematic, obscuring the degree to which our destinies as human beings are interlocked. When some fare well and attain much, it is almost always at the expense of others.<sup>9</sup>

Another variant of the above charge is voiced by Bernard Williams in *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*: "Thinking about your possible states in terms of virtues is not so much to think about your actions, is rather to think about the way in which others

---

<sup>6</sup> Roland Hursthouse, *On Virtue Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 32.

<sup>7</sup> See Kotva, "Christian Ethics and the 'Sectarian Temptation,'" and Scott Holland, "The Problems and Prospects of a 'sectarian Ethic': A Critique of the Hauerwas Reading of the Jesus Story," *The Conrad Grebel Review* 10 (Spring 1992): 162-67.

<sup>8</sup> Thomas W. Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983); Edward Lohse, *Theological Ethics of the New Testament*, trans. M. Eugene Boring (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991); Sarah Conly, "Flourishing and the Failure of the Ethics of Virtue," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 92-93.

<sup>9</sup> Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*, 33.

might describe or comment on the way in which you think about your actions.”<sup>10</sup> At a general level his charge is that virtue ethics is self-centered.

The thesis shall show that virtue ethic is not narcissistic by expounding the relational or communal value within the field and particularly within the works of Romanus Cessario, James F. Keenan, and Joseph J. Kotva. We shall argue that while a *prima facie* concern of virtue ethics is the development of one’s character, it is fundamentally concerned at the same time with the well-being of others, as earlier mentioned Solomon argues: “Classical virtues like justice, Christian virtues like love or charity, and Alasdair MacIntyre’s favorite modern virtue, Jane Austen’s amiability, all have a predominantly other-regarding character”.<sup>11</sup>

## **B. The Concept of Relationality**

James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest present two theories to human relationality.<sup>12</sup> First is the theory of external relations, which is also called the classical ontological view. The theory states that relationships are merely external to the human person, and so do not have a substantial effect on the person. Relationships are only but accidents.<sup>13</sup> It means that relationships are not intrinsic in the substance of the person.<sup>14</sup>

Second is the theory of internal relations also called reductive relationalism. The theory states that the identity and nature of a person depends completely upon the

---

<sup>10</sup> Williams, *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy* (London: Fontana, 1985), 11. See also Jonathan Webber, “Cultivating Virtue,” in *Phenomenology and Naturalism*, ed. Havi Carel and Darian Meacham (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> Solomon, “Internal Objections to Virtue Ethics,” 434.

<sup>12</sup> James R. Beck and Bruce Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century* (Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005), 305-347.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 306.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*

relations the person sustains to other persons and things.<sup>15</sup> In this case the relation is intrinsic and indispensable not accidental.

Along with Beck and Demarest, this thesis proposes that a genuine theological approach on the human person must adequately incorporate these two theories of human relationality. Therefore, this thesis will respond to the charge of narcissism, mentioned above, by exploring anew the relational value of virtue ethics. We here call it all-inclusive relationality which is both horizontal and vertical. Horizontal because it expresses the relationships between the person as an individual, persons to persons and persons to the environment. Vertical because of our dependency on God.

To explore anew the relational value of virtue ethics, the thesis makes a comparative reading of three scholars, namely Romanus Cessario, James F. Keenan, and Joseph J. Kotva. Our choice of moral theologians who specialize in virtue ethics is based on fact that they share similarities yet differ quite considerably. Cessario and Keenan are Catholic theologians, who utilize different methods and arrive at different conclusions, while Kotva is a Mennonite from the Reformed tradition. This thesis shall delineate how their various traditions influence their theologizing from a complementary perspective. They all belong to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition to a large extent. However, we shall show the extent to which they share in that tradition. This reading shall be based on the arguments in favour of the reasonableness of commensurability. Therefore, even though my theological predisposition of their choice is based on their general approach to virtue ethics, it is specifically grounded upon their articulation of the relational nature of virtue ethics. In this context, I shall draw upon their particular and general works with reference to virtue ethics with a view to creating lines for commensurability.

---

<sup>15</sup> Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 309.

### **C. Methodology**

Broadly speaking this thesis uses the qualitative research method, articulating the approaches of our dialoguing partners.<sup>16</sup> This method also enables a researcher to explore through multiple procedures that are both flexible and evolving.<sup>17</sup> The multiple procedures used in this thesis are diachronic, synchronic and comparative study. These methods are not self-sufficient but mutually inclusive for a project as this.

The diachronic approach appropriately fits into the qualitative research methodology because it helps in assessing the historical contexts that form the development of ideas and concepts on the virtues over the centuries. It also puts to perspective the contemporary debates on virtue ethics. While the synchronic approach assists in providing the necessary guide for a close reading of the theologians. This approach gives opportunity of the examination and interpretations of concepts and processes. Finally, the comparative study enables us to pull together the convergences and divergences in ideas, traditions, and method of theologizing by our interlocutors. On the whole, the comparison in the qualitative tradition involves configurations and appropriate interpretations.

### **D. Thesis Design**

In general, the thesis is divided into five main chapters with sections and sub-sections. Chapter one gives the historical overview of virtue ethics. The chapter is divided into two sections: section A can be considered as “*status quaestionis*” or

---

<sup>16</sup> Egon G. Guba and Yvonna S. Lincoln, “Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research,” in *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994), 114. This method is appropriate for a research such as this because it provides the four indicators necessary for a reliable research: credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

<sup>17</sup> Ranjit Kumar, *Research Methodology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Los Angeles: Sage, 2011), 184.

review of “the state of investigation.” It considers the renewal of moral theology and the eclipse of the theology of virtues. The section re-evaluates the arguments presented by Alasdair MacIntyre and Joseph J. Kotva as to the how and why of the eclipse of virtue ethics and its consequent retrieval in the past decades. It also highlights the relevance of the call of Vatican II to renewal of which virtue ethics is today considered as an integral part. Section B outlines the historical development of virtues; from its beginnings in classical tradition to contemporary era. The sub-sections within will show the development and movement of ideas. It will show the link between the content of virtue ethics and its contexts.<sup>18</sup> This will enable us to place into perspective our dialoguing partners in succeeding chapters.

Chapters two, three and four employ the synchronic method by providing a reading on each of the scholars under study. In chapter two we shall show how Cessario approaches the virtues from a theological-anthropological standpoint. The relevance of Aristotelian-Thomist influence on theology today is emphasized. As such, this thesis shall demonstrate how this tradition influenced Cessario’s theology on the virtues. Specifically, we shall situate Cessario as a *ressourcement*-Thomist and a realist-Thomist. Thereafter, the chapter shall consider particular features of virtue ethics that highlight the relational value we are seeking to accentuate. To this end the chapter ends with the Cessario’s presentation of *communio*.

The third chapter discusses Keenan’s personalist-pastoral approach. The chapter situates him as a personalist and a revisionist-Thomist. This enables him to weave together his personalist currents with his revisionist tendencies because virtue ethics is argued to be person centered. He explores other virtues and various contexts in which the relational value virtue ethics fits appropriately. He interlaces the virtues

---

<sup>18</sup> See Abraham Edel, *Method in Ethical Theory* (New Brunswick: 1994), 27.

of justices, fidelity, and self-care with contexts like discipleship, and sexual ethics in order to create the relational model. The chapter concludes with the context of the Eucharist as the paradigmatic example that shows the relational nature of the human person. Keenan's approach in this chapter is very "progressive" and anthropological.

Since our previous two theologians are Catholics, chapter four turns to the approach of the Reformed theologian Joseph J. Kotva. This chapter proceeds by showing the ecumenical tone of Kotva. He brings something new in his approach as he seeks areas of convergences rather than divergences between theologians from varying traditions. He does this through the use of correlational style. The perspective of his schematization is very theological as he explains the dynamic interplay between, Christology, grace and the virtues. The chapter will progress to show the biblical connections with virtue ethics in order to elucidate the personal and communal nature of virtue ethics. This is in line with the call of Vatican II for the renewal of moral theology through Scripture. Kotva proposes a reconstruction of virtue ethics to include the virtues of forgiveness. The chapter offers an account of virtues that is spiritualized.

The final chapter is divided into three sections. All three sections pull together the different explorations of virtue by Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva and place them within particular and general themes in order to create a comparative reading. The chapter proceeds by justifying comparative reading based on tradition. Whilst chapters two, three, and four situate the scholars respectively according to their traditions, this chapter proceeds to show their convergences and divergences. It intends to show how similar they may be but not exactly the same and how different they may be but not mutually exclusive. Themes like, the nature of virtue, the

development of virtue, their use of scripture and how they conceive the human person within Erickson's three views will be comparatively examined.

The thesis shall then return to the focal point of the relationality of virtue ethics. We shall argue that the concept and theology of the relational value of virtue ethics by our dialoguing partners is restrictive to only human relationality. There is caveat in such a concept because it does not include the environment. The thesis finishes by outlining some "points for further study". Thus, we propose an all-inclusive relationality that encompasses humanity with environment. To this effect the thesis shall propose what we may call a triad of ecological virtues namely; "ecological-justice", "ecological-love", and "ecological-prudence". The thesis shall end with a general conclusion.

In summary, this thesis exhibits an unambiguous structure: First, an overview of the current state of virtue ethics, followed by a historical development of ideas over the centuries. Second, the presentation of specific features of virtue ethics by the authors understudy that relate to the theme of our study; third, a comparative reading based on particular themes culminating with an all-inclusive relationality approach. Charles Curran puts perspective to this in the following words: "This model sees the moral life in the light of the individual's multiple relationships to God, neighbour, world, and self, and the need to act responsibly within these relationships."<sup>19</sup>

---

<sup>19</sup> Charles Curran, "Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition," in *Virtue: Readings in Moral Theology no. 16*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 55.

## PART I: HISTORY

### CHAPTER ONE

#### A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF VIRTUE ETHICS

##### 1.0 Introduction

David O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon in *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage* write: "The human race has passed from a rather static concept of reality to a more dynamic, evolutionary one."<sup>1</sup> This statement both implicitly and explicitly has implications to the history of moral theology.<sup>2</sup> The works of John Mahoney, John Gallagher, and Renzo Gerardi disclose this dynamism within the retelling of the history of moral theology.<sup>3</sup> Their histories show that the nature of moral theology is constantly shifting its method. For example, ethicists have often focused on laws, rules, principles and procedures for resolving moral issues, concealing the role of the virtues.<sup>4</sup> William C. Spohn in an article "Return of Virtue Ethics," articulates this point more succinctly:

Since the enlightenment, moral philosophers concentrated on specific acts which are justified by rules or consequences, while deliberately ignoring questions of virtue, character, and the nature of human happiness. The Manualists departed from Aristotle and Thomas Aquinas in treating the theological and

---

<sup>1</sup> David J. O'Brien and Thomas A. Shannon, *Catholic Social Thought: The*

<sup>2</sup> Thomas A. Shannon, "Methods in Ethics: A Scotistic Contribution," in *The Context of Casuistry*, ed. James F. Keenan and Thomas A. Shannon (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1995), 3.

<sup>3</sup> John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of Roman Catholic Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987); John A. Gallagher, *Time Past, Time Future: A Historical Study of Catholic Moral Theology* (New York: Paulist, 1990); Renzo Gerardi, *Storia della morale: Interpretazioni teologiche dell'esperienza Cristiana* (Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 2003). Each of these approaches the history differently; Mahoney begins with referencing the patristic era on the penitentials, Gallagher gives a more comprehensive antecedents of the manuals, while Gerardi takes on a magisterial history with Scripture as a starting point. See James F. Keenan, *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences* (New York: Continuum, 2010), 6.

<sup>4</sup> Joseph J. Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1996), 5.

moral virtues as sources of obligations rather than as the dynamics of moral living.<sup>5</sup>

Unfortunately, both Mahoney and Gallagher say very little on the virtues. They were not unaware of the relevance of the retrieval of virtue in morality theology.<sup>6</sup> Yet, writing in the 1980s and 1990s they did not yet take the project of the retrieval of the virtues seriously enough. Therefore, their history needs to be reconstructed to reflect more on the virtues.<sup>7</sup>

The aim of this chapter is to place virtue ethics more properly within the entire history of moral theology. It aims to look at the history of ideas regarding virtue – where it has come from, where it is now, and where it may be going. This is important because history helps renew sources of significant sources of theology. As highlighted by Servais Pinckaers: “The genesis of concepts and systems, traced by historical study, gives a new dimension to their content, bringing them relief and new clarity.”<sup>8</sup>

The chapter shall be divided into two sections: The first section explores the call of Vatican II to renewal, and the reasons for the current retrieval of virtue ethics. This may be termed a “*status quaestionis*” or a review of “the state of investigation,” in which it will be argued that virtue ethics is a vital aspect of the renewal. The second section shall articulate different historical epochs, conceptions, development, and growth of virtue ethics. This is with a view to showing the dynamic historical

---

<sup>5</sup> William C. Spohn, “Return of Virtue Ethics,” *Theological Studies* 53 (1992): 60. See also, Gallagher, *Time Past, Time Future*, 56-62.

<sup>6</sup> See Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of Roman Catholic Tradition*, 249; Gallagher, *Time Past, Time Present: A Historical Study of Catholic Moral Theology*, 56-58.

<sup>7</sup> David A. Horner, “Is Aquinas an Act-Ethicist or an Agent-Ethicist?” *The Thomist* 70, 2 (April 2006): 237-65.

<sup>8</sup> Servais Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. from the third edition by Mary Thomas Noble (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995), 192.

antecedents of virtue ethics both as a philosophical and theological concept with its accrued riches and contemporary significance in the way it is applied.

## **SECTION 1: THE RETRIEVAL OF VIRTUE ETHICS WITHIN THE RENEWAL OF MORAL THEOLOGY**

### ***1.1 Vatican II and the Renewal of Moral Theology***

The Second Vatican Council document on the formation of priests *Optatam Totius*, adopted and promulgated on 28<sup>th</sup> October, 1965, called for the *aggiornamento* of moral theology:

Special care is to be taken for the improvement of moral theology. Its scientific presentation, drawing more fully on the teaching of Holy Scripture, should highlight the lofty vocation of the Christian faithful and their obligation to bring forth fruit in charity for the life of the world.<sup>9</sup>

Vatican II is especially known for its ecclesiology, that is, the identity of the church and the relationship between the church and the world. However, the renewal of moral theology by way of scripture is only briefly mentioned in the decree for the formation of priests. Yet, even such a small reference implies that at the time in which the decree was promulgated, there is already a struggle with the earlier manualist tradition. The reasons will be outlined later.

Specifically, *Optatam Totius* explicitly requested that moral theology be renewed through Scripture. According to Charles Curran, the particular purpose of the renewal was to articulate the God-man relationship because the Christian is conceived as a person who responds to God's call.<sup>10</sup> Accordingly, Rudolf Schnackenburg in

---

<sup>9</sup> Vatican II *Optatam Totius*, 16. Degree on Priestly Training [http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist\\_councils/ii\\_vatican\\_council/documents/vat-ii\\_decree\\_19651028\\_optatam-totius\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_decree_19651028_optatam-totius_en.html) (accessed March 23, 2015).

<sup>10</sup> See Charles Curran, "The Role and Function of Scripture in Moral Theology," in *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 180.

*The Moral Teaching of the New Testament* could argue that the renewal of moral theology was intended to foster ecumenical dialogue with Protestants by emphasizing the primacy of God's intervention in human history.<sup>11</sup> But the renewal also disclosed some fault lines. Enda McDonagh in *Moral Theology Renewed* identifies the following tension:

The renewal issues form the tension generated between two forces in the mind of the church or the theologian, the never-ending quest for a fuller understanding of the Christian message and the need to expound that message in the light of the prevailing ideas, needs and problems of the men of a particular time and place. The task of theology then is to provide the intellectual and scientific basis for a fruitful dialogue between the Word of God and his world.<sup>12</sup>

But moral theology was in a poor state to negotiate this tension. Reflecting on Moral Theology according to Vatican II, Joseph Fuchs noted that the above instruction reflected that poor place moral theology *vis-a-vis* other theological disciplines.<sup>13</sup> Similarly, Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor in *Moral Theology in an Age of Renewal: A Study of the Catholic Tradition since Vatican II* further comments:

The Council was rather reacting to the long-standing discontent which many people in the Church in general as well as in the moral theological community had been expressing over the state of the discipline. Although this displeasure had become especially noticeable in the years leading up to the Council, its roots were indeed very deep. For example, in 1899, Fr. Thomas J. Bouquillon, the first professor of moral theology at Catholic University of America, wrote that moral theology had become obsolete, a pathetic poor cousin of other theological specialties as a result of its inability to keep up with the times.<sup>14</sup>

---

<sup>11</sup> Rudolph Schnackenburg, *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament* (New York: Herder & Herder, 1965), 13-53.

<sup>12</sup> Enda McDonagh, *Moral Theology Renewed* (Dublin: The Furrow Trust, 1965), 13.

<sup>13</sup> Joseph Fuchs, "Moral Theology According to Vatican II," in *Human Values and Christian Morality* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1979), 1. This article first appeared as 'Theologia moralis perficienda; votum Concilii Vaticani II', *Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgia*, Rome, 55 (1966): 499-548.

<sup>14</sup> Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor, *Moral Theology in an Age of Renewal: A Study of the Catholic Tradition Since Vatican II* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003), 1.

Elsewhere, Odozor, draws together MacDonagh's and Fuch's observations:

Long before the Second Vatican Council many people in the church believed that moral theology could no longer adequately confront the problems of modern society. The two world wars, the great scientific and technological developments in the modern era, the rise of new nations, and the emergent pluralism among these nations and in the world at large were only some of the factors which posed new questions for Christian living. Moral theology between the two Vatican Councils was aware of many of these problems and tried to resolve some of them, for example, those pertaining to sexuality and the use of medical technology. However, the tools that were employed proved to be inadequate . . . By the time of the Second Vatican Council, the dissatisfaction with this theology had become quite palpable and led to the Council's call for the renewal of moral theology.<sup>15</sup>

Since the tradition of the manualists was inadequate to respond to relevant questions, the difficulty remained regarding what structure would be appropriate as a model for moral theology to engage adequately with the world today? McDonagh suggests three. Firstly, moral theology must be God-centered.<sup>16</sup> What the history of moral theology reveals is that faceless institution of law has always taken center stage instead of God.<sup>17</sup> This has always endangered genuine search for perfection, because people turn to the law as the guiding principle to achieve perfection.

Secondly, moral theology must be Christocentric. McDonagh emphasizes the Christocentric link specified by Vatican II, and maintained by theologians such as Fuchs.<sup>18</sup> *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution On The Church, promulgated on November 21, 1964 echoes:

---

<sup>15</sup> Paulinus Ikechukwu Odozor, *Richard A. McCormick and the Renewal of Moral Theology* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995), xiii-xiv. See also Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*, 303.

<sup>16</sup> McDonagh, *Moral Theology Renewed*, 18. See also Josef Fuchs, "Moral Theology According to Vatican II," in *Human Values and Christian Morality* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1970), 2.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*

The Head of His Body is Christ. He is the image of the invisible God and in Him all things came into being. He is before all creatures and in Him all things hold together. He is the head of the Body which is the Church. He is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He might have the first place. All the members ought to be moulded in the likeness of Him, until Christ be formed in them. For this reason we, who have been made to conform with Him, who have died with Him and risen with Him, are taken up into the mysteries of His life, until we will reign together with Him.<sup>19</sup>

Fuchs re-echoes Vatican II's assertions in the following words:

The council requires that moral theology shall be taught not only and not primarily as a code of moral principles and precepts. It must be presented as an unfolding, a revelation and explanation, of the joyful message, the good news, of Christ's call to us, of the vocation of believers in Christ. This means that Christ and our being-in-Christ are to be its center and focus.<sup>20</sup>

Christ thus is the true human end, since moral theology has to be centered on Christ and the Christian life has to be lived in imitation of him. Ann Marie Mealey in *The Identity of Christian Morality* is more pro-active when she argues that when moral theology is appropriately Christocentric it enhances dialogue with biblical studies about the person of Christ revealed in Scripture.<sup>21</sup> She cautions that if Vatican II's directions are not followed:

Moral theology will turn to the human sciences as a dialogue partner, rather than to sacred sciences of biblical studies, spirituality or dogmatic theology . . . The lack of cooperation with the sacred sciences means that moral theology runs the risk of conducting itself in way that scarcely refers to the person of Jesus or to the call to holiness and transcendence.<sup>22</sup>

Among the many theologians that set in motion the direction of the Second Vatican Council, two moral theologians are particularly significant: Fritz Tillmann and Bernard Häring. Fritz Tillmann in 1934 published *Der Meister Ruft (The Master*

---

<sup>19</sup> *Lumen Gentium* no. 60-63.

<sup>20</sup> Fuchs, "Moral Theology According to Vatican II," 3.

<sup>21</sup> Ann Marie Mealey, *The Identity of Christian Morality* (Surrey: Ashgate, 2009), 14-15.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

*Calls*) where he graphically shows the fundamental idea of what it means to follow Christ.<sup>23</sup> His influence concerned the personal effect that Jesus' self-understanding had on the community of disciples.<sup>24</sup> Moral theology for Tillmann, "was the scientific presentation of following Jesus in the life of the individual and community: Catholic moral theology finds the source of its search for moral truth in the person of Jesus as the original image and the eventual goal for all of us".<sup>25</sup> Also, Bernard Häring in the foreword of his book *The Law of Christ* writes: "The principle, the norm, the center, and the goal of Christian Moral Theology is Christ. The law of the Christian is Christ himself in Person."<sup>26</sup> Other post-conciliar theologians like German Grisez elaborated: "The renewal of moral theology, the council says, requires 'livelier contact with the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation' - in other words, moral theology should be Christocentric."<sup>27</sup> John Paul II cemented the Christocentric approach in the introduction to the 1993 Encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*.<sup>28</sup>

Thirdly, a renewed moral theology has to be presented in a way that is person-centered and not action-centered, as was the case with the manualists. McDonagh argues:

In the structure of moral theology, man, may never be treated as an object or as an impersonal source of material actions, the morality of

---

<sup>23</sup> Fritz Tillmann, *The Master Calls: A Handbook of Morals for the Layman*, trans. by Gregory J. Roettger (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960), 1-68.

<sup>24</sup> See Daniel Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 54.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*; Bernard Häring, *The Law of Christ* vol. one (Cork: Mercier Press, 1963), vii.

<sup>27</sup> Germain Grisez and Russell Shaw, *Fulfillment in Christ: A Summary of Christian Moral Principles* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1991), 5. See also Livio Melina, *Sharing in Christ's Virtues: For a Renewal of Moral Theology in the Light of Veritatis Splendor*, trans. William E. May (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001).

<sup>28</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical letter *Veritatis Splendor* (London: Catholic Truth Society, 1993), 3.

which are judged independently of the person performing them. The human response which these actions express is as personal as the divine invitation which prompts them. In the moral theology which studies and judges them, this personal character should emerge very clearly.<sup>29</sup>

In particular, this opens the way to virtue ethics since it is a character-based ethics and therefore person-centered. This aspect of the personal nature in which moral theology should take will be discussed later in chapter five.

According to Odozor, the renewal of moral theology can be summarized as a challenge to construct a moral theology that is:

Historically conscious, as opposed to one which is founded on externalism; a moral theology which has confidence in the human race, as opposed to that which is pessimistic about the prospects of the human race; a moral theology which is built on confidence in grace, as opposed to one which is founded on the terror of sin; a moral theology which stresses the theme of the covenant rather than legalism; a moral theology which assigns values to earthly realities rather than one which stresses only private piety and sins.<sup>30</sup>

Yet, despite virtue ethics being consistent with such priorities, it took another generation of moral theologians began to draw upon its possibilities. Roughly twenty years after the Council, Romanus Cessario noted: “It is a safe generalization to say that virtue theory occupies small place in the current renewal of moral theology, at least in Roman Catholic circles.”<sup>31</sup> Today, however, virtue ethics has taken center stage in the Roman Catholic theology. To place Cessario’s assertion in context, virtue ethics was still at the margins of philosophical as well as theological discourses.

This thesis considers virtue ethics as an intrinsic aspect of the renewal that opposes the externalism, legalism and pessimism highlighted above by Odozor.

---

<sup>29</sup> McDonagh, *Moral Theology Renewed*, 23.

<sup>30</sup> Odozor, *Moral Theology in an Age of Renewal*, 42-3.

<sup>31</sup> Romanus Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Notre Dame University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 12.

Considering norms and principles in current Catholic theology without virtue ethics will stagnate the entire call to renewal.

## ***1.2 Understanding the Eclipse of Virtue Ethics***

As already noted, John Gallagher in *Time Past, Time Future*, and John Mahoney in *The Making of Moral Theology* provide a comprehensive historical overview of developments within moral theology, without fully accounting for eclipse and retrieval of virtue ethics. However, James F. Keenan in a co-authored book *Jesus and Virtue Ethics* gives a particular reading of the history of moral theology that accounts for the reclaiming of the framework. Accordingly, Keenan proposes seven distinct periods in the history of moral theology: Patristic, penitentials, scholastics, confessional manuals, casuistry, moral manuals and contemporary moral theology.<sup>32</sup> Each era, he contends was either marked by avoiding sin, or on becoming a disciple of Christ.<sup>33</sup> For example, the penitential era:

During this period, moral theology was shaped predominantly by a concern about the sins ones should avoid, and not about the good to be pursued. Similarly, with emphasis on one's own moral state, the Christian's communal self-understanding was less important, and a long period of moral narcissism began, in which Christians became anxious not about the kingdom or the needs of the church, but rather about individual souls.<sup>34</sup>

---

<sup>32</sup> Daniel Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002), 2.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, 1.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 3. See also Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 14. See also Pinckaers, "Rediscovering Virtue", 361.

Ethicists concentrated on controversial issues: pre-marital sex, abortion, euthanasia, suicide and a host of others. The basic question asked was “is this right or wrong?”<sup>35</sup> Ethics from this backdrop, many currently argue, was depersonalized.<sup>36</sup>

Contrary to the above, Aristotle, Plato and Aquinas conceived morality in terms of the dispositions or traits of character rather than rules. Mahoney affirms that Augustine along with Ambrose and Gregory viewed the whole moral life in the categories of the four cardinal virtues in unison with charity.<sup>37</sup> These writers emphasized the interiority of the Christian and also the outward expression of that interiority.<sup>38</sup> Consequently, the penitentials lost this tradition of the Fathers who depended on Scripture and the virtues.<sup>39</sup>

The moral theology that evolved during the scholastic era naturally depended on the virtues to outline a suitable moral identity.<sup>40</sup> Before Aquinas, Aristotle in the *Nichomachean Ethics* offered eleven virtues for the citizens in the *polis*, honesty, magnanimity etc.<sup>41</sup> Aquinas in *Summa Theologiae* adopted the cardinal virtues of Plato, Cicero, Ambrose, Gregory, and Augustine namely, prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance.<sup>42</sup> Aquinas’ genius is seen in his addition and underlying synthesis of the three theological virtues of faith, hope and charity.<sup>43</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> James F. Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” in *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*, ed. Bernard Hoose (London: Cassell, 1998), 84.

<sup>36</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. with new prologue (London: Duckworth, 2007), 6-12.

<sup>37</sup> Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*, 43. See also James F. Keenan, *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 147.

<sup>38</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue*, 2.

<sup>39</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>40</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>41</sup> Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics* (hereafter *NE*).

<sup>42</sup> St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, Complete English Edition in Five Volumes, trans. Fathers of the English Dominican Province vol. 2 Ia-IIae QQ. 1.114 (Indiana: Christian Classics, 1948), q. 61, aa.1-5 (hereafter *ST*); Some other works of a Aquinas are *Summa Contra Gentiles*, and the *Compendium Theologiae* and finally,

This thesis earlier highlighted the shift in the way moral theology was undertaken during the penitential era. This movement reached a highpoint in the early modern era with casuistry and the moral manuals. The manuals were not concerned with Christian edification or the holistic growth of the human person. To take a particular symptomatic example, namely the 1908 manual of Thomas Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology for English-Speaking Countries*:

We must ask the reader to bear in mind that manuals of moral theology are technical works intended to help the confessor and the parish priest in the discharge of their duties. They are as technical as the text-books of the lawyer and the doctor. They are not intended for edification, nor do they hold up a high ideal of Christian perfection for the imitation of the faithful. They deal with what is obligation under pain of sin; they are books of moral pathology.<sup>44</sup>

Slater further emphasizes: “Moral theology proposes to itself the much humbler but still necessary task of defining what is right and what is wrong in all the practical relations of the Christian life . . . The first step on the right road of conduct is to avoid evil”.<sup>45</sup> Unsurprisingly, the virtues went into a natural eclipse with the above conclusion of the role of moral theology. However, it would be overly critical to argue that the eclipse of virtue ethics was a deliberate attempt by the theologians of that era. We have to bear in mind that the era was simply responding to the challenges of its time, namely promoting moral order.

With regard to philosophy, Philippa Foot in *Virtues and Vices* offers another reason for the eclipse of virtue ethics. She explains: “The tacitly accepted opinion was that a study of the topic would form no part of the fundamental work of ethics; and

---

Commentaries on Aristotle. Daniel Harrington J. and James F. Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010), 3.

<sup>43</sup> *ST* I-II, q. 62. aa. 1-4.

<sup>44</sup> Thomas Slater, *A Manual of Moral Theology for English-Speaking Countries* vol. 1, 3rd ed. (New York: Benziger Brothers, 1908), 6.

<sup>45</sup> *Ibid.*, 5-6.

since this opinion was apparently shared by philosophers such as Hume, Kant, Mill, G. E. Moore, W. D. Ross and H.A. Prichard . . . Perhaps the neglect was no so surprising.”<sup>46</sup> As a result, virtue ethics became irrelevant and was driven to the precincts of both philosophical and theological discourses.<sup>47</sup>

As in theology, Foot advocates the need for retrieval. According to Foot, the works of remarkable philosophers like Georg Henrik von Wright and Peter Geach initiated a comeback.<sup>48</sup> However, a large number of philosophers and theologians consider Elizabeth Anscombe to have begun the original return in her landmark article, “Modern Moral Philosophy.”<sup>49</sup> It gained significant momentum with the more recent influential work of Alasdair MacIntyre, entitled *After Virtue*, to which we shall return in the last sub-section of this chapter.<sup>50</sup>

---

<sup>46</sup> Philippa Foot, *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978), 1.

<sup>47</sup> Conversely, Foot’s assertion above has been contradicted to some extent by recent virtue ethicists who are looking back even to Hume for inventiveness on the virtues. For example Terence Irwin in *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study* ascribes his inspiration on the virtues to Hume. See also Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, Vol. II: from Suárez to Rousseau (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 641-674.

<sup>48</sup> Georg Henrik von Wright, *The Varieties of Goodness* (London: Routledge and Keegan, 1963), 136. See especially chapter vii. Even though he alludes to the earlier work of Nicolai Hartmann as the only full-scale modern treatment of virtues that he knows; Peter Geach, *The Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977). There are others who attribute the resurgence of virtue ethics to Elizabeth Anscombe, in her essay “Modern Moral Philosophy,” like James Van Slyke, *Theology and the Science of Morality: Virtue Ethics, Exemplarity, and Cognitive Neuroscience*, ed. G.R. Peterson, K.S. Reimer, W.S. Brown and M.L. Spezio (New York: Routledge, 2012).

<sup>49</sup> Elizabeth Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” *Philosophy* 33 (1958): 1-19; James Van Slyke, *Theology and the Science of Morality: Virtue Ethics, Exemplarity, and Cognitive Neuroscience*, ed. G.R. Peterson, K.S. Reimer, W.S. Brown and M.L. Spezio (New York: Routledge, 2012). This thesis shall stick to the account that goes back to Anscombe.

<sup>50</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

On the theological side, Vatican II ushered a more incisive call to renewal within church circles as earlier indicated.<sup>51</sup> We shall return to this in our later discussion on the contemporary era.

### **1.3 Reasons For The Retrieval of Virtue Ethics**

As already noted, the current retrieval of virtue ethics offers great advantages in addressing deficiencies in moral theology. Servais Pinckaers summarizes the benefits of such resurgence in the following words:

The introduction of the concept of virtue offers many opportunities for the shaping of a morality that takes the human person into account. Virtue is a dynamic human quality acquired through education and personal effort. It forms character and assures continuity in action. Teaching on virtue would seem to be a good corrective for excessive individualism.<sup>52</sup>

In sum, virtue ethics provides a better and comprehensive framework of moral experience.<sup>53</sup> This is because in moral reflection virtue ethics “moves from specific acts to the background issues such as character traits, personal commitments, community traditions”.<sup>54</sup> The current interest in virtue ethics is therefore more pertinent to contemporary society. Following the observations of Joseph J. Kotva and Alasdair MacIntyre the factors that have led to a renewed interest in virtue ethics, may be summarized as follows: the perception and experience that society is in moral crisis, the rise of historical consciousness, and failed contemporary ethical theories.<sup>55</sup>

---

<sup>51</sup> Decree on the Training of Priests (*Optatam Totius*), n. 16. See also William k. Leahy and Anthony T. Massimini, eds. *Third Session Council Speeches of Vatican II* (Glen Rock: Paulist Press, 1966), 196.

<sup>52</sup> Pinckaers, “Rediscovering Virtue,” 362.

<sup>53</sup> James A. Donahue, “The use of Virtue and Character in Applied Ethics,” *Horizon* 17 (1990): 228-43.

<sup>54</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 5.

<sup>55</sup> *Ibid.* 6-12; MacIntyre, *After Virtue* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 51-61.

### 1.3.1 *Anthropological and Moral Crisis in Society: A Moral Sense Argument*

Morality both as a concept and praxis has always been a significant element in human history.<sup>56</sup> We cannot talk about society comprehensively without morality. Likewise, we cannot talk about morality within human society without referencing “right and wrong”, “good and bad”, “duty and obligation”, “praise and blame”.<sup>57</sup> Such terms, according to Vincent MacNamara, summarizing the Catholic moral tradition, should be understood from the perspective of “what is good or fulfilling or growth-making for people.”<sup>58</sup>

When contemporary society is examined along these lines, Kotva argues that one can identify moral malaise. According to him, the moral bankruptcy evident in modern society is an important factor responsible for the renewed interest on the virtues.<sup>59</sup> Kotva may have overstated this as one can identify moral dissatisfaction in all epochs. Charles Taylor in *The Ethics of Authenticity* corroborates when he writes: “Moral laxity there is, and our age is not alone in this. What we need to explain is what is peculiar to our time.”<sup>60</sup>

The cultural moral legacy of the past is today being challenged by a counter-culture. For example the counter-culture phenomenon is very prevalent in American society. According to Timothy Miller in *Hippies and American Values*, counter-culture is a romantic social movement among the teenagers that had its beginnings in

---

<sup>56</sup> Mark Oraison, *Morality for our Time*, trans. Nels Challe (New York: Image Books, 1968), 21.

<sup>57</sup> Vincent MacNamara, *The Call to be Human: Making Sense of Morality* (Dublin: Veritas, 2010), 12.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid.

<sup>59</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 6-12.

<sup>60</sup> Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 16-7.

late 1960s and early 1970s.<sup>61</sup> These teenagers, through their lifestyles in the areas of sex, drugs and Rock, expressed their dissatisfaction to mainstream culture.<sup>62</sup> And according to Art John in his article “A Theory of Hippies; Part One: ‘What have you Got?’” the above dissatisfaction is a revolt against *status quo*.<sup>63</sup> This revolt as further explained by Jack G. Gurgess in an article “Notice to the Dead and Dying: You are Standing on a Generation” has a dimension of a generation gap where the young feel the old are moribund.<sup>64</sup> Today, people ask the question, “what is happening to the young teenagers?” Conversely, the younger ones are “astonished” at what has gone wrong with the older people.

Kotva agrees that modern society is in crisis. To sustain this argument, Kotva cites *Newsweek Poll*, which found that 76% of adult Americans think, “The United States is in a moral and spiritual decline.”<sup>65</sup> The decline is multifaceted: it is economic, financial, and above all anthropological. For example, Robert Keen writes: “An unprecedented storm hangs over the stability of international currencies and the world economic system has become not only progressively volatile but in danger of collapse.”<sup>66</sup> Again, the growth of multinational co-operations that entails controlling business from a distance has ripple effects. This implies that decisions are made regardless of local situations, which “are increasingly made on the basis of the balance

---

<sup>61</sup> Timothy S. Miller in *Hippies and American Values* (Tennessee: Tennessee Press, 2011), xvi. See also Theodore Roszak, *The Making of Counter Culture* (New York: Doubleday, 1969).

<sup>62</sup> *Time*, Cover story on the Hippies during the Summer of Love, 1967.

<sup>63</sup> Art John, “A Theory of Hippies; Part One: ‘What have you Got?’” *Fifth Estate* (Nov. 1966): 15-30.

<sup>64</sup> Jack G. Gurgess, “Notice to the dead and Dying: You are Standing on a Generation,” *Los Angeles Free Press*, April 25, 1969.

<sup>65</sup> See Kotva, *The Christian Case*, 6.

<sup>66</sup> Keen, “Virtue is Necessary,” 4.

sheet alone, without any reference to the human or social cost”.<sup>67</sup> There are other ethical issues created by developments in economics. For example the use of customers’ confidential information for personal benefits, and potential abuses of products like alcohol, cigarettes and other substances.<sup>68</sup> Such a malaise is narrated in the film *Wall Street* captured by the maxim that ‘Greed is good.’<sup>69</sup>

Furthermore, Kotva argues that current debates on the breakdown of “traditional” family setting and violence in television points to the decline in moral standards.<sup>70</sup> With regard to the family, he writes: “Children are less likely to become healthy, well-balanced moral agents if they lack loving parental guidance and appropriate role models.”<sup>71</sup> Finding proper role models today becomes a challenge; for it is not the saint who becomes a model today but the “rock star”.

Derek L. Philips in his article “Authenticity or Morality?” argues that modern society has made being “authentic” and “in touch with one’s feelings” the ideal.<sup>72</sup> In effect, this approach abrogates the place of absolute norms in society, with serious consequences requiring a virtue ethic to reshape. He concludes:

We cannot accept or sustain a society in which many people are authentic and thus free to give themselves over to undisciplined urges and felt needs. If we are to secure a decent society, we need a population that internalizes moral principles and develops on various virtues. In other words, a good society depends on a virtuous citizenry. Lacking such a citizenry, life will become more and more like a jungle and the barbarians in our midst will devour the rest of us.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup> John Scally, “When Greed is not Good: Business Ethics in a Fast-changing World,” in *Ethics in Crisis*, ed. John Scally (Dublin: Veritas, 1997), 72. (71-81)

<sup>68</sup> *Ibid.*, 72-3. The case of Damien Murray who stole £810,000 from clients is another example in point.

<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*, 73.

<sup>70</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 6.

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>72</sup> Derek L. Philip, “Authenticity or Morality?” in *The Virtues: Contemporary Essays on Moral Character*, Robert B. Kruschwitz and Robert C. Roberts eds. (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1987), 2-3, 17. Kotva uses Philip’s idea to support his arguments.

<sup>73</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 7.

These are some of the moral questions contemporary society faces. Present society has to be cautious of a so-called neo-barbarism. It is continually asserted that that moral advancement is not commensurate with modern scientific advancement. In response advancement must be holistic in order to be truly human.<sup>74</sup> The answer therefore may be found in the return to virtues.<sup>75</sup>

### **1.3.2 *The Rise, Challenge and Dynamism of Historical Consciousness***

John Lukacs in *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past* argues that one of the significant developments in western civilization is the emergence of historical consciousness.<sup>76</sup> Kotva uses the ideas of James Gustafson and John Mahoney to explain how the rise of historical consciousness has become one of the major factors leading to a renewed interest in virtue ethics.<sup>77</sup> According to Charles Curran our recognition of historical consciousness can shape our understanding of virtue ethics today.<sup>78</sup>

The human being is by nature a historical being, situated in a specific historical and cultural context with identifiable beliefs systems and moral codes. By extension, “all knowledge including moral knowledge is historically grounded and at same level

---

<sup>74</sup> See MacNamara, *The Call to be Human*, 22-23.

<sup>75</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 58.

<sup>76</sup> John Lukacs, *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past* (New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2009). With a new introduction by the author and a foreword by Russell Kirk. Previously printed as *Historical Consciousness, or, the Remembered Past*, rev. and enl. (New York: Schocken Books, 1985).

<sup>77</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 8. See See James M. Gustafson, *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics: Prospects for Rapprochement* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978), 57-84; John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of Roman Catholic Tradition* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987), 202-337.

<sup>78</sup> Charles E. Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 53.

informed by the setting from within which is known.”<sup>79</sup> Historical consciousness is the awareness of the narrative of the past that is on-going.

Historical consciousness has given birth to two shifts: it limits the role and status of rules and increases the attention given to one’s context.<sup>80</sup> Starting with the former, it is evident that in contemporary society, history is used to challenge the status of moral rules.<sup>81</sup> Certain rules, it is proposed, are made which are acceptable because they suit a particular historical context. But when same rules are placed within a different historical context they might be unacceptable. A classic example is the long-standing Christian prohibition against money lending, which has now changed to the point where even some churches give loans or take loans with high interest rates.<sup>82</sup> As society is dynamic so also are certain rules.

It is imperative to acknowledge that ethics cannot continue to be based on rules and norms without discussing the value of the historical moment in which such rules are applicable.<sup>83</sup> Such an approach would ensure a balanced ethical framework that is workable and coherent with both norms and historical situations of any epoch. This is vital in doing theology today because the awareness created by historical consciousness is overwhelmingly inexhaustive:

The more aware we become of the fluid and changing nature of society, the more our moral judgments must attend to the details of the concrete situation. If nature and society are basically unchanging, then the general principles are fine and we simply do whatever those before us did. But if nature and society change and develop, then we must attend to contextual variety and situational specificity. The continuities of human life are no doubt important, but historical consciousness pushes

---

<sup>79</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 8.

<sup>80</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>81</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>82</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*

ethical theory to acknowledge the potential uniqueness of each moment.<sup>84</sup>

The above statement echoes the variety of current approaches of Christian ethics in particular movements such as “Liberation theology”, “Black theology”, “Situation ethics”, “Feminism”. Each of these approaches insists on contextual specificity.

In the same way, virtue ethicists can take account of the specific context. Thus, there is the movement from norms and rules to character formation and contexts. But equally virtue ethics is universal, that is, it is relevant to different historical contexts and situations. Furthermore, it proposes the development of certain virtues (especially prudence) to be able to deal with real practical situations.<sup>85</sup>

### **1.3.3 Failed Ethical Theories**

One of the basic claims made by MacIntyre in *After Virtue* is that the Enlightenment project of justifying morality failed.<sup>86</sup> Although the Enlightenment scholars like Kierkegaard, Kant, Hume, Smith and others agreed on the character and context of the precepts that constitute morality, something was missing. MacIntyre writes:

For Diderot and Hume the relevant features of human nature are characteristics of the passions; for Kant the relevant feature of human nature is the universal and categorical character of certain rules of reason. (Kant of course denies that morality is ‘based on human nature’, but what he means by ‘human nature’ is merely the physiological non-rational side of man.) Kierkegaard no longer attempts to justify morality at all; but his account has precisely the same structure as that which is shared by the accounts of Kant, Hume, Diderot, except that where they appeal to characteristics of the passions or of reason, he invokes what he takes to be characteristics of fundamental decision-making.<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 9. MacIntyre also observes that ethical conceptions have history. And any relationship between one to the other can only be made intelligible in the light of that history. See MacIntyre, *After Virtue* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 52.

<sup>85</sup> See Edward LeRoy Long, *A Survey of Recent Christian Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 105-108.

<sup>86</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 37-61.

<sup>87</sup> Ibid., 52

Although these philosophers approach morality from varied frameworks, their conclusions can be reduced to the authority moral rules and obligations have on morality. Hence, MacIntyre argues that the project of this nature had to fail because of the apparent inconsistency between their shared conception of moral rules on the one hand and divergences in their conception of human nature on the other hand.<sup>88</sup> From a philosophical point of view, these schools of thought are dislocated from their historical connections to both classical and theistic roots.

The Enlightenment project as represented by Kant, Hume, Diderot and Kierkegaard was centered on reason alone. In comparison to a theistic framework, reason “can supply . . . no genuine comprehension of man’s true end,” and so “insufficient to deal with the passions.”<sup>89</sup> The feature of the moral scheme that is teleological in nature was classically expounded by Aristotle in his *Nicomachean Ethics*. According to this scheme there is a significant difference between “man-as-he-happens-to-be and man-as-he-could-be-if-realized-his-essential-nature. Ethics is the science which is to enable men to understand how they make the transition from the former state to the latter.”<sup>90</sup> Keenan and Kotva draw directly from this language, as shall be outlined in chapters three and four.

A project centered only on reason was bound to fail, because it failed to show the connections between foundational principles with other normative principles like virtues and the vices that instruct people on how to move from potentiality to act. It makes for incompleteness. Kotva argues that the missing element of the different modern ethical theories was an explication of human moral experience.<sup>91</sup>

---

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

<sup>89</sup> Ibid. 54.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 10.

Consequently, they neglected the question of character, which constitutes a huge aspect of that moral experience.<sup>92</sup>

The current revival of virtue ethics is a response to the inadequacies of moral theories as indicated above. In sum, our effort so far has been to establish why there is a renewed interest in virtue ethics today. The succeeding section shall seek to understand the meaning and nature of virtue ethics.

#### **1.4 Towards a Working Definition of Virtue**

There are various definitions on virtue from both the philosophical and theological traditions.<sup>93</sup> For example from the philosophical tradition, Julia Annas in an article “Virtue Ethics,” writes:

A virtue is a state or disposition of a person . . . A virtue, though, is not a habit in the sense in which habits can be mindless, sources of action in the agent that bypass her practical reasoning. A virtue is a disposition to act, not an entity built up within me and productive of behaviour; it is my disposition to act in certain ways and not others. A virtue . . . is a disposition to act for reason, and so a disposition that is exercised through the agent’s practical reasoning.<sup>94</sup>

Annas’s definition has no reference to God. But our focus in this section is to articulate definitions of virtue in line with Christian tradition. To this end, virtue has been defined by Stanley Harakas in *Toward Transfigured Life* as: “The habitual and firm orientation of the will and of the whole character to act in specific and concrete ways which are appropriate to those who are in the process of growth in the image of

---

<sup>92</sup> See John M. Doris, *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behaviour* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 15; William K. Frankena, *Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973), 62-63.

<sup>93</sup> For example, Raymond DeveHere makes a distinction between Pre-philosophical and philosophical conceptions of virtue. Raymond J. DeveHere, *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002).

<sup>94</sup> Julia Annas, “Virtue Ethics,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*, ed. David Copp (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006), 516. (515-536)

God.”<sup>95</sup> Similarly, Annas admits that even among the ancient pagans there is a tradition, originating from passages in Plato, taking virtue to be ‘becoming like God’.<sup>96</sup> Yet she does not reflect it in her definition.

As St. Augustine in *De Trinitate* stresses, this image of God becomes the beginning and ultimate goal of human destiny.<sup>97</sup> For the Christian moral tradition the ultimate goal is and remains personal union with God.<sup>98</sup> Gregory of Nyssa argues: “The goal of a virtuous life is to be like God.”<sup>99</sup> Virtue therefore, leads to the love of this ultimate goal or the highest good. This remains a central theme in Christian tradition. We shall return to it in almost all succeeding chapters.

Jean Porter in *Recovery of Virtues: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* outlines Aquinas’s grounding of his theory of virtues in this general principle of goodness and the human good.<sup>100</sup> Morally good actions are conceptually linked to the relevant virtue in that certain determinate kinds of actions are characteristic of particular virtues and tend to promote them in the individual. Following Aquinas, Porter identifies elements in promoting a particular virtue, one of which is for some criteria for distinguishing true from false exemplifications of the virtue in question with guidelines derived from a higher principle.<sup>101</sup> In this context, Christ becomes the

---

<sup>95</sup> Stanley Harakas, *Toward Transfigured Life* (Minneapolis: Life and Light, 1983), 27-28. See W. J. Burghardt, *The Image of God in Man According to Cyril of Alexandria: Studies in Christian Antiquity* 14 (Washington, D C: Catholic University Press of America, 1957), 4.

<sup>96</sup> Anna, “Virtue Ethics,”

<sup>97</sup> St. Augustine, *De Trinitate* BK. 15, chap. 7, no. 10 and chap. 8. 11.

<sup>98</sup> Romanus Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 45.

<sup>99</sup> Gregory of Nyssa, *De Beatitudinibus* 1:PG. 44, 1200D.

<sup>100</sup> Jean Porter, *Recovery of Virtues: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (Westminster: The Westminster Press, 1990), 70. See also *Moral Action and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: University of Cambridge, 1995), 142.

<sup>101</sup> *Ibid.*

higher principle. Therefore, for the Christian the one and true value and motivation is the incarnated Christ. Häring further articulates:

Christ taught us what virtue is; above all in His own all embracing love. What virtue appears in the very excess of His loving sacrifice by which he offered himself for the glory of God and the salvation of mankind. In Christ there is the most tremendous union of opposites without force or constraints. In Him is the most perfect and harmonious balance of virtue with all the haunting beauty of consummate goodness.<sup>102</sup>

St. Augustine also identifies all virtues with the person of Christ: “Now we require many virtues, and through these virtues we advance to virtue itself. What virtue, you inquire? I reply: Christ, the very virtue and wisdom of God. He gives diverse virtues here below, and he will also supply the one virtue, namely himself.”<sup>103</sup> This brings out the Christological nature of virtue ethics, a theme highlighted in renewal of moral theology and which shall be further developed in forthcoming chapters.

Since virtue is seen as a *habitus*, some theologians identify salient qualities which belong to a life lived according to Christian virtue. The following are the three features of actions qualified by *habitus*: First, promptness or readiness to do something; second, ease or facility in performing the action, and third, joy or satisfaction while doing it.<sup>104</sup> Aquinas himself argues: “A habit is called a virtue because it confers aptness in doing; secondly . . . it confers the right use of it.”<sup>105</sup> Thus, a virtue becomes a *habitus* only when performed out of one’s volition or freedom.

Brian Davies in *Thought of Thomas Aquinas* sees within humanity ability or capacity in potency: “Virtues are abilities, tendencies, or capacities which make it easy

---

<sup>102</sup> Häring, *Law of Christ*, 486.

<sup>103</sup> St. Augustine, *Enarrationes* Psalms 38, no. 11.

<sup>104</sup> See Yves R. Simon, *The Definition of Moral Virtue*, ed., Vukan Kuic (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), chaps. 2-4.

<sup>105</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 57.a.1.

for us to do certain things or behave in certain ways.”<sup>106</sup> They are then dispositions by which a person acts well.<sup>107</sup> Aquinas accepts St. Augustine’s definition of virtue as “a good quality of the mind, by which we live righteously of which no one can make bad use, which God brings about in us, without us.”<sup>108</sup> This definition shall be unpacked later.

Crucial in understanding the virtues is Porter’s reference to the fact that the virtues “are enduring traits of character which incline the agent to act in one characteristic way rather than another . . . A virtue is always a good quality.”<sup>109</sup> This good quality is explained by Aquinas to be the perfection of a power:

Now, it is necessary that the end of which any power is capable is good, because every evil implies a defect . . . For this reason, it is necessary that the virtue of anything be said to be ordained to good. Hence, human virtue, which is an operative habit is a good habit, and is productive of the good.<sup>110</sup>

Virtue considered as a *habitus* therefore is not the approval given to an action after it has been performed, but the source of action, a modification inclining it towards its full realization in action. T. C. O’Brien sums it all:

Virtue is a good habit. Because man directs his activities towards objectives to be realized, and these objectives are in conformity or opposition with the authentic finality of his nature, his actions can be good or bad. But just as his objectives measure the moral values of his activities, so his actions. If these habits give a bend toward truly human goals, then they are good, and are called virtues; otherwise they are bad, and are called vices.<sup>111</sup>

---

<sup>106</sup> Brian Davies, *Thought of Thomas Aquinas* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992), 239.

<sup>107</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 56. a. 3.

<sup>108</sup> Cited in *ST II-II*, q. 55. a.4.

<sup>109</sup> Porter, *Recovery of Virtues*, 110.

<sup>110</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 56.aa.1-3

<sup>111</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopaedia* 2nd ed., s.v. “Virtue.” For further understanding read the Prologue of Aquinas in the *Secunda Secundae*.

From the above citation, habits towards truly human goals provide the context and measurability of determining whether actions are virtuous or vicious. Virtue can be said to be an operative habit that is morally good while vice is an operative habit that is morally bad. In a Thomistic framework, virtues make us “good” although they in themselves cannot make us good. Rather they are capable of doing so when through a combination with operational actions they are able to produce the good, because virtue is ordered towards activity.<sup>112</sup> This perfection of a power for its operation Aquinas calls “operative habit”.<sup>113</sup>

In the final analysis, we can say that virtue disposes the Christian towards actions that pertain to right conduct. That does not eschew the fact that in the operative process of virtue, difficulties might be encountered. But when these conflicts arise, the higher good helps in the perfection of the virtues through faith and Christian exercises.<sup>114</sup> Therefore the ability of something to function well in accord with its nature is central to the understanding of virtue.

---

<sup>112</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 49.a.3.ad.1; q. 49. a.4, ad.1.

<sup>113</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 55. aa. 2&3; q. 56. a.1.

<sup>114</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 47-48.

## SECTION 2: A HISTORY OF THE THEOLOGY OF VIRTUE

### 1.5 *Historical Overview*

Having given a preliminary understanding of virtue, this section will seek to explore the historical contexts of virtue ethics. The aim is to show both a consistency and dynamism to the concept of virtue and to identify links between the different historical periods. It shall only choose two significant people from each era, while acknowledging the contributions of other writers.

#### 1.5.1 *Virtue in Classical Tradition*

Jean Porter observes two foundational sources for Christian thought on the virtues: “Namely the ideals and theories of virtue that emerged in Greek antiquity and were further elaborated in the Hellenistic Roman empire, and the ideals of virtue set forth or implied in Scripture.”<sup>115</sup> In the Classical Greek tradition virtue was a commonly used concept. But there was a shift in its usage. For example: “In Athenian society, the heroic virtues that are appropriate to the warlike society of archaic Greece became increasingly problematic in the more settled, urban conditions of that society. These social changes, in turn, gave rise to systematic philosophical reflection on the virtues.”<sup>116</sup> In these changed conditions, the prized virtues changed because in the new Greek worldview, the good person became identified with being a rational being. Perhaps this raises questions whether the less rational a person was, the less virtuous he/her was? Two of the most important figures of this period among others are Plato and Aristotle.

---

<sup>115</sup> Jean Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Robin Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 88.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*

### 1.5.1.1 Plato and The Virtues

Plato (427-348 BCE) in *The Republic*, using Socrates as mouthpiece, proposes the virtues of wisdom (*sophia*), courage (*andreia*), self-restraint (*sophrosune*) and justice (*dikaisune*) as the four core virtues of the ideal city.<sup>117</sup> These virtues according to Plato are acquired based on classification within the city. For example, wisdom is identified within the ruling class, called the Guardians: “The city is wise only through the good counsel and knowledge of its Guardians.”<sup>118</sup> Only the philosophers as the wise can be the Guardians and so the ruling class. Courage was a virtue for the military class whose duty was to defend the city.<sup>119</sup> Self-restraint unlike wisdom and courage is not common to one class but more like a kind of “concord or harmony”.<sup>120</sup> Furthermore, “self-restraint . . . requires not only that the better should control the worse, but also that they should agree that the better should be in control.”<sup>121</sup>

Plato’s aim was to create a social order. But he does not bring out the distinctive features that explicate whether each class within the social order is content with its tasks, especially the economic class. Such a model undermines the rights and freedom of the economic class, for it is brutal to limit a person’s task to only one. Justice as a principle for the formation of the ideal city becomes shaped by the importance of social order. In Platonic terms it is the principle of sticking to ones own job which is best suited to him/her.<sup>122</sup>

There are lots of objections that can be raised on Plato’s account of virtues in the city. For example his account of justice as only a political concept does not reflect

---

<sup>117</sup> Dahlsgaard, Peterson, Seligan, “Shared Virtue: The Convergence of Valued Human Strengths Across Culture and History”.

<sup>118</sup> R. C. Cross and A. D. Woozley, *Plato’s Republic: A Philosophical Commentary* (London: MacMillan Press, 1964), 105. Reprinted in 1966, 1970, & 1971.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 106.

<sup>120</sup> Plato, *The Republic* 430e.

<sup>121</sup> Cross and Woozley, *Plato’s Republic: A Philosophical Commentary*, 107.

<sup>122</sup> Plato, *The Republic*, 433a

the understanding of justice as a moral concept substantiated in relationships between people. On the whole, Plato is making us believe that people can foster right relations with others within his stratified structure of the ideal city through the virtues.

### **1.5.5.2 Aristotle and the Virtues**

Contrary to Plato's stratified concept, Aristotle (384-322 BCE) developed a more integrated understanding of virtue. It is commonly asserted that virtue ethics considered as a systematic science has its foundations from Aristotle. D. S. Hutchinson in *The Virtues of Aristotle* writes: "Aristotle's philosophy of virtue is intimately and inextricably connected with other aspects of his moral philosophy . . . Aristotle's moral philosophy is nothing more than a discussion of the virtues (both ethical and intellectual)." <sup>123</sup> This systematic element is shown by his arguments regarding theories of human conduct. For him the subject matter of ethics is not principles but virtues. In *Nicomachean Ethics* Aristotle argues that the virtues reside not in the passions but in states of character and to some extent faculties. <sup>124</sup> For Aristotle, one cannot have practical wisdom without first acquiring the virtues. <sup>125</sup> Consequently, for Aristotle the most significant thing in ethics is acquiring the virtues, and not acquiring theories and principles of conduct. Summarizing his entire moral philosophy of virtues, Aristotle understands virtues to be a special character trait that results from training. It involves acquiring the ability to act spontaneously. It is a *hexis*. <sup>126</sup>

---

<sup>123</sup> D. S. Hutchinson, *The Virtues of Aristotle* (London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1986), 1.

<sup>124</sup> See Samuel Wells ed., *Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010), 163.

<sup>125</sup> Aristotle, *NE*, 1140b17-20; 1144a23-b1.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 108. *Hexis* as Aristotle uses it is a special kind of disposition, which in itself is a quality of excellence, perfection. It is a disposition in virtue to act well or not to act. See *NE* 1106a10-12.

A distinctive feature of Aristotle in the development of the theory of virtues is his doctrine of the mean.<sup>127</sup> For Aristotle the mean in which virtue lies makes the virtues stable dispositions that avoids extremes in particular actions. According to Porter, Aristotle's mean is sometimes equated with moderation, reflected in today's understanding of the virtue of prudence as caution. However, Aristotle's notion of the mean is challenged today because the application of the mean varies from one circumstance to another.<sup>128</sup>

Aristotle added to the four Platonic virtues, generosity, wit, friendliness, truthfulness, magnificence and greatness of soul. For Aristotle, happiness or *eudaimonia* was the ultimate good of the virtues. Aquinas will develop more on this later and will go further than Aristotle to state union with God as the ultimate good of the virtues.

In sum, both Plato and Aristotle claim that the virtues are essentially expressions of one's quality. The entire classical tradition understood virtue as a process likened to acquiring a practical skill. The analogy of skill acquisition is pertinent because in learning to acquire a particular skill, the apprentice learns from a person who knows better than him/her. In this sense virtue requires that an individual learns from another person but with the view of thinking and comprehending for oneself. Similarly, Annas states:

Ethical reflection begins from what you learn in your society; but it requires you to progress from that. Virtue begins from following rules or models in your social and cultural context but it requires that you develop a disposition to decide and act that involves the kind of understanding that only you can achieve in your own case.<sup>129</sup>

---

<sup>127</sup> Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 89.

<sup>128</sup> Rachana Kamtekar, "Ancient Virtue Ethics: An Overview with an Emphasis on Practical Wisdom," in *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, ed. Daniel C. Russell (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 36.

<sup>129</sup> Annas, "Virtue Ethics," 518.

Such a progress is dynamic and it delineates the social and communal dimension of virtue ethics. Annas further writes: “Classical virtue theories are marked both by realistic recognition of the socially embedded nature of our ethical life.”<sup>130</sup>

### **1.5.2 *Virtue in Sacred Scripture***

Sacred scripture, of course, does not provide a systematic reflection on the virtues. Rather scripture can provide a source of insight by articulating distinct characteristic traits, and placing exemplary individuals as models of right conduct. In what follows, the next two sub-sections will look at virtues in the Old Testament and New Testament.

#### **1.5.2.1 *Virtue in Old Testament Literature***

According to John Barton in an article “Virtue in the Bible” the Bible does not explicitly deal with virtue as a model but it does so implicitly.<sup>131</sup> To be precise, the Old Testament does not use the word virtue *per se* but speaks of human and divine qualities of goodness.<sup>132</sup> Sacred Scripture uses the Hebrew word *Sedeq* in place of virtue. This word when used is in reference to right conduct (cf. Gen. 15:6; Deut. 6: 25; 24:13; Ps 106:13). This implies that the entire language of virtue seems very quiet until later Hellenistic influence: “The place one might immediately look for the first of our themes, that of fixed and stable moral dispositions, is the wisdom literature, especially proverbs and the Wisdom of Jesus Ben Sira.”<sup>133</sup> In Wisdom literature *Virtus* is used to refer to virtue as a general term (cf. Wis. 4:1; 5:13), and applied to some specific virtues like the moral virtues: “And if anyone loves righteousness, her

---

<sup>130</sup> Ibid., 523.

<sup>131</sup> John Barton, “Virtue in the Bible” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 12/1 (1999): 13. This article was first delivered as a paper in a meeting of the Society for the Study of Christian Ethics at Wycliffe Hall, Oxford, September 11, 1998. The online version is <http://sce.sagepub.com/content/12/1/12.citation> (accessed July 17, 2014).

<sup>132</sup> Bohr, *Catholic Moral Tradition*, 201.

<sup>133</sup> Ibid.

labours are virtues; for she teaches self-control and prudence, justice and courage; nothing in life is more profitable for mortals than these (Wis. 8:7).”<sup>134</sup> Note that in the Old Testament prudence was used to denote wisdom.

According to the commentary of Barton, in wisdom literature people are generally classified into two categories: the wise (otherwise called virtuous person) on the one hand and the fool (vicious person) on the other. This categorization is premised upon the knowledge that a person’s action reflects his/her character. Wisdom literature also emphasizes that for good actions to be performed, the individual must heed good counsel of wise people: “The . . . purpose of the book of Proverbs . . . taken as a whole was some kind of moral training: by reading about the wise and the fool one gradually learned to imitate one and avoid turning into the other.”<sup>135</sup> This dynamic based on the analogy of apprenticeship is similar to the classical tradition as underscored earlier. The difference between the two traditions lies upon the impact of the acquisition on the learner. In the classical tradition, the trainer undergoes series of training over time. But the impression given by the wisdom literature especially Proverbs on the dichotomy between the wise and fool, is of the wise or foolish as fixed and unchanged.<sup>136</sup> From this context therefore, the fool remains a fool and the wise gets wiser (Prov. 9:9). One begins to wonder whether the fool has any hope of becoming virtuous? Responding to this dilemma Barton thinks that the Bible is interested in conversion not moral progress.<sup>137</sup>

This thesis finds Barton’s position unsatisfactory. James M. Gustafson in “The Changing use of the Bible in Christian Ethics,” argues that the Bible is a “revealed

---

<sup>134</sup> *The New Revised Standard Version* (NRSV). All references from Scripture in this thesis shall be from this version.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*, 14.

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*, 15.

<sup>137</sup> *Ibid.*

reality rather than a revealed morality”.<sup>138</sup> Christian ethics is not completely about morality reduced to propositions but about God, his revelation and invitation to humanity and how humanity responds.<sup>139</sup> When Biblical morality is reduced to revealed morality conversion becomes its focal point but when considered as a revealed reality then the progressive aspect of human morality becomes a continuous response to the invitation of God, without ruling out the place of conversion. This idea is captured in various narratives of the Old Testament. For example God’s relationship with the people of Israel depicted in the marriage of Hosea to an unfaithful wife (Hosea 2:1-23).

Therefore, this thesis considers the Christian interpretation of the Old Testament ethics to be both in terms of conversion and progression. This conception re-enforces the dialogical nature of Christian faith and the relationship with the divine.<sup>140</sup> Gustafson writes: “The Christian moral life, then, is not a response to moral imperatives, but to a Person, the living God.”<sup>141</sup> In this sense, Paul Lehmann argues in an article “The Christian Foundation and Pattern of Christian Behaviour” that the most important question is not what God commands but what God does. It is more about “The Divine Indicative than it is about Divine Imperative”.<sup>142</sup> In this context therefore the biblical ethics of the Old Testament cannot be completely an ethics of conversion but also an ethics of progression. These two concepts can be suitably applied to virtue

---

<sup>138</sup> James M. Gustafson in “The Changing us of the Bible in Christian Ethics,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology*, ed. Charles Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 140-143.

<sup>139</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>140</sup> See Charles Curran, “The Role and Function of Scriptures in Moral Theology,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology*, ed. Charles Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 180.

<sup>141</sup> Gustafson, “The Changing us of the Bible in Christian Ethics,” 142.

<sup>142</sup> Paul Lehmann, “The Christian Foundation and Pattern of Christian Behaviour,” in *Christian Faith and Social Action*, ed. John A. Hutchinson (New York: Scribner Publishers, 1953), 100.

ethics, as one eschews vice which is conversion and through repeated actions becomes virtuous which is progressive.

The central theme about virtue in the Old Testament can be reduced to moral goodness. To be good by Old Testament standards was to keep the Law. In this sense the law was used as a formative process to being aright with God. At the explicit level therefore, the language of virtue is seemingly understated but at the implicit level it resonates within the entire ethics of goodness which God calls believers. Furthermore, the language of virtue can be derived from Old Testament stories depicting immoral practices. For example the story of Abraham sleeping with his maid in Gen. 16, or the story of Joshua killing an entire population as an act of obedience to God's command in Joshua 6.<sup>143</sup> Even though the morality of such actions is challenged today, we can implicitly learn *via negative* of what it means to be bad. Barton argues in favour of such a supposition that the biblical authors perhaps wrote these narratives with the view of exemplifications to see what can be learned from them about the difficulties and merits of living a virtuous moral life and the ills of failing to do so.<sup>144</sup>

### **1.5.2.2 *Virtue in New Testament Literature***

The theology of virtue is more vivid in the New Testament than the Old Testament. Nevertheless, it is not a dominant idea in the New Testament. The New Testament offers accounts of character traits that can be either coherent or incoherent to the Christian moral life.<sup>145</sup>

---

<sup>143</sup> For further reading see John Rogerson, "The Old Testament and Christian Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Robin Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012).

<sup>144</sup> Barton, "Virtue in the Bible," 19. David M. Gunn gives a very clear illustration of this point in his work *The Story of David* (Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978); See also R.N. Whybray, *The Succession Narrative: A Study of II Samuel 9-20, I Kings 1 & 2* (London: SCM Press, 1968).

<sup>145</sup> Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 90.

A cursory look at the Old Testament reduces its ethics to explicit rules neglecting inner dispositions. But the New Testament approach displays an explicit ethic based on inner intentions, desires, and dispositions.<sup>146</sup> According to Servais Pinckaers in *Morality the Catholic View* an approach such as this offers an account of the ways of wisdom that lead to holiness of life and perfection through the virtues.<sup>147</sup> This is evident in the successions of antithesis in the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5:12-48, and Luke 6:27-39.<sup>148</sup> Still, the New Testament cannot be said to explicitly treat virtues.

Going through the New Testament one can see the orientation towards the virtues of wisdom and justice. For example it speaks of wisdom which is given even to little ones in the Messianic age (cf. I Pet. 4:7). A central theme of both the Old and New Testament is the true nature of justice: “Sacred Scriptures constantly exhort and guide us to respect the rights of others and to do so with practical wisdom or prudence that exceeds mere legalism (cf. Col. 4:1).”<sup>149</sup> The virtue of justice in the New Testament is placed at the level of the human heart considered as the root of human action. The parable of the ten maidens may be an eschatological parable but we can infer that Jesus illustrates the virtue of prudence as well: Five prudent or wise and the other five imprudent (Matt. 25: 1-13; Luke 14: 28-30; Matt. 6:19-20). He typifies temperance in Matt. 4: 1-11 by not succumbing to the devil’s temptations and in Matt. 9: 10-17 by taking the little fish and few loaves and feeding thousands and the leftovers

---

<sup>146</sup> Millar Burrows, “Old Testament Ethics and The Ethics of Jesus,” in *Essays in Old Testament Ethics*, ed. James L. Crenshaw and John T. Willis (New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1974), 233.

<sup>147</sup> Servais Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, prefaced by Alasdair MacIntyre and trans. Michael Sherwin (Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001), 8.

<sup>148</sup> Burrows, “Old Testament Ethics and The Ethics of Jesus,” 233.

<sup>149</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 12.

are gathered. Jesus exemplifies the virtue of fortitude when he remained resolute to undergo the cross in Matt. 26: 36-39.

In the Pauline writings the excellence of character is exhorted: “Whatever is true, whatever is honourable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things” (Phil. 4:8). St Paul stresses that Christ is the source and center of Christian virtue. He considers the virtues as found in the Greek culture and proposes them to the believers. For example according to Abraham J. Malherbe in *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* the virtue and vice lists in Col. 3:18-4:1 is a so-called household code appropriated from the Stoics.<sup>150</sup> But Paul emphasises their transformative quality through faith in Christ, which makes them quite distinct from those in Greek culture. N. T. Wright in *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* argues in favour of this when he writes:

The center of Paul’s ethics is ‘to be a kind of Christian transformation of the ancient traditions of virtue, of character development. This, indeed, is the point at which his ethical teaching is at the same time closest to, and most interestingly distinguished from, that of the world around. As with the tradition from Plato and Aristotle onwards, Paul has a goal in view, but his goal is not Aristotle’s ‘happiness’ *eudaimonia*. Nor is the attaining of that goal a matter, as it is in Aristotle, of the ‘self-made man’ producing the cardinal virtues of courage, justice, temperance and prudence that were required for a soldier or statesman in ancient Greece. Paul’s goal . . . is the mature humanity which reflects the divine image and which will be reaffirmed in the resurrection. The attaining of that goal is as much a matter of self-denial as of self-fulfilment. And the virtues which are to be produced include four which not ancient pagan would have recognized as positive character-traits: patience, humility, chastity and above all *agapē*, ‘love’.<sup>151</sup>

---

<sup>150</sup> Abraham J. Malherbe, *Paul and the Popular Philosophers* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989), 4. Paul’s approach would seem to be counter-culture as sexual offences seen in his list of vices would not appear as vices in Hellenistic catalogues. See J. W. Thompson, *Moral Formation According to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics* (Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011), 94.

<sup>151</sup> N. T. Wright, *Paul and the Faithfulness of God*, Book II, Part III & IV (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013), 1115-6.

Another point of departure of Paul from the Greek philosophers is that his concept of character development in virtue is eschatological, while for the Greeks it would have been only temporal.<sup>152</sup>

This gives a new vision and modification to the virtues. Thus, Pinckaers commenting on St Paul says:

It is clear that for him the organism of charisms and virtues possessed an entirely Christian head, formed by three virtues of which the philosophers were ignorant. Faith, hope and charity guaranteed a direct bond with the source of Christian life, Christ and his spirit. These virtues were unique in their dependence on the initiative of divine grace. They governed all of Christian action and gave to the other virtues, working in harmony with them, an incomparable value, measure, dynamism and finality.<sup>153</sup>

The virtues are thus seen to effect personal transformation with an eschatological dimension.

As highlighted earlier, the New Testament offers an account of character traits to sustain the Christian life. St. Paul in Gal. 5: 22-23 gives a lists of the fruits of the spirit which are consistent to the Christian character: “By contrast, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control. There is no law against such things.” These may be considered as personal character traits but Paul would have expected that they be practiced within the Christian community. A deeper Christian formula is articulated by St. Paul when he expresses in I Cor. 13:13: “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and the greatest of these is love.” Paul does not name them conceptually as theological virtues which was a systematization undertaken by Aquinas as we shall later see.

The entire theology of the virtues in the scripture particularly the theology of Paul shows an emergence of a new approach to virtues different from the Greco-

---

<sup>152</sup> Ibid., 1117.

<sup>153</sup> Pinckaers, “Conscience, Truth and Prudence,” 202.

Roman tradition. Paul's addition of the Christian virtues of love, patience, humility, and chastity not known within the pagan world gives distinctive feature to the growth of the idea of virtue.<sup>154</sup> This shift will impact on the succeeding eras, as we shall see below.

### **1.5.3 *The Patristic Accounts of Virtue in the Latin Church***

The classical tradition has shown us how the virtues especially the cardinal virtues were generally accepted in Greek culture. It is no surprise that in the first century Philo of Alexandria incorporated the scheme in his biblical interpretations.<sup>155</sup> In the succeeding two centuries Philo's work influenced the works of Clement of Alexandria and Origen. Platonic and Stoic backgrounds which influenced St. Paul in the preceding sub-section also predisposed Clement and Origen.<sup>156</sup> Later on Latin Fathers like Ambrose, Lactacius, Jerome and Augustine came on the scene. These Church Fathers drew a lot from Platonic and Stoic schools of thought through the process of assimilation. Pinckaers shows this relationship in the following words:

They draw on pagan thought and culture in order to place it in the service of the Gospel. It is from this collaboration between faith and reason that theology is born. The Fathers especially take advantage of pagan moral teaching concerning the virtues, vices and contemplation. They adopt the four classical cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, courage, and temperance, which are surrounded by numerous annexed virtues, and are already mentioned in Wisdom (8:9). This process of assimilation is made easier by the fact that the Fathers, like the philosophers, considered the moral life as a quest for happiness, and see in the practice of the virtues the best response to the primordial question of happiness posed by every human heart.<sup>157</sup>

---

<sup>154</sup> See N. T. Wright, *Virtue Reborn* (London: SPCK, 2010).

<sup>155</sup> Istva P. Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* (Boston: Brill, 2011), 11.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 19. Also see Otto Bardenhewer, *Patrology: The Lives and Works of the Fathers of the Church*, trans. from the second edition by Thomas J. Shahan (Freiburg: B. Herder, 1908), 433.

With these came the process of the Christianization of the cardinal virtues of the Classical tradition.

Despite the influence of classical philosophy, the accounts of virtues offered by the Fathers of the church primarily flowed from Scripture. Correspondingly, Pinckaers holds that there are two central sources of the Fathers' teaching: Scripture being their primary source and secondary source of Greco-Roman culture and philosophy.<sup>158</sup> Their general moral teachings were centered on Christ as presented in the Gospels, through the celebration of the Divine Liturgy, reading and meditating on scriptural text(s) and applying the text in daily living.

Even though they drew upon Platonic and Stoic thought the Patristic Fathers differed on the goal of the virtues. For Plato and Aristotle the highest good of virtue is happiness, although Aristotle goes further than Plato by stating that humans cannot be like God because God is too transcendent. Hence he eschews the concept of God in his understanding of virtues.<sup>159</sup> But the Fathers show a connection between virtue and the highest good that is God. For example Ambrose argues: "Virtue is thus defined by the wise. The first good of things is to know God, and which a pious mind to reverence him as true and divine, and to delight in that lovable and desirable beauty of the

---

<sup>158</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 18.

<sup>159</sup> May Colby, "Patristic Theology: Final Paper  
[www.academia.edu/614479/Patristic\\_Theology\\_final\\_Paper](http://www.academia.edu/614479/Patristic_Theology_final_Paper) (accessed July 22, 2014).

eternal truth with the whole affection of the mind.”<sup>160</sup> Ambrose set the platform for a deeper theological understanding of the virtues, particularly the cardinal virtues.<sup>161</sup>

### 1.5.3.1 *St. Ambrose and the Virtues*

According to Bejczy, Ambrose (330-397 AD), bishop of Milan, is regarded as the first person to use the word *virtutes cardinales* (cardinal virtues) and *virtutes principales*.<sup>162</sup> Peter Lombard in *The Sentences* supports this claim: “*Primus autem qui eas cardinales vocat est Ambrosius* (the first therefore who called them [the four principal virtues] was Ambrose.”<sup>163</sup> Bejczy argues that Ambrose although did not consistently use the terms or phrases cardinal virtues or principal virtues, but referred to them in some of his works as the gifts of the Holy Spirit.<sup>164</sup>

Because of the influence of Platonic categories, Ambrose employed the allegorical style in trying to explain the virtues.<sup>165</sup> He converts the Platonic virtues into Christian virtues. For example, in *De Paradiso* Ambrose interprets the four rivers of paradise as the cardinal virtues which came forth from the source of wisdom.<sup>166</sup> He

---

<sup>160</sup> St. Ambrose, “On the Death of Satyrus,” in *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 10, trans. H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin and H.T.F. Duckworth and ed. Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. (Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896.) Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/3403.htm>>(accessed July 22, 2014).

<sup>161</sup> See St. Ambrose, *De officiis*, vol. 1 1.25.118, trans. Ivor Davidson (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001).

<sup>162</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 12; Saint Ambrose, *Seven Exegetical Works: Isaac, or the Soul, Death and the Happy Life, Joseph, the Patriarchs, Flight from the World, the Prayer of Job and David*, trans. Michael P. Hugh (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1972), 53-4; See also Ambrose, *Expositio in Lucam* 5:49 and 5:62, CCSL 14:152, 156.

<sup>163</sup> Peter Lombard, *The Sentences* 2:188, no.3. Lombard himself was influenced later on by Ambrose’s concept of the cardinal virtues.

<sup>164</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 12-3.

<sup>165</sup> Andrew M. Greenwell, “Ambrose and the Cardinal Virtues,” <http://lexchristianorum.blogspot.ie/2012/09/st-ambrose-and-cardinal-virtues.html> (accessed July 22, 2014).

<sup>166</sup> St. Ambrose, *De paradiso* 3.14-18, CSEL 32.1:273-277.

further uses the allegorical style in his oration of his dead brother Satyrus (ca. 378). Here, he praises his brother for living the Platonic virtues. Ambrose commandeered the virtues in a way that transcended philosophy. His aim was to Christianize the cardinal virtues as seen in his work *De Officiis Ministrorum*.<sup>167</sup> For he believed that the cardinal virtues do not only help people live good lives but also at the hour of death they help people prepare for the final journey. In this sense Ambrose unswervingly connects the virtues to God, who is the *summum bonum*.<sup>168</sup> By so doing he shares with Paul's eschatological dimension of the transformative power of virtue. His further use of allegory can be seen in the way he associated the cardinal virtues throughout his works with biblical quartets. For instance, the four creatures in the book of Ezekiel (Ez. 1:1-28; the man stands for prudence, the lion for fortitude, the ox for temperance, and the eagle for justice), and also the four men who carried the lame man to Jesus in Mark 2:3-4.

Ambrose further incorporated the cardinal virtues into the teachings of Jesus in the New Testament. For example, he believed that the cardinal virtues were analogous to the Lucan account of the Beatitudes (Luke 6: 20-22 & 24-26).<sup>169</sup> He demonstrates this in his *Commentary on Luke*, for him “those who are poor in spirit”, are blessed with the virtue of temperance, for those who are temperate overcome the seduction of materialism. And “blessed are those who are hungry, they shall be satisfied”, references justice, for those who are just are compassionate to the needs of others. And “blessed are you who weep, you will laugh”, is referencing Christian prudence (notice

---

<sup>167</sup> St. Ambrose, *De Officiis Ministrorum*. This work is considered as his first ethical or moral treatise. See Philip Schaff, “On the Duties of the Clergy,” [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0339-0397,\\_Ambrosius,\\_De\\_Officiis\\_Ministrorum\\_Libri\\_Tres\\_\[Schaff\],\\_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0339-0397,_Ambrosius,_De_Officiis_Ministrorum_Libri_Tres_[Schaff],_EN.pdf) (accessed July 28, 2014).

<sup>168</sup> Ibid.

<sup>169</sup> See Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 145.

he qualifies prudence to be Christian) which is the sort of practical reasoning that seeks eternal happiness. Ambrose connects the last cardinal virtue to the beatitude “blessed are you when people hate you . . . rejoice and be glad for your reward will be great in heaven”. For him the crown of suffering is the “consummation of courage” for the Christian believer.<sup>170</sup> To complete his list, Ambrose added the Pauline virtues of faith, hope and love to the classical virtues of justice, wisdom, fortitude and temperance. Augustine will later adopt the same list, ordered towards love, as established by Paul.<sup>171</sup>

Ambrose’s synthesis of the virtues with Scripture became very foundational to later Fathers like Saints Augustine and Gregory.<sup>172</sup> Lastly, Bejczy remarks that one of the important contributions Ambrose made was that he taught his audience, “the cardinal virtues if interpreted in accordance with the faith, were not just useful for believers and pleasing to God, but secured the salvation of the soul – a message unheard in the Latin Church until then”.<sup>173</sup> One can say that Ambrose’s approach was soteriological in nature.

### **1.5.3.2 St. Augustine and the Virtues**

Augustine of Hippo (354-430 AD) is another significant figure.<sup>174</sup> Like previous classical authors, Augustine’s theological considerations on the virtues were influenced by what was characteristic of the society. His conception of virtue was tied

---

<sup>170</sup> Andrew M. Greenwell, “St. Ambrose: The Virtues and the Beatitudes,” <http://lexchristianorum.blogspot.ie/search/label/St.%20Ambrose%20on%20Virtue> (accessed July 22, 2014).

<sup>171</sup> See *Saint Ambrose Letters*, trans. Sister Mary Melchior Beyenka (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954), 253.

<sup>172</sup> Ernest Leigh-Bennett, *Handbook of the Early Fathers* (London: Williams & Norgate, 1920), 311.

<sup>173</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 17.

<sup>174</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 91.

to the concept of the good that makes a person happy. He argues that the perfect good must be beyond humanity: the ultimate good is God.<sup>175</sup> His Christian understanding of love on the one hand and the Stoic concept of reason on the other hand hugely influenced his approach, in which faith and charity come to the aid of reason, which leads a person to true happiness. Augustine follows Plato and the Stoics in maintaining that the virtues are expressions of a quality.<sup>176</sup> But he deviates from them by identifying the quality to be Christian love. He employs Neo-Platonic categories of dispositions by which the soul liberates itself from the bonds of earthly existence in order to embrace God.<sup>177</sup> John M. Rist in *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* argues along this line:

For while according to the Stoics all forms of virtue are modes of right reason, for Augustine they have become modes of love. As a result of their love for God, says Augustine, men are able to react morally to whatever situation may arise in the course of their lives.<sup>178</sup>

Central to Augustine's conception of virtue is the idea of Christian love: "This love bestows the ability to place all human affections in their right order, loving God above all, and loving creatures as expressions of Good's goodness, within the parameters set by God's decrees."<sup>179</sup> The love of God for Augustine is the only proper motivation of virtue.<sup>180</sup> Such a conception led Augustine to argue that the cardinal virtues were simply forms of charity. The passage below shows how he subordinates

---

<sup>175</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 20.

<sup>176</sup> Augustine in the *City of God* takes an extreme position when he argues that the virtues of the pagans are vices because they are not based on the vision of God. For him they are expressions of pride not virtues.

<sup>177</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 22.

<sup>178</sup> John M. Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 161.

<sup>179</sup> Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 91.

<sup>180</sup> For him the stoics and Epicurean philosophy restricted virtue to be only a human reality. For him the virtues are divine realities. His ideas here are too strict.

the cardinal virtues to the theological virtues. Such a systematic style makes his approach different from other patristic Fathers who were more homiletical:

Virtue is nothing other than the perfect love of God. Now, when it is said that virtue has a fourfold division, as I understand it, this is said according to the various movements of love. Thus, these four virtues . . . I do not hesitate to define them as follows: Temperance is love giving itself entirely to the beloved; courage is love readily baring all things for the sake of the beloved; justice is lover serving only the beloved and therefore ruling rightly; prudence is love distinguishing wisely between what hinders it and what helps it. But, as we have said, the object of this love is nothing other than God, the sovereign good, the highest wisdom and the perfect harmony. We may therefore define these virtues as follows: temperance is love preserving itself entire and incorrupt for God; courage is love readily bearing all things for the sake of God; justice is live serving only God, and therefore ruling well everything else that is subject to the human person; prudence is love discerning well between what helps it toward God and what hinders it.<sup>181</sup>

This citation, explains two things: Firstly, Augustine agrees with Ambrose on the lists of the virtues and also with St. Paul who gave primacy to the virtue of love or charity. Secondly, it shows how Augustine connects the classical cardinal virtues with the Christian virtues that will be later called theological virtues. According to Pinckaers this connection will be foundational to the entire structure of moral theology in later years.<sup>182</sup>

There is an aspect, which Augustine adds to his theology of the virtues that is less emphasized by Ambrose, namely grace. He maintained that love must underline the virtues but emphasized that all virtues are imperfect if not supported by Grace.<sup>183</sup>

---

<sup>181</sup> St. Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae (On the Morals of the Catholic Church)* 15.25 [PL 32:1322].

<sup>182</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 21-2.

<sup>183</sup> Rist observes that Augustine seemed to have consistently sustained this understanding in most of his writings. However, in a later work *De Trin.* 13.20.25 due to pressure from the Pelagian argument he was prone to emphasize faith rather than love as the gift that promotes genuine virtue. But Rist would have us believe that this would rather be a development not a change of doctrine. See Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized*, note 50. See also Rist, *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized*, 170.

Augustine's position is based on the fact that as fallen humans no one can act justly without the aid of grace.<sup>184</sup> Therefore, the ideal moral end, which the virtues are targeted towards, cannot be achieved without grace. This Augustinian concept of grace will influence the understanding of Kotva as we shall later see.

It should be noted that both Ambrose and Augustine did not intend to advance a comprehensible account of virtue theory. It was only around the twelfth century that this project found a definitive systemization. The two Fathers of the church above offer us an understanding of virtue that is built upon Pauline theology and existential realities as offered by early philosophers. Their use of the cardinal virtues differs with Augustine, unlike Ambrose, infrequently utilizing the four cardinal virtues as an exegetical motif. The works of these Fathers offer the theoretical developmental framework of Christian virtue ethics, with the love of God as the summation. This era remained of significant importance to the entire history of moral theology as concluded by Pinckaers:

The Fathers, it is true, do not systematize moral theology in the way that later generations will. Yet their moral teaching, because of its close proximity to Scriptures and to the personal and ecclesial experience of Christians, as well as its close relationship to dogmatic theology and the liturgy, contains a fullness that makes it an inexhaustible heritage and a model to follow.<sup>185</sup>

To place this aspect of history into context within the whole history of moral theology, this legacy of the Fathers was lost with the inception of the early medieval era. This period moved away from theorizing the virtues to practical living giving rise to the "penitentials" or instructional manuals intended for confessors, containing lists of sins and penance to be enforced on the penitent. This tradition continued till the late

---

<sup>184</sup> St. Augustine of Hippo, *The Perfection of Justice* 2.4; 3.5-6; *Sermon* 26.7-10; 155.10.10.

<sup>185</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 24.

medieval era that ushered in the Scholastic era and a flurry systematic approaches. Of particular prominence are Peter Lombard, and St. Thomas Aquinas.

#### 1.5.4 *Scholasticism: A Systematic Approach to Virtue*<sup>186</sup>

This period stretches from the eleventh century to the fourteenth century.

This period of theology coincides with the formation of independent townships and the birth of an urban mercantile class, as well as with the creation of universities and the construction of the gothic cathedrals. It also coincides with the spiritual movements initiated by St. Francis and St. Dominic and expressed in religious orders of a new type, different from the monks.<sup>187</sup>

With regard to the history of ideas, this era delineated the relationship between the cardinal and theological virtues.<sup>188</sup> Previously termed “three graces,” by Augustine, it was at this time the term theological virtues came into prominence.<sup>189</sup>

Another significant element is the retrieval of Aristotle’s works and the introduction of scholastic method.<sup>190</sup> Scholastic method grew out of disputations in schools during the Middle Ages. It had two complementary features: “1.The acceptance of ‘authorities, or major works of antiquity, as sources of knowledge and bases of teaching. 2. The use of dialectic as reason’s chief tool in the working out of science.”<sup>191</sup> Its basic instruments were definition, distinction, and argumentation. Its ideal goal was certain truth, although frequently it could reach only probable

---

<sup>186</sup> There are various names given to this period: “Middle Ages”, which was created by the Renaissance’s writers with the view of making irrelevant the period between the classical era and their particular time. “Medieval period” is used as an adjective to denote Middle Ages.

<sup>187</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 25; Klima ed., *Medieval Philosophy: Essential Readings with Commentary*, 7.

<sup>188</sup> See William E. Mattison, “Thomas’s Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance,” *The Thomist*, 74. No. 2 (April, 2010): 191.

<sup>189</sup> See St. Augustine, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love*. Chap. XXX-XXX1.

<sup>190</sup> Klima ed., *Medieval Philosophy: Essential Readings with Commentary*, 8.

<sup>191</sup> Pinckaers, *The Sources of Christian Ethics*, 216.

conclusions.<sup>192</sup> This is done with the practice of rational dialectic.<sup>193</sup> By the thirteenth century the scholastic method employed analytico-synthetic method.<sup>194</sup> This is a method which offered solutions to both theological and philosophical problems, and was influenced by Aristotle.<sup>195</sup> But the Aristotelian procedure was centered on logic devoid of divine revelation. Thus, Christian writers of this generation had to embellish Aristotle's logic with their Christian beliefs.

The next section of the thesis attends to the works of Peter Lombard and Aquinas on the virtues because they offer a more complete theological synthesis of the virtues than any of the other scholastics. According to Pinckaers:

The works of the fathers show Christian thought and experience to be in continuity with apostolic tradition, while confronting it with the philosophical wisdom whose sources they endeavour to utilize while safeguarding the supremacy of revelation. In the transmission of patristic teaching the Sentences of Peter Lombard play a determining role as the required manual for theological teaching.<sup>196</sup>

Lombard and Aquinas through a dialectical style will develop their knowledge of the Fathers more profoundly and as well as the varying schools of philosophy like stoics, Platonists and Aristotelians.<sup>197</sup>

#### **1.5.4.1 Peter Lombard: Virtues in *The Sentences***

Peter Lombard (c. 110-1160) as a schoolman was a student of Peter Abelard (1074-c.1142). But these two had opposing methodologies with regard to virtues.<sup>198</sup> We

---

<sup>192</sup> William A. Wallace, "Scholasticism" <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/scholasticism.aspx> (accessed July 29, 2014).

<sup>193</sup> Pinckaers, *Morality the Catholic View*, 25.

<sup>194</sup> M. De Wulf, *Scholasticism Old and New: An Introduction to Scholastic Philosophy Medieval and Modern*, trans. P. Coffey (Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1907), 21.

<sup>195</sup> For further reading on scholastic method see Norman Kretzmann and Eleonore Stump ed., *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 14-18.

<sup>196</sup> Servais-Theodore Pinckaers, "The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 19.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, 17.

shall briefly contrast them to reiterate the fact that the scholastic period is a synthesis of two traditions namely, the Aristotelian and the Augustinian traditions. Abelard conceives virtue in completely Aristotelian categories, namely, as a firm or constant disposition that enables one to be moral. Conversely, Lombard offers a stringent theological account of the virtues that is based on patristic authorities.<sup>199</sup>

In the four Books of *The Sentences*, Lombard ties the notion of the virtues to qualities conferred by grace.<sup>200</sup> For example in Book Three he treats the virtues and aligns them with Christ by arguing that Christ had the virtues of faith, hope and love. Lombard's treatment of the virtues is tied to his teaching on salvation.<sup>201</sup> He defines virtue in Augustinian terms: "a good quality of the mind by which one lives rightly, that nobody uses badly, and that God alone works in man".<sup>202</sup> Following the above definition, Lombard's concept of virtue is linked to grace. This is one of the specialties of the Scholastic Period. In fact, later theological articulations about the virtues after this period will have very minimal and in some cases complete neglect of the role of grace within the Catholic tradition. This is more emphasized within the Reformed tradition, as we shall see in later chapters.<sup>203</sup> However, the danger of sticking to Lombard's definition is that one can undermine human effort on the one hand or over reliance on the grace of God on the other hand. Effectively, in order to avoid this, Lombard moves away from the classical tradition that totally viewed virtue only as a human quality.

---

<sup>198</sup> Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 92.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 119.

<sup>201</sup> See Philipp W. Rosemann, *The Great Medieval Thinkers: Peter Lombard* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 139.

<sup>202</sup> Peter Lombard, *The Sentences* II.27.2 §1, 1:480-485.

<sup>203</sup> This thesis shall only highlight the Reformed Tradition's emphasis on grace but shall not formally deal with the topic of grace, as it will be outside its scope.

Lombard adopts the principal virtues of the classical tradition of Wisdom 8:7 (justice, prudence, fortitude and temperance), and of the Fathers like Augustine. For example he follows Augustine who in the *De Trinitate* wrote: “Justice consists in helping the wretched, prudence in guarding against treacheries, fortitude in bearing troubles, temperance in controlling evil pleasures.”<sup>204</sup> Mattison notes that Lombard does not propose an unequivocal explanation for any classification of the virtues.<sup>205</sup> He simply groups the virtues but “nowhere does he define a category (such as ‘theological virtue’)”.<sup>206</sup> According to Mattison, Lombard in *The Sentences* explains faith, hope and charity on the one hand and prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance on the other hand. But he argues elsewhere, like Augustine that charity is the mother and the form of the virtues.<sup>207</sup> Lombard’s ideas on the virtues are highly Augustinian. The link between the theological and cardinal virtues for Lombard was to help order our lives on earth but at the same time they open up heaven for us. “Thereupon, . . . the four virtues are fully present in Christ; in fact, it is from him that we derive our virtues.”<sup>208</sup> In this sense, one can hold that Lombard’s ethics is generally Christocentric.

However, some writers have criticized Lombard’s position in the way he links the virtues to Christ. For example, Marcia Colish in *Peter Lombard* observes that Lombard’s treatment of the virtues does not offer a precise link between the theological and cardinal virtues.<sup>209</sup> Also Philipp Rosemann citing Balzer Handbuch says that Handbuch criticizes Lombard’s annexation of the virtues in his

---

<sup>204</sup> Lombard, *The Sentences*, Distinction XXXIII; Augustine, *De Trinitate* 14.9.12.

<sup>205</sup> Mattison, “Thomas’s Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance,” 196.

<sup>206</sup> Ibid.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid. See also Lombard, *The Sentences* 1.15, PL186: 711A.

<sup>208</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 121.

<sup>209</sup> Marcia Colish, *Peter Lombard* (Leiden: Brill, 1994), 507.

Christology.<sup>210</sup> Rosemann thinks that both Colish and Handbuch's criticisms are based on structure rather than content.<sup>211</sup> In this sense, he sees nothing wrong with the Lombardian inclusion of the virtues in Christ. Hence he concludes:

The Lombardian conception of virtue is different from our own, in so far as he prefers to show us virtues in its perfect state, that is to say, in Christ. One could say that Peter Lombard approaches virtue "from above", from a quasi-divine angle, and not from the point of view of its instantiation in ordinary human nature.<sup>212</sup>

Implicitly, the criticism attempts to say that Lombard does not provide a formal categorization of virtue.<sup>213</sup> But Mattison argues differently:

However, though Lombard devotes no explicit attention to explaining the bases for categorizations of virtues, his treatment of the cardinal virtues does offer an implicit rationale for what the four cardinal virtues have in common . . . It demonstrates that, . . . the cardinal virtues certainly pertains to humanity's destiny in eternity . . . and because their presence in the next life requires further discussion, it seems that their activities are primarily associated with temporal life. This is a foreshadowing of how certain thirteenth-century thinkers, including Thomas, will distinguish the cardinal virtues as a category.<sup>214</sup>

Considering Colish's critique and Mattison's observations this thesis holds that Lombard's synthesis of the virtues does not explain how the different categorization relate to one another. Rather it is Aquinas who in his synthesis of the virtues explicates the relationship that Lombard failed to do.<sup>215</sup> The common understanding is to consider the two sets of virtues as opposing to each other. But Aquinas will show that they are intertwined by using arguments from both the scripture, patristic Fathers as well as various schools of philosophy.

---

<sup>210</sup> Rosemann, *The Great Medieval Thinkers: Peter Lombard*, 126.

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>212</sup> *Ibid.*, 120-21.

<sup>213</sup> Mattison, "Thomas's Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance," 198.

<sup>214</sup> *Ibid.*, 196-197.

<sup>215</sup> *Ibid.*, 213.

#### 1.5.4.2 Thomas Aquinas: A Philosophical and Theological Synthesis

##### *of the Virtues in the Summa Theologiae (c. 1225-1274).*<sup>216</sup>

The practical theology which was prevalent alongside the Manualists tradition at this period was deficient. There was a doctrinal gap which Aquinas sought to fill:

All Dominican writers . . . previous to Thomas had valiantly covered various aspects of learning for their confreres in pastoral care-Raymund and his fellows for confessional practice, . . . Aag Denmark for missionaries, . . . James of Varazze for lives of saints and preaching, Simon of Hinton for the practical theological needs of his English brethren.<sup>217</sup>

Unlike those cited above, Aquinas saw the need to provide a *Summa* of general theology that encompassed God, trinity, Creation, Incarnation and human nature.<sup>218</sup>

Aquinas is aware of the departure of the virtues from the manuals hence he introduces them in the *Summa*. In the *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas presents an extraordinary structure of the virtues.<sup>219</sup> He defines virtue in Augustinian terms as well.<sup>220</sup> Each virtue is explained with its opposing vice and correlating gift of the Holy Spirit.<sup>221</sup>

Aquinas treats the virtues by using the dialectical method. He also articulates the teachings of the Fathers and makes citations from the Bible and of course Aristotle. He shows a great interest in returning to sources. The twentieth century movement *Ressourcement* emphasises such a return to sources. In chapter two of this

---

<sup>216</sup> For further reading about Aquinas' life and influences in theology and philosophy see, Jean-Pierre Torrell, *St. Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 1 revised ed. (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005).

<sup>217</sup> Leonard E. Boyle, "The Setting of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas-Revisited," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 7.

<sup>218</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>219</sup> Etienne Gilson, *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1924), viii.

<sup>220</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 55, a.4.

<sup>221</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 59, a.2; q. 60, aa. 3-5; II-II, q.4, a.2; q. 18,a.1; q. 24, a.1; I-II, q. 65, a.1.

thesis this theological approach shall be further explained, showing a link with the history of virtues presented in this chapter.

In the *Summa*, Aquinas discusses the virtues as the basis for Christian faith made possible through grace. Hence he first treats the theological virtues then follows up with the cardinal virtues. The question remains on what basis does Aquinas categorize the virtues? He follows the tradition that preceded him by categorizing them on the bases of object, end, and efficient cause. However, he differed from others because he shows through his categorization the relationship between the virtues, an area that was overlooked by his predecessors. Later scholastics after Lombard like William of Auxerre (1150-1231) and Philip the Chancellor (1160-1236) initiated a deeper categorization of the virtues.<sup>222</sup> Yet a fully integrated treatment of the synthesis of the categorization needed to be developed which will explicate the relationship based on cause, object and end.

#### **1.5.4.2.1 *Categorization and The Relationship of the Theological and Cardinal Virtues***

To show the relationship between the theological and cardinal virtues Aquinas argues that the virtues can be categorized based on cause, object and end. Firstly, virtues can be acquired generally through either habituation or grace:

Virtue is natural to man inchoatively. This is so in respect of the specific nature, in so far as in man's reason are to be found instilled by nature certain naturally known principles of both knowledge and action, which are the nurseries of intellectual and moral virtues, and

---

<sup>222</sup> William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea III*, tracts 11-29. See also Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 93.

in so far as there is in the will a natural appetite for good in accordance with reason.<sup>223</sup>

According to Aquinas, both the cardinal and theological virtues are caused by nature. However, Aquinas introduces a distinction between the cardinal and theological virtues by reason of perfection: “It is therefore evident that all virtues are in us by nature, according to aptitude and inchoation, but not according to perfection, except the theological virtues, which are entirely from without.”<sup>224</sup> Aquinas argues in the second article that human virtue directed to the good, which is defined according to the rule of human reason, can be caused by human acts or acquired human virtues.<sup>225</sup> He draws out a distinction between the moral virtues and the theological virtues by stating: “Some moral and intellectual virtues can indeed be caused in us by our actions: but such are not proportionate to the theological virtues. Therefore it was necessary for us to receive, from God immediately others that are proportionate to these virtues.”<sup>226</sup>

Secondly, Aquinas categorizes the virtues based on object. Here he differentiates between the theological and cardinal virtues. Aquinas argues:

The precepts of the Law are about acts of virtue. Now the Divine Law contains precepts about the acts of faith, hope and charity: for it is written (*Ecclus. ii.8, seqq*): *Ye that fear the Lord believe Him*, and again, *hope in Him*, and again, *love him*. Therefore faith, hope and charity are virtues directing us to God. Therefore they are theological virtues.<sup>227</sup>

Aquinas introduces the concept of happiness to show the distinction between the theological and cardinal virtues explaining that man is perfected by virtue for it is by those actions he is guided to true happiness. Happiness is twofold according to

---

<sup>223</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 1.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 2.

<sup>226</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 3.

<sup>227</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 62, a. 1.

Aquinas: happiness achieved through man's natural principles and happiness beyond man's nature obtained through God alone. Therefore, the theological virtues directly concern God as their sole object, while the cardinal virtues indirectly concerns God as their object:

The reason and will are naturally directed to God, inasmuch as he is the beginning and end of nature, but in proportion to nature. But the reason and will, according to their nature, are not sufficiently directed to Him in so far as He is the object of supernatural happiness.<sup>228</sup>

Thirdly, it is a categorization based on the end of virtue. Aquinas holds that the cardinal virtues perfect the intellect and appetites in proportion to nature, but theological virtues do so supernaturally.<sup>229</sup> Aquinas brings together both the object and end of virtue: "Now the object of the theological virtues is God Himself, Who is the last end of all, as surpassing the knowledge of our reason."<sup>230</sup> Aquinas as captured above further expresses the link between the virtues:

The theological virtues direct us sufficiently to our supernatural end, inchoatively: i.e., to God Himself immediately. But the soul needs further to be perfected by infused virtues in regard to other things, yet in relation to God. The power of those naturally instilled principles does not extend beyond the capacity of nature. Consequently man needs in addition to be perfected by other principles in relation to his supernatural end.<sup>231</sup>

One of the defining differences between Aquinas and other earlier scholastics is that Aquinas explains that the cardinal virtues can be both infused and acquired but with a difference in formal object.<sup>232</sup> For example, he distinguishes between infused and acquired temperance: a person with acquired temperance may fast from food based on human reason but the person with infused temperance may fast from food

---

<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 62, a. 2.

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid., q. 63, a. 3.

<sup>232</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 4.

based on Divine rule. In this context, both may share the same material object but differ in their formal object.<sup>233</sup> Also Aquinas is “able to account for the difference between the cardinal and theological virtues by attending to more than the ultimate end of virtue”.<sup>234</sup>

The above synthesis and categorization of virtues by Aquinas had a far ranging influence on later writers within the Thomistic tradition and even outside it. Looking at the huge amount of written materials on Aquinas (Neo- Thomists) one can say that his teachings have been given varying of interpretations that have even expanded his original thought.<sup>235</sup>

#### **1.5.4.2.2 *The Theological Virtues***

Drawing upon the Patristic tradition and Scripture, Aquinas identifies the divine or theological virtues as faith, hope and charity.<sup>236</sup> These theological virtues for Aquinas cannot be accounted for naturalistically.<sup>237</sup> Aquinas explains why they are called theological virtues: “First, because their object is God, inasmuch as they direct us aright to God: secondly, because they are infused in us by God alone: thirdly, because these virtues are not made known to us, save by Divine revelation, contained in Holy Writ.”<sup>238</sup> He reiterates that the theological virtues are needed and not the cardinal virtues alone. Although the inclusion of the cardinal virtues is drawn from the

---

<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Mattison, “Thomas’s Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance,” 228.

<sup>235</sup> See Gerald McCool, “Neo-Thomism and the Tradition of St. Thomas,” *Thought* 62 (1987): 132-150; Fergus Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomisms* (Malden: Blackwell, 2002).

<sup>236</sup> The person to use the category “theological virtues” has been variedly conceived. William C. Mattison III associates the first use of this category to William of Auxerre. See Mattison, “Thomas’s Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance,” note 43.

<sup>237</sup> Brian Davies, *Aquinas* (New York: Continuum, 2002), 154.

<sup>238</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 62, a. 1.

distinctly Aristotelian source, Brian Davies in *Aquinas* brings out the difference between Aquinas and Aristotle:

Aristotle has no belief in God as a Trinity. And he has no notion of God becoming human so that people may come to share in the divine life. Aquinas, however, does. He also thinks that there can be no sharing in the life of Trinity unless God brings about in us more than what Aristotle would have taken people to be able to bring about simply considered as human beings. Aquinas introduces the notion of theological virtues since he believes that God is prepared to give us more than we are, or are capable of achieving, simply by being human. And he does so because of the way he reads the Bible, especially the New Testament . . . that God offers people something they cannot achieve on their own.<sup>239</sup>

We can say that Aquinas places importance on the theological virtues because of his conception of the distorted nature of humanity by sin. Humanity cannot save itself and so must rely on the grace of God. God alone is the *beatitudo* that humanity seeks. Hence, the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity. In the next sub-sections we shall explain each of the theological virtues in the light of Aquinas.

#### **1.5.4.2.2.1 *The Virtue of Faith***

Aquinas begins the *Secunda Secundae* by treating the virtue of faith; this is because faith is about God the First Truth.<sup>240</sup> He initially treats faith as an act in general in questions one to three, and then proceeds in questions four to sixteen to discuss faith as a virtue. For Aquinas, faith is an assent of the intellect and will on the basis of the formal object of Truth which is God.<sup>241</sup> It is also certainty about things unseen.<sup>242</sup> Aquinas captures the physical and spiritual dimension of the person within his

---

<sup>239</sup> Davies, *Aquinas*, 154.

<sup>240</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 1. a.1.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 2, aa. 1 & 2.

<sup>242</sup> *Ibid.*, II-II, q. 4. a. 5

understanding of faith both as an act and as a virtue by acknowledging the fact that it is an intellectual assent that comes about through its object and choice.<sup>243</sup>

Faith for Aquinas has an end, namely heaven. Therefore, to attain to the perfect vision of heaven faith becomes a prerequisite. This is one of the distinguishing elements between the Thomistic and Aristotelian conceptions of virtue.<sup>244</sup> Furthermore, Aquinas distinguishes active faith from passive faith otherwise called living faith or lifeless faith. Faith based on divine truth is the living faith while faith based only on human reason is the lifeless faith of the philosopher.<sup>245</sup>

In contrast to the Pelagians who argued that faith was a product of man's free will, Aquinas argues that God infuses faith. He writes:

Man, by assenting to matters of faith, is raised above his nature, this must needs accrue to him from some supernatural principle moving him inwardly; and this is God. Therefore faith, as regards the assent which is the chief act of faith is from God moving man inwardly by grace . . . To believe does indeed depend on the will of the believer: but man's will needs to be prepared by God with grace, in order that he may be raised to thing which are above his nature.<sup>246</sup>

The implication is that faith though a gift of God must be accepted and lived by the believer. From this context therefore, the "inner act of faith" must be complemented by the "outer act of faith".<sup>247</sup> Aquinas here establishes the link between a person's interior motivations and his exterior actions. For this to be possible the gifts of understanding and knowledge must correspond and respond to the virtue of faith.<sup>248</sup>

---

<sup>243</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 1. a.4.

<sup>244</sup> This will be later explained in chapter four.

<sup>245</sup> Ibid.

<sup>246</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 6, a. 1, ad. 3.

<sup>247</sup> See Stephen J. Pope, "Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 38.

<sup>248</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 8.

Thus, the effects of faith are to engender appropriate fear of the Lord and purity of heart.<sup>249</sup>

Aquinas also considers the vices opposed to faith in question ten: “In due sequence we must consider the contrary vices: first, unbelief, which is contrary to faith; secondly, blasphemy, which is opposed to confession of faith; thirdly, ignorance and dullness of mind, which are contrary to knowledge and understanding.”<sup>250</sup>

#### 1.5.4.2.2.2 *The Virtue of Hope*

Aquinas devotes only five questions to the treatment of hope. This means that it receives the shortest treatment among the theological virtues.<sup>251</sup> Perhaps this is so because so much was taken for granted then with issues of believe in God. But Josef Pieper in *Hope* argues that there is anthropological presuppositions that supports Aquinas’s treatise on hope:

Hope like love is one of the primordial dispositions of the living person. In hope, man reaches ‘with restless heart,’ with confidence and patient expectation toward . . . the arduous ‘not yet’ of fulfilment, whether natural or supernatural. As a characteristically human endeavour, then hoping incarnates a reaching out for anything that is perceived as good, and for anticipated fulfilment that the possession of something brings.<sup>252</sup>

Based on the above one should expect that Aquinas to give it a thorough treatment but he does not.

Unlike the virtue of faith, Aquinas delves directly into treating hope as a virtue in question seventeen. Hope is a virtue because its object is a future good by means of divine assistance: “Our hope attains God Himself, on Whose help it leans. It is

---

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 7.aa. 1 & 2.

<sup>250</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 10..

<sup>251</sup> See Pope, “Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas,” 38.

<sup>252</sup> Josef Pieper, *Hope*, trans. Mary Frances McCarthy (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 27. See Romanus Cessario, “The Theological Virtue of Hope,” in *Ethics of Aquinas*, trans. Grant Kaplan and Frederick G. Lawrence and ed. Stephen Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 232.

therefore evident that hope is a virtue, since it causes a human act to be good and to attain its due rule.”<sup>253</sup> According to Aquinas there are four distinct characteristics of

hope:

First, that it is something good . . . hope regards only the good; in this respect hope differs from fear, which regards evil. Secondly, that it is future; for hope does not regard that which is present and already possessed: in this respect, hope does differ from joy which regards a present good. Thirdly, that it must be something arduous and difficult to obtain, for we do not speak of any one hoping for trifles . . . in this respect, hope differs from desire . . . wherefore it belongs to the concupiscible, while hope belongs to the irascible faculty. Fourthly, that this difficult thing is something possible to obtain: for one does not hope for that which one cannot get at all . . . hope differs from despair.<sup>254</sup>

In this sense hope can be treated partly as an intellectual virtue but more concretely as a theological virtue.

Pointedly, the object of hope is eternal happiness as argued by Aquinas:

The hope of which we speak now, attains God by leaning on His help in order to obtain the hoped for good. Now an effect must be proportionate to its cause. Wherefore the good which we ought to hope for from God properly and chiefly, is the infinite good, which is proportionate to the power of our divine helper, since it belongs to an infinite power to lead anyone to an infinite good . . . Therefore the proper and principal object of hope is eternal happiness.<sup>255</sup>

Even though the object of hope is eternal happiness with God, Aquinas also assumes that it has secondary objects by referencing “other things” for which we pray to God for. From this context, Aquinas integrates again both the mundane and spiritual spheres of humanity. But he cautions that God has to be the final end, and He should not be used as a means to other goods.<sup>256</sup>

---

<sup>253</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 17.a. 1.

<sup>254</sup> *ST* I-II, q. 40. a.1.

<sup>255</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 17.a. 2.

<sup>256</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 5; q. 19.a. 4, ad. 3.

Aquinas here shows the relationship between the virtues faith and hope. He first argues that faith precedes hope.<sup>257</sup> But he goes on to show the link in the following words:

Hope is called the entrance to faith, i.e., of the thing believed, because by hope we enter in to see what we believe . . . thereby man begins to be established and perfected by faith. The thing to be hoped for is included in the definition of faith, because the proper object of faith, is something not apparent in itself.<sup>258</sup>

In sum therefore, hope is a virtue that offers the believer a confident drive towards the future by overcoming all inhibitions.

The opposing vices to the virtue of hope are despair, hatred of God, unbelief and presumption.<sup>259</sup>

#### **1.5.4.2.2.3 *The Virtue of Charity***

The importance Aquinas gives to this virtue is manifested in the number of questions devoted to the topic, namely, twenty three to forty-six, which is almost the same number of questions devoted to the first two virtues (faith and hope) put together. He places a premium to it because he treats it both as a doctrinal and theological piece.

Quoting Augustine Aquinas defines: “Charity is a virtue which, when our affections are perfectly ordered, unites us to God, for by it we love him.”<sup>260</sup> This definition delineates the friendship that exists between God and humans of which the whole *Summa Theologiae* is framed. By implication, the virtue of charity enables people to achieve the end for which they strive through friendship with God. It is not surprising then that Aquinas considers it as the form of all the virtues:

Charity is called the form of the other virtues not as being their exemplar or their essential form, but rather by way of efficient cause, in so far as it sets the form on all . . . charity is compared to the

---

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., a.7.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., a. 7. ad. 1 & 2.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., qq. 20 & 21.

<sup>260</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 23. a. 3. St. Augustine, *De Moribus Eccl.* Xi.

foundation or root in so far as all other virtues draw their sustenance and nourishment therefrom, and not in the sense that the foundation and root have the character of a material cause. Charity is said to be the end of other virtues, because it directs all other virtues to its own end. And since mother is one who conceives within herself and by another, charity is called the mother of the other virtues, because, by commanding them, it conceives the acts of the other virtues, by the desire of the last end.<sup>261</sup>

By loving God the principal end one loves what God loves. Charity thus esteems both the supernatural and natural order as aligned to God. In the supernatural order, man shares in the Godhead through the love of neighbour and also through the love of one's body, love of sinners and enemies.<sup>262</sup> In the natural order there is the proclivity to love friends, our nearest and dearest, namely family members and friends. This is an affective relationship, or interpersonal relationship, that occurs in nature. Aquinas thus gives both a theological and anthropological explanation to charity. The effects of both the supernatural and natural order which is esteemed by charity are joy, peace and divine mercy.<sup>263</sup> More so, Aquinas conceives these as acts of charity.<sup>264</sup> By and large, we can claim that charity plays an integrating role among the theological virtues and in the life of every Christian.

At the basis of Aquinas' theology on charity is the concept of friendship. Charity is the virtue that enables the friendship between God and humankind to be sustained. Edward Schockenhoff in an article "The Theological Virtue of Charity (IIa-IIae, qq. 23-46," claims that Aquinas was the first medieval theologian to insert the Aristotelian category of friendship into the virtue of charity as God's activity of

---

<sup>261</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 23.a. 8.

<sup>262</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 25. a. 1. See also, aa. 5, 7 & 8.

<sup>263</sup> *ST* II-II, qq. 28 & 29

<sup>264</sup> Ibid., q. 29. a. 4; see also q. 28. a. 4.

infusion upon humanity.<sup>265</sup> Charity becomes the grace-filled friendship of the human person for God. Elsewhere, Aquinas uses charity and friendship interchangeably.<sup>266</sup>

However, Aquinas does not use the words charity and love interchangeably in the *Summa*. Aquinas in the *Summa* he uses only charity. It is very likely that he avoided using love because of the multiple meanings of the word love as used differently by catholic and protestant theologians.<sup>267</sup> Some authors in their theological reflections on the theological virtues use the term love rather than charity, such as Josef Pieper in *Faith, Hope, Love*.<sup>268</sup> But Aquinas consistently uses charity, only using love as a principal act of charity.<sup>269</sup> Perhaps, Aquinas considers love as a personal choice as one can choose to love or not to love that comes from within, while God from without directly infuses charity.<sup>270</sup> Aquinas considers the following as vices against charity: hatred, sloth, envy, discord and schism, and scandal.<sup>271</sup>

#### 1.5.4.2.3 *The Cardinal Virtues*

The distinguishing factor in the theological virtues is that their objects concern God directly. In contrast, the cardinal virtues concerns what modern theologians call “innerworldly” activities.<sup>272</sup> These include activities like making decisions, engaging in relationships filial and erotic, dispensing of goods, confronting difficult situations etc. These innerworldly activities are often considered as moral virtues given that the

---

<sup>265</sup> Eberhard Schockenhoff, “The Theological Virtue of Charity (IIa-IIae, qq. 23-46),” in *Ethics of Aquinas*, trans. Grant Kaplan and Frederick G. Lawrence and ed. Stephen Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 246.

<sup>266</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 23a. 1. Here he says: “Charity is friendship”.

<sup>267</sup> Chapter three of this thesis shall explain the nuances in the use of the word love by catholic and protestant theologians.

<sup>268</sup> Josef Pieper, *Faith, Hope, Love* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997).

<sup>269</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 27. a.1.

<sup>270</sup> See Michele Ferrero, *The Cultivation of Virtue in Matteo Ricci’s “The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven”* (Taipei: Fu Jen Catholic University Press, 2004), 320.

<sup>271</sup> *ST* II-II, qq. 34- 42.

<sup>272</sup> See William C. Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues* (Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008).

term is used with a broader connotation.<sup>273</sup> At the same time the moral virtues are called cardinal virtues. Mattison explains that although Aquinas uses the term “moral virtues” to refer to the above-mentioned activities but in some instances he uses “cardinal virtues” to avoid confusion.<sup>274</sup> Here, we choose to use the term “cardinal virtues”.

The cardinal virtues are central to Aquinas’ moral theory because of his predisposition towards Aristotelian tradition. He names four of these virtues following this tradition: Prudence, justice, temperance and fortitude. They are called acquired virtues because their acquisition comes about through repetitive human activity. These four virtues order all our appetitive and intellectual powers that make it possible for us to perform human acts: prudence orders our practical reasoning, justice orders the will while temperance and fortitude order the passions which are divided into concupiscible and irascible. Thus, they sufficiently order all the components within us that are involved in any moral action.<sup>275</sup>

Aquinas further reiterates that for people to act well, it is requisite that not only their reason be well disposed through a *habitus* of intellectual virtue, but also their appetite be well disposed through a *habitus* of cardinal virtues.<sup>276</sup> Davies explains the above claim by commenting that knowledge is not enough to make a person good, because one might have the knowledge of the good but yet be unable to act in the light of what he/she knows to be good.<sup>277</sup> *Ipsa facto*, an individual must be engaged both at

---

<sup>273</sup> Ibid. 66.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> See Porter, *Recovery of the Virtues*; Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).

<sup>276</sup> Ibid.

<sup>277</sup> Davies, *Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 243.

the level of intellect and will; for a man may have doctorates from the most prestigious university and yet not be good.<sup>278</sup>

#### 1.5.4.2.3.1 *The Virtue of Prudence*

Kerr in *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomisms* asserts that the word prudence in modern language suggests caution: “Sometimes a virtue, often more like a vice, it means a habit of being circumspect and discreet, careful above all to avoid undesired consequences of a decision.”<sup>279</sup> John Connery criticizes the above conception in an article “Prudence and Morality” when he says for the modern mind:

The prudent man is the man who takes no risks. He is a conservative who will neither raise head above the crowd nor stand out for it. If such prudence is associated with morality at all, it is with a kind of moral mediocrity. The prudent man never does anything very bad; neither does he do anything very good . . . The less a person did or said, the fewer mistakes he would make, and hence the more prudent he would be considered.<sup>280</sup>

What Connery is saying is that prudence of this kind rather stifles and hinders the authentic life of perfection and can lead to indifference and permissiveness in moral living. Jean-Pierre Torrell agrees in *Saint Thomas Aquinas* that such a conception of prudence suggests a timorous and even negative attitude of action that is unacceptable.<sup>281</sup>

For Aquinas prudence is “right reason about things to be done” (*recta ratio agibilium*).<sup>282</sup> Torrell expands this Thomistic definition by saying: “Prudence is the virtue of decision, of personal responsibility, of risk consciously taken. It closes the deliberative processes by daring to prescribe action in a specific situation, singular

---

<sup>278</sup> Ibid.

<sup>279</sup> Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomisms*, 121. See also Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 106; Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 79.

<sup>280</sup> John R. Connery, “Prudence and Morality,” *Theological Studies* 13 (1953): 564.

<sup>281</sup> Jean-Pierre Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, vol. 2, trans., Robert Royal (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003), 270-275.

<sup>282</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 57, a. 4.

each time that will never repeat itself as such”.<sup>283</sup> From this context Torrell calls prudence a virtue of risk. But Torrell misinterprets Aquinas. To understand this we must capture the background that informed and shaped Aquinas’s usage of the term. Prudence is a derivative of the word “*providens*”, “*prudentia*”. Aristotle calls it “*Phronesis*.”<sup>284</sup> Kerr explains that Aquinas identifies prudence with the biblical doctrine of divine Providence that is, “prudential and providential”.<sup>285</sup> Aquinas’ usage of providence stems from the fact that the created world was created ‘good’: “In created things good is found not only as regards their substance, but also as regards their order towards an end and especially their last end, which . . . is the divine goodness.”<sup>286</sup> Thus, God does have a plan for all created things. This plan is what Aquinas calls providence. In this sense therefore, prudence cannot be considered as a virtue of risk.

Prudence is the *habitus* of choosing (*electus*) that is making choices.<sup>287</sup> For a choice to be good, two things are required: First, the intention is directed to a due end and this is the work of a moral virtue which includes the appetitive faculty to the good that is in accord with reason. Second, the person must rightly utilize the means that are required to attain the end. This is only possible by means of reason that knows how to counsel, judge and command, which is the function of prudence and the virtues annexed to it.<sup>288</sup>

---

<sup>283</sup> Torrell, *Saint Thomas Aquinas*, 270.

<sup>284</sup> *NE*, Book IV.

<sup>285</sup> Kerr, *After Aquinas*, 120. See also Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans., Christopher Rowe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.

<sup>286</sup> *ST*, Ia, q. 22, a.1.

<sup>287</sup> Prudence for St. Augustine is love choosing wisely between the helpful and the harmful in our striving towards God. (*De Moribus Ecclesiae Catholicae*, Bk 1, chap 15.) See also Waldo Beach and H. Richard Niebuhr, *Christian Ethics*, 2nd ed. (New York: Ronald Press, 1973), 15.

<sup>288</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 47 a.8. These are the distinct acts of prudence.

Prudence understood as both an intellectual and moral virtue has a phenomenal worth.<sup>289</sup> This worth of prudence does not consist in mere thought but in its thorough application to human actions.<sup>290</sup> Keenan summarizes Aquinas' understanding of prudence that counters Torrell's conception of risk:

Prudence, of course is not the tepid little virtue that warns us against taking bold steps. On the contrary, prudence is the virtue that looks forward to the overall end of life and sets all subsequent agendas for attaining that end and all intermediate ends. Prudence discerns and sets the standards for the pursuit of the end and therein helps us to articulate the norms of moral action. Moreover, prudence enjoys nearly the same function and authority over the moral virtues that charity does with the infused virtues . . . prudence unites and connects the moral virtues.<sup>291</sup>

Aquinas stresses the unequivocal place of prudence when he says: "Nobody can be virtuous without possessing prudence . . . The other virtues can never be virtues unless their seeking is prudently conducted."<sup>292</sup> In this way Aquinas emphasises the primacy of prudence over the other cardinal virtues. He demonstrates this primacy and excellence in many ways. For instance, he claims that prudence directs the cardinal virtues in the choice of means and, specifically because it appoints the mean that all virtues are to attain. It is the most excellent of the acquired virtues.<sup>293</sup> Furthermore, prudence is superior because it puts order into acts of reason.<sup>294</sup> It plays both a directive and perfecting function to all the other cardinal virtues.<sup>295</sup>

The virtue of prudence in its integrative, perfective and directive roles fundamentally perfects both the action and the individual who performs it through the instrumentality of reason. Vice on the contrary generates actions that are partly or

---

<sup>289</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 47.a.4.

<sup>290</sup> *Ibid.*, a.1.

<sup>291</sup> Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 144. See also *ST* I-II, q. 65.a.1.ad.3.

<sup>292</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 47.a.14.

<sup>293</sup> *ST* I-II, q.66, a.3, ad. 3.

<sup>294</sup> *Ibid.*, I-II, q. 61, aa. 2-4.

<sup>295</sup> *ST* I-II, q. 58, a. 3; q. 68, a. 1; q. 63, a. 2

totally not in consonance with right reason. This is either through excess or defective use of reason that produces a definite or subtle form of evil. Aquinas identifies those vices, which are directly opposed to prudence, and those with a false resemblance to prudence which are often due to abuse of the things required of prudence.<sup>296</sup> In sum, the main vices opposed to prudence are: imprudence and counterfeit prudence, but there are others aligned to these.<sup>297</sup>

#### 1.5.4.2.3.2 *The Virtue of Justice*

The virtue of justice is the longest in Aquinas' treatment of the virtues in the *Summa Theologiae* (qq. 58-122). Possibly, the significance of this is because of the social and theological nature of justice for Aquinas.<sup>298</sup> A close look at the traditions that Aquinas references makes this point clearer: he references classical writers especially Aristotle, then the patristic Fathers specially St. Augustine as primary sources. Aquinas considers the plurality or diversity of views on justice and claims that it can be understood as a virtue in general and in particular.<sup>299</sup> Aquinas therefore gives a systematic account to these conceptions of justice and integrates it as an essential aspect of Christian moral life.

Justice in general concerns the common good of the community as its object and is guided by what the philosopher calls legal justice.<sup>300</sup> For Aquinas general justice is identifiable with Aristotle's legal justice. The distinctive Christian feature Aquinas

---

<sup>296</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 53. a. 1. See also Cessario, *The Virtues, or The Examined life*, 118.

<sup>297</sup> For more on the vices of prudence see *ST II-II*, qq. 53-55; Douglas J. Zaggi "The Moral Virtue Of Prudence In St. Thomas Aquinas: Its Relevance In Christian Moral Life" A Thesis Submitted To The Faculty Of Moral Theology In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For A Master's Degree In Theology Of The Pontifical University Of St. Patrick, Maynooth, May 2011.

<sup>298</sup> Jean Porter, "The Virtue of Justice (IIa IIae, qq. 58-122)," in *Ethics of Aquinas*, In *Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 272.

<sup>299</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>300</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 58.aa. 5 & 6.

gives to justice is what makes him different from Aristotle as we shall see later. However, elsewhere Aquinas designates general justice as legal justice.<sup>301</sup>

Particular justice concerns matters relating to specific goods that may differ from person to person.<sup>302</sup> In either way, justice is a most needed virtue in relation to both oneself and other human beings. We can say therefore, there are three basic relations of justice as proposed by Aquinas: Firstly, the relations of the individuals to one another. Secondly, the relations of social whole to individuals, and thirdly, the relations of individuals to the social whole.<sup>303</sup>

According to Aquinas the other virtues are about the passions but justice is about operations from the will.<sup>304</sup> Justice both general and particular is expressed fittingly in external actions. Although they are prompted by the inner disposition of the person they are not directed by the passions. Justice in this way is not a tendency but a settled disposition to act in particular ways.<sup>305</sup> This is what makes justice distinct from fortitude and temperance.<sup>306</sup> But Aquinas ignores the fact that the passions when not properly ordered can negatively influence the administration of justice in particular instances.

The importance of this virtue is appreciated when one understands that the other virtues concern the perfection of a person in relation to himself. But justice connects one with other persons:

It is proper to justice, as compared with the other virtues, to direct man in his relations with others: because it denotes a kind of equality, as its very name implies; indeed we are wont to say that things are adjusted when they are made equal, for equality is in reference of one thing to some other. On the other hand the other

---

<sup>301</sup> Ibid.

<sup>302</sup> Ibid., a. 7.

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., II-II, q. 58. a. 5.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid., a. 9.; also see I-II, q. 22, a.3; q. 59.

<sup>305</sup> Porter, "The Virtue of Justice (IIa IIae, qq. 58-122)," 275.

<sup>306</sup> *ST I- II*, q.60. a. 2.

virtues perfect man in those matters only which befit him in relation to himself, . . . whereas the right in a work of justice, besides its relation to the agent, is set up by its relation to others . . . Justice has its own proper object over and above the other virtues, and this object is called the just, which is the same as *right*. Hence it is evident that right is the object of justice.<sup>307</sup>

This explains why Aquinas describes justice as the “*habitus* whereby a person with a lasting and constant will renders to each his due with constant and perpetual will”.<sup>308</sup>

Aquinas further explains that the inclusion of the words will and perpetual in this definition stresses that justice must be done by a voluntary act of will and must be firm. But the question remains who and what determines what is due to a person?<sup>309</sup>

Traditionally, this has been answered by emphasizing that the goal of justice is “*ius*” often translated as “right”. *Ius* describes a well-ordered society. But this is not always the case. Nonetheless, the just person seeks what is right in relation to others, and others in relation to himself/herself.<sup>310</sup>

In Aristotle’s view who determines what is due to the other would be the philosopher. Within the philosophical tradition there are diversities of opinion on this point. For example the categorical imperative of Kant differs from Jeremy Bentham’s principle of utility. While Kant says: “Act only according to that maxim whereby you can at the same time will that it should become a universal law.”<sup>311</sup> In this instance one acts justly only based on duty or obligation. But there are situations beyond the consideration of formal obligations. The principle of utility on the other hand claims: “Act always so as to maximize total net balance of pleasures and pains.”<sup>312</sup> This means

---

<sup>307</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 57. a. 1.

<sup>308</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 58.a.1. Plato in the *Republic* gives the same definition of justice.

<sup>309</sup> For further reading see Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, 47-50.

<sup>310</sup> Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 136.

<sup>311</sup> Immanuel Kant, *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, in *Ethical Principles*, 2<sup>nd</sup> trans. James W. Ellington (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing, 1999), 14.

<sup>312</sup> See Jeremy Bentham, *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*, ed. J. Burns and H. L.A. Hart (London: Athlone Press, 1970).

an innocent person can be punished for a greater majority. This concept is both reductionist and hedonistic. These principles may to some extent determine what or who is due what, but Christian tradition offers a more general perspective. For example in Matt. 7:12, Jesus says: “Do unto other as you would have done unto you”. This is today called the Golden Rule.

Aquinas considers two kinds of justice, “distributive” and “commutative” justice.<sup>313</sup> Even though Aquinas examines these two forms of justice together, he shows how different they are: distributive justice distributes common goods equitably, while commutative justice is concerned with the reciprocal dealings between two or more people.<sup>314</sup> Both forms of justice fit into John Rawls assertion of justice in *A Theory of Justice*: Justice “is the first virtue of social institutions”.<sup>315</sup> Note that Rawls’ use of a plural in the word institutions delineates the overarching importance of the virtue of justice in all spheres of life. Aquinas in both forms of justice attempts to portray the relational nature of justice. Both distributive and commutative justice form an organic whole in Aquinas’ treatment of justice. These two concepts are given a more in-depth meaning when Aquinas later introduces the concept of restitution and respect for person.<sup>316</sup> This implies that justice as a virtue is natural to humanity.<sup>317</sup>

---

<sup>313</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 61; Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, 71-72. In philosophical tradition justice is divided into four categories: Retributive justice (punishment and reward), reparative justice (restitution); distributive justice (distribution of goods by state); commutative justice (fairness of exchanges between individuals). See Karen Lebacqz, “Justice,” in *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*, ed. Bernard Hoose (London: Cassell, 1998), 169.

<sup>314</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 1.

<sup>315</sup> John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971), 3.

<sup>316</sup> *ST II-II*, qq. 62 & 63.

<sup>317</sup> For furthering reading on the connection between virtue and natural law see Clifford G. Kossel, “Natural Law and Human Law (Ia IIae, 90-97),” in *Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 176-178.

The chief vice of justice is injustice with its annexed vices of reviling, tale bearing, cursing, cheating and lying, usury, etc. Aquinas explains these from questions sixty-four to seventy-eight in the *Summa*.

#### 1.5.4.2.3.3 *The Virtues of Fortitude and Temperance*

Aquinas names fortitude and temperance among cardinal virtues or what he calls “human virtues”.<sup>318</sup> While the first two cardinal virtues as we have seen perfect the will and intellect, these two last cardinal virtues concerned human passions. Hence we consider them together. Such virtues help control both the irascible and concupiscible powers of a person.<sup>319</sup> However, Aquinas accepts fortitude to be one of the gifts of the Holy Spirit and corresponds to the fourth beatitude.<sup>320</sup>

Fortitude otherwise called courage had a very limited conception prior to and during the time of Plato and Aristotle. These considered fortitude in military terms. But Aquinas broadened out the idea by way of the Ambrosian concept of courage: “Ambrose takes fortitude in a broad sense, as denoting firmness of mind in face of assaults of all kinds . . . For he that can stand firm in things that are most difficult to bear, is prepared, in consequence, to resist those which are less difficult.”<sup>321</sup> In this context there are two aspects to fortitude: Firstly, it is a general virtue denoting firmness of mind with respect to all virtues. Secondly, it denotes steadfastness in facing practical difficulties or dangers.<sup>322</sup> Aquinas notes that although fortitude is a passion it must conform its possessor to reason.<sup>323</sup> Yet fortitude may also enhance reason. The will according to Aquinas can be disinclined to follow that which is in

---

<sup>318</sup> *ST* II-II, qq.123. a. 1.

<sup>319</sup> *ST* I-II, q.57.a. 6.

<sup>320</sup> *ST* II-II, q.139. aa. 1 & 2.

<sup>321</sup> *ST* II-II, q.123. a. 2.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.*,a.1.

accordance with reason on account of some obstacles, requiring the virtue of fortitude.<sup>324</sup>

In Thomistic categories, virtues are considered in relations to the end. In this sense fortitude is a virtue of the end. Hence Aquinas introduces the concepts of fear, death, and endurance.<sup>325</sup> Fear is one of the obstacles that disavow the will from following reason. From this perspective, fortitude is the virtue that restrains fear and moderates daring.<sup>326</sup> Death is the greatest of bodily evils. For Aquinas fortitude is what we need in the end for all will have to die either through sickness, battle or martyrdom.<sup>327</sup>

Pieper suggests that the word fortitude presupposes vulnerability.<sup>328</sup> It means that people are subject to desires like sex, food, drink and the fear of death. But the specific character of fortitude is in suffering injuries in battle for the realization of the good. One of the distinctive features in Aquinas' treatment of fortitude is the introduction of the concept of ultimate good. Even though Aristotle argues in his *Ethics* that to be brave fortitude is a good in itself, Aquinas argues differently: "In overcoming danger, fortitude seeks not danger itself, but the realization of rational good."<sup>329</sup> Here he distinguishes proximate good and ultimate good. The proximate good agrees with Aristotle's identification of fortitude being the good itself but the ultimate good Aquinas links to God: "Accordingly, we must conclude that the brave man intends as his proximate end to reproduce in action a likeness of his habit, for he intends to act in accordance with his habit: but his remote end is happiness or God."<sup>330</sup>

---

<sup>324</sup> Ibid.

<sup>325</sup> For fear see *ST II-II*, q.125; for death see q. 123. a. 4; for endurance see q.123.a. 6

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., a. 3.

<sup>327</sup> Ibid., a. 5.

<sup>328</sup> Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, 117.

<sup>329</sup> *ST II-II*, q.125.a.2.ad.2.

<sup>330</sup> *ST II-II*, q.123.a. 7.

According to Aquinas fortitude cannot stand alone. He explains how it is linked to other virtues: It has to rely on superior virtues like prudence and justice. In this effort of Aquinas, we can see that he begins to fashion out the hierarchy existing between the virtues.<sup>331</sup> Therefore, the praise of fortitude depends on prudence and justice. Pieper sums it up in these words:

Under the direction of prudence, the good of man becomes compellingly evident. Justice primarily brings about the actual realization of this good. Fortitude by itself is not the primary realization of the good. But fortitude protects this realization or clears the road to it.<sup>332</sup>

However, we must note too that the exercise of other virtues will always need the virtue of fortitude. For example, for a judge to pass sentence to someone who is considered an influential person in the society, he needs courage.<sup>333</sup> Aquinas names some of the vices of fortitude, ambition, vainglory, pusillanimity or fear.<sup>334</sup>

Lastly, human desires must be governed by a *habitus* inclining them to suitable moderation, namely temperance. Temperance has a wide range of usage in both Greek and Latin. Primarily, the Greek usage implies “directing reason” in the widest sense. But in Aquinas’ usage as noted by Pieper, the primary and essential meaning of temperance is “to dispose various parts into one unified and ordered whole.”<sup>335</sup> Aquinas calls temperance the serenity of the spirit (*quies animi*).<sup>336</sup> Therefore, it signifies the realization of the inner order in oneself, differentiating it from other moral virtues.

---

<sup>331</sup> See *ST* II-II, q.136.2.ad.2.

<sup>332</sup> Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, 125.

<sup>333</sup> Peter Geach, *The Virtues* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977), 162.

<sup>334</sup> For further reading on these vices see *ST.*, II-II, qq. 131, 132,133, 135.

<sup>335</sup> *Ibid.*, 146.

<sup>336</sup> *ST.*, II-II, q.68.a.5.

It is commonly believed that temperance is a virtue completely against human inclinations or pleasures, because it is conceived as curtailment and repression of the passions. But Aquinas argues differently:

Nature inclines everything to whatever is becoming to it. Where man naturally desires pleasures that are becoming to him. Since, however, man as such is a rational being, it follows that those pleasures are becoming to man which are in accordance with reason. From such pleasures temperance does not withdraw him, but from those which are contrary to reason. Wherefore it is clear that temperance is not contrary to the inclination of human nature, but is in accord with it. It is, however, contrary to the inclination of the animal nature that is not subject to reason.<sup>337</sup>

The sensitive appetites of the body are good in themselves. But the reason and method by which they are pursued determines their rightness or wrongness. Hence, Aquinas calls temperance a virtue of moderation:

Temperance, which denotes a kind of moderation, is chiefly concerned with those passions that tend towards sensible goods, viz. desire and pleasure . . . Temperance directly moderates the passions of the concupiscible which tends towards good, as a consequence, it moderates all the other passions . . . Desire denotes an impulse of the appetite towards the object of pleasure, and this impulse needs control, which belongs to temperance.<sup>338</sup>

Temperance implies self-preservation not negation. This virtue according to Aquinas guards the person against perversion from within, and also protects one from the perversion from without. This virtue concerns the control of the bodily desires like sex, food and drinks etc. The modes for the achievement of temperance are chastity, continence, humility, gentleness and mildness, while the vices against this virtue are, unchastity, incontinence, pride, gluttony and so on.

By way of concluding this section, this thesis has shown the development of virtue ethics over the centuries reaching its apex with the systematic articulation by the scholastics of the late medieval era and especially Aquinas. We have seen that these

---

<sup>337</sup> *ST.*, II-II, q.141.a.1.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*, a. 3. Ad. 1 & 2.

developments have shown a movement in the conception of virtue from purely political and philosophical contexts to a valued theological context. The developments of virtue in the medieval era were more conceptual.<sup>339</sup> However, the theme of virtue as noted by Porter was still part of many literary works and was extensively being used to offer pastoral counselling.<sup>340</sup> Foundational to the above application of virtue was the understanding that whatever way virtue is considered either from a philosophical or theological perspective it is always connected to the good of the human person.

Unfortunately, the next historical period – the modern period – departed from the rich tradition of the schoolmen. After the systematisation of the earlier period, came a period of delineation and codification with the development of the confessional manuals centred on the seven deadly sins. These manuals truncated the highly systematic work of the scholastics. The Protestant Reformers like Martin Luther and John Calvin criticized the manuals and returned to the moral codes of the scriptures. The virtues then were less emphasised in the theological tradition and went into a period of decline. What preoccupied the minds of pastors and theologians was sin and as a result the commandments were more emphasized.<sup>341</sup> Pieper gives another reason: “It is true that the classic origins of the doctrine of virtue later made Christian critics suspicious of it. They warily regarded it as too philosophical and not Biblical enough. Thus, they preferred to talk about commandments and duties than about virtues.”<sup>342</sup> Concurrent with an over-emphasis on the law was a new preoccupation with sin particularly understood as a noncompliance to law.

---

<sup>339</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 94.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*, 29.

<sup>342</sup> Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues*, x.

### 1.5.5 *Virtue Ethics in the Modern Period (from Fifteenth to Nineteenth Century)*<sup>343</sup>

According to Porter the theological advancements of virtue was in decline with the advent of the modern period in the fifteenth century.<sup>344</sup> Due to the Reformation, the place of the virtues was undermined by two sources. Firstly, there were the objections of the Reformers themselves. Secondly the response of the counter-reformation as exemplified by Francisco Suárez (1548 –1617) and Hugo Grotius (1583-1645) who emphasised a more principled and so legal approach to the natural law.<sup>345</sup> Because of the shift in debate the virtues were relegated to the background in theological discourses.<sup>346</sup> Catholic Moral theology became primarily preoccupied with conversations on natural law and sin.

This period began with a criticism of scholasticism. For example, Grotius criticized the Aristotelian concept of the mean in passion and action. He argues that while the mean in action can be found, the mean in the passions seem implausible.<sup>347</sup> But elsewhere Grotius admits that some virtues keep the passions relatively under control hence we can talk of moderation. However, he argues that this is not the inherent activity of virtue but right reason. Although, Grotius admitted that “no antecedent stable set of rules or laws can substitute for the moral knowledge the virtuous agent possesses,”<sup>348</sup> later developments prioritised the law over character. Virtue then became subordinated to duty. This is well captured by John Locke in *An*

---

<sup>343</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 95. According to Porter, the modern period as used here stretches from the fifteenth century to the nineteenth century

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> See Terence Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, Vol. II: *from Suárez to Rousseau*, 1.

<sup>346</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 95.

<sup>347</sup> See J. B. Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 76.

<sup>348</sup> Ibid.

*Essay Concerning Human Understanding*: “By whatever standard soever we frame in our minds the ideas of virtues or vices . . . their rectitude, or obliquity, consists in the agreement with those patterns prescribed by some law.”<sup>349</sup> A later eighteenth century work corroborates Locke’s claims: “A virtuous man is one who has the habit of acting conformably to his duties.”<sup>350</sup>

According to Porter, this situation demanded for a new approach to virtues.<sup>351</sup> This gave birth to the moral-sense theory led by David Hume (1711-76). According to Hume moral judgment is based not on reason but on sentiments of approval and disapproval, feelings or dispositions.<sup>352</sup> Hume connects motives with virtues and differentiates between natural and artificial virtues based on the general claims that “we value virtuous actions only insofar as they express a virtuous character”.<sup>353</sup> Consequently, human action according to Hume is guided by feelings not reason. This is clearly stated in *Treatise On Human Nature*: “Reason is, and ought only to be the slave of the passions.”<sup>354</sup> According to Porter:

This represents a break with the dominant classical and medieval understanding of the virtues, according to which they are always at least informed by rational judgments even if they do not consist in knowledge or reasonableness alone. However, Hume does grant that one important class of virtue depends on reason indirectly, namely artificial virtues such as justice, which presuppose rational social conventions for their origin and exercise.<sup>355</sup>

---

<sup>349</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, Book II, XXVIII, 1689, 358.

<sup>350</sup> *Diderot’s Encyclopédie*, s.v. “Moralité”.

<sup>351</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 95.

<sup>352</sup> See Irwin, *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, 620.

<sup>353</sup> *Ibid.*, 641. See also Schneewind, *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Philosophy*, 365-369.

<sup>354</sup> David Hume, *A Treatise on Human Nature*, eBook [http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4705/4705-h/4705-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0086](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4705/4705-h/4705-h.htm#link2H_4_0086) (accessed September 10, 2014).

<sup>355</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 95.

The moral-sense theory seems to have also appealed to Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758), a puritan theologian.<sup>356</sup> Edwards in *The Nature of True Virtue* follows Hume to hold that moral judgments are based on sentiments not reason.<sup>357</sup> Like Hume, he also breaks away from the classical medieval conceptions of virtues informed by reason. Edwards understands virtue as “the beauty of those qualities and acts of the mind that are of moral nature, i.e. such as are attended with desert or worthiness of praise and blame.”<sup>358</sup> According to Edwards: “The nature of true virtue consists in a disposition to benevolence towards being in general; though such a disposition may arise exercises of love to particular beings, as objects are presented and occasions arise.”<sup>359</sup> In this context the being in general can be identified with God and particular beings by implication are other humans. For an individual to love God makes it possible to love another person. Therefore, true virtue does not arise from self-love but rather the love of God, a presupposition that counters the charge that virtue ethics is narcissistic.

It is to be noted that while the modern period writers like Hume and Edwards broke away from the classical tradition, they in some way continued with the tradition of Aquinas by giving the virtues a divine reality. However, the moral-sense approach by Hume and Edwards was inadequate in providing a comprehensive approach. As a result, from the beginning of the nineteenth century to the early part of the twentieth

---

<sup>356</sup> There are other moral philosophers and theologians on this period that are worth mentioning: Grotius (1583-1645), David Hume (1711-1776) and Friedrich Schleiermacher (1768-1834).

<sup>357</sup> Jonathan Edwards, *The Nature Of True Virtue*, <http://depts.washington.edu/lsearlec/TEXTS/EDWARDS/VIRTUE.HTM> (accessed September 10, 2014).

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

century virtue was not a theme that was prominent among philosophers and theologians.

### **1.5.6 Contemporary Era: A Challenge for a New Approach (from twentieth century to present)**

In the previous sections this thesis outlined the fact that the eclipse of the theme of virtues can be traced back to the overly legalistic emphasis on natural law of the Manualists and Casuists. In contrast, the late twentieth century can be regarded as an era of retrieval, and perhaps some modification of virtue ethics. Charles Curran in the foreword to a collection of readings on *Virtue* states:

Virtue is a most important subject in moral theology, but until a few decades ago it lived mostly in the shadows of the discipline. In recent decades, writing on virtue has re-emerged spectacularly in both philosophical and theological ethics. In the realm of Roman Catholic theological ethics . . . this return to the language of virtue finds its roots in the mid-twentieth-century turn to the subject.<sup>360</sup>

Recalling earlier sections of this chapter, there were two phases in this renewal. The first phase of the retrieval was dominated by the philosophical tradition, which we introduced in the first section of this thesis.<sup>361</sup> Within this tradition, the pioneering works of Elizabeth Anscombe, Georg Henrik von Wright, Peter Geach, and Alasdair MacIntyre are remarkable.<sup>362</sup>

Special attention is deserved by the works of Anscombe and MacIntyre, reaffirmed by B. Talbot in *Retrieval of Ethics*: “The two texts that are most widely cited as the starting points and the inspiration for the [virtue ethics] movement are Elizabeth Anscombe’s “Modern Moral Philosophy” and Alasdair MacIntyre’s “After

---

<sup>360</sup> Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam eds. *Readings in Moral Theology 16: Virtue* (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), ix.

<sup>361</sup> See Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 98.

<sup>362</sup> Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” 1-19; MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.,

Virtue.”<sup>363</sup> Correspondingly, D. Statman in “What is Virtue Ethics All About?” writes: “The Debate which inaugurated much of the renewed interest in the virtues began with Anscombe’s article, “Modern Moral Philosophy” (1958).”<sup>364</sup>

Anscombe in her article “Modern Moral Philosophy,” attacked the legalistic tradition called deontology and dangers of consequentialism by proposing neo-Aristotelian approach to virtue as the comprehensible substitute.<sup>365</sup> She argues:

Anyone who has read Aristotle’s *Ethics* and has also read modern moral philosophy must have been struck by the great contrasts between them. The concepts which are prominent among them moderns seem to be lacking or at any rate buried or far in the background, in Aristotle . . . It might be possible to advance to considering the concept “virtue” with which, I suppose, we should be beginning some sort of a study of Ethics.<sup>366</sup>

MacIntyre like Anscombe based his work primarily on Aristotle.<sup>367</sup> Unlike most moral philosophers, MacIntyre through most of his works beginning from *After Virtue* to his recent work *Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* argues that virtue theory provides a wider context of human teleology and dispositional history than action based ethics.<sup>368</sup> One of the distinguishing factors about MacIntyre’s approach is captured by Patterson: “His decision to formulate a

---

<sup>363</sup> B. Talbot, *Retrieval of Ethics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009), 2.

<sup>364</sup> D. Statman, “What is Virtue Ethics All About?” in *Virtue Ethics: A Critical Reader*, ed. D. Statman (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1997), 44.

<sup>365</sup> G. E. M. Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” in *The Collected Philosophical Papers of G. E. M. Anscombe Volume III: Ethics, Religion and Politics* (Minneapolis: University of Minneapolis Press, 1981), 37-38.

<sup>366</sup> Anscombe, “Modern Moral Philosophy,” 1, 12-3.

<sup>367</sup> Patterson, *Freedom, Virtue and Narrative: A Comparative Study of the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanley Hauerwas*.

<sup>368</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue; Dependent Rational Animals: Why Human Beings Need the Virtues* (London: Duckworth, 1999).

grounding of the virtues in terms broader than on the basis of an analysis of human nature.<sup>369</sup>

The second phase of the retrieval of virtues is theological. As named in section I, some twentieth century catholic theologians such as Fritz Tillmann and Bernard Häring recognised the necessity of such a renewal shortly before Vatican II.<sup>370</sup> These theologians first turned to Scripture as a central source and later to the theme of virtues. For example, Tillmann departed from the principle based approach to Scripture. In his book first published as *Der Meister Ruft (The Master Calls)* in 1934, he argues that the central theme in Christian moral life is discipleship, that is the imitation of Christ through the virtues.<sup>371</sup> We shall elaborate on this in chapter three of this thesis. Häring in *Law of Christ* written in 1963 argues that the Christian moral life cannot be reduced to only the observation of moral norms, but that the foundation of the Christian moral life is found in the virtues, precisely the theological virtues.<sup>372</sup> He explains that through the theological virtues we are placed in dialogue with God through Christ:

The theological virtues give to us an interior relationship to Christ, our Teacher, Redeemer, and Friend. They are the inner capacity, the divine invitation and obligation to imitate Christ, because Christ is for us the sole cause of this God-like life flowing from these virtues is nothing other than actual imitation of Christ, harkening to Christ, hoping in Christ, obediently loving Christ.<sup>373</sup>

Surprisingly, even after Vatican II the neglect of virtue ethics continued for quite a period. Some scholars like David Cloutier and William C. Mattison III have

---

<sup>369</sup> Patterson, *Freedom, Virtue and Narrative*, 19.

<sup>370</sup> There are protestant theologians whose contributions to the debate have been very powerful. For example Stanley Hauerwas.

<sup>371</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*.

<sup>372</sup> Häring, *The Law of Christ*, 3.

<sup>373</sup> *Ibid.*, 8.

recently observed the neglect in major theological works of the post-conciliar period of 1968-1993.<sup>374</sup> Major textbooks that were being used in seminary formation were devoid of the theme of virtues. For example, the fifteen volumes of *Readings in Moral Theology* edited by Charles Curran and Richard McCormick overlooked virtue ethics, until the sixteenth volume edited by Curran and Lisa Fullam titled *Virtue*. Other resource books exemplified the same lacuna such as Richard Gula's *Reason Informed by Faith* (1989) and Timothy O'Connell's *Principles for a Catholic Morality* (1990).<sup>375</sup>

A significant new direction was marked out by Servais Pinckaers in his *The Sources of Christian Ethics* (1995). The same year Gula utilises character and virtue ethics in *Ethics for Pastoral Ministry* – of which a second edition, *Just Ministry* was published in 2010.<sup>376</sup> O'Connell also shifts towards virtue ethics in a later work entitled *Making Disciples*.<sup>377</sup> Cloutier and Mattison III further accuses Germain Grisez in his *The Way of the Lord Jesus* vol. 1 of the same neglect.<sup>378</sup> However, Grisez in a later volume briefly integrates virtue. Very recently the theological landscape has been filled with works on the virtues. Some works draw together older pieces under the new organising principle of virtue. For example, Benedict XVI's

---

<sup>374</sup> David Cloutier and William C. Mattison III, "Review Essay: The Resurgence of Virtue In Recent Moral Theology," *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 229.

<sup>375</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*; Timothy O'Connell, *Principles for a Catholic Morality* (San Francisco: Harper One, 1990). Going through my nine years of formation in the seminary nothing was said about the virtues. I learned about the virtues during my Catechism years as a kid.

<sup>376</sup> Richard M. Gula, *Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers* (New York: Paulist Press, 2010).

<sup>377</sup> Timothy O'Connell, *Making Disciples: A Handbook of Christian Moral Formation* (New York: Crossroads, 1998).

<sup>378</sup> Cloutier and Mattison III, "REVIEW ESSAY: The Resurgence of Virtue In Recent Moral Theology," 229. See Germain Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus, Vol. I: Christian Moral Principles* (Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1983).

*The Virtues* (2010), edited by Jacquelyn Lindsey, collects some of Benedict's speeches where he references virtues.<sup>379</sup>

Most recently, Michael W. Austin in *Virtues in Action: New Essays in Applied Virtue Ethics* (2013) puts together well written articles on virtue ethics encompassing areas like professional virtue, social virtue, environmental virtue.<sup>380</sup> The implication of the above is that the contemporary approaches on virtue ethics is reflected not only in theological fields but also in the philosophical, economic and social spheres of life.<sup>381</sup>

The theologians under study in this thesis – Romanus Cessario, James Keenan and Joseph Kotva – are contemporary theologians who have shown great interest in the field by elucidating different aspects of virtue ethics to fit coherently into different aspects of moral theology. For example, Cessario argues that the moral life is based on the traditional virtues of Christian literature and wisdom from the Thomistic tradition. He therefore offers an interpretation that seeks meaning by returning to original sources, often termed *Ressourcement*.<sup>382</sup> Keenan privileges virtue ethics as a method

---

<sup>379</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *The Virtues*, collected and ed. Jacquelyn Lindsey (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010).

<sup>380</sup> Michael W. Austin, *Virtues in Action: New Essays in Applied Virtue Ethics* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

<sup>381</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.*, ix. See also Maria Carl, "Law, Virtue and Happiness in Aquinas' Moral Theory," *The Thomist* 61, 1 (January 1997): 425; Robert B. Kruschwitz and Robert C. Roberts eds. *The virtues: Contemporary Essays on Moral character* (Belmont: Wadsworth, 1987), 237-63; James F. Kenaan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," *Louvain Studies* 30, 3 (2005): 182. This is the basic idea that Kotva reflects in his book, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 5. On the economic and social life see Robert Keen, "Virtue is a Necessity," *Tablet* (8 November 2008): 4-5. Interestingly, the renewed interest on virtue is again reflected in best-sellers: Andrew M. Greeley, "The Cardinal Virtues" (New York: Warner Books, 1990). Kotva cites another best-seller, William J. Bennett, "The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories" (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993).

<sup>382</sup> This shall be further explained in chapter two.

of building bridges between Scripture and moral theology.<sup>383</sup> More importantly, he develops a concept of virtue that is relational in nature because he considers the human person as the center of normative ethics. And Joseph J. Kotva appeals to the Gospel of Matthew and Paul's letters to express the concerns of virtue towards personal and communal growth.<sup>384</sup>

In sum, contemporary approach to virtue ethics is distinct from other eras for a number of reasons. Firstly, the theological position taken by contemporary theologians are intended to counter action-based ethics. Secondly, Anscombe, MacIntyre, Haring, Tillmann and others argue that virtue ethics provides a wider field for human flourishing than principled-based ethics. Finally, another distinctive feature of this era is the extension of virtue ethics to other fields of study like medical ethics, legal and media ethics.

## **1.6 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter began by way of reading backwards: from where we are. It justified the renewal called by Vatican II and argued that virtue ethics is an integral part of the renewal. It also thematically explicated the eclipse and retrieval of the theology of virtues. This enabled us to place into proper perspective virtue ethics within the general historical settings. The history of virtue ethics has been drawn from both classical moral tradition and theological traditions: the cardinal virtues drawn upon from Plato and Aristotle while the theological virtues from the Augustinian, Ambrosian and Thomistic traditions. This means that the history of virtue ethics encompasses diverse approaches. According to Porter: "It would be a mistake to assume that there is one definitive form of virtue ethics, or even that all virtue

---

<sup>383</sup> Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 24.

<sup>384</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*.

ethicists would agree about the meaning and implications of the concept of virtue.”<sup>385</sup>

The implication of this statement is substantiated by the different approaches to virtue ethics in contemporary theology. This is because there is an extension of virtue ethics into sexual ethics, medical ethics, pastoral life, legal and media ethics, business ethics etc. Therefore, virtue ethics provides a wider framework for the application of the will, dispositions of character, prudential judgment and even the passion in various fields of human study.<sup>386</sup>

One of the great strengths of the history of virtue ethics is that unlike its rivals deontology and consequentialism, it has a long history of interaction with moral theology by its engagement with Wisdom literature in the Old Testament, the ethical teaching of Paul in the New Testament and the systematization of Aquinas.<sup>387</sup> However, the interaction has not been without lapses.

---

<sup>385</sup> Porter, “Virtue Ethics,” 99.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

<sup>387</sup> Patterson, *Freedom, Virtue and Narrative*, 1.

## CHAPTER TWO

### ROMANUS CESSARIO: A THEOLOGICAL-ANTHROPOLOGICAL APPROACH

#### 2.0 Introduction

Born in Boston, Massachusetts in 1944, Romanus Cessario is an American theologian, presently serving as a professor of systematic theology in St. John's seminary, Brighton, Massachusetts, and at the Theological Institute of Fribourg, Switzerland, specializing in sacramental and moral theology.

Of particular interest to Cessario is the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas. He serves as an Associate Editor, *The Thomist* (1980 to date) and a member of the Advisory Board, Center for Thomistic Studies, University of St. Thomas (1999 to date). He is also General Editor of Catholic Moral Thought Series, The Catholic University of America Press (1995 to date). As a moral theologian, he is a visiting Professor at Pontifical John Paul II Institute for Studies on Marriage and Family American campus, Washington, D.C, Australian campus, East Melbourne, and Victoria. He is a member of and has held offices within many academic organizations including the Academy of Catholic Theology (2007 to date), the Ramsey Colloquium, Religion and Public Life Institute (1998 to date) and the Society of Christian Ethics (1994 to date).

In the course of this chapter, I will first situate Cessario as a theologian and then examine his over-all theological structure on the virtues. Thereafter, I will outline themes that will help articulate the community or relational value of virtue ethics in the current moral landscape.

## 2.1 *Situating Romanus Cessario*

As outlined in chapter one, contemporary scholarly study has identified lapses in the way moral theology was practiced over the recent centuries.<sup>1</sup> One of those lacunae was in the area of virtue ethics. Cessario ascertains: “The history of the treatment of Catholic moral theology of moral virtues, . . . exhibit uneven patterns of interest.”<sup>2</sup> He goes further to state:

During the four centuries that preceded the opening of the Second Vatican Council in 1962, happiness and virtue and the developed or infused ‘connaturality’ that unites them in the human person were not the themes that dominated Catholic Moral teaching. Moral teachers of course spoke about eternal happiness, but not as an end or object that shapes concrete human conduct and that can be experienced, at least in some measure, here and now by those who live a virtuous life. They rather spoke about eternal happiness as a future reward for right conduct. Moral teachers did write about the virtues, but not as the preferred way to describe the requirements of the everyday moral life. Nor is there much evidence that the Christian people received instruction on how to appreciate virtue’s ‘connaturality’ . . . The Christian virtues were displaced from moral theology . . . The displacement of the virtues from moral theology changed the way Christians thought about the moral life.<sup>3</sup>

Cessario argues more succinctly:

---

<sup>1</sup> Gallagher, *Time Past, Time Present*, esp. chaps 1 & 2.

<sup>2</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 153. Some of his published works are: *The Christian Faith and the Theological life* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1996); *An Introduction to Moral theology* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2001), *The Vision and the Examined Life*. London: Continuum, 2002; “The Meaning of Virtue in the Christian Moral Life: Its significance for Human life Issues,” *The Thomist* 53, 1 (January 1989): 173-196. These works are a representation of his entire body of writings on virtue ethics.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 159-160. Cessario draws upon his historical details on the shift or lapse also from Servais Pinckaers two principal works: *Sources of Christian Ethics*, trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of American Press, 1995); *Morality: The Catholic View*, trans. Michael Sherwin (Indiana: St. Augustine’s Press, 2001).

From the Council of Trent until the Second Vatican Council, the casuist systems, which we may provisionally define as a morality based on the formation of conscience, and the obligation to obey duly established norms, largely eclipsed the virtue tradition of moral theology that guided Roman Catholic moral theology since its beginning in the patristic era.<sup>4</sup>

This context helps to explain the depth and urgency of the pastoral direction, which Vatican II initiated, in the renewal of moral theology as a whole and the retrieval of virtue ethics in particular.<sup>5</sup>

Therefore, Cessario sets out to respond to the on-going renewed interest in virtue ethics, one that has been sustained by developments in several disciplines particularly the psychological sciences, philosophy and theology itself.<sup>6</sup> Cessario delineates his primary aims as follows: First, to illustrate that the moral life is based on traditional virtues in Christian literature and instructions.<sup>7</sup> He proceeds on the supposition that the virtuous life is revealed through eternal law, natural law and gospel law of grace.<sup>8</sup> Secondly, Cessario seeks to explore in all his works the value of theological instruction about the virtues in appreciating, protecting and promoting human life among different religious faiths and other people of good will.<sup>9</sup> Thirdly, to provide valuable tools about the virtues to students at all levels and to provide meaningful dynamics for the moral life of Christians in general.<sup>10</sup>

---

<sup>4</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, 229.

<sup>5</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 3.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 156. Russell Hittinger, "Natural Law and Catholic Moral Theology," in *The First Grace: Rediscovering the Natural Law in a Post-Christian World* (Wilmington: ISI Books, 2003).

<sup>9</sup> *Ibid.*, ix.

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*, x.

Cessario's general framework on the virtues is drawn from the theological system of St. Thomas Aquinas. He writes: "Although the theology of the virtues presented . . . draws upon many resources, the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas remains the central influence. In the thirteenth century, Aquinas distinguished himself by developing a moral theology of the virtues."<sup>11</sup> Of Aquinas, Charles Curran observes that: "there is a persistent tension between philosophy and theology in the writings and legacy of Thomas Aquinas."<sup>12</sup> This trend is depicted in the various interpretations and approaches of Thomistic ethics on the virtues.<sup>13</sup> For example, "Jean Porter in her 1990 book *The Recovery of Virtue* deals only with the philosophical aspect of Aquinas and brackets the theological."<sup>14</sup> In comparison, Cessario in his 1991 book *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* emphasizes the theological aspect of Thomistic notion of virtues.<sup>15</sup> However, Aquinas's theological ethics can be harmonized with his philosophical ethics.

In my effort to situate Cessario, I consider him as a primary interpreter of Aquinas. Porter in a recent article criticizes Cessario for being too faithful to Aquinas: "While I find this book *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, to be illuminating in many ways, however, he does seem to me to assume too quickly that Aquinas's

---

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>12</sup> Charles E. Curran, "Virtue: The Catholic Tradition Today," in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue*, ed., Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 52.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Jean Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue: Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics* (Louisville: Westminster, 1990).

<sup>15</sup> See Curran, "Virtue: The Catholic Tradition Today," 52-53; Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*.

moral theory is closed to any further development.”<sup>16</sup> Yet as Aidan Nichols argues in “Thomism and the *Nouvelle Theologie*,”: “The job of Thomas’s interpreters was not merely to retrieve his spirit but to integrate issues of contemporary import into his universal verity.”<sup>17</sup> This is the exactly what Cessario does as he interprets Aquinas.

Cessario may be described as a “*Ressourcement* Thomist.” *Ressourcement* is a twentieth Catholic movement that has had a powerful impact on contemporary Catholic theology.<sup>18</sup> *Ressourcement* is a French neologism with no corresponding English word. According to Gabriel Flynn in an article “The Twentieth-Century Renaissance in Catholic Theology” the word was first coined by French poet and social critic Charles Péguy (1873-1914).<sup>19</sup> It is a movement marked by “a return to sources, or renewal through return to sources”. It is a movement according to Deem that began with some Catholic scholars in the early part of the twentieth century to return to the first interpreters of Christian revelation, the Church Fathers and consequently Aquinas who heavily relied on them.<sup>20</sup> Therefore, the renewal of theology entails a return to

---

<sup>16</sup> Jean Porter, “The Fundamental Option, Grace, and the Virtue of Charity,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue*, ed., Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 186 note 17.

<sup>17</sup> Aidan Nichols, “Thomism and the *Nouvelle Theologie*,” *The Thomist*, 64 (2000): 13-14.

<sup>18</sup> Michael Deem, “Culture and Theology: The *Ressourcement* Movement (Part 1)” [vox-nova.com/2008/03/30/culture-and-theology-ressourcement-movement-part-1](http://vox-nova.com/2008/03/30/culture-and-theology-ressourcement-movement-part-1) (accessed August 15, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> Gabriel Flynn, “The Twentieth-Century Renaissance in Catholic Theology,” in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology* ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4.

<sup>20</sup> Deem, “Culture and Theology.” There are progenitors to this movement but those who gave the movement a definitive shape are; Francisco Suarez, Domingo Bañez, and John of St. Thomas. See Jose Pereira, *Suarez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2007). Later on the works of Maurice Blondel, *Action (1893): Essay on a Critique of life and Science of Practice*, trans. Oliva Blanchette (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984); Pierre Rousselot, *The Intellectualism of Saint Thomas*, trans. James E. O’Mahoney (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935) and Joseph Maréchal, *A Maréchal Reader*, trans. Ed.

roots in theology in the writings of the early Church Fathers, in order to understand their basic ideas and interpret them into contemporary theology and world.<sup>21</sup>

One of the great figures of the *ressourcement* movement was Henri de Lubac, and in particular his work entitled *Catholicism*. What makes de Lubac stand out among others is: “The conviction that the treasury of Patristic theology does not wear thin along the historical terrain traversed by Christianity and that Christianity cannot meet the exigencies of modern times without rediscovering its essence through return to its sources in the church Fathers.”<sup>22</sup> In fact Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger wrote in the forward of the aforementioned book: “De Lubac makes visible to us in a new way the fundamental intuition of Christian faith so that from this inner core all the particular elements appear in a new light . . . whoever reads de Lubac’s book will see how much more relevant theology is the more it returns to its center and draws from its deepest sources.”<sup>23</sup>

Cessario returns to two invaluable sources in Christian history, namely, the early Church Fathers and Thomas Aquinas. Stephen M. Fields, citing Marcellino D’Ambrosio, in an article “*Ressourcement* and the Retrieval of Thomism for the Contemporary World,” identified in Thomas a similar quality to the Church Fathers: “Like the Fathers of the church whom the movement pledged to revive, Thomas ‘held theology, spirituality, and pastoral practice in a dynamic and vital unity’, even as he

---

Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970). For a comprehensive historical development of the movement see Flynn and Murray eds., *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, 1-289.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> Michael Deem, Part II: The *Ressourcement* Movement: Henri de Lubac [percaritatem.com/2006/10/25/part-ii-ressourcement-movement-henri-de-lubac/](http://percaritatem.com/2006/10/25/part-ii-ressourcement-movement-henri-de-lubac/) (accessed August 15, 2013).

<sup>23</sup> Henri de Lubac, *Catholicism*, trans. Lancelot C. Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988).

maintained a dialogue with the currents of his time.”<sup>24</sup> A close reading of the works of Cessario reveals the extent of this retrieval.

The categorization of Cessario as a *Ressourcement* Thomist is also made in a recent book titled *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments and the Moral Life*. Reinhard Hütter and Matthew Levering in the introduction of this book capture: “The present volume honours Romanus Cessario by witnessing to the renewal of Thomistic theology.”<sup>25</sup> The editors indicate the role Cessario has played in the endeavour to retrieve the thoughts of Aquinas: “Realizing much sooner, than many others that *ressourcement* does not dispense with, but in fact requires, Thomism, he figures as one of the truly influential theologians of our time.”<sup>26</sup> Cessario himself declares: “One can practice a sound moral theology by employing fully and honestly the classical sources that from the beginning have nourished the discipline, and at the same time honour the magisterium as a guide on contemporary problems and issues.”<sup>27</sup> Cessario again indicates that sources from the New Testament, early Church Fathers notably St. Augustine and Medieval Scholastics especially Aquinas are credible in this endeavour.<sup>28</sup>

With regard to virtue ethics therefore, this method will lead Cessario to utilise the works of early church Fathers.<sup>29</sup> For example in his book *The Moral Virtues and*

---

<sup>24</sup> Stephen M. Fields, “*Ressourcement* and the Retrieval of Thomism for the Contemporary World,” in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 355.

<sup>25</sup> Reinhard Hütter and Matthew Levering eds., *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments and the Moral Life, Essays in Honour of Romanus Cessario* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 1.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 3

<sup>27</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, xv.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*

*Theological Ethics*, Cessario argues that the subject of virtue ethics in the Christian moral life is given its first sustained treatment by the fourth century apologist Lactantius in his work entitled *Divine Institutiones*.<sup>30</sup> In book six, chapter five, Lactantius argues that virtue is an interior reality, which shapes human capacities to perform good actions. It is a property of each individual: virtue is altogether our own, for it depends upon the will of doing that good.<sup>31</sup> He makes a distinction between virtue and knowledge: “Knowledge cannot be virtue, because it is not within us, but it comes from without.”<sup>32</sup> Therefore, the knowledge of good and evil in itself is not virtue. Virtue is in the very performance of good acts and the avoidance of evil acts: “Yet knowledge is so united with virtue, that knowledge precedes virtue, and virtue follows knowledge because knowledge is of no avail unless it is followed by action.”<sup>33</sup>

Another early Church Father that Cessario cites in the development of his virtue ethics is St. Augustine. One of Augustine’s most cited texts is *On The Free Choice of the Will*, in which Augustine introduces the topic of virtue ethics and discusses the virtues in relation to the eternal law, reason and wisdom.<sup>34</sup> In his attempt to explain how the human person comprehends and applies both eternal and temporal laws, he

---

<sup>30</sup> Ibid. See also Lucius Caелиus Firmianus Lactantius, *De Opificio Dei*, Chapter 12; Lactantius, Complete Works, trans. William Fletcher, in *The Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vol. 21-22 (Edinburgh, 1871), republished as *The Ante-Nicene Fathers*, Vol. 7 (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1899-1900); *Divine Institutes*, trans. With introduction and notes by Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003).

<sup>31</sup> Lactantius, *Ante-Nicene Fathers*, vol. 7, tran. William Fletcher and ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe (Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886), chap. 5. See also Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 1-2.

<sup>32</sup> Ibid.

<sup>33</sup> Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> St. Augustine, *On Free Choice of the Will*, Bk. 1.

claims that both laws provide pattern and guidance to the will in making choices.<sup>35</sup> But he adds that this dialectic is not automatic, for there exist possibilities of going astray. In his opinion this is the point where the cardinal virtues come into play. Augustine maintains that it is the will that turns out to be decisive in determining whether reason the higher portion of the human being or the desires or the appetites or passions that prevail.<sup>36</sup> This is the point where Cessario departs from Augustine: “Virtue implies more than the will to commit a virtuous action. Authentic virtue exists only when the human person possesses a certain interior conformity of both the cognitive and the appetitive powers to the purpose or goals of a virtuous life.”<sup>37</sup>

Augustine again brings in another possible perfection of the human person namely wisdom. While Augustine treats wisdom to be wider than prudence, Cessario systematically harmonizes them but qualifies wisdom as Christian wisdom.<sup>38</sup> He holds that while practical reason intervenes at particular moments of moral choice, their normative character derives from sources which remain a priori, and therefore independent of cumulative human experience and inclinations.<sup>39</sup> But on the other hand:

Christian wisdom develops in an individual, at least in part, as a result of both inclination and experience. Thus, Aquinas insists that the moral virtues and prudence operate according to a kind of synergy, that is they exercise a causal influence on each other. As a result of this synergy of prudence and the virtues, Christian wisdom, in accord with *lex aeterna*, really enters into and shapes the appetitive life of the individual.<sup>40</sup>

In other instances Cessario treats wisdom and prudence independently:

“Prudence, even though a virtue of the mind, operates differently than the virtues of

---

<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 78.

<sup>38</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 77.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid.

<sup>40</sup> Ibid.

the speculative intellect, wisdom, science and understanding.”<sup>41</sup> Prudence therefore operates as a virtue in connection with the inclinations of the human person to achieve a goal.

The reading of Thomas in alignment with the Church Fathers identifies Cessario as a *Ressourcement* Thomist. But the emphasis on Thomas himself also marks Cessario as a realist moral theologian. According to David Brink in “Moral Realism and the Sceptical Arguments from Disagreement and Queerness,” moral realism is the metaphysical claim that there are objective moral facts that imply true moral propositions.<sup>42</sup> For Cessario such metaphysical and moral realism is epitomised in the tradition of St. Aquinas.<sup>43</sup>

Cessario is more specific than Brink when he argues that moral realism begins with the assumption that we can know reality.<sup>44</sup> Aquinas in *Summa Theologica* writes: “The first act of human intellect is to know being, namely a reality as the first and proper object of the understanding, just as sound is the first and proper object of hearing, the sight is the first and proper object of our eyes.”<sup>45</sup>

---

<sup>41</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>42</sup> David Brink, “Moral Realism and the Sceptical Arguments from Disagreement and Queerness,” in *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*, ed. Louis P. Pojman (California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1989), 421. Ibid., 1. See also Franklin I. Gamwell, “Moral Realism and Religion,” *Journal of Religion* 73 (1993): 479-495.

<sup>43</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, 17-22. See S.W. Blackburn, “Moral Realism,” in *Morality and Moral Reasoning: Five Essays in Ethics*, ed. John Casey (London: Methuen, 1971), 101-124.

<sup>44</sup> Jim Wishloff, “The Land of Realism and the Shipwreck of Idea-ism: Thomas Aquinas and Milton Friedman on the Social Responsibilities of Business,” *Journal of Business Ethics* 85 (2009): 3.

<sup>45</sup> *ST* q. 5, a.2

Philosophical and moral ethicists may have a more limited view about moral realism, paving a way to confusion.<sup>46</sup> But Thomistic moral realism according to Cessario: “Provides the most promising way to overcome the confusions and some of the characteristic of much of Christian ethics.”<sup>47</sup> Cessario himself claims that in order to understand the moral life in line with the church’s teachings one has to have recourse to the moral realism of Aquinas.<sup>48</sup> Cessario thus offers us four features of realist moral theology within the Thomist tradition.<sup>49</sup>

Firstly, a realist theology according to the Thomistic tradition has and is derived from one source namely *sacra doctrina*, which refers to the nature of divine teaching itself. According to Aquinas *sacra doctrina* both treats divine realities and regulates human ways of acting.<sup>50</sup> Secondly, moral theology is a science of faith. God’s truthfulness alone, as mediated through the witness of Scripture and Tradition and safeguarded by the Magisterium ensures the authenticity of the revealed teaching about morals. Thirdly, realist moral theology is concerned with explaining the good ends of human flourishing and not to expound whatever ecclesiastical pronouncements say about them. Fourthly, all forms of moral realism must reflect the central place of the Holy Spirit in the moral life of the believer.<sup>51</sup> Thus, the whole theological framework of Cessario is built upon these features of a realist theology. Cessario concludes:

Moral theology must first recognize ‘the principles of the moral order which spring from human nature itself’ as to many reflections of God’s

---

<sup>46</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, 1, footnote 1.

<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid., 17-22.

<sup>50</sup> *ST Ia*, q. 1, a. 4.

<sup>51</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, 17-22.

purposes and designs for the world- what Aquinas calls the Eternal Law. Likewise, although moral realism accords to human persons the highest dignity in the created order, it reserves to God the highest dignity simply speaking. Therefore, realist moral theology makes divine wisdom, not human reason, the ultimate measure of created morality, so that while right reason plays an important role in the development of a virtue-centered life, rationalizations about human conduct do not.<sup>52</sup>

From the foregoing, we can see how Aquinas remains a central influence to Cessario. As seen in chapter one, Aquinas provided a profound and new synthesis in theological reflection especially on the virtues<sup>53</sup> According to Cessario, such a synthesis supported the immense interest in Aquinas on the virtues in medieval era and today.<sup>54</sup>

Hütter and Levering also observe the influence Cessario has had in promoting the Thomistic tradition.<sup>55</sup> He has been involved in a number of other publications in order to further disseminate the work of Aquinas.<sup>56</sup> Cessario in his work *A Short History of Thomism* reiterates the relevance of the Thomistic tradition in the present enquiry on virtue ethics.<sup>57</sup> And in general: “Thomism remains an active intellectual tradition in both secular and religious circles.”<sup>58</sup>

Another key feature of Cessario’s work is how it is placed at the service of faith. Hence, Cessario examines and applies the virtues in the light of Christian faith recognizing the impact the church has had over society and its members:

---

<sup>52</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 6-7.

<sup>53</sup> See Thomas Franklin O’Meara, *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997), 20.

<sup>54</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 6.

<sup>55</sup> Hütter and Levering eds., *Ressourcement Thomism*, 16.

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*, 17. See Cessario, “Theology at Fribourg,” *The Thomist* 51 (1987): 329.

<sup>57</sup> Romanus Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism* (Washington, D. C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003). First published in French and later in Italian with the title: *IL Tomismo E I Tomisti*.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 12

For the Catholic Church is by the will of Christ the teacher of truth. It is her duty to proclaim and teach with authority the truth which is Christ and, at the same time, to declare and confirm by her authority the principles of the moral order which spring from human nature itself.<sup>59</sup>

An example of such an influence in his work is in the difference between the two editions of *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* in which the second includes the authoritative texts of church documents like *Veritatis Splendor* and *Deus Caritas Est*. It also supports his grounding of moral theology in *sacra doctrina*. Therefore, Cessario connects his explication of the virtues with papal documents and especially documents that address fundamental questions of moral theology such as *Veritatis Splendor*. Such an approach responds to the criticism that virtue ethics ignores the authority of Biblical and Church teaching. Cessario does engage virtue ethics with scripture especially the New Testament. However, he has been criticised for providing a poor engagement.<sup>60</sup> But most importantly, Cessario shows the interconnection between the personal, communal, and ecclesial life.<sup>61</sup>

Alongside the conceptions of Cessario as *Ressourcement* Thomist and a realist moral theologian Cessario seeks to disclose a virtuous life that is theologically founded upon Christ. It is a claim Cessario himself makes: “To seek a warrant for this claim leads one to the central message that Christ came to reveal to the world. It is the incarnate Son who announces that the Blessed Trinity exists as both the final cause of all human activity and the true perfection of the human person.”<sup>62</sup>

---

<sup>59</sup> Vatican II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, no. 14.

<sup>60</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 64.

<sup>61</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues and the Examined Life*, especially chapters three and five.

<sup>62</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral theology*, 212.

In the next section, I shall examine how Cessario understands human nature, and shall seek to unpack his theological reflections on the virtues. Cessario brings a real depth in his interpretation of Aquinas in an era of renewed interest in the virtues. Drawing upon the published works cited earlier, this thesis will give an expository background towards understanding Cessario's theology of the virtues.

## **2.2 Over-all Theological Structure**

According to Cessario, the current debates about the principles of moral theology; the place of Magisterial teachings, the rights of individuals to make choices have challenged and somewhat changed the way a Christian may examine his or her conscience.<sup>63</sup> The presuppositions of Revisionism and casuistry remain rule-centered no matter how they are presented today.<sup>64</sup> Conversely, a new approach is urgent in current moral reflection. This motivated Cessario's publication of 1991 edition of *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*. Here, he illustrates a moral life based on the traditional virtues in Christian literature and instructions. Furthermore, Cessario argues for the theological aspects of the Thomistic idea that the Christian moral virtues are infused and not acquired.<sup>65</sup> He argues again that since virtue is called by Aristotle and Aquinas a "*habitus* of acting according to reason", when something is "against reason" it is in its most fundamental sense against virtue too.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>63</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2-3.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid., 3. Cessario gives an elaborate explanation to the revisionist and casuist outlook. See his works, "Casuistry and Revisionism: Structural Similarities in Method and Content," in *Humanae Vitae: 20 anno dopo, Atti dell II Congresso Internazionale di Teologia Morale* (Milano: Edizioni Ares, 1989), 385-409; *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 229-242.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> See *ST I-II* q. 64.a.1.

The claims Cessario makes are from a fundamental morality that explains why a life of both faith and reason leads invariably to a virtuous life and consequently perfect happiness. His chief concern in this book is the moral virtues. In chapter seven of the second edition he examines some official church documents that bear on both the cardinal and theological virtues.<sup>67</sup> Cessario affirms: “Drawing on these documents that interest religious and all people of good will, the new concluding chapter aims to illustrate the perennial value of theological instruction about the moral virtues for safeguarding human life and society.”<sup>68</sup> The difference between the two editions typifies the dynamism of thought and faithfulness to the church teaching. However there are similarities. In both editions, Cessario discusses important topics like personality, *habitus* and its development, character and growth in the Christian life, *communio* and the moral life and many other topics. Cessario discusses the theoretical framework of virtue ethics in these books by introducing the reader to the original synthesis of theological ethics.<sup>69</sup>

It is in another work, entitled *The Virtues or the Examined Life*, that Cessario treats the seven virtues individually. What runs through them all is that Cessario examines the basic features of the Christian moral life within the Person of Christ who is the norm for judging the Christian moral action. He argues that the vocation of the Christian is in transforming the *seculum* by a virtuous life, a point stressed by Pope John Paul II in the encyclical *Christifideles laici*.<sup>70</sup> Cessario unequivocally argues that

---

<sup>67</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ix.

<sup>68</sup> Ibid.

<sup>69</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>70</sup> See Cessario, *The Virtues and the Examined Life*, vi.

every human action streams from the person's union with Christ who is virtue personified.<sup>71</sup>

Consequently, this study identifies Cessario's general structure to be anchored upon a theology of participation. The theology of participation was originally developed from Platonic tradition, signifying the derivation of temporal diversity from eternal unity and the structural dependence of the many on the one.<sup>72</sup> But as used in Christian tradition especially by the church Fathers and Scholastics, the concept means the dependence of creatures on the creator in the order of efficient, exemplary and final causality.<sup>73</sup> However, there developed a Thomistic notion to the concept of participation from the concept of *Esse* as the *Actus essendi* that is participation by similitude and composition.<sup>74</sup> To connect this principle to the virtues Aquinas asserts that human intuitive knowledge of the first principles resembles Angelic "Intellection" while man's more characteristic knowledge is reasoning whereby he reaches out to reality through the moral virtues.<sup>75</sup> Therefore, the excellent participation is seen in Christ's sharing of human nature: "God not only renewed the human race but gave humanity the power to become partakers of divinity through the grace of Christ."<sup>76</sup> Similarly, Cessario examines virtues from the theological-anthropological standpoint that begins and is sustained in Christ.

In another article entitled "The Meaning of Virtue in the Christian Moral Life: Its significance for Human life Issues", Cessario unpacks the implications of a virtue-

---

<sup>71</sup> *Ibid.*, vii.

<sup>72</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Participation."

<sup>73</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>74</sup> See *ST I*, q.4.ad.3.

<sup>75</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 47.a 5.

<sup>76</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v. "Participation."

centered life on morality for difficult issues in bioethics.<sup>77</sup> He examines several themes in contemporary moral theology, discussing proportionate reason and the ethics of personal responsibility. He articulates the fact that the church has a role in leading people to the fullest knowledge of God.<sup>78</sup> This explains his inclusion of a new chapter on *Veritatis Splendor and Moral Virtues* in his second edition of *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* as highlighted earlier.

The naming of Cessario's overall theological structure makes it possible to see his movement in locating virtue in the whole of human experience. I shall proceed to examine how virtue envelops the human reality in nature according to Cessario.

### **2.3 Understanding Virtue in Human Nature: Natural and Gospel Laws**

According to Aquinas:

Virtue is natural to us in respect to specific nature insofar as certain naturally known principles in regard to both thought (*intellectus*) and action (*synderesis*) are in our reason naturally which are like the seeds of intellectual and moral virtue, and insofar as there is in the will a certain appetite for good in conformity with reason.<sup>79</sup>

For Cessario, Aquinas acknowledges the reality of a more common but general instinct for virtue as part of the human experience.<sup>80</sup> But he goes further to comment that such a human nature requires moral development in order to form these motivations for

---

<sup>77</sup> More needs to be developed between virtue and bioethics.

<sup>78</sup> Romanus Cessario, "The Meaning of Virtue in the Christian Moral Life: Its significance for Human life Issues," *The Thomist* 53, 1 (January 1989): 173-196.

<sup>79</sup> *ST* I-II, q. 63, a. 2. See Jonathan Barnes, *The Complete Works of Aristotle*, (Princeton 1984) *Physics II*. Ch1; Angela M. McKay, *The Infused And Acquired Virtues In Aquinas' Moral Philosophy: A Dissertation*. Graduate Program in Philosophy Notre Dame, Indiana April 2004 [etd.nd.edu/ETD/Theses/available/etd-0452004-125337/unrestricted/McKayAMO52004.pdf](http://etd.nd.edu/ETD/Theses/available/etd-0452004-125337/unrestricted/McKayAMO52004.pdf) (accessed May 16, 2013).

<sup>80</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 98.

virtue.<sup>81</sup> This moral development is evident among Christian apologists who were tenacious in their theology of the need for Christians to develop a distinctive moral culture irrespective of the prevalent antagonism to gospel values.<sup>82</sup>

A genuine understanding of human nature is not achievable without reference to original sin. However, Cessario argues that biblical understanding of original sin has led to a misinterpretation of correct understanding of human nature.<sup>83</sup> Considering this, Cessario argues that anthropological factors deny built-in virtues in human nature.<sup>84</sup> However, realist theologians like Aquinas and Cessario himself accept the understanding that original sin touches every person. Aquinas expounds: “As a result of (the loss of original justice) all the powers of the soul are in a sense lacking an order proper to them, their natural order to virtue.”<sup>85</sup> Yet he does not completely deny the built-in virtues in nature even though he acknowledges their lack in the original scheme of things. Even with the fallen, an instinct for virtue remains.<sup>86</sup> This is corroborated by Istva Bejczy in *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century* where he underlines the essential medieval idea of virtue and morality in the notion of the fallen human nature.<sup>87</sup> For the medieval authors virtue is not just the realization of the potential goodness innate to the human soul but a victory over the defects, which attach to human nature since the fall.<sup>88</sup>

---

<sup>81</sup> Ibid.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid., 96. See also Avery Dulles, *A History of Apologetics* (London: Hutchinson, 1971); Karl Barth, *Doctrine of the Word of God: Church Dogmatics*, vol.1, Part 1 English trans. G.T Thomson (Edinburgh: T & T, 1939), 30-33.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 97.

<sup>85</sup> *ST* I-II, q.85.a.3.

<sup>86</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, no.10.

<sup>87</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 223.

<sup>88</sup> Ibid.

Conversely, the rationalists and other romantic views are polemical to this understanding of human nature. Baron D'Holbach for example, argues in *The System of Nature or Laws of the Moral and Physical World*, that nature alone through known experiences can bring about the search of happiness and so rejects the built-in virtues.<sup>89</sup> But Cessario wittingly avoids the extremes of D'Holbach and other rationalists by arguing:

When it comes to evaluating basic human nature, Christian realism seeks to maintain a balanced position. It can never suggest that human nature, even in its fallen state, amounts to a miserable wreck left only to await divine intervention in order to realize any moral goodness whatsoever . . . On the other hand, moral realists surely reject the Pelagian view that, given the fact of Christ's resurrection, human nature's inclination to virtue itself suffices to lead a morally good life.<sup>90</sup>

Since the instinct of virtue is not obliterated with original sin, Cessario following Aquinas, uses the term "natural virtue", a distinguishable tendency within human nature to achieve perfection based on specific nature and individuated nature aligned to right reason.<sup>91</sup> Jacques Maritain in *Person and the Common Good* makes use of such a metaphysical distinction.<sup>92</sup> The argumentation is furthered by Cessario who like Aquinas accepts the fact that natural virtue may exist in an individual only in the sense that bodily dispositions are disposed better or worse to particular virtues.<sup>93</sup> Cessario in line with Aquinas's conception concludes that there exists a universal

---

<sup>89</sup> Baron D'Holbach, *The System of Nature or Laws of the Moral and Physical World* vol. II, tran. H.D. Robinson, 3 ebrary.com/lib/nuim/docDetail.action?docID=5001753 (accessed 26 August, 2013).

<sup>90</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 97.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid., 98; See also *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 2.

<sup>92</sup> Jacques Maritain, *Person and the Common Good*, trans. John J. Fitzgerald (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972).

<sup>93</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 98. See also *ST I-II*, q. 63, a. 1.

drive for virtue that is a constitutive part for all humanity independent of original sin.<sup>94</sup> Therefore, virtues exist in nature and knowledge of the good can proceed from nature.

Catholic moral teaching holds that within the realm of human knowledge and conduct, the Christian can sufficiently arrive at moral truth from two sources: Through natural law and gospel law. The *Gaudium et Spes, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern world* recognizes this legitimacy.<sup>95</sup> These two sources for moral truth or human knowledge are mutually inclusive or complementary. Although they may differ in approaches, they are not mutually exclusive.<sup>96</sup> The temptation is to prefer one and reject the other. Some moral truths may be arrived at from natural law but they will be insufficient for a holistic approach. But Cessario claims the Christian can arrive at the very “essence of things” from two different perspectives: Firstly, “The believer peers into the actual economy of salvation and beholds what even the angels long to see. As a communication of the truth about God and the secret purpose of his will (Eph. 1:19) . . . But this knowledge comes only through faith in Christ.”<sup>97</sup> Secondly, the Christian profits from universal perspective from “the unchanging force of the natural law of peoples and of its universal principles”.<sup>98</sup> Therefore:

This results in a knowledge of natural law and virtue that holds true for all humankind. Just as the angels gaze on the same truth in the morning and in the evening, so faith and reason bring the human person face to face with the single truth that remains rooted in the divine being and is made know ‘from seeing the light of the gospel of glory of Christ who is the image of God’ (2 Cor. 4:4).<sup>99</sup>

---

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> *GS.*, 10 and 79.

<sup>96</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 7.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> *Gaudium et Spes*, 79.

<sup>99</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 8.

For Cessario then, both natural and gospel laws are complementary. However, Cessario contends that the truths of faith surpass the scope of human intellect:

They cannot be measured by the human intellect's inherent criteria for evidence. In believing therefore, the intellect, under the impulse of the will's command, effected by grace, assents to what exceeds its natural requirements and capacities, namely, the truthfulness of God revealing.<sup>100</sup>

The Revelation of God in history has an impact even in human moral conduct. The reason for this is to promote the welfare of the human race.<sup>101</sup> Appealing to St. Gregory of Nyssa, Cessario affirms: "Only the believer grasps that the goal of a virtuous life is that we become like God himself."<sup>102</sup>

We must be attentive to the relationship between claims of intellect and Christian faith.<sup>103</sup> For this reason Cessario proposes: "For the Christian believer, the theological life amounts to the exercise of both the three theological virtues, faith, hope and Charity, and the moral virtues, prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance."<sup>104</sup> It is imperative then for Cessario to explain *how* human nature can develop through the virtues; hence he must consider both the acquired and infused virtues. In sum Cessario posits that there are:

Two sets of virtues in conjunction with the claim that two ends or perfections are open to the human creature. One is natural end or perfection that is connatural to the inborn capacities native to the human person; the other is supernatural end or perfection that is possible only because of a special gift of divine grace given through Christ."<sup>105</sup>

---

<sup>100</sup> Ibid.

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 8-9. The original quote is from St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Orationes de beatitudinibus*, Sermon 1, in St. Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer and the Beatitudes*, trans. Hilda Graef (Westminster: Ancient Christian Writers, 1954), 85-96.

<sup>103</sup> St. Ambrose, *Commentary on Luke*, BK 2, chap.19, no. 22 (CCL 14:39).

<sup>104</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 10.

<sup>105</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 165.

We can consequently talk of human nature and acquired virtue and human nature and infused virtue.

### 2.3.1 *Human Nature and Acquired Virtue*

The acquired virtues as the name indicates are those virtues that are acquired through repetition. Traditionally, such virtues are prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Cessario holds that the acquired virtues provide one way for human nature to develop: “Obviously a single action cannot produce the kind of permanent disposition in our psychological structure which constitutes a *habitus*. The development of *habitus* requires a series of repeated actions.”<sup>106</sup> Aristotle argues in his *Nicomachean Ethics* that the development of virtue requires the help of a legislator in order to have the right kind of habituation.<sup>107</sup> But the Christian tradition according to Cessario adopts a more theological-anthropological approach centered on individual’s disposition to the development and habituation of virtue.<sup>108</sup>

Our conception of human nature in the previous section does not inhibit the development of virtue. Cessario citing Yves Simon echoes the variables, which are involved in the development of *habitus*:

Again the number of repetitions required to establish a habit varies greatly from person to person, as well as from case to case. How many times do you have to smoke marijuana to develop the habit? How many times do you have to take opium? I personally would not want to experiment with any of that stuff, because you never know. Do we know how many readings it takes to memorize a poem? Does it take more to memorize texts in a foreign language? Nonsense verse? It all depends on the person. Speaking in general, we know that it

---

<sup>106</sup> Ibid., 99.

<sup>107</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* Bk. 2 chap. 1 (1103b3-7).

<sup>108</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 99. Keenan develops a more personalistic approach as we shall in chapter three.

takes younger people less time to do it than it takes older people. Moreover, some rare individuals can get anything committed to memory by glancing at it just once. But these are exceptions to the rule. The law of habit calls for repetition.<sup>109</sup>

Cessario explains here that mere repetition by itself does not explain the growth of a virtuous *habitus*. But he agrees with Aquinas on the context in which repetition produces virtue namely: “Insofar as acts of such virtue proceed from reason under the power and rule such good is established.”<sup>110</sup> In this sense, Cessario uses habit very restrictively. He uses it only in connection to reason. Hence, an authentic development of virtue demands that the requirements of reason have to be applied.<sup>111</sup> Reason becomes a principle for the development of virtue.

Aquinas describes the virtues as dispositions that grow out of man’s nature and at the same time not natural to man.<sup>112</sup> By nature man possesses the seeds or inclinations which give rise to the virtues, but not the virtues themselves – considered as stable dispositions towards particular kinds of actions. Importantly, Aquinas does describe these seeds of virtue as a sort of habit: deep-seated stable dispositions that allow man to act in accord with his end.<sup>113</sup> This kind of dispositions are called “innate goodness” by Michele Ferrero as he details in his dissertation, *The Cultivation of Virtue in Matteo Ricci’s The True meaning of the Lord of Heaven: Issues for Moral Theology*.<sup>114</sup> While the acquired habits Ferrero calls “Acquired goodness” which is

---

<sup>109</sup> Ibid. Also see Yves R. Simon, *The Definition of Moral Virtue*, ed. Vukan Kuic (New York: Fordham University Press, 1986), 51.

<sup>110</sup> Ibid. *ST* I-II, q. 63, a. 2.

<sup>111</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 100.

<sup>112</sup> *ST* I-II, q. 63. a.1; *ST* I-II, q. 63. a. 2.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid.

<sup>114</sup> Michele Ferrero, *The Cultivation of Virtue in Matteo Ricci’s The True meaning of the Lord of Heaven: Issues for Moral Theology*, A Dissertation in Sacred Theology to the Fu Jen Catholic University (Taipei: Fu Jen Catholic University Press, 2004), 246.

proper to the actualization of the innate goodness through our free will and right reason.<sup>115</sup> Citing Matteo Ricci, Ferrero states: “If this free and creative actualization of the potency to goodness is constant it takes the name of ‘virtue’. ‘Virtue’ belongs therefore to the second kind of goodness: it is the result of one’s own efforts.”<sup>116</sup>

From the above, Cessario also argues that virtue in general provides a natural or innate inclination towards freely choosing and performing an action: “Virtue establishes in us a kind of second nature, since it provides a steady inclination for freely performing good actions in the same way nature itself operates with respect to necessary actions, such as sight and digestion.”<sup>117</sup> Therefore, within the human nature and through acquired virtues lies natural principles or seeds of virtue or goodness.

The virtues are meaningless if they are not attuned to particular ends or goals within human nature. To underscore the impact acquired virtue has on human nature, he writes:

The one who possesses an acquired virtue attains a particular good of human nature, such as steadfastness in the face of difficulties, towards which the virtue- in this example, fortitude- strives. Furthermore, the acquired virtue enables the one who develops it to act after the fashion of a *habitus*-formed act, that is, promptly, easily, and with a measure of satisfaction and joy.<sup>118</sup>

Cessario notes a relevant question in discussing the acquired virtues: what happens when one who possesses acquired virtue commits sin? Cessario responds that personal sin does not initially destroy any acquired virtue an individual may have developed.<sup>119</sup> Still it remains a matter of grave concern. It will take a repeated vice to replace a virtue

---

<sup>115</sup> Ibid.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 101.

<sup>119</sup> Ibid.

acquired through repeated action.<sup>120</sup> Cessario acknowledges that sin can affect the acquired virtue but differently than it does the infused virtues.<sup>121</sup> The difference lies in the relationship between the infused virtues and the life of faith: “Since the infused virtues rely on the graced relationship between the believer and Christ, a decisive rupture in that relationship, such as one caused by serious sin, can only result in the effective loss of the infused virtues.”<sup>122</sup> However, the acquired virtues operates differently because it will take a repeated vice to replace a virtue. Cessario concludes by citing Aquinas: “Although without grace one cannot avoid mortal sin, so as never to sin mortally, yet one is not hindered from acquiring a *habitus* of virtue whereby one can abstain from evil deeds for the most part, and especially from those which are very much opposed to reason.”<sup>123</sup>

### **2.3.2 Human Nature and Infused Virtues**

The infused virtues are the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. Cessario points out that writers like Philip the Chancellor, John de la Rochelle, Albert the Great and Odo Rigaud in their treatises neglected to define whether the theological virtues were infused or not.<sup>124</sup> He also admits: “The medieval schoolmen, influenced by the Augustinian view that the virtues of the philosophers counted for nothing towards salvation, accepted the infusion of the moral virtues as given in Christian teaching.”<sup>125</sup> For example, immediately after defining grace as a habit that affects the very essence of the soul, Aquinas argues for the necessity of a new set of virtues. He claims that

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Ibid.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid.

<sup>123</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 63, a.9, ad. 5.

<sup>124</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 103.

<sup>125</sup> Ibid., 102.

with the infusion of grace, God bestows new first principles, or new seeds of virtue on man.<sup>126</sup>

But there are other scholars who disputed the necessity of the infused virtues. For example Duns Scotus as cited by Cessario argued against the infused virtues: “Although many things are said about these infused moral virtues, in particular, that they are necessary on account of [supernatural] mode, mean, and end, in fact there seems no reason to hold for infused moral virtues, rather the acquired virtues suffice.”<sup>127</sup> In like manner, Mary Beth Igham and Metchild Dreyer posit in *The Philosophical Vision of John Duns Scotus: An Introduction*, that moral goodness is achievable only through the right use of reason and not through infused virtues.<sup>128</sup>

Contrary to the above, Cessario argues that the primary principle for the existence of the infused virtues is the call of the Christian to share in the divine life: “Since divine love only follows upon the divine initiative, this participation in God’s very life amounts to something entirely above nature’s abilities.”<sup>129</sup> The primary theological principle Cessario operates is the vocation of the Christian believer to participate in the divine life and this serves as the primary principle for the existence of the infused virtues.<sup>130</sup> Cessario here displays the Thomistic notion of the concept of participation outlined earlier. Aquinas himself argues: “For it belongs to limitless power to bring us to limitless good. Such a good is life eternal, consisting in the joyful

---

<sup>126</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 62.a. 1..

<sup>127</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 103.

<sup>128</sup> Mary Beth Igham and Metchild Dreyer, *The Philosophical Vision of John Duns Scotus: An Introduction* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 174.

<sup>129</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 104-105.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*, 104

possession of God himself.”<sup>131</sup> This conception raises the question whether humanity can attain perfect bliss without God? In view of this Aquinas sustains: “There can be no complete and final happiness for us save in the vision of God.”<sup>132</sup> Cessario citing Thomas Gilby concludes:

First, that man has been created by God in his nature and natural powers, not as a heartless joke, but with some natural expectancy of such development that he will reach to his fulfilment or happiness. Second, that this end can be reached only by the pure gift of grace quite beyond his deserving by any natural efforts of his own.<sup>133</sup>

The infused virtues therefore show that human nature can be elevated to beatific fellowship with God. “This elevation of human nature’s destiny requires a proportionate elevation of human nature’s capacities,” Cessario argues.<sup>134</sup> Based on this elevation, he is convinced that human nature requires supplementary capacities.<sup>135</sup> In his view, the one source that can generate this additional capacity for the believer is the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>136</sup> The Holy Spirit can create capacities and shape the human destiny proportionate to supernatural beatitude. St. Paul captures this in his exhortation to the Galatians: “For through the Spirit, by faith, we wait for the hope of righteousness” (Gal. 5:5). Cessario links grace and the Holy Spirit in order to re-state the relevance and impact of the infused virtues on human nature.

The activity of the infused virtues in nature is predicated by the activity of God himself:

---

<sup>131</sup> *ST II-II*, q.17, a. 2.

<sup>132</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 3, a. 8.

<sup>133</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 105. Cessario bases his argument from Thomas Gilby, *Purpose and Happiness (1a2ae.1-5)*, Vol.16 (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968), 153.

<sup>134</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 106.

<sup>135</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>136</sup> *Ibid.*

The existence of the infused virtues reveals God's providential plan whereby he chooses to endow the order of grace with the same kind of provisions already established for the order of nature. Recall that the infused moral virtues include authentically graced activities. As a result, the one who acts with such a *habitus* actually participates in the merits of Christ's sacrificial death and resurrection. The infused virtues belong to the kind of life lived in the church of faith and sacraments . . . The reality of the infused virtues implies that the Christian moral life possesses all the characteristic of an intrinsic morality, though transformed by the power of faith.<sup>137</sup>

Therefore, one can claim that the infused virtues perfect human nature and the spiritual life of an individual through the action of God.<sup>138</sup> Having seen how virtue is conceived from the perspectives of human nature, natural and gospel laws, it is important to further the argument by considering in particular the Christian understanding of virtue according to Cessario.

#### **2.4 Understanding Christian Virtue Ethics**

Joseph Fuchs in *Is there a Christian Ethics?* distinguished between two levels of Christian ethics; the categorical level- comprising of various types of virtues and values like justice and charity, and the transcendental level comprising of attitudes and norms that go beyond yet diffuse the various moral categories, like faith, and love.<sup>139</sup> Fuchs argues that Christian ethics has its distinctive characteristic only at the transcendent level, but on the categorical level its norms, values and virtues considered materially are simply human, adding nothing specifically Christian.<sup>140</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>138</sup> Ibid.

<sup>139</sup> Joseph Fuchs, "Is there a Christian Ethics?" in *The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*, ed. Charles Curran and Richard McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 3-19.

<sup>140</sup> Ibid. See also Pinckaers, *Sources of Christian Ethics*, 101.

Conscious of the distinction made by Fuchs, Cessario argues that in virtue ethics there is a Christian character in the both the categorical and transcendent level. This is captured in his definition of Christian virtue. Cessario makes reference to Aquinas' citation of the Augustinian definition of virtue in the *Summa Theologiae* namely: "Virtue is a good quality of mind, by which one lives righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us without us."<sup>141</sup> Following Aquinas' explanations, Cessario considers this under four causal variants, which he examines within his general Christian teleological framework.<sup>142</sup> Cessario's examination is intended to bring out the Christian dimension of virtue ethics, which Fuchs seem to deny or reduce its relevance.

The first is what he calls the formal cause: "Virtue is good quality of mind." Virtue for Aquinas belongs to the generic category of quality – it is qualified as good. Aristotle calls this quality *Habitus*.<sup>143</sup> Aquinas develops such an Aristotelian concept and stresses the importance it has in shaping human conduct. Cessario reiterates:

The scholastic theologians understood the important function that *habitus* has in shaping human conduct. Accordingly, they described *habitus* as holding a middle position between potency- the capacity for action- and full actuality- actually doing something . . . A person without any *habitus* lacks what is required for sure comportment, and finds any kind of purposeful activity difficult and burdensome.<sup>144</sup>

Therefore, *habitus* as understood by Aquinas and interpreted by Cessario connotes the perfection of human capacity that empowers a person not only to act, but also to act well:

---

<sup>141</sup> *ST I-II*, q.55, a. 4.

<sup>142</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 100.

<sup>143</sup> See Aristotle, *NE* Bk. 2, chap. 6 1106b36; *Eudemian Ethics* Bk. 1, chap. 10 1227b8.

<sup>144</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 34-35.

The virtues really alter the particular instances in which they inhere, these good *habitus* modify or shape the psychological capacities of the human person. But this happens in a way that respects the virtuous person's ability to express a full range of creativity and human initiative.<sup>145</sup>

*Habitus* has been considered differently by different fields. For example fields of enquiry like social and political sciences argue that *habitus* is emergent of a social system. Andreas Pickel supporting this claim argues that *habitus* should not be conceptualized as the property of an individual instead it should be seen as a property of a social system.<sup>146</sup> But the Aristotelian tradition posits that it is the property first of an individual person.<sup>147</sup> Nonetheless, in orientating the *habitus* one encounters others and therefore it admittedly takes on a social dimension.

The use of the concept of *habitus* in Christian theology is often misunderstood, especially the fact that *habitus* is acquired through repeated activity. Pinckaers argues in "Virtue is not a Habit" that *habitus* in the true scholastic sense means total openness to creative activity, not unnatural repetition.<sup>148</sup> Also according to Jacques-M Pohier in an article "Psychology and Virtue," the post-conciliar theologians were often not in favour of the concept as it presented a too mechanical view of Christian growth and very unsuitable to meet the required standards of a personalist moral theology.<sup>149</sup>

Regardless of the mechanical interpretations of *habitus*, Cessario identifies other authors within the Thomistic tradition who accept the advantage *habitus* offers to virtue

---

<sup>145</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 100.

<sup>146</sup> Andreas Pickel, *The Habitus Process: A Biopsychosocial Conception*, working paper CSGP05/1 [www.trentu.ca/globalpolitics/documents/pickel1051.pdf](http://www.trentu.ca/globalpolitics/documents/pickel1051.pdf) (accessed August 22, 2013).

<sup>147</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 100.

<sup>148</sup> Servais Pinckaers, "Virtue is not a Habit," trans. Bernard Gilligan, *Cross Currents* (Winter: 1962): 65-81. The original work is in French printed in *Nouvelle Revue Theologique* 80 (1960): 387-403.

<sup>149</sup> Jacques-M Pohier, "Psychology and Virtue," *New Blackfriars* 50 (1969): 483-490.

ethics and Christian beliefs. For example, Vernon Bourke in his article “The Role of *Habitus* in the Thomistic Metaphysics of Potency and Act” supports the argument by addressing the subject from a magisterial perspective.<sup>150</sup> Cessario himself expresses the advantages that lie within a proper conception of *habitus* in the Thomist tradition.<sup>151</sup> He notes that the Christian believer has the natural ability to perform certain actions, but still needs to be aided by faith.<sup>152</sup> Bearing this in mind Cessario proceeds to make a connection between *habitus*, Christian faith, conversion and freedom. It is a connection that produces a modification process which proceeds from who the human person is to who he/she ought to be. This is a process we shall explore in the succeeding chapter. In the interim, the *habitus*’ modification of the psychological capacities of the person is expected to bring about faithfulness with the Christian experience:

New Testament belief does not produce boring conformity; rather the Christian experiences a kind of second-nature conformity to gospel values that makes living an upright life prompt, joyful, and easy. Since virtue is supple, the virtuous person can decide and act on moral issues that result from even the most complex circumstances of the moral life.<sup>153</sup>

Therefore, Christian virtue does not deny the Christian the ability of creativeness and the proper use of initiative as noted by Cessario.<sup>154</sup>

The second part of the definition is what he calls the material cause. Cessario establishes the fact that virtue epitomizes a moral or spiritual reality.<sup>155</sup> He notes that virtue strictly speaking has no material cause. This is explainable by considering the

---

<sup>150</sup> Vernon Bourke, “The Role of *Habitus* in the Thomistic Metaphysics of Potency and Act,” *Essays in Thomism*, ed. R.E. Brennan (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1942), 103-109.

<sup>151</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 36.

<sup>152</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>153</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>154</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 100.

<sup>155</sup> *Ibid.*, 101.

subjects of virtues, which are all the rational powers of the human soul; intellect and will representing the rational appetite and the sense appetites. Therefore, it is immaterial. Nevertheless, we can speak of the same subjects of virtue as providing their material cause.<sup>156</sup> Accordingly, Aquinas himself argues, to possess human nature in itself is not sufficient to produce virtue. Virtue develops by some deliberate exercise of the human capacities.<sup>157</sup> In this case one can argue that the exercise of the human capacities can indeed become the material cause. This being the case, Christian virtue is developed through deliberate free choice.<sup>158</sup>

Thirdly, the efficient cause: “Which God works in us without us.” This is in line with the categorization made in chapter one sub-section 1.5.4.2.1. Human nature endows humanity with natural abilities that are operative within such a nature, which Aquinas and others call the acquired virtues.<sup>159</sup> But the definition given above denotes the infused virtues are endowed by deific grace in and through the power of the Holy Spirit.<sup>160</sup> According to Cessario, the Holy Spirit is the efficient cause of virtue in the Christian.<sup>161</sup> This is what gives this set of virtues a Christian outlook. Cessario justifies his position as follows: “Because their origin and development depend on the divine agency, the infused moral virtues function only within the broader context of the theological life of faith, of hope, and of charity.”<sup>162</sup>

---

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Aquinas, *De Veritate* q.1a.8.

<sup>158</sup> G.E.M Anscombe, “Thought and Action in Aristotle,” in *Articles on Aristotle 2, Ethics and Politics*, ed. Jonathan Barnes et al (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1977), 61-71.

<sup>159</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 101.

<sup>160</sup> Ibid.

<sup>161</sup> Ibid.

<sup>162</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages*, 125-127.

Following the second part of the definition “works in us without us”, it could be grimly conjectured that human effort is almost not needed. But divine activity does not negate human endeavour.<sup>163</sup> Bejczy captures this more aptly when he writes: “Virtue is basically a gift of God which requires a consensus of the human will in order to become meritorious.”<sup>164</sup> The implication of the phrase “God working in us without us” does not negate human freedom.

The fourth part of the definition is about the final cause: “By which no one lives righteously, of which no one can make bad use.” The final end for every virtue is determined by the performance of a virtuous action.<sup>165</sup> Accordingly, “each of the virtues formally marks off an area of human endeavour, but without specificity the exact shape that every choice will take.”<sup>166</sup>

#### **2.4.1 *Virtue Ethics And Christian Faith***

Pope John Paul II in *Veritatis Splendor* declares:

In Jesus Christ and in his Spirit, the Christian is a ‘new creation’, a child of God; by his actions he shows his likeness or unlikeness to the image of the Son who is the first-born among many brethren (cf. Rom. 8:29), he lives out his fidelity or infidelity to the gift of the Spirit, and he opens or closes himself to eternal life, to the communion of vision, love and happiness with God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.<sup>167</sup>

The Christian faith proposes to offer believers a new way of life. It is a way of life that illuminates the *recta ratio* (right reason) via the power of Christ, the light of the world. Such illumination is evident in Christian living as exemplified in the practice of

---

<sup>163</sup> The conversion of St. Paul in Acts 9:1-31 is a case in point.

<sup>164</sup> Bejczy, *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages* 102.

<sup>165</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined life*, 101.

<sup>166</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>167</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, no. 73.

community life in the Acts of the Apostles: “Now the company of those who believed were of one heart and soul, and no one said that any of the things which they possessed was his own, but they had everything in common” (Acts 4:32). The place of community becomes the foundation for Cessario to link virtue and Christian faith. According to Cessario: “An objective as noble and arduous as maintaining a common life tells us something important about the character of ‘those who believed’.”<sup>168</sup>

The character of the believers in their effort to live a community life has undergone transformation through the grace of Christ in the Holy Spirit. That is why the New Testament chooses the imagery such as the Vine and the Branches (John 15:1-11) to depict the transformation effected by Christ. Hence, “The text from Acts makes it clear that the church announces not only a transformation of persons, but also the formation of communion of persons.”<sup>169</sup> Therefore, one of the goods which Christian virtue offers is the inner desire to participate, first in the Trinitarian community of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit and second in the community of believers.

Cessario illustrates how language of virtue found in the Rule of St. Benedict provides an engaging platform for moral theologians and for Christian. St. Benedict modified a form of community life, which existed in the East to the specific requirements of Western Christianity.<sup>170</sup> Compared to other precepts, the Rule provides a moderate path between individual zeal and formulaic institutionalism. Benedict’s concerns were the needs of monks in a community environment, namely, to establish due order, to foster an understanding of the relational nature of the human person, and to provide a spiritual father to support and strengthen the individual’s ascetic effort and

---

<sup>168</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 192.

<sup>169</sup> *Ibid.*, 193.

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.*

the spiritual growth that is required for the fulfilment of the human vocation granted to the human person as a Christian.<sup>171</sup>

To further elucidate the relationship virtue ethics has with the Christian faith, Cessario admits a challenge being faced by theological ethicists with regards to Christian moral life and moral wisdom endowed by nature through reason.<sup>172</sup> The question arises: what is the difference between Christian morality and natural morality? There are polarized answers to this. On the one hand there can be a humanist reduction of the content of all Christian moral teaching to only what reason makes accessible. On the other, there can be a fundamentalist limitation of all moral instruction to only whatever the New Testament imparts.<sup>173</sup> Richard McCormick suggests in an article titled “Does Religious Faith Add to Ethical Perception?” that belief makes available a new approach to fulfil otherwise quite natural moral precepts as cited by Cessario.<sup>174</sup> Others argue that the difference lies in the fact that Christian morality invests in a sacramental system with its own set of rules and obligations. Grisez takes this position when he suggests in *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, that ones choice to follow Christ especially within the context of the church sacraments constitutes a distinctively Christian activity.<sup>175</sup> Grisez does not take into account the infused virtues as integral components of that vocation.

---

<sup>171</sup> See *Rule of St. Benedict: A Guide to Christian Living*, trans. Monks of Glenstal Abbey, the full text of the Rule in Latin (Cork: Four Courts Press, 1994); Gerard MacGinty, *The Rule of St. Benedict: Themes Texts and Thoughts* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1980), 23-112.

<sup>172</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 22.

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Richard A. McCormick, “Does Religious Faith Add to Ethical Perception? In *Readings in Moral Theology, no.2 The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1980), 156-173; also see Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 22.

<sup>175</sup> Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, chaps. 26 & 27.

But for Cessario none of the above views is able to show the difference or give a vivid description of the relationship between virtue ethics as a moral philosophical field and theological ethics. He assumes the realist position which is in line with Aquinas' explanation of "*rectitude appetitus*": "Now human virtue, as we have said, is virtue as it corresponds to the perfect notion of virtue which requires rectitude of appetite, for such a virtue not only confers faculty of doing well but also causes the performing of a good action."<sup>176</sup>

Every ethical approach employed toward attaining these goals and ends must acknowledge what Geach calls "built-in teleologies".<sup>177</sup> Because of this sanctifying grace must also respect these built-in teleologies, the end of which should be the flourishing of the human person. Even though Cessario accepts that human experience offers humanity countless ways of achieving such flourishing, he strongly underscores the pivotal role the virtues play in the up building of the believers' lives through grace:

For the Christian the ultimate reasonable good remains the achievement of the goal which Paul announces to Titus; 'for the grace of God has appeared for the salvation of all people, training us to renounce irreligion and worldly passions, and to live sober, upright, and godly lives in this world, awaiting our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and saviour Jesus Christ' (Titus 2:11-13).<sup>178</sup>

The implication of the above quote is that the Christian faith offers an entirely new dimension to its adherents. As *habitus* is achieved through repetitions so is the Christian moral life perfected through constant conversion. Therefore, the dialogue between virtue ethics and the Christian faith is on-going.

---

<sup>176</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 61.a.1.

<sup>177</sup> Geach, *The Virtues*, vii.

<sup>178</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 24.

The Christian moral life in order to endure must be opened to change and development. The behavioural sciences offer a great deal on human development.<sup>179</sup> Cessario accepts that Christian theology has a lot to learn from other sciences and even other non-Christian religions with regard to growth in Christian virtue, for instance the use of enneagram in spirituality and moral theology for self-discovery.<sup>180</sup> But Cessario cautions that such interplay requires genuine theological surveillance and application.<sup>181</sup>

What Cessario attempts to achieve by this reflection is to establish a realist theological stance in moral theology from the perspective of virtue ethics. He also acknowledges the fact that other theologians do not necessarily share in this position.<sup>182</sup> The overarching question which shall be left unanswered here is the relationship between nature and supernatural: whether the Christian is a spiritual being in human nature or a natural being in search of a spiritual nature.

The realist position about the Christian faith proposes a call to a transformative life. Cessario citing Rahner argues that it is a conversion that is progressive within the mystery of God.<sup>183</sup>

---

<sup>179</sup> For example see Gordon W. Allport, *Pattern and Growth in Personality* (London: Holt, Rinehart and Wiston, 1969), 57-110, 275-310; Susan C. Cloninger, *Personality Description, Dynamics and Development* (New York: W.H Freeman and Company, 1996); Michael Lewis, "Models of Development," in *Advances in Personality Science*, ed. Daniel Cervone and Walter Mischel (New York: The Guilford Press, 2002).

<sup>180</sup> Maria Beesing, *Enneagram: A Journey of Self Discovery* (Denville: Dimension Books, 1984).

<sup>181</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 25. Cessario makes reference to adaptations of some aspects of modish methods of spiritual renewal. See also *Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*, "Letter to the Bishops of Catholic Church on some Aspects of Christian Meditation," of December 14, 1989.

<sup>182</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>183</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 27.

### 2.4.2 *Virtues Ethics and Christian Tradition: A Biblical Connection*

In chapter one, the need of moral theology to break from methods of casuistry and moral manuals was outlined. Against this background it is easy to see why the moral theology of the time has been characterized as unbiblical, un-ecumenical, casuistic, minimalist, ‘domestic’ in its concerns, legalistic and sin-centered. Moral theology was effectively a discipline separated from the rest of theology. The renewal of moral theology was explicitly called for by Vatican II in its *Decree on Priestly Formation* in the revision of ecclesiastical studies, but its directives had a much broader sweep than just preparation for the ministry of the confessional. As it states: “Other theological disciplines should also be renewed by livelier contact with the mystery of Christ and the history of salvation.”<sup>184</sup>

As emphasized by *Optatam Totius*, foundational to a Christian understanding of morality is the place of scripture. Christian tradition has always emphasized the importance of personal transformation through the Scriptures. Gregory L. Jones in an article “Formed and Transformed by Scripture: Character, Community, and Authority in Biblical Interpretation” argues:

---

<sup>184</sup> Vatican II, *Optatam Totius*, no. 16. Animation of theology through Scripture see Raymond F. Collins, *Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986); Leslie Houlden, *Ethics and New Testament*, revised ed. (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992); Willi Marxsen, *New Testament Foundations for Christian Ethics* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993); John Barton, *Ethics and the Old Testament* (Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998); Mary E. Mills, *Biblical Morality: Moral Perspectives in Old Testament Narratives* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001); Timothy P. Jackson, “The Gospels and Christian Ethics,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics* ed. Robin Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 29-62; Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*; Thomas T. Bretzke, “Scripture and Ethics: Moving Along the Sacred Claim Axis,” in *Morally Complex World: Engaging Contemporary Moral Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004), 79-108; Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*.

Readers who attempt to remain detached and neutral in their interpretation of the Bible will typically understand it less deeply than those who discipline their lives by studying Scripture as the vehicle of God's word . . . The call of Scripture is for us to be open to the transformation of our lives and to see the necessity of such transformation.<sup>185</sup>

As briefly discussed in previous section, Cessario furthers this discussion from the perspective of the New Testament account of personal transformation through grace and virtues.<sup>186</sup> Such a transformation is emphasized even by different traditions as represented by classical writers like Plato, Aristotle, patristic Fathers and medieval theologians like Aquinas.<sup>187</sup> And according to Ellen F. Davis in an article "Preserving Virtues: Renewing the Tradition of the Sages": "Virtue is practiced within particular traditions, each of which retells history in distinctive ways. The Christian Bible (the Old and New Testaments) is one such narrative recounting history."<sup>188</sup> Davis gives reasons why we turn to Scripture:

The reason for us to turn to Scripture . . . is to enable a genuine renewal of the virtue tradition from a perspective that is both ancient and fresh. We must begin again by building on the foundation of Scripture, because it has been too long since the virtues . . . were living theological concepts.<sup>189</sup>

Recall from chapter one the observation that there is no explicit theology of virtue in the Scriptures. Rather particular virtues are articulated, encouraged and

---

<sup>185</sup> Gregory L. Jones, "Formed and transformed by Scripture: Character, Community, and Authority in Biblical Interpretation," in *Character and Scripture: Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. William P. Brown (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 31.

<sup>186</sup> Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 18.

<sup>187</sup> See D. S Hutchinson, *The Virtues of Aristotle* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1987), 39-52; *ST I-II*, q. 106, aa. 1, 2.

<sup>188</sup> Ellen F. Davis, "Preserving Virtues: Renewing the Tradition of the Sages," in *Character and Scripture: Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation*, ed. William P. Brown (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002), 184-185, note 5.

<sup>189</sup> *Ibid.*, 187.

practiced. Cessario in building the foundations of scripture finds a connection between the classical and biblical views of virtue ethics in St. Paul's letter to the Colossians:

Put to death therefore what is earthly in you: fornication, impurity, passion, evil desire, covetousness, which is idolatry. On account of these the wrath of God is coming. In these you once walked, when you lived in them. But now put them all away: anger, wrath, malice, slander and foul talk from your mouth. Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old nature with its practices and have put on the new nature, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator (3:5-10).

According to Christian tradition virtues are not only acquired but also exercised. Exercising the virtues effectively, “inescapably brings the person into relationship with others. This happens either directly, as in the obvious case of justice, or indirectly, as when others benefit from one who possesses the virtues of personal discipline, temperance, and fortitude.”<sup>190</sup> The engagement therefore transcends the individual to the level of the community, as this thesis will detail in succeeding sections. It is often argued by opposing theories that the practice of virtue is a platform for self-preoccupation, sometimes at the expense of others who may need our time and attention to important things.<sup>191</sup> However, in line with the main focus of this thesis, Cessario contends: “Christian theology understands the virtuous life as profoundly relational. On the other hand, self-regarding individualism does affect the actual situation of secular morality.”<sup>192</sup> De facto, this is conditioned by *veritatis vitae* of Aquinas.

Within the Christian tradition of virtues there exists an underlining principle which Aquinas calls *veritas vitae*, the truth of life which the virtues seek. According to

---

<sup>190</sup> Ibid.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid.

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 21.

Aquinas: “Truth of life is the kind of truth by which something exists as true, not by which someone speaks what is true. Like everything else one’s life is called true on the basis of its reaching its rule and norm, namely divine law; by measuring up to this, a life has uprightness.”<sup>193</sup> Conformity to *lex aeterna* by individuals and communities and the practice of the virtues give concrete expression to the truthfulness of life.<sup>194</sup> In addition, the Christian believer’s conformity to Christ through the sacraments and faith heightens the opportunities to attain the truth of life. Although Aquinas himself would seem to have neglected reflecting the mediating role of Christ in the economy of the virtues, this *lex aeterna* is represented by the church’s magisterial teachings. The next section shall look at the connection between virtue ethics and magisterial teachings.

### 2.4.3 *Virtue Ethics and Magisterial Teachings*

Cessario writes: “A virtuous life can only unfold within the overarching irradiation of Eternal Law, Natural Law, and the Gospel law of grace.”<sup>195</sup> In other words the virtuous life brings an individual into union with God and humanity within a community. Presenting a model of the church as a community, he expounds: “The Church of Christ holds as a foundational principle that the more one is united to God through the rhythms of a virtuous life lived in some kind of community with friends, the more one discovers his or her own ‘personality’.”<sup>196</sup> Pope Benedict in his first Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas Est* stresses the fact that one’s union with God takes place without the lost

---

<sup>193</sup> *ST II-II*, q.109, a.3, ad.3

<sup>194</sup> Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 21.

<sup>195</sup> *Ibid.*, 156; *ST I-II*, Prologue, q. 90.

<sup>196</sup> *Ibid.*, 152.

of personal identity: “This union is no mere fusion, a sinking in the nameless ocean of the Divine.”<sup>197</sup>

To adequately understand the interface between virtue ethics and magisterial teaching one has to again highlight the theological witness of Aquinas. According to Cessario, Aquinas’ theological views to the Christian virtues tradition which is found in the *Secunda Pars* and *Summa Theologiae* has been of great influence on magisterial teaching.<sup>198</sup> In other words the church draws from the teaching of Aquinas’ inspiration on the virtues. However, the magisterial teaching on the virtues is very minimal. As earlier observed in chapter one, the church has not presented a full document on the virtues, except for the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* (1992), and a few references made in some encyclicals.

It is evident to Cessario that through his analytic and dialectic skills, Aquinas gives a vivid description of the Christian moral life that deals with human nature.<sup>199</sup> Aquinas does this by summarizing the established tradition of the Fathers, the monastic authors and earlier scholastics.<sup>200</sup> To be precise, Aquinas’ efforts manifest the fact that what gauges virtues and virtuous activities perfects human creatures, that is, by what is divinely ordered to make each human person happy.<sup>201</sup> Human nature according to Cessario following Aquinas becomes the measure for virtuous human behaviour.<sup>202</sup>

In the opinion of Cessario, the above statement is teleological in nature. At this point, Cessario makes a connection with the encyclical letter of Pope John Paul II,

---

<sup>197</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no.10.

<sup>198</sup> Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 157.

<sup>199</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>200</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>201</sup> *Ibid.*, 158.

<sup>202</sup> *Ibid.*

*Veritatis Splendor*. This document discusses the relationship between the moral good, virtues, human behaviour, and Christian anthropology: “Activity is morally good when it attests to and expresses the voluntary ordering of the person to his ultimate end and the conformity of a concrete action with the human good as it is acknowledged in its truth by reason.”<sup>203</sup> In chapter two of the same encyclical letter, the pope draws upon the thought of Aquinas. According to Cessario the chapter makes references to the virtues of Christian life:

It is the “heart” converted to the Lord and to the love of what is good which is really the source of true judgments of conscience. Indeed, in order to ‘prove what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect’ (Rom. 12:2), knowledge of God’s law in general is certainly necessary, but it is not sufficient: what is essential is a sort of “connaturality” between man and the true good (Cf. St. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q.45, a. 2.). Such a connaturality is rooted in and develops through the virtuous attitudes of the individual himself: prudence and the other cardinal virtues, and even before these the theological virtues of faith, hope and charity. This is the meaning of Jesus’ saying: “He who does what is true comes to the light” (Jn. 3:21).<sup>204</sup>

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* does contain important reflections on the virtues as previously noted. It reminds us: “A virtue is a habitual and firm disposition to do the good. It allows the person not only to perform good acts, but to give the best of himself. The virtuous person tends toward the good with all his sensory and spiritual powers; he pursues the good and chooses it in concrete actions.”<sup>205</sup> Pope Benedict XVI summarizes the virtues in *Deus Caritas Est*.<sup>206</sup>

---

<sup>203</sup> Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*, 72.

<sup>204</sup> *Ibid.*, 64.

<sup>205</sup> *CCC.*, No. 1803.

<sup>206</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est*, no.39.

What we have tried to do in previous sections is to examine Cessario's treatment of virtue ethics from a theological-anthropological perspective. The next section is going to look at how Cessario links his conception of the human person and how the virtues develop in the human person.

## ***2.5 Virtue/Habitus Development: A Dynamic Process***

In our earlier discussions we argued that virtues are attitudes, dispositions, or character traits that enable us to be and to act in ways that develop potentials within an individual. However, the one question that remains unanswered is how does a person develop *habitus*? I shall examine how Cessario answers the above question within his understanding of the human person.

### ***2.5.1 Habitus Development***

Cessario in interpreting Aquinas argues that the concept of *habitus* presupposes development:

*Habitus* supposes a conception of the human person as open to development and modifications from both natural and divine causes. Furthermore, *habitus* points up the difference between what derives from authentically personal activity and what remains rooted in the biological givens of temperament or personality type. Aquinas himself clearly understood that each human person possessed certain natural endowments, as distinct from *habitus*, which establish, within the limits set by common nature, the range of expression achievable by personal effort.<sup>207</sup>

The realist anthropology according to Cessario recognizes the fact that people display different aptitudes for moral development.<sup>208</sup> This is not to accept in Blaise Pascal's remark: "What is true on one side of the Pyrenees is false on the other."<sup>209</sup> The core of

---

<sup>207</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 36.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>209</sup> Blaise Pascal (1623-1662), *Pensees*, ed. Brunschvicg, no. 294.

the moral life involves educative and developmental processes. And the progress of virtue or growth of vice depends upon how successfully one applies these processes.

One of the concepts central to *habitus* development is capacity. William Mattison III observes the following:

We have capacity for greatness, and also great destructives, to both ourselves and others. Particularly in the formative college years, but even throughout our lives, our lives are furnished, and each of us can become the sort of person who is pleased with, or who regrets, who he or she is.<sup>210</sup>

Capacity as used here refers to the actual or potential ability to perform a virtuous act. Ian Burkitt defines capacity in an article “Technologies of the Self: *Habitus* and Capacities”: “Capacities are the ensemble actual potentials to carry out an action and there is dialectical relationship between acts and capacities: the latter being the products of prior activities, in which individuals develop, refine, or modify their capacity for action.”<sup>211</sup> And Pierre Bourdieu detailed also in *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste* that *habitus* when considered along with capacity becomes a generative formula that accounts for judgments and practices.<sup>212</sup> So *habitus* for Bourdieu becomes a structuring structure, which organizes and directs actions or capacities.<sup>213</sup> Burkitt and Bourdieu show the link between *habitus* and capacity.

---

<sup>210</sup> Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 58.

<sup>211</sup> Ian Burkitt, “Technologies of the Self: *Habitus* and Capacities,” *Journal for the Social Behaviour* 32:2<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/1468-5914.00184/asset/1468-5914.00184.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).

<sup>212</sup> Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. Richard Nice (London: Routledge Keegan and Paul, 1984), 170. Originally published in French, with the title *La Distinction: Critique Sociale du Jugement* (Paris: Les Editions de Minuit, 1979).

<sup>213</sup> *Ibid.*

Therefore, Cessario acknowledges this link between *habitus* and capacity by affirming:

*Habitus* provide the whole person with settled capacities for action which surpass the simple ability to exercise will. In fact, one author describes *habitus* as ‘metaphysical Perfectant’. Such a perfection heightens our human capacities to such an extent that those who act with ‘habituated’ intellect, will, and appetites approach the optimum performance of the strongest and most perfect human being.<sup>214</sup>

*Habitus* and capacity produce a perfect human person.<sup>215</sup> Considering the views of Burkitt, Bourdieu and Cessario we hold that *habitus* is oriented towards being and doing. Burkitt adds to this elucidation by further claiming that “*habitus-capacity*” suggests the possibility of doing something, or acting in ways that are creative and not wholly predetermined.<sup>216</sup> This requires a developmental process. To some degree this repudiates the claims that *habitus* can be monotonous.

According to Cessario, since *habitus* and capacity are directed towards action there are three conditions necessary for its development. Firstly, *habitus* cannot be said to be rightly so if its capacity is only to perform one kind of action.<sup>217</sup> In other words the possessor of the *habitus* must be able to engage in diverse kinds of activity or what Thomas de Vio Cajetan calls “variety in Parts”.<sup>218</sup> Capacity then enjoys the ability of versatility in action.<sup>219</sup> What Cessario, Aquinas and Burkitt are saying is that the most authentic development of *habitus* consists in the fact that it is not automated to perform

---

<sup>214</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 42. For further reading on “Metaphysical Perfectant” see Bourke, “The Role of *Habitus*,” 106-107.

<sup>215</sup> Ibid.

<sup>216</sup> Burkitt, “Technologies of the Self: *Habitus* and Capacities.”

<sup>217</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 43.

<sup>218</sup> Ibid.

<sup>219</sup> Ibid. See *ST* I-II, q.49, a. 4.

in just a particular way but must be open to a variety of actions which may change depending on circumstantial evidences.

The second required condition pertains to some degree to the person.<sup>220</sup> In addition to the ability of diverse realizations of activity, “capacity must possess a certain malleability or suppleness as regards undergoing change.”<sup>221</sup> Burkitt also agrees with Cessario but puts it differently: “*Habitus* . . . is not bound to eternal repetition, for complex and human activity must be flexible and adaptable to various situations.”<sup>222</sup> Cessario further buttresses his argument on the flexibility and suppleness of capacity by distinguishing between the inherent activity of the part of the body like the eye which has the ability of sight and the actual activity of the conscious being or subject who freely chooses to act in a particular way.<sup>223</sup> For Cessario the intellect and will become fundamental places where *habitus* is formed and the ability to exercise freely certain kinds of activity actuated.<sup>224</sup> But he adds, both the *habitus* and activity must be in line with reason and the sense appetites.<sup>225</sup> This condition and the first stated above are interpretatively two sides of the same coin.

The third condition necessary for the development of *habitus* is the agent itself.<sup>226</sup> Theological ethics teaches that *habitus* has two sources of development: human agent and divine benevolence (infused *habitus*).<sup>227</sup> As a Christian theologian, Cessario argues from the perspective of divine benevolence that because *habitus* is

---

<sup>220</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 43.

<sup>221</sup> *Ibid.* Cessario does not qualify this statement leaving it open to misinterpretation.

<sup>222</sup> Burkitt, “Technologies of the Self: *Habitus* and Capacities.”

<sup>223</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 43.

<sup>224</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>227</sup> *Ibid.*

directly given through the activity of the Holy Spirit they are properly called infused-theological virtues. For Cessario the activity of the Holy Spirit finds meaning within the New Testament *Kerygma* which elicits twofold change in the agent: First, image restoration which consists in the rectification of disordered appetite and second the acquisition of the whole collection of graced benefactions.<sup>228</sup>

It is evident that Cessario does not reject the contributions of secular sciences that suggest behavioural and environmental constructs in the development of *habitus*. However, Christian theology can appropriate scientific findings only in so far as they do not compromise the human person and his/her *telos*. But in this potential dialogue, the approach of Cessario is to primarily reiterate the framework of the realist theology.

Virtues are developed through learning and practice.<sup>229</sup> Aristotle held that a person could improve his or her character by practicing self-discipline, while a good character can be corrupted by repeated self-indulgence.<sup>230</sup> For example, the ability to excel as an athlete or footballer or tennis requires learning, constant and untiring practice for hours, so too our capacity to be just, prudent, merciful and courageous. For a habit to be acquired in some cases it has to displace another vice.<sup>231</sup>

The above explains why virtues are sometimes called habits. John Locke in his *Essay Concerning Human Understanding* states that habit is “the power or ability in Man, of doing the same thing . . . forward, and ready upon every occasion to break into

---

<sup>228</sup> On behavioural approaches See Peter Fonagy and Anna Higgitt, *New Essential Psychology: Personality Theory and Clinical Practice* (London: Methuen, 1984).

<sup>229</sup> Manuel Velasquez, Claire Andre, Thomas Shanks and Michael Meyer, “Ethics and Virtue,” Santa Clara University. <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/ethicsandvirtue.html> (accessed August 30, 2013).

<sup>230</sup> Ibid.

<sup>231</sup> Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 62.

action.”<sup>232</sup> However, the principle of habit involves both constancy and change.<sup>233</sup>

Carlisle argues:

On the one hand, it is through habit that beings –whether human, animal, vegetal or mineral–hold their shape through time; they remain the same (or approximately the same) even in movement, for they repeatedly follow certain patterns and sequences. In this way, habit forms part of an individual’s stable identity- and it may even constitute this identity. On the other hand, we can acquire habits only because we are changed by our actions and experiences.<sup>234</sup>

It means, once they are acquired, they become characteristic of a person. For example, a person who has developed the virtue of generosity is often referred to as a generous person because he or she tends to be generous in all circumstances not only in particular instances. Hence, Mattison claims: “Having a virtue is not simply an indicator of past action, but more importantly a dynamic disposition to act well in the future . . . Every new opportunity for moral action is not begun from scratch, but rather with an inclination to act well.”<sup>235</sup> Cessario’s three conditions necessary for the development of *habitus* falls within Mattison and Carlisle’s conceptions of habit.

But Cessario ignores some distinctions on habit. First, he does not show the distinction between idiosyncratic, individual habits and collective habits, or custom.<sup>236</sup>

Second, he does not show the distinction between active and passive habit, that is acquiring a habit in a specific way of acting or by mere sensation.<sup>237</sup> Third, he does not

---

<sup>232</sup> John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. P. H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1975), 293.

<sup>233</sup> Clare Carlisle, *On Habit: Thinking in Action* (London: Routledge, 2014), 17.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

<sup>235</sup> Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 62.

<sup>236</sup> See Tom Crook, “Habit as Switchpoint,” *Body and Society* 19, nos. 2 and 3 (2013): 275-81.

<sup>237</sup> Carlisle, *On Habit: Thinking in Action*, 7.

show how habit can be a source or a result of an action.<sup>238</sup> Cessario simply generalizes his concept of *habit*.

Furthermore, there is another important element in the development of *habitus* which Cessario seems to neglect. It is the element of intentionality. On intentionality, Mattison argues: “The reason habits develop has everything to do with intentionality.”<sup>239</sup> For him, “intention is the a goal or purpose toward which we direct ourselves. It is the specification of our desire.”<sup>240</sup> Acting intentionally therefore pertains to reason and will. To buttress this point Mattison gives an example:

For instance, consider two other people besides your friend Joe who is cheap. Mary is generous, and does as much as she can to help those in need. While Joe is, unfortunately, still cheap, Mary is generous. A third person, Lucy, is also accustomed to donating money to charitable causes. Yet in Lucy’s case, she only does this in public settings, as when the collection goes around in the church, or when a club is raising money in her dorm. She is doing it in order to look generous in front of others. In fact, if she had an opportunity to be generous with no one watching, there is little chance she would donate the money. She does not have the same habit as stingy Joe, because she does indeed donate money at times. But neither does she develop the same habit as generous Mary, even though both consistently perform similar acts of donating money to those in need. The difference between these latter two is their intentionality.<sup>241</sup>

Mattison concludes: “Thus habits are related to, but not equated with, performing certain types of actions. This relationship is cyclical. It is often through repetition of intentional actions of certain type that habits develop in the first place.”<sup>242</sup>

---

<sup>238</sup> Ibid.

<sup>239</sup> Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 62.

<sup>240</sup> Ibid., 39.

<sup>241</sup> Ibid., 60.

<sup>242</sup> Ibid.

### 2.5.2 Christian Conversion: The Growth of the Christian Virtues

Raymond F. Paloutzain, James T. Richardson, and Lewis R. Rambo in an article “Religious Conversion and Personality Change” argue that conversion as used in Christian theology is indeed relevant and apt in our discussion of the development and quality of *habitus* and personality.<sup>243</sup> Recent researches reveal that beliefs lie at the heart of personality and adaptive functioning and that they give us unique insights into such personality and functioning.<sup>244</sup>

From a religious perspective conversion can have a huge impact on personality. This explains why one of the central concerns of the early Fathers of the Church was to offer strong moral instructions for those newly converted to the Christian faith.<sup>245</sup> Such instructions were centred on the application of the summary of the commandments made by Jesus in Luke 10:27 “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself”.<sup>246</sup>

Nevertheless, Cessario also observes that the theology of the Fathers did not engage in speculating how one might distinguish the human and divine elements in the moral life.<sup>247</sup> However, medieval thinkers like Aquinas were influenced in their understanding of the presence of a moral instruction apart from the one announced by Jesus. They found warrant for this idea in the text of St. Paul: “When Gentiles who have

---

<sup>243</sup> See Raymond F. Paloutzain, James T. Richardson, and Lewis R. Rambo, “Religious Conversion and Personality Change,” *Journal of Personality* vol. 67, no.6 (1999): 1047-1079.

<sup>244</sup> *Ibid.* In behavioural sciences words like change in personality are used while Christian faith uses words like conversion or metanoia or repentance.

<sup>245</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 28-29. See Psalm 19:7.

<sup>246</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

not the law do by nature what the law requires, they are a law unto themselves, even though they do not have the law.” (Rom. 2:14).<sup>248</sup> Traditionally, this assertion of St. Paul has supported the idea of a moral law that is written in the hearts of people and this can be called the natural moral code innate in every human person. Therefore, at the core of conversion in the life of a Christian is the moral demand called for by natural and divine laws.

This prompts the question can an individual do good without grace? Cessario buttresses his answer through Aquinas’ position by arguing that although an individual may successfully perform certain human actions apart from divine assistance, a person cannot perform the whole good which is connatural to human flourishing without grace.<sup>249</sup> He argues metaphorically: “So a sick man is capable of some movement by himself, yet he cannot move perfectly with the movement of a healthy man unless he is healed by the aid of medicine.”<sup>250</sup> Cessario thinks that the above Thomistic conclusion is similar to the conclusions reached by St. Paul in Rom. 8:22-23. This text suggests an internal struggle or tension within the Christian in living the moral life.<sup>251</sup> It is a tension which Cessario feels has a fundamental importance: “The medieval theologians explained how this tension can contribute to growth in Christian virtue.”<sup>252</sup>

Cessario concludes that Christian living always requires an honest acceptance of the possibility of growth in daily response to the call of Jesus Christ. This implies acknowledgement of our sins yet relying on the special grace of God for the forgiveness

---

<sup>248</sup> Ibid.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>250</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 109, a. 2.

<sup>251</sup> For further reading on the struggle between the spirit and the flesh see J. Louis Martyn, *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 251-265.

<sup>252</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 30.

according to his mercy.<sup>253</sup> However, the outflow of personal energy is of utmost importance.<sup>254</sup> Realist moral theology therefore will have the features of a theology that attends to the workings of both nature and grace. Along these lines, Stephen J. Duffy in *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology* argues within the tradition of Aquinas that grace does not destroy nature but perfects it: “Grace is either uncreated, God’s own self as the gracious giver, or a created gift superadded to natural human powers and rendering their acts meritorious.”<sup>255</sup> Divine grace elevates those human virtues that have been formed by repeated deliberate acts, because man is wounded by sin, and cannot easily maintain a moral balance. Through the sacraments and the help of the Holy Spirit, Christ offers the grace needed to persevere and to adequately and genuinely respond to his love by keeping his commandment of love.<sup>256</sup> For Cessario, divine grace animates both the infused and theological virtues.<sup>257</sup> The practice of virtue by the human person requires both grace and the constant call to conversion.

### **2.5.3 *Habitus and Personality***

According to Cessario, Aristotle’s account of *hexis* in the *Nicomachean Ethics* provides Christian theologians with a psychological foundation needed for a comprehensive

---

<sup>253</sup> See Frank J. Matera, *God’s Saving Grace: A Pauline Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012).

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.*, 30-31. See also Henri Rondet, *The Grace of Christ: A Brief History of the Theology of Grace*, trans. and ed. Tad W. Guzie (Westminster: Newman Press, 1966).

<sup>255</sup> Stephen J. Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993), 127.

<sup>256</sup> CCC., 1810-1811. According to the *Catechism*, Grace has an important role in the virtuous life of a Christian: It sanctifies, beautifies the human soul, it strengthens the will and enlightens the mind.

<sup>257</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 31.

discourse of virtue ethics.<sup>258</sup> Nevertheless, *Nicomachean Ethics* only offers one constituent part towards a comprehensive and sensible theological appropriation of *habitus*.<sup>259</sup> The other component part is the intellectual discoveries and presuppositions of the behavioural sciences.<sup>260</sup> It is important that one takes account of personality in discussing *habitus*/virtues. Personality has been defined differently by behavioural sciences but none is universally accepted.<sup>261</sup> The idea and experience therefore is elusive.<sup>262</sup>

Charles S. Carver and Michael F. Scheier *Perspectives on Personality* suggest a working definition: “Personality is a dynamic organization, inside the person, of psychological systems that create the person’s characteristic patterns of behaviour, thoughts, and feelings.”<sup>263</sup> And Nathan Brody and Howard Ehrlichman in *Personality Psychology: The Science of Individuality* define personality: “The sum total of a person’s thoughts, feelings, desires, intentions, and action tendencies.”<sup>264</sup> The concept of personality when used concerns the existence of individual differences and intrapersonal functioning.<sup>265</sup> The term personality is also used in a descriptive way; for example “she has a warm and friendly personality.”<sup>266</sup> The definitions seen above include cognitive, motivational, and behavioural process.

---

<sup>258</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid., 38.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

<sup>261</sup> Charles S. Carver and Michael F. Scheier, *Perspectives on Personality* 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000), 3.

<sup>262</sup> Jo Brunas-Wagstaff, *Personality: A Cognitive Approach* (London: Routledge, 1998), 11-28.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 5.

<sup>264</sup> Nathan Brody and Howard Ehrlichman, *Personality Psychology: The Science of Individuality* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998), 3.

<sup>265</sup> Carver and Scheier, *Perspectives on Personality*, 6.

<sup>266</sup> Joseph MacDonagh, Carol Linehan and Rebecca Weldridge, *Behavioural Science for Marketing and Business Students* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 2002), 141.

Cessario accepts that developmental psychology deals with factors that contribute to the shaping of personal traits, and hence they offer valuable insights to character.<sup>267</sup> Cessario suggests that even though such insights reveal much in an individual's traits and character formation, moral theology has to be cautious in the application of these insights because: "Behavioural scientists do not necessarily share the common and fundamental assumption about the spiritual character of the human person that is indispensable to an authentic Christian teaching."<sup>268</sup> He further expounds:

Christian theology can critically appropriate scientific findings, provided their underlying anthropological suppositions do not reduce the human individual to its material components or remain agnostic about the basic constitution or ultimate destiny of the human person. The freedom and dignity of God's children surpass the limits established by all forms of psychological determinism.<sup>269</sup>

From the above citation, Cessario identifies one of the primary tasks of realist moral theology is to explicate how moral development affects the intrinsic make-up of the human person.<sup>270</sup> The implication here is that *habitus* can modify the whole of a person. Cessario develops his argument following Aquinas' discussions on the acquired *habitus*; that human capacities develop as a result of proper activity, through the combined actions of free choice and intelligence.<sup>271</sup> Such a development does not only

---

<sup>267</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 38.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 39.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>270</sup> *Ibid.* An example of this task of realist moral theology is vivid in the work of Richard M. Gula, *Moral Discernment* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997), 27-40; William Cosgrove, *Christian Living Today: Essays in Moral and Pastoral Theology* (Dublin: Columba Press, 2001), 35; Louis Jansen, "Artificial Insemination: Ethical Considerations" *Louvain Studies* (1980): 3-29; See also Kevin T. Kelly, *New Directions in Moral Theology: The Challenge of Being Human* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992), 31-60.

<sup>271</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 39

affect the individual's acts but his/her very self that is his/her personality.<sup>272</sup> *Habitus* in this sense brings about personal transformation.

Christian doctrine asserts that the extent of the change can reach to the very core of a human person's selfhood and identity. For example, the virtue of filial piety can effectively alter the rebellious and disaffected adolescent so that the young person becomes an honest and respectful member of the household. Christian theology, supported by the New Testament's assertion of the radical power that grace holds out to the human person, supposes that such a virtuous transformation of the self can occur in many circumstances. *Habitus* provides the metaphysical basis for elaborating a moral theology confident enough of itself to give serious attention to this kind of person transformation.<sup>273</sup>

Cessario differentiates between a positive *habitus* and a negative *habitus* by applying Aquinas' philosophical categories of the essence of quality. Quality originates from an actual internal ordering of substance's parts. It makes things to be different in the way cold gruel is different from hot soup.<sup>274</sup> "Quality does not amount simply to placing a thing within its proper classification or to an extrinsic, merely ephemeral modification of a subject. Quality means to possess oneself in a determined way."<sup>275</sup> Therefore, to speak of *habitus* as a quality refers to a real modification of a person's moral character. In this sense, vicious *habitus* produces a vicious individual, which is a negative *habitus*; virtuous *habitus*, that is a positive, produces a virtuous person.

Cessario's argument is elaborated when he introduces the subject of capital punishment to his discourse on *habitus* development, which also connects to his reflections on Christian conversion outlined in preceded sections. Aquinas posits that in the case of capital punishment, the development of a vicious *habitus* in a given

---

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid. On the example of filial piety see *ST* II-II, q. 101, aa. 1-4.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid.

individual can reach a point where something of the excellence which belongs to human nature disappears.<sup>276</sup> Cessario writes: “Aquinas justified capital punishment on the basis that the one who possessed chronically bad *habitus*, actually lost a large measure of personal dignity so that the moral theologian could no longer designate the object of the direct killing as human in an unqualified sense.”<sup>277</sup> Cessario differs here with Aquinas. He believes that the potentiality inherent in each created being is never lost; the person rather is open to moral reform:

Accordingly, Christian theology insists against the common tendency to suppose that patterns of sinful behaviour, even when supported by repeated actions, definitively establish one’s personal identity. Virtue makes a real saint, but vicious *habitus* leave the person in a state of disordered potential. At the same time, the conviction that *habitus* represents a genuine qualification of one’s person- clinical psychologists may prefer to use the expression “personality” here- allows realist moral theology to affirm that the radical correction of moral disorders always remains feasible.<sup>278</sup>

Cessario argues that ‘quality’ describes a progressive appreciation or depreciation of the moral capacities of the human person.<sup>279</sup> Fittingly, Aquinas claims that for a quality to be described as a *habitus* it must attain a certain degree of permanence.<sup>280</sup> Hence he distinguishes *habitus* from disposition on the basis of how easily the two kinds of qualification change.<sup>281</sup> According to Cessario: “Since the

---

<sup>276</sup> *ST* II-II, q. 64, a.2, ad. 3. For further reading on capital punishment see Avery Dulles, “Catholicism and Capital Punishment,” in *Readings in Moral Theology no. 13: Change in Official Catholic Moral Teaching*, ed. Charles E. Curran (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 132-144.

<sup>277</sup> See Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, note 19, 193.

<sup>278</sup> *Ibid.*, 41.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>280</sup> *ST* I-II, q.49, a. 2, ad. 3.

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.* “This difference, ‘difficult to change,’ does not distinguish habit from the other species of quality, but from disposition. Now disposition may be taken in two ways; in one way, as the genus of habit, for disposition is included in the definition of habit (*Metaph.* v, text. 25): in another way, according as it is divided against habit.

moral life requires free choice to develop, the measure or value of a given quality, that is, whether it embodies a virtue or a vice, will result from how well or ill such choice conforms to the requirements of authentic moral wisdom.”<sup>282</sup> Eternal law, *lex aeterna* becomes the standard rule in evaluating *habitus*, which is an essential aspect of an individual’s personality and not human laws and sciences.

## **2.6 Virtue Ethics and the Human Person**

In order to understand the theological framework in which Cessario operates, it is important to identify his theology of the human person as *Imago Dei*, which I shall examine in the next sub-section. This will enable us to further understand how Cessario employs the participatory model in his theology on the virtues as indicated in a previous section. Gaven Kerr captures in an article *Aquinas: Metaphysics, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy* how the participation in Aquinas’ metaphysics works:

Firstly, when something receives in a particular fashion what pertains universally to another, it is said to participate in that other; for example, a species (‘man’) is said to participate in its genus (‘animal’) and an individual (Socrates) is said to participate in its species (‘man’) because they (the species and the individual) do not possess the intelligible structure of that in which they participate according to its full universality. Secondly, a subject is said to participate in the accidents that it has (for instance, a man is a certain colour, and thereby participates in the colour of which he is), and matter is said to participate in the formal structure that it has (for instance, the matter of

---

Again, disposition, properly so called, can be divided against habit in two ways: first, as perfect and imperfect within the same species; and thus we call it a disposition, retaining the name of the genus, when it is had imperfectly, so as to be easily lost: whereas we call it a habit, when it is had perfectly, so as not to be lost easily. And thus a disposition becomes a habit, just as a boy becomes a man. Secondly, they may be distinguished as diverse species of the one subaltern genus: so that we call dispositions, those qualities of the first species, which by reason of their very nature are easily lost, because they have changeable causes; e.g. sickness and health: whereas we call habits those qualities which, by reason of their very nature, are not easily changed, in that they have unchangeable causes, e.g. sciences and virtues. And in this sense, disposition does not become habit.”

<sup>282</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 41.

a statue participates in the shape of that statue in order to be the statue in question). Thirdly, an effect can be said to participate in its cause, especially when the effect is not equal to the power of that cause. The effect particularizes and determines the scope of the cause; for the effect acts as the determinate recipient of the power of the cause. The effect receives from its cause only that which is necessary for the production of the effect. It is in this way that a cause is participated in by its effect.<sup>283</sup>

In sum, one can say that the human person can become virtuous through participation and activity. Participation through the supernatural union with God is made possible through Grace, and for Aquinas only a rational being is capable of this union since he alone can know God.<sup>284</sup> In the words of Aquinas:

The perfection of the rational creature consists not only in what belongs to it in respect of its nature, but also in that which it acquires through a supernatural participation of Divine goodness. Hence it was said above (I-II, Q. 3, A. 8) that man's ultimate happiness consists in a supernatural vision of God.<sup>285</sup>

The Vatican II document *Gaudium et Spes* emphasized the same point by stressing that as intelligent beings humanity reaches its final perfection in two ways: First through “wisdom which gently draws the human mind to seek and love what is true and good,”<sup>286</sup> and second, through activity in the application of reasoning reaching out to other reality particularly through the moral virtues.<sup>287</sup> It follows that the human person

---

<sup>283</sup> Gaven Kerr, Aquinas: Metaphysics, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource [www.iep.utm.edu/aq-meta/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-meta/) (accessed September 9, 2013).

<sup>284</sup> See *ST* II-II, q. 2, a. 3.

<sup>285</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>286</sup> *GS.*, no. 15.

<sup>287</sup> See *ST* II-II, q. 47. 5

is deified by divine wisdom through participation in the creative work of God and through human activity.<sup>288</sup>

The section below will deal with the theological foundations of the human person by positing an understanding of the human person as *Imago Dei*. The anthropological foundations are in-built within the theological foundations. It is my intention to show that a theological foundation will elaborate how the human person is an individual but at the same time a relational being.<sup>289</sup>

### **2.6.1 *The Human Person as Imago Dei***

Since virtue ethics and moral theology as a theological science is concerned with the human person it is important to consider the nature of the creature whose good it directs.<sup>290</sup> According to Cessario: “The theological doctrine of the *Imago Dei* recapitulates what theologians have said about the origin and nature of the human creature. It also controls theological reflection on the nature of human action.”<sup>291</sup> Gula similarly states: “The Biblical witness to the mystery of creation provides the theological foundation for understanding the ultimate place of God and human life as a reflection of God.”<sup>292</sup> Cessario confirms: “The earliest witnesses of the Christian tradition support the theological postulate that every individual instance of human nature bears the image of God.”<sup>293</sup> This is constantly re-echoed in church documents. Again, Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes* states: “For sacred scripture teaches that humankind was created ‘in the image of God’ with the capacity to know and love its

---

<sup>288</sup> See William E. May, *An Introduction to Moral Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003), 217.

<sup>289</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 64.

<sup>290</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 22.

<sup>291</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>292</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 64.

<sup>293</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 24.

creator, and was divinely appointed with authority over all earthly creatures, to rule and use them and glorify God.”<sup>294</sup>

There are varied approaches to ‘image’. Cessario adopts Aquinas’ version which is based on the classical tradition. Firstly, when image is used in connection with the human person it denotes a similitude or likeness: “A true image must not only resemble its original in something characteristic of its species, but also originate from what it images. According to this exact norm, then, only the eternal Son himself manifests the perfect image of God in an absolute similitude of species.”<sup>295</sup> Secondly, image belongs to the genus of signs. That is to say the image of God in the human person can exist either as an instrumental sign or as a formal sign. Explaining this Cessario says:

An instrumental sign points beyond itself, as when a road marker on the New Jersey Turnpike tells me that New York is 100 miles down the road. When I see the sign, I gain an image of New York, but I still behold the fields of New Jersey, not the Empire State Building. A formal sign reveals something about what it inheres in, as when a healthy complexion persuades me that I am beholding a healthy person. Every human creature points toward God, whereas only the saints reveal the God in whose image they are created.<sup>296</sup>

We can see the participatory model of Aquinas clearly at work in the distinctions of images which he employs. While all humanity carry the instrumental sign, only the virtuous reveal the formal sign.

Furthermore, the human person created in the image of God has a Trinitarian dimension. Gula articulates: “The Trinitarian doctrine implies a communitarian

---

<sup>294</sup> Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 12; Gunnlaugur A. Jonsson, *The Image of God: Genesis 1:26-28 in a Century of Old Testament Research* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988).

<sup>295</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 26.

<sup>296</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

understanding of being human. The Trinitarian vision sees that no one exists by oneself, but only in relationship to others.”<sup>297</sup> Aquinas emphasizes this point when he says that the image of God in us signifies an image both of the divine nature of Christ and of the divine Persons of the Trinity.<sup>298</sup> The community of the three persons of the Trinity is represented in each of us through our participation in the triune God: “For the being of God is understood as event and relationship, but only through an epistemology of participation.”<sup>299</sup> Aquinas himself teaches that the image of the trinity is found in our activities of thinking and acting.<sup>300</sup> Also John Edward Sullivan in *The Image of God: The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence* draws upon the riches of the teachings of the Fathers especially on the Trinity to explore the concept of *Imago Dei*.<sup>301</sup> All these conceptions are foundational to Cessario’s reflections on the image.

The implication is that our complete imaging of the Trinity consists in some actualization of our human capacities.<sup>302</sup> Cessario distinguishes natural and Supernatural image of God. In the former, the natural order without sanctifying grace elevates the person to share in the divine life, “the God thus attained in knowledge is reached not in his very self, but rather according to the soul’s own proper mode of being and as the cause to that being.”<sup>303</sup> While in the latter, the human person is aided by grace.<sup>304</sup>

---

<sup>297</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 65.

<sup>298</sup> See *ST I*, q.93, a.5. See also William J. Hill, *The Three-Personed God* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University America Press, 1982).

<sup>299</sup> See Paul S. Fiddes, *Participating In God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity* (Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000), 38.

<sup>300</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 93, a.7.

<sup>301</sup> See John Edward Sullivan, *The Image of God: The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence* (Dubuque: Priory Press, 1963).

<sup>302</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 28.

<sup>303</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

<sup>304</sup> *Ibid.*, 30.

To say that the human person is an *Imago Dei* has both theological and anthropological implications. It is important to note that the human person has to be understood from a theological-anthropological perspective in doing moral theology today. It means that the human person cannot be fully understood without reference to God. Such an understanding leads to a better articulation of ethics. However, Cessario does not consider the eschatological aspect of the *Imago Dei*. But Mark S. Medley identifies an eschatological dimension to the human person in his book *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human*. Medley rather talks of *Imago Trinitas* and not *Imago Dei*. He does this from five theses: God constitutes human person; *Imago Trinitas* points to the human person as *theonomous*; *Imago Trinitas* affirms personhood as ineffable, concrete and ecstatic, points to life of communion with others and with all of creation; As an iconic metaphor poised in a balance between particularity and communion; Therefore *Imago Trinitas* affirms the eschatological aspect of human personhood.<sup>305</sup> The use of *Imago Dei* by Cessario and *Imago Trinitas* by Medley in relation to the human person capture both the theological, anthropological and eschatological dimension of the human person.

Theological prepositions on the human person may not be treated in complete isolation from philosophical assumptions. Cessario is aware that philosophical assumptions adversely influence the development of moral philosophy and in turn the shape moral theology.<sup>306</sup> Therefore, Cessario opines that since moral theology is a scientific enquiry that shapes human behaviour, the moral theologian must be informed about the conclusions of anthropology and other behavioural sciences as highlighted

---

<sup>305</sup> Mark S. Medley, *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human* (Lanham: University Press of America, 2002), 170-180.

<sup>306</sup> Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 23.

earlier on in this chapter.<sup>307</sup> And Benedict Ashley reasons in *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian*: “A right understanding of science and of history, guided by the light of the Gospel, surely leads to the contemplation of the Triune God.”<sup>308</sup> Appreciating the place of theology in this endeavour, Cessario asserts: “While the philosophical justification for confidence about the analogous structure of nature and action distracts some moral philosophers, moral theologians enjoy an advantage afforded them by their commitment to and dependence on revealed truth.”<sup>309</sup> St. Augustine in his *Confessions* realises this advantage when he writes that the Christians have sure knowledge about their destiny and how to reach it from revealed truth rather than in philosophical speculation.<sup>310</sup>

From the foregoing, Cessario wishes to establish a sound theological anthropology that explains the complete meaning of the Christian faith about creation by developing an understanding of the relationship between human nature and human person.<sup>311</sup> Since he traces the nature of the human person to God: “God constitutes the objective happiness of every person. Since complete happiness for the human person is found only in the happiness that results from God’s own happiness, the moral theologian finds true consolation in the guidance that divine revelation gives for the moral life.”<sup>312</sup>

Therefore, in trying to understand the human person from the perspective of the Christian doctrine of *Imago Dei*, Cessario is trying to understand the origin and nature

---

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Benedict Ashley, *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian* (Massachusetts: The Pope John Center, 1985), xv.

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> St. Augustine, *Confessions* BK. 5, chap.4 (PL 32, col.708). See also Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 24.

<sup>311</sup> Ibid., 24.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid., 24-25.

of the human person in connection with his actions within the moral spectrum. His theology of the *Imago Dei* is built around the substantive view as shall see in the last chapter of this thesis.

Our concern so far has been to show how the human person made in the image of God attains that image of conformity with his or her maker. The last existential state of the *Imago Dei* is beholding God face to face.<sup>313</sup> God becomes the beginning and end of the *Imago Dei*. The most basic principle of the Christian moral life is the awareness that every person bears the dignity of being made in the image of God.<sup>314</sup> The person has been given an immortal soul and through the gifts of intelligence and reason enables it to understand the order of things established in his creation. God has also given us a free will to seek and love what is true, good, and beautiful.

The achievement of the fullness of the *Imago Dei* in the Christian moral life is one that seeks to cultivate and practice virtue. Hence, Douglas John Hall in *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship*, argues: “To be *Imago Dei* does not mean to have something, but to be and do something: to image God.”<sup>315</sup> And Medley also reiterates the fact that the divine image is not a thing, but a process.<sup>316</sup> Hall aptly captures: “*Imago Dei* therefore indicates openness, transcendality, alterity, participation, and

---

<sup>313</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>314</sup> Cessario does not further discuss the importance of the concept of dignity in the doctrine of the *Imago Dei*. But it is a concept that is central to any discussion on the human person imaging God.

<sup>315</sup> Douglas John Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986), 98.

<sup>316</sup> Medley, *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human*, 2.

relatedness. Hence, human beings are created for loving communion and interconnection with the Divine, with one another, self and with all creation.”<sup>317</sup>

Therefore, our understanding of the human person as *Imago Dei* and *Imago Trinitas* stresses that humanity and relatedness are intertwined so that the deeper one’s participation in relationships is, the more human one becomes. Since the individual and community are necessary to grow in God’s image, the fundamental responsibility of being the *Imago Dei* and for living in community is to give oneself. A deeper participation in the human community enhances the humanity of each person within the community while the failure to establish community diminishes the humanity of all.<sup>318</sup>

### 2.6.2 *Relationship Between Person(s) and Communities*

In order to understand the dynamics in any human community one must understand how parts relate to the whole.<sup>319</sup> According to Cessario, there exists a general bond of relationship within the human species.<sup>320</sup> Yet there is a distinguishing relationship that exists between an individual person as *Imago Dei* and the common good of the

---

<sup>317</sup> Hall, *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship*. See also Charles E. Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue* (New York: Paulist Press, 2011), 55-78. On the relationship with nature see also Kevin W. Irwin, “Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments,” in *Preserving the Creation: Environmental Theology and Ethics*, ed. Kevin W. Irwin and Edmund D. Pellegrino (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1994), 67-111. Relations with others see Pope Leo XIII, Encyclical Letter *Rerum Novarum*, 1891; National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All* (Washington, DC: USCCB Publishing, 1997). On the Self see *ST. II-II*, q.26, aa.3-5.

<sup>318</sup> Michael J. Himes and Kenneth R. Himes, “Rights, Economics and Trinity,” *Commonweal* 113 (March 14, 1986): 139-140.

<sup>319</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 134. Cessario discusses this under the virtue of Justice.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.* Aquinas explains further: “In some general sort of way, every man is by nature a friend of every man – in the way that Ecclesiasticus talks about ‘every animal loving its own’.” *ST I-II*, q.114. a.1, ad 2.

society.<sup>321</sup> At the same time, each individual person is unique in his or her own distinct way.

Cessario in order to adequately explain the relationships that exist between a person within the human community introduces a distinction between a human individual and a person. It is a distinction which I find very technical and inexplicit. He argues:

By their preoccupation with the “self” as a particular center of consciousness and volition, the philosophers of the Enlightenment broke with earlier philosophical traditions and their way of accounting for the individuality of each human being within the species. Because of the theology of incarnation, Christian thinkers had always upheld the distinction between an individual instance of human nature and the human person; whereas Christ possesses two individual and concrete natures, in the mystery of the hypostatic union, he remains one divine Person. And so the Christian tradition developed . . . a heightened awareness of the unique dignity that belongs to human personhood.<sup>322</sup>

Accordingly, the Christian tradition has always taught of the uniqueness of the human personhood.<sup>323</sup> Cessario cites Pope John Paul II who in his encyclical letter *Centesimus Annus* emphasized the care and responsibility that the church accords to the human person as a unique being: “We are not dealing here with man in the ‘abstract’, but with the real, ‘concrete’, ‘historical’ man. We are dealing with each individual, since each one is included in the mystery of the Redemption. And through this mystery Christ has

---

<sup>321</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 134.

<sup>322</sup> *Ibid.*, 134-135

<sup>323</sup> *Ibid.* 135. On human dignity See J. Brian Benestad, *Church, State, and Society: An Introduction to Catholic Social Doctrine* (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011), 38; Pope John Paul II, *Christifideles laici (On the Vocation and Mission of the Lay Faithful in the Church and Modern world)*, No. 37; *Vatican II, Gaudium et Spes* no. 19.

united himself with each one for ever.”<sup>324</sup> Cessario appeals to incarnational theology to show the link between a person and community.

Cessario also borrows the arguments of Jacques Maritain detailed in *The Person and the Common Good*: “The human being is caught between two poles; a material pole, which, in reality, does not concern the true person but rather the shadow of personality or what, in the strict sense, is called individuality, and a spiritual pole, which does concern true personality.”<sup>325</sup> He goes further that while the individual *qua* individual can be subordinated to larger societal interests, the individual *qua* person enjoys an excellence that surpasses that of the whole human social order and, because of the divine design, finds rest and perfection only in union with God.<sup>326</sup> However, Cessario observes that the above assertion raises questions for Christian ethics: “Does a human being considered simply as an individual member of the species enjoy certain prerogatives, such as the freedom to marry, that even the state, for its own legitimate interests, cannot restrict?”<sup>327</sup> Even though Cessario does not attempt to answer the question raised above, he confirms the distinctive place the Church accords to the human person in the community: “The origin, the subject and the purpose of all social institutions is and should be the human person, whose life of its nature absolutely needs to be lived in society.”<sup>328</sup> It follows that the person cannot live independently of the community.

---

<sup>324</sup> John Paul II, Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus*, chap. 6, no. 53.

<sup>325</sup> Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good*, trans. John J. Fitzgerald (New York: 1947), 33.

<sup>326</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>327</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 135.

<sup>328</sup> Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no.26.

Invariably, there is connection between human persons in society by way of their status within that society, be it economic, social or religious. The above connection between the person and society raises the question of the principle of subsidiary, because the Church understands a social community as an “ordered whole” that can exist in varying interdependent ways.<sup>329</sup> Again the concept of subsidiary raises questions about power, distribution of goods and ordering of the society. This thesis does not intend to discuss the dynamics of the principle of subsidiary. Simply put, Cessario identifies the implication of the principle of subsidiary as follows:

A community of a higher order should not interfere in the internal life of a community of a lower order, depriving the latter of its functions, but rather should support it in case of need and help to coordinate its activity with the activities of the rest of society, always with a view to the common good.<sup>330</sup>

Explaining this Cessario says: “The church considers social community as an ‘ordered whole’ that can exist in diversely independent ways: at the same time, it is important to recall that subordination does not spell obliteration.”<sup>331</sup>

Cessario observes that in any attempt to consider human community holistically, theologians would have to take into consideration two important factors: “First, the ordering of the whole to the common good, and second, the achievement of diverse ends within the same community.”<sup>332</sup> When not considered, two effects can result. Firstly, there may be radical individualism, which destroys the due ordering of human society. Secondly, it may result in totalitarianism, which undermines personal

---

<sup>329</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 136.

<sup>330</sup> Pius XI, Encyclical Letter, *Quadragesimo Anno*, 1.

<sup>331</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 135-6.

<sup>332</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

dignity that each member of the community ought to enjoy.<sup>333</sup> Therefore, the virtue of justice must consider these two extremes by means of prudence. And Cessario captures this more aptly: “True social justice aims to establish a human community that is readied for participation in the beatific communion of the saints, one which, because of the infused virtue of justice, already appears in some ways among those who belong to Christ.”<sup>334</sup>

Cessario identifies three forms of human community, namely: the natural family, the political community and the church as the new community. He applies the virtues of justice and charity to these forms of community to better illustrate the connectedness between the person and the community.<sup>335</sup> In the first form, he says:

The natural family represents the whole that in the created order best realizes the divine design; as the domestic church, the family finds its deepest origin in the sacramental bond between wife and husband. Since it arises from natural processes, however, the unity of the whole excludes the ‘otherness’ that justice requires, though not the exercise of charity, according to St. Paul, Christian marriage represents in a symbolic way.<sup>336</sup>

The primary orientation of the community has its originality from the natural family upon which every other form is built.

Secondly, the political or civic community entails a perfect expression of human society whose end is the *bene vivere humanum*, the good of human prosperity for the community.<sup>337</sup> The human good must be built upon the virtue of justice within the “city”. According to Aquinas as cited by Cessario: “If every community is ordered

---

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

<sup>334</sup> Ibid.

<sup>335</sup> Ibid.

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

<sup>337</sup> Ibid. St. Augustine in the *City of God* discusses the end of the human society. See Erich Przywara, *An Augustine Synthesis* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1936), 265.

to the good it follows that the chief community is the one that aims at the chief human good that exists.”<sup>338</sup> Therefore, Cessario argues: “The achievement of a just political order lacks the ultimate perfection that consists in loving God above all things, but as an authentic secondary end, the human *polis* embodies its own degree of perfection that the universal call to sanctity must respect.”<sup>339</sup> Within the political society, justice alone does not provide the complete virtue for a more perfect and humane community.

This being the case, Cessario introduces the third form of community, namely the church, “the ‘new community’ of elect.”<sup>340</sup> This new community springs up from the unique bonds that charity establishes among the members of Christ’s body. According to Cessario, this community supersedes every form of human community: “The new law of evangelical justice reigns, so that within the church the end of all order is *beatitudo*, the blessed response of the saints in God.”<sup>341</sup> Cessario gives an ecclesiological approach and places the church as the model of true community because of the virtue of love that is the foundation of a community as the church.

The three distinct forms of community represent various “common goods” though different, but provide the enabling environment for the practice of the virtues. Nonetheless, human experience cuts across all three forms of community. The practice of virtue therefore can be meaningfully exercised in the home, within the *polis* and in the church. To endure and prosper, communities need institutional structures, but these should serve community. The church is one of those institutionalized structures which has been at the service of community.

---

<sup>338</sup> Ibid. Original quote is from Aquinas, *Sententia libri Politicorum* BK. 1, lect. 1. I

<sup>339</sup> Ibid.

<sup>340</sup> Ibid.

<sup>341</sup> Ibid., 136-137.

### 2.6.3 *Persons Networking within Communio*

We have seen how Cessario brings out the distinctive relationship between an individual human person as an *Imago Dei* and the community from the perspective of the virtue of justice. Here he seeks to explain the activity of the persons in the community by taking the virtue of charity as a starting point. Cessario identifies how Aquinas in the *Summa Theologica* gives a comprehensive account of what he calls the objects of the virtue of charity.<sup>342</sup> Aquinas enumerates the different categories of persons that form the church, invariably forming a *communicatio* of charity.<sup>343</sup>

*Communicatio* as used by Cessario is a term derived from the concept *communicatio idiomatum*, which is a Christological concept that explains the interaction of a deity with humanity.<sup>344</sup> The concept is most often used with reference to Christ. But Johann Hamann a moral philosopher in *Writings in Philosophy and Language* argues that the concept should apply not only to Christ but should be generalized to cover all human action.<sup>345</sup> However, Cessario borrows the concept *communicatio* and uses it in a restrictive sense to imply a process of interaction within the human family as understood from the perspective of the virtue of charity or love. But since the concept is originally Christological, Cessario brings in Christ in his discourse who becomes the central figure in the *communicatio*. This explicates further the concept of participation but with an ecclesiological slant. His effort is to show in

---

<sup>342</sup> Ibid., 75; *ST* IIa- IIae q. 25, aa. 1-12.

<sup>343</sup> *ST* IIa- IIae q. 25, aa. 1-12.

<sup>344</sup> Catholic Encyclopedia: *Communicatio Idiomatum*  
[www.newadvent.org/cathen/04169a.htm](http://www.newadvent.org/cathen/04169a.htm)(accessed September 30, 2013).

<sup>345</sup> Johann Hamann and Kenneth Haynes, ed., *Writings on Philosophy and Language* (Leiden: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 99.

the words of Hans Urs von Balthasar, “Life in his community is at the same time both personalizing and socializing.”<sup>346</sup>

Cessario states that Christian love primarily is the love of God but it involves self and others: “The New Testament makes it abundantly clear that Christian love by its very nature reaches out and embraces the whole order of creation” (1 John 4:21).<sup>347</sup> The question “who is my neighbour?” (Luke 10:29) challenges us to an inquiry about the persons that make the *communicatio* of charity.<sup>348</sup> Furthering into this inquiry Cessario notes:

Any person can authentically love only on account of his or her share in that unique *communicatio* which God establishes within the human family through the incarnation of his only son. But so that theological charity does not become indistinguishably conflated with other forms of human affectivity nor the church mistaken for whatsoever human community, the moral theologian must examine carefully what makes for divine charity.<sup>349</sup>

Therefore, Aquinas argues that membership of the *communicatio* is based in terms of the *ratio formalis objecti* as cited by Cessario.<sup>350</sup> In other words: “Only the good God is the First Friend for every member in the *communicatio* of charity; and his unlimited goodness subsequently forms the radical ground for every manifestation of authentic friendship.”<sup>351</sup> Going further he sustains: “At the same time, the gospels make it clearer that even though God alone is the sole explanation for charity, other

---

<sup>346</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Nine Theses*, (2), p. 110. See also Stefan Oster, “The Other and the Fruitfulness of Personal Acting,” in *Love Alone is Credible: Hans Urs von Balthasar as Interpreter of the Catholic Tradition* vol. 1, ed. David L. Schindler (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008), 303-316.

<sup>347</sup> Ibid.

<sup>348</sup> Aquinas discusses this extensively under the objects of charity. See *ST II- II*, q. 25, aa. 1-12.

<sup>349</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 75.

<sup>350</sup> Ibid., 75-76.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., 76.

persons, whom the New Testament refers to as ‘neighbour’, can enter into the *communicatio*.<sup>352</sup> The *communicatio* therefore establishes a relationship between the persons participating. Cessario appeals to scripture to further explicate the participatory model at work within the *communicatio*:

The New commandment explicitly speaks about these relationships when it enjoins that ‘You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbour as yourself’ (Luke 10:27). And in his last discourse, Jesus himself says: “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another” (John 13:34).

To help understand Jesus’ injunction of loving others as ourselves, Cessario elucidates: “Only persons constitute the only true terms of the love of benevolence, they are the true ‘objects’ of charity.”<sup>353</sup>

From the foregoing we can decipher that there are three classes within the *communicatio* which are to be considered: God, oneself and the neighbour:

The proper and formal object of course is God, the Principal Friend to whom everything is referred; God alone remains the reason why we love ourselves and our neighbour. Next, each believer constitutes an object of charity for him or herself. Then, charity goes out to the neighbour, both angels and men, who either participate in or are called to participate in the fellowship of God’s love (*communicatio beatitudinis*).<sup>354</sup>

There are three important questions that Cessario brings to the fore: First, how are we to love ourselves in charity? Second, how are we to love our neighbour? Third, among

---

<sup>352</sup> Ibid.

<sup>353</sup> Ibid., 77.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid. See Edward Collins Vacek, *Love Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1994).

neighbours how are we to love those who are sinners, and enemies? Basically the questions are two, with the third as a corollary of the second.

Firstly, the New Testament demands love of neighbour as ones love for self as we have seen in previous biblical citations. By implication to be able to love the neighbour a person must first love him or herself. Even Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* remarks: “Friendly feelings towards others flow from a person’s own feelings towards himself or herself.”<sup>355</sup> Aquinas too in *Summa Theologiae* maintains: “Just as unity is presupposed to union, so our love for ourselves is the model and root of friendship; for our friendship for others consists precisely in the fact that our attitude to them is the same as to ourselves.”<sup>356</sup> But Cessario draws our attention to the fact that love of self is beyond egoism; for genuine self-love never apes self-centered and egoistic love.<sup>357</sup> The proper love of self has both psychological and physical implications. He advocates for a genuine understanding of love of self and particularly love of our bodies. He rejects any form of disguised Manichaeism, and unwarranted asceticism that is injurious to the body.<sup>358</sup>

Secondly, the Christian demand to love oneself also extends to the neighbour. Cessario explains that loving one’s neighbours seems a simple task when understood from the standpoint of loving those who love us back. But it is challenged when one has to love others outside the *communicatio*, that is people considered to be sinners or

---

<sup>355</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, BK 9, chap. 4 (1166a1); see also, chap. 8 (1168b5).

<sup>356</sup> *ST II-II*, 25, a. 4.

<sup>357</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 78. St. Therese of Lisieux gives a detailed illustration of this in her work *The Story of a Soul*, trans. John Clarke (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 1976), 220-221.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*, 79.

hardened criminals.<sup>359</sup> The question thus is: how can sinners, who by definition are those who have exchanged the good of beatitude for the apparent goods of finite capacity, fit into the *communicatio*?<sup>360</sup> Notice that Cessario is justifying his position of the Church being the model par excellence of community. Answering the above question, Cessario alludes to Aquinas' explanation:

For by definition, the sinner is not God's friend. While it is true that sinners are not actual sharers in the *communicatio beatitudinis*, they still remain until death potential sharers in it. Charity urges us then to promote their return to God's goodness. This means that we should love them in such a way as to ensure that they come to participate fully in the mystery of Christ's love. Christ's own example and his teaching, especially the parables of the lost sheep and the prodigal son, amply emphasize this central Christian concern.<sup>361</sup>

Cessario further appeals to St. Augustine who introduces a judgment of mercy in human relationship.<sup>362</sup> The inclusion of mercy is what makes the church different with the civil society. The approach to the virtue of mercy is somewhat different between the church and the state. In the latter mercy is unmerited it is simply given while in the former it has to be earned.

Third, Cessario captures another demand of *communicatio* which insists the person must also love the neighbour who is an "enemy". The "enemy" here can refer to personal enemies, or the enemies of the communities to which one belongs; the family, the fatherland, even the church.<sup>363</sup> Cessario makes a distinction between a sinner and an enemy in the illustration below:

---

<sup>359</sup> Ibid.

<sup>360</sup> Ibid.

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

<sup>362</sup> See St. Augustine *Tractatus super Joannem* 31, c.7 (PL 35:1642).

<sup>363</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 81.

First, to love an enemy as such, i.e., *sub ratione inimici*, would be the same thing as to love a sinner as a sinner . . . We can recognize that there is a distinction to be made between a sinner and an enemy; the sinner remains someone who fails to keep God's law, but a person can become an enemy through no personal fault. One example is the soldier enlisted in the service of an enemy army. In this case, the *communicatio* of charity first requires that the offense be removed – in the example of the soldier, whatever precipitated the hostilities- by the guilty party . . . At the same time, the teaching of the gospel enjoins us to love the individual enemy, even with the predilection that exhibits the perfection of charity (see Matt. 5: 43-48).<sup>364</sup>

Of course, it may be possible to find utilitarian motives for ignoring or letting go of past sins, but “Only Christ makes it possible to love the enemy in a way that transcends self-referential love.”<sup>365</sup> This means that loving the enemy transcends even the willingness of an individual to love the sinner or enemy according to the demands of the gospel. That is why Cessario insists: “The love that one renders to an enemy does not, by the very fact that she or he is an enemy, make the love a better one to pursue. In fact, all things being equal, to love a friend is both better and more meritorious.”<sup>366</sup> It is a love that is tough yet demanded by the gospel values. This is because: “Charity breaks down all barriers, of nationality, of race, of class, of culture.”<sup>367</sup>

In conclusion, western theological tradition has always taught that God, the self, the neighbour (foe and friend) are the constituent elements that form the *communicatio beatitudinis*. As St. Augustine teaches: “There are four kinds of things a

---

<sup>364</sup> Ibid.

<sup>365</sup> Ibid.

<sup>366</sup> Ibid., 82.

<sup>367</sup> Ibid.

man must love, one is above him, namely God; another is himself; the third is close to him, namely his neighbour; and the fourth is beneath him, namely his own body.”<sup>368</sup>

## 2.7 Concluding Remarks

At this juncture, we may note some particular aspects of Cessario’s work. Primarily, he considers himself faithful to Aquinas, yet his *Resourcement* Thomism is shaped by way of a reading of Thomist themes found in the Patristic Era. He is also committed to moral realism that supports a doctrinally Christocentric approach to moral theology and the virtues.

Our reading of Cessario analyse the classical virtues individually. Rather, he tends to thematically discuss them from the general conditions necessary for establishing a construct named Christian virtue ethics.<sup>369</sup>

Most significantly, this chapter brings out the basic elements in the works of Cessario that make for the theology of virtue from the perspective of the value of the community. At the heart of all this is the fact that Cessario operates from a standpoint of an explicit theology. Christ becomes the paradigmatic figure and by extension the human person as an *Imago Dei* and the community. In general Cessario appeals to the dynamics within ecclesiology and *communicatio* to bring out the relational aspect of virtue ethics.

---

<sup>368</sup> St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, BK. 1, chap. 23, (PL 34, 27).

<sup>369</sup> See Josef Pieper, *The Cardinal Virtues* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965). Pieper gives a detailed explanation of each of the virtues. Another author who explains the virtues individually with great illustrations is Mattison. See Mattison, *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*.

## CHAPTER THREE

### JAMES F. KEENAN SJ: A PERSONALIST-PASTORAL APPROACH.

#### 3.0 Introduction

James F. Keenan is a Jesuit priest specializing in fundamental moral theology. He obtained his BA at Fordham University Bronx, New York in 1976. He pursued his Masters in Divinity (M. Div) at Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, Mass. in 1982. Soon afterwards, he received his S.T.L in 1984, and in 1988 his S.T.D both from Gregorian University, Rome. Presently he is a Professor of Moral Theology in the Department of Theology Boston College.

Keenan's research interests are widespread including the History of Moral Theology<sup>1</sup> and the revival of St. Thomas Aquinas's works.<sup>2</sup> His book *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae* serves as foundational to his development of thoughts on Aquinas and later the virtues.<sup>3</sup> Other areas of research interest are the New Testament Ethics, the human body,<sup>4</sup> and ethical issues on HIV/AIDS and genetics.<sup>5</sup> Keenan has edited, authored and co-authored many books

---

<sup>1</sup> James F. Keenan, *A History of Moral Theology in Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences* (New York: Continuum, 2010); "The History of Catholic Moral Theology," in *In the Service of Charity and Truth: Essays in Honour of Bishop Lucius Ugorji* (New York: Peter Lang, 2012).

<sup>2</sup> James F. Keenan, *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1992); "Ten Reasons Why Thomas Aquinas is Important for Ethics Today," *New Blackfriars* 75 (1994): 354-363.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 51, 94-96, 98-101.

<sup>4</sup> James F. Keenan, "Christian Perspectives on the Human Body," *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 330-346.

<sup>5</sup> James F. Keenan, "Genetic Research and the Elusive Body," in *Embodiment, Medicine and Morality*, ed. M. Farley and L. S. Cahill (Dordrecht: Kluwer Academics, 1995), 59-73.

and written many articles that bear on virtue ethics and other ethical issues.<sup>6</sup> Such is his output that Thomas Ryan in his article, “Christian Ethics: Moral Dilemmas or Something More,” considers Keenan as one of the leading contemporary theologians.<sup>7</sup> With reference to virtue ethics some of Keenan’s works include: “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,”<sup>8</sup> and his co-authored books with Daniel Harrington and Joseph Kotva.<sup>9</sup> In his many other works Keenan attempts to describe the present challenge of espousing virtue ethics.<sup>10</sup>

Keenan currently serves as member of Board of Directors, Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA) (2012 to date); Fellow, Institute for Advanced Studies in the Humanities, University of Edinburgh; Fellow, Center of Theological Inquiry, Princeton; Editorial Board Member of *Theological Studies* (1991 to date). Keenan’s interest in bioethics has also earned him the Chair, Catholic Theological Coalition on HIV/AIDS Prevention (1997 to date).

---

<sup>6</sup> For ethical issues like HIV/AIDS, see James Keenan, *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention* ed., assisted by Lisa Sowle Cahill, Jon Fuller, and Kevin Kelly (Continuum, 2000); For other ethical issues, see “Ethical Issues in Health Care Restructuring,” *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 136-150.

<sup>7</sup> Thomas Ryan, “Christian Ethics: Moral Dilemmas or Something More,” *Compass: A Review of Topical Theology* 46, 1 (2012): 33. <http://compassreview.org/autumn12/6.pdf> (accessed October 17, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> James F. Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 709-729. Reprinted in *Readings in Moral Theology Number 11: The Historical Development of Fundamental Moral Theology in the United States*, ed., Curran and McCormick (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1999), 281-306.

<sup>9</sup> Daniel Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002); *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010); James F. Keenan and Joseph Kotva, ed., *Practice what you Preach: Virtue, Ethics, and Power in the lives of Pastoral Ministers and Their Congregations* (Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> James F. Keenan, “Virtue Ethics: Setting an Agenda,” *Thought* 67 (1992): 113-114; “Virtue Ethics: Making a Case as It Comes of Age,” *Thought* 67 (1992): 115-127.

Our task in this chapter is to show how Keenan builds a theology of virtue on the relational aspect of the human person, for the human person takes primacy of place in his theological reflections. For Keenan virtue ethics is person-based ethics rather than act-based ethics, because virtues, not principles, are the sources for understanding normative conduct.<sup>11</sup> Furthermore, Keenan is convinced that to have a viable moral theology we must understand the person(s) as agent rather than objects; and as agents we are relational.<sup>12</sup>

### **3.1 *Situating James F. Keenan***

The first task in this section is to place Keenan within the current moral debate on the revival of virtue ethics. As previously noted, Keenan proposes seven distinct periods in the history of moral theology: Patristic, penitentials, scholastics, confessional manuals, casuistry, moral manuals and contemporary moral theology.<sup>13</sup> Each era, he contends was either marked by avoiding sin, or on becoming a disciple of Christ.<sup>14</sup>

As seen in chapter one of this thesis, the Penitentials consequently eclipsed the tradition of the Fathers that depended on Scripture and the virtues.<sup>15</sup> For example, Mahoney affirms that St. Augustine along with saints Ambrose and Gregory viewed the whole moral life in the categories of the four cardinal virtues in unison with charity.<sup>16</sup> These writers emphasized the interiority of the Christian and also the

---

<sup>11</sup> James F. Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," *Louvain Studies* 30, 3 (2005): 184-185.

<sup>12</sup> *Ibid.*, 723.

<sup>13</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 2.

<sup>14</sup> *Ibid.*, 1, 3.

<sup>15</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

<sup>16</sup> Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*, 43. See also James F. Keenan, *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004), 147.

outward expression of that interiority.<sup>17</sup> In like manner the moral theology that evolved during the scholastic era naturally depended on the virtues.<sup>18</sup> Keenan articulates:

Inasmuch as theology was seen as a science investigating God and the human, moral theology specifically studied humanity as responding lovingly to the initiative of God. This study was then highly anthropological . . . and naturally depended on the virtues to outline an appropriate moral identity.<sup>19</sup>

A significant feature of his work is the use of history in doing moral theology: “James Keenan, professor of Moral Theology, has worked extensively on the history of Catholic Moral theology, in the revival of interest in virtue ethics.”<sup>20</sup> One of his influences is Bernard Lonergan. Lonergan in *Method in Theology* explains that history in theology is not the mere coalition of historical data; rather it is an understanding that has an interpretative function.<sup>21</sup> Thus, history as a functional specialty is a judgment of precisely what is going forward in the data of the past uncovered and comprehended.<sup>22</sup> History for Lonergan is the fact of a dynamic forward, affirmed on the basis of historical evidence.<sup>23</sup>

Keenan draws upon Lonergan’s work, by also writing of history from such a functional specialty perspective. Richard Gula in the review of *Paul and Virtue Ethics* has also noted that Keenan presents the historical dynamism of the virtues.<sup>24</sup> However,

---

<sup>17</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 2.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*, 4.

<sup>19</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>20</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>21</sup> Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (London: Darton, 1972), 175-186.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, 185-186.

<sup>24</sup> Richard M. Gula, “A Review of *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*, by Daniel J. Harrington, and James F. Keenan (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010),” *Theological Studies*, Vol. 73, No. 2 (June 2012): 480.

the dynamism of the virtues raises the all-important issue of hermeneutics, which according to Gula was not address in the book.<sup>25</sup> Other historians of moral theology, such as Henry Lea, Mahoney, and Gallagher have influenced Keenan a great deal in the way they capture the history of moral theology.<sup>26</sup>

To further situate Keenan, it is necessary to identify why he writes on virtue ethics. He sees in virtue ethics “a comprehensive approach to all of Christian life, not simply an exercise in character formation divorced from Christian faith and life.”<sup>27</sup> Therefore virtue ethics allows him to further the integration between moral theology and Scripture, by engaging in dialogue with biblical studies. For example in his collaborative work with Harrington he identifies those virtues that are Scripture based.<sup>28</sup> Gula in the above mentioned review comments:

Collaborative interdisciplinary projects in biblical studies and ethics are rare. All too often, biblical scholars and moral theologians work separately when trying to relate to each other’s disciplines . . . *But* together they help realize Vatican II’s vision of enriching moral theology by drawing more fully from Scripture.<sup>29</sup>

This approach is dialogical. The dialogical perspective is further made visible in the ways Keenan sees the virtues as capable of bridging the gap between moral theology and other fields of theology like liturgy, spirituality and others.<sup>30</sup>

Keenan’s works offer a positive engagement for scholars, pastors and lay faithful with a “heuristic probe” intended to generate further dialogue.<sup>31</sup> From this

---

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

<sup>26</sup> Henry Lea, *The History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church* (Philadelphia: Lea Brothers, 1896); Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*; Gallagher, *Time Past, Time Future*.

<sup>27</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, xiv.

<sup>28</sup> Note 8.

<sup>29</sup> Gula, “A Review of *Paul and Virtue Ethics*: 479.

<sup>30</sup> James F. Keenan, “What is Virtue Ethics,” *Priests and People*, vol. 13, no. 11 (1999): 401.

context, he intends to communicate with “thinking” Christians on something that is profoundly foundational to individuals, families, the church and the entire community.<sup>32</sup> In this sense Keenan’s audience becomes the ordinary Christian.

Secondly, Keenan wishes to sustain the renewed interest in the revival of virtue ethics. Chapter one has shown how both philosophers and theologians neglected virtue ethics for a long time. Keenan, like other current theologians makes his theological contributions to resonate with his philosophical counterparts.

Thirdly, Keenan challenges us to think of the virtues not in the classical expression as perfecting individual powers within an individual person but rather as rightly realizing the ways that we are related.<sup>33</sup> People are relational in three ways: generally, specifically, and uniquely.<sup>34</sup> We shall return to these themes later. Charles Curran supports Keenan’s argumentation by writing:

Yes, much individual diversity exists, but there still remains a minimal understanding of those virtues that must form a part of every Christian life. One can spell out the virtues of the Christian life common to all Christians only in the sense of a loosely arranged minimum common to all.<sup>35</sup>

In this context Keenan proposes a new categorization of virtues.<sup>36</sup>

Keenan can be identified as a Revisionist Thomist. The revisionist movement is a recent theological movement that attempts to reformulate the meaning of truth-

---

<sup>31</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, xii.

<sup>32</sup> James F. Keenan, *Virtue for Ordinary Christians* (Franklin: Sheed & Ward, 1999), vii.

<sup>33</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 122.

<sup>34</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 723.

<sup>35</sup> Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today,” 54.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*

claims of Christian traditions from various critical perspectives.<sup>37</sup> Revisionism as an ethical method, evaluates the rightness or wrongness of an act in terms of the human person adequately considered and how the act impacts its dimensions, aside from the subjective motivation or moral goodness of the agent choosing the act.<sup>38</sup> David Tracy who is a prime-shaper of the revisionist theology writes in *Blessed Rage For Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* expressing the fundamental insight of the revisionist theology: “The task of Christian theology intrinsically involves a commitment to investigate critically both the Christian faith in its several expressions and contemporary experience in its several cultural expressions.”<sup>39</sup> To do this Tracy proposes five theses:

-First Thesis: There are two principal sources for theology; the Christian texts and common human experience and language.

-Second Thesis: A Critical correlation of the results of the investigations of the two sources of theology.

-Third Thesis: The principal method of investigation of the source can be described as the phenomenology of the “religious dimension” present in everyday and scientific experience and language.

-Fourth Thesis: The principal method of investigation of the source “the Christian tradition” can be described as an Historical and Hermeneutical investigation of classical Christian texts.

---

<sup>37</sup> *New Catholic Encyclopedia* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., s.v, “Revisionist Theology.” There are other designations given to revisionist theology: “Reductionist theology”, or “The Emerging Church”.

<sup>38</sup> See Louis Janssens, “Artificial Insemination: Ethical Considerations,” *Louvain Studies* 8 (1980): 3-29; Todd A. Salzman, *What are they Saying About Catholic Ethical Method?* (New York: Paulist Press, 2003), 134.

<sup>39</sup> David Tracy, *Blessed Rage For Order: The New Pluralism in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1975), 45.

-Fifth Thesis: To know the truth-status of the results of one's investigations into the meaning of both common human experience and the Christian texts the theologian should employ an explicitly transcendental or metaphysical mode of reflection.<sup>40</sup>

Keenan operates out of similar commitments. He presents the appropriateness of his chosen categories of virtue ethics as fundamental aspect within Christian tradition.<sup>41</sup> This represents a responsibility to the tradition.<sup>42</sup> Yet, while Keenan defends the classical tradition of the virtues, as Aquinas understood them, he applies his revisionist skills by proposing new virtues to meet contemporary experiences.

As argued by Todd A. Salzman in *What are they Saying About Catholic Ethical Method* revisionism as a movement came in as a response to the call of Vatican II for the renewal of moral theology<sup>43</sup> This project has resulted in the reconstruction of moral theology.<sup>44</sup> As already noted, the retrieval of virtue ethics was an effort to re-construct one of the aspects the manuals of moral theology overlooked.<sup>45</sup> The overall enterprise is aimed at providing an explicit normative method that is conducive to generalized human experience.<sup>46</sup> This is what Dale Jamieson in "Method and Moral Theory," calls "dominant conception" which makes particular moral theories explicit and universal by making vivid their coercive power.<sup>47</sup> However, revisionism as method accepts the fact that there are many sources of moral knowledge. One of those is tradition. The revisionists have a unique

---

<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 43-56.

<sup>41</sup> Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, xiv.

<sup>42</sup> Tracy, *Blessed Rage For Order*, 44.

<sup>43</sup> Salzman, *What are they Saying About Catholic Ethical Method?* 6.

<sup>44</sup> Ibid.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid. Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 44; See Charles Curran, *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1999), 48.

<sup>47</sup> Dale Jamieson, "Method and Moral Theory," in *Companion to Ethics*, ed. Peter Singer (Malden: Blackwell, 1991), 477.

understanding of Tradition which shapes their ethical theories.<sup>48</sup> According to Salzman revisionism creates a dialectical process of constructing a synthetic whole with the various sources of moral knowledge.<sup>49</sup> This dialectical process is quite evident in Keenan, as he weaves around the Thomistic virtues with his proposed virtues to provide a hermeneutical lens for contemporary moral life.

One of the fundamental aspects to revisionists is historical consciousness.<sup>50</sup> We have already recognized this feature of Keenan's work. According to historical consciousness worldview, a moral theory must be based on reality that is dynamic and evolving.<sup>51</sup> The vitality and changing mode proposed by the revisionists also emphasize that meaning must be retained. Keenan writes history from such a perspective.

Fourthly, Keenan observes in *Virtues for Ordinary Christians* that there is a constant criticism that virtues are soft, inexact, and lofty. Instead he presents them as tangible, realistic, expedient, essential, and person-centered yet in communion with others. He advances that virtues are not ideas, but liveable practices, exercised by individuals within a relational context.<sup>52</sup>

Keenan has been influenced by so many sources. This is evident in his effort in ranging wide in the Catholic tradition especially theologians like St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. He is also influenced by modern developments in moral theology, classical work, popular culture and personal experiences.<sup>53</sup> Another major influence is Alasdair MacIntyre, as we shall examine in the succeeding section. Some revisionists

---

<sup>48</sup> Salzman, *What are they Saying About Catholic Ethical Method?* 138.

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>51</sup> Ibid., 56 & 136. See also Grisez, *The Way of The Lord*, 106.

<sup>52</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, vii.

<sup>53</sup> See Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, xiii.

theologians like Haring, Fuchs, Bruno Schuller, Louis Janssens and Curran have influenced Keenan. Curran for example has developed the social-responsibility model to incorporate fields like virtue ethics.

Keenan can also be situated as a personalist moral theologian. In his review of Linda Hogan's work *Confronting the Truth: Conscience in Catholic Tradition*, Keenan identifies himself as a personalist moral theologian: "Like this reviewer, Hogan clearly is among the personalists."<sup>54</sup> Personalist moral theologians accentuate the value of the human person by seeking to explore in a deeper sense the meaning and nature of the human person. They reject for example Hegelian idealism that neglects the reality of human existence.<sup>55</sup> Instead they emphasize the radical difference between persons and non-persons and the irreducibility of the person to impersonal spiritual or material factors. They also affirm the dignity of persons, a concern for the person's subjectivity and self-determination, with particular emphasis on the social (relational) nature of the person.<sup>56</sup>

As observed in chapter one, moral theology became reduced to a legalism (rule based ethics) and as a result neglected the human person. Charles Curran in *The Origins of Moral Theology in the United States: Three Different Approaches* argues that the legalistic model is inappropriate in doing moral theology today.<sup>57</sup> Along this line Richard Gula re-echoes in an article "The Shifting Landscape of Moral Theology":

---

<sup>54</sup> James F. Keenan, "A Review of *Confronting the Truth: Conscience in Catholic Tradition*," by Linda Hogan, *The Tablet* (April 21, 2001): 508.

<sup>55</sup> Thomas D. Williams, "Personalism," Stanford encyclopedia of Philosophy [plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism) first published November, 12 2009 with a substantive revision 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2013 (accessed February 6, 2014).

<sup>56</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>57</sup> Charles Curran, *The Origins of Moral Theology in the United States: Three Different Approaches* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1997).

The first generation of post-conciliar moral theologians, such as Bernard Haring, Josef Fuchs, Bruno Schuller, and Louis Janssens in Europe, and Richard McCormick and Charles Curran in the United States, were largely concerned with clarifying the rightness and wrongness of actions and solving moral problems. But they were beginning to make this analysis in a personalistic, rather than legalistic, context. One of the great contributions of these first generation of revisionists was to shift the axis of the moral life away from the law-obligation model that focused on individual acts and toward the personal, relational-responsibility model that gave centrality to the person.<sup>58</sup>

The human person as a concept in both philosophy and theology has two aspects: the human person as individual and rational, and the human person as relational.<sup>59</sup> Unfortunately, the former has been emphasized historically more than the latter.<sup>60</sup>

Keenan adopts Thomistic personalism which avoids the extremes of over-emphasizes of the person as individual and rational on the one hand and the person as relational on the other hand. Instead, Thomism stresses the metaphysical distinction between individuality and personality and establishes a more balanced position.<sup>61</sup> Keenan emphasizes both the person as an individual and the person as relational.<sup>62</sup> He concludes:

Note . . . virtues call us to help one another. In previous centuries, the virtues of purity, meekness, modesty and vigilance were signalled as Christian virtues. They promoted a type of Christian who measured and parsed his every movement. The virtues from the scriptures do not promote, however, a private piety: reconciliation, mercy, charity, hope and humility call us to recognize the need we have for one another. They provide ways of helping us to forge forward on the way of the Lord, recognizing that we should never

---

<sup>58</sup> Richard Gula, "The Shifting Landscape of Moral Theology," *Church* (Spring, 2009)[http://www.churchmagazine.org/issue/0903/upf\\_shifting\\_landscape.php](http://www.churchmagazine.org/issue/0903/upf_shifting_landscape.php) (accessed October 17, 2013).

<sup>59</sup> Brian Johnstone, "What Does it Mean to be a Person?," *Studia Moralia*, 48/1 (2010): 125.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>61</sup> See Maritain, *The Person and Common Good*, 9.

<sup>62</sup> See Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 723-729.

outdistance one another, but rather that we should strive together for the finish line.<sup>63</sup>

### **3.2 An Over-all Theological Structure**

Keenan's general theological structure on the virtues is built around the human person. MacIntyre argues that contemporary ethics has fragmented and disintegrated, and we now live in a state of 'moral disagreement'. Each person has his or own moral position and dismisses any other's by simply saying, 'well that's your opinion.'<sup>64</sup> He claims that the above disintegration occurred because ethicists have depersonalized ethics.<sup>65</sup>

Keenan follows MacIntyre in proposing that ethics should be re-personalized.<sup>66</sup> To achieve this aim, MacIntyre suggests that ethics has to address the questions: what type of people we ought to become? rather than asking the rightness and wrongness of an action.<sup>67</sup> Following this insight, Keenan remarks:

Christian ethicists immediately recognized the importance of this question. Who other than Jesus Christ beckoned us more to consider the question about the people we could become? In his invitation to us to become, by his grace, his disciples, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom, Christ in the Scriptures has always extended to us a call to answer the question: who ought we to become?<sup>68</sup>

While MacIntyre writes as a moral philosopher Keenan writes as a moral theologian. Keenan sets out his own agenda to address the threefold question of "who are we?", "Who ought we to become?" and "How do we get there?"<sup>69</sup> Because of the centrality

---

<sup>63</sup> Keenan, "What is Virtue Ethics," 404.

<sup>64</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 6-12.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Keenan, "What is Virtue Ethics?" 401.

<sup>67</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

<sup>68</sup> Keenan, "What is Virtue Ethics," 401.

<sup>69</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, see chapters three, four and five.

of this threefold question, it is reflected in most of Keenan's works.<sup>70</sup> We shall elaborate on this threefold question in the next section.

In *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, Keenan approaches the virtues by taking familiar patterns of Christian life from the perspectives of the family, school, parish, and commerce.<sup>71</sup> He picks one virtue and interlaces it with the existential human experience. He applies same methodology in other works. For example in an article titled: "Proposing Cardinal Virtues", Keenan applies the virtues in the case of Mrs. Bergmeier.<sup>72</sup> He accepts the traditional list of the virtues but goes further to add other ones like fidelity, self-esteem, hospitality, gratitude, truthfulness, etc.<sup>73</sup> In other situations he proposes other virtues of fidelity, and self-care.<sup>74</sup> He gives reason why the classical list is inadequate:

The virtues are . . . traditional teleological, (i.e., end-oriented) guides that collectively aim for the right realization of the human person. As teleological, they need to be continually realized and redefined; their final expression remains outstanding. The mature person is constantly growing in the virtues. This means that virtue is always at once looking for expression in action and when a virtue is realized in

---

<sup>70</sup> Ibid., 35-74; see also Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 1-8.

<sup>71</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*. See also MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, xiii.

<sup>72</sup> "Mrs. Bergmeier is a married woman with several children and a husband who is ill. She has been arrested by the Nazis for assisting her Jewish neighbours and sentenced for six years without parole. After months in the camp, she learns that her husband's health is progressively declining due to his tending to the children, and that the children are not faring at all well due to their father's ailing state. She also learns something else: because of overcrowding, the camp releases pregnant women who are held for lesser crimes, like hers. Aware of one particular guard who regularly makes outrageous advances on her, Mrs. Bergmeier, for the sake of her family, submits herself to him. Three months later a pregnant Mrs. Bergmeier returns to her family to care for her husband and children." James F. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," *Theological Studies* 56 (1995): 709-710. Keenan makes a distinction here between the deontologists' interpretation of the case and the proportionalists' or revisionists': For the deontologists, sexual relations outside of marriage are always intrinsically wrong. The second group the proportionalists looked at the object of her activity and the effects. But none of these looked at how much Mrs. Bergmeier was affected as a person. This is where virtue ethics comes into play.

<sup>73</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 37-134.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid., 720-721.

action it make the person more virtuous. Thus the more we grow in virtue, the more we are able to recognize our need of further growth . . . The nature of virtue is . . . historically dynamic; being in themselves goal-oriented, virtues require being continually considered, understood, acquired, developed and reformulated.<sup>75</sup>

Keenan's revisionist tendencies are very evident in his reformulation project of the virtues. However, lacunae can develop in his work that may be the inevitable result of his approach. He has allowed himself to be interpreted either as being too liberal or even sitting on the fence, because often he does not offer strong conclusions or be definite in his answer.

Keenan is pro-active in proposing sets of new virtues, which he thinks are transcultural and transgenerational: Justice, fidelity, self-care, and prudence.<sup>76</sup> He considers them transcultural because as persons we are relational generally, specifically and uniquely.<sup>77</sup> However, he does not take into account the variances in different cultures that may be at odds.

Keenan also approaches the virtues from the perspective of sexual ethics.<sup>78</sup> This further explains Keenan's desire to re-evaluate virtue ethics to meet contemporary challenges. It is also to establish or further the discourse with other fields of study.<sup>79</sup> Keenan's work has a pastoral outlook. One can say it involves a cyclical and dialectical movement of theory and practice.

---

<sup>75</sup> James F. Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," *Louvain Studies* vol. 30 no. 3 (2005): 186.

<sup>76</sup> We shall refer to the proposed list in the later sections.

<sup>77</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 723.

<sup>78</sup> Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," 180-197.

<sup>79</sup> *Ibid.*, 193-197. See also, Ronaldo Zaccharias, "Virtue Ethics as a Framework for Catholic Sexual Education: Towards the Integration between Being and Acting in Sexual Education, STD Dissertation, Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, MA, 2003.

This chapter proceeds by outlining his anthropological vision through an appraisal of the question of identity that is foundational to his theological configuration on virtue. The chapter will thereafter consider particular themes on virtue ethics, which will articulate the dialectical movement mentioned above.

### **3.3 Anthropological Vision of the Question of Identity**

Virtue ethics is an ethical approach that fuses together ‘who we are’ and ‘what we do’. Gula affirms: “In the idiom of traditional Catholic moral theology, *actio sequitur esse*: who we are shapes what we do. Then there is the dialectical return: What we do in turn shapes who we are.”<sup>80</sup> The question therefore is of identity and human action. Keenan develops MacIntyre’s idea in explaining the teleological scheme inherent in Aristotle’s *Nicomachean Ethics* by identifying the dynamics between “man-as-he-happens-to-be” and “man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature” and the ethical science to make the transition from the former state to the latter.<sup>81</sup> The threefold question I have renamed ‘anthropological vision of the question of identity’.

MacIntyre argues in line with the older tradition that ethics becomes the viable science that can make real the transition from “man-as-he-happens-to-be” to “man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realized-his-essential-nature”. MacIntyre explains further the function ethics plays in such interface.<sup>82</sup> The scheme gets complicated but not changed when it is placed within the framework of theistic beliefs, either Christian, Jewish, or Islamic.<sup>83</sup> He writes:

The precepts of ethics now have to be understood not only as teleological injunctions, but also as expressions of a divinely ordained law. The table of virtues and vices has to be amended and added to and

---

<sup>80</sup> Gula, *Just Ministry*, 46.

<sup>81</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 52.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid., 53.

a concept of sin is added to the Aristotelian concept of error. The law of God requires a new kind of respect and awe. The true end of man can no longer be completely achieved in this world, but only in another. Yet the threefold structure of untutored human-nature-as-it –happens-to be, human-nature-as-it-could-be-if-it-realized-its-*telos* and the precepts of rational ethics as the means for the transition from one to the other remains central to the theistic understanding of evaluative thought and judgment.<sup>84</sup>

The philosophical articulation of the transition between the aforementioned states via ethics is extremely broad. Ethics has three main branches, meta-ethics, normative ethics and applied ethics, each of which has sub-branches.<sup>85</sup> Keenan specifically appeals to virtue as a branch of normative ethics. To adequately answer the first question namely “who are we?” he provides the context of a discipleship that is conducive to growth and self-understanding.

### **3.3.1 *Who are We? Within the Context of Discipleship***

The question “who are we?” covers a wide range of dimensions in the human life including physical, psychological, historical, philosophical and theological dimensions. It will be beyond the scope of this thesis to explain the above dimensions. Rather it restricts our understanding of ‘who we are’ within the theological dimension by reflecting on discipleship as Keenan suggests. As Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman in “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian” affirm: “Virtue ethics answers the question ‘who am I to become’.”<sup>86</sup> Discipleship within Christian tradition entails becoming like Jesus. Hence, “The New Testament invites

---

<sup>84</sup> Ibid.

<sup>85</sup> For further reading see Frankena, *Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Mel Thompson, *Ethical Theory* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (London: Hodder Education, 2005); Julia Driver, *Ethics: The Fundamentals* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007); Baron, *Three Methods of Ethics*.

<sup>86</sup> Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” *Theological Studies* vol. 74, No. 2 (June 2013): 465.

the followers of Jesus to become and *be* like Jesus and, because they *are* like him, to *do* as he did.”<sup>87</sup>

A deeper insight to the above question of identity is developed by Vincent MacNamara who explains ‘who I am’ in his book, *The Call to be Human: Making Sense of Morality*: “I am talking about who I have become with my unique configuration of desires, fears, prejudices, longings, hurts, jealousies, envies. It is not a clean slate that takes on the burden of moral life. But a very particular person, heavy with the legacy of its past.”<sup>88</sup>

According to Keenan, the answer to the Question *Who are we?* Is simply: “A disciple of Jesus, made in the image and likeness of God.”<sup>89</sup> Being a disciple offers a crucial and overarching identity to the Christian. “In that identity, Christians define themselves not only in relationship to Jesus but also in relation *to themselves and* to fellow Christians, because following Jesus has always been a communal activity and is never a solitary action.”<sup>90</sup> He therefore agrees with MacNamara’s conception of “who am I” as cited above, without articulating the negative aspects named by MacNamara. Indeed, Keenan’s work is quite optimistic about the person.

The concept of discipleship when looked at from MacNamara’s conception of “Who am I?” denotes the concept self-understanding. But the understanding of discipleship in the first century and the changing understanding of the twenty-first century concept of self-understanding may be conflicting.<sup>91</sup> Conscious of this, Keenan chooses to stick to “discipleship” as the proper foundation of Christian

---

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

<sup>88</sup> Vincent MacNamara, *The Call to be Human: Making Sense of Morality* (Dublin: Veritas, 2010), 198.

<sup>89</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 49.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid. The italicized words are mine.

<sup>91</sup> Ibid.

ethics.<sup>92</sup> This is because it offers a suitable context in answering the first question of identity that explains human nature within teleological and theological constructs. A further question can be raised here: “who is a disciple?” According to Harrington, the disciple is one who wants to be with Jesus and to share his mission in every era.<sup>93</sup> The disciple belongs to a new family, and takes on a simple lifestyle, and learns to subordinate personal needs for the sake of the mission itself.<sup>94</sup> Furthering his argument on discipleship, Keenan draws upon the works of Fritz Tillman and Klaus Demmer to explicate the concept of being a disciple from different perspective but with a conceptual unity.<sup>95</sup>

Tillmann (1874-1953) was originally a German Biblical scholar. Unfortunately his career as biblical scholar came to an end in 1912 by a decree of the Consistorial Congregation, upon which he turned to moral theology. In his earlier mentioned work *The Master Calls* he graphically shows the fundamental idea of what it means to follow Christ.<sup>96</sup> His influence in moral theology concerned the personal effect that Jesus’ self-understanding had on the community of disciples.<sup>97</sup> On this, Tillmann developed a theology of Christian search for the good within the framework of being a true disciple of Christ.<sup>98</sup> Tillmann showed that to be a disciple of Jesus was never disconnected from either the love of neighbour or a concern for the needs of the

---

<sup>92</sup> Ibid., 53-58.

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> See Tillmann, *The Master Calls*; Klaus Demmer, *Shaping the Moral Life: An Introduction to Moral Theology* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2000).

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 1-68.

<sup>97</sup> See Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 54.

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

world.<sup>99</sup> He further conveys that each individual is incorporated into the family of God through baptism, by the indwelling of the spirit of God.<sup>100</sup>

To link this up with virtue, Tillmann introduces the concept of perfection.<sup>101</sup> He posits that baptism is a universal call to perfection.<sup>102</sup> By using the term perfection he moves readily to the discussion on the virtues because of how they perfect all that is human. He re-echoes Christ's sayings that the birthplace of moral actions, either good or bad is man's interior dispositions.<sup>103</sup> In sum, discipleship is a call to perfection by practicing the virtues.

This forms the basis for which Keenan approaches the virtues from the perspective of discipleship. For both Tillmann and Keenan through baptism and other sacraments, a new relationship ensues. Keenan affirms: "This new relationship calls us to take notice of the imprint of God's self within ourselves. There, within, we are called to allow the work of God to continue in the development of our interior dispositions."<sup>104</sup> Jesus says:

Abide in me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself unless it remains on the vine, so neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine and you are the branches. He who abides in me, and I in him, he bears fruit; for without me you can do nothing (Jn. 15:4ff).

This metaphor describes the union or connection between Jesus and the disciple. The disciple's identity becomes incorporated into the identity of the master who calls:

---

<sup>99</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*, 255; Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 54.

<sup>100</sup> *Ibid.*, 21.

<sup>101</sup> See Seasoltz, *A Virtuous Church*, 106.

<sup>102</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>103</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*, 36.

<sup>104</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 55.

The organic connection between the branch and its vine is the necessary condition for the former's growth, flowering and fruit. The figure primarily describes the union of Christ and His disciples; nevertheless it reveals with incomparable clarity the general thought of the saviour: only as long as the vital union between Him and His followers persists do they remain His disciples and bear fruit as His followers.<sup>105</sup>

Tillmann discusses the relational character of what it means to be a disciple by way of love of God, love of neighbour and love of self, in which Jesus becomes the model and motive of the disciple.<sup>106</sup> Because of his appeals to scripture, Tillman became very influential in reviving biblical thought in moral theology.

Accordingly, Keenan makes the same claims as Tillmann: "The entire moral life is organized and shaped by our following of Jesus."<sup>107</sup> Discipleship is therefore a response to the love which God has shown to each person. It is also a response to the self as a "thou" and a participation in God's continuous creative activity: "He is the unsurpassable goal who always goes before us, making our call to follow him a dynamic movement."<sup>108</sup>

The second moral theologian Keenan draws upon is Klaus Demmer, a German theologian. For Demmer also, the first step to understanding revelation and the human person is to understand Jesus.<sup>109</sup> Demmer goes further than Tillmann to add that history plays a vital role in shaping our understanding of 'who we are'.<sup>110</sup> He argues that our self-understanding has to be placed within the context of history: "God reveals God's self to all people in an historical event and shares with them indestructible meaning, a situation exists in which no historical event could be

---

<sup>105</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*, 21.

<sup>106</sup> Ibid. See parts two, three, four and five.

<sup>107</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 55.

<sup>108</sup> Ibid., 57.

<sup>109</sup> Demmer, *Shaping the Moral Life*, 25-26.

<sup>110</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 55.

prevented from acquiring some dimensions of meaning.”<sup>111</sup> Keenan therefore contends: “Like Jesus of Nazareth, our self-understanding must be situated in history. Thus, just as Jesus reveals to us his self-understanding in history, so too we must work out in history that self-understanding of ourselves in Jesus.”<sup>112</sup> Jesus reveals to us the Father. Such a revelation reveals the relationship between Jesus and the Father. It follows that those who become disciples of Christ now share in this self-understanding; they not only understand the Father through the Son but they understand themselves as well.<sup>113</sup> Keenan further gives an eschatological side of this self-understanding.<sup>114</sup>

Like Tillmann, Demmer maintains that Jesus is the model and animator, the goal and the cause of all Christian action.<sup>115</sup> For Demmer, as for Tillmann, even though Christ is and remains the model of the disciple, the moral life of the person is not devoid of conflict and limitations.<sup>116</sup> Sin becomes an existential predicament. Hence, who we are does not consist only in the positives of our lives but also the negatives. In chapter one we saw how the manualists facilitated the phobia of sin. But sin or human weakness must find some experiential content in order to be less abstract.<sup>117</sup> In this context, sin is understood in relation to a person’s vocation which forms part of his/her identity as a disciple.<sup>118</sup> This would bring about a true sense of personal responsibility.

---

<sup>111</sup> Demmer, *Shaping the Moral Life*, 26.

<sup>112</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 55.

<sup>113</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>114</sup> *Ibid.*, 56.

<sup>115</sup> Demmer, *Shaping the Moral Life*, 68.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 58.

<sup>117</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>118</sup> *Ibid.*

The implications for Keenan are twofold: Firstly, in order to understand who we are, the context of discipleship serves as a great paradigm. Secondly, as disciples, we partake in the self-understanding of Jesus.<sup>119</sup> This means: “By his self-understanding Jesus entered into a radical openness to the will of God, and that in that openness he freed us from sin and death; in turn, Jesus made possible our ability to hear and respond to his call to follow in his footsteps.”<sup>120</sup> Scripture is rich with imagery of walking in Jesus’ footsteps. But among others Keenan finds the answer Jesus gave to the question, “And who is my neighbour?” more appealing. He answers the question with the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).<sup>121</sup>

From the parable of the Good Samaritan Jesus teaches us not to look for a neighbour to love but rather we should be neighbours who love.<sup>122</sup> In virtue ethics we can appreciate the fact that *being* precedes *doing*.<sup>123</sup> According to Keenan, this is one of the lessons of the parable of the Good Samaritan.<sup>124</sup> At the end of the discourse Jesus instructed the man “go and do the same”. It does not end there for Jesus himself became the greatest exemplar: “I have given you an example, that as I have done to you, so you also should do” (John 13:15).

---

<sup>119</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 57.

<sup>120</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>121</sup> Keenan gives an allegorical interpretation of the above parable: “Jesus is the neighbour who has entered our chaos to rescue and save us.” See Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 58. See also Vogt Christopher, “Fostering a Catholic Commitment to the Common Good: An Approach Rooted in Virtue Ethics,” *Theological Studies* vol. 68, 2 (June 2007): 399-401. For further reading on the Good Samaritan see L. H. Egelkraut, *Jesus’ Mission to Jerusalem: A Redaction Critical Study of the Travel Narrative in the Gospel of Luke, Luke 9:51- 19:48* (Frankfurt: Lang, 1976), 89-90; Joseph A. Fitzmyer, *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)* (New York: Doubleday, 1985), 885.

<sup>122</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 58.

<sup>123</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 465.

<sup>124</sup> *Ibid.*

To become authentic moral exemplars we must be ready to engage with the question of ‘who we are’. It remains the question of self-knowledge, that is critical and honest. In using the language of virtues one can ask ‘am I just, brave, temperate, and prudent?’<sup>125</sup> Answering this would depend on the level of self-knowledge each individual has and the ability to respond to spontaneous situations like in the story of the Good Samaritan. Keenan suggests that we use Aquinas’s cardinal virtues to aid self-reflection.<sup>126</sup> However, he later presents his own agenda by proposing other virtues, as we shall see later. On the whole Keenan’s approach is Christocentric.

### 3.3.2 “*Who Ought we Become?*”

According to Keenan: “The second question embodies a vision of the type of person we ought to become.”<sup>127</sup> The above question suggests an end, a goal which humanity is poised to achieve. Keenan argues that often in ethical reflection, the goal is where we begin.<sup>128</sup> For instance, the Christian faith as expressed in the New Testament begins with the inauguration of the kingdom of God and it inevitably becomes the goal of the Christian journey.<sup>129</sup> This is a typical Thomistic method, being teleological in nature.<sup>130</sup> Aquinas held that the end of the human person is the first ethical consideration. For Keenan life is defined by the goal in view: “From an ethical viewpoint, the end is the quintessential point of departure, since strong ethical systems always start with the end. The goal always defines the agenda being pursued.

---

<sup>125</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 85.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

<sup>127</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 40.

<sup>128</sup> Ibid.

<sup>129</sup> Ibid.

<sup>130</sup> Aquinas is considered to be the most significant Catholic teleologist. See Gula *Reason Informed by Faith*, 302.

The agenda, from start to finish, is shaped by the end.”<sup>131</sup> The kingdom in this case becomes the goal. Therefore, God becomes the end.<sup>132</sup>

What we ought to become is determined by a lot of factors depending on the actual context. For example, for a young man in the Greek tradition, becoming a hero was the “ought” of his life. But that may differ for a Christian young man today. Keenan explains further, that the goal or end of the Christian life has an eschatological dimension:

In the Christian tradition in general and in Paul’s case in particular the answer to this question is shaped in large part by hope for the fullness of eternal life with God as the goal or *telos* of human existence. Like Jesus and many of his Jewish contemporaries, Paul thought about his goal or end (*telos*) in eschatological or apocalyptic terms: “If somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead” (Phil. 3:11). Like them, Paul regarded resurrection as part of the scenario of future events culminating in the full manifestation of God’s rule and justice in the Kingdom of God (“Thy Kingdom come,” Matt. 6:10).<sup>133</sup>

Keenan is arguing that the concept of the kingdom provides actual substantive guidance in becoming “who ought we become”.<sup>134</sup> What Keenan is doing is drawing a link between the present and the eschatological dimension of the human person.

Keenan acknowledges that identifying the human *telos* has undergone historical development.<sup>135</sup> He contrasts the current revival with approaches that ignored the end of man.<sup>136</sup> For example, Emile Durkheim (1858-1917) represents the era that overlooked the end of man.<sup>137</sup> Durkheim’s sociological definition of religion in his last book *The Elementary forms of the Religious Life* states: “A religion is a

---

<sup>131</sup> Ibid., 40.

<sup>132</sup> See *ST I-II*, q. 90, a.2.

<sup>133</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 21.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>135</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 41.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid.

unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden-beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a church, all those who adhere to them.”<sup>138</sup> This definition is explained by Alan Aldridge in his commentarial work, *Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction*: “Most strikingly, Durkheim’s definition contains no reference to God, or the gods, or spiritual beings, or the transcendent, or another world, or the soul, or life after death.”<sup>139</sup> Therefore, in Durkheim’s terms:

The sacred is a social construct: Sacredness is conferred not by God but by society: There is no qualitative difference between Lourdes, Jerusalem and Mecca on the one hand, and Anne Hathaway’s Cottage, Wembley Stadium (the ‘home’ of Association football) or the Tupelo shack where Elvis Presley was born.<sup>140</sup>

Effectively, what Durkheim is suggesting is that God, as the *telos* of all human endeavour should be bracketed out.<sup>141</sup> Keenan criticizes Durkheim’s removal of religious goals:

Having removed the religious purposes of moral teachings, he supposed that the stuff of the moral tradition could be kept intact. Thus religious tradition taught us to treat all people equally either because God commanded it, because God would reward or punish us if we do not, because we share in God as being images of God, or because it was our destiny to be one with God and every human. Durkheim effectively deleted the clauses beginning with the word because.<sup>142</sup>

Keenan further articulates: “Durkheim could make the claim that moral educators would be able to weave the moral fabric of society completely on their own, in part,

---

<sup>138</sup> Emile Durkheim, *The Elementary forms of the Religious Life* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1915), 47. See also Steven Luke, *Emile Durkheim His Life and Work: A Historical and Critical Study* (London: Penguin Books, 1973), 450-477.

<sup>139</sup> Alan Aldridge, *Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000), 24. The italicized word is mine.

<sup>140</sup> *Ibid.*, 25.

<sup>141</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 42.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*

because he believed that the end of moral systems was detached from the contents of such systems.”<sup>143</sup> But MacIntyre argues differently that every ethical theory must have its own end or it runs the risk of being vague.<sup>144</sup>

Keenan upholds that the difference between Durkheim and MacIntyre is largely based on the function of the end in the clarification of their moral theories:

Does the end simply motivate us, or does it actually shape the contents of morality? Does union with God simply move us to assume a virtuous life, or does it shape the content of Aquinas’ virtues? Is the kingdom of God the end, the *because* that prompts us to live rightly, or is it also that which determines the content of the Christian agenda? Durkheim basically claimed the former, while MacIntyre claims the latter in all these cases.<sup>145</sup>

What we ought become can find meaning within the end. And the end according to Keenan is more than a motivator.<sup>146</sup> However, the content of the end may differ. For example, in Aristotle’s view the end consists in achieving happiness or flourishing by cultivating the virtues and avoiding vices.<sup>147</sup> Aristotelian ethics have a common ground with Christian ethics from the standpoint of happiness which is the end of virtue. However, Keenan notes that they differ in the content of the flourishing.<sup>148</sup> Keenan uses the parable of the labourers in the field who entered the work force at different times (Matt. 20:1-16) to show the differences. Accordingly, from the Christian perspective, the remit is not based on merit but on the pure generosity and

---

<sup>143</sup> Ibid.

<sup>144</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 54-55.

<sup>145</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 42.

<sup>146</sup> Ibid.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid., 43.

<sup>148</sup> Ibid. Recent debates on the distinctive character of Christian ethics or revelation offer more insight. See James M. Gustafson, “The Changing use of the Bible in Christian Ethics,” in *Readings in Moral Theology no. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 133-150; J. W. Rogerson, “Christian Morality and the Old Testament,” *Heythrop Journal* vol. 36 (1995): 422-430.

mercy of the master.<sup>149</sup> In comparison, Aristotle would insist on strict justice. The same can be said of the “good thief” in Luke 23:39-43.<sup>150</sup> In both cases, Keenan posits that mercy becomes the core virtue for Christian ethics:

Without mercy we do not have Christian ethics. Mercy is constitutive of the kingdom, and therefore, inasmuch as it pertains to the end, mercy precedes and shapes the content of Christianity. Thus the kingdom does not simply provide a motivation for morality. As morality’s end, it also gives shape to the contents of Christian ethics. In short, all ethical systems have an end and that end is defining.<sup>151</sup>

Hence, Keenan’s persistence in the reconstruction of virtue ethics.

For Keenan, the Kingdom of God is the end for Christian ethics and so plays a defining role in our becoming “who we ought to become”. In this context, therefore, he agrees with MacIntyre who argues in favour of a *telos* in any ethical approach, theoretical or practical. But unlike MacIntyre a moral philosopher, Keenan as a theologian realizes the eschatological dimension to the kingdom as “the already-but-not yet.”<sup>152</sup> He explains: “Because the end is not yet fully realized, it is not fully recognized, articulated, or understood. In a manner of speaking, the kingdom as end is at times barely discernible. It beckons us to discover it, proclaim it, and enter it. But it remains on the horizon of our expectations.”<sup>153</sup>

Within this eschatological dynamic, Keenan “proposes the notion of “Christian Idealism” as a framework to understanding and articulating the type of people that the kingdom of God requires us to become.”<sup>154</sup> By Christian idealism

---

<sup>149</sup> Ibid.

<sup>150</sup> Ibid.

<sup>151</sup> Ibid.

<sup>152</sup> Ibid.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid., 44.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid. Keenan’s Christian Idealism has no connection with Platonic Idealism or Kantian Transcendental Idealism.

Keenan means seeing the end or *telos* through the realistic context of history viewed from the perspective of divine knowledge.<sup>155</sup> He conceives history as the accumulated evidence of our human experiences.<sup>156</sup> It understands the reality that God has made through human experience.<sup>157</sup> Therefore, the idealism he speaks about is within human experience, the capability to achieve our goals and purpose within the moral law. Christian idealism for Keenan is realizing ideas in history through human experience. This presents a dynamic view of moral theology as a whole and in particular virtue ethics.<sup>158</sup>

This approach brings to the fore the relevance of human growth. Aligning human growth with the end of human life becomes an imperative: “Setting this end means that the fundamental task of the moral life is to develop a vision and to strive to attain it. Inasmuch as that vision is who we ought to become, then, the key insight is that we should always aim at growth.”<sup>159</sup> Human growth can be understood from different perspectives. But Keenan restricts his understanding to the Christian life by citing 1 Cor. 3:2 “I fed you with milk, not solid food, for you were not ready for it. And even now you are not yet ready.” This verse points to the significance of spiritual maturity as a process. Virtue ethics considered from this context may be called ethics of growth.<sup>160</sup> Therefore, ‘who we can become’ is a member of the kingdom of

---

<sup>155</sup> Ibid.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> See P. P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago, Moody Press, 1989), 546.

<sup>158</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 45

<sup>159</sup> Ibid., 85.

<sup>160</sup> See Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 45. See also Leonard Martin, “‘I Fed you with Milk’: Missionary Morals in Brazil in a Time of AIDS,” in *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention*, ed. James F. Keenan et al (New York: Continuum, 2000), 128-134; Roger Burggraeve, “From Responsible to Meaningful Sexuality: An Ethics of Growth as an Ethics of Mercy for Young People in This Era of AIDS,” in *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention*, ed. James F. Keenan et al (New York:

God.<sup>161</sup> In other words we can become who we are only in union with the risen Lord.

Keenan writes:

Who other than Jesus Christ beckoned us more to consider the question about the people we could become? In his invitation to us to become, by his grace, his disciples, children of God, and heirs of the kingdom, Christ in the scripture has always extended to us a call to answer the question: who ought we to become?"<sup>162</sup>

Ultimately, Keenan concludes that for us to achieve the end or goal that is the kingdom of God we need to apply the virtues. In answering the question "who ought we become?" may have both an individualistic and corporate implications. Having become virtuous individually, we consequently influence the lives of other people around us. MacIntyre captures it better:

When recurrently the tradition of the virtues is regenerated, it is always in everyday life, it is always through the engagement by plain persons in a variety of practices, including those of making and sustaining families and households, schools, clinics, and local forms of political community.<sup>163</sup>

### 3.3.3 "How do we Get there?"

The above question can be reformulated: "What means do we employ in order to know who we are," or "how do we become that which we strive?" While deontology and consequentialism focus on moral duties and outcomes, the proponents of virtue ethics, by contrast, emphasize behavioural dispositions in order to 'know who we are' and 'what we ought become'. Since the virtues provide the means to attaining the human end, Keenan suggests that in order to get to the end one needs prudence.<sup>164</sup>

---

Continuum, 2000), 303-316; Philip Keane, "The Objective Moral Order: Reflections on Recent Research," *Theological Studies* 43 (1982): 260-278.

<sup>161</sup> Keenan, "What is Virtue Ethics," 401.

<sup>162</sup> Ibid.

<sup>163</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., xiii.

<sup>164</sup> Keenan, "Virtue Ethics," 87.

Following the tradition of Aristotle and Aquinas, Keenan holds that prudence is not simply caution.<sup>165</sup> In his view:

Prudence is rather the virtue of a person whose feet are on the ground and who thinks both practically and realistically. Prudence belongs to the person who not only sets realistic ends, but sets out to attain them. The prudent person is precisely the person who knows how to grow.<sup>166</sup>

The choice of prudence does not underestimate other virtues. I have decided to restrict myself only to prudence but Keenan's suggestion is much wider.<sup>167</sup> I shall explain below why I chose prudence.

Firstly, prudence recognizes the ends to which a person is naturally inclined. It establishes the agenda by which one can pursue those ends and directs the agent's own performance of the pursued activity. Furthermore, it measures the rightness of the actions taken. Prudence, in short, guides the agent to living a self-directed life that seeks integration.<sup>168</sup> Secondly, Prudence covers a broad spectrum of human life with an animating role. For example Aquinas points out: "Prudence is of good counsel about matters regarding man's entire life and the end of human life."<sup>169</sup> Thirdly, prudence connects both the intellectual and moral virtues. Aquinas himself writes: "Prudence directs the moral virtues not only in making a choice about the means, but also in appointing the end."<sup>170</sup>

---

<sup>165</sup> Ibid.

<sup>166</sup> Ibid.

<sup>167</sup> See Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 72-73.

<sup>168</sup> James F. Keenan, "The Virtue of Prudence (IIa IIae, qq. 47-56)," in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed., Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 259.

<sup>169</sup> *ST I-II*, q.57, a.4ad3.

<sup>170</sup> See *ST I-II*, q.66, a. 3, ad. 3.

Crook notes that there are three acts in the smooth operation of prudence: deliberation, decision-making, and action or promptness. Of these, Keenan emphasizes deliberation.<sup>171</sup> Aquinas uses counsel instead of deliberation even though he considers them as synonymous. Aquinas states that counsel denotes a research of the reason about human actions.<sup>172</sup> He uses the same word as Aristotle, *eubulia*. He refers to *eubulia* in the *Secunda Secundae* as being of “good counsel or rather a disposition to take good counsel”.<sup>173</sup> These are the two senses in which Keenan uses deliberation. The emphasis on deliberation by Keenan exonerates virtue ethicist from the charge of self-centeredness. Deliberation or counsel promotes a particular good end congenial to individual and groups. That is why Aquinas himself notes: “There is no good counsel either in deliberating for an evil end, or discovering evil means for attaining a good end.”<sup>174</sup>

Keenan makes a more relational and experiential explanation when he affirms: “The first sign of real prudence is finding the right person to give us advice.”<sup>175</sup> From this standpoint: “Deliberation is the counterpart of precipitancy or rashness.”<sup>176</sup> Pithily, we think before we speak. Keenan cites St. Augustine who writes:

I will earnestly desire you to make the acquaintance of persons whose wisdom is more profound, whose eloquence is greater, whose knowledge is more comprehensive, whose conscience is freer of all contagion of sin, and who will therefore instruct you rightly by word and example.<sup>177</sup>

---

<sup>171</sup> Crook, *Virtue and Vice*, 128.

<sup>172</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 51, a.1.

<sup>173</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>174</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>175</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 87.

<sup>176</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>177</sup> Saint Augustine, “Treatise on Various Subjects: The Christian Life, Lying, Against Lying, Continence, Patience, The Excellence of Widowhood, the Work of

An individual seeking counsel must seek the right person(s). For example, to quit drinking one cannot seek counsel from someone who is equally a heavy drinker. Such a person must seek the counsel of one who knows the difference between moderate and excessive drinking.<sup>178</sup> Although counsel or deliberation is important for any voluntary moral action, the final decision has to be made by the individual. Unfortunately, Keenan does not emphasise this point strongly, as it could have formed a good basis for his relational model.

Keenan like Aristotle says: “Finding prudence is finding the middle point.”<sup>179</sup>

It is about finding the mean of the particular action in question. He explains the mean as follows: “Prudence looks for the moderating advisor, it does so because it realizes that all of prudence is precisely getting to the middle point or the mean between extremes. As Aquinas says, virtue is the mean . . . neither too little nor too much.”<sup>180</sup>

In order to find the mean, Keenan argues we must have a clear idea of who the agent is.<sup>181</sup> This makes him different from Aristotle. This is because the mean of virtue is not something static, for no two means are the same. This shows the difficulty in prudence. Bearing this in mind Keenan further observes: “In a manner of speaking, a virtue ought to fit a person the way a glove fits one’s hand. There is a certain tailor-made feel to a virtue, which prompts Aquinas to call virtue one’s second nature.”<sup>182</sup>

---

Monks, *The Usefulness of Fasting, The Eight Questions of Dulcitus*,” in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 14, trans. Mary Sarah Muldowney et. Al, ed. Roy J. Deferrari (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University Press, 1952), 9.

<sup>178</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 88.

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

<sup>180</sup> Ibid.

<sup>181</sup> Ibid.

<sup>182</sup> Ibid.

By and large what virtue ethics offers also includes setting of the agenda of the end and the means to accomplish the end. By way of extension, virtuous living involves the whole of human life: “It sees every moment as the possibility for acquiring or developing a virtue.”<sup>183</sup> This explains why Aquinas himself underscores the fact that every human action is a moral action.<sup>184</sup> I am therefore what I do. Keenan pictorially puts it:

The way I take breakfast, the way I leave home, the way I drive to work, the way I greet people in the morning are all exercises that affect me. My morning exercises make me in part the person I will be for the rest of the day. They make me become what I do . . . The person who exercises by running eventually becomes a runner just as the one who dances becomes a dancer. From that insight Thomas, like Aristotle before him, sees that intended, habitual activity in the sports arena is no different from any other arena of life. If we can develop ourselves physically we can develop ourselves morally by intended, habitual activity.<sup>185</sup>

### **3.4 Virtues: *The Habits of Being***

In this section, Keenan is trying to show how virtue ethics encompasses everyday living. According to Aquinas, every voluntary human action is a moral action as indicated above. Morality therefore cannot be reduced to only actions of seemingly great importance: “The way we talk, the time we spend, the plans we make, the relationships we develop all constitute the moral life. Morality is not primarily the study of grave actions: “Rather it is the study of human living.”<sup>186</sup> Human action is built on the following premises as argued by Martin E. P. Seligman in *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize your Potential for Lasting Fulfilment*: “There is a human ‘nature’, that actions proceed from character, and

---

<sup>183</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>184</sup> See James F. Keenan, “Ten Reasons why Thomas Aquinas is Important for Ethics today,” *New Blackfriars* 75 (1994): 354-363.

<sup>185</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 89.

<sup>186</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 4.

character comes in two forms, both equally fundamental- bad character, and good or virtuous (angelic) character.”<sup>187</sup> Therefore, good and bad characters are reflected in everyday life.<sup>188</sup>

Human living as we know through daily experiences is multifaceted and complex. To deal with these complexities, Keenan observes that one has to form relevant and vital character traits or habits or practices.<sup>189</sup> This thesis is attentive to the distinction that Servais Pinckaers makes between habit and virtue in his work “Virtue is not a Habit”. Pinckaers says virtue is not a “habit” in the ordinary meaning of the term. For him habits can be automated actions bereft of reasoning while virtues are those stable characters that always ensure practical reason and will.<sup>190</sup> Therefore, the usage of habit here is not in the ordinary sense as observed by Pinckaers but rather in a stricter sense. Any reference to habit here shall not be in the ordinary sense. I apply the sense as used by Aristotle: “Now character [*ēthos*], as the word itself indicates, is that which is developed from habit [*ethos*]; and anything is habituated which, as a result of guidance which is not innate, through being changed a certain way repeatedly [*pollakis*], is eventually capable of acting in that way.”<sup>191</sup>

MacIntyre supports the tradition of using virtues in the strict sense. For him practices are activities that help influence the development of dispositions to perform

---

<sup>187</sup> Martin E.P. Seligman, *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002), 125.

<sup>188</sup> Ibid.

<sup>189</sup> Ibid.

<sup>190</sup> Servais Pinckaers, “Virtue is not a Habit,” *Cross Currents* 12 (1962): 65-82. See also Nancy Sherman, *Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989), 157-160.

<sup>191</sup> Aristotle, *Eudemian Ethics*, Books I, II, and VIII, trans. Michael Woods (Oxford University Press, 1982).

particular acts.<sup>192</sup> Keenan believes that to be able to deal with the changing demands of the moral life we have to adopt certain relevant practices.<sup>193</sup> According to Keenan there are simple daily activities that are taken for granted and they demand us to constantly adopt practices to handle them. For instance:

Waking up, eating breakfast, showering, going to work, writing letters, making calls, establishing new relations, playing sports, entertaining, driving, doing laundry, preparing meals, taking notes, using the computer, wearing clothes, dining, going to bed, reading, walking through shopping malls, relating to parents and children, listening, watching TV and brushing our teeth.<sup>194</sup>

As simple as they seem, they are regular practices that eventually become habits through repeated actions and they effectively become deep-seated in us and they constitute a fundamental part of our entire existence. Any human science that does not use character as a basic idea will not be able to provide an authentic account of human action.<sup>195</sup>

Keenan essentially writes to impact ordinary life. However, one might ask whether he does not go too far in making a virtue out of every human action? Furthermore, he does make it look too ordinary and overly simplistic. Unfortunately, there seem to be an ambiguity in Keenan's usage of habit. To some extent Keenan identifies virtues with Pinckaers' ordinary sense of the word habits, rather than the stricter sense. Even though Keenan has identified many practices that become habits, he does try to sift between them. Some practices engage us more than others namely; states of life and occupation.<sup>196</sup>

---

<sup>192</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 273.

<sup>193</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 4.

<sup>194</sup> *Ibid.*, 5

<sup>195</sup> Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, 128.

<sup>196</sup> See Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 5.

Firstly, by state of life Keenan means our status either as married or single people; religious included here.<sup>197</sup> By way of contrast between the family life and the religious life, he suggests, the privacy and independence that religious or clerical life requires are foreign to the responsibilities of family life.<sup>198</sup> Therefore: “These state-of-life practices form the most profound habits in each of us.”<sup>199</sup> Secondly, our occupation constitutes formative practices. Keenan further elucidates this point by citing his father’s experience as a cop:

Before being a state investigator, my dad was a New York City police officer for twenty years. That ‘practice’ had its own language . . . and its own hierarchy of values. The ‘force’ had its stories, and he told them as concretely and specifically as he lived them. On Manhattan South Homicide Squad, he came into contact regularly with people who literally used others. He despised these pushers and pimps, but developed a profound respect for drug addicts and prostitutes; he saw regularly that though they fought (usually unsuccessfully) for dignity and survival, they still managed to think of and protect their neighbour. As result my dad habitually walked away from hypocrites and anyone else who exaggerated their condition. He loved integrity and hated liars. Likewise his practice of investigating several “suspects” before making a “determination” made him a man slow to judge. Once he made his decision, however, he did not change his mind easily. He was not a teacher, doctor, nurse, priest, or sanitation engineer, he was a cop: twenty years of practice made him one.<sup>200</sup>

As we have seen, habits are formed through repeated actions. This is by implication applicable to all forms of habits whether good and bad.

---

<sup>197</sup> Ibid. Added to the states of life are stages of life, which Keenan does not reflect. By stages of life here I mean the developmental levels of a person: infancy, childhood, puberty, young adults, adults and advanced adults etc. At each of these stages of life, the individual faces unique challenges peculiar to that particular stage, which can impact on the formation of character and habits.

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Ibid.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid., 5-6.

Keenan considers the negative habits that people form and later would want to drop. He asserts that people undermine what the moral life entails by forgetting just how ingrained our habits are and just how long it took to form them:

Instead we get rather simplistic ideas that moral action and moral change are simply a matter of intention or will. We think, for instance, that after twenty years of using the practice of cursing that suddenly we are going to give up on Ash Wednesday and we are stunned at our lack of moral purpose when suddenly, two days later, we find ourselves blurting out some profanity. For ten years we developed the habit of thinking poorly of one particular person. We relish these thoughts and on occasion we let slip to others these private estimations. Yet, with firm purpose we resolve never to think ill of this person again. But as soon as something goes wrong, we know whose fault it is.<sup>201</sup>

The picture painted above seems grim and inundated with pessimism about our inability to drop acquired bad habits. That is not the point Keenan is trying to convey.

He states unequivocally:

Until we realize the importance of practices and how they affect us habitually we will continue the useless practice of making unattainable resolves. Those intentions will be nothing more than expressions of wishful thinking unless we begin to engage other practices that can correct not only our ways of thinking, but also our ways of perceiving and handling reality.<sup>202</sup>

Essentially, Keenan is saying we need to develop more healthy habits or practices in order to root out the negative ones. We find the analogy which Jesus offers in Matthew 12: 43-45 very pertinent in this scenario.

The question remains, how does one root out a bad habit with a good one? Keenan, unfortunately, does not offer us the explicit procedural techniques to go about this. He rather offers general insights, as we shall see in the succeeding paragraphs. Perhaps, this indicates the difficulty virtue ethics faces in terms of

---

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>202</sup> Ibid., 6-7.

availability of principles that can assist the formation of character and the direction of human conduct.

On the other hand, in one's efforts to drop certain bad habits a person can experience an inner battle which C. G. Jung in *Dreams* captures: "It is towards oneself that one has the strongest resistances."<sup>203</sup> In the same vein Jessica Macbeth in *Sun Over Mountain: A Course in Creative Imagination* argues:

There is a part of us that always says No to any change in ourselves or in our lives. We can call it reasonable caution, we can call it cowardice or stupidity- it all depends on how we are feeling about the situation and ourselves at the moment. And there is another part of us that always wants to leap forward into new experiences and new ways of being. We can call this bravery or foolhardiness or stupidity, again depending on how we feel about what is happening . . . There is a part of us, an old and cunning part, which regards all new experiences and new ideas with extreme doubt. It says, 'I survived yesterday just the way I am. If I were to change now, I might not survive. Why go looking for trouble?' This part of us also collects experiences, and then forms judgments based on very simplistic assessments of those experiences.<sup>204</sup>

This is the portrait of a human being fully alive. Life has an inner dynamism that tends to grow, to be expressed, to be shared, be conserved and lived.<sup>205</sup>

Keenan may not have offered us explicit procedural techniques but he offers four basic insights to the moral dynamic life within the perspective of change.<sup>206</sup> Firstly, the decision to change a particular aspect of one's life always occurs in some context.<sup>207</sup> Let me articulate this point in a story about my father Mr. John Zaggi. I

---

<sup>203</sup> C. G. Jung, *Dreams* (London: Ark Paperbacks, 1985), 9.

<sup>204</sup> Jessica Macbeth, *Sun Over Mountain: A Course in Creative Imagination* (Dublin: Gateway, 1991), 97-98.

<sup>205</sup> John Powell, *Fully Human Fully Alive* (Allen: Tabor Publishing, 1976), 9.

<sup>206</sup> Note that in chapter two Cessario uses the word conversion, while Keenan here is using the word change. Perhaps in line with their approaches, conversion sounds more theological while change relies more on behavioral sciences.

<sup>207</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 7.

grew up to know my dad to be a heavy drinker. He goes to work and never comes home till late at night. A few times he made efforts to stop drinking but failed, and like Keenan will say: “Like the seed thrown on shallow or rocky ground, decisions that are not deeply rooted inevitably have short lives.”<sup>208</sup> That was what happened to my dad in his efforts to stop drinking. But in 1984, my mother was sick with a chronic stomach ulcer. On 23<sup>rd</sup> February 1984, my dad went drinking while my mother was dying at home with no one to help. I was only eleven years old. With the help of neighbours my mother was taken to the hospital and immediately operated upon. When my dad came back in the night he was heavily drunk and he could not even comprehend the extent of the situation when I told him mum was taken to the hospital. The following day his head was clear enough to process the events of the previous day. He left for the hospital. Mum was in a coma for two days. The most amazing thing happened: dad for the first time went two days without drinking alcohol. He sat at mum’s bedside. On her gaining consciousness, my dad kneeled down and pleaded to mum to forgive him and promised to stop drinking from that day onward. This is the context that changed my dad and till this day never drank. Keenan offers two categories to change: a person can wake up and resolve to change without previous reflection, and on the other hand others do not and cannot change their habits so quickly.<sup>209</sup> For the people in the second category it can be a long, tortuous and gruesome journey.

It is important to draw a contrast between Keenan’s story of his father and my father’s story. This contrast will bring out the two aspects of virtue ethics that are distinct yet integral. Keenan’s father illustrates the fact that virtues are developed

---

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

<sup>209</sup> Ibid.

through habituation, that is through good activity. They develop through an awareness of one's dispositions of the good and of the struggles others are experiencing. While in my father's case, virtue comes about through a counter-habit to form a new disposition of not drinking. These two aspects of virtue ethics are not mutually exclusive. They may differ in motivational sources but the end that they both seek is the same, namely the good of the human person.

Secondly, Keenan highlights that for change to be effective it must be personal and intentional.<sup>210</sup> By this he means each individual must recognize his or her uniqueness as a condition for determining which practices are helpful, and which are not, in rooting out a particular bad habit or developing a good habit. This emphasizes self-knowledge. An understanding of our personalities can help us find situations in which we will thrive, and help us avoid situations in which we will experience too much anxiety. Self-awareness and personal growth depend on a deeper understanding of the circumstances in which good character flourishes and of the roots of good character in human nature, whether understood from a scientific, philosophical, or religious point of view.

Thirdly, because of the importance of moral growth, we must guard against the false belief that we have no need for improvement.<sup>211</sup> In order to improve, Keenan suggests that we must be attentive to the counsel of people who occasionally and frequently urge us to greater growth: "Appreciative self-knowledge without the willingness to listen to others leads to lives illustrated by those who believed that they had attained perfection."<sup>212</sup> This resonates with what we were saying in preceding

---

<sup>210</sup> Ibid.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

<sup>212</sup> Ibid., 8.

chapter dealing with deliberation as an act of prudence. Furthermore, and pertinent to this thesis, it also highlights the relational value of virtue ethics.

Fourthly, each time we move from our bad habits to healthy ones, it is largely due not only to our individual efforts and support of friends but more importantly the grace of God.<sup>213</sup> Andre Louf in *Tuning to Grace: The Quest for God* captures this point clearly talking about the battle of St. Paul with human imperfections and the grace of God:

Important here was not Paul's strength, or his personal victory over temptation, but only his continuing in it, and so continuing in grace. For grace does not connect with our strength or our virtue, but only with our weakness . . . For it is precisely the place where the surprise of the grace of Jesus comes over us.<sup>214</sup>

Keenan is showing the connection between the acquired virtues and the infused virtues. According to the Thomistic tradition, grace is freely given but yet permits meritorious participation.<sup>215</sup> This Thomistic thought has been challenged by the Reformed tradition, which believes that we are saved by grace alone and no human action is required. Such a contrast has challenged ecumenical discourse in recent times.<sup>216</sup> We shall return to the impact of Reformed tradition in the succeeding chapter.

---

<sup>213</sup> Ibid.

<sup>214</sup> Andre Louf, *Tuning to Grace: The Quest for God* (Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992), 44.

<sup>215</sup> Thomas Joseph White, "The Precarity of Wisdom: Modern Dominican Theology, Perspectivalism and the Task of Reconstruction," in *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments and the Moral Life, Essays in Honour of Romanus Cessario* ed., Reinhard Hütter and Matthew Levering eds., (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010), 95.

<sup>216</sup> For further reading see, Joseph Wawrykow, *God's Grace and Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas* (Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1995); Michael Root, "Aquinas, Merit, Reformation Theology after *The Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification*," *Modern Theology* 20, No. 1 (2004): 5-22.

The essence of the place of grace is vivid in the consideration of humanity as frail, yet subsumed into the sphere of God's general creative activity.<sup>217</sup> This is because the life of a Christian is a progressive growth to perfection through virtue. By implication, our actions express our nature. It will be valid to ask, if our nature has been shaped in part by factors over which we have no control, are we responsible for our actions? Attempting to answer this question in its entirety will be beyond the scope of this dissertation. However, it can be given perspective to some degree when considered within the framework of virtues in the context of Christian growth in the ensuing section.

### ***3.5 Virtue Ethics and the Christian Call to Growth***

In a previous section we looked at how Keenan answers the question of “who are we?” within the context of discipleship. This implies growth because the disciple continuously learns. Therefore, from this perspective, the Christian life is a call to growth through virtue. For Keenan:

This seemingly obvious yet healthy maxim is not, however, readily found in the long history of moral theology. There we seldom find challenges such as, Are you maturing? or Are you becoming a better person before Christ for the church? Nor do we find questions asking, Are you doing enough? or Are you growing up?<sup>218</sup>

Instead what was obtainable was a “spiritual pathology.”<sup>219</sup> This establishes a great gap, with which Keenan is very dissatisfied with and wishes to fill.

To do this Keenan briefly examines the Christian call to growth from four perspectives.<sup>220</sup> Firstly, he takes the example of the gospels and scriptures.<sup>221</sup>

---

<sup>217</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*, 23.

<sup>218</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 20.

<sup>219</sup> Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology*, 28.

<sup>220</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 20-25.

Scripture for example, expresses the call of God to humanity especially in the New Testament. Jesus always calls us to follow him. This call according to Keenan has always been understood as a call to advance, a call to growth. He cites St. Paul who stresses: “Forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call to God in Christ Jesus” (Phil. 3:13-14). St. Paul uses the metaphor of running or journey to depict spiritual and moral moving or growth of the believer. For Keenan, the gospel story is full of “moving” characters:

The shepherds hurry to the stable as the Magi follow the star; Zacchaeus climbs a tree and Levi leaves his table; the woman with the haemorrhage pushes through the crowd and the paralytic finds the Lord by entering through a roof; the prodigal son and his father rush toward one another; Jairus and Nicodemus break ranks to see Jesus and Cornelius visits Peter. The Gospels are filled with stories of people literally striding in their passage to the Lord.<sup>222</sup>

He gives a metaphorical application of the stories and likens them to the Christian growth. Effectively, from his revisionist perspective, Keenan is advocating that current theology has to be dynamic. And that the Christian life encapsulates both the sinful and sinless moments of life.

Secondly, in the early centuries of the church, the church Fathers did not allow the scripture’s stories of growth to be lost in church’s tradition. Keenan appeals to St. Gregory the Great who writes: “In this place one is never permitted to stand because unless one strives for the heights, one will slide into the depths.”<sup>223</sup> Accordingly, the early Fathers like Ignatius of Antioch, John Chrysostom, Ambrose and Augustine exhorted believers to follow Christ by bettering the community and

---

<sup>221</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid., 21-22.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid., 22

showing love to their neighbours. Even though they talked about sin, their central focus was reflecting on the Gospels, the call of Christ and the virtues.<sup>224</sup> Keenan following the exhortations of the early Fathers came to the conclusion:

The preachers of the first five centuries are careful to urge us onto the *right* way. For this reason they appeal to the virtues. By concentrating on virtues or character building, they do not fasten attention primarily on pitfalls or obstacles. They attend, rather, to practices that can better the pilgrim. Though virtues assist the traveller to harness weaknesses and overcome liabilities, their overriding function is to develop strengths. The profoundly personal and positive emphasis of the virtues that we find in the early sermons of the gospels stand in sharp contrast to the later obsession with sinful acts.<sup>225</sup>

In the above citation, Keenan brings out the connection between preaching the gospel and invoking the virtues. This has always been the approach of the early Fathers, and most importantly Augustine and Ambrose as we saw in chapter one.<sup>226</sup> The same approach is also present in the great saints, such as Dominic, Francis, Clare, because of the importance of pedagogical guidance towards growth.

Thirdly, Aquinas, in line with other thirteenth century scholars like those mentioned in chapter one, structured his *Summa Theologiae* in line with the suggested movement: the movement of God to us; our responsive movement to God; and the meeting of the two movements in the divinity and humanity in Christ. Incisively, Aquinas says: “We may reduce the whole of moral matters to the

---

<sup>224</sup> See William A. Jurgens, *The Faith of the Early Fathers: A Source-book of the Theological and Historical Passages from the Writings of Saint Augustine to the end of the Patristic Age*, vol.3 (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1979). See also, Saint Ambrose, “Saint Ambrose Letters,” in *The Fathers of the Church*, vol. 26, trans. Sister Mary Melchior Beyenka and ed. Roy Joseph Deferrari et.al (Washington, D.C: The Catholic University Press, 1954).

<sup>225</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 24.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.*

consideration of the virtues.”<sup>227</sup> According to Keenan then: “Aquinas like Augustine finds in the virtues the proper mode of instructing those who read the Gospel.”<sup>228</sup>

Fourthly, contrary to the moral growth and discipleship which the Gospels emphasize, moral theology at times prioritised sin and wrongdoing. A person’s moral worth was determined by a person’s sinfulness or sinlessness.<sup>229</sup> A close reading of the Penitentials, the scholastics, the casuists and the Manualists, reveal a huge number of sinful acts and very few words about being good persons, or growth in the Christian life. This did not encourage growth among the believing community.

The call to moral growth through the virtues is a call that acknowledges the human weakness that is in need of divine assistance:

Certainly this moral call to grow and to better ourselves is not a call to make ourselves into other gods. That was what those who ate from Eden’s Tree wanted, what those who built the tower of Babel wanted, or what those like the Bishop Pelagius advocated, thinking that by our own efforts we could become perfect. Again Paul gives us clear insight: ‘Not that I have obtained this or am already perfect; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own’ (Phil. 3:12). The call to strive, to grow, is not a matter of choice. Rather, Christ has called us and given us the grace that commands us to respond. On God’s account, we must move forward.<sup>230</sup>

Being virtuous means living according to the order God has inscribed in human nature. Of course, human nature is also wounded by sin. Because of sin, humans have certain negative inclinations (e.g., toward selfishness, greed or lust) that are in fact not God-given, but the sinful distortions of our nature. Therefore, we need grace to heal us of these distorted inclinations.

---

<sup>227</sup> *ST* Prologue.

<sup>228</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 24-25.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 23. I refer you to Chapter one where I have examined the history of moral theology.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

What Keenan is doing is that he is trying to create a balance between Thomistic ideas on grace and merit and avoid the mistake of treating grace in isolation to human action. He is therefore affirming the reality of human action as a cooperation of the whole of our natural capacities to God's action through grace.<sup>231</sup>

### **3.6 *Virtue Ethics and The Human Person***

MacIntyre, Keenan and other contemporary ethicists assert the importance of personalizing ethics.<sup>232</sup> They all argue that the human person should be at the center of all ethical reflections. In a previous section I introduced the case-study of Mrs. Bergmeier in the context of making a point that the human person can be neglected by other ethical approaches.<sup>233</sup> At this point we turn to examine it in order to articulate the claim that virtue ethics is more person centered than action centered. Keenan uses the story to show the incompleteness of other ethical theories and proposes that virtue ethics offers a better approach.

Firstly, let us examine how the deontologists and the proportionalists responded to the case of Mrs. Bergmeier. According to Keenan, the deontologists reaffirmed the position held for several years, namely: any act of sexual relations outside marriage is always intrinsically immoral and sinful.<sup>234</sup> It was a

---

<sup>231</sup> See Gerald McKenny, *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), 217.

<sup>232</sup> See MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 52-53; Keenan, "What is Virtue Ethics," 401.

<sup>233</sup> I refer you to section 3.2 where I narrated the story of Mrs. Bergmeier.

<sup>234</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 709. See Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, Vatican Declaration on Certain Questions of Sexual Ethics, December 29, 1975, nos. 13 & 14; Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio*, Apostolic Exhortation on the Family, 1981, no. 11; William E. May, "The Liberating Truth of Catholic Teaching on Sexual Morality," in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 8: Dialogue About Catholic Sexual Teaching*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 513-524. This article was first printed in *Homiletic and Pastoral Review* in 1983; Kevin T. Kelly, *New Directions in Sexual Ethics: Moral Theology and the Challenges of AIDS* (London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1998), 184; Lisa Sowle

straightforward answer for them: Mrs. Bergmeier's actions were wrong irrespective of the end in view. Keenan is very biased against the deontologists. He does not consider reasons why the deontologist condemned Mrs. Bergmeier. In contrast he is more sympathetic to the proportionalists who found the case challenging.<sup>235</sup> According to Keenan the proportionalists rather than challenge the deontologists argued amongst themselves by raising two concerns. The first type has to do with her action, so they asked what was the object of Mrs. Bergmeier's activity? Was her action an extension of her marriage, or a contradiction of her marriage? In other words did her action compromise the institution of marriage? The second concern is the effect of the action – on the guard, the husband, the children, and her new child.<sup>236</sup>

Keenan highlights a lacuna in the entire debate:

Nowhere did anyone ask how this action affected Mrs. Bergmeier. Instead, the entire case concerned how her action affected others. Reflection on this omission leads to the question: What should be at the center of any discussion involving the famous case of Mrs. Bergmeier? Should the acts of intercourse and the effects of those acts be at the center of ethical discussion, as they were for the deontologists and the proportionalists? Or should Mrs. Bergmeier be at the center?<sup>237</sup>

For Keenan what is most important is placing Mrs. Bergmeier as a moral agent not her moral action or the consequences of that action.<sup>238</sup>

Virtue ethics is an agent-based ethics; however, the whole spectrum of ethics I believe considers both the person and the action. This is in line with Frankena's

---

Cahill, *Sex, Gender and Christian Ethics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), reprinted in 1998, 1999, 2000.

<sup>235</sup> This does not make him a proportionalist. Christopher Robert Kaczor categorically states "James F. Keenan is not a proportionalist". *Proportionalism and the Natural Law Tradition* (Washington, D. C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2002), 64.

<sup>236</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 709-710.

<sup>237</sup> *Ibid.*, 710.

<sup>238</sup> *Ibid.*

“double-aspect” ethics.<sup>239</sup> In this context further reflections on harmonizing the different ethical theories are pertinent, although may be beyond the scope of this thesis. But to highlight the problem, there are arguments among some moral philosophers on the auxiliary and independent nature of virtue ethics. Keenan synthesizes the arguments:

Certainly, some like William Frankena and Bruno Schüller find that virtue ethics cannot be an independent method of moral reasoning. For them, virtues merely augment an existing method; they do not supply specific directives for determining right or wrong conduct. Frankena and Schüller claim that principles and rules direct, while virtues merely enable us to perform what the principles command. Thus virtues are auxiliary and derivative . . . But Martha Nussbaum argues that the Greeks used virtues precisely to judge moral conduct: virtues can provide the standards of morally right conduct. Virtues not principles are the source for understanding normative conduct. In fact, principles and rules are derived from virtues: they are directives that obtain their content from the virtuous activity which humanity enjoins. As opposed to the auxiliary use that they are assigned by others, in this schema the virtues are adequate life-guides.<sup>240</sup>

In sum, the deontologists see virtues as performing only supporting role. For instance, John Rawls in *Theory of Justice* holds that virtues are dispositions to act on moral imperatives by restructuring duty in motivational categories.<sup>241</sup> For the consequentialists, virtues only play an instrumental role. In this sense virtue is seen as disposition that produces non-moral consequences.<sup>242</sup>

However, the virtues go beyond these restrictive roles. They are life-guides to the human person towards self-knowledge, and self-actualization. The quest to find

---

<sup>239</sup> Frankena, *Ethics*, 32.

<sup>240</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 710. See William Frankena, “The Ethics of Love Conceived as the Ethics of Virtue,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 21-31; Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness*, 299.

<sup>241</sup> John Rawls, *Theory of Justice* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1970), 192, 437.

<sup>242</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 65.

an ethics that is person centered is prevalent in the works of notable philosophers and theologians, even though they differ in their general theoretical.<sup>243</sup>

Keenan raises a necessary question: “What are the virtues that make one a ‘moral Person’?”<sup>244</sup> He observes that any attempt to answer the above question must take into cognizance of two concerns: Firstly, he acknowledges the claims of culture. It belongs to local communities to determine practices that form a moral person.<sup>245</sup> For example, the warrior was the archetypal or ideal excellent person in Homeric culture, thereby placing emphasis on the virtue of bravery or courage. In comparison, for Aristotle and the Greek philosophical tradition the excellent person was the person of prudence.<sup>246</sup> Cultural ambivalence is a challenge to not only to virtue ethics but ethics in general.

Secondly, we have the claims of individual differences. Owen Flanagan in *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism* argues that no normative portrait can be borne out of a single anthropological perspective.<sup>247</sup> Keenan expresses a similar idea that saints and heroes do not adequately provide normative standards that can be universally accepted as to the kind of person we ought to be: “Saint Elizabeth was not Mahatma Gandhi; St. John the Baptizer was not the Little Flower.”<sup>248</sup> He further argues, because they are uniquely different they should not be taken as role models as warned by Flanagan and Caroline Walker Bynum in *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*. Bynum for example argues: “Medieval hagiographers pointed

---

<sup>243</sup> See Frankena, “The Ethics of Love Conceived as the Ethics of Virtue,”; Frederick Carney, “They Virtue-Obligation Controversy,” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 5-19; MacIntyre’s book, *After Virtue*.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 7-36.

<sup>246</sup> See Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 712.

<sup>247</sup> See Owen Flanagan, *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1991).

<sup>248</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 712.

out repeatedly that saints are not even primarily ‘models’ for ordinary mortals; the saints are far too dangerous for that . . . Rather, they should be loved, venerated, and meditated upon as moments in which the other that is God breaks through into the mundane world, saturating it with meaning.”<sup>249</sup> The claim that Bynum makes is that people can become morally excellent by just simply being themselves.<sup>250</sup> The saints have always been an original, never an imitation.<sup>251</sup> Reading closely into Keenan’s presuppositions one can assume that he has to some extent bought into the American concept of individualism.

This thesis does not accept the above notion of exemplars. This is because, as Aristotle himself says: “We ought to attend to the undemonstrated sayings and opinions of experienced and older people or of people of practical wisdom not less than to demonstration; for, because experience has given them an eye, they see aright.”<sup>252</sup> Also Patrick M. Clark in an article “The Case for an Exemplarist Approach to Virtue in Catholic Moral Theology” argues that particular exemplars rather than abstract concepts, serve as the deepest foundation of practical reason which further determines the shape and function of a theological theory of virtue.<sup>253</sup> He further contends that the definition of moral goodness has to be traced to the particular expression of that goodness experientially through the lives of particular people.<sup>254</sup>

---

<sup>249</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, *Holy Feast and Holy Fast* (Berkeley: University of California, 1987), 7.

<sup>250</sup> Being oneself does not imply rejecting the inspirational life of people who have excelled in moral virtuous life. They play both challenging and motivational roles in the lives of others.

<sup>251</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 713.

<sup>252</sup> Aristotle, *NE VI. II*, 1143b10-13.

<sup>253</sup> Patrick M. Clark, “The Case for an Exemplarist Approach to Virtue in Catholic Moral Theology,” *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 54-82.

<sup>254</sup> *Ibid.* 57.

At the heart of the New Testament is a call to be imitators of Christ and the Saints: “So that you may not become sluggish, but imitators of those who, through faith and patience, are inheriting the promises” (Heb. 6:12); “Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us rid ourselves of every burden and sin that clings to us and persevere in running the race that lies before us.” (Heb. 12:1); “Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ.” (1 Cor. 11:1); “Join with others in being imitators of me, brothers, and observe those who thus conduct themselves according to the model you have in us (Phil 3:17).” Vatican II in *Lumen Gentium*, 50 affirms:

For when we look at the lives of those who have faithfully followed Christ, we are inspired with a new reason for seeking the city which is to come (Heb. 13:14; 11:10). At the same time we are shown a most safe path by which . . . we will be able to arrive at perfect union with Christ, that is holiness. In the lives of those who shared in our humanity and yet were transformed into especially successfully images of Christ (2 Cor. 3:18), God vividly manifests to men his presence and his face. He speaks to us in them, and gives us a sign of his kingdom, to which we are powerfully drawn, surrounded as we are by so many witnesses (Heb. 12:1), and having such an argument for the truth of the gospel.

Lawler and Salzman add another dimension: “The dynamic of virtue begins with imitation of role models but concludes with authentic morality through personal decision and responsibility.”<sup>255</sup> It is an imitation that respects our individuality and uniqueness, at the same time our connectedness as family of God.

Feasibly, any effort to describe the ideal qualities of the excellent moral person will meet with challenges because of the variances in the claims of culture and uniqueness of individuals. Acknowledging this fact spurs Keenan to identify just some minimal conditions that must be made in order to call a person a virtuous

---

<sup>255</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 450.

person.<sup>256</sup> Earlier on he argues that everyone is unique but here he is prepared to create a universal category. This shows the tension inherent in virtue ethics. Keenan thus, attempts to resolve this tension.

He accepts MacIntyre's claims that the virtues of justice and prudence exist universally prior to any culture's specific claim of them. Keenan therefore argues that the cardinal virtues are functional tools in seeking to understand the human person.<sup>257</sup> They play a heuristic function, by which he means they are cardinal virtues that serve as guides to a wider understanding of the threefold questions of identify.<sup>258</sup> He explains further: "They do not fill in the claims of either culture or the individual."<sup>259</sup> It would seem as if Keenan accepts the universal character of the virtues of justice and prudence, which MacIntyre proposes, yet elsewhere he slightly fills out his position by saying:

Cultures give flesh to the skeletal cardinal virtues. This thickening differentiates, then, one virtue in one culture from a similar one in another. Justice, fidelity and self-care in a Buddhist culture have somewhat similar and somewhat different meanings than they do in a liberal or Confucian context.<sup>260</sup>

In this context, what is justice in one culture might be a vice in another. But the entire endeavour of Keenan is not to validate the specificity of cultural claims on who and what an excellent person is but to identify qualities of the minimally virtuous person independent of any claims.<sup>261</sup>

---

<sup>256</sup> Ibid. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 714.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid.

<sup>258</sup> Ibid.

<sup>259</sup> Ibid.

<sup>260</sup> Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," 192; See also Lee H. Yearley, *Mencius and Aquinas: Theories of Virtue and Conceptions of Courage* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990).

<sup>261</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 714.

In the light of the above argument, Keenan insists that the cardinal virtues express what minimally constitute the virtuous person. He argues:

Philosophers and theologians have recognized that being virtuous is more than having a particular habit of acting, e.g. generosity. Rather, it means having a fundamental set of related virtues that enable a person to live and act morally well. The cardinal virtues have the task of making a person sufficiently, rightly ordered to perform morally right actions. Beyond the cardinal virtues, other virtues are certainly important, but the cardinal virtues perfect the fundamental anthropological dimensions of being human that are needed for integrated virtuous behaviour. Thus Thomas Aquinas describes the four virtues as principles of integration both in the person and in the action itself.<sup>262</sup>

Keenan believes that the cardinal virtues define to a large extent both what a human person should primarily become and the principal actions the person should engage regardless of an individual's religion. Therefore, the cardinal virtues are transcultural and transgenerational because of our common understanding of right living.<sup>263</sup> In this context therefore, the doors of cultural absolutism and religious differences have been considerably shut by virtue ethics.<sup>264</sup> Keenan thus argues from an anthropological perspective than a theological standpoint.

Considering the traditional Thomistic list of virtues, Keenan proceeds to recommend a new set of cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, fidelity and self-care. What more, this set of virtue are capable of furthering our understanding of the person. According to Keenan, we are relational in three ways: "Generally, specifically, and uniquely."<sup>265</sup> But Lawler and Salzman, offer us different set of triad

---

<sup>262</sup> Ibid.; *ST I-II*, q.61, aa.2 & 3.

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 715.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid. See also Christopher Stephen Lutz, *Tradition in the Ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre: Relativism, Thomism, and Philosophy* (Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009), 65-112.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

than the ones offered by Keenan: “generally, particularly and selfishly.”<sup>266</sup> Using Keenan’s triad, each of these relational ways of being requires a concomitant cardinal virtue: “As a relational being in general, we are called to justice. As relational being specifically, we are called to fidelity. As a relational being uniquely, we are called to self-care.”<sup>267</sup> By way of distinguishing them from Aquinas’ structure, Keenan contends:

None is ethically prior to the other; they have equally urgent claims and they should be pursued as ends in themselves. Thus we are not called to be faithful and just in order to be faithful. None is auxiliary to the others. Each is a distinctive virtue, none being a subset or subcategory of the others. They are cardinal.<sup>268</sup>

The fourth cardinal virtue in the list proposed by Keenan is prudence. According to Keenan, prudence is the virtue that defines what constitutes the just, faithful, and self-caring mode of life for a person.<sup>269</sup> These proposed virtues shall be examined in the next sub-section.

I shall conclude this section by summarizing how Keenan applies these virtues to the case of Mrs. Bergmeier.<sup>270</sup> Firstly, from the viewpoint of justice, she showed love to her neighbours and demonstrated as well their equality, by protecting the neighbour.<sup>271</sup> In general, Mrs. Bergmeier was true to the demands of the society that protected marriage until the point of violating the institutional claims of

---

<sup>266</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 470.

<sup>267</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 723. See also, “Learning the Virtue of Justice,” *Church* 9/3 (1993): 38-40; “The Virtue of Fidelity,” *Church* 9/2 (1993): 38-39; “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 195; *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 58-70; *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 123, 149, 154-159; *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 9-10, 126, 155, 205-208.

<sup>268</sup> *Ibid.*, 724.

<sup>269</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>270</sup> For further reading see Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 719; *ST* Supplement 41-68.

<sup>271</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724.

marriage. Keenan notes: “But this violation is not pursued for its own sake.”<sup>272</sup> Secondly, from the standpoint of fidelity, Mrs. Bergmeier had a profound love for her husband and children, as the entire story attempts to show. This fidelity made her sacrifice her happiness, and dignity in order to save the family from imminent death. Thirdly, from the demands of self-care, some would think she was careless and thought less about herself. But Keenan argues differently:

A person who lacks self-care could not possibly endure the emotional burden of such a decision. Without that virtue, shame, self-loathing, and hatred would most likely materialize in her life and eventually become insurmountable. Only a person who can be caring of herself as she is faithful to her husband and children and just in fighting for fellow citizens could live with this decision.<sup>273</sup>

Fourthly and finally, knowing the above assertion is the prerogative of prudence. Keenan conceives: “Prudence needs to guide us about justice, fidelity and self-care.”<sup>274</sup> Perhaps a close look at the virtues of justice, fidelity and self-care one can see the possibility of conflict or tension. Keenan recalls the movie, *Terminator II*. In the movie Arnold Schwarzenegger is to find a boy who is to save the world. As the story unfolds, the boy rather than go with Arnold deliberately goes first to save his mother Linda Hamilton. “The boy suspends the fate of all humanity (the issue of Justice) to save his mother (the issue of fidelity).”<sup>275</sup> In other instances too the three cardinal virtues come into conflict as in the story of the Greek drama *Antigone*.<sup>276</sup> Admittedly, tension of interest may occur but in general these virtues are not in conflict.

---

<sup>272</sup> Ibid., 728.

<sup>273</sup> Ibid., 729.

<sup>274</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 55.

<sup>275</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>276</sup> Ibid. For further reading on *Antigone* see Kathrin H. Rosenfield, *Antigone Sophocles' Art: Hölderlin's Insight* (Aurora: The Davies Group, 2010).

### ***3.7 Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics: The Human Person and Relationality Considered***

The previous section introduced the ways in which as persons we are relational. Louis Janssens in his essay “Personalist Morals,” aptly explains the human person is adequately considered when taken as a historical subject in corporeality who stands in relation to the world, to other persons, to social structures, and to God, and who is a unique originality within the context of being fundamentally equal with all other persons as existing beings.<sup>277</sup> MacNamara further explains, as persons we have a shared history: hopes, passions, desires, aspirations, and needs.<sup>278</sup> It follows that a person can be himself or herself only when opened to others. It is going beyond oneself: relationship and gift to another thus become part of what it means to be a person.<sup>279</sup>

Based on the above premises, Keenan argues: “Our relationality generally is always directed by an ordered appreciation for the common good, in which we treat all people as equal. And our traditional way of labelling this reciprocal relationship of members is called “common good”. *Gaudium et Spes* talking about common good states:

Because human relationships intensify and extend gradually to the whole universe, the common good, that is to say, this set of social conditions which allow people, either as groups or as individual members, to reach their fulfilment more fully and more easily, so today takes on an increasingly universal complexion and consequently involves rights and duties with respect to the whole human race. Every

---

<sup>277</sup> Louis Janssens, “Personalist Morals,” *Louvain Studies* 3 (Spring 1970): 5-16. See also William F. Murphy, “Revisiting Contraception: An Integrated Approach in the Light of the Renewal of Thomistic Virtue Ethics,” *Theological Studies* Vol. 72, Issue 4 (Dec. 2011): 841.

<sup>278</sup> MacNamara, *The Call to be Holy*, 46.

<sup>279</sup> Peter Bristow, *Christian Ethics and the Human Person: Truth and Relativism in Contemporary Moral Theology* (Oxford: Family Publications, 2009), 96.

social group must take account of the needs and legitimate aspirations of other groups, and further the common good of the entire human family.<sup>280</sup>

The same document previously expresses that individuals exist for their own sake and yet they only fulfil themselves by making a gift of themselves to others.<sup>281</sup> Keenan does not give a definition of the common good. This is one of the lacunae identified in his work. However, his interest is to show the relational nature of virtue ethics. As members of the human race, we are expected to respond to all members in general equally and impartially.<sup>282</sup>

The above statement finds appropriate context when virtue ethics is linked to sexual ethics. Keenan in his article “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” considers “sexual ethics in the key of virtue, that is, a relational person based ethics”.<sup>283</sup> John Grabowski in *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Sexual Ethics* reiterates: “All virtues are inherently interpersonal – that is, they are acquired in and sustained by specific communities and their practices. This is nowhere more evident than in regard to the relational reality that is human sexuality.”<sup>284</sup> This means that our sexuality is an essential dimension of our capacity for connectedness.

However, our society is in a crisis of sexuality: the apparent scandal of sexual abuses within the church and society as a whole, hedonism and the increasing debate

---

<sup>280</sup> Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, no. 26. For present-day treatment of common good with reference to ethics see: David Hollenbach, *The Common Good and Christian Ethics* (New York: Cambridge Press, 2002).

<sup>281</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 24.

<sup>282</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 10.

<sup>283</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 180.

<sup>284</sup> John Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Sexual Ethics* (Washington, D. C: Catholic University America, 2004), 163.

on homosexuality and bestiality are indicative of this fact.<sup>285</sup> These have prompted a call for a more credible articulation of Catholic sexual ethics.<sup>286</sup> As with the rest of moral theology, there is a demand and work towards reconstruction. And Christine E. Gudorf in *Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics* suggests:

The first step in reconstructing Christian sexual ethics is to understand at best human sexuality itself, and in this day and age this means consulting biological science and social science, as well as the experience of human individuals and communities. I do not suggest that Masters and Johnson or Bell and Weinberg replace the Bible, church Fathers, and the classic theologians as more or less infallible authorities. Sexuality is a social construct in which biology is only one part. Neither are the social sciences of themselves capable of defining or interpreting human sexuality. But we must take seriously the broad areas of scientific consensus regarding reproduction, sexual response, sexual difference, and the development of sexual identity and orientation.<sup>287</sup>

Lisa Cahill in *Between the Sexes: Foundations for a Christian Ethics of Sexuality*, suggests four sources for such reconstruction of Christian sexual ethics: scripture, theological tradition, philosophical accounts of the human person, and descriptive

---

<sup>285</sup> It would be an excursus if I treat the issue of sexual abuses. But for further reading on this issue see: Phyllis Hamilton and Paul Williams, *Secret Love: My life with Father Michael Cleary* (Dublin: Mainstream Publishing, 1995); Annie Murphy and Peter DeRosa, *Forbidden Fruit: The Story of my Secret Love Affair* (New York: Warner Books Inc., 1994); Peadar Kirby, "The Death of Innocence: Whither Now? Trauma in Church and State," *Studies* 84/335 (1995): 257-265; Barry M. Coldrey, "The Sexual Abuse of Children: The Historical Perspective," *Studies* 85/340 (1996): 370-380; John Dardis, "Speaking of Scandal," *Studies* 89/356(2000): 309-323; Kevin Doherty, "The Paschal Dimension of the Forty Days as an interpretive Key to a Reading of the New and Serious challenges of Faith in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland 1990-2010," a Doctoral Thesis Presented to Mater Dei Institute of Education, 2011.

<sup>286</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 203. This chapter was first published in *Louvain Studies* 30, 3 (2005): 180-197.

<sup>287</sup> Christine E. Gudorf, *Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics* (Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1994), 3. Also See William Masters and Virginia Johnson, *Human Sexual Response* (Boston: Little, 1966); and *Human Sexual Inadequacy* (Boston: Little, 1970); Alan Bell and Martin Weinberg, *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978).

explanations of the lived reality of persons and societies.<sup>288</sup> All these proposals by both Gudorf and Cahill are quite engaging but Keenan proposes a different approach that posits a theological schema, which gives primary credence to the human person, we turn to virtue ethics.<sup>289</sup>

As this thesis has indicated in the last section, we are relational in three ways: Generally, specifically, and uniquely.<sup>290</sup> Earlier on we discussed them briefly in relation to the case of Mrs. Bergmeier, but here we shall look at how Keenan examines these three distinct spheres of human relationality from the standpoint of virtue ethics and sexual ethics. This is to show how virtue ethics is in dialogue with other fields of study and how compatible it is to these fields and how it is not self-centered as charged.

### ***3.7.1 Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Human Person as Relational Being in General: Justice***

Our relational nature as human beings finds definition and vision in our understanding of the Triune God as a Trinity. The doctrine of the trinity teaches God as a community of persons: “Let us make man in our own image and likeness” (Gen. 1: 26-27). In this light, personal existence, then, can never be seen as an ‘I’ in isolation, but always as ‘I’ and ‘you’ in relationship. In the words of Gula: “Human existence does not precede relationship, but is born of relationship and nurtured by it. To be a human person is to be essentially *directed towards others*.”<sup>291</sup>

---

<sup>288</sup> Lisa Cahill, *Between the Sexes: Foundations for a Christian Ethics of Sexuality* (Philadelphia: Fortress and Paulist Press, 1985), 5.

<sup>289</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 180-181.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid., 9; Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 723.

<sup>291</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 67.

From the above background, the first relational configuration that Keenan proposes is our relationality in general. The structure of this relationality in general is always to be directed by a methodical understanding of the common good.<sup>292</sup> For example including another person who is mostly left out in our team efforts, and the understanding that cooperation is better than isolation, initiates a sense of the common good.<sup>293</sup> The concepts of relationality and common good presuppose that we are by nature social beings.<sup>294</sup> Appropriately capturing this concept is the line of the English Poet John Donne, “No man is an Island”.<sup>295</sup> James Hanigan also delineates in his book, *As I have Loved You: The Challenge of Christian Ethics*:

To recognize the social nature of the human person is to recognize that human beings need one another in order to be what they are-human. Human life is not possible in isolation; human development cannot take place apart from a human community . . . Human life needs other human lives in order to be human.<sup>296</sup>

Therefore, the adjoining virtue to our relationality as social beings is the virtue of justice according to Keenan.<sup>297</sup> This is because justice is about universality and impartiality.<sup>298</sup> Our consciousness and responsiveness to justice theoretically and practically explains how our individual existence is a shared existence. Our individual goals are justified only when they respect the forms of inter-dependence which

---

<sup>292</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724. See also Lisa Sowle Cahill, “The Global Common Good in the Twenty-First Century,” in *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*, ed. James Keating (New York: Paulist Press, 2004), 233-251.

<sup>293</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christian*, 68.

<sup>294</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 459.

<sup>295</sup> John Donne, “Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions,” in *The Works of John Donne, with a Memoir of His Life*, 6 Vols., ed. Henry Alford (London: John W. Parker, 1839), 574-575.

<sup>296</sup> James Hanigan, *As I have Loved You: The Challenge of Christian Ethics* (New York: Paulist Press, 1986), 77.

<sup>297</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724.

<sup>298</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 470.

constitute our relational selves: “From the point of view of justice, then, we need to ask whether our moral choices and actions detract from the value of true community or promote the kind of self-giving which sustains the well-being of life together.”<sup>299</sup>

For Keenan the virtue of justice substantiates the claims that apart from specific relations we belong to, we are expected to respond equally and impartially to all.<sup>300</sup> He accepts Paul Ricoeur’s claims that from time immemorial justice has always been associated with equality.<sup>301</sup> Any discourse on justice raises the question of “right”. But Keenan remarks: “Because justice has always been considered the primary virtue or principle, the notion of conflict arises precisely because ethicists are no longer convinced that justice alone adequately covers “the right”.<sup>302</sup> To this end various ethicists make different claims. For example, Frankena suggests the principle of beneficence to complement the principle of justice.<sup>303</sup> While the Christian ethicists Tom Beauchamp and James Childress propose beneficence, and autonomy to complement justice.<sup>304</sup> Keenan himself, as already noted, proposes fidelity and self-care and finally mercy.<sup>305</sup> This is to suggest not a conflict but a variety of approaches that may be legitimate to each based on the parameters within which they seek to work.

---

<sup>299</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 67.

<sup>300</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724

<sup>301</sup> Paul Ricoeur, “Love and Justice,” in *Radical Pluralism and Truth: David Tracy and the Hermeneutics of Religion*, ed. Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike (New York: Crossroad, 1991), 195.

<sup>302</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 122.

<sup>303</sup> Frankena, *Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

<sup>304</sup> Tom Beauchamp and James Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1989).

<sup>305</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724-729; For mercy see Harington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 126.

Most scholars in their discourses treat justice as a principle.<sup>306</sup> But Keenan treats justice here as a virtue. He is trying to bring out the lacuna inherent in other theoretical frameworks. When justice is treated as a principle it becomes more academic and strictly anthropological but when treated as virtue it addresses everyday life and appeals to ordinary people and so encompasses both theological and anthropological concerns. By implication, Keenan wants to show that virtue ethics is more holistic. Following Aquinas' definition of justice, Keenan reiterates that justice is the virtue that "perfects" or orders the will, it inclines us to good relationships with other people.<sup>307</sup> In other words, justice is the virtue of acting and being that enhances relations with others. And these relations are part of the constituent aspect of our identities within the moral spectrum. Therefore, justice as a virtue is concerned not only with people's external activities but primarily their inner dispositions.<sup>308</sup>

Sexual ethics in its basic form is relational both in being as sexual persons and in expression. The question remains, how does justice as a virtue correspond to sexual ethics? Considering the presupposition Keenan offers us earlier on, on our relationality in general, specifically and uniquely, we can apply justice to sexual ethics by learning to appreciate the other person as possessing a dignity that belongs to being human and made in the image and likeness of God.<sup>309</sup> Since justice by definition is relational, the same can be said of human sexuality. At the center of

---

<sup>306</sup> See David Lewis Schaefer, *Illiberal Justice: John Rawls Vs. the American Political Tradition* (Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007); Richard Delgado, *Justice at War: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights during times of Crisis* (New York: New York University Press, 2003); Swain Ashok, Ramses Amer and Joakim Öjenda, *Globalization and Challenges to Building Peace* (London: Anthem Press, 2007).

<sup>307</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 122; Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 135.

<sup>308</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 724.

<sup>309</sup> *Ibid.*, 206.

justice is the concept of equality.<sup>310</sup> Therefore in sexual relations, the virtue of justice commands us to treat the other person with equality. It directs us to deal with the other person not as an object of sexual gratification but as a co-subject.<sup>311</sup> According to Keenan justice demands that the person we are in relationship with is not taken for granted, rights not compromised and dignity upheld and protected at all times.<sup>312</sup>

The virtue of justice when applied to relationship goes across-the-board. It is not limited only to the person we are in relationship with, but it makes us conscious of cases of inequality or indignity prevalent in and around us.<sup>313</sup> According to Keenan the virtue of justice is enhanced by mercy. Because the virtue of mercy motivates us to respond in a timely way to the needs of people. Aquinas maintains that the sum total of the Christian religion consists in mercy. This explains why Keenan correlates mercy with justice: “A justice informed by mercy is vigorously alert to those who are particularly vulnerable.”<sup>314</sup> He therefore calls it justice-mercy.<sup>315</sup> Keenan states that the importance of justice-mercy is very urgent especially with the current wave of child abuse that has beclouded and dented the church, which is a vice against justice.<sup>316</sup> He also identifies the abuse of vulnerable adults, and rape.<sup>317</sup> Furthermore,

---

<sup>310</sup> The sensitivity and urgency of the demands of justice to the equality of people in particular male and female, prompted certain scholars to observe that Catholic sexual ethics has historically focused largely on male experience and now needs to better incorporate the perceptiveness and experiences of women. For example Barbara Hilkert Andolsen argues from this standpoint in her article, “Whose Sexuality? Whose Tradition? Women, Experience and Roman Catholic Sexual Ethics,” in *Readings in Moral Theology, Feminist Ethics and the Catholic Moral Tradition*, no. 9, ed. Charles Curran, Margaret Farley, and Richard McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1996), 207-239.

<sup>311</sup> *Ibid.*, 206-207.

<sup>312</sup> *Ibid.*, 207.

<sup>313</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>314</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 207.

<sup>315</sup> Keenan, *Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics*, 195.

<sup>316</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 207.

justice invites people always to recognize situations when the commercialization of sex and the trafficking of minors dehumanize others. These are clear indications of the importance of the virtue of justice in sexual ethics.<sup>318</sup>

The virtue of justice continues to be relevant as people not only engage in becoming instruments or catalysts for change in compromised situations but that they as persons enter into the turmoil of the other person's life.<sup>319</sup> In clear terms Keenan affirms: "Justice in sexual ethics requires us to recognize, support, and promote the equality of genders, with the understanding that such work still has much to accomplish."<sup>320</sup>

How can the virtue of justice be taught and sustained? We have so far looked at the general scope of the relationship between justice and virtue and have come to the conclusion that they are indeed compatible. In what practical ways can we foster this compatibility? Keenan suggests that catholic justice informed by mercy in the context of sexual ethics can be taught as a curriculum in our schools.<sup>321</sup> It can also be developed as part of the religious programs taught in parishes, perhaps for first communion and confirmation classes and also adults' on-going formation. Again the priest can talk about it from the pulpit.<sup>322</sup> Keenan is convinced of this approach because:

It helps us see that our sexuality, where we are most capable of expressing, receiving, and mutually sharing love, is the embodiment of our most vulnerable dimensions. It is where through intimacy we leave ourselves open to the other. For this reason the church's long history of

---

<sup>317</sup> Ibid. See Philip S. Keane, *Sexual Morality: A Catholic Perspective* (New York: Paulist Press, 1977).

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid.

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> Ibid., 208.

<sup>322</sup> Ibid.

privileging justice easily extends its interest into the realm of sexual ethics.<sup>323</sup>

The identification of concrete practices that can bring about transformation of peoples' character as well as feasible social and cultural obstacles to human sexual flourishing is essential especially in contemporary culture that trivializes sex. Parents, teachers, pastors and civil leaders have to go back to the drawing boards for re-orientation. However, Keenan fails to show how virtue ethics can and does respond to the current issues of contraception, homosexuality and pornography from a justice perspective.

### ***3.7.2 Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Persons as Relational Beings Specifically: Fidelity***

Specifically, each human person is bounded with particular persons within the bonds of family or friendship. St. Paul in his first letter to Timothy imparts that we are to provide for these particular persons, and “especially for family members” (Tim 5:8). And St. Augustine in *The City of God* exhorts that we are to love in general all within our ambit.<sup>324</sup> In the *Summa Theologiae* Aquinas holds that as persons we have an obligation towards those we are specifically close to.<sup>325</sup> Accordingly:

If justice urges us to treat all people equally, then fidelity makes different claims on us. Fidelity is the virtue that nurtures and sustains the bonds of those special relationships that we enjoy whether by blood, marriage, love, or sacrament. Fidelity requires that we treat with special care those who are closer to us. If justice rests on impartiality and universality, fidelity rests on partiality and particularity.<sup>326</sup>

---

<sup>323</sup> Ibid.

<sup>324</sup> St. Augustine, *The City of God*, trans. Marcus Dods, Intro. Thomas Merton (New York: Modern Library, 1994), 693.

<sup>325</sup> *ST II-II*, q. 31. a. 3; q. 32. a.9; *ST II-II*, q. 26, aa. 6, 7, and 8.

<sup>326</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 724-725. See also Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 470.

The partiality identified by Keenan here is what Lawler and Salzman call “Legitimate partiality”.<sup>327</sup> Indeed, Henry Newman in Sermon 5 endorses this legitimate partiality when he writes: “The best preparation for loving the world at large, and loving it duly and wisely [under the guidance of prudence], is to cultivate an intimate friendship and affection toward those who are immediately about us.”<sup>328</sup>

Keenan considers fidelity as the virtue that enhances this kind of relationality. He draws upon the works of Niebuhr and Ricoeur who argue on love that challenges justice.<sup>329</sup> He underscores the conflict in the application of the word love as evident in the work of William Werpehowski, “‘Agape’ and Special Relations,” and other theologians.<sup>330</sup> For instance Werpehowski highlights the conflict between love in general and love in particular. Karl Rahner as cited by Keenan would say love or charity is transcendental.<sup>331</sup> According to Keenan, the protestant theologians use the word “love more concretely as being as categorical as justice.”<sup>332</sup> This tension is both conceptual and practical. For the Protestant theologians, love is particular while justice is universal.<sup>333</sup> While the Catholic theologians argue that love seeks justice.<sup>334</sup>

---

<sup>327</sup> Lawler and Salzman, “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian,” 470.

<sup>328</sup> Henry Newman, Sermon 5, in *Parochial and Plain Sermons* (San Francisco: Ignatius 1987), 258.

<sup>329</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 725. See Reinhold Niebuhr, *Love and Justice: Selections from the Shorter Writings of Reinhold Niebuhr*, ed. D. B. Robertson (Louisville: Westminster, 1957), Paul Ricoeur, “Love and Justice,” in *Radical Pluralism and Truth: David Tracy and the Hermeneutics of Religion*, ed. Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike (New York: Crossroad, 1991).

<sup>330</sup> William Werpehowski, “‘Agape’ and Special Relations,” in *The Love Commandments*, ed. Edmund Santurri and William Werpehowski (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1992), 138-56.

<sup>331</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 725. The original citation is in Karl Rahner, “The Commandment of Love in Relation to the other Commandments,” in *Theological Investigations 5*, trans. Karl H. Kruger (Baltimore: Helicon, 1969), 439-539.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> Ibid.

Because of this conflict, Keenan chooses the word fidelity, which he finds more apt in expressing the fundamental aspect of sustaining special bonds: “I prefer to name this virtue fidelity rather than love, because of *the above* confusion in the use of the word ‘love’”.<sup>335</sup> There are some theologians similar to Keenan who use the word fidelity as well, such as Paul Waddell, Carol Gilligan and Margaret Farley.<sup>336</sup> Keenan develops their different insights. Waddell for instance recaptures the teachings of Aristotle, Augustine and Aquinas on friendship. According to Keenan, Waddell:

Highlights an often forgotten dimension of the life of Jesus. Not only did Jesus teach and heal those who followed him, he also befriended them, called them together, played, laughed, and ate with them. His gatherings with friends were so noteworthy that they scandalized the teachers of the law. Yet, these were moral activities. Just as Jesus’ life sets the norm we follow- being just as he is just- so too are we called to follow him in friendship- being a friend as he is a friend.<sup>337</sup>

Carol Gilligan’s book *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* suggests that each person is supposed to have two concerns: Firstly, to be just and to be able to stand alone to see the moral terrain as it is. Secondly to be faithful through friendships so as not to become isolated and incapable of meeting the other as a friend not as a task.<sup>338</sup> Fidelity in friendships or relationships becomes a key concept in discussing moral life. When exercised, fidelity becomes a virtue in friendship. In this light, the application of the virtue of

---

<sup>334</sup> Richard McCormick, “A Commentary on the Commentaries,” in *Doing Evil to Achieve Good*, ed. Richard McCormick and Paul Ramsey (Chicago: Loyola University, 1978), 42-45.

<sup>335</sup> Keenan, “Proposing Cardinal Virtues,” 725. The italicized words are mine.

<sup>336</sup> See Paul Waddell, *Friendship and the Moral Life* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1989); Paul Ramsey, *The Patient as Person: Explorations in Medical Ethics* (New Haven: Yale University, 1970); Gilbert Meilaender, *Friendship: A Study in Theological Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1981);

<sup>337</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christian*, 61.

<sup>338</sup> Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women’s Development* (Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982).

fidelity by Keenan seeks to show that virtues as inner dispositions must find expression in the way people relate.

Fidelity is a virtue that encompasses all of human relationships. However, Keenan notes that fidelity as a virtue over time has been spoken less about: “Until recently, however, despite parental efforts, the virtue of fidelity has received little notice from . . . moral teachers.”<sup>339</sup> What has become commonplace is that people have been taught not to be unfaithful, and little is taught on the dynamics or ways in which people can be more faithful.<sup>340</sup> Keenan is suggesting that parents should teach their children on the ways to be faithful.<sup>341</sup> He is therefore advocating for a resurgence of the theology of fidelity.

Teaching fidelity and trying to be faithful is an arduous task as Keenan notes.<sup>342</sup> It is easier for two people to do a particular thing that they both love doing but difficult to engage in an enterprise that both have varied interests. This is one of the challenges that the virtue of fidelity can face. Yet fidelity is a call to engage and disengage. Fidelity makes claims on us to engage in concrete and practical practices that can lead to a better understanding of the demands of the moral life and the Christian call to be friends of Jesus and one another:

This is my commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. You are my friends if you do what I command you. No longer do I call you servants, for the servant does not know what his master is doing; but I have called you friends, for all that I have heard from my Father I have made known to you (John 15:12-15).

---

<sup>339</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christian*, 59.

<sup>340</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>341</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

<sup>342</sup> *Ibid.*, 62.

There is another side to the challenge of fidelity: It is the seeming conflict with justice. Fidelity and justice are two distinct concepts but they appear to be competitive in some sense.<sup>343</sup> Keenan addresses this suspicion:

The drama of Antigone is caught as she stands between supporting a universal peace for her whole city and obeying Creon's law, or else tending to her brother who remains unburied outside the city walls. But Greek culture is not the only setting for conflicts between justice and fidelity. The American movie industry regularly depicts justice calling us away from our special relationships. A lawyer abandons her father's defense and becomes his accuser of crimes against humanity in *The Music Box*. A wife rejects her husband's commands and participates in a civil rights demonstration in *A Long Walk Home*, and a mother campaigns against apartheid while a teenage daughter feels neglected in *A World Apart*.<sup>344</sup>

On the other hand: "In *Scent of a Woman* a prep school student decides not to report on his friends despite the harm that they have caused to the entire school."<sup>345</sup> And in *Terminator* the young man abandons the demands of the community and goes first to rescue his mother as cited earlier. The above examples demonstrate how we can be caught between two opposing claims. Yet Keenan argues that although justice and fidelity are distinct, they are not in contradiction:

All societies call us to be faithful to the long-standing relationships we have. Fidelity differs from justice in that the latter calls us to treat with impartiality all people, while fidelity recognizes that we each are constituted by a variety of specific interpersonal relationships. A fidelity informed by mercy then leads us toward approaching prudently and fearlessly those whom we love. It demands that we privilege the particular relationships that we enjoy.<sup>346</sup>

Keenan contextualizes the virtue of fidelity in his article "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics". As a background to this, Aelred of Rievaulx's *Spiritual Friendship*,

---

<sup>343</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 726.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> Ibid.

<sup>346</sup> Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," 195.

articulates: “We cannot be just until we are in relationship and again we cannot be just in a relationship until we are faithful.”<sup>347</sup> Within the experience of any relationship we are called to be faithful at all times and unambiguously when in a sexual relationship.<sup>348</sup> Wadell encapsulates the above statement when he articulates that the entire scope of the moral life is what happens to us in relationships be they sexual or non-sexual.<sup>349</sup> This experience always involves a movement: a movement from isolation to communion that generates and transmits a sense of sharing in the identity of another person.<sup>350</sup> It is a sharing that brings about belonging but yet in belonging we become distinct. So justice and fidelity in sexual ethics are intrinsically linked yet different as earlier noted.<sup>351</sup>

The specific interpersonal relationship is what Wadell calls “preferential Love”.<sup>352</sup> This may be criticized conceptually for being selfish, but based on practical knowledge we are connected both generally and specifically as we have seen earlier on. However, our being faithful to specific relationships do not set us against our relationship in general. According to Keenan, fidelity simply demands that we privilege the particular relationship we enjoy.<sup>353</sup>

---

<sup>347</sup> Aelred of Rievaulx’s, *Spiritual Friendship*, trans. Mark F. Williams (Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1994), 57-90. In book III he presents the requirements of unbroken friendship. In dialogue 61 Aelred names four qualities that ought to be tested in a friend and the first one is faithfulness.

<sup>348</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 195. See also Enda McDonagh, *Gift and Call* (Indiana: Abbey Press, 1975), 29-30.

<sup>349</sup> Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life*, 142.

<sup>350</sup> See Edward Vacek, “Towards a Phenomenology of Love Lost,” *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 20 (Spring 1989): 3-6. It proves the maxim of Teilhard de Chardin valid when he writes: “To be is to unite” and “union differentiates”. Teilhard de Chardin, *Phenomenon of Man* (New York: Harper and Row, 1965), 262; See also Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1967), 2:65.

<sup>351</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 195.

<sup>352</sup> Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life*, 70-119.

<sup>353</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 195.

Fidelity makes some basic claims on persons in all sexual relations. Firstly: Being informed by mercy Catholic fidelity anticipates the chaos of our sexuality and sexual relationships. Fidelity teaches us to be no fools in entering sexual relationships. It reminds us that entering into a sexual relationship with another means entering into an intimate complexity where we need to recognize the inevitable yet unpredictable moments of upheaval and confusion attendant to such intimacy.<sup>354</sup>

Such an awareness requires that we do not walk out of every loving relationship: “Fidelity calls us never to abandon our lover, to recognize rather that our sexual love must deepen, embrace, and extend through intimacy.”<sup>355</sup> Effectively, Keenan is saying we should more fervently apply all skills available both physically and emotionally to sustain and defend all our loving relationships.<sup>356</sup>

Secondly, fidelity demands a consideration of the other person.<sup>357</sup> We have been dissatisfied with the approach of doing ethics in which emphasis is laid on individuals and particular actions. But the moral life is what takes place within us when we stand with others. It implies that we stand not over and against others but in connection. Such a connection is very often unappreciated. Consideration of the other person is indicative of the fact that sexual ethics is not just about an individual but an individual in relationship.<sup>358</sup> It is a consideration that respects the feelings, anxieties and uniqueness of the other as well.

Thirdly, fidelity demands honesty in the sexual expression of the relationship.<sup>359</sup> By implication, fidelity requires honesty, patience, and intense reflective sensitivity to the other person in all forms of interactions. These can be

---

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid. for further reading see Aelred of Rievaulx’s, *Spiritual Friendship*, 69.

<sup>356</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 195. The story of David and Jonathan is very instructive, see 1 Sam. 20: 1-42.

<sup>357</sup> Ibid.

<sup>358</sup> Ibid.

<sup>359</sup> Ibid. See also Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 150-151.

considered as sub-virtues of fidelity. Fourthly, fidelity privileges dialogue. It opens up genuine avenues and modes for two people to ably express their needs, hopes, fears and desires as alluded to in the second claim. Keenan agrees with Andre Guidon on the fact that sex is a form of communication: “This fidelity helps the Christian to grow further in love and in humanity. It sees sex itself as a language that expresses in a variety of ways the human person in openness and in pursuit of the other.”<sup>360</sup>

The pinnacle of the relevance of the virtue fidelity in sexual relationship is the welcoming of children forming part of the bond. Rather than considering the sexual union from the negative side of no divorce, Keenan opts for a more positive approach as he emphasizes the procreative experience through the bond. Therefore: “Catholics are intensely interested in the nature of marriage as the place where faithful love and procreativity concretely flourishes.”<sup>361</sup>

### ***3.7.3 Virtue Ethics, Sexual Ethics and Human Person as Relational Being Uniquely: Self-Care.***

The virtue of self-care has a theological justification in Matthew 22:39 “Love your neighbour as yourself.”<sup>362</sup> Loving yourself is a command by Christ. But this is to be

---

<sup>360</sup> Ibid. See also Andre Guidon, *The Sexual Language: An Essay in Moral Theology* (Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1976).

<sup>361</sup> Ibid.

<sup>362</sup> Edward Vacek uses the word self-love. Edward Collins Vacek, *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1994), 239-273. The common biblical text cited is Mark 12:31 “You must love your neighbour as yourself.” See *ST* II-II, q.26. aa.3-5; q. 26. aa. 9-11; Oliver O’Donovan, *The Problem of Self-Love in Augustine* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980), 119-120. Although there are other scholars who argue differently. For instance Anders Nygren argues that the commandment “You must love your neighbour as yourself” should not be read to include self-love but to exclude it. For O’Donovan Christian love is self-giving while self-love is acquisitive. See Anders Nygren, *Agape and Eros* (New York: Harper & Row, 1969), 100-101, 13-132, 217; Gilbert Meilaender, *Faith and Faithfulness* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991), 55-56, 86-88.

differentiated with self-centeredness or egoism. Self-care according to Keenan is the virtue that enables an individual become conscious of the demands the self evokes, namely that one be accountable to oneself.<sup>363</sup> This is a pivotal aspect in all human relations.<sup>364</sup>

In recent times, psychological studies have shown that one of the greatest setbacks to healthy human living is poor self-care.<sup>365</sup> From this backdrop, self-care is the virtue that permits healthy self-love and invites reflection on our unique self that is a gift of God that should be accepted, appreciated and protected.<sup>366</sup> Each human person is unique, and a self that belongs to oneself and yet relational.

With reference to virtue ethics, Keenan opines that while other proposed virtues cannot meet the concerns of the self, self-care is the one virtue that addresses the unique relationship of the moral agent with self.<sup>367</sup> Here, Keenan does not use terms like self-love and self-esteem or self-respect.<sup>368</sup> However, in a later work he uses similar terms especially self-esteem.<sup>369</sup> He treats self-esteem here only as a subgroup of self-care. He defines self-care in this context as the unique responsibility to care for oneself affectively, mentally, physically, and spiritually.<sup>370</sup> According to Bristow this implies self-possession, self-mastery, and self-determination.<sup>371</sup> Similarly,

---

<sup>363</sup> Keenan, "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics," 195.

<sup>364</sup> Ibid. See also Haring, *Free and Faithful in Christ*, 2, 429.

<sup>365</sup> See Jack Dominian, "Sexuality and Personal Relationships," in *Embracing Sexuality: Authority and Experience in the Catholic Church*, ed. Joseph Selling (Burlington: Ashgate, 2001), 13.

<sup>366</sup> Lawler and Salzman, "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian," 471.

<sup>367</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 726.

<sup>368</sup> Ibid.

<sup>369</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christian*, 70-75.

<sup>370</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 726.

<sup>371</sup> Bristow, *Christian Ethics and the Human Person*, 78.

it implies self-consciousness although not in the terms of Descartes,<sup>372</sup> or John Locke,<sup>373</sup> or David Hume conceptualization.<sup>374</sup> Rather he refers to it as a consciousness that a person possesses about self that is practical and reflective in a virtuous way.<sup>375</sup>

Keenan is aware that his proposal of self-care as a virtue has some objections. It sounds too egoistic and selfish. And he observes that some Christian activists may argue against it from the dimension of Christ's death on the cross for humanity.<sup>376</sup> In other words had Jesus considered self-care as a virtue he would not have died.<sup>377</sup> But Keenan argues:

But we have every reason to believe that the historical Jesus took care of himself; we need only think of how often he is contrasted with John the Baptizer. Likewise we have no reason to suppose that Jesus suffered from lack of self-esteem. In fact, I think we can say that it was precisely because Jesus knew the virtue of fidelity, justice, and self-care that the agony in the Garden was so painful. He was a man who loved God, humanity, his friends, and himself: his conflict, like all true conflicts was to determine which relationship made the greater claim on him.<sup>378</sup>

The above example of the passion of Christ elaborates the functional unity among the virtues proposed by Keenan in relation to human relationality: that for the common good Christ died which is justice imbued with mercy, that for the fidelity he

---

<sup>372</sup> See Descartes, "Principles of Philosophy 1", in *Descartes: Key Philosophical Writings* (London: Wordsworth, 1997).

<sup>373</sup> See John Locke, *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, ed. Peter H. Nidditch (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979).

<sup>374</sup> See David Hume, *A Treatise of Human Nature*, ed. Ernest C. Mossner (London: Penguin, 1955). Both Locke and Hume substituted the being of a person rooted in substance for the activity of consciousness.

<sup>375</sup> See Karol Wojtyla, *Person and Community*, trans. Peter Lang (New York: 1993), 169-170.

<sup>376</sup> Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 727.

<sup>377</sup> Ibid.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid., 727-728.

professes to the Father he accepted to die, that for self-care, he considers the “I-thou-we” as the ultimate principle.

Evidently, the other two virtues that we have previously looked at deal with the other person(s). Keenan states that the acting individual is overshadowed with giving out of his/her person. With reference to sexual ethics, a person therefore stands the risk of self-neglect and he/she runs the danger of being taken advantage of within and outside the scope of the relationship especially with regard to sex.<sup>379</sup> It behoves the individual not to let himself or herself be taken advantage of. This is in the case where the person is not a minor. What happens in the case of a minor? Keenan does not proffer an answer. This is where the virtue of justice comes into play as we are all called to be aware of the vulnerability of people around be they minors or adults.<sup>380</sup>

The virtue of self-care enables the individual to become more aware of one’s “capabilities, whether and when one can sustain a sexual relationship”.<sup>381</sup> Keenan identifies a danger of peer pressure, cultural disvalues that can pressure one into sexual relationships that are casual and may be injurious to the person and inevitably to the other partner.<sup>382</sup> But self-care according to him is the virtue that encourages people not to succumb to such pressures and disvalues. He cautions:

Self-care might also lead us to acknowledge that we have long been inhibited and fearful of intimacy, touch, or sexual expression. Prudential self-care informed by mercy leads some people to delay as precipitous sexual intimacy, but for others it gently prods them to seek sexual love that has, for long, been an object of fear and dread.<sup>383</sup>

---

<sup>379</sup> Ibid., 196.

<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

<sup>381</sup> Ibid.

<sup>382</sup> Ibid.

<sup>383</sup> Ibid. See Michael Hartwig, *The Problem of Abstinence and the Poetics of Sexual Intimacy* (New York: Peter Lang, 2000).

The virtue of self-care according to Keenan is the one virtue that enables us as individuals to enter into our histories in order to initiate a healing process instead of repression.<sup>384</sup> The ability to face one's very own dark sides can be challenging. But coming to terms with our sexual issues can help reduce the risk of other extremes:

Self-care invites us to be as patient with ourselves as we are with others and invites us to not look to sexual experiences as a way, for instance, of resolving problems of self-esteem. Self-care invites us to see sexual relationships as goods to be pursued but precisely within a virtuous context.<sup>385</sup>

He cautions that self-care can be self-absorbing in which an individual person becomes the end of all.

By and large, Keenan has succeeded in giving an approach that articulates the fact that the narrative of each of the virtues within the context of the human person does not stand on its own. Therefore, in discussing the virtues with regard to the human person, Keenan approaches them from a relational perspective. One of the most central theses so far articulated is that our actions and our relationships emanate from our identity. And the Christian identity as we know is relational. One must love oneself before loving another.<sup>386</sup> Equally, human sexuality is an essential aspect of our human capacity for connectedness. A society or persons that promote individualism that is devoid of virtuous living fails to offer a veritable context for a credible appreciation, expression and education in positive sexual ethics.

---

<sup>384</sup> Ibid.

<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

<sup>386</sup> James F. Keenan, *Ethics of the Word: Voices in the Catholic Church Today* (Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2010), 172.

### 3.8 Christian Virtue Ethics: Providing A Communal Setting

This chapter has so far shown how Keenan underscores the relational character of the human person within the framework of virtue ethics from a general anthropological perspective. This is against the backdrop of the individualistic model of morality that dominated catholic moral theology as identified in chapter one. Keenan declares:

A fairly individualistic personal model of morality dominated theological ethics; my sins were my sins, my merit was my merit; my grace was my grace. The Christian belonged to a church, but responsibility, like identity, was not collectively understood. Though there were hints of a language that saw the church as a community of faith, for the most part those concepts were secondary . . . Thus we may have had a communion of saints, but they were singularly named. We did not celebrate communities but rather heroic individuals (and we still do).<sup>387</sup>

There is the conviction in Keenan that although we celebrate individual lives of holiness we are intrinsically interdependent and the bonds of community have great impact on all our discourses and activities.<sup>388</sup> Keenan stresses the fact that there has to be a shift to a relational anthropology that has its foundation in theology.<sup>389</sup> That is why he finds virtue ethics more appealing in this enterprise.

To do this, Keenan draws upon the work of Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics*.<sup>390</sup> In this book, Spohn appeals to Christian worship as the practice that shapes Christian identity: “The Christian identity is relational rather than individualist. The relevant question is no longer *Who* am I? but *Whose* am I? Christians have been claimed by God and by a community so that their destiny is

---

<sup>387</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 153.

<sup>388</sup> Ibid.

<sup>389</sup> Ibid., 154-155.

<sup>390</sup> Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 155; Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*.

bound up with others.”<sup>391</sup> For Spohn the Christian identity in the New Testament comes from commitment and identification with others as well as with God.<sup>392</sup> It is patently clear that the modern understanding of “self” and “identity” is mutilated. For instance, the *Newsweek* of June 29, 1998, reported the story of a woman in Nebraska who planned to “Exchange vows with herself in front of a mirror and 200 friends and relatives at a ceremony where she will marry herself, in a celebration of the fact that she is ‘happy with herself’”.<sup>393</sup>

Against this backdrop, Christian identity is resoundingly communal by first being committed to the master. St. Paul writes: “We do not live to ourselves, and we do not die to ourselves. If we live, we live to the Lord and if we die we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die we are the Lord.” (Rom. 14:7-8). Therefore: “Belonging to this gracious Lord liberates us from self-centered existence.”<sup>394</sup> It is vital that we find a setting to explore the communal nature of virtue ethics from a theological standpoint that is Christocentric. This section shall seek to consider how Keenan explores the Eucharist as a setting. From the outset one can argue that he sees the unambiguous place of the Eucharist in the Christian life.

### **3.8.1 *The Eucharist: An Authentic Communal Setting for Virtue***

The place of the Eucharist in the life of the believer is important viewed from the understanding of individual identity noted in the previous section. More practically Keenan affirms: “Specially in the practice of the Eucharist, we find the spiritual practice where this relational identification with Christ is regularly fostered. In the

---

<sup>391</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics*, 163.

<sup>392</sup> *Ibid.*, 164.

<sup>393</sup> *Newsweek*, June 29, 1998, 19. Cited by Spohn in *Go and Do Likewise*, endnote 2 of chapter 8.

<sup>394</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 164.

practice of the Eucharist we become what we do (or eat and drink): We become the body of Christ.”<sup>395</sup> The Eucharist effects transformation of its recipients: “For this reason, the Eucharist is therefore the paradigm of the community of faith. Through the Eucharist we become like Christ.”<sup>396</sup> Far from being completely so, we are confronted with the reality of the tension between what we actually do become in the Eucharist and what we could become in and through the Eucharist. Spohn further explains:

Unfortunately, these lofty meanings bear scant resemblance to most worship services this side of the *eschaton*. The actual gatherings at the Lord’s Table manifest our disunity and divisions as much as any unity we have in Christ. Denominational fissures . . . Congregations defined by race, class, ethnic origin, riven by sexual politics.<sup>397</sup>

For example, Joel Van Amberg in *A Real Presence* examines conflicts in Augsburg at the time of the Protestant Reformation over the meaning and celebration of the Eucharist. He situates the theological debate within the milieu of the crisis between guild members and the leading citizens in the city council.<sup>398</sup> Thomas Rausch in *Reconciling Faith and Reason* argues that what ought to unite us namely the liturgy apparently divides us. For example, we find a polarization among Catholics of their understanding of whether the mass is a sacrifice or a meal.<sup>399</sup>

From the above examples, Keenan accepts the fact that the divine initiative also encounters shortcomings as expressed earlier by Spohn.<sup>400</sup> By our estimation this assertion generates the following questions: If through the Eucharist we become like

---

<sup>395</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 155.

<sup>396</sup> Ibid; Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 165.

<sup>397</sup> Ibid., 166.

<sup>398</sup> Joel Van Amberg, *A Real Presence: Religious and Social Dynamics of the Eucharistic Conflicts in the Early Modern Augsburg 1520-1530* (Leiden: Brill, 2012).

<sup>399</sup> Thomas Rausch, *Reconciling Faith and Reason* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000). See also, *The New York Times/CBS News Poll* June 1, 1994, B 8.

<sup>400</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 156.

Christ, why then the tension? Is the Eucharist incapable of truly transforming us into another Christ? Or are we just unable as individuals to avail ourselves of the transforming power of the Eucharist? It is interesting to note that both Spohn and Keenan hold that the scandal of division is appropriate because it pervades the gospels' accounts.<sup>401</sup>

To explain the appropriateness, Spohn thinks that the Eucharist becomes a place of celebration which warrants the practices of forgiveness and solidarity.<sup>402</sup> While for Keenan it helps us to understand ourselves as the people called together through virtuous conformity.<sup>403</sup> These two concepts of forgiveness and solidarity emphasize the social and spiritual dynamics of the Eucharist that engender practical living.

Keenan raises very important questions: "What then are the practices that help shape such virtuous conformity as a response to the gift of God in the Eucharist? How do our prayerfulness, our community spirit, our participation, our gestures, and our use of music and language in the liturgy allow us to be shaped by the one we seek?"<sup>404</sup> We must understand the Eucharist as the *locus* for becoming a community of disciples. This will enable us consider the liturgy of the Eucharist as a sequence of personified activities that are capable of transforming us through the enabling Grace of God.

---

<sup>401</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 165; Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 156.

<sup>402</sup> *Ibid.* See also John Bossy, "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700," *Past and Present* 100 (1983): 29-61.

<sup>403</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 156; See also Joseph Woodill, *The Fellowship of Life: Virtue Ethics and Orthodox Christianity* (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1998).

<sup>404</sup> *Ibid.*

The whole liturgy of the Eucharist is divided into two parts: the Liturgy of the word and the Liturgy of the Eucharist.<sup>405</sup> Below, I shall show how Keenan describes the different aspects of these parts of the Mass in the light of our communal encounter and challenge of reliving the call of becoming the virtuous community of disciples.

### **3.8.1.1 *The Liturgy of the Word: Virtuous Moral Implication***

There are moral practices, which the Eucharist engenders. Firstly, the Eucharist as a celebration begins with the sign of the cross. Theologically the cross is a symbol of liberation from sin and guilt.<sup>406</sup> All participating in the celebration are invited to communally make this sign. This further indicates the reality of our common experience of sin and guilt.<sup>407</sup> And according to Keenan: “Guilt and shame have no lasting claim on us not because we are good, but because Christ by the cross has taken away our sins by his mercy. When we sign ourselves by the cross, we are set free from guilt so as to be free to live for ourselves and for others.”<sup>408</sup> But Keenan is concerned whether the action is allowed to navigate through the very being of the participants in order to evoke a true sense of value.

The moral implication is that the sign of the cross is not only a sign of being claimed by Christ but it is also a sign of identifying ourselves with each other as a liberated people.<sup>409</sup> Forgiveness therefore cannot be absent from any Eucharistic celebration: “The community that shares Christian worship enacts forgiveness ritually

---

<sup>405</sup> Ibid., 156-158. See also Vivian Boland and Thomas McCarthy, *The Word is Flesh and Blood: The Eucharist and Sacred Scripture* (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2012), especially part three.

<sup>406</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 156.

<sup>407</sup> See Demmer, *Shaping the Moral Life*, 58.

<sup>408</sup> Ibid., 156-157. See also James F. Keenan, *The Works of Mercy: The Heart of Catholicism* (Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2005), 93.

<sup>409</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 157.

so that it can perform forgiveness away from the table.”<sup>410</sup> But on the contrary, the cross rather than becoming a liberating force has been used to shame, imprison, torture or harm other people:

That Christians have used the cross as some sort of weapon of their own to promote their purported righteousness over others’ purported wickedness is the great Christian obscenity. Whenever we separate our understanding of the cross from God’s mercy, we inevitably risk again morally deplorable conduct, for we forget how our righteousness was won. For this reason the practice of cross burning in the United States was so obscene: In whitened, hooded sheets, members of the Ku Klux Klan burned the cross as a symbol of racial threat and racial violence.<sup>411</sup>

A proper understanding of the gratuitousness of the gift of Christ’s liberation through the cross deepens our appreciation of the mercy of God: “Through the cross we are signed by our redemption, but on the road to sanctification we call for mercy. This communal practice highlights the on-going reconciliation of ourselves with God; we never celebrate the Eucharist without it. It is a remarkably habitual liturgical practice.”<sup>412</sup> Mercy therefore becomes an important virtue in Christian living. This explains why Keenan interlaces mercy with his proposed virtues as highlighted in previous sections. The link between God’s mercy and us is expressed in the Gloria whereby all again sing to the glory of God which is an act of gratitude and a sign of

---

<sup>410</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 175. Bishop Desmond Tutu remarked during the South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission, “Without forgiveness, there is no future.” 177 & 179

<sup>411</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 157. The same can be said of former apartheid South Africa where universities ran theological departments that sought to justify the apartheid suppression with biblical citations: The white dominated ‘Dutch Reformed Church’ supported apartheid. See Gudorf, *Body, Sex, and Pleasure*, 2.

<sup>412</sup> *Ibid.*

humility.<sup>413</sup> This effectively makes the believing family ready to receive the narrative of the Lord in the readings.<sup>414</sup>

Secondly, Keenan highlights the importance of the celebration of the word. Citing Hauerwas who states in *A Community of Character* the Christian task is to get the narrative of Jesus right.<sup>415</sup> The following questions are pertinent: How do we get this narrative of Jesus right? How do we receive it? Or how is this narrative translated into actual living? Furthermore, what is the role of the preacher in unfolding the narrative? Is the preacher able to make alive the Word and its meaning to the life of the living community? Should the preacher be seen as a model, a trail blazer or simply a messenger or proclaimer?<sup>416</sup>

The proper reception of the narrative of the word largely depends on the disposition of both the leader and the led.<sup>417</sup> From a broader perspective, the word when not well celebrated makes the profession of the faith a mere recitation without real encounter with Jesus in our lived experiences. The celebration of the word ends with the prayers of the faithful which should be formative prayers reflecting the needs of the church and our personal needs and appreciation for the encounter. The recitation of the creed links us with the second part of the liturgy, which is the Eucharist itself.

---

<sup>413</sup> See Margaret Daly-Denton, "When in Music God is Glorified," in *The Word is Flesh and Blood: The Eucharist and Sacred Scripture*, ed. Vivian Boland and Thomas McCarthy (Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2012), 54-64.

<sup>414</sup> Ibid. See Kevin W. Irwin, *Models of the Eucharist* (New York: Paulist Press, 2005), 102-104.

<sup>415</sup> Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*.

<sup>416</sup> Harington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 158.

<sup>417</sup> Ibid.

### 3.8.1.2 *Liturgy of the Eucharist: Virtuous Moral Implications*

In the liturgy of the Eucharist:

Here we enter into an extended prayer that calls us to remember. In doing so, we turn to the act of memory, our most affective, historical, rational practice . . . to bring back our hearts to our recollections . . . we define ourselves, with the priest, with the community, and with God, and so we sing ‘Holy, Holy, Holy’”<sup>418</sup>

Central to the celebration is the Eucharistic prayer(s), is another narrative that shapes us, a narrative told over and over again which calls us into the reception of the body and blood of Christ.<sup>419</sup> Keenan brings out the effectiveness of the narrative:

By entering the narrative of deliverance, humility, and mercy, we become, like Christ himself, characters in the narrative of salvation. The story of our salvation leads inevitably to the self-understanding that just as Jesus’ death was for us, so too is the meal for us. But the narrative of our salvation does not end with us; rather it empowers us as a community of disciples to follow Christ and serve and feed others with the word and sacrament.<sup>420</sup>

The moral practice that is borne out of the Eucharist is the continuous call to interiorization, service and reconciliation.

Shortly before the reception of the Eucharist, the Lord’s Prayer is proclaimed. As a community we share in the same fatherhood of God and through the prayer we bring our past, our present and the future into his care. Indeed it our shared humanity. We are reminded of the need for the virtues of reconciliation and forgiveness in the Our Father and the kiss of peace.<sup>421</sup> Mattison makes this point more explicit underlying how the seven virtues are intertwined in the prayer of Our Father:

---

<sup>418</sup> Ibid.

<sup>419</sup> Ibid.

<sup>420</sup> Ibid.

<sup>421</sup> Ibid.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. (Faith). Thy kingdom come, (Hope). Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. (Love). Give us this day our daily bread, (Prudence). And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. (Justice). Lead us not into temptation, (Temperance). But deliver us from evil. (Fortitude).<sup>422</sup>

We finally receive the body and blood of Christ, that which brings inner transformation and a disposition towards virtuous works. The entire liturgy concludes with the sending forth to proclaim the gospel with our lives: “Having been fed, fortified, and sustained on the journey of the community of discipleship, we turn to serve God and one another.”<sup>423</sup>

The deep implication of the Eucharist is transformative, that is becoming that which we eat namely Christ and becoming servants to others. Therefore, Eucharist used as a context by Keenan does not only explain our communality but also is indicative of certain virtues that are shared: the virtues of mercy, forgiveness, and humility. The Eucharist we can finally say, enables us grow in virtue.

### 3.9 Concluding Remarks

It cannot be over-emphasized that since Vatican II, moral theology has been called to renewal and reunion with the fields of dogmatic theology, ascetic theology, and biblical theology, but at the same time retaining its coherent, developmental, and anthropological vision of the human person.<sup>424</sup> The premier works of Fritz Tillmann, Gerard Gilleman on scripture and moral theology are worth noting.<sup>425</sup> Later

---

<sup>422</sup> Mattison III, *Introducing Moral Theology*, 399.

<sup>423</sup> *Ibid.*, 159.

<sup>424</sup> James F. Keenan, *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences* (London: Continuum, 2010), 59.

<sup>425</sup> Tillmann, *The Master Calls*; Gérard Gilleman, *The Primary of Charity in Moral Theology* (Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1959).

theologians like Spohn came on board to distinctly specify how moral theologians read and interpret the scriptures:

When theologians turn to the Scripture for moral guidance they are not acting like moral philosophers. They turn to a history rather than a theory of ethics, to a canonical text whose credential is inspiration by God and not merely logical consistency. Christians turn to Scripture to discover more than the right thing to do; they want to act in a way that responds to the God of their lives.<sup>426</sup>

Spohn names six models for approaching scripture in order to comprehend its value for moral instruction. But he notes that the six models are not signs of chaos but rather of the irreducible richness of the Scripture itself.<sup>427</sup> Spohn identifies the command of God model with Dietrich Bonhoeffer.<sup>428</sup> The second model is ‘Scripture as reminder’ identified with Josef Fuchs.<sup>429</sup> Alongside this model is the work of Bruno Schüller who argues that the scripture does not provide moral instruction but moral exhortation.<sup>430</sup> The third model is the hermeneutics of liberation identifiable with Gustavo Gutiérrez.<sup>431</sup> Richard Niebuhr represents the fourth model that typifies God’s action in human history and is called the responsibility ethics.<sup>432</sup> Discipleship is the fifth model and names like Stanley Hauerwas, John Howard Yoder, Sally

---

<sup>426</sup> William C. Spohn, *What are they Saying about Scripture and Ethics?* (Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1984), 1.

<sup>427</sup> *Ibid.*, 3.

<sup>428</sup> See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, *The Cost of Discipleship* (New York: Macmillan, 1963).

<sup>429</sup> Josef Fuchs, *Natural Law: A Theological Investigation* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965).

<sup>430</sup> See Bruno Schüller, “The Debate on the Specific Character of a Christian Ethics: Some Remarks,” in *Readings in Moral Theology No. 2: The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1980).

<sup>431</sup> Gustavo Gutiérrez, *A Theology of Liberation* (New York: Orbis Press, 1973). Other works on feminism, black theology and neo-colonization can be categorized under this model.

<sup>432</sup> Niebuhr, *The Responsible Self*.

McFague standout.<sup>433</sup> The last model is Spohn's own model that he calls "scripture as basis for responding to love".<sup>434</sup> In a later work that we have seen earlier on he argues that virtue ethics was "the most appropriate avenue for engaging scripture".<sup>435</sup>

Therefore, theoretically Keenan can be identified with the model of Spohn but he goes a little further to apply the virtues in a pastoral way. However, we wish to note that in his attempt to apply the virtue of justice, Keenan seemingly ignores the relevance of law. Perhaps, it is a deliberate attempt to break ranks with the emphasis on law by the deontologists. However, law remains vital in all moral reflections. To adequately underscore the place of law in the virtue of justice, we must decipher the four key elements which Aquinas identifies in his definition of law which serves the common good: 1. Law is a dictate of reason, 2. Law must be made by proper authority, 3. Law must be properly promulgated or made known, 4. Law must be directed to the common good of the group under consideration.<sup>436</sup>

It is imperative that such structures are modified to suit changing challenges as history progresses. However, this must be done with care. The autonomy suggested by Beauchamp and Childress can be misinterpreted to mean license for permissiveness and perversion within the western culture.<sup>437</sup> Some of these modifications can have adverse effects the basic structures like the family.<sup>438</sup> That is why virtue ethics remains relevant in today's moral landscape.

The fundamental notion that all virtues are interpersonal cannot be

---

<sup>433</sup> See Hauerwas, *A Community of Character*; Yoder, *Politics of Jesus*; Sally McFague, *Speaking in Parables* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

<sup>434</sup> Spohn, *What are they Saying*, 106.

<sup>435</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 27.

<sup>436</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 90. a. 4.

<sup>437</sup> Beauchamp and Childress, *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*.

<sup>438</sup> See Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 68.

disputed.<sup>439</sup> The virtues whether infused or acquired are relentlessly practiced by individuals and maintained, encouraged by specific communities.<sup>440</sup> As Keenan observed earlier on, the Christian community must see to it that members practice virtue; this call is valid for the church, the small prayer groups within the parish and most importantly within the family unit which is considered the domestic church. The family is very foundational in acquiring and practicing virtue. Technically, Keenan may be challenged for not extensively examining the family as the *locus* for virtuous actions.

I wish to finally remark that there are two basic areas in which virtue ethics in its communal and personal praxis becomes indispensable namely, justice and practice of sexuality. The abuses in the history of the church and within family circles have made this call even more urgent. But the answer to this can be found in the true application of the virtue of justice and self-care. And Grabowski captures it better when he writes:

A full answer to the crisis of sexuality in the contemporary church and society can only be found in people who by their lives and practices proclaim a countercultural alternative to its trivialization-people whose masculinity-femininity is a sacramental sign of ‘the sincere gift of self’, whose sexual practices foster authentic human flourishing, whose sexuality is imbued with virtue. This lived witness of the human vocation to communion within marriages, families, religious vocations, and the single life is both a sign of participation in the One whose very being is Gift and whose life as a Trinity of Persons is an eternal communion of love.<sup>441</sup>

To appeal to virtue ethics offers an opportunity to communities and individuals to discuss character traits, and dispositions that can help communities.<sup>442</sup>

---

<sup>439</sup> Grabowski, *Sex and Virtue*, 163.

<sup>440</sup> Ibid. See also Cessario, *Introduction to Moral Theology*, 193-195. See also chapter two of this dissertation section 24.1 note 124.

<sup>441</sup> Ibid., 168.

<sup>442</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics,” 197.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### JOSEPH J. KOTVA JR.: VIRTUE ETHICS: AN ECUMENICAL APPROACH.

#### 4.0 Introduction

Joseph J. Kotva Jr, a pastor of the Mennonite Church, is a scholar in Christian ethics concentrating in clergy ethics, medical ethics and virtue ethics.<sup>1</sup> Kotva acquired his BA in 1985 at the Eastern Mennonite College Harrisonburg, VA and in 1987 obtained his MA at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, Elkhart, IN. Kotva completed his Ph.D. in Theology and Ethics in 1994 at the Fordham University, Bronx NY. Currently, he is the Executive Director of the Anabaptist Center for Health Care Ethics (ACHE). Since 2002, he has been Adjunct Professor at the Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary, IN. He was a member of the Ethics Committee Lehigh Valley Hospital, Muhlenberg from June 1997 to 2003.

---

<sup>1</sup> The Mennonite church is an upshot of the Anabaptist movement. After years of biblical studies, a small group of young scholars felt dissatisfied with Martin Luther and Ulrich Zwingli because they were not radical enough in their use of scripture to criticize church practices. See Joseph J. Kotva Jr., "The Anabaptist Tradition: Religious Beliefs and Health Care Decisions," *Park Ridge Center Handbook Series*, 2002. It should be noted that the Reformed Tradition held that the reformed Christians should believe and practice only those things explicitly taught in Scripture hence the slogan *sola scriptura, sola Gratias and sola Fide*. See Alister E. McGrath, *Christian Theology: An Introduction* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (Malden: Blackwell, 2001), 65-80. James Gustafson argues that because of this slogan debates within Protestant ethics took place within boundaries of Scripture. *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1979), 21. Some of Kotva's works: Joseph J. Kotva Jr., "Clergy Ethics as Modeling Vulnerability," *AMBS Alumni News* (Fall 2000): 1-2; Joseph J. Kotva Jr., "The Christian Pastor's Role in Medical Ethics," *Second Opinion* (March 2001): 22-48. Joseph J. Kotva Jr., "An Appeal for a Christian Virtue Ethic," *Thought* (June 1992): 158-180; "An Ethical Reading of The Gift of Presence: Nursing and the Relevance of Virtue," *Mennonite Medical Messenger* (April-June 1993): 34-39; "Christian Virtue Ethics and the 'Sectarian Temptation'," *The Heythrop Journal* (January 1994): 35-52; James Keenan and Joseph J. Kotva Jr. eds., *Practice What You Preach: Virtues, Ethics, and Power in the Lives of Pastoral Ministers and Their Congregations* (Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999).

This chapter turns to Joseph J. Kotva in order to hear a voice from the Reformed tradition on virtue ethics. Firstly, we shall proceed by locating him within a philosophical and theological tradition.

#### **4.1 Situating Joseph J. Kotva**

Cessario and Keenan both worked from the unexamined assumption that virtue ethics is compatible with Christian theology. However, Kotva, because virtue ethics has a pre-Christian and primarily Greek framework, does not begin with such an assumption. He must therefore establish the link between the intrinsic morality of Aristotle and the divine morality of the Christian faith. This is the primary task of *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*.<sup>2</sup> The later part of this section shall show why and how Kotva believes this link is important for the mutual benefit of virtue ethics and Christian faith.

Although, Kotva agrees with Aquinas that some aspects of Aristotle's ethics can be apt for Christian ethics,<sup>3</sup> and he acknowledges the immense contributions Aquinas offered in the adaptation of Aristotelian ethical framework on the virtues, Aquinas does not play a major role in Kotva's works.<sup>4</sup> Rather, he focuses on contemporary neo-Aristotelian approaches to virtue ethics. Kotva's dialoguing partners are mostly Neo-Aristotelian philosophers: Alasdair MacIntyre, Martha Nussbaum, Nancy Sherman, and Edmund L. Pincoffs.<sup>5</sup> And among the theologians the following are worthy of mention,

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid., 2. This major work on virtue was Kotva's Ph. D dissertation, which he restructured into a book. Chapter six of this same book is a shortened version of his article "Christian Virtue Ethics and the 'Sectarian Temptation'", first published in *The Heythrop Journal*, 1994.

<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 1. In the *ST*, especially the *Secunda Pars*, Aquinas explicitly shows how Aristotle's Ethics can be integrated into Christian theology and even Scripture.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

<sup>5</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue; Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* (London: Duckworth, 1988); *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition* (London: Duckworth, 1990); Martha C. Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986); "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, ed.

Hendrikus Berkhof, James F. Keenan, Romanus Cessario.<sup>6</sup> These moral philosophers and theologians offer a viable moral vision through virtue ethics for Kotva. He appeals to Neo-Aristotelian views on virtue ethics not because Aristotle previously had a Christian soteriology – because obviously he had not – but to find common ground between Aristotle’s philosophies with Christian beliefs.<sup>7</sup>

Kotva makes four broad claims. The first, mentioned already, is how virtue ethics is compatible and valuable in offering credibility to Christian convictions about the moral life. From this perspective, Kotva accuses other Christian ethicists of doing too little to argue on the need for Christians to support virtue ethics over non-virtue theories.<sup>8</sup> Kotva finds the works of William Frankena and Philip Quinn uninspiring because they reject virtue ethics as an ethical approach. For example, Frankena in an article “Conversations with Carney and Hauerwas” writes: “I do not see . . . why a religious framework requires us to think in aretaic or virtue, rather than in deontic or obligation, terms. My impression is that, in the Judeo-Christian tradition, the divine law conception of ethics has been at least as prevalent as the EV (Ethics of Virtues) one.”<sup>9</sup> And Philip Quinn in “Is Athens Revived Jerusalem Denied,” argues from the same

---

Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr. and Howard K. Wettstein (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 32-53; Nancy Sherman *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989); Edmund L. Pincoffs, *Quandaries and Virtues: Against Reductivism in Ethics* (Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986).

<sup>6</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.; Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of Faith*, revised ed. Trans. Seird Woudstra (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1986); Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, ix; Keenan, *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas’ Summa Theologiae*. Kotva acknowledges the mentorship of Keenan as his lecturer.

<sup>7</sup> Kent Reames, “A Review of Christian Case.” <http://www.academicroom.com/bookreview/christian-case-virtue-ethics> (accessed March 27, 2014).

<sup>8</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 48.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid. For original citation see William Frankena, *Journal of Religious Ethics* 3 (Spring 1975): 53.

position by articulating that the typical Christian tradition emphasises duty over virtue, an approach more Kantian than Aristotelian.<sup>10</sup>

Quinn also conveys misgivings about whether virtue ethics is congenial to a fully Christian emphasis on God's grace. For Quinn because of the fallen state of man, humanity will more respond to a divine command theory rooted in Kantian ethics of duty.<sup>11</sup> He therefore concludes, we cannot turn to an Aristotelian virtue theory because it will mean rebuffing some basic Christian claims such as grace.<sup>12</sup> Kotva, in response, argues that humanity in its fallen state stands far more in need of grace than reliance on some sort of divine-command theory. The issue of grace will become an important point for Kotva, influenced largely by his Reformed background. Frankena and Quinn are stating the obvious looking at the history of moral theology and its emphasis on obligation and rules. But it also highlights the neglect of an approach like virtue ethics. Kotva writing in defence of neo-Aristotelian virtue ethics argues: "It is compatible with, and readily amended to, and useful in expressing Christian convictions and modes of moral reasoning."<sup>13</sup>

It is very important according to Kotva for authors to illustrate how compatible virtue ethics is with Christian beliefs. As an example, Kotva notes the work of Paul

---

<sup>10</sup> Philip Quinn, "A Response to Hauerwas: Is Athens Revived Jerusalem Denied," *Asbury Theological Journal* 45 (1990): 49-57.

<sup>11</sup> See William C. Spohn, "The Return of Virtue Ethics," *Theological Studies* 53 (1992): 63.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid. There are other scholars who have expressed same misgivings. For example Gilbert Meilaender, *The Theory of Practice of Virtue* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984), x, 36; Richard Taylor, *Ethics, Faith and Reason* (Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1985), 22-25. This book was reprinted with a different title as *Virtue Ethics: An Introduction* (Interlaken: Linden Books, 1991); see also Eilert Herms, "Virtue: A Neglected Concept in Protestant Ethics," *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (6): 481-495. In sum all these scholars do not provide coherent work to justify how appealing and compatible virtue ethics is to Christian theology.

<sup>13</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 1.

Wadell, entitled *Friendship and the Moral Life*. Wadell argues that if friendship is considered a virtue then it is compatible with Christian convictions because charity:

Is not only a single virtue, but a comprehensive description of what he (*Aquinas*) took the fullness of life to be. To be human is to seek and enjoy friendship with God, a friendship which begins in this world by grace, is strengthened through the virtues, and is brought to perfection by the spirit.<sup>14</sup>

Kotva himself correlates virtue ethics with contemporary Christian theology by highlighting the actual links between it and Christian theology in themes like sanctification, Christology and theological anthropology.<sup>15</sup> These themes are best understood when we have a grasp of the Reformed Tradition, to which we shall return later.

Second, he seeks to establish the claim that Christian life is essentially social or communal in nature and practice. Kotva proceeds with the process of correlation between systematic theology, moral theology and scripture by underlining the connections between Matthew and Paul in the New Testament. He examines issues relating to dispositions and basic attitudes that bring out outstanding examples with virtue ethics from a communal context.<sup>16</sup> Again, we shall return to this in the later part of this chapter.

The third claim is slightly connected to the second. Basically Kotva's self-conscious approach has an ecumenical tone.<sup>17</sup> He attempts to correlate contemporary Protestant and Roman Catholic theology, by appealing to shared-Christian beliefs. His method is an example of a goal he seeks, by drawing on theologians that represent

---

<sup>14</sup> Paul Wadell, *Friendship and the Moral Life*, xvii. The italicized word is mine.

<sup>15</sup> See Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 69-93.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 103-134.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

different traditions – for example Norman C. Kraus (a Mennonite), Hendrikus Berkhof (Reformed Tradition), and Edward Schillebeeckx (Catholic tradition).<sup>18</sup>

Fourth, he claims to address the criticisms of Christian virtue ethics as couched by authors like Wolfgang Schrage, outlined in the general introduction.<sup>19</sup> These argue that virtue ethics is “self-centered” and not “other-centered”. But Kotva argues that since the Christian life is essentially social, “true human excellence, the true human good includes loving service to God and others.”<sup>20</sup> By implication, we are to a great extent influenced by our social connections. Citing Berkhof, Kotva concludes:

Unless we assume that one simply wills to be a certain kind of person, attention to how we are influenced by specific relationships, policies, practices, and actions is essential. Failure to attend to these influences is a denial of our finite, historical, and embodied nature. We are not angels standing outside our actions, untouched by our beliefs, histories, relationships, desires, and personal characteristics. As part of God’s natural, created order, we are shaped in profound ways by biological, social, and historical forces.<sup>21</sup>

Kotva’s theology is shaped by his Reformed tradition. James M. Gustafson, in *Theology and Ethics* offers us three general elements in Reformed tradition: the sense of powerful order of the sovereignty of God, the centrality of religious affections in moral life, and the understanding of human life in relation to the powerful Other which requires all of human activity be ordered properly in relation to what can be discerned about the purpose of God.<sup>22</sup> This thesis proposes to read Kotva in the light of these

---

<sup>18</sup> Kent Reames, “A Review of Christian Case,” <http://www.academicroom.com/bookreview/christian-case-virtue-ethics> (accessed May 19, 2014).

<sup>19</sup> Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament*; Lohse, *Theological Ethics of the New Testament*.

<sup>20</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 145.

<sup>21</sup> *Ibid.*, 146. See Berkhof, *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of Faith*, 189-190.

<sup>22</sup> James M. Gustafson, *Theology and Ethics* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1981), 164. For example Jonathan Edwards in *The Nature of True Virtue* synthesizes these three Elements when he writes: “True virtue, most essentially consists in *benevolence to being in general*.” He goes on to say true virtue consists “*in love to God; the Being of*

three elements, all of which provide a theocentric morality. Effectively, Kotva is influenced by these three general elements of Reformed Tradition. All human affections, therefore, have to be ordered towards God since he is the supreme, governing and ultimate end of everything:

The end of morality goes beyond morality to the glorification of God. And God is glorified when life is ordered with particular goods in their proportionate relations to each other, and to him as the greatest good. There is nothing short of transformation of our vision in being rightly oriented by love to God; there is reordering of our particular objects of valuation and of our affections in being turned from self towards the objective reality of Being, God.<sup>23</sup>

The conceptual articulation of Kotva on sanctification, Christology and theological anthropology with connection to virtue finds expression from the above theological supposition of the Reformed Tradition as proposed by Gustafson. This approach by Kotva is a respectful response to the suspicions that Protestant ethics traditionally held of virtue ethics. Charles E. Curran in “Virtue: The Catholic Tradition,” stresses the above suspicion:

Protestant ethics has tended to be suspicious of a virtue ethics approach because of its understanding of justification and its fear of any ethic based on the principle of human flourishing and striving for perfection. Protestantism has generally insisted on God’s gracious gift and has been fearful of the latent Pelagianism (we are saved by our own efforts) in Catholic understandings of salvation and morality.<sup>24</sup>

Elizabeth Agnew Cochran in an article “Faith, Love, and Stoic Assent: Reconsidering Virtue in the Reformed Tradition” also expresses the same concerns:

For Martin Luther, John Calvin, and Jonathan Edwards, the possession or absence of faith plays a crucial role in determining a Christian’s status before God. Because faith is connected to salvation, these theologians resist the notion that faith is a virtue:

---

beings, infinitely greatest and best”. See Jonathan Edwards, *The Nature of True Virtue* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960), 3, 14.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 176.

<sup>24</sup> Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Tradition,” 51.

humans cannot pursue virtue until they have been justified, and faith is a condition for justification and in some sense prior to it.<sup>25</sup>

Jonathan Edwards for example discards the claims that faith is a virtue. For him faith cannot be obtained prior to conversion but accepts charity and hope as a virtue. Considering faith as virtue denotes that humans can be virtuous before receiving God's grace.<sup>26</sup>

Although in Kotva, such suspicion is giving way to a convergence of ideas on virtue ethics based on character, this does not mean that divergences do not still exist. It is to be noted that Kotva is conscious of the tensions especially as expressed by a scholar from the Reformed Tradition, Gilbert Meilaender. Although not rejecting virtue ethics, Meilaender in *Theory and Practice* expresses the tension between self-mastery of virtue and a self that is perfectly passive before God:

Thinking about virtue directs our attention inward upon the self and its capacities for self-mastery and self-realization . . . True virtue is not possible as a human achievement; it cannot be thought of in terms of self-mastery. Indeed it requires once more again that moment of naked faith in which the self is perfectly passive before God.<sup>27</sup>

The Catholic tradition has consistently taught of a proper love of the self, not towards the individual as the absolute, but as a part of God's gracious reign and love.<sup>28</sup> Kotva tries to work through the apparent tension by considering sanctification, Christology and theological anthropology with virtue ethics, as we shall see later. But in

---

<sup>25</sup> Elizabeth Agnew Cochran, "Faith, Love, and Stoic Assent: Reconsidering Virtue in the Reformed Tradition," *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 199.

<sup>26</sup> See Kenneth P. Minkema et al. eds., *Miscellany 682, The Works of Jonathan Edwards 26 vols.* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957-2008). Luther who took same position even before Edwards influenced Edwards. See Martin Luther, *Freedom of Christians, Luther's works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, & Helmut T. Lehmann (St. Louis: Concordia, 1986), 31: 343.

<sup>27</sup> Meilaender, *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*, 104 & 117.

<sup>28</sup> Curran, "Virtue: The Catholic Tradition," 55

the interim we should note that according to the Reformed tradition sanctification, its beginning, continuation and eventual completion completely depends on God's grace.<sup>29</sup>

Kotva's major work is *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*. Most of his other works are articles, which give interpretative application of his main ideas, for example, *Practice what you Preach*. This book captures the link between theory and practice, thereby stressing the relevance of virtue and practice. And some of his earlier works like "An Appeal for a Christian Virtue Ethic," "Christian Virtue Ethics and the Sectarian Temptation" are foundational to his main work. Because of the concise nature of some of these works it will be difficult to tease out a general theoretical framework. This being the case, they shall be subsumed into the general proceedings of this chapter.

The chapter shall proceed by outlining his understanding of the nature of virtue ethics. Then the thesis shall undertake to examine the community value of virtue ethics, as presented by Kotva.

#### **4.2 *The Nature of Christian Virtue Ethics***

Kotva accepts that there is little coherence on the precise nature or content of the virtues.<sup>30</sup> The historical data provided in chapter one outlines the differences in the usage of the concept. MacIntyre makes the same point in an article "The Nature of the Virtues," writing:

Homer, Sophocles, Aristotle, the New Testament and Medieval thinkers differ from each other in too many ways. They offer us different and incompatible lists of the virtues; they give a different rank order of

---

<sup>29</sup> Chan, *The Ten Commandments and the Beatitudes: Biblical Studies and Ethics for Real Life*, 14.

<sup>30</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 23.

importance to different virtues; and they have different incompatible theories of virtue.<sup>31</sup>

Julia Hynes in her article “Virtue Theory: A Defence Against Consequentialism and Deontology in Medical Ethical Arena” explains why there are gaps between views of different virtue ethicists as argued by Kotva and MacIntyre. According to Hynes examples often provided are separate from the Aristotelian-Thomistic traditions.<sup>32</sup> In this context Kotva appeals only to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition for only this tradition gives a better rendering to the Christian appeal on virtue ethics, in dealing with the various versions of virtue.

Spohn also explains that in these diverse examples, different traditions and cultures give different meaning to a particular virtue.<sup>33</sup> For example, courage in Greek culture is brevity in war and in another culture it may mean following one’s conscience against social pressure. But despite the above, MacIntyre argues that there is a core concept which turns out to prove the entire tradition of virtue has a conceptual unity: “One of the features of the concept of virtue . . . is that it always requires for its application the acceptance of some prior account of certain features of social and moral life in terms of which it has to be defined or explained.”<sup>34</sup>

Furthering this discussion on a core to virtue ethics, Kotva offers us six conceptual generalizations or accounts that are according to him widely accepted. Virtue in relation to human good or end, virtues incorporate both the intellectual or

---

<sup>31</sup> Alasdair MacIntyre, “The Nature of the Virtues” *Hastings Center Report* Vol. 11, no. 2 April (1981): 27.

<sup>32</sup> Julia Hynes, “Virtue Theory: A Defence Against Consequentialism and Deontology in Medical Ethical Arena”, in *Thomas Aquinas: Teacher and Scholar. The Aquinas Lectures at Maynooth, Vol. 2:2002-2010*, ed. James McEvoy, Michael W. Dunne and Julia Hynes (Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012), 197. However, this is not to mean that virtue ethics should not undergo reformulation to meet contemporary demands. The last section of this chapter will address this supposition.

<sup>33</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 28.

<sup>34</sup> *Ibid.*, 29.

rational and affective self, virtues intertwined with dispositions and capacities, virtues as stable aspects of character, virtuous actions and performances.<sup>35</sup>

First, according to Kotva, the virtues must be understood in connection to the human *telos* or human good.<sup>36</sup> Aristotle introduces his teleological virtue ethics by reflecting on the human end. For him happiness or flourishing is the human end in cultivating virtues. The German theologian Wolfhart Pannenberg in *Theology and the Kingdom of God* criticizes Aristotle's construct. He argues that happiness in itself cannot prove the presence of "good" as evil people can find happiness in their bad actions.<sup>37</sup> Such a conception of happiness leads to a degenerative autonomy. In this sense Pannenberg finds Aristotle's concept of human end inadequate because there are no parameters to judge one's sense of happiness. For Aquinas however, the concept of the human end is a functional purpose that is theocentric. And Jean Porter in *The Recovery of Virtue* writes that Aquinas' theory of morality presupposes an account of the natural human good.<sup>38</sup> It is a human good that is inextricably connected to a good human action. And as Ralph McInerny posits in *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* the key to Aquinas' moral theory is the concept of functional purpose of human action.<sup>39</sup> Aquinas himself argues:

Acting with purpose is a function of a human being, and he never does so without knowing what he is about. Yet many beings are not aware of an end, for either they are quite without consciousness, thus insentient things, or they do not recognize the meaning of end and purpose, thus brute animals. Apparently, then, acting with purpose is exclusively for rational beings.<sup>40</sup>

---

<sup>35</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 23-26.

<sup>36</sup> *Ibid.*, 23.

<sup>37</sup> Wolfhart Pannenberg, *Theology and the kingdom of God* (Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975), 106.

<sup>38</sup> Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue*, 68-69.

<sup>39</sup> Ralph McInerny *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1982), 1.

<sup>40</sup> *ST* I-II, q.1, a. 2

Aquinas agrees that human beings always act for an end, but argues that the true ultimate end of human beings happens solely in communion with God. In other words, the Kingdom of God is where human beings find happiness.<sup>41</sup> No secular or human-made happiness, like Aristotelian “*eudemonian*” ethics, can ever replace the perfect happiness that God wants all believers to experience in life.

Sarah Conly in an article “Flourishing and the Failure of the Ethics of Virtue” refutes the teleological nature of virtue ethics by arguing that it does not provide a plausible account of why character should be prior in our evaluation of human end.<sup>42</sup> Kotva taking a lead from Aquinas’ argumentation without referencing him, rejects Conly’s position when he says:

The *telos* underlines our notion of what counts as a virtue and how virtues should be understood. The *telos* helps this way: when we picture the best kind of life for humans to live, we also see the traits, dispositions, and capacities that contribute to or detract from that kind of life. The virtues are those states of character that enable or contribute to the realization of the human good. The vices are those that detract from or hinder the realization of the good.<sup>43</sup>

The teleological dimension remains a central aspect of virtue ethics. This assumption is buttressed by the fact that the human person by his or her nature is purpose-driven, with ends or goals to achieve. This does not mean that the end is achievable by a simple leap. Hence, Kotva applies MacIntyre’s teleological scheme utilised by James Keenan as outlined in the previous chapter.<sup>44</sup>

MacIntyre makes an important contrast between what man is and what he could be: “Within that teleological scheme there is a fundamental contrast between man-as-

---

<sup>41</sup> *ST I-II*, q1, aa. 1, 4, 6.

<sup>42</sup> Sarah Conly, “Flourishing and the Failure of the Ethics of Virtue,” 84.

<sup>43</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 23.

<sup>44</sup> See chapter Two of this dissertation, 14. Note that we shall consider human end, human good, *telos* to be synonymous as our discourse progresses.

he-happens-to-be and man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realizes-his-essential-nature.”<sup>45</sup>

MacIntyre goes further to propose the viable method to achieve a transition: “Ethics is the science which is to enable men to understand how they make the transition from the former state to the latter . . . Ethics therefore in this view presupposes some account . . . of the essence of man as a rational animal and above all some account of the human *telos*.”<sup>46</sup>

The above presuppositions by MacIntyre suggest a bi-partite structure of man-as-he happens-to-be and man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realizes-his-essential-nature. The third part is the method to make the transition. But Kotva develops MacIntyre’s bi-partite structure into a tripartite structure namely: 1. Man-as-he happens-to-be and 2. Man-as-he-could-be-if-he-realizes-his-essential-nature. 3. Those capacities, dispositions, inclinations, habits that will make the transition from 1 to 2.<sup>47</sup> This is very Thomistic.

Conversely, while Keenan interprets MacIntyre within a general theoretical frame of human identity, Kotva reads MacIntyre within a specific framework of human end or good. But on the whole the teleological categories named by MacIntyre, and developed by Keenan and Kotva suggest that human nature is tailored towards an end and providing the means to that end is what virtue ethics is concerned with. This explains why “within a teleological virtue ethics certain kinds of actions, habits, capacities and inclinations are discouraged because they direct us away from our true nature. Other kinds of actions, habits, capacities, and inclinations are encouraged because they lead us toward our true end.”<sup>48</sup>

---

<sup>45</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 52.

<sup>46</sup> Ibid.

<sup>47</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

The purported teleological scheme as MacIntyre argues fits into most theological or theoretical frameworks: Christian, Jewish, Islamic, Liberal theory etc., but more importantly within the plurality of Christian traditions. This stimulates a challenge to look at how Kotva adopts an ecumenical tone. We shall discuss this in the next sub-section.<sup>49</sup> But in general, all that ethics offers to any of the above theological or theoretical frameworks is it serves as a conductor from what we are to what or who we can be. This is further coordinated by natural perfection of the human good as experienced by all religions. Accordingly, natural perfection of the human good consists in acting in harmony with virtue within the content of the human end.<sup>50</sup>

The question remains, what is the content of the human good or end? According to Kotva the content of the human *telos* consists in three perspectives: First, it consists in the practice of the various virtues. It means that the *telos* requires activity. As Aristotle himself held, human good consists in activity.<sup>51</sup> Activity is defined and expressed by one's traits and dispositions. Amelie O. Rorty who argues in "Virtues and Their Vicissitudes" better expresses this idea: "Traits do not, of course, form actions in isolation. Individual virtues determine appropriate actions. They . . . function within a supportive, directing, and sometimes oppositional network."<sup>52</sup> This explains why Kotva maintains that a teleological virtue ethics encourages certain kinds of action like kindness, generosity, respect etc. and discourages vices like meanness, murder, stealing

---

<sup>49</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 53.

<sup>50</sup> See Porter, *The Recovery of Virtue*, 70.

<sup>51</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.7. 1097a22-1098b20.

<sup>52</sup> Amelie O. Rorty, "Virtues and Their Vicissitudes," in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 138.

etc.<sup>53</sup> The ultimate end of these actions is the human good. Therefore, Kotva conclusively says:

The human good or *telos* requires activity, not any kind of activity, but activity that exemplifies the virtues. The *telos* is not a static state or something one obtains and then clings to. Rather, the human good consists largely of a certain way of living of a certain kind of activity . . . consistent with the various virtues.<sup>54</sup>

Even though Kotva is seeking to prove how compatible virtue ethics is with Christian beliefs, he finds himself appealing indirectly to natural law especially in his conception of the human good by stressing the aspect of natural perfection as seen earlier. Such an approach establishes a ready point of reference and convergence with other traditions that may not be Christian.

Like MacIntyre, Kotva argues that to understand the notion of human *telos*, it is vital to comment on the way concepts have a functional role by providing evaluative judgment. For example, concepts such as “watch”, “knife”, “farmer” generate such judgments:

If we want to know what a “good farmer” is, we look to the point, purpose, role, or function of a farmer-maximizing crop yield without devastating the land, for example. A good farmer is one who well fulfils the function, role, or purpose of a farmer. A bad or poor farmer is one who does not fulfil well the same function, role, or purpose.<sup>55</sup>

The above concepts cannot be defined independently of evaluative criteria. In the same way, a teleological ethics like virtue ethics suggests that the concept “human” is akin to the functional concepts mentioned above. According to MacIntyre, the concept human should be “understood as having an essential nature and an essential purpose for function . . . Man stands to ‘good man’ as ‘watch’ stands to ‘good watch’ or ‘farmer’ to

---

<sup>53</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 20.

<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> Ibid., 17.

‘good farmer.’<sup>56</sup> Therefore, virtue ethics serves such a functional evaluative role to the understanding of the human person. It is required by a person in order to examine his present state with reference to his or her activity, emotions, and desires against the ultimate end.<sup>57</sup> Kotva argues in the same way:

Evaluating a particular watch according to the function and purpose of watches, we can evaluate our current human nature and activity according to the true function or purpose or role of humans. That is, we can evaluate who we are and what we do against our true nature or *telos*, against the excellent performance of the functions or purpose characteristic of humans.<sup>58</sup>

A pertinent question at this stage will be what then is the ultimate end of the human good? Unfortunately, Kotva does not clearly answer this question. However, to answer this question we have to go back to Aquinas himself. Aquinas in *Summa Contra Gentiles* writes: “Every agent acts for the sake of an end.”<sup>59</sup> According to Georg Wieland in “Happiness (Ia IIae, qq. 1-5)”: “Human action and the corresponding end only appear as a special case of cosmic movement.”<sup>60</sup> While in the *Secunda Pars* of the *ST* Aquinas concentrates on actions that proceed from reason and free will which he calls human actions. It is in this context that he answers the question, “in what does the final end of the human life and actions consist?” Opinions may differ. For example, the politician considers power the final end, and the hedonist pleasure. But for Aquinas human end lies in divine goodness.<sup>61</sup> And Davies in *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas* interprets Aquinas to mean that happiness is not merely a matter of ‘what turns you on’. It is something that has to be comprehended while

---

<sup>56</sup> MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. 58.

<sup>57</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 17.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

<sup>59</sup> Aquinas. *Summa Contra Gentiles*, III, chap. 2. See also Paul E. Sigmund, trans. and ed., *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988), 6.

<sup>60</sup> Georg Wieland, “Happiness (Ia-IIae, qq. 1-5),” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen Pope (Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 57.

<sup>61</sup> *ST* I, q. 44, a. 4.

bearing in mind that human life has an end.<sup>62</sup> Aquinas holds that there can only be one final end for all human beings:

The object of the will, that is the human appetite, is the Good without reserve, just as the object of the mind is the True without reserve. Clearly, then, nothing can satisfy our will except such goodness, which is found, not in anything created, but God alone. Everything created is a derivative good.<sup>63</sup>

In a later article Aquinas concludes:

Final and perfect happiness can consist in nothing else than the vision of the divine essence. To make this clear, two points must be observed. First, that people are not perfectly happy so long as something remains for them to desire and seek: secondly, that the perfection of any power is determined by the nature of its object . . . [Now] the intellect attains perfection in so far as it knows the essence of a thing . . . [and] . . . for perfect happiness the intellect needs to reach the very essence of the first cause.<sup>64</sup>

Aquinas does not introduce this proposition in an argumentative way but applies it in a descriptive way such that he stresses how humans through knowledge, love, free will and activity can attain this end which is God.

Second, according to Kotva, another aspect of the human *telos* is closely related to the first, namely those virtues that lead us to the *telos* are integral parts of the end itself.<sup>65</sup> The idea of a human good or end includes the idea of becoming a certain kind of person. In this sense then virtues become a means to an end. But according to Kotva they are not mere means, for they are a constituent part of the goal itself.<sup>66</sup> We shall return to the teleological nature of virtue ethics in the succeeding section.

Third, the content of the human good is both individual and corporate.<sup>67</sup> This gives perspective to our thesis statement namely the community or relational value of

---

<sup>62</sup> Davies, *The Thought of Thomas Aquinas*, 228.

<sup>63</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 2.a. 8.

<sup>64</sup> *ST I-II*, q.3. a. 3.

<sup>65</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 20.

<sup>66</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>67</sup> *Ibid.*

virtue ethics. Paralleled to the above consideration, Rorty upholds: “Action takes place in a social world. It is, in the end, our social and political relation to others that keeps our virtues in whatever precariously appropriate balance they have.”<sup>68</sup> Kotva therefore sustains:

The human *telos* is found in common projects, shared activities, and intimate relationships. Things like friendship, shared activities, and larger political affiliations are part of and essential to the human good. They are ends and activities we seek for their own sake. Such relationships have an intrinsic worth, and from a virtue perspective it is absurd to think of the human good apart from such interconnections. Social connections are valued for their instrumental benefits. But their worth is much deeper and more pervasive than instrumental gain: they provide the very form and mode in which the human good is realized.<sup>69</sup>

Fourth, the virtues should be understood holistically. This means that the various virtues include both the intellectual or rational part of the self and the affective or desiring part of the self. This is because referencing the virtues includes the whole range of human feelings and thinking faculties.<sup>70</sup> Similarly, Nancy Sherman in *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue* writes: “To act rightly is to act in affect and conduct. It is to be emotionally engaged, and not merely to have the affect as accompaniment or instrument. It is to reason and see in a way that brings to bear the lessons of the heart as much as the lessons for a calmer intellect.”<sup>71</sup> In like manner, Kotva concludes: “The sum of the virtues encompass the fields of both intellect and will.”<sup>72</sup> This is what G. Simon Harak in *Virtuous Passions: The Formation of Christian Character* calls “the organic unity of the moral agent”.<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>68</sup> Rorty, “Virtues and Their Vicissitudes,” 144.

<sup>69</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 21.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 24.

<sup>71</sup> Sherman, *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue*, 2.

<sup>72</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 24.

<sup>73</sup> G. Simon Harak, *Virtuous Passions: The Formation of Christian Character* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), 67.

Fifth, there is the generalization that virtues incorporate tendencies, dispositions and capacities. The underlining aspect of this fifth point is not the dispositions or tendencies themselves but the scope of the virtues. The general scope of the virtues for Kotva includes “all those states of character or character traits that influence how we choose and act. The virtues include states of character that provide for continuity in one’s actions.”<sup>74</sup> According to Kotva, the virtues comprise dispositions to aptly respond in a certain way in related situations. It is a reaction that must be merited by a sense of continuity.<sup>75</sup> For example in applying the virtue of justice a virtuous person must seek to be just without prejudices always. In this context, virtues must be stable qualities in an individual. According to Kotva: “We do not lose or gain virtues overnight or in a single act. One occasionally acts ‘out of character’ or in discontinuity with his or her character. In general, however, one acts in accord with one’s virtues and vices . . . One does not suddenly gain or lose virtue.”<sup>76</sup> This triggers the point of the stability of the virtues.

Kotva observes that the stability of the virtue depends largely upon the moral education and development of the virtues. R. B. Brandt in an article “The Structure of Virtue” calls this the formation of intention.<sup>77</sup> The stability of virtue should withstand all adverse situations. This is expressed more aptly by Stephen Hudson in “Character Traits and Desires” when he writes, a virtuous person “must be principled and must have the capacity, the strength of will, to act as he should despite temptations”.<sup>78</sup> Kotva goes further than Brandt and Hudson by underscoring that the virtues also include

---

<sup>74</sup> Ibid.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid.

<sup>77</sup> R. B. Brandt, “The Structure of Virtue,” in *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*, ed. Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998), 65

<sup>78</sup> Stephen Hudson, “Character Traits and Desires,” *Ethics* 90 (1980): 539-549.

dispositions to pursue particular ends by applying the most appropriate means necessary to achieving those ends in view.<sup>79</sup> It involves a coordination of both disposition or capacity and means.<sup>80</sup>

Sixth, authentic virtuous actions according to Kotva may sometimes be performed “instrumentally” but must always be performed “for their own sake”. He explains:

Just and courageous actions can be performed because of the goods or ends they cause, such as survival, self-respect, and the respect of others. But for those acts to be truly virtuous, they must also be performed for their own sake- that is, performed simply because they are just or courageous actions. They must be ends in themselves. They must be the kinds of actions that would be valued even if they failed to achieve their goals or led to unexpected ill consequences.<sup>81</sup>

The claim we are making here is that authentic virtuous action is more than learning balanced deliberation, or learning to make decisions that will produce desired ends especially general ends of welfare and preservation of one’s life. It is learning to value the actions that result or may not result in the desired ends and also the kind of person who performs the actions.<sup>82</sup>

---

<sup>79</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 24.

<sup>80</sup> See Gareth Pierson, *Virtues and Vices* (Dublin: Browne & Nolan, 1935), 27. Pierson speaks of the coordinated disposition and the golden mean both objectively and subjectively. He also identifies the various influences over the mean: Influence of the church, and influence of the society. He provides an engaging reading.

<sup>81</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 25. A very practical story to illustrate the above point is the story of Suzanna in Daniel 13. Two men for refusing to commit adultery with them falsely accused Suzanna. She had two options when the men approached her for sex: either accept to sleep with them and have her “good name” protected and her marriage “saved” or refuse and face death by stoning. She chose the second option of refusing rather than compromising her marital vows and contravening the law of God against adultery of any kind. Her choice was informed by the true virtue of purity of the body, fidelity to her marital vows and reverence for the law of God which are ends in themselves. Suzanna’s action at first may have no instrumental value but indeed was pursued for its own sake.

<sup>82</sup> See Sherman, *Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue*, 176.

In summary, virtues are those infused and acquired qualities of character that are central to the achievement of all human ends. Spohn summarizes the common features of virtue ethics: Virtue ethics is concerned with the character of the agent; dispositions, tendencies and capacities are also constituent parts; it is concerned with human flourishing which has both individual and social dimensions.<sup>83</sup> Hence the emphasis on cultural shaping of virtues and the connection between manifestations of virtue, common existential human traits, and ultimately human agency takes center stage. Therefore, in whatever form virtue ethics is presented it must have these common features.

#### **4.3 *Virtue Ethics: An Ethics of “Being” or “Doing”?***

The historical sketch of Chapter One outlined the shift in moral theology in recent generations. Gula describes this as a move towards an “ethics of being” or “character ethics”.<sup>84</sup> Metaphorically, it may be described, as the challenge of man who has been able to conquer outer space but still unable to conquer the inner space which is his very being. Over the years, actions which are likened to outer space took precedence over inner dispositions, the core of the person. For example Thomas Beauchamp and James Childress’s definition of virtue in *Principles of Bio-medical Ethics* highlight the above point: “Virtues are settled habits and dispositions to do what we ought to do.”<sup>85</sup> According to William May in an article “Virtues in Professional Life”, such a definition subordinates being with action.<sup>86</sup> Gula cautions:

If we talk too exclusively of actions, we are in danger of regarding them as something outside ourselves and as having a reality of their

---

<sup>83</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 28.

<sup>84</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 7.

<sup>85</sup> Thomas Beauchamp and James Childress, *Principles of Bio-medical Ethics* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1979), 235.

<sup>86</sup> May, “Virtues In Professional Life,” 95.

own. But actions are always expressions of a person. Moral goodness is a quality of the person, constituted not by rule-keeping behaviour alone, but by cultivating certain virtues, attitudes, and outlooks.<sup>87</sup>

The above approach sums together ‘to do what we ought do’ with ‘to *be* what we ought to *be*’.<sup>88</sup> This is outlined by the current renewal of moral theology with reference to virtue ethics that constructs a theology of both being and doing.

Kotva from the above premises reasserts two perspectives: First, “being” precedes “doing” which he calls the priority of being.<sup>89</sup> However, it is apparent that one cannot talk of an action without first talking of or about the agent or subject of the action. Most human actions are preceded by intentionality. This does not deny the fact that some actions are spontaneously carried out without any prior reflection. In any case being precedes doing. Second, Kotva connects being with doing.<sup>90</sup>

According to Kotva, both being and doing constitute interdependent concerns and must be taken jointly in any all-inclusive undertaking in moral theology because, right actions are intrinsically linked to right judgment emanating from a good character.<sup>91</sup> In this context, one of the connecting elements between being and doing is the choices an individual makes. In connection to the above comment, William E. May in *An Introduction to Moral Theology* argues that the actions of a person are not something that accidentally occur to an individual; they are rather the external expressions of a person’s choice, the revelation of a person’s moral identity, that is, his or her being a moral being.<sup>92</sup> He further states:

---

<sup>87</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 7.

<sup>88</sup> *Ibid.*, 99.

<sup>89</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 30.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>92</sup> William E. May, *An Introduction to Moral Theology* (Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 1991), 23.

For at the core of an action, as human and personal, is a free, self-determining choice, which as such is something spiritual and abides within the person, determining the very being of the person. The Scriptures, particularly the New Testament, are very clear about this. Jesus thought that it is not what enters a person that defiles him or her; rather, it is what flows from the person, from his heart or her heart, from the core of his or her being, from his or her choice (cf. Matt. 15:10-20; Mk. 7:14-23).<sup>93</sup>

Being as a subjective reality cannot be treated in isolation of character and action, character and action become the locus for the definition of an individual's identity. This point is made clearer by the definition of character by Grisez: "Character is the integral existential identity of the person- the entire person in all his or her dimensions as shaped by morally good and bad choices- considered as a disposition to further choices."<sup>94</sup> It follows necessarily that we shape our character and our identity by the very choices we make. For example, if I want to be a hospitable person, then I have to choose to be hospitable to people in a consistent way. It is apparent therefore, that who we are, including our character, influences our choices and actions.<sup>95</sup>

Similarly, Kotva further argues that in order to adequately analyse actions we have to be concerned first with the kind of people we are. This is illustrated by the following examples and it is necessary I give the full passage because it summarizes how our character influences our choices or judgments and our choices in turn influence our character:

Most of us do not go to just any one when we seek moral advice. We do not ask moral advice from young children or persons known for their dishonesty. Rather, we seek people who are trustworthy, honest, courageous and wise. In so doing we acknowledge the importance of the virtues. We seek people of moral maturity because we know they are the best suited for giving moral advice. They are, for example, the most likely to identify the issues correctly and be honest with us. Thus, states of character are important in identifying and communicating the right. Many women confronting unwanted

---

<sup>93</sup> Ibid., 23-4

<sup>94</sup> Grisez, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles*, 59.

<sup>95</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 30.

pregnancies never consider abortion, even though our society treats abortion as a matter of personal choice. These women carry the fetuses to term then either care for the children themselves or put the babies up for adoption. Their view of themselves and their vision of the world precludes the question of abortion. Thus, their characters not only delineate how moral questions are handled, but what they conform as moral questions. For these women, abortion is not a moral question or matter of choice. Most of us have a few glaring character faults or at least know someone with such limits. One may have a compulsive personality, a short temper, or a problem with fidelity. Often the difficulty here is not with knowing the right, but doing it. People lacking in temperance, patience, or fidelity often know how they should act but find themselves unable. Thus, their states of character greatly influence their ability to do the right.<sup>96</sup>

The inferences from the above illustrations are that one's state of being can affect the performance of an action either rightly or wrongly. The two perspectives of being preceding doing and the interdependence of the two is summed up in the above illustration. Therefore, Kotva concludes: "We act out of who we are."<sup>97</sup> Virtue ethics must deal with being good and doing good in order to be holistic.<sup>98</sup> In the words of May, "One's being does not free-float behind one's deeds; it should manifest itself in doing."<sup>99</sup>

#### ***4.4 Virtue Ethics: Ecumenical Perspective***

Lawler and Salzman in "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian" give a good account of Christian virtue ethics.<sup>100</sup> They first examine natural virtue ethics deriving from the Aristotelian tradition and its contemporary personification. Then they consider Christian virtue ethics deriving from the following of Jesus Christ, and then they draw a contrast between natural and Christian virtue ethics.<sup>101</sup> Nevertheless, their narrative

---

<sup>96</sup> Ibid., 30-31.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid., 30.

<sup>98</sup> May, "Virtues In Professional Life," 95

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 101.

<sup>100</sup> Lawler and Salzman, "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian".

<sup>101</sup> Ibid.

does not take into account the multivalent nature of Christian tradition but draws upon one tradition only. However, Kotva as we mentioned earlier sets out in *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics* to argue that theologians advocating virtue ethics have failed to show why Christians may find virtue ethics appealing. He argues that virtue theory is both compatible with and helpful in giving voice to Christian moral living.<sup>102</sup>

Kotva's assumption is confronted by the challenge of pluralism within Christian tradition. He accepts the reality that there exist differences within the Christian tradition when he writes: "This work does not focus on denominational or sectarian distinctions. Rather, it argues that a virtue framework is helpful in expressing the basic Christian journey founded in Scripture and classical Catholic doctrine."<sup>103</sup> He further articulates:

There are many differences with Christianity. The Lutherans are not Mennonites, and neither groups is Roman Catholic. Still, it is likely that Orthodox Christians, Roman Catholics, and Reformation Christians (including groups from the "radical" end of the reformation) share substantial ground. This shared ground makes it intelligible to speak about the Christian tradition, however difficult it may be to define its boundaries. We can talk about the Christian tradition without additional qualifiers like "Roman Catholics" or "Lutheran". After all, it makes sense to have a "Dictionary of Church History" or a "Dictionary of Christian Theology". While we may disagree on what to exclude from such dictionaries, we will agree on much that must be included.<sup>104</sup>

Aware of the above differences, Kotva deals with theological categories that appeal to numerous Christian traditions. The attractiveness of virtue ethics forms the basis for an ecumenical perspective that is foundational within various fields of Christian enquiries: Theology, Scripture, Systematic and Biblical Studies.<sup>105</sup> Likewise, Keenan argues in his

---

<sup>102</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 1-2. Authors like Frankena have expressed dissatisfaction with the assertion that virtue ethics provides a fitting platform for expressing fundamental Christian concerns as highlighted earlier.

<sup>103</sup> *Ibid.*, 59.

<sup>104</sup> *Ibid.*, 60.

<sup>105</sup> *Ibid.*

co-authored book with Harrington, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, that virtue ethics unites fields of theology that have been long isolated from each other. It provides a bridge between ascetic and moral theology, between liturgy and moral theology, between scripture and moral theology.<sup>106</sup>

One of the greatest points of reference between the different faith expressions within Christianity is the Scripture. In a later section we shall see how Kotva applies this to develop an understanding of the corporate dimension of virtue ethic. Kotva expresses that whatever he proposes as an ecumenical framework may not be applied strictly by all Christian denominations but may be modified. He states: “The implication is that differing Christian communities will find a general Christian virtue ethics in its basic framework and outline, helpful in expressing their moral convictions.”<sup>107</sup> His framework is therefore not definitive but suggestive, readily opened to adaptations.

To be able to provide such a framework, Kotva identifies three theological links and parallels between virtue ethics and Christian convictions: sanctification or self-transformation and dependency on the grace of God, Christology, that is Jesus as the true human end, and Christian anthropology.<sup>108</sup> To undertake to explain these three categories, Kotva examines various theologians from different Christian traditions. He explains: “The discussion of each theological category draws on authors from more than one Christian tradition. This is done to show *that* the proposed correlations between the theological categories and virtue theory are possible readings across denominational lines.”<sup>109</sup> In each of the categories highlighted above, Kotva treats different theologians in order to offer readings of theological classifications within a

---

<sup>106</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 23-30.

<sup>107</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 61.

<sup>108</sup> *Ibid.*, 69.

<sup>109</sup> *Ibid.*, 70. Italicized word is mine.

wider Christian tradition.<sup>110</sup> The ecumenical approach Kotva takes does not attempt to explain how different Christian traditions conceive virtues based on their individual different readings. One will assume that his efforts would have been to delineate how each of these traditions understands virtue ethics but rather he seeks to establish the correlating lines within a general or broader theological framework. The succeeding sections shall seek to connect the above themes with virtue ethics.

#### **4.4.1 Sanctification, The Grace Of God and Virtue Ethics**

Meilaender in *The Theory and Practice of Virtue* advances the thesis that virtue ethics is naturally harmonious and compatible with a life of sanctification, development and holiness.<sup>111</sup> Kotva acknowledges Hauerwas, in *Character and the Christian Life*, for highlighting the systematic link between virtue ethics and sanctification.<sup>112</sup> Kotva defines sanctification as follows: “Sanctification involves the growth and transformation of oneself and one’s character towards a partially determinate picture of the human good or end.”<sup>113</sup> Spohn also in *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics* and “The Return to Virtue Ethics” makes the same claim that virtue ethics provides an appropriate context for genuine Christian sanctification.<sup>114</sup>

The task in this sub-section is to define the aspects of sanctification that are connected to virtue ethics drawing upon three distinct theologians each representing a tradition as illustrated by Kotva: John Macquarrie, representing the Anglican

---

<sup>110</sup> Ibid.

<sup>111</sup> Meilaender, *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*.

<sup>112</sup> Hauerwas, *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics*.

<sup>113</sup> Ibid., 72. A more clear definition is given by Louis Berkhof: “The gracious and continuous operation of the Holy Spirit, by which he delivers the justified sinner from the pollution of sin, renews his whole nature in the image of God, and enables him to perform good works.” Louis Berkhof, *Systematic Theology*, new combined edition with new preface by Richard A. Muller (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996), 532.

<sup>114</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise Jesus and Ethics*; “The Return to Virtue Ethics,” 60-75.

tradition,<sup>115</sup> Millard Erikson, of the Baptist Conference,<sup>116</sup> and Hendrikus Berkhof who is Dutch Reformed.<sup>117</sup> Kotva uses a method of dialogue between three authors and correlates their ideas. We may call this a correlational methodology. It is a method in practical theology that engages in dialogue in which negative analogy is dropped and positive analogy, which has mutual influential relationship is adopted.<sup>118</sup> Unfortunately, Kotva does not represent the Catholic tradition here but introduces it in the second category dealing with Christology. This makes his ecumenical approach to be hypothetically incomplete. Perhaps, it demonstrates the misgivings the Reformed Tradition has always had on the Catholic position on sanctification by human merit.

Kotva justifies his choice of these three authors by stating that although they are from different traditions and use varied theological methods, they agree on the central importance on sanctification. Existentialism and transcendental Thomism methodically influence Macquarrie, while Erikson is a conservative evangelical influenced by *sola Scriptura* maxim, and Berkhof is “neo-Barthian”.<sup>119</sup> However different their theological methods are, they all agree that sanctification is compatible with virtue ethics.

Firstly, according to Kotva, Hendrikus Berkhof sees sanctification as a process that begins with repentance, justification and faith. Christ becomes the goal of the entire

---

<sup>115</sup> John Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1977).

<sup>116</sup> Millard Erikson, *Christian Theology*, 3 vols. (Grand Rapids: Baker Books House, 1985).

<sup>117</sup> Hendrikus Berkhof, *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of Faith*, Revised ed. Trans. Sierd Woudstra (Grand Rapids: Wm. B Eerdmans, 1986).

<sup>118</sup> Richard R. Osmer, *Practical Theology: An Introduction* (Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008), 165. The correlational model is first associated with Paul Tillich. But his model is criticized to be one-sided because he presents theology as giving answers to the questions raised by arts and science. This prompted David Tracy to develop a revised correlational model that is more mutual than Tillich’s. For further reading see Paul Tillich, *Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1951); *Theology and Culture* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1959); Tracy, *Blessed Rage For Order: The New Pluralism in Theology*.

<sup>119</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 94, note 8.

process, hence he speaks of “conformity to Christ”.<sup>120</sup> In his valuation, God has a purpose for humanity, which involves a covenantal relationship requiring constant transformation, a transformation into becoming Christ-like.<sup>121</sup> It is a transformation that is not static or final but dynamic, it involves a struggle both within the self and without.<sup>122</sup> Berkhof’s conception of sanctification, beginning only at repentance, by implication denies the possibility of an individual becoming virtuous even before acquiring the virtues especially faith. This is very typical of the Reformed Tradition. However, Kotva attempts to develop a common ground with other varying traditions. I doubt whether he is successful because of Berkhof’s nuanced position.

Like virtue ethics sanctification according to Berkhof involves becoming a certain kind of person: It involves freedom from destructive customs and practices, and freedom for a transforming love of the world and neighbour. It involves becoming the sort of person who often performs acts of faith and love spontaneously, out of who one is. But this involves self-examination. If we are to progress in faith toward the goal, we must sometimes ask if we are acting and growing in freedom and love.<sup>123</sup> This idea resonates with the tripartite anthropological vision of Keenan as discussed in the previous chapter.<sup>124</sup> Berkhof’s transformative process of sanctification is on-going, like virtue, as virtue is not attained in one day or by a singular virtuous act. In this context, the virtuous person through sanctification or self-transformation grows from who he/she is into who he/she can become. This involves a deliberate choice of action which has a teleological aim of achieving the highest good which is God. Therefore, God becomes the highest good for all Christians despite their differences in tradition.

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 467.

<sup>122</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 72.

<sup>123</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 443-444.

<sup>124</sup> See chapter three, section 3.3.

Secondly, Millard Erikson similarly designates that Christ is the goal of sanctification. He also considers sanctification as a process that lasts a lifetime, beginning with conversion.<sup>125</sup> Erikson uses concepts like regeneration and restoration.<sup>126</sup> Like Berkhof, sanctification for Erikson is becoming like Christ. According to him this is not a superficial or external resemblance: “Likeness to Christ involves a whole set of characteristics or qualities which make something what it is.”<sup>127</sup> This implies that the life-long process of sanctification demands a change of character, a development of certain dispositions. Simply put, it demands certain kinds of virtues that are Christ-like. Erikson suggests a list of those kinds of virtues, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, self-control, faithfulness and gentleness.<sup>128</sup> Erikson is more theological and practical than Berkhof.

Thirdly, Macquarrie argues that in sanctification there is first the entry into the Christian life which proceeds to growth.<sup>129</sup> Both Berkhof and Erikson miss this point. Sanctification has a unitary process that is initiated by God and man has only to cooperate.<sup>130</sup> Like Erikson, Macquarrie affirms that sanctification is called “an imitation of Christ”. For him:

This is not an external “imitation” of Christ but rather, in Bonhoeffer’s language, a “conformation” of the Christian to Christ. Yet while the giftlike character of this life must always be stressed, it is also a life that makes demands and requires a genuine “synergy” or coworking, between the supporting grace of God and the free human commitments which that grace can perfect and bring to achievement.<sup>131</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> Erikson, *Christian Theology*, 3 vols., 945.

<sup>126</sup> *Ibid.*, 944-946.

<sup>127</sup> *Ibid.*, 970.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*, 970-971.

<sup>129</sup> Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, 343-344.

<sup>130</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>131</sup> *Ibid.*, 344.

According to Kotva's evaluation, Macquarrie's accounts are similar to those of Berkhof and Erikson. But Macquarrie goes further to specifically state that the structure of the Christian life can be expounded in many ways but most particularly through the theological virtues, faith, hopes and love.<sup>132</sup> He explains further, the virtue of faith for Macquarrie is a commitment and acceptance as man's responsible decision by gracious approach and self-disclosure of being.<sup>133</sup> It is an appropriation of the event of Jesus Christ- the incarnation, cross, and resurrection.<sup>134</sup> Hope is not to be confused with the optimism that characterizes some era of history, when human power and knowledge are expanding and it seems that man can build for himself a secure and prosperous future. Thus, the Christian hope is in God's activity and presence in the world.<sup>135</sup> It is eschatological as well in the sense that it gazes onwardly to the consummation of the divine work in creation and reconciliation, while love, the greatest of them all, leads to a community.<sup>136</sup> Both ontologically and theologically, love is letting-be. According to Macquarrie:

Love is letting-be, not of course in the sense of standing off from someone or something, but in the positive and active sense of enabling-to-be . . . . Most typically, "letting-be" means helping a person into the full realization of his potentials for being; and the greatest love will be costly, since it will be accompanied by the spending of one's own being.<sup>137</sup>

In sum, Kotva posits that the three theologians' descriptions of sanctification are akin to virtue ethics.<sup>138</sup> He summarizes their accounts:

---

<sup>132</sup> Ibid., 344-345. He writes: "The present exposition, will be in terms of the three characteristics which St. Paul, after his discussion of the gifts of the Spirit names as central to the Christian life-faith, hope and love. These are sometimes called "theological virtues" as distinct from the natural virtues of classical moral philosophy."

<sup>133</sup> Ibid., 345.

<sup>134</sup> Ibid., 346.

<sup>135</sup> Ibid., 347.

<sup>136</sup> Ibid., 348.

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 348-349.

<sup>138</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 72.

Sanctification is a teleological process that involves the transformation of the self and the development of character traits or virtues. The end or goal of sanctification can be variously designated but is frequently discussed in terms of likeness or conformity to Christ. Conformity to Christ thus provides a sense of sanctification's goal. It provides each author with a broad vision of the end to which sanctification moves, an end that includes certain traits and virtues. Sanctification is also a process . . . where one moves from the kind-of-person-one-is to the kind-of-person-one-is-called-by-God-to-be.<sup>139</sup>

Apparently, the concept of sanctification is akin to the concept of virtue theory. But their seeming departing line is the idea of dependency on the grace of God which sanctification introduces.<sup>140</sup> Our dependency on the grace of God according to Kotva does not repudiate human activity and struggle in moral transformation.<sup>141</sup> Kotva seems to move away from the traditional Reformed position of being saved by grace alone, but does not explicitly show that. Furthermore, he detects a lacuna in the earlier tradition of virtue ethics for the lack of emphasis on Grace.<sup>142</sup> It follows that his introduction of grace is intended to fill the lacuna.

By introducing the concept of grace Kotva establishes a substantive link between sanctification and virtue ethics. This explains why he will later propose a reformulation of virtue ethics by placing emphasis on the need of God's grace. But in the interim, we can acknowledge that all three authors accept that we are active partners with the grace of God in the transformative process of sanctification.<sup>143</sup> This shows a shift from the traditional teachings on grace within the Reformed Tradition but

---

<sup>139</sup> Ibid., 74

<sup>140</sup> Ibid.

<sup>141</sup> Ibid.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> See Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 456-477; Erikson, *Christian Theology*, 969, 971, 973; Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, 343-344. But Erikson has a slight nuance to predestination as critiqued by Kotva. See note 36 of chapter four of *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*.

considered from Calvin's concept of "irresistible grace of God".<sup>144</sup> Kotva makes a shift in order to accommodate other traditions' teaching on grace. To create the ecumenical platform, grace has to be understood within the context of being active partners with God. To this end, Stephen J. Duffy in *Dynamics of Grace* writes: "Actual grace which is God's grace is both operative and cooperative . . . Where grace is operative, God acts and humans are passive; where it is cooperative, God's action elicits our active, free response."<sup>145</sup> An ethics that is concerned with moral growth invariably has to accentuate God's grace. "Growth continues through out one's life, but growth is possible only because of divine grace working in us."<sup>146</sup>

The moral growth very often uses the metaphor of struggle with inclinations. St. Paul expresses this struggle in Romans 7:19 "For the good that I want, I do not do, but I practice the very evil that I do not want." This is a cry of helplessness. But the priority of God's grace in such a struggle becomes an immutable answer.

From this context, Kotva insists that virtue ethics must be tailor-made to integrate this concern. However, he notes that there are scholars who express suspicion that virtue ethics cannot accommodate the Christian belief in the grace of God. For example Philip Quinn in "Is Athens Revived Jerusalem Denied?" expresses this misgiving.<sup>147</sup> But other scholars like Solomon Yiu and J. M. Vorster argue alongside Kotva:

Virtue ethics that are divinely grounded by the grace of God, guide

---

<sup>144</sup> See John H. Boyd, *Christianity versus the God of Calvin* (Florida: Xulon Press, 2006), 95.

<sup>145</sup> Stephen J. Duffy, *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology, New Theology Studies 3* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993), 160. Duffy gives a historical and interpretative study of Grace in this book.

<sup>146</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 75.

<sup>147</sup> Quinn in "Is Athens Revived Jerusalem Denied?" 51-53.

humans in the pursuit of life purpose, goal and destiny which is the Kingdom of God. Only God himself, the God of the Kingdom, is the source providing a sound foundation in reality for virtues as well as the ultimate good.<sup>148</sup>

J. R. Wilson also argues that Christian virtues are formed on the foundation of God's grace; humans must come before God with a contrite heart and recognise that only the work of the Spirit in our lives enables the Christian life.<sup>149</sup> The virtue of faith becomes the principal virtue leading to the appropriate response of God's grace in each person.<sup>150</sup> From this perspective therefore we can talk of the infused virtues as grace-centred virtues. The concept of virtue when considered from the perspective of grace reaffirms the fact that the Christian response to the call of God is not a remote ideal. It is a construct that is both cooperative and operative as noted earlier. Christian virtue ethics is ontologically grounded in God the source of all virtues.<sup>151</sup> The inevitability of divine grace for the cultivation of virtues remains important to the historical Reformed tradition.

Berkhof, Erickson, and Macquarrie all establish an ontological framework in which a person is elevated and given a new nature and faculties are bestowed with new abilities by reason of sanctification and the virtues as perduring dispositions. All three authors use the theological concepts of conformity and imitation. These two concepts imply compliance, identification and internalization. Virtue ethics finds internalization as a proper construct of the concepts of conformity and imitation.

---

<sup>148</sup> Solomon Yiu & J. M Vorster, "The goal of Christian virtue ethics: From ontological foundation and covenant relationship to the Kingdom of God", *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 2013, 47(1), Art. #689, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ids.v47i1.689> (accessed May 1, 2014).

<sup>149</sup> J.R., Wilson, *Gospel Virtue: Practicing faith, Hope & Love in Uncertain Times*, (Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998), 34-35.

<sup>150</sup> B.W. Farley, *In Praise of Virtue: An Exploration of the Biblical Virtue in a Christian Context* (Grand Rapid: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995), 62-63.

<sup>151</sup> Yiu & Vorster, "The goal of Christian virtue ethics," 5.

#### 4.4.2 Christology and Virtue Ethics: Jesus as the true Human end

In the preceding sub-section Kotva offered an account of three authors on sanctification. He identifies that all three authors delineate the end of sanctification to be “conformity with Christ”. Our present sub-section furthers the dialogue on the idea of Christ as the paradigmatic human person.<sup>152</sup> According to Kotva: “Its central claim is that an adequate Christology includes the notion that Jesus of Nazareth embodies the true human good or end. Jesus Christ is not just another human being, but the paradigmatic human being.”<sup>153</sup>

There are two reasons why Kotva introduces Christology in his discourse of virtue ethics. Firstly, he wishes to show that Christian virtue ethics is teleological in nature, with Jesus Christ being its *telos*: “By looking at Christology, we see that the life and way of Jesus of Nazareth helps provide the end’s content.”<sup>154</sup> Secondly, he argues against some Christian ethicists who consider Jesus to be irrelevant in constructing ethics. For example John H. Yoder in *The Politics of Jesus* argues that Jesus should not be seen as a model for normative ethics, because Jesus offered only a spiritual message and not an ethical message.<sup>155</sup> He contends that Jesus had a different world-view that was apocalyptic.<sup>156</sup> Yoder proposes that our new ethics should be developed on a mixture of common sense, natural wisdom, and “the nature of things” based around what is suitable, relevant and effective, an “ethic of the situation”.<sup>157</sup> But contrary to Yoder’s extreme position, Kotva argues in line with Hans Urs von Balthasar’s proposal in his “Nine Propositions on Christian Ethics” that Christ in the first thesis is “concrete

---

<sup>152</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 78.

<sup>153</sup> Ibid.

<sup>154</sup> Ibid., 87.

<sup>155</sup> John H. Yoder, *The Politics of Jesus* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972), 16-19.

<sup>156</sup> Ibid.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid., 8-9.

norm”.<sup>158</sup> As St. Bonaventure articulates in his *Sentences*, Christ is the exemplar of the virtues: “*exemplar excitativum virtutum*”.<sup>159</sup> Kotva although accepts that our new ethics must reflect Yoder’s propositions of common sense, and natural wisdom, he holds that an appeal to Christology makes such an engagement more definitive and substantive. Hence, the Christological perspective Kotva offers is intended to argue that Jesus’ normative humanity is not to be neglected in any Christian discourse on ethics.<sup>160</sup>

To expand on the above claim, Kotva constructs a close reading of three further authors with varying theological traditions: C. Norman Kraus, representing the Mennonite tradition, Hendrikus Berkhof representing the Dutch Reformed tradition, and Edward Schillebeeckx representing the Catholic tradition. Kotva only outlines their points of convergence on Jesus’ true end but ignores their varying points of divergences because he uses a correlational methodology that neglects polemics. It is not my intention to outline the divergences either.

Firstly, C. Norman Kraus, in *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, offers a Christology from a disciples’ standpoint.<sup>161</sup> In a later book, *God Our Saviour*, which became a companion book to *Jesus Christ Our Lord*, Kraus expresses his convictions that Christian theology essentially begins with the belief that Jesus is the normative revelation of God to humanity.<sup>162</sup> According to him this conviction is informed by Jesus’ total identity and the impact of his relating with people in his teaching and entire ministry.<sup>163</sup> Interpreting

---

<sup>158</sup> Hans Urs von Balthasar, “Nine Propositions on Christian Ethics,” in *Principles of Christian Morality*, Joseph Ratzinger, Heinz Schurmann, and Hans Urs von Balthasar eds. (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 77-102.

<sup>159</sup> St. Bonaventure, III Sent., d.35,a.1,q.2, concl.

<sup>160</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 87.

<sup>161</sup> C. Norman Kraus, *Jesus Christ Our Lord: Christology from a Disciples’ Perspective* (Ontario: Herald Press, 1987).

<sup>162</sup> C. Norman Kraus, *God Our Saviour: Theology in a Christological Mode* (Scottsdale: Herald Press, 1991), 20. See also Richard A. Norris, ed., *Christological Controversy* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980), 1.

<sup>163</sup> *Ibid.*, 22-25.

Kraus, Kotva assumes that Christ's entire life depicts two intertwined aspects of incarnation; in Jesus we see God and he shows in us what it means to be fully human.<sup>164</sup> Therefore, Christians historically have tried to voice their convictions that "Jesus was 'Immanuel, God with us.'<sup>165</sup> Kraus according to Kotva argues that Christians have an idea of who they are and who they can become in and through Jesus:

What is extraordinary and even miraculous in all of this is that Jesus realized the full potential of the image of God within the existential boundaries of sinful humanity . . . Thus Jesus fulfilled the sinless image of God in and for humanity and became the paradigm for all humanity as 'children of God (John 1:12-13).<sup>166</sup>

By Kotva's assessment:

Christ became the human paradigm because he realized our full human potential. He resisted selfish temptations, identified with the weak and oppressed, made love his motivation and guide, responded in love to both friends and enemies, was obedient to God (even to death), and found self-fulfilment in relationship with God rather than in autonomy. In short, the same way of being and acting that moves Christians to see God in Christ is what makes Christ our model and paradigm. In his complete identification with humanity, humanity reaches its goal in him.<sup>167</sup>

There are two important concepts which will help bring out the link between Kraus' Christology and virtue ethics: knowledge and discipleship.<sup>168</sup> "The quest is to know Christ and his import for our lives is not, according to Kraus, limited to the intellect. It is in discipleship, following Christ, that we both learn who he is and are ourselves transformed toward that goal."<sup>169</sup> According to Kotva, Jesus becomes the model for the Christian disciple and:

Virtue theory often uses the master/apprentice model to describe the process of oral education and the acquisition of the virtues. It is in being guided by, following after, and imitating masters or worthy

---

<sup>164</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 79.

<sup>165</sup> Kraus, *God Our Saviour*, 27.

<sup>166</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 80.

<sup>167</sup> Ibid.

<sup>168</sup> I refer you to chapter three, section 3.3.1 of this dissertation.

<sup>169</sup> See Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 80.

examples that we learn to recognize and embody the emotional and intellectual dispositions, habits, and skills designated by the virtues.<sup>170</sup>

Kraus' Christology has an ethical dimension because of his understanding of discipleship.<sup>171</sup> For him as disciples we are called to obedience to the master Jesus who is our model, complemented by self-transformation under the tutorage of Christ.<sup>172</sup> Therefore, the place of moral exemplars remains crucially important in virtuous living. In sum, Kotva brings out the basic elements in Kraus' Christology that to appropriate virtue ethics, Christians know who they are and their end because they have seen it in Jesus. The transition is effective through a master/apprentice relationship with Jesus.<sup>173</sup>

Secondly, Hendrikus Berkhof of the Dutch Reformed tradition argues, especially in *Christian Faith*, that Jesus is the true human end.<sup>174</sup> According to Berkhof, the most essential question that comes to the fore is the question of Jesus' identity: "Who do you say I am?"<sup>175</sup> For Berkhof, historical investigations are insufficient to offer us adequate answer; hence we have to turn to faith.<sup>176</sup> In turning to faith we ask "what does faith see in this Jesus? Or what does faith say he is?"<sup>177</sup> By Kotva's estimation, "Faith's decision about Jesus is not a blind leap. It is a decision justified by the total picture of Jesus's person and life."<sup>178</sup> Berkhof, argues that one's faith must be rooted and find expression from Jesus' sonship within a covenantal relationship of

---

<sup>170</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>171</sup> See Richard Kauffman, ed., *A Disciple's Christology: Appraisals of Kraus's Jesus Christ our Lord* (Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1989).

<sup>172</sup> Kraus, *God Our Saviour*, 40.

<sup>173</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 81.

<sup>174</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*.

<sup>175</sup> See Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 2.

<sup>176</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 284.

<sup>177</sup> Dr. J. Faber, "Modern Trends In Christology: The Person Of Jesus In H. Berkhof's Christology" [http://www.spindleworks.com/library/faber/006\\_mod.htm#1](http://www.spindleworks.com/library/faber/006_mod.htm#1) (accessed May 21, 2014).

<sup>178</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 82.

mutual love.<sup>179</sup> According to Kotva, Jesus' normative and paradigmatic role is emphasized by Berkhof by stressing Jesus' humanity:

Indeed, for Berkhof it is Jesus' humanity that leads faith to make claims about his unique origins. The historical encounter with Jesus and the way he realized his human existence (seen in light of both God's previous dealings with Israel and the resurrection) drives faith to view him as the true human come from God. In other words, faith sees a new creative act of God in Jesus because Jesus fully realized human existence as it was divinely intended.<sup>180</sup>

Berkhof like Kraus believes that Jesus is the created extension of God outside God ("Jesus is the image of the Unseen God . . ." Col. 1: 15). Therefore, we know our *telos* because we have seen that in Christ.<sup>181</sup> Berkhof's Christology is a horizontal Christology, which acknowledges more the humanity of Jesus than his divinity. Hence he denies the pre-existence of Jesus before his birth.<sup>182</sup> Kotva does not identify the heretical extremity in Berkhof's Christology because of the style or methodology of correlation which he employs. This does not offer a comprehensive approach to virtue. Both the divinity and humanity of Jesus make for a better approach to virtue.

Thirdly, Edward Schillebeeckx is a controversial Catholic theologian. He is commonly considered as one of the less extreme of 'progressive' Flemish theologians because of his liberal and unorthodox positions.<sup>183</sup> According to Kotva, Schillebeeckx in two of his major works *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology and Christ; The Experience of Jesus as Lord* underscores the import of historical investigations about

---

<sup>179</sup> Berkhof, *Christian Faith*, 286.

<sup>180</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 84.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 85.

<sup>182</sup> See Faber, "Modern Trends In Christology: The Person Of Jesus In H. Berkhof's Christology".

<sup>183</sup> E. L. Mascall, A Review of *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, *Religious Studies* Vol. 16, No. 2 (June, 1980): 242. (242-245)<http://www.jstor.org/stable/20005655>(accessed 20<sup>th</sup> January, 2014).

Jesus.<sup>184</sup> A historical investigation on the question of historical Jesus, the encounter of the early Christians with Jesus and place of Christian faith and practice should be built upon.<sup>185</sup> According to Kotva, while Kraus and Berkhof stress the “total picture” of Jesus, Schillebeeckx emphasizes our need of a narrative Christology.<sup>186</sup> He argues: “If we are going to encounter and communicate Jesus of Nazareth, we need to tell and retell his story – a story that starts with Israel, continues in Jesus’ life, teaching, death and resurrection, and persists in the life of the church and the promise of a future not yet realized.”<sup>187</sup> From this perspective, Schillebeeckx argues “Christians learn to express . . . the content of what ‘God’ is and the content of what ‘humanity’ can be from the career of Jesus.”<sup>188</sup> Thus, in Jesus we understand our true purpose and end.<sup>189</sup>

The three authors then agree that Christians know of their true end precisely in the person of Christ.<sup>190</sup> According to Kotva:

This claim that the human *telos* is seen in Christ is not trivial. It asserts that we can find clues to our true nature and end by looking at a specific point in history. It claims, moreover, that such clues are normative. Whatever else we may say or discover about our true end, it must conform to the shape and pattern of Jesus’ entire way.<sup>191</sup>

Considering the presuppositions so far articulated by the above authors vis-à-vis our particular discussions on virtues, one sees the connection that Jesus is not only the end or goal but also a model for the formation of character and behaviour inevitably a

---

<sup>184</sup> Edward Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology and Christ*, trans. Herbert Hoskins (New York: Crossroad, 1979); *The Experience of Jesus as Lord*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1980).

<sup>185</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 85.

<sup>186</sup> Ibid.

<sup>187</sup> Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, 77-80.

<sup>188</sup> Schillebeeckx, *On Christian Faith*, trans. John Bowden (New York: Crossroad, 1987), 28.

<sup>189</sup> Schillebeeckx, *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology*, 598-607.

<sup>190</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 86.

<sup>191</sup> Ibid., 87.

transformation of self into the likeness of Christ. “Christian faith” according to Kotva, “is becoming a certain sort of person. It is a matter of becoming like Jesus.”<sup>192</sup>

Therefore, virtue ethics can fully embrace the assertions that Christians make about the normative nature of Jesus’ being and teachings.<sup>193</sup> In sum:

A Christian adoption of virtue theory could affirm Jesus as providing essential clues to our true nature. Because of Christ we have a vision of where our journey should take us. Because of Christ, we can contrast who-we-are with who-we-could-be and focus on habits, capacities, interests, precepts, injunctions, prohibitions, and skills consistent with the move from the former to the latter.<sup>194</sup>

It is obvious from the above that it is Christ who makes ethical thinking and acting ‘Christian’.<sup>195</sup>

#### ***4.5 Theological (Christian) Anthropology and Virtue Ethics***

In the previous chapter, Keenan delineated how virtue ethics is concerned with the human person. In like manner, Kotva argues that virtue ethics has a central core which is the understanding of the human person as a self-forming and determining agent.<sup>196</sup>

The Christological concepts of the previous sub-section are important for theological anthropology. Kotva introduces two basic trends in Christian anthropology: human freedom and our communal nature to better express this anthropology. However, the methodology Kotva applies varies from the two previous sections. While he reviews and correlates the works of different authors in the last two sections, here he synthesizes

---

<sup>192</sup> Ibid., 89.

<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Ibid., 90.

<sup>195</sup> See Paul L. Lehmann, *Ethics in Christian Context* (Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963), 121.

<sup>196</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 26.

the general basic ideas in the two aspects of Christian anthropology named above and goes further to show their distinctive roles.

Firstly, the Christian accounts of human freedom agree that we are neither totally determined nor totally free.<sup>197</sup> For him such an understanding is derivable from the understanding of the two concepts of behaviourism and voluntarism. It is pertinent to briefly explain what these two concepts mean in order to comprehend why Kotva uses them.

Behaviourism as a science operates from the assumption that condenses all human actions to observable behavioural patterns that are completely external, implicitly beyond an individual's control. In other words, it takes into account socio-cultural and physical variables from the environment as well as variables from the biological history of the person.<sup>198</sup> In behaviourism the overt variables are not only the object of study but also the key object of interest.<sup>199</sup> In sum, it considers why we do what we do, and what we should and should not do.<sup>200</sup> We have to differentiate two varying concepts within behaviourism; radical behaviourism and theoretical behaviourism. For radical behaviourism internal dispositions of the person are insignificant.<sup>201</sup> For example Burrhus Frederic Skinner on the one hand in most of his works argues that behaviour should be studied in its own right and not considered as a

---

<sup>197</sup> Ibid., 26.

<sup>198</sup> See, Stephen F. Ledoux, *Origins and Components of Behaviorology* 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (New York: ABCs of Canton, 2002), 4.

<sup>199</sup> Howard Rachlin, *Introduction to Modern Behaviorism* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. (New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1991), 287.

<sup>200</sup> William M. Bum, *Understanding Behaviorism: Science, Behaviour and Culture* (New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994), 3.

<sup>201</sup> John Staddon, *The New Behaviorism: Mind, Mechanism, and Society* (Philadelphia: Psychology Press, 2001), 148.

pointer of unspecified internal mechanism.<sup>202</sup> On the other hand theoretical behaviourism attempts to understand the internal states of a person, where each state is defined by equivalent histories.<sup>203</sup> It sees internal states simply as theoretical constructs based on information. However, both radical and theoretical behaviourism can be reduced to the theory of determinism, a notion that human behaviour is determined solely by heredity and environment. For example, “Delinquency is blamed on bad environment; famous artists acknowledge debts to parents and teachers; and some behavioural traits, such as alcoholism, schizophrenia, and IQ, are acknowledged to have a genitive component.”<sup>204</sup> Nevertheless, individuals still receive either blame or praise. This implies that there is something more than heredity and environment in human behaviour, namely that people have the free will or freedom to choose their actions.<sup>205</sup> Accordingly, the concept of voluntarism becomes pertinent.

Voluntarism is a school of thought that presupposes that the ultimate nature of reality is based on the will not intellect or emotions. This is so when considered from a metaphysical perspective. But when considered from the perspective of action it becomes any action based on non-coercion. Combining the two perspectives, one can conclude that it is the will that determines right and wrong actions. But Mark Murphy in a well-written article entitled “Theological Voluntarism” argues that within normative voluntarism there is what he calls theological voluntarism. It holds that certain actions have their moral significances in divine will, for example the absolute

---

<sup>202</sup> Burrhus Frederic Skinner, “Are Theories of Learning Necessary?” *Psychological Review*, 57 (1950): 193-216; *Science and Human Behaviour* (New York: Macmillan, 1953).

<sup>203</sup> Staddon, *The New Behaviorism*, 142.

<sup>204</sup> Bum, *Understanding Behaviorism*, 11.

<sup>205</sup> *Ibid.*

obligation to obey God.<sup>206</sup> Theological voluntarism is an aspect of divine command theory.

According to Kotva, the understanding of the agency of virtue falls mid-way between the two conceptions of behaviourism and voluntarism.<sup>207</sup> He takes this position because neither behaviourism nor voluntarism can explain how and why we acquire the virtues. For example behaviourism claims to communicate to us how we can modify the environment in order that people act virtuously, but it may not specify what virtue means.<sup>208</sup> We have seen that virtue is an acquired human quality rather than an inherited temperament like in behaviourism.<sup>209</sup> Hence, it has to fall mid-way, for both behaviourism and voluntarism are extremes:

The former reduces everything to mindless behavioral manipulation. The latter does not consider the way our actions influence who we become: it projects a self standing behind or above its acts that is not altered by those acts. The latter is also unconcerned with the virtues because they play no role in choice and action. In the former, we do not participate in the formation of our character. In the latter, our character is largely irrelevant.<sup>210</sup>

Conversely, virtue ethics according to Kotva:

Acknowledges that we choose and act without being completely determined. Yet an explanation of our choices and actions must refer to our desires, states of character, and personal history. In other words, virtue theory assumes that we are embodied creatures whose choices and actions are neither completely determined nor completely free.<sup>211</sup>

The implication is that contemporary virtue theory must transcend the construct of reducing all human actions to external cause or to a self free from body, history,

---

<sup>206</sup> Mark Murphy, Murphy, Mark, "Theological Voluntarism", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/voluntarism-theological/> (accessed March 3<sup>rd</sup> 2015).

<sup>207</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 27.

<sup>208</sup> Staddon, *The New Behaviorism*, 97.

<sup>209</sup> May, "Virtues In Professional Life," 100.

<sup>210</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 28

<sup>211</sup> *Ibid.*, 27.

perceptions, imagination and beliefs.<sup>212</sup> Therefore, since Kotva is arguing in favour of Christian case for virtue ethics, Murphy's conception of theological voluntarism should have a place within Kotva's conceptualizations.

For virtue ethics to have a focus like other ethical theories it requires human agency. To show that virtue ethics is different both in concept and content from behaviourism and voluntarism, Kotva offers the following reasons: Firstly, virtue ethics offers a comprehensive account of human agency. Secondly, because virtue ethics encompasses feelings, and intellect, tendencies, dispositions and capacities, these would demand human agency to be manifested tangibly and operationally. Thirdly, talking about virtue ethics entails the formation and shaping of character through human agency. Equally, determinants of character are unimportant unless they are involved in the process of choosing and acting.<sup>213</sup> "In short, we shape ourselves and each other toward or away from the virtues by our choices, actions, and interaction."<sup>214</sup> Kotva therefore concludes that human agency is vital to virtue ethics:

We develop and help form our tendencies and dispositions through our choices and actions. But those tendencies and dispositions also inform and direct our choices and actions. We are not, as the behaviorist account suggests, simply at the mercy of forces outside our control; we help form our own and each other's character. We also are not, contrary to the voluntarist account, free from the constraints of character. Past choices and actions influence the kind of persons we become, and the kind of person we become informs our choices and actions.

From the above we have seen how and why virtue ethics to be meaningful needs human agency. The two elements that stand out here are that virtue ethics is goal oriented and so needs some form of agency, and within the agency is the element of reflexivity. In this context, virtue ethics transforms the agent because the agent

---

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> Ibid. 28.

<sup>214</sup> Ibid.

embodies the virtues. Human agency becomes an invaluable concept in discussing freedom. This is because an explanation of our choices and actions must refer to our inner dispositions, formed character and personal history. Consequently, according to Kotva:

Virtue ethics works with an understanding of the self as a self-forming and determining agent. This understanding of agency falls somewhere between behaviourism and voluntarism. It acknowledges that we choose and act without being completely determined . . . In other words, virtue theory assumes that we are embodied creatures whose choices and actions are neither completely determined nor completely free.<sup>215</sup>

The implication is that human freedom from the perspective of Christian anthropology cannot be completely limited or unlimited. It is defined according to what Vincent MacNamara in *The Truth in Love* calls “freedom to see and freedom to do”.<sup>216</sup> The link to virtue is found in Kotva’s statement: “Freedom allows us to choose between competing options, but it also means that through our choices we play a key role in the development of our character, goals, and desires.”<sup>217</sup> In other words it is called freedom of self-determination. This involves personal choices and relationships.<sup>218</sup>

Secondly, the theological anthropology in the creation account of Genesis is basically communal in nature.<sup>219</sup> It posits that relationships and corporate action are intrinsic to virtue ethics. Kotva articulates: “We acquire the virtues in the company of others. And while the goal of our journey involves individual growth, it also involves common projects, shared activities, and intimate relationships.”<sup>220</sup> The liberating action

---

<sup>215</sup> Ibid., 26-27.

<sup>216</sup> Vincent MacNamara, *The Truth in Love: Reflections on Christian Morality* (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988), 114-121.

<sup>217</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 91.

<sup>218</sup> See Gula, *Reasons Informed by Faith*, 77.

<sup>219</sup> We shall have a wider biblical consideration of this in the succeeding section. It will form the basic thrust in our theoretical framework.

<sup>220</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 92.

of God in the Old Testament to the people of Israel as a nation, an imagery given by Paul of the church as a body in the New Testament both emphasizes the communal nature purported by theological anthropology.<sup>221</sup> Kotva is relentless in arguing that Jesus himself, the *telos* of the Christian life does not typify an individualistic gospel: “Instead, he serves others, celebrates with others, and proclaims a community of mutual service and love.”<sup>222</sup>

Christian anthropology therefore has always viewed the individual in community. “The self does not exist in a vacuum, and self-realization requires the presence of others.”<sup>223</sup> The theological stands of Berkhof, Erickson, and Macquarrie, on personal sanctification have communal overtures. However, they only scratch the surface. In the next section we shall have an in-depth examination of the communal nature of virtue ethics from the biblical narratives of Matthew and St. Paul.

#### ***4.6 Virtue Ethics and Its Biblical Connections: Gospel of Matthew and St. Paul***

The call of Vatican II in *Optatam Totius*, 16 for moral theologians to draw more abundantly from Scripture has been positively responded to by many theologians within the Catholic tradition. Within the Protestant and Reformed traditions, the scriptures were already a valued source. For example, the aforementioned Meilaender in showing how the virtues are consistent with the call to sanctification and holiness, utilises the New Testament.<sup>224</sup> Similarly, Kotva constructs a virtue ethics framework for moral theology that appeals to the gospel of Matthew and the epistles of St. Paul. Among other aspects identified by Kotva within this framework is the individual and corporate nature

---

<sup>221</sup> Ibid.

<sup>222</sup> Ibid.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Meilaender, *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*.

of virtue ethics.<sup>225</sup> Most recently the two co-authored books by Keenan and Harrington, explore in concrete ways how Scripture and moral theology can integrate with virtue ethics.<sup>226</sup> Such interaction needs to proceed cautiously as remarked by James Bretzke in an article “Christian Ethics and Scripture”.<sup>227</sup> Another approach is that of Joseph Woodill in *The Fellowship of Life: Virtue Ethics and Orthodox Christianity*, where he explored the Eastern patristic writings to reveal that the early church developed both personal and communal objectives for closeness with the Lord and one another.<sup>228</sup>

The aim of this section is to demonstrate how Kotva recognizes the compatibility between scripture and virtue ethics by specifically examining Matthew’s Gospel and the Pauline Writings. Kotva argues that both Matthew and Paul can be read from a virtue perspective, even though in Matthew the element of law is prominent as well. But “Kotva argues that we should understand Matthean references to law as Nussbaum understands the place of law in a virtue ethic, namely as exemplary and paradigmatic. Law exists to help shape the character of Christians in accord with the virtues.”<sup>229</sup>

Therefore, this thesis does not consider virtue ethics as a complete alternative to other moral principles like deontology and consequentialism. All three normative principles are important in doing ethics today. Hence, Gregory Trianosky in an article “What is Virtue Ethics All About?” argues: “Rules themselves do not tell us how to

---

<sup>225</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 108.

<sup>226</sup> Keenan and Harrington, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*.

<sup>227</sup> James Bretzke, “Christian Ethics and Scripture.” [www.usfca.edu/Fac-staff/bretzkesj/BretzkeScriptureEthicsCourseNotes.htm](http://www.usfca.edu/Fac-staff/bretzkesj/BretzkeScriptureEthicsCourseNotes.htm) (accessed January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014). See also Stephen E. Fowl, and L. Gregory Jones, *Reading in Communion: Scripture and Ethics in Christian Life* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991).

<sup>228</sup> Joseph Woodill, *The Fellowship of Life: Virtue Ethics and Orthodox Christianity* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1998).

<sup>229</sup> Kent Reames, “A Review of Christian Case for Virtue Ethics. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1996. Joseph Kotva. [www.academicroom.com/bookreview/Christian-case-virtue-ethics](http://www.academicroom.com/bookreview/Christian-case-virtue-ethics) (accessed February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

apply them in specific situations, let alone how to apply them well.”<sup>230</sup> He further observes: “Much of right conduct cannot be codified in rules and principles. Moral situations are too complex.”<sup>231</sup> We can conclude with Spohn: “Persons of wisdom and prudence whose virtue incorporates and appreciation of the basic principles of moral rightness will make the best judgment.”<sup>232</sup> So, the virtue ethics that this thesis adopts still admits to the important relationship with the law.

Before we proceed Kotva justifies his choice of Matthew and Paul by stating:

One benefit of choosing Matthew and Paul is that they represent the predominant New Testament genres (gospel and epistle). Another benefit is that a cursory view of either Matthew or Paul suggests incompatibility with virtue ethics. Matthew can be read as supporting either a law based ethic (5:17-18) or an ethic based on the principle of love (22:36-40). Similarly, the popular image of Paul as preoccupied with grace and faith leaves little room for ethics, let alone an ethic focusing on the formation of virtuous people. However, . . . the first Gospel and Paul’s letters readily connect with virtue theory.<sup>233</sup>

By no means does Kotva argue that Matthew and Paul deliberately developed explicit virtue ethic. But rather Matthew and Paul have a virtue ethics approach in so far as “their concerns, themes, patterns of moral reasoning, and use of language fit well with the basic virtue framework.”<sup>234</sup> It is therefore the hermeneutical model of reading and application that enables Kotva to make such fitting assumption.

Kotva interprets Matthew and Paul closely but with slight nuance. He looks at Matthew from the perspectives of internal qualities of feelings and dispositions. Then he examines the relationship between master and disciple and the understanding of virtue ethics and Christian morality from individual and corporate perspectives. While he

---

<sup>230</sup> Gregory Trianosky, “What is Virtue Ethics All About?” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 27 (1990): 342.

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Spohn, “The Return of Virtue Ethics,” 66.

<sup>233</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 103.

<sup>234</sup> Ibid.

gives primacy to how Paul emphasizes persons as moral examples. Then he examines internal qualities too, and his understanding of morality as both individual and corporate.<sup>235</sup> Our writer is aware that not everything in Matthew and Paul has an apparent correlative to virtue ethics.<sup>236</sup>

The next move is to place Matthew and Paul side by side from the standpoints of their internal qualities and their understanding of virtue ethics as being individual and corporate. This is to explicitly show the Reformed Tradition emphasis on Scripture.<sup>237</sup> The characteristic hermeneutics employed by this tradition is the literary approach whereby the interpreter recognizes the intended sense or meaning of the text. Such an approach is critiqued by Schneiders:

The author's intention is not actually available to the reader once the author can no longer be interrogated . . . Appeal to the meaning intended by the author is not only impossible in fact but undesirable in principle, since it would greatly limit the potential richness of meaning of the text.<sup>238</sup>

Aware of the above, Kotva interacts with Matthew and Paul from what Schneiders calls "The World Before the Text".<sup>239</sup> This methodology gives room for appropriation and an encounter between the text and reader. Therefore, Kotva enters into and appropriates the world of meaning between Matthew and Paul which they project from the perspective of virtue ethics. Furthermore, the Reformed Tradition emphasizes the soteriological contents of the biblical text or texts.

#### **4.6.1 Internal Merits of Matthew Paralleled with Virtue Ethics**

---

<sup>235</sup> *ibid.*, 104.

<sup>236</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>237</sup> One of the theological methods that the Reformed Tradition operates is formal principle. This method consists in the affirmation of scripture as the supreme source of theology. It rejects reason and experience as sources of theology. While catholic theology underscores the importance of reason, experience, scripture and tradition in doing theology. See David Buschart, *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Introduction to Theological Hospitality* (Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2006), 43.

<sup>238</sup> Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text*, 162-3.

<sup>239</sup> *Ibid.*, 157.

According to Kotva, Matthew's Gospel presents us with a noticeable parallel with virtue ethics based on the fact that both are concerned with "internal" qualities of human action.<sup>240</sup> To demonstrate this Kotva argues that Matthew depicts the kind of people and actions that are commendable and worthy of sharing in God's beatific vision. This highlights the soteriological importance the Reformed Tradition has as previously mentioned. To further this course, Kotva looks at the Sermon on the Mount (Matt. 5:1-12).<sup>241</sup> According to Donald Senior in his book *Matthew*, the beatitudes:

Underscore the eschatological perspective of Jesus' mission, lifting up those virtues, attitudes, and characteristic actions that define authentic discipleship . . . The literary form, declaring 'blessed' those who exhibit a particular behaviour or disposition, has biblical precedents, particularly in the Wisdom and prophetic literature (see Sirach 25: 7-9; 48: 1-11; Isa. 30: 18; 32:20).<sup>242</sup>

Those declared blessed are "the poor in spirit", "those who hunger and thirst for righteousness", and those who are "pure in heart". According to Kotva, "these and other blessings presuppose human action, they also commend a posture reflecting certain attitudes and feelings."<sup>243</sup> This approach is made more visible in the six antitheses (5: 21-48) that follow, two of which create a shift from external action to internal dispositions; Jesus not only condemns murder but definitively cautions against anger, the predisposition to murder, he not only condemns adultery but lust, which is the root of adultery. There is a shift from overt actions to dispositions and feelings.<sup>244</sup> Senior also reiterates: "The series of antitheses . . . deals with human relationships and each

---

<sup>240</sup> Ibid.

<sup>241</sup> The Sermon on the Mount is considered by most Scripture scholars to be the first of five great discourses in the Gospel and the foundation for all that follows. The text presents Jesus as the teacher par excellence. The text may have originated as a compendium of Jesus' sayings intended for Christian ethical instruction. See Donald Senior, *Matthew* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998).

<sup>242</sup> Senior, *Matthew*, 70.

<sup>243</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 104.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid. See also Daniel Patte, *The Gospel According to Matthew: The Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987), 78-79.

calls for a more exacting fidelity to the law on the level of both actions and interior disposition.”<sup>245</sup> The central point both Kotva and Senior are making is echoed more by Jesus when he addresses the question: a good tree produces good fruits and a bad tree produces bad fruits (see Matt. 3:8, 10:15-20; 12:33) and that the measure of a person is found in whatever comes out of the person (see Matt. 15:10-20).<sup>246</sup>

The importance of the internal qualities or disposition stressed by Matthew’s account does not negate explicit human actions: “Matthew does not advocate a morality of pure intention and never rejects action as unimportant. Indeed, the parables of the two sons (Matt. 21:28-31), the parable of the talents (25:31-46) make clear the considerable weight Matthew attaches to action.”<sup>247</sup> And Schrage affirms that Matthew also emphasizes both the internal and external.<sup>248</sup>

According to Kotva the interest of Matthew in both the internal and external establishes a link with virtue ethics.<sup>249</sup> Specifically, virtue ethics is interested in tendencies, feelings and dispositions, as Matthew.<sup>250</sup> Also, “like Matthew’s understanding of the connection between internal and external, virtue ethics sees an intimate link between states of character and action, between, ‘being’ and ‘doing’.”<sup>251</sup> It remains valid therefore, that virtues are characteristic ways of behaving that make both persons and actions good.<sup>252</sup> Dialectic is fashioned between being and doing, between internal and external as we have seen in an earlier section.

---

<sup>245</sup> Senior, *Matthew*, 74.

<sup>246</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 105. See also Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 67-68.

<sup>247</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>248</sup> Schrage, *The Ethics of the New Testament*, 43-45.

<sup>249</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 105.

<sup>250</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>251</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>252</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 23.

Kotva has so far shown how both Matthew and virtue ethics are correlated. But he observes that both seem to view the internal as having precedence over external as also suggested by Roger Mohrlang, in *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives*.<sup>253</sup>

#### **4.6.2 Matthew's Personal and Communal Ethics**

At the heart of the virtue approach to ethics is “community”. A person’s character traits are not developed in isolation, but within and by the communities to which one belongs, including family, church, school, and other private and public associations. As people grow and mature, their personalities are deeply affected by the values that their community prizes, by the personality traits that they encourage. They are also influenced by the role models that their communities put forth for imitation through traditional stories, fiction, movies, television, and so on. The virtue approach urges us to pay attention to the contours of our communities and the habits of character they encourage and instil. “Virtue theory views relationships and corporate activity as essential to both the true human end and the journey toward that end.”<sup>254</sup> This implies that the human end is not achieved on a single leap but it involves a process, a movement towards. That being the case, Kotva follows Schrage who argues that Matthew’s ethics is both individual and corporate.<sup>255</sup>

We must first acknowledge the individual or personal character that is associated with Jesus’ choice of the disciples. The narrative of this call in Matthew 4: 18-22; 9:9 validates this claim.<sup>256</sup> Their personal or individual call is reflected in their leaving behind their nearest and dearest: for example, James and John leaving behind their

---

<sup>253</sup> Roger Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 113 & 181.

<sup>254</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 108.

<sup>255</sup> Ibid. See Schrage, *Ethics of New Testament*, 89-90.

<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

father in Matt. 4: 22.<sup>257</sup> Jesus also exemplifies this personal perspective in his interaction. According to Kotva, Jesus:

Interacts with crowds, but also specific, concrete individuals (e.g., 8:2-15). He talks about socially observable actions but also about the individual's attitudes and feelings (e.g., 5:21-24). And, most strikingly, Jesus tells us that God rejoices more over finding one lost 'sheep' than over ninety-nine that were never lost (18:12-14).<sup>258</sup>

As individuals called by Jesus, the disciples were expected to exhibit particular character traits which virtue ethics advocates. Seymour Chatman in *Story and Discourse* argues that the story embraces not only "events" but also "characters".<sup>259</sup> And character for Chatman is a paradigm of traits.<sup>260</sup> He further defines a trait as a personal quality of a character that persists over a part or the whole narrative.<sup>261</sup> Consequently, Matthew portrays Jesus as being "obedient" to God (see 3:15; 4:1-11) and also compassionate to the crowds (9:36; 14:14). This is a personal quality that runs through the whole of Jesus' ministerial work. To further elucidate this point Jack Dean Kingsbury in *Matthew as Story* argues that Matthew uses each of the disciples to display both positive and negative character traits, namely: loyalty, love, attentiveness, obedience, trust and humility, fear, doubt and despair.<sup>262</sup> This also establishes a link with virtue ethics, which may be considered as an interpretative reading of the narrative of Matthew. The

---

<sup>257</sup> For some this can be viewed as scandalous. However, we see Jesus later affirming the importance of marriage in Matt. 19:9 and filial relationships in Matt. 15: 4-6.

<sup>258</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 108.

<sup>259</sup> Seymour Chatman, *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film* (New York: Cornell University Press, 1978), 107-138.

<sup>260</sup> *Ibid.*, 126-127.

<sup>261</sup> *Ibid.*, 125.

<sup>262</sup> Jack Dean Kingsbury, *Matthew as Story*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988), 10-28. Kingsbury unfortunately characterizes the principle characters in Matthew thus, Jesus, the disciples, religious leaders, the crowds and other minor characters. In the case of the disciples for instance he could have treated them as individual characters with their distinct and unique traits. He is influenced by the characterization of character made by E.M. Forster and M. H. Abrams. E.M. Forster, *Aspects of the Novel* (New York: Harcourt, 1954); M.H. Abrams, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (New York: Holt, 1981).

connecting point is that virtue ethics is character centered and Matthew displays the character traits of Jesus and the disciples. Kotva therefore uses character traits as a hermeneutics to reading Matthew. This is the foundation to Kotva's identification of virtue framework in Matthew.

Another connecting theme between Matthew and virtue ethics is role modelling, which becomes an application of the hermeneutics he applies in reading Matthew. Kotva shows this by identifying various elements in the book of Matthew which point to specific individuals as moral exemplars; references made of the prophets (5:10-12), Abel (23:35), John the Baptist (21:32) etc., are noted by Matthew as being archetypes of virtuous living.<sup>263</sup> Obviously, Jesus remains the model par excellence according to Matthew (27: 4; 19; 10: 24-25; 38-39; 16: 24). Kotva citing Mohrlang sums up:

Matthew's pointing to Jesus and others as examples of models is significant from the perspective of virtue theory . . . We can learn from persons of practical wisdom even if they are not present. We gain insight by observing how such persons handled situations similar or analogous to our own . . . Thus, from virtue theory's perspective, Matthew's offering of specific people and groups as models or examples is noteworthy.<sup>264</sup>

However, the call of Jesus initiated towards individuals had a public dimension. They were called to be gatherers of people. That means their individual call was aimed at public administration. Also another reason why Jesus called the disciples was that they could be with him. Therefore, Matthew's ethics according to Kotva involves relationships and corporate activity.<sup>265</sup> One of the pericopes which captures this sense of corporate or communal activity is Matt. 16:13-18:35.<sup>266</sup> These texts concern the regulating of life with the Christian community. And Matt. 18 further highlights the

---

<sup>263</sup> Ibid., 111.

<sup>264</sup> Ibid.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid., 108.

<sup>266</sup> see Daniel J. Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew, Sacra Pagina Series* (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991), 267.

relational character existing within the Christian community.<sup>267</sup> Kotva argues that sin is one of the concepts addressed in Matt. 18 that has significant implications for both the individual and community.<sup>268</sup> The significance is evident in the process applied to deal with sin in vv.15-20. Harrington suggests two aspects to this end. Firstly, the pericope suggests that moral discernment and moral wrongs are not simply personal matters.<sup>269</sup> They concern the community of the church as indicated in vv. 15-17. The idea of two or more gathered in his name favours our argument.

Secondly, the text suggests a process that brings out forgiveness and reconciliation as indicated in v.15 “You have regained that one”. Kotva affirms: “This focus on restoration suggests that the Gospel presumes our moral interdependence. It is precisely because we are not morally self-sufficient that Matthew’s Jesus outlines a process for helping one who is straying from the path.<sup>270</sup> Kotva in an article “Transformed in Prayer” states that in the Lord’s prayer in Matt. 6:9-13 we seek not only that my sins be forgiven, but that our sins be forgiven.<sup>271</sup> For him to pray in this way is to recognize that others are also the children of God; it is to share in the mutual need for forgiveness and deliverance.<sup>272</sup> Kotva therefore concludes:

---

<sup>267</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 109.

<sup>268</sup> Ibid.

<sup>269</sup> Harrington, *The Gospel of Matthew*, 263-272. The use of the word Church *Ekklesia* makes this point clearer.

<sup>270</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 109. Kotva observes that the text seem not to identify which kinds of sins in particular but deals with sin from a broader perspective. Perhaps, Kotva is informed by the current understanding that, there are actions which can be sinful and criminal, and there are actions which can be only sinful but not criminal. For example paedophilia is both sinful and criminal, while fornication or consensual sex with an adult is sinful not criminal.

<sup>271</sup> Joseph J. Kotva, “Transformed in Prayer,” in *Practice What you Preach*, 153. For Kotva, prayer is a virtue necessary for a good Christian life. As a virtue, prayer engenders others virtues like, humility, patience and solidarity.

<sup>272</sup> Ibid. The earlier part of the Lord’s Prayer clearly shows the corporate nature of humanity: “Our Lord did not teach us to pray to *my* Father, but *our* Father. I am not to ask for *my* daily bread but for *our* daily bread . . . I am to seek not . . . merely that *I* will be delivered from evil, but that *we* will be delivered.”

This is comparable to virtue theory's claim that from infancy onward we depend on each other for our moral development. We depend, for example, on instruction and guidance from parents, models, and friends. Although Matthew does not fully develop or spell out this view, he appears to agree: our moral development depends on the presence and help of others.<sup>273</sup>

Another relevant aspect that Kotva finds consistent between Matthew and Virtue ethics is the principle of the law of love.<sup>274</sup> According to him Matthew's Jesus exhorts love of enemies (5:44), the "golden rule" (7:12) and the greatest law is love of God and love of neighbour (22:36-40).<sup>275</sup> Matthew's ethics is also one of justice (12:18, 20; 23:23), and mercy (9:13; 12:7).<sup>276</sup> Kotva argues that Matthew's ethics cannot be restricted to these hermeneutical principles alone, because these principles in Matthew are not self-interpreting or individually sufficient.

He also argues that Matthew deontological tone or law language has an educative function.<sup>277</sup> But for the purpose of this work, this thesis wishes to only emphasize that love is indeed the essence of the law's demand. Mohrlang who posits that love serves as a "critical principle by which the individual commandments of the law and tradition are to be read, interpreted and evaluated" corroborates the above.<sup>278</sup>

In sum, Matthew, similar to virtue ethics, visualizes the Christian life to be both individual and corporate. Ogletree supports this conclusion when he writes that the call for a new way of life in the New Testament involves community of friendship.<sup>279</sup> Therefore, it necessitates mutual recognition, care, support and service within the

---

<sup>273</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 109.

<sup>274</sup> *Ibid.*, 113.

<sup>275</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>276</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>277</sup> *Ibid.*, 115-117.

<sup>278</sup> Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 21. See

<sup>279</sup> Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*, 90. In most accounts of virtue friendship is a major theme. For example in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics*, he dedicates one-fifth of the entire work to friendship (Books VIII-IX).

community.<sup>280</sup> It means that persons have to develop genuine friendship within the community:

From a virtue perspective, good friendships are both intrinsically valuable and instrumentally essential to our moral formation. Friends advise and correct us, invite us into their values and commitments, serve as moral mirrors, occasion imitation and emulation, provide windows into other ways of seeing and experiencing the world, protect us from boredom and burnout, and shape our self-image and self-understanding *as well as understanding others*.<sup>281</sup>

#### **4.4.3 Internal Merits of Paul Paralleled with Virtue Ethics**

The previous sub-section has shown how Kotva forms a correlation between Matthew and virtue ethics. The same method shall be applied in this sub-section. It will show how Paul correlates with virtue ethics in the same themes as in his treatment of Matthew: internal merits, a moral worldview that is both individual and corporate and moral exemplars.<sup>282</sup> As we review Kotva's work we shall see how both writers, Paul and Matthew have points of convergences on the above themes. This explains our earlier assertion that the correlational model is concerned only with areas of mutual relationship. Above all, Kotva aims at showing how in his reading of both biblical authors, he can highlight the importance of virtue ethics within the biblical tradition. This may not be the direct intention of the biblical authors themselves.

Kotva begins by affirming how Matthew and Paul are interested in both action and internal dispositions.<sup>283</sup> This is to show how virtue ethics is concerned with both being and doing. According to Kotva this concern is expressed in Paul's espousal of virtue and vice lists: "Immorality, impurity, licentiousness, idolatry, sorcery, enmity,

---

<sup>280</sup> Ibid.

<sup>281</sup> Joseph J. Kotva, "Seeking Out Good Friends," in *Practice What you Preach: Virtues, Ethics, and Power in the Lives of Pastoral Ministers and their Congregation*, ed. James F. Keenan and Joseph Kotva (Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999), 76. The italicized words are mine.

<sup>282</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 119-122.

<sup>283</sup> Ibid., 120.

strife, jealousy, anger, selfishness, dissension, party spirit, envy, drunkenness (Gal. 5:19-21)". Sam K. Williams in his work *Galatians*, notes that two-thirds of these vices are sins emanating from within, which is the heart.<sup>284</sup> While the virtues are nine as listed by Paul in Galatians, love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, faithfulness, goodness, gentleness and self-control (5:22-23).<sup>285</sup> Williams calls them "multiple traits of character".<sup>286</sup> Paul's lists of virtues and vices have to do with internal qualities as well.

Kotva like other biblical scholars observes: "These lists do not show Paul was explicitly working from a 'virtue ethic.'"<sup>287</sup> He explains that such lists were common in Paul's time.<sup>288</sup> Kotva contends that Paul himself did not refer to them as "virtues" or "vices" but rather works of "flesh" and works of the "Spirit".<sup>289</sup> According to Kotva's deduction:

What these lists do show is that Paul considered dispositions and attitudes important and that he assumed that such interior aspects come to expression in action. By appropriating these long, unsystematic, and loosely connected lists, Paul depicts or portrays both the kind of people Christians are called to be and the kinds of actions appropriate to those people.<sup>290</sup>

There are aspects other than virtue and vices in which Paul shows considerable interest about inner dispositions.<sup>291</sup> For example, Paul appealing to the Corinthians: "Let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to

---

<sup>284</sup> Sam K. Williams, *Galatians* (Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997), 150.

<sup>285</sup> There are several other citations scattered through Paul's letters that content these and other lists: Rom. 1:29-31; 13:13, 1 Cor. 5:10-11; 6:9-10; Eph. 4:31-32; 5:3-4; Col. 3:5-8; 1Tim. 1: 9-10; 2 Tim. 3: 2-4.

<sup>286</sup> Williams, *Galatians*, 150.

<sup>287</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 120.

<sup>288</sup> Ibid. See also Williams, *Galatians*, 150; Arland J. Hultgreen, *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2011), 103-104.

<sup>289</sup> Ibid.

<sup>290</sup> Ibid.

<sup>291</sup> Ibid.

completion in the fear of God” (2 Cor. 7:1). He also talks about the renewing of the heart in Rom. 5:5; 8:27).

Kotva is implying that the New Testament writings especially Paul’s epistles are more concerned with who we are, the inner dispositions that form the new man or woman. In sum, Paul is interested in practical actions that are defined by inner qualities, attitudes and dispositions. It is the latter that gives birth to the former.<sup>292</sup>

#### **4.6.4 Paul’s Personal and Communal Ethics**

Kotva acknowledges that like Matthew, Paul also conceives the Christian life to be both personal and communal.<sup>293</sup> It is important to note here that Paul’s individual ethic cannot be comprehended independent of his communal ethic. For example in Rom. 12:3; 1 Cor. 12:11; Eph. 4:7, Paul conveys that each individual has his or her own measure of faith. But this individual value of faith cannot be explained independent of the community. This assumption is supported by Robert H. Mounce in *Romans: The New American Commentary* that Paul reminded them as the human body is made up of different parts performing different tasks so also in Christ many members form one body (cf. 1 Cor. 12:12-31).<sup>294</sup> He further writes:

Unity in diversity is the theme that runs through this section. This unity, . . . was only possible because the members were “in Christ,” that is, joined by faith they had become a part of the body of Christ. Since they were all members of one body, it follows that ‘each belong[ed] to all the others (v.5). The Christian faith is essentially a corporate experience. Although each member has come to faith by a separate and individual act of faith, the believing community lives out its Christian experience in fellowship with one another. John Donne’s ‘No man is an Island’ is true of the church of Jesus Christ. ‘Lone Ranger Christianity’ is a contradiction in terms.<sup>295</sup>

---

<sup>292</sup> Ibid., 121.

<sup>293</sup> Ibid.

<sup>294</sup> Robert H. Mounce, *Romans: The New American Commentary* Vol. 27 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995), 234.

<sup>295</sup> Ibid.

That is why in vv. 6-8 of chapter 12, Paul lists seven gifts and encourages the Romans to apply their individual gifts for the benefit of the entire church: If a person's gift is service, then he or she has to serve others; if it is teaching or encouraging then he or she must provide guidance for what people ought to do.<sup>296</sup>

P. Stuhlmacher in *Paul's Letter to the Romans* divides the seven gifts into two: prophetic activity and service.<sup>297</sup> Hence, Kotva affirms: "Like the many parts of a body, the church includes many different people with many different abilities and gifts. Yet the individuals' abilities and gifts find their purpose and are to be used for the benefit of one another."<sup>298</sup> In this sense, Kotva holds that Paul's emphasis on building up the church fits well with virtue ethic's social or communal dimension.<sup>299</sup> The individual does not live in isolation because "community is the nurturing context within which the individual is expected to live."<sup>300</sup> Within the nurturing context of community, striving to become more just, understanding, patient, and compassionate, is challenging.<sup>301</sup>

According to Kotva, Paul assumes our moral interdependence when he addresses the issue of excommunication for a man living with his stepmother (1 Cor. 5: 1-8).<sup>302</sup> The implication of such an action is emphasized later in 1 Cor. 15:33 that "Bad company ruins good morals." This highlights the truthfulness of our ability to influence one another.

The emphasis so far has been the corporate and inter-reliant aspects of Paul's ethics. Kotva stresses that this does not undervalue the place of an individual in the

---

<sup>296</sup> Ibid., 235.

<sup>297</sup> P. Stuhlmacher, *Paul's Letter to the Romans* (Louisville: Westminster, 1994), 193.

<sup>298</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 121.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid., 140.

<sup>300</sup> Paul Sampley, *Walking Between Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991), 43.

<sup>301</sup> Kotva, "Seeking Out Good Friends," 76.

<sup>302</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 121.

whole scheme of things.<sup>303</sup> Paul himself says each person will be judged according to what he or she has done (Rom. 2:6; 14:4, 10, 12; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:10). He further insists that each person should examine his or her work so as to be sure he is not running in vain (Gal. 2:2; Phil. 2:16; 3:10-16).<sup>304</sup>

What Kotva is trying to show is that Paul's concept of the Christian life incorporates both individual and community: "Individual gifts and abilities find their proper setting in the church. We are individually accountable before God, but we are also morally interdependent and can influence each other for good or for ill."<sup>305</sup> This statement is replete with challenges to our modern life of individualism. It is indeed evident that the over-emphasis of the self over others or community can pose a huge threat to our present call to an appreciation of the relational value inherent in virtue ethics. Kotva therefore suggests, as did Keenan, that the classical approach to virtue ethics needs reformulation.<sup>306</sup> In the next section, we shall examine the two themes suggested by Kotva that can help reformulate and enhance the current approach to virtue ethics: grace and forgiveness.

#### ***4.7 Reformulating Virtue Ethics: Necessary Elements***

The exposition of both Matthew's Paul's theological insights on virtues as seen above challenge a reformulation of the virtues to meet contemporary demands. The reformulation does not indicate a rejection of the virtues as insufficient but stresses a complementary progression with the existing virtues as articulated by both Matthew and Paul. Kotva suggests two areas in which this reformulation can take place: Grace and

---

<sup>303</sup> Ibid., 122.

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Ibid.

<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 129.

forgiveness. Grace shall be looked at from the theology of St. Paul while forgiveness from the theological approach of Matthew's gospel.

#### 4.7.1 *Grace*

There is a challenge in teasing out the parallels present between Matthew, St. Paul and virtue ethics. According to Kotva, this lacuna is in the area of the grace of God, and the implications for moral growth.<sup>307</sup> At the centre of this moral growth is the concept of transformation. This is aptly expressed in our discussions on sanctification in section 4.4.1. The whole concept of transformation is linked to the concept of sin. The lack of grace therefore can pose a challenge to ones transformation and existence. Paul J.

Achtemeier in *Romans: Interpretation* writes:

It remains true that for a creature to survive, it must enjoy the creator's continuing favour. Such favour by the creator is then to be accepted by the creature as the only source of its continuing existence. Such a favourable disposition by the creator toward his creation Paul calls "grace".<sup>308</sup>

Although Achtemeier can be accused of undervaluing human efforts, a point we shall see later as the section progresses, essentially, he is trying to show the explicit role grace plays in Pauline theology.<sup>309</sup> Mohrlang captures it better when he says: "Paul's ethics are fundamentally grounded in the concept of grace and thoroughly dependent on the initiating and energizing work of God himself in the human heart."<sup>310</sup> Therefore, Kotva agrees with Achtemeier, Mohrlang and Robert O'Toole that it is the grace of God that permeates the theological articulations of St. Paul:

God is the source of everything, including every right deed (Rom. 8:28; 1 Cor. 3:21-23; 8:6; Phil. 1:6; 2:13). The contributions for the Jerusalem poor, for example, are attributed to God's grace (2 Cor.

---

<sup>307</sup> Ibid.

<sup>308</sup> Paul J. Achtemeier, *Romans: Interpretation* (Louisville: John Knox Press, 1985), 16.

<sup>309</sup> The whole of parts Two, three, and four of Achtemeier's book are interpretative discourses on grace. In fact the central theme in *Romans* is Grace.

<sup>310</sup> Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 118.

8:1; 9: 8, 14). So is Paul's ministry (Rom. 15:15; 1 Cor. 3:5-7; 15:10; 2 Cor. 5-6; 4:7; Gal. 1:15-16).<sup>311</sup>

Such a theological datum flows from Paul's understanding of two central themes: human nature and the incompleteness of the law to redeem humanity through mere observance. Kotva captures this clearly:

In Paul's understanding, humanity, when alienated from God, is incapable of consistently doing what is right, even when we want to do it (Rom. 3:9-10, 22-23; 7:9-25; . . . 2:14-15). We are enslaved by the alliance of law, sin, and death. It is God's work through Christ that frees us from these powers (Rom. 6:3-14; 7:4-6; 7:24-8:4; Gal 5:1). In Christ we are set free for love and service (Gal. 5:13). The Christ event also creates community (Rom. 12: 3-8; 1 Cor. 1:10-13; 3:3; 12:12-31) and tears down racial, social, and gender alienation (Gal. 3:26-28).<sup>312</sup>

The grace Paul speaks of is personified in Christ: "Christian living flows from God's act in Christ and is empowered by the Spirit's continuing presence."<sup>313</sup> However, the power of the spirit is no guarantee of a sin-free life.<sup>314</sup> It is to be noted here that the full implementation of God's grace depends on the human response it receives.<sup>315</sup> According to Achtemeier the human response is expressed in what Paul calls "faith" or "trust" in God.<sup>316</sup> Conversely, human effort becomes important. Therefore, Kotva concludes: "Grace does not eliminate the need for human effort."<sup>317</sup> This is expressed in his moral exhortations to his listeners. For example, Paul exhorts the Philippians to work out their salvation (2:12). His constant reiteration about imitating him in his struggles with the Gospel also indicates this human effort demanded. "Paul's vision of

---

<sup>311</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 129. See also Robert F. O'Toole, *Who is a Christian? A Study in Pauline Ethics* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990), 17-20.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Mohrlang, *Matthew and Paul*, 118. Mohrlang distinguishes here the human and eschatological elements in Pauline theology as he discusses the tensions in human nature.

<sup>315</sup> Ibid.

<sup>316</sup> Achtemeier, *Romans: Interpretation*, 16.

<sup>317</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 130.

the Christian life does not exclude the need for human effort or separate the life of faith from the moral life, but Paul's focus on grace does add an element never mentioned in the earlier discussion of virtue theory."<sup>318</sup> We can see that Kotva does not treat grace here as a virtue but as a theological concept that further elucidates the link between the theological virtues and the human virtues.

This element of grace emphasizes God's activity in the lives of individuals. It shows how as individuals empowered by grace and personal efforts; people can live an ordered moral life.

#### **4.7.2 Forgiveness**

The classical list of virtues in chapter one does not include forgiveness. Although it can be argued that the virtue of love encompasses forgiveness. However, forgiveness demands some attention. As Kotva himself explains forgiveness and reconciliation are essential to community's life and practice.<sup>319</sup>

Kotva restates the focus of forgiveness in Matthew's gospel evident in the "Lords prayer" (6:10-13). The prayer establishes an anthropological and theological link in our seeking for God's forgiveness: the possibility of receiving forgiveness from God depends on our ability to forgive others (6:14-15). Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu at the Truth and Reconciliation Commission highlights this point after the abolition of apartheid, when he says: "No Future without Forgiveness."<sup>320</sup> Forgiveness is not only to be received but must be given. The full implication of forgiveness within the Christian tradition is reciprocal in nature. The life of Jesus is inundated by acts of forgiveness

---

<sup>318</sup> Ibid.

<sup>319</sup> Ibid., 119.

<sup>320</sup> *Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, vol. 2, cha. 6; vol. 5 §138 (Cape Town: Juta, 1998); Desmond Tutu, *No Future without Forgiveness* (New York: Doubleday, 1999). William Bole, "Politics of Forgiveness: A Catholic Perspective" [http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A\\_politics\\_of\\_forgiveness.pdf](http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A_politics_of_forgiveness.pdf)(accessed 4<sup>th</sup> February,2014).

from beginning to end. According to Kotva Jesus contends in Matt. 5:23-24 that forgiveness takes precedence over liturgical rites.<sup>321</sup> Hence, Jesus would always give forgiveness to the sinner even when considered blasphemous by the Jewish authorities. He not only forgave people who had sinned against His Father and even those who had personally sinned against him.<sup>322</sup>

As noted at the beginning of this section, virtue theory contains nothing specifically linked to forgiveness. At the same time, there is nothing from the classical tradition of virtue theory that would suggest any tension with the concept of forgiveness introduced here as a virtue.<sup>323</sup> Rather, it modifies the concept of justice as a virtue, and deepens the virtue of love of neighbour even the love of enemies.

Forgiveness has hardly been a traditional value in world affairs. William Bole argues that the concept is foreign to most secular political philosophies in the West and is peripheral to the tradition of Christian just-war teaching – or was, until Pope John Paul II issued his ground-breaking 2002 World Day of Peace message titled, “No Peace without Justice, No Justice without Forgiveness”.<sup>324</sup> Bole suggests:

Our concept of forgiveness needs to be open enough to let aggrieved people voice their anger, as we Americans needed to do after the atrocities of September 11, 2001. It needs to be challenging enough so that people examine their own faults, as we Americans also needed to do after 9/11. It also should be strong enough to allow for justice – and meet the challenge posed by John Loughran in “The Power of Forgiveness”.<sup>325</sup>

---

<sup>321</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 118.

<sup>322</sup> After the resurrection Jesus referred to the disciples as brothers even after they had deserted and denied him before the authorities, and even the soldiers that killed him.

<sup>323</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 119.

<sup>324</sup> William Bole, “Politics of Forgiveness: A Catholic Perspective” [http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A\\_politics\\_of\\_forgiveness.pdf](http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A_politics_of_forgiveness.pdf) (accessed February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

In sum, the language of both Matthew and Paul fits satisfactorily with the language of virtue ethics in expressing Kotva's insistence on Christians appropriating the virtue framework.

#### **4.8 Concluding Remarks**

This chapter concludes with a few observations. Firstly, it is important that Kotva argues it is appropriate that Christian theology should turn to virtue ethics as an ethical approach that is holistic and compatible with Christian beliefs. Such an appeal creates continuity of ideas between historical luminaries on virtue ethics and contemporary ethical approaches as seen in chapter one. Secondly, this thesis observes that although Kotva seeks to advance an approach that is ecumenical in nature he makes no in-depth reference to Aquinas who is today considered as one of the most influence figures in Christian theology. Thirdly, to promote his correlational theology he deals only with convergences. This approach can be short-sighted. For example, the correlation between Matthew and Paul does not take into account many factors; their varying methodology, their audiences, and cultural influences. More so, the questions asked within their milieu are not the same questions that may be asked today.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### **A Comparative Investigation Based On Key Themes And Related Traditions: Convergences And Divergences**

#### **5.0 Introduction**

In the last three previous chapters, we outlined some aspects of the works of Cessario, Keenan and Kotva on the virtues as they relate to the core theme of this thesis namely the relational value of virtue ethics. However, this thesis also considered other themes, which on first glance may not be a part of the main focus of this thesis but form vital elements of the entire structure of virtue ethics. Simply put, the general content of the theologians under study concern a common ethical method. In this sense we can say similarities abound. However there are some gaps and nuances. As the chapter progresses, it is our intention to structure these convergences and divergences with a view to drawing a conclusion.

This entire chapter shall be divided into three sections: section one will examine the convergences and divergences based on tradition and some themes. Some of the questions include how do they scholars differ based on their traditions? Is there a way they complement each other? Since virtue ethics covers a wide area in moral field, the section shall consider specific themes like, the nature of virtue ethics, the development of virtue and their use of Scripture. Because virtue ethics is a person-centered ethic, section two will turn to an appraisal of the human person. The section shall utilise the typology of Millard J. Erickson – substantive, relational and functional views – in order to further tease out the convergences and divergences of the authors.<sup>1</sup> The third section shall be an analysis based on the relational approaches of our interlocutors. It shall identify a lacuna in their approach and make a proposal for

---

<sup>1</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.

further study on an all-inclusive approach that encompasses the environment. The chapter shall begin by justifying the need for a comparative investigation based on traditions.

## SECTION 1

### **5.1 *Justifying Comparative Reading based on Traditions***

Before turning to the comparative study itself, it is important to reassert the value and possibility of comparative study. In particular, we will draw upon the reasonableness of commensurability as advanced by C. Taylor, and A. Jonsen and S. Toulmin. C. Taylor argues in *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*: “Human reason is comparative in nature. All criteria standing besides others all methods co-existing with other methods, that none is standing completely independent of the other.”<sup>2</sup> A more convincing argument is put forward by A. Jonsen and S. Toulmin in *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning*: “Practical reasoning in Ethics is not a matter of drawing formal deductions from variable axioms, but of exercising judgment – that is weighing considerations against one another.”<sup>3</sup> Taylor, Jonsen and Toulmin as seen above provide us with some tools that serve as foundational to an engaging comparative reading based on the expository materials provided in chapters two, three and four.

There are however challenges to this approach. Other scholars, such as T. S. Kuhn, R. Rorty, R. Chang, and H. Sankey argue that reasoning at its depth is

---

<sup>2</sup> C. Taylor, *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989), 72.

<sup>3</sup> A. Jonsen and S. Toulmin, *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning* (Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988), 341.

necessarily incommensurable.<sup>4</sup> These authors argue that things cannot be compared because they are simply facts without formative guidelines. Reacting to this disagreement, H. Patrick Glenn in *Legal Traditions of the World* claims that their idea is an outcome of the Western thought which holds that there should be no existing teaching that should obstruct our individual charismatic, rational and decision-making capacity.<sup>5</sup> Ultimately, this current is originally a by-product of 17<sup>th</sup> century Enlightenment that accentuated reason and individualism over tradition and faith. The rejection of incommensurability is based on a reductionist account of the person and reasoning that ignores and rejects the powers of imagination, mystery, sentiments and feelings.<sup>6</sup> But the framework offered by commensurability does respect the above. Therefore, commensurability fits into the general frame of virtue ethics which is foundational to this chapter. The question that begs answer is “what then is tradition?”

In everyday language, tradition is conceived as the past with its impact on the present. The anthropologist Nelson H. H. Graburn in an article “What is Tradition?” considers tradition as: “The name given to those cultural features which, in situations of change, were to be continued to be handed on, thought about, preserved and not lost.”<sup>7</sup> Conversely, traditional thinking is frequently contrasted with progressive or

---

<sup>4</sup> See T. S. Kuhn, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962); R. Rorty, *Philosophy and the Mirrors of Nature* (Princeton: University Princeton Press, 1979); R. Chang ed., *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997); H. Sankey, *Rationality, Relativism and Incommensurability* (Aldershot: Ashgate: Harvard University Press, 1997).

<sup>5</sup> H. Patrick Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 41-2.

<sup>6</sup> See Christopher Casey, “Grecian Grandeurs and the Rude Wasting of Old Times”; Britain, the Elgin Marbles, and Post-Revolutionary Hellenism,” *Foundations* Vol. III, no. 1 (October, 2008): 6-25.

<sup>7</sup> Nelson H. H. Graburn, “What is Tradition?” <https://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/gender-sexuality/What%20is%20tradition.pdf> (accessed October 6, 2014).

self-determining thinking.<sup>8</sup> Such a conception construes tradition as an opposite of modernization.<sup>9</sup> But this dissertation conceives tradition as an operative concept with historical, theoretical and practical connotations. This is because the dissertation also accepts that: “History, with its relativizing effect, tell us, however, that we are all part of a tradition or traditions.”<sup>10</sup> More importantly, “our consciousness of being exposed to the past and its effects must be coupled with our interpretative response. We must interpret what our tradition is proposing to us”.<sup>11</sup> In our present context, the traditions we are engaging with are *Ressourcement* Thomism, Personalist-revisionist Thomism and Reformed traditions as respectively represented by Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva.

A. Kronman emphasizes the significance of placing these theologians within their respective traditions. In an article “Precedent and Tradition,” he argues that tradition is a common feature within human society which enables us to encase a common factor and it also furthers our comprehension of variances between identifying features of the person.<sup>12</sup> Another importance is that theoretical constructs and their applications are hugely determined by ones tradition.<sup>13</sup> For example, Aquinas is essentially from the Aristotelian tradition. Some of his theoretical paradigms or concepts are typically Aristotelian. The same can be said of Cessario or Keenan.

A note of caution here, studying different traditions and contrasting individual authors based on their traditions can engender an academic scenario that simply justifies one over another with no regard to their strengths and history of their ideas and the questions they seek to address. As a result a genuine interaction between

---

<sup>8</sup> Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World*, 1.

<sup>9</sup> Graburn, “What is Tradition?”

<sup>10</sup> Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World*, 2.

<sup>11</sup> Mealey, *The Identity of Christian Morality*, 126. Mealey examines the three Ricoeurian categories of tradition and concludes that there is dialectic between past and present for the reasons of continuity as well as innovation. See pages 125-8.

<sup>12</sup> A. Kronman, “Precedent and Tradition,” 99 *Yale Law Journal* (1990): 1029.

<sup>13</sup> Glenn, *Legal Traditions of the World*, 3.

traditions is compromised. Therefore, the purpose of the comparative investigation in this chapter is to facilitate an on-going dialogue between the authors' traditions with respect to virtue ethics. Glenn reiterates this objective more clearly:

A theory of tradition should therefore not be thought of as a present, or perhaps future construction, but rather as a present device, or method, for thinking multiple traditions. It is a method for expanding knowledge and understanding, involving movement from within one tradition to another, using all of the teaching of both (or all) of the traditions to facilitate this process. Thinking theoretically about tradition means suspending conviction in a given tradition at least to the point of hearing, and learning, from another tradition.<sup>14</sup>

This further underscores the importance of dialogue within different theological traditions. In this sense we can argue: “There is no exclusive method and much to be said about the virtues, and defects, of different methods. There are questions of efficiency, but there are also larger and more obscure questions of compatibility of various methods with the traditions themselves.”<sup>15</sup>

Therefore, in what follows, this dissertation shall seek to contrast the three theologians and their respective traditions with a view to exposing and synthesizing the dynamism within each and also within the general structure of virtue ethics. The intention here is not to only show how independently each stands but how all can form an organic whole.

## ***5.2 Convergences and Divergences based on Tradition.***

Anscombe's “Modern Moral Philosophy” (1958) and MacIntyre's *After Virtue* (1981) have provoked much engagement in deeper inquiries based on particular traditions. In chapter two of this thesis, Cessario was identified as a *Ressourcement* Thomist. He is

---

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 4.

<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 6-11.

also considered as a moral realist.<sup>16</sup> Chapter three classified Keenan as both a personalist and Revisionist Thomist.<sup>17</sup> Finally, chapter four considered Kotva as belonging to the Reformed tradition and a neo-Aristotelian.<sup>18</sup> The focus of the sections below is to establish areas of significant intersections and divergences based on traditions between Cessario, Keenan and Kotva.

One of the principal features shared by Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva is the fact that virtue ethics has a tradition that goes back to Aristotle and sustained by Aquinas. The renewal and return to the virtue ethics of Aristotle and Aquinas resonates with all three theologians under study. Anscombe had originally contended that philosophers and perhaps theologians interested in morality should start afresh by returning to Aristotle's work on practical reason and virtue.<sup>19</sup> Consequently, the terminology and method of neo-Aristotelian philosophy associated has grown in prominence. However, for many, Aristotle's works could not be retrieved adequately without reference to Aquinas, developing into a distinctly contemporary stream of Aristotelian-Thomism. Anscombe herself is such an example as her work directed towards Thomism. Mary Geach writes:

Anscombe drew upon [Aquinas] to unknowable extent: she said to me that it aroused prejudice in people to tell them that a thought came from him: to my sister she said that to ascribe a thought to him made people

---

<sup>16</sup> See section 2.1 of chapter two. This thesis is conscious of the fact that there are different versions within the *ressourcement* movement but what is common among them is the ideology of returning to sources. For example, evangelical *ressourcement*. See Robert E. Webber, *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World* (Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999); D. H. Williams, *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants* (Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999).

<sup>17</sup> See section 3.1 of chapter three, especially. In these pages a deeper explanation is given to the concepts.

<sup>18</sup> See section 4.1.

<sup>19</sup> Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy."

boringly ignore the interest of it, whether they were for Aquinas or against him.<sup>20</sup>

Through the intellectual influence of Aquinas, many moral philosophers and theologians have become neo-Aristotelians such as Philippa Foot, Alasdair MacIntyre, and Rosalind Hursthouse. Specifically, scholars who turned to Aquinas as part of developing their neo-Aristotelian concepts of virtue ethics relied heavily on the *Summa Theologiae*. Although Kotva prefers to be catalogued as neo-Aristotelian rather than Aristotelian-Thomist, the three theologians of this thesis fit into this development.

The question remains “why do these authors turn to Aquinas’s accounts on the virtues?” One of the discernable reasons is that Aquinas gives a more detailed and systematic account than Aristotle. Foot in an essay “Virtues and Vices” argues along this line:

By and large Aquinas followed Aristotle- sometimes even heroically- where Aristotle gave opinion, and where St. Thomas is on his own, as in developing the doctrine of the theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity, and in his theocentric doctrine of happiness, he still used an Aristotelian framework where he can: as for instance in speaking of happiness as man’s last end. However there are different emphasis and new elements in Aquinas’ ethics: Often he works things out in far more detail than Aristotle did, it is possible to learn a great deal from Aquinas that one could not have got from Aristotle. It is my opinion that the *Summa Theologica* is one of the best sources we have for moral philosophy, *and theology* and moreover that St. Thomas’s ethical writings are as useful to the atheist as to the Catholic or other Christian believer.<sup>21</sup>

It follows that Aquinas could be said to be the perfect student of Aristotle.<sup>22</sup> We can therefore argue that looking for Aristotle for inspiration will be tantamount to looking

---

<sup>20</sup> Mary Geach, “Introduction,” in *From Plato to Wittgenstein: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*, ed. Mary Geach and Luke Gormally, XIII-XX (Charlottesville: Imprint Academic, 2011), xix.

<sup>21</sup> Foot, “Virtues and Vices,” 1-2. The second italicized words are mine.

<sup>22</sup> See Kerr, *After Aquinas*, 9. In a general scale Aquinas understood that some Aristotelian concepts could appropriately be applied into Christian theology.

for Aquinas.<sup>23</sup> Nevertheless, those we classify as Thomists still differ in their interpretations of Aquinas. As Fergus Kerr outlines, there are various versions of Thomism.<sup>24</sup> So although, Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva share in the Thomistic tradition especially with respect to the virtue, to what extent are they Thomists? This question shall be answered later in this sub-section.

Following the Thomist tradition, Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva all agree with Aquinas' lists and synthesis of the cardinal or moral virtues and the theological virtues, because they have both theological and anthropological significance. For example, Cessario emphasizes the theological aspects of Aquinas's notion of virtues.<sup>25</sup> Cessario frankly confesses to the influence Aquinas: "Although the theology of the virtues presented . . . draws upon many sources, the teaching of St. Thomas Aquinas remains a central influence. In the thirteenth century, Aquinas distinguished himself by developing a moral theology of the virtues."<sup>26</sup> But Cessario is more than a mere reader of Aquinas; rather he interprets and integrates issues of great relevance for contemporary society with Aquinas's concepts. For example he interprets the virtues of charity alongside *communio* and the realization of friendship and integrates fortitude with Christian anthropology of human emotions.<sup>27</sup> In general, Cessario's theology of the virtues reveals the depth of Aquinas's theological reflections and which further attests an active intellectual tradition with great potentiality in theology today.<sup>28</sup>

---

<sup>23</sup> See Candace Volger, "Aristotle, Aquinas, Anscombe and the New Virtue Ethics." [http://www.academia.edu/2500806/Aristotle\\_Aquinas\\_Anscombe\\_and\\_the\\_New\\_Virtue\\_Ethics](http://www.academia.edu/2500806/Aristotle_Aquinas_Anscombe_and_the_New_Virtue_Ethics) (accessed November 5, 2014).

<sup>24</sup> Kerr, *After Aquinas*.

<sup>25</sup> See chapter two.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibid.*, 5.

<sup>27</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or The Examined Life*, 61-157.

<sup>28</sup> Cessario, *A Short History of Thomism*, see chapter two of this thesis.

Keenan like Cessario believes that the Thomistic tradition serves a fitting foundation for the revival of virtue ethics.<sup>29</sup> The influence of Aquinas on Keenan originates from his first major work *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae*.<sup>30</sup> Through careful analysis of the text, he delineates the distinction between rightness and goodness in Aquinas, pointing to the virtues as a form of moral goodness.<sup>31</sup> He accepts Aquinas's lists of infused and acquired virtues. He writes:

In the *Nichomachean Ethics*, Aristotle gives us eleven different virtues that are necessary for citizens to engage. Friendship, magnanimity, and practical wisdom are some of these. In the "Second Part" of the *Summa Theologiae*, Thomas Aquinas takes from Plato, Cicero, Ambrose, Gregory, and Augustine the four cardinal virtues: prudence, justice, temperance, and fortitude. To these he adds the three theological virtues: faith, hope, and charity.<sup>32</sup>

However, he finds the list of Aquinas insufficient. Keenan, although a Thomist in origin, ranges widely within the Catholic tradition.<sup>33</sup>

Although Kotva does not consider himself to be a Thomist, our reading of his entire framework echoes strongly the Thomistic framework. With an apparent paradox, he asserts in the introduction of *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*:

St. Thomas does not play a direct or major role in this book. Yet a plausible summary of the book's argument is that Thomas was right all along: Aristotle's *Ethics* are notably well-suited to the Christian moral life . . . While Thomas is seldom mentioned, this book can be reasonably described as arguing for the resumption of Thomas's basic project.<sup>34</sup>

Kotva would prefer to be positioned as a neo-Aristotelian because of the influence of other neo-Aristotelian moral philosophers like MacIntyre, Martha Nussbaum and

---

<sup>29</sup> See Keenan, "Virtue Ethics," 84; see also Odozor, *Moral Theology in the Age of Renewal*, 259.

<sup>30</sup> Keenan, *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologiae*.

<sup>31</sup> *Ibid.*, 94-96, 124-127, 101.

<sup>32</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 3-4.

<sup>33</sup> *Ibid.*, xiii.

<sup>34</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 1.

Nancy Sherman.<sup>35</sup> But as we have argued earlier, and quietly admitted to by Kotva, to seek for Aristotle implies seeking for Aquinas. The primary project of Kotva is to show how compatible the virtues are with Christian faith. Therefore, Aquinas cannot but be a basic reference point for any synthesis of the virtues with Christian faith. Aquinas has been considered by some scholars to be one of the greatest teleologists. For example, Stephen Pope in “Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas,” argues: “Aquinas’s Ethics is founded upon a profoundly teleological view of created reality in general and human nature in particular: Everything that exist acts purposefully for an end.”<sup>36</sup> In like manner, Kotva argues that virtue ethics is a teleological ethic.<sup>37</sup> We can therefore hold that Kotva’s account of the virtues is from the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition.

Therefore, all three scholars share a common commitment to the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition in their explanations of the virtues. In other words, what Aristotle and Aquinas have said on the virtues is largely captured, interpreted, analyzed and applied by Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva. Their individual style though may differ. But to what extent can we say they are committed to the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition?

Firstly, we shall consider Cessario within the *ressourcement*-Thomist tradition, a tradition that places him at variance with Keenan and Kotva. In general terms, *ressourcement* is considered today as an important aspect of twentieth century catholic theology.<sup>38</sup> William F. Murphy’s article “Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*” maintains that the relationship between Aquinas and the *ressourcement* was important

---

<sup>35</sup> See MacIntyre, *After Virtue; Whose Justice? Which Rationality*; Nussbaum, *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*; Sherman, *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle’s Theory of Virtue*.

<sup>36</sup> Stephen Pope, “Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas,” in *The Ethics of Aquinas*, ed. Stephen J. Pope (Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 32.

<sup>37</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 17.

<sup>38</sup> See note 14 on the different versions within the *ressourcement* movement.

leading to the Second Vatican Council.<sup>39</sup> American historian John W. O'Malley goes further in *What Happened at Vatican II?* He argues that *ressourcement* is present in every form of renewal. He writes "In brief, some form of *ressourcement* lay behind every reform movement in Western Christianity – and behind every reform movement in Western culture- at least up to the Enlightenment."<sup>40</sup>

The early part of chapter two of this thesis showed how other theologians considered Cessario as a *ressourcement*-Thomist.<sup>41</sup> Cessario does not only go back to Aquinas as source but as far as the patristic Fathers whom Aquinas himself cited. The advantage of this approach is not to sub-plant the existing tradition but to create a unity of ideas. Additionally, this approach would enable him offer an appropriate reading of Aquinas' text and contexts. Flynn stresses this point when he cites Yves Congar:

One day the balance will be drawn up, but already the positive quality can be sensed. What would a little later be called '*Ressourcement*' was then at the heart of our efforts. It was not a matter of mechanically replacing some theses by other theses or of creating a 'revolution' but of appealing as Péguy did, from one tradition less profound to another more profound.<sup>42</sup>

---

<sup>39</sup> William F. Murphy, "Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*," *Josephinum Journal of Theology*. Vol. 18, no. 1(2011): 4.

<sup>40</sup> John W. O'Malley, *What Happened at Vatican II?* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008), 41. For various forms of reform movement see Gabriel Flynn, "Introduction: The Twentieth-Century Renaissance in Catholic Theology," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 4. For further reading on biblical renewal see Benedict T. Viviano, "The Renewal of Biblical Studies in France 1934-1954 as an Element in Theological *Ressourcement*," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, 305-317. For Liturgical renewal see Keith F. Pecklers, "Ressourcement and the Renewal of Catholic Liturgy: On Celebrating the New Rite," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, 318-332. On the influence of *ressourcement* on general Christian theology, see Policraticus, Culture and Theology: The *Ressourcement* Movement (Part 1) <http://voxnova.com/2008/03/30/culture-and-theology-the-ressourcement-movement-part-1/> (accessed April 13, 2015).

<sup>41</sup> See section 2.1 of chapter two.

<sup>42</sup> Flynn, "Introduction: The Twentieth-Century Renaissance in Catholic Theology," 4. Originally from Yves Congar, "The Brother I have Known," trans. Boniface Ramsey. *The Thomist* 49 (1985): 499.

In this sense the profound Thomistic tradition on the virtues remains fundamentally important. Cessario realizes this great potential in retrieving the teachings of Aquinas and the Fathers.<sup>43</sup>

In retrieving Aquinas's teachings on the virtues, Cessario bears in mind what Stephen Fields in "Ressourcement and the Retrieval of Thomism for the Contemporary World" calls "the narrative of modernity".<sup>44</sup> This concept has two sides: Firstly, any solutions to modern problems must therefore entail a radical reworking of the roots of thought and culture. Secondly is the opposite of the first in that it conceives modernity as the disintegration of a homogeneity.<sup>45</sup> Cessario's work resonates with Fields' first proposal. For example, Cessario writes:

The Schoolmen of the Middle Ages, inspired by the patristic texts and aided by classical philosophy, developed different models to explain the dynamic of the . . . virtues. But the voluntarist emphasises associated with the *via moderna* and the harvest of Medieval theology cut short the development of this paradigm.<sup>46</sup>

To overcome the 'short-cutting' and successfully recover the theological synthesis of Aquinas on the virtues, Cessario goes back to the patristic Fathers. He writes elsewhere:

---

<sup>43</sup> Even though the prospects of *ressourcement* were evidently huge yet it was criticized. For example M.-Michel Labourdette criticizes it by the use of the term *Nouvelle Théologie* (New theology). Also Aidan Nichols feared that *ressourcement* was hatching a new anti-intellectualism into theology. See Aidan Nichols, "Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*," *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 7. Proponents of *Ressourcement* like Congar were reproached. See Congar, "The Brother I have Known," 500. The tension that ensued led to the Encyclical Letter of Pius XII, *Humani Generis* online version, [http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/pius\\_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_p-xii\\_enc\\_12081950\\_humani-generis\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_12081950_humani-generis_en.html) (accessed October 9, 2014).

<sup>44</sup> Stephen M. Fields, "Ressourcement and the Retrieval of Thomism for the Contemporary World," in *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, ed. Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 358.

<sup>45</sup> Ibid.

<sup>46</sup> Cessario, *The Moral and Theological Ethics*, 3.

In order to explicate what Christians believe about the moral life, theological ethics has long employed both the vocabulary and the rhetoric of virtue theory. Arguably, one can discover the substance of a well-developed theology of virtue even in the earliest Patristic writers. But fourth century Christian apologist, Lactantius, gave the subject of virtue in the Christian life its first embellished treatment in his *Divine Institutiones*.<sup>47</sup>

This is the typical methodology of the *ressourcement* theologians. Cessario will make use of extensive citations from the patristic Fathers. For example in *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, he cites St. Augustine who in *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 83, no. II identifies the virtues with Christ.<sup>48</sup> Cessario later builds on this Christocentric role and places Jesus as the paradigmatic model for a virtuous life – so central in the Patristic Fathers.<sup>49</sup> Elsewhere, he argues: “Without an effective union with Christ, no human person can in practice achieve the perfection of the moral life that conduces to beatific fellowship.”<sup>50</sup>

M.-D Chenu in *Introduction to the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas* articulates a criticism of many that Aquinas makes very little reference of Christ in the *Secundar Pars* of the *Summa Theologica*.<sup>51</sup> Cessario acknowledges this criticism while utilising the Patristic authors to fill out the framework of Aquinas. In his effort to respond to the above charge, Cessario simply downplays the severity of the charge by explaining that the absence of the frequent referencing of Christ in the *Secundar Pars* “happens simply because of *Aquinas*’ methodological presuppositions in developing the *Summa Theologiae*”.<sup>52</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>48</sup> Ibid.

<sup>49</sup> Cessario, *Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 21-2.

<sup>50</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 4.

<sup>51</sup> See M.-D Chenu, *Introduction to the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*, trans. A.-M Landry and D. Hughes (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1964), 314.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid. The italicized word is mine.

Further examples of this use of sources can be seen in his work *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, where he builds chapter one on St. Augustine's work *De Genesi ad litteram*, Book IV, and Origen's commentary on the Songs of Songs.<sup>53</sup> He also makes numerous references of other Church Fathers like Gregory of Nyssa and St. Ambrose.<sup>54</sup>

Cessario, in order to maintain the above tradition retains the lists of virtues itemized by Aquinas: the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and charity and the four moral virtues of prudence, justice, fortitude, and temperance. To this effect, he does not see the need to introduce other virtues. This is to maintain his traditional Thomist style as a *ressourcement* theologian. He only explains the existing virtues within the parameters of theological-anthropology. It implies that the *ressourcement* theology can be said to be more conservative and not very opened to much creativity and innovation of ideas.

In comparison, Keenan as a Revisionist Thomist accepts Aquinas's position on the virtues yet he is not uncritical.<sup>55</sup> Accordingly, his revisionist grounding makes him argue that the lists of virtues as given by Aquinas are inadequate to meet the exigencies of modern society. For example, the concept of justice in Aquinas's category does not sufficiently meet with the challenges or demands on the person from family, friends, and perhaps community, for they may demand particular ways of relating contrary to being just in a general sense. While Aquinas and Cessario argue that the cardinal virtue of justice is supported by temperance and fortitude and none contradicts the other,

---

<sup>53</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 3-9; See Origen, *The Song of Songs: Commentary*, trans. R. P. Lawson (London: Ancient Christian Writers, 1957).

<sup>54</sup> Ibid. Some of their works are: St. Gregory of Nyssa, *Orationes de Beatitudinibus*, Sermon 1. The English edition, St. Gregory of Nyssa, *The Lord's Prayer and the Beatitudes*, trans. Hilda Graef (London: Ancient Christian Writers, 1954); St. Ambrose, *Commentary on Luke*, BK 2, chap. 19, No. 22 (cd14: 39).

<sup>55</sup> See Odozor, *Moral Theology in the Age of Renewal*, 258.

Keenan argues differently: “The moral person cannot only be just; the demands to care for a loved one may conflict with the call to be fair to everyone.”<sup>56</sup>

Therefore, he suggests new list of virtues, which will take care of the above concern. The reconstruction of the classical list of virtues shows one of the advantages of revisionist methodology. As an approach it is dialectical, and so a more progressive and dynamic method than *ressourcement*. However, it is prone to oversimplification of concepts and also runs the risk of functioning only within the mindset of modernity, a temptation that can undermine a renewal based on return that is basic to *ressourcement* theology.<sup>57</sup>

Kotva’s approach is based on the Reformed tradition, in dialogue with the contemporary neo-Aristotelianism. Kotva follows the works of non-theological writers like MacIntyre. Drawing on non-theological authors can bring challenges. Hauerwas argues that the approach of neo-Aristotelianism with the implied distinction between nature and grace is problematic.<sup>58</sup> Yet unlike Hauerwas, Kotva is attempting to avoid the extreme positions of his tradition through dialogue especially on key concepts with the Reformed tradition such as grace and Christology. It is unfortunate that he does not continue the dialogue with Aquinas. However, the dialogue of ideas – his key methodological approach – leads him to common ground between varying traditions.

### ***5.3 Convergences and Divergences Based on Particular Themes***

Our three scholars Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva have made significant contributions to contemporary virtue ethics. Beyond the broad suppositions of their traditions, it is possible to identify similarities and differences around certain key themes. The

---

<sup>56</sup> Keenan, “Virtue Ethics,” 92.

<sup>57</sup> See Stanley Hauerwas, “The Virtues of Alasdair MacIntyre”, *First Things* 176 (Oct. 2007), 39.

<sup>58</sup> *Ibid.*

following sub-sections will look at the convergences and divergences based on the areas of the nature of virtue, the development of virtue, and the use of scripture. These areas are chosen to provide depth while at the same time limit the scope of the study.

### **5.3.1 *The Nature of Virtue Ethics***

Our conception of virtues today cannot ignore the historical antecedents of the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition. The readings of the works of Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva are a procedural and contextual continuity of the above tradition. It may be said that Cessario speaks for all three when asserting the value Aristotelian-Thomistic ethics holds for moral theology and moral philosophy.<sup>59</sup>

To recall the Thomistic understanding of virtue outlined by Cessario: Prior to Aquinas, St. Augustine defined virtue as “a good quality of mind by which one lives righteously, of which no one can make bad use, which God works in us without us.” As we saw earlier in chapter two of this thesis, Aquinas adopted this Augustinian definition because it captures the generic sense of the word *habitus*: “As a generic category for virtue, *habitus* describes both the acquired human virtues as well as the infused moral virtues. Since *habitus* amounts to the real shaping of our character, virtue ensures that one actually does live righteously.”<sup>60</sup> This Augustinian definition espoused by Aquinas became one of the central points of departure between him and Aristotle. Thus, while Aristotle defines virtue as habitual action-dispositions which are oriented towards *Eudaimonia*, Cessario follows Aquinas by defining virtue as “an interior principle of the moral life which directs the individual’s relationship with God and with neighbour. As such, Christian virtue remains a stable reality, something

---

<sup>59</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 12.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, 53.

which firmly establishes in the believer the capacity to accomplish those deeds which are worthy of the kingdom of God.”<sup>61</sup>

There are three characteristics that make Cessario’s conception of virtue distinctive from Keenan and Kotva: Firstly, he follows Aquinas’s theological application of the word *habitus* by relating it to the *kenosis* of Christ:

Christ . . . as he assumed a full and complete human nature and accepted the personal history implied in living out a human existence. In the case of Christ, meritorious acts of love and obedience form the center of his life of preeminent virtue. By this kind of life, ultimately expressed in his salvific death on the cross, Christ makes complete sanctification possible for the whole human race.<sup>62</sup>

Secondly, Cessario unlike Keenan and Kotva describes and applies virtue in such a way that satisfies human psychological, religious, and physical capacities:

*Habitus* supposes a conception of the human person as open to development and modification from both natural and divine causes. Furthermore, *habitus* points up the difference between what derives from authentically personal activity and what remains rooted in the biological givens of temperament or personality type.<sup>63</sup>

Thirdly, Cessario’s conception of virtue harmonizes with Fuch’s transcendental and categorical levels of Christian ethics as explained in chapter two.<sup>64</sup> Cessario’s use of *habitus* moved away from the common understanding of *habitus* as something mechanical to openness to creative activity by emphasizing development of *habitus* as chapter two highlighted. He therefore links *habitus* with Christian faith, conversion and freedom.<sup>65</sup> All these concepts linked to virtue ethics offer more possibility for holistic approach.<sup>66</sup>

---

<sup>61</sup> Ibid., 1.

<sup>62</sup> Ibid., 7 & 37.

<sup>63</sup> Ibid., 36.

<sup>64</sup> See chapter two of this thesis.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>66</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 100.

The nature of virtue ethics that Cessario constructs is attentive to the entire narrative that defines the human person, by broadening Thomistic approach to fit into contemporary Christian concept of moral goodness. He argues that this is acquired through inborn aptitude and the grace of God.<sup>67</sup> Accordingly, Cessario departs from those who consider virtue ethics as some form of determinism and holds that Christian virtue ethics cannot be taken out of the context of human predilection towards good and God's grace. By so doing, Cessario remained focus to his task of positioning his notion of virtue within the wider setting of the Christian tradition by giving it a theological-anthropological underpinning.

Keenan, like Cessario considers it appropriate to sustain and at the same time broaden the Thomistic concept of virtue, but unlike Cessario he approaches it largely from an anthropological perspective. But like Cessario, he argues that virtue should be understood in Thomistic terms as a *habitus* that orients us towards the ultimate good, namely God. According to Keenan it is by conceiving virtue in this light that can lead to self-understanding and relationship with God.<sup>68</sup> Where he differs with Cessario is based on methodology rather than theological conceptualization. To clearly show this departure, Keenan's entire theological framework on the virtues is based on one's self-understanding and relationship with God which is summed up in the three anthropological visions mentioned in chapter three: "who are we?", "who we ought become?", and "how do we get there?". Both Keenan and Kotva adopt the above insight from MacIntyre for their presuppositions. Keenan's methodology may be different from Kotva but his theological articulations in the above concepts in describing the nature of virtue are similar. For example, like Cessario, Keenan argues

---

<sup>67</sup> Ibid., 39. For inborn aptitude see Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 2:1-5; *ST II-II*, q.108. a. 2.

<sup>68</sup> See chapter three of this thesis.

that virtue consists in knowing who we are, the good we ought to do as disciples of the kingdom. Therefore he explains virtue by placing it within the context of discipleship. This is because discipleship defines who a Christian is in relation to God and others.<sup>69</sup> He draws upon Tillmann who argues that virtue directs the Christian to desire perfection by re-echoing that the birthplace of moral goodness is man's interior dispositions and not external actions.<sup>70</sup> Christ who is the embodiment of virtue shapes the Christian's life first from within.<sup>71</sup> But unlike Cessario, Keenan emphasises the anthropological aspects rather than the theological.

In his second consideration of the vision of the person "who we ought become" Keenan offers a critical teleological understanding of virtue. He shares in the Thomistic idea that virtues are an aspect of the Christian faith that establishes the kingdom of God that is the *telos* of the Christian. In this sense, virtues for Keenan have both religious and ethical implications.<sup>72</sup> This means that Keenan shares Cessario's convictions that virtue becomes a central part of situating human conduct. Because both argue that human conduct should not be judged through obligation or rules but rather through dispositions. The shared conception running through their works is that virtue covers socio-historical, biological and developmental aspects of the human person. We shall later re-iterate how Keenan goes further than Cessario.

Kotva shares particular ideas similar to those of Cessario, and Keenan. For example his conception of the nature of virtue is akin to Cessario's and Keenan's. Kotva in his understanding of the nature of virtue works within five generalized conceptions of virtue. But we shall re-state only three here. Firstly, like Cessario and

---

<sup>69</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 49.

<sup>70</sup> See chapter three of this thesis, 23.

<sup>71</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 55.

<sup>72</sup> *Ibid.*, 40. *ST* I-II, q. 90. a. 2. I refer the reader to chapter three of this thesis where I sketched the historical variances in the concept of *telos* between sociology and religion.

Keenan, he considers virtue in relation to human end or *telos*.<sup>73</sup> The unique aspect of Kotva's assertions is that virtue and the *telos* are open to modification and improvement.<sup>74</sup> Therefore, he proposes a twofold teleological virtue ethics: One that is leading to and also constituting the human end.<sup>75</sup> In this sense, he articulates like Keenan that the content of the *telos* includes the notion of becoming a certain kind of person.<sup>76</sup> Both Keenan and Kotva define the notion of becoming within a relational context that combines theology and metaphysics. Therefore, Kotva's account, like Aristotle's, is philosophical, but unlike Aristotle's, it is theological.

Secondly, Kotva argues like Cessario and Keenan that virtue incorporates both the intellectual and affective aspects of a person. Although these authors may differ by emphasizing one over the other, but the underlying datum is that virtue must reflect a whole range of human feeling, emotions, thinking and acting. However, Kotva emphasizes more of the affective aspects which includes the religious convictions of the Christian than the intellectual aspect.

Thirdly, as a corollary to the second point, Kotva is united to Cessario and Keenan by arguing that virtue fundamentally involves the treatment of tendencies, *habitus*, dispositions and capacities. Although they vary in style in the way they use terminologies in their works. For example, Cessario as archetypical Thomist uses *habitus*, as dispositions, more often than the rest. While Keenan will prefer terms like inclinations and habits.<sup>77</sup> With a pastoral outlook, Keenan prefers to use habits in order to make his discourses practical rather than abstract. While Cessario and Kotva are cautious in using the word habit to avoid the ambiguity of the term and also its

---

<sup>73</sup> Kotva, *Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 23.

<sup>74</sup> Ibid. 42.

<sup>75</sup> Ibid., 21.

<sup>76</sup> Ibid. Also see Harrington and Keenan, *Paul and Virtue Ethics*, 4ff.

<sup>77</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, especially chapter three. He gives the various levels of the use of habits.

mechanical implications. However, in whatever way these scholars use these terms they use them to encompass the fields of intellect, will and human feelings in relation to reason.<sup>78</sup>

### **5.3.2 *The Development or Acquisition of Virtue***

Central to all accounts of virtue is the development of virtue or character formation. This is because the development of virtue continues to be foundational and meaningful to our understanding of the entire concept of virtue. When we talk of development of virtue we are talking about character development. The questions that are often raised are: are virtues or character taught? Do they naturally occur? Or are we responsible for the development and growth of virtue?

Many other forms of moral inquiry attempt to give answers to these questions. For example they are points of interest in political philosophy. In Part III of *A Theory of Justice* by John Rawls, attention is paid to how individuals might be trained in a just society to develop the virtue expected of them as citizens.<sup>79</sup> According to Marcia Homiak, Rawls' presuppositions became foundational to later discourses on psychological foundations of virtues as the starting point to good moral character.<sup>80</sup> Similar questions are also being asked with legal theory, with relatively new developments in virtue jurisprudence.<sup>81</sup>

However, the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition on the development of virtue remains the most persuasive. To be able to situate the scholars under study, a guide is

---

<sup>78</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 24.

<sup>79</sup> Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*.

<sup>80</sup> Homiak, Marcia, "Moral Character," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/moral-character/>> (accessed November 27, 2014).

<sup>81</sup> See Lawrence B. Solum, "Virtue Jurisprudence: An Aretaic Theory Of Law" <http://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/law-theory-workshop/files/Solum.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2015).

required. To use a common source of all three scholars, Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* proposes a method by which people develop virtue by using an analogy between virtue and art. In Book II, chapter 1, he argues that virtue as a set of skills gradually develops over time through practice. He distinguishes between capacities acquired by nature and those acquired through practice. For him natural capacities are those “we first acquire the potentiality and later exhibit the activity” like hearing and seeing. These activities do not need practice.<sup>82</sup> In contrast there are those activities or skills we acquire through learning and practice, for example differentiating musical notes.<sup>83</sup> But in chapter 4 of Book II, Aristotle himself takes into consideration the deficiency of his analogy given that virtues necessitate a person to be in a particular internal disposition while the arts do not.

The primary thrust of the above is that virtue is both acquired innately and through corresponding practice, correction and inner personal disposition. Aquinas expanded on Aristotle’s thought when he wrote:

Virtue is natural to man inchoatively . . . in so far as in man’s reason are to be found instilled by nature certain naturally known principles of both knowledge and action, which are the nurseries of intellectual and moral virtues, in so far as there is in the will a natural appetite for good in accordance with reason . . . [B]oth intellectual and moral virtues are in us by way of natural aptitude, inchoatively, but not perfectly, since nature is determined to one, while the perfection of these virtues does not depend on one particular mode of action, but on various modes, in respect of the various matters, which constitute the sphere of virtue’s action, and according to various circumstances.<sup>84</sup>

Mary M. Keys in *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good* recognizes a distinction between Aristotle’s account of the development of virtue and Aquinas’s accounts:

---

<sup>82</sup> Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* 110 3a 26-30.

<sup>83</sup> *Ibid.*, 110 3a 31-32.

<sup>84</sup> *ST I-II*, q.63. a. 1.

On Aristotle's account, by nature we are more or less fertile soil for planting the flowers or fruits of the ethical virtues. On Aquinas's account, the soil of our nature already contains the seed of those virtues, both intellectual and ethical, as well as an inclination to water and grow them.<sup>85</sup>

To turn again to Cessario, Keenan and Kotva.

Cessario as a realist moral theologian begins by appealing to a realist anthropology that recognizes how people have different aptitudes for moral development.<sup>86</sup> He then proceeds to substantiate this claim by adopting Aquinas's epistemology which states that each person possesses a natural endowment distinct from *habitus* which exist within the limits set by common human nature, which is achievable through personal effort.<sup>87</sup> He then draws a link between *habitus* and capacity; *habitus* is a structuring structure that directs capacities.<sup>88</sup> As such it must have within it three conditions to fully develop into a virtue: versatility (ability to perform other functions), malleability (suppleness towards change), and the agent himself (affected by two sources; infused and acquired).<sup>89</sup> These three conditions summarize Aquinas's position on the development and growth of virtue, which Cessario adopts.

One of the distinctive aspects of Cessario's conception of the development of virtue is the activity of the Holy Spirit operational in the infused virtues which elicits twofold change: Image restoration which consists in the rectification of disordered

---

<sup>85</sup> Mary M. Keys, *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 106.

<sup>86</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 36.

<sup>87</sup> See chapter 2 sub-section 2.5.1.

<sup>88</sup> For further reading on capacity see Ian Burkitt, "Technologies of the Self: Habitus and Capacities," *Journal for the Social Behaviour* 32:2 <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/1468-5914.00184/asset/1468-5914.00184.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).

<sup>89</sup> See chapter two sub-section 2.5.1.

appetites and also the acquisition of an array of graced benefactions.<sup>90</sup> Another distinct feature is that Cessario acknowledges the value of behavioural sciences, although he rarely follows through on this point.<sup>91</sup> It is however an acceptance of one of Anscombe's theses, that is the need of an adequate philosophy of psychology, especially moral psychology.<sup>92</sup> Therefore, the virtues can be acquired through the gift of grace and practices congenial to human reason, goodwill, and intentionality. Unfortunately, Cessario left intentionality unexplored all through his works.

Similarly, Keenan does not depart from the Thomistic pattern for the development of virtue, albeit he does not offer an in-depth explication, as did Cessario. However, he hypothetically treats it under the theme of habits.<sup>93</sup> Keenan argues that there are traits of character that are innate in us, but more so there are those that can be acquired by learning and practice.<sup>94</sup> But he does not bring out the difference between ordinary habit and actual practice which involves the use of one's rational powers as Carlisle argues.<sup>95</sup> He simply follows MacIntyre who maintains that practices help to develop dispositions to perform particular actions that are virtuous.<sup>96</sup> MacIntyre further states that virtues can be acquired through internal and external practices within an on-going social networking.<sup>97</sup> He therefore emphasized our understanding of virtues should begin from practices rather than passions. Keenan draws upon this conception and enlarges the dimension of the social networking which resonates with the practices considered from his concept of relationality as seen in chapter three. Keenan is more anthropological than Cessario who is more theological.

---

<sup>90</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 3-18.

<sup>91</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 25.

<sup>92</sup> See Anscombe, "Modern Moral Philosophy."

<sup>93</sup> See chapter three.

<sup>94</sup> See chapter three, page 42.

<sup>95</sup> Carlisle, *On Habit: Thinking in Action*, 104ff.

<sup>96</sup> See MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 2<sup>nd</sup>., 273.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

One of the distinctive features in Keenan's concept of the development of virtue that makes him different from Cessario and Kotva is his emphasis that virtues are dynamic rather than static. This encompasses the realm of experience in one's life and that of others'.<sup>98</sup> His relationality model in which the concerns for the general good can affect concerns for self-care and unique relationship as explained in chapter three informs this approach. Another distinct feature is that our varied states of life and occupation constitute formative processes to the acquisition of virtues.<sup>99</sup> As a pastorally orientated theologian, Keenan is very practical in showing how the virtues can be formed. For Keenan the acquisition of virtue must be personal and intentional, demanding self-knowledge. Self-knowledge means the understanding our personalities that will aid form particular dispositions that are appropriate to specific choices in life.<sup>100</sup>

Keenan analogously maintained that the grace of God is must needed for the development of virtues. But going through his works one can see a nuance that he tends to be more anthropological. He tends to write more about practices and habits more than what the grace of God can do within us.

Kotva unlike Cessario and Keenan appeals to behavioural sciences as basis to his understanding of the development of virtues. This is clearly seen when he takes a middle course between behaviourism, and voluntarism.<sup>101</sup> Although appealing to the behavioural sciences, he accentuates the point that virtue ethics considers the self as a self-forming and determining agent by arguing: "We acquire the virtues in or through our actions and choices, by habituation and training, and through the praise and blame,

---

<sup>98</sup> I refer you to chapter three where cited my father's experience as a drunk.

<sup>99</sup> Keenan, *Virtues for Ordinary Christians*, 5-6. Here he cites the example of his father.

<sup>100</sup> See example given in chapter three.

<sup>101</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 26-27.

censure or encouragement of others.”<sup>102</sup> The above idea of blame resonates with the example I shared in chapter three regarding my father. Virtues do not only come about through praise but as well through constructive blame. A virtue then can develop contrary to an acquired vice. Kotva therefore expands his scope on the development of virtue by referencing praise and blame.

Like Cessario and Keenan, Kotva also links the development of virtue with grace. But unlike Cessario and Keenan he criticizes earlier account of virtue that ignored the role of grace.<sup>103</sup> This legitimizes his position as belonging to the Reformed tradition by weaving through the ideas of Berkhof, Erickson and Macquarrie.<sup>104</sup> These scholars underline the fact that both God’s grace and human effort are necessary for sanctification and the development of virtue. Understandingly, he choses three authors from the Reformed tradition with similar world view on grace in order to show a shift from the typical Reformed tradition of *Sola Gratia* to a more ecumenical view that tallies with the Catholic tradition. He ends up by constructing an understanding of grace that is very Augustinian.<sup>105</sup>

Note that Kotva is writing in response to a contention that the Reformed tradition finds virtue and Grace incompatible. For example, Porter argues that the

---

<sup>102</sup> Ibid., 28.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid., 74.

<sup>104</sup> See Berkhof, *Christian Faith*; Erickson, *Christian Theology* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.; and Macquarrie, *Principles of Christian Theology*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

<sup>105</sup> See St. Augustine, *On Grace and Free Will*, trans. Peter Holmes and Robert Ernest Wallis, and revised by Benjamin B. Warfield, *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. 5. Ed. Philip Schaff (New York: Christian Literature Publishing, 1887). Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1510.htm>> (accessed December 2, 2014). St. Augustine argues at a general level in chapter Seven that grace is necessary with freewill to lead a good life. And at a spiritual level he argues against the Pelagians who denied the need of grace to get to heaven. Hence in chapter Eighteen he argues in line with the Epistle of James 2:14-26 that faith without good works is insufficient for salvation.

theology of the Reformers led to a turn to law rather than virtue.<sup>106</sup> As previously detailed, Protestantism was suspicious of virtue because it presupposed total dependence on the person to achieve moral goodness. For example the French Protestant theologian Roger Mehl in *Catholic Ethics and Protestant Ethics* argues that virtue in itself does not make a person good. However, general protestant ethics acknowledges the pedagogical significance of virtue.<sup>107</sup> Correspondingly, Donald G. Bloesch in *Freedom for Obedience: Evangelical Ethics in Contemporary Times* conveys doubts in the concept of virtue because the notion of character purports to emphasize habituation that is irreconcilable to Christian thought on grace.<sup>108</sup> These conversations according to the typical Reformed tradition end in the conclusion that virtue does not make us good because we are dependent on the grace of God.<sup>109</sup>

Kotva as a Reformed theologian does not legitimize the above claims and therefore responds to the contention differently by stating that grace is compatible with virtue ethics. Recent writers have argued in line with Kotva. For example Rehnman finds the above suspicion and doubt unfounded and blames it on a gross neglect of primary sources.<sup>110</sup> To solve this problem Rehnman focuses on the works of early Reformer Pietro Martire Vermigli (1499-1562). Vermigli argues in his work *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* that virtue is central to a good life and

---

<sup>106</sup> Porter, "Virtue Ethics," 95. See also Eilert Herms, "Virtues: A Neglected Concept in Protestant Ethics," *Scottish Journal of Theology* Vol. 35, Issue 6 (December 1982): 483.

<sup>107</sup> Roger Mehl, *Catholic Ethics and Protestant Ethics* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971), 91-2.

<sup>108</sup> Donald G. Bloesch, *Freedom for Obedience: Evangelical Ethics in Contemporary Times* (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984), 82. See Stanley Hauerwas and Charles Pinches, *Christians Among the Virtues: Theological Conversations with Ancient and Modern Ethics* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1997), 27.

<sup>109</sup> See Sebastian Rehnman, "Virtue and Grace," *Studies in Christian Ethics* Vol. 25 (2012): 475.

<sup>110</sup> *Ibid.*

is compatible with grace.<sup>111</sup> He clearly brings this out in the distinction he makes between the infused and acquired virtues in *Ethicorum Commentarius* when he states:

The acquired virtues do not contradict the infused virtues: when it comes to the true virtues such as faith, hope, charity and the like, we must say that nothing prevents our nature (in spite of its corruption) from being adorned with those gifts of grace, provided that God himself stoops to impart them. It is against human nature, however, to acquire these virtues by ourselves and through our own efforts.<sup>112</sup>

This is the trend of thought which Kotva has so far followed. He has avoided the extreme position of the radical Reformers. He supports the argument that grace is not contrary to virtue and human nature. Similarly, Cessario following Augustine and Ambrose argues that the Christian must be attentive to the active interaction between human effort and divine grace.<sup>113</sup>

Even though Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva have shown that virtue come about through practice, all have fail to show in depth how political, economic, and religious institutions play a huge role in the development and growth of virtue. They may have affirmed the anthropological and sociological contributions but have not develop an engaging account that reflects the deeper influences of environment, family and cultural values of particular people. Any account of the development of virtue must be opened to the variances in cultural values.

---

<sup>111</sup> Pietro Martire Vermigli, *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, ed. Emidio Campi and Joseph C. McLellard (Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2006). Originally in *Primum, secundum et initium tertii libri Ethicorum ad Nicomachum Commentarius*, ed. Guilio Santerenziano, Luca Baschera and Christopher Moser (Leiden: Brill, 2011).

<sup>112</sup> Vermigli, *Ethicorum Commentarius*, 309.

<sup>113</sup> Cessario, *The Virtues, or the Examined Life*, 10.

### 5.3.3 Use of Scripture

As previously noted *Optatam Totius* 16 challenges theologians to use scripture in order to establish biblical-theological foundations to aid a moral theology that is explicitly Christian.<sup>114</sup> In a more specific way, the renewal of moral theology through Scripture in virtue ethics can be legitimized with the following reasons: Firstly, scripture is relevant to virtue ethics because of the prominence it gives to the law of the spirit written in people's hearts.<sup>115</sup> This is an operating principle that has its roots from the Old Testament (See Jer 31:33). The spirit works within the hearts of humanity to recreate us and to give the strength to yield the fruits anticipated by the word of God.<sup>116</sup> In connection to virtue, Aquinas is more exact when he writes: "What is primary in the law of the New Testament, and it is in this that the entire virtues consist, is the grace of the Holy Spirit that is given through faith in Christ."<sup>117</sup>

Secondly, a return to Scripture reiterates the datum that there are particular things that human reason alone cannot comprehend. Hence we turn to Scripture for fuller understanding.<sup>118</sup> Hamel further argues that human reason is not infallible and so needs to be perfected by Scripture. In this sense, biblical morality becomes a faithful and more consistent mirror and guide especially in those areas that deal with the passion.<sup>119</sup> He further amplifies the importance of the use of scripture when he states:

---

<sup>114</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, xiii.

<sup>115</sup> Edouard Hamel, "Scripture: The Soul of Moral Theology," in *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 106. This thesis adopts the propositions Hamel offers.

<sup>116</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>117</sup> *ST I-II*, q. 106. a. 1.

<sup>118</sup> Hamel, "Scripture: The Soul of Moral Theology," 108-9. See also *Dei Verbum* no. 6.

<sup>119</sup> *Ibid.*, 110.

Biblical morality will reveal to the Christian the profound meaning of the indications that come from one's own conscience. Left to one's own lights, the human being remains an enigma to oneself . . . only revelation provides the full meaning of human moral rules, of human values (virtues). Biblical morality will also serve as a developer.<sup>120</sup>

However, there are diametrically opposing views to the importance of Scripture in doing ethics today. For instance Jack T. Sanders in *Ethics in the New Testament: Change and Development* offers two reasons why the New Testament is irrelevant for ethics: the diversity of Scripture, and the eschatological probabilities of the New Testament writers.<sup>121</sup> Sanders argues:

Jesus does not provide a valid ethics for today. His ethical teaching is interwoven with his imminent eschatology to such a degree that every attempt to separate the two and to draw out only the ethical thread invariably and inevitably draws out also strands of the eschatology, so that both yarns only lie in a heap.<sup>122</sup>

Perhaps, Sander's presuppositions are more epistemological than theological. Because within the theological dimension Jesus's ethics can be merged with his eschatology when we consider his ethics as a 'kingdom ethic'.<sup>123</sup> Sanders apparently downplays the force of the identity that the Christian experiences in his or her faith in the person of Jesus as the normative person in the whole of the Christian tradition. In this, the ethics that Jesus offers encompasses the whole of his life and ministry. It may not be logically laid out as we have ethics done today but its distinctive character is nonetheless evident. Hence, Bruce B. Birch and Larry L. Rasmussen write in *Bible and Christian Ethics*:

---

<sup>120</sup> Ibid.

<sup>121</sup> Jack T. Sanders, *Ethics in the New Testament: Change and Development* (Philadelphia, 1975). See also his article "The Question of the Relevance of Jesus for Ethics Today," *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 45-65.

<sup>122</sup> Ibid., 29.

<sup>123</sup> See Georgia Harkness, "Christian Ethics," <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=802&C=1078> (accessed December 2, 2014).

“Our contention is that the most effective and crucial impact of the Bible in Christian ethics is that of shaping the moral identity of the Christian and the church.”<sup>124</sup>

Bearing in mind the above reasons for the use of Scripture, and its relevance to virtue ethics, we shall proceed in this sub-section to position Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva in their use of Scripture. It is not the intention of this thesis to address explicit methodological and exegetical issues in their use of scripture. It is rather to highlight their hermeneutical patterns. More specifically it is our intention to situate them within James M. Gustafson’s two distinctions in the use of scripture, namely, a “moral use” and “theological use” and partly Kenneth R. Himes four hermeneutical tasks as we shall later explain.<sup>125</sup> The advocates of the “moral use” use scripture as an authoritative source of morality, while the advocates of “theological use” apply scripture as a primary source of knowledge which shapes and informs our response to God’s call.<sup>126</sup>

Cessario’s use of Scripture is identifiable with Gustafson’s “theological use”. To cast our minds back, Cessario argues that the New Testament presents virtue as an internal principle, which guides an individual’s relationship with God and neighbour.<sup>127</sup> For Cessario, such operative principle of the New Testament is not only limited to the infused virtues but also applicable to the moral virtues. This shows the theological link expressed by Vermigli as shown in the previous sub-section. The “theological use” of

---

<sup>124</sup> Bruce B. Birch and Larry L. Rasmussen, *Bible and Christian Ethics* (Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1976), 104.

<sup>125</sup> For further reading on these uses of scripture see James M. Gustafson, “The Place of Scripture in Christian Ethics: A Methodological Study,” *Interpretation* 24/4(1970): 430-455. Reprinted in his *Theology and Christian Ethics* (Ohio: Pilgrim Press, 1974).

<sup>126</sup> See Allen Verhey, “The Use of Scripture in Ethics,” in *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick (New York: Paulist Press, 1984), 214. For other forms of the uses of scripture in ethics see David Kelsey, *Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975).

<sup>127</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., 1.

Scripture by Cessario is further illustrated through his constructive hermeneutical interpretation of the Parable of the Maidens in Matt. 25: 1-13. He explains that the text challenges the preparedness of the Christian disciple in welcoming the kingdom of God.<sup>128</sup>

The implication for Cessario's approach stresses further the significance of the scriptural text in the formation of a virtuous character for the kingdom. The underlying factor here is the entire process by which an individual's character is formed in agreement with beatific vision. This is in line with what John Brunt and Gerald Winslow say in an article "The Bible's Role in Christian Ethics: "Scripture shapes the character of the moral actor."<sup>129</sup> This supports the earlier statements made by Birch and Rasmussen in chapter one.<sup>130</sup> For Cessario, a person's identity is vividly captured in his/her response to God. He uses biblical citations that are indicative of such. For example, Matt. 5:9, Matt. 6: 33; Luke 18:18-19; John 1: 5; 1 Cor. 2: 14; 2 Cor.4: 6 etc. Therefore, Cessario' use of Scripture can be situated within the "theological use".

Similarly, Keenan acknowledges the place of Scripture in virtue ethics specifically moral theology in general when he writes: "Roman catholic moral theology which long considered scripture as no more than a reminder of the moral life, now finds through the medium of virtue ethics the resources for living an animated life of love and justice based on revelation."<sup>131</sup> This is further re-echoed in Keenan's co-authored books with Harrington, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics* and *Paul and Virtue Ethics*. Primarily, these

---

<sup>128</sup> Ibid., 2.

<sup>129</sup> John Brunt and Gerald Winslow, "The Bible's Role in Christian Ethics," *Andrews University Seminary Studies* vol. 20, no. 20 (Spring 1982): 3-21.

<sup>130</sup> See sub-section 1.1.

<sup>131</sup> James F. Keenan, "Innovation: The Recovery of History and Scripture for Moral Theology," Center for Catholic Studies and Social Thought. Summer Lectures Series July 9<sup>th</sup> 2008.

two books can be said to be a respond to the call of Vatican II towards the renewal for a biblically founded moral theology as earlier detailed. Keenan himself acknowledges that he uses virtue ethics as a means of transmitting the content of the New Testament Ethics.<sup>132</sup> In the above mentioned co-authored books, while Harrington treats questions of methods in biblical exegesis and makes textual interpretations of particular pericopes, for example, Matt. 6:24 and Luke 16:13, Keenan interprets the text with a view to creating a bridge between virtue ethics and scripture. His focus is to express the New Testament emphasis on human response to God's gracious activity in Jesus.<sup>133</sup>

Like Cessario, Keenan applies the "theological use" of scripture. This is visible in the way he seeks deeper insights into his three-fold question of "who are we?" "who we ought become?" and "how do we get there?" These are compressed into the concept of God's kingdom as the perspective and goal of which the entire Christian ethics is centered upon. In this way, Keenan's interpretations of biblical texts (although few) are based on divine standards not human standards. For example in his interpretations of Matt. 20: 1-16 he writes:

In scripture, we see that Jesus teaches that, although God's kingdom will establish the right order, it will not be simply based on human standards of justice and on strict reward and punishment. The parable of laborers in the field who enter the work force at different times . . . makes clear that the eschatological celebration will not be simple *quid pro quo*, since because of the owner's generosity, all are paid the same, even though some worked only a short time.<sup>134</sup>

The thrust of Keenan's argument is the kingdom. He therefore draws upon the virtue thoughts of Aquinas and relates it to the kingdom as the end which demands certain qualities. In this sense, to be part of the kingdom, one must develop particular virtues

---

<sup>132</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 29.

<sup>133</sup> *Ibid.*, xiv.

<sup>134</sup> *Ibid.*, 43.

or values as highlighted in the Sermon on the Mount in Matt. 5: 3ff.

Keenan's use of scripture is informed too by his idea of the concept of movement, or growth in virtue as seen in various New Testament texts particularly in the encounter Jesus had with people.<sup>135</sup> He argues, moving forward is a constant theme within the Gospels: The shepherds hurry to see the baby Jesus (Luke 2: 8-21), the disciples called to leave everything and follow Jesus (Matt. 4: 18-22) Zacchaeus climbs the tree to see Jesus (Luke 19: 3-5), the woman with haemorrhage pushes forward to touch Jesus (Luke 8: 43-48) and the prodigal son turns towards home (Luke 15: 11-32). Keenan's idea of using movement is centered on a movement towards God. This is one of the best descriptions of the "theological use of scripture." He may be lacking in exegesis but he brings out the theological significance of the text as it relates to virtue as a moral theologian.

Like Cessario and Keenan, Kotva also admits the compatibility between scripture and virtue ethics.<sup>136</sup> But unlike them Kotva uses scripture in the "moral sense". Scripture for him is used as an authority. This is an approach common within the Reformed Tradition as we have seen. For example he does this by appealing to the Beatitudes in Matt. 5:3-6 to stress the internal qualities exhorted by Christ which are reflective of virtues' emphasis on dispositions. Like Keenan, he comments on the Sermon on the Mount but interprets them rather as entirely having a direct link with virtue ethics which this thesis considers not completely so:

Consider, for example, the Sermon on the Mount. The beatitudes depict the kinds of people and actions that will receive full share in God's coming Kingdom. In pronouncing blessings on the "poor in spirit" (5:3), on those who "hunger and thirst for righteousness" (5:6), and

---

<sup>135</sup> See Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 27.

<sup>136</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case For Virtue Ethics*, 103.

those who are “pure of heart” (5:8), Matthew’s Jesus promises God’s reign to those who are humble before God, who yearn for and desire God’s justice, and who live from a position of genuineness and integrity. While these and other blessings presuppose action, they also commend a posture reflecting certain attitudes and feeling.<sup>137</sup>

One may seek to interpret these beatitudes along the lines of virtue ethics but to claim that they have direct link with virtue ethics will be too presumptuous. This goes to show how he uses scripture as an authoritative source.

Hermeneutically, one of Kotva’s dialoguing partners is Allen Verhey who in *The Great Reversal: Ethics and the New Testament* suggests that the text of the beatitudes demands certain character traits and in fact creating what he calls a “catalogue of virtues”.<sup>138</sup> This explains the antithesis in Matt. 5: 21-48 where there is a movement from external actions to internal dispositions: “Jesus never denies that killing is wrong, but he explicitly warns about anger (5:27-28)”<sup>139</sup> Here Jesus addresses the root of murder which is anger. What Kotva is doing is to show how the gospel narratives provide a context which forms our individual and collective personalities. This is in line with Hauerwas conception of how narrative affects virtue.<sup>140</sup>

Kotva repeatedly turns to St. Paul’s writings to re-enforce the internal qualities he argues in favour of in Matthew. For example, he appeals to the lists of virtues in Romans 1:29-31; 13:13; 1 Cor. 5:10-11. Kotva in his use of Scripture explores both Matthew’s and Pauline literary and rhetorical devices that are consistent with virtue ethics, for example moral paradigms, and illustrations of character traits. While Matthew’s supremacy of Jesus structures the distinctive virtues of a person, Paul’s

---

<sup>137</sup> Ibid., 104.

<sup>138</sup> Allen Verhey, *The Great Reversal: Ethics and the New Testament* (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984), 86.

<sup>139</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case For Virtue Ethics*, 104.

<sup>140</sup> Hauerwas, *Community of Character: Toward a Constructive Christian Social Ethic*.

insistence on God's grace makes a Kotva's approach comprehensive.

Kotva also employs the "theological use" of scripture. Parallel to Keenan's conception of discipleship as the call Jesus offers in the New Testament, Kotva is convinced that Jesus calls his disciples, trains them and becomes a true model to them.<sup>141</sup> Also like Keenan, Kotva employs the concept of moral growth through the use of terms like "walking" or "racing" in the light of Christian demands depicted in texts like Rom. 6:4; 8:4; 1 Thess. 2:12; 1 Cor. 3:3; 1 Cor. 9:24-27. According to Keenan and Kotva, the Christian life through virtue is dynamic not static.<sup>142</sup> Kotva particularly uses concepts like transformation and sanctification to highlight the above point.

On the whole, we can say that Kotva in particular is more grounded in biblical exegesis and hermeneutics than Cessario and Keenan. This explains his criticism of Cessario for inappropriate use of Scripture.<sup>143</sup> While Cessario and Keenan will more often use scripture as proof-text, Kotva engages with the text through a hermeneutical method of correlation and appropriation as emphasized in chapter four. Again Kotva is more specific in his choice of texts which capture both the implicit and explicit language of virtue better than Cessario and Keenan. Perhaps this is borne out of the knowledge that for the Reformed tradition Scripture has a regulative function.<sup>144</sup>

Interestingly, Kotva's choice of Matthew, which at first value represents a law-ethic and Paul's emphasis on grace seemingly, gives little space for virtue ethics. But the methodology that he applies persuasively shows how these books are connected to virtue ethics through a conversation by realizing the relevance of Spohn's assertion:

---

<sup>141</sup> See Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 68.

<sup>142</sup> *Ibid.*, 71; Kotva, *The Christian Case For Virtue Ethics*, 124.

<sup>143</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 64, note 26.

<sup>144</sup> J. Thomas Whetstone, "Principles of Reformed Worship" <http://theaquilareport.com/principles-of-reformed-worship/> (accessed February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014).

Readers who are seeking meaning rather than a detached, objective picture of Jesus cannot treat the . . . text as a relic. They must enter into conversation with it, bring their questions and concerns into ‘the world of the text’ and interrogate it from new angles. They also must let the text interrogate them and allow its strangeness to upset their familiar frameworks and assumptions. It must enter the world of the reader to generate fresh meaning.<sup>145</sup>

The on-going application of biblical text into moral reflection reiterates the significance of scripture in moral theology as we explained in chapter one. To adequately interpret Scripture and relate it to moral theology one needs to be aware of four tasks as identified by Kenneth R. Himes in “Scripture and Ethics: A Review Essay”:

- The Exegetical task: examines the text from its original context.
- The Hermeneutical task: assesses the meaning of the text for today.
- The Methodological task: shows how scripture is used in moral Reflection
- The Theological Task: explicates the relationship of scripture to other sources of moral wisdom.<sup>146</sup>

Sandra M. Schneiders in *The Revelatory Text* incorporates these tasks into her three hermeneutical models: *The World Behind the Text*, *The World of the Text*, and *The World Before the Text*.<sup>147</sup>

Kotva’s interpretations or application of Matthew, Paul and other biblical texts he uses are based on Himes third and fourth tasks: Methodological and Theological tasks. He ignores the broader historical, cultural, literary contexts of the text. But the interest here is to agree with Spohn who argues that Scripture today is read through

---

<sup>145</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 16.

<sup>146</sup> Kenneth R. Himes, “Scripture and Ethics: A Review Essay,” *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 15 (April 1985): 65-73. See also Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 166-172.

<sup>147</sup> Schneiders, *The Revelatory Text: Interpreting the New Testament as Sacred Scripture*, 97-174.

ethics than through history.<sup>148</sup> Perhaps this explains the inability of Cessario, Keenan and Kotva to reflect the “world behind the text” that is the history of composition of the various texts used. But in the words of Gula: “Any use of the Bible is uncritical which ignores the cultural horizons and presuppositions both ‘behind the text’ and ‘in front of the text’”.<sup>149</sup> A better hermeneutic will take cognizance of Gula’s observation.

## SECTION 2

---

<sup>148</sup> Spohn, *Go and Do Likewise*, 16. For further reading on the historical background of the text see; Tom Wright, *Luke for Everyone* (London: SPCK, 2001); *Encyclopedia Judaica* Vol. 14 “Samaritans,” s.v; Stephen Kaufman, “Samaritan Political Identity.” A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for an M. A in Middle Eastern History, Tel Aviv University, 1998.

<sup>149</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 168.

#### **5.4 The Human Person as the Image of God: A Biblical-Theological View**

The question ‘what is a human person?’ is a question that has challenged all generations and different fields of study.<sup>150</sup> For some, it is best answered through philosophical inquiries. For example the German Philosopher Emmanuel Kant summarizes his understanding of the human person by answering four fundamental questions 1. What is man? (Anthropology) 2. What can I know (Epistemology)? 3. What ought I do? (Ethics) 4. What may I hope? (Religion). The last three questions cannot be adequately answered without consideration of the first which deals with the identity and nature of the human person.<sup>151</sup> Religions offer a deeper insight into the experiences, narratives and concepts pertaining to the human person as existence, meaning and purpose of the human life. Catholic Christian theology drawing upon both sources of faith and reason seeks to present a holistic approach to the human person.

Put together, one can consider the human person as a created, social, political, historical, moral and spiritual being.<sup>152</sup> However, this section shall consider the human person from the biblical anthropological perspective as created in the image and likeness of God. This thesis chooses to restrict our understanding of the human person

---

<sup>150</sup> Before Vatican II the concept “human nature” was more in use. But since Vatican II, there has been a shift to the use of “human person”. This shift is important because human nature only emphasises the natural tendencies of common bodily structures and functions but the concept human person brings the totality of the person into perspective. Therefore, Vatican II ushered in a personalistic foundation of morality. For further reading see Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 63-4.

<sup>151</sup> Cited by Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 119.

<sup>152</sup> See Plato’s *Phaedo* and *Republic*, in *Plato: Complete Works*, eds., John M Cooper and D. S. Hutchinson (Indianapolis: Hackett, 1997); *Catholic Encyclopedia*, s.v “Person.” For further reading on the historical being see: Karl Rahner, *Christian at the Crossroads* (London: Burns and Oats, 1977); *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, trans. William V. Dych (New York: Crossroad, 1976); *Hearer of the Word: Laying Foundation for a Philosophy of Religion* trans. Joseph Donceel (London: Continuum 1994); Declan Marmion and Mary E. Hines eds., *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005); Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzmann, “Karl Rahner and Human Nature: Implications for Ethics,” *Irish Theological Quarterly* 74 (2009): 289-418.

to *Imago Dei* for the following reasons: Firstly, to consider the human person from the various fields of inquiry will be rather too broad. Secondly, the concept of the *Imago* can encompass key concepts pertinent to our subject and to moral theology as whole.<sup>153</sup>

There are other relevant biblical passages that speak of the person as an image of God, the central biblical reference concerns creation: “Let us make humankind in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth, and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth” (Gen. 1: 26-27). According to Michael Maher, in *Genesis*: “The phrase as a whole is meant to convey the idea that humanity, the high point of creation, was brought into being as a result of a special divine choice and decision.”<sup>154</sup> In the creation narrative of Genesis only the human person is created in God’s “image” (*tselem*) and “likeness” (*Demuth*).

According to Gula: “To say that the human person is the “image of God” is first a theological statement before it is an anthropological one. This means that it says something about the relation between God and us which has implications for what it means to be human.”<sup>155</sup> Both the theological and anthropological understanding of the human person as the “image of God” is highlighted more in the New Testament. For example James 3:9, forbids the use of the tongue to curse other persons because we have been made in God’s likeness. Again in 2 Cor. 3:18, St. Paul writes: “And all of us, with unveiled faces, seeing the glory of the Lord as though reflected in a mirror, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another; for this comes from the Lord, the Spirit.”

---

<sup>153</sup> Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 141.

<sup>154</sup> Michael Maher, *Genesis* (Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1987), 29.

<sup>155</sup> Gula, *Reason Informed by Faith*, 64.

The above text unveils a progressive nature of the image of God within us while the Old Testament texts show how the human person originated. This progressive nature of the image of God is further expressed by St. Paul in his letter to the Ephesians 4: 23-24: “Be renewed in the spirit of your minds, and to clothe yourselves with the new self, created according to the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.” From this context therefore, the human person is not the definitive image-bearer of God; Jesus Christ is (2 Cor. 4:4; Col. 1:15).<sup>156</sup> James and Demarest argue:

By entering our time and space, the Son of God has given visible demonstration of what God is like (John 1: 18; 14:9). God’s purpose for His twice-born children is that they should “be conformed to the likeness of his Son” (Rom. 8:29). Thus through the new birth and life-long “imitation of Christ” . . . believers are being shaped into the likeness of Christ, the perfect image of God. The fact of the human being’s creation in God’s likeness is stated in the first page of the Bible; but not until the revelation of God’s Son and His redeeming work did the full implications of the human person’s resemblance to God become clear.<sup>157</sup>

The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* also states:

It is in Christ the ‘image of the invisible God’, that man has been created ‘in the image and likeness’ of the Creator. It is in Christ, Redeemer and Saviour, that the divine image, disfigured in man by the first sin, has been restored to its original beauty and ennobled by the grace of God.<sup>158</sup>

The history of Christian theology has affirmed that over the centuries there have been developments and different interpretations of the doctrine of the *Imago Dei*. The International Theological Commission in a document titled *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God* writes:

Patristic and medieval theology diverged at certain points from biblical anthropology, and developed it at other points. The majority

---

<sup>156</sup> James and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 150.

<sup>157</sup> Ibid. For further reading on Christ as the Image of God see Frances Young, *God’s Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013), 158-172.

<sup>158</sup> CCC no. 1701.

of the representatives of the tradition, for example, did not fully embrace the biblical vision which identified the image with the totality of man. A significant development of the biblical account was the distinction between image and likeness, introduced by St. Irenaeus, according to which ‘image’ denotes an ontological participation (*methexis*) and ‘likeness’ (*mimêsis*) a moral transformation (*Adv. Haer.* V,6,1; V,8,1; V,16,2). According to Tertullian, God created man in his image and gave him the breath of life as his likeness. While the image can never be destroyed, the likeness can be lost by sin (*Bapt.* 5, 6.7). St. Augustine did not take up this distinction, but presented a more personalistic, psychological and existential account of the *imago Dei*. For him, the image of God in man has a Trinitarian structure, reflecting either the tripartite structure of the human soul (spirit, self-consciousness, and love) or the threefold aspects of the psyche (memory, intelligence, and will). According to Augustine, the image of God in man orients him to God in invocation, knowledge and love.<sup>159</sup>

These divergent patristic views have greatly influenced the writings of the scholastics.

For example, the Commission continues by explaining this influence in the works of Aquinas, Bonaventure and Meister Eckhart:

In Thomas Aquinas, the *Imago Dei* possesses an historical character, since it passes through three stages: the *imago creationis (naturae)*, the *imago recreationis (gratiae)*, and the *similitudinis (gloriae)* (*ST I* q.93 a.4). For Aquinas, the *Imago Dei* is the basis for participation in the divine life. The image of God is realized principally in an act of contemplation in the intellect (*ST I* q.93 a.4 and 7). This conception can be distinguished from that of Bonaventure, for whom the image is realized chiefly through the will in the religious act of man (*Sent.* II d.16 a.2, q.3). Within a similar mystical vision, but with a greater boldness, Meister Eckhart tends to spiritualize the *Imago Dei* by placing it at the summit of the soul and detaching it from the body (*Quint.* I, 5, 5-7; V, 6.9s).<sup>160</sup>

Across the divergent approaches, it may be said that the concept of the *Imago Dei* is what makes humans human.<sup>161</sup> One anthropological implication is that we all share in

---

<sup>159</sup> International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God*, 2002.

<sup>160</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>161</sup> See Walter Eichrodt, *Theology of the Old Testament* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967), 2, 122.

the same human condition. Our existence as persons is based on the divine love of God, which is a Trinity that remains a great symbol of our relationality; God says: “let *us* make man”.<sup>162</sup> Gula further captures:

The Trinitarian doctrine implies a communitarian understanding of being human. The trinitarian vision sees that no one exists by oneself, but only in relationship to others. To be is to be in relationship. The individual and the community co-exist. Humanity and relatedness are proportional so that the deeper one’s participations in relationship is, the more human one becomes. Since community is necessary to grow in God’s image.<sup>163</sup>

Moral principles therefore can be generated as we enter into relationships with other people. Principles that help us discover who we are and who we can be within ourselves and in relation to others.<sup>164</sup>

Millard J Erickson in *Christian Theology* goes on to further convey the theological-pastoral implications:

Our understanding of the image will affect how we treat our fellow humans and how we minister to them. If we understand the image as being primarily human reason, then our dealings with others will be basically of an educative and cognitive nature. If we understand the image to consist in personal relationships, our ministry will emphasize “relational theology” and small-group interaction.<sup>165</sup>

To adequately consider the human person that is consistent with biblical notion, we turn to the three-fold view of image presented by Erickson. He examines the idea according to a substantive, relational, and the functional view.<sup>166</sup> The trifold approach will enable

---

<sup>162</sup> Gula, *Reasons Informed by Faith*, 64-5. Italicized word is for emphasis.

<sup>163</sup> Ibid. 65.

<sup>164</sup> Vatican II in *Gaudium et Spes* captures the different aspects of the human person; The human person is good and created in the image of God (*GS* nos. 1, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 27, 34 & 36).

<sup>165</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 459.

<sup>166</sup> Gula, *Reasons Informed by Faith*, 65. See also Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century*, 141-147. Erickson unlike Beck and Demarest gives an evaluation of the three views.

us to place the three theologians under study within these three respective views of the human person.

#### 5.4.1 *Substantive View*

Traditionally, the substantive view interprets the uniqueness of the *Imago Dei* in terms of humans exclusively possessing reason or intellect, will and other spiritual characteristics.<sup>167</sup> These capacities are what distinguish humans from other animals.<sup>168</sup> This explains the use of the term *Homo sapiens*, thinking beings. The substantive view has been a major view in the history of Christian theology.<sup>169</sup> Its interpretative process is based on the text of Gen. 1:26-27. Erickson remarks: “On the basis of Genesis 1:26-27 a tendency gradually developed to understand “image” and “likeness” as two aspects or dimensions of the image of God.”<sup>170</sup>

Different conceptions on “image” and “likeness” developed over time in Christian theology. To this effect, the patristic Fathers and later medieval theologians were polarized in distinguishing between image and likeness. For example, in the early centuries of the church, Justin Martyr (100-165) in his *Apology* outlined the “image” in relation to reason and moral aptitude: “In the beginning when God created man, he endowed him with the power of understanding, of choosing the truth, and of doing right.”<sup>171</sup> While St. Augustine posited that the *imago* inhabited the rational, spiritual soul and mind.<sup>172</sup> His anthropology is further linked to his theology of the person when he argued that the human person could “use reason and intelligence to

---

<sup>167</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 460.

<sup>168</sup> J. Wentzel van Huyssteen, *Alone on the World? Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology* (Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006), 117.

<sup>169</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 460; Christopher Lilley, “Essentially Human: A Defense of the Substantive *Imago Dei*” [http://www.academia.edu/3591810/Essentially\\_Human\\_A\\_Defense\\_of\\_the\\_Substantive\\_Imago\\_Dei](http://www.academia.edu/3591810/Essentially_Human_A_Defense_of_the_Substantive_Imago_Dei) (accessed October 23, 2014).

<sup>170</sup> *Ibid.* 461.

<sup>171</sup> Justin Martyr, *Apology* 1.28 [ANF, 1:172].

<sup>172</sup> St. Augustine, *On the Trinity* 12.7 [NPNF, 3; 158-60].

understand and behold God”.<sup>173</sup> Augustine does not show a clear distinction between the image and likeness. But St. Irenaeus the bishop of Lyons developed a systematic distinction between image and likeness.<sup>174</sup> In his treatise *Against Heresies* he argues that the image means that Adam had reason and freewill, while the likeness indicated some sort of supernatural benefaction. Accordingly, at the fall Adam lost the likeness but retained the image to some degree.<sup>175</sup>

This distinction between image and likeness by Irenaeus was further advanced by the scholastics. The Aristotelian-Thomistic version of the substantive view is considered the best version.<sup>176</sup> According to Beck and Demarest: “Aquinas wedded Aristotelian logic with Augustinian anthropology. Thomas endorsed the patristic and medieval distinction between image (the intellectual nature retained after the Fall) and likeness (conferred righteousness lost at the Fall).”<sup>177</sup> Aquinas affirms that a human person “is said to be made to the image and likeness of God” specifically with respect to “the end or terminus of the production of man” which is God.<sup>178</sup> He further articulates:

Since it is because of his intellectual nature that man is said to be made to the image of God, it follows that he is made to God’s image to the highest degree to the extent that his intellectual nature is able to imitate God to the highest degree. But it is with respect to God’s knowing and loving Himself that an intellectual nature especially imitates God.<sup>179</sup>

---

<sup>173</sup> Ibid., 14.4.

<sup>174</sup> See Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century*, 145.

<sup>175</sup> Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.6.1.

<sup>176</sup> Lilley, “Essentially Human: A Defense of the Substantive *Imago Dei*.”

<sup>177</sup> Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 146.

<sup>178</sup> *ST I-II*, q.75-102.

<sup>179</sup> *ST I-II*, q.93. a.4.

Aquinas therefore synthesized the works of the early fathers like Augustine and Origen and developed a theological-anthropology of the *Imago Dei* that is also teleological in nature. Unfortunately, this theological synthesis was unsuitable to the Reformers.

The Reformers rejected the distinction between image and likeness that characterized some of the writings of the patristic Fathers and systematized by the scholastics. Martin Luther for example in his *Lectures on Genesis* does not see a distinction between image and likeness. He posits that it expresses a common Hebrew tradition of parallelism.<sup>180</sup> He takes an extreme position when he argues that all features of the image of God in man were corrupted and what is left is but a relic.<sup>181</sup> Luther takes this position in order to argue in favour of the grace of God and so de-emphasize merits which seem to be apparent in scholastic distinction or more precisely a feature in Catholic theology.

These polarized interpretations within the substantive view of the human person leave uncoordinated conceptions of the image of God. But Erickson concludes that although they differ, however, “they agree in one particular: the locus of the image. It is located within humans as a resident quality or capacity. Although conferred by God, the image resides in humans whether or not they recognize God’s existence and his work.”<sup>182</sup>

In relation to virtue, Erickson’s conclusion suggests that the infused virtues are part of the image and likeness of God that was not lost by sin. It also suggests the acquired virtues can be developed by people whether or not they believe in God. Remarkably, all the virtues both infused and acquired find a *locus* within the human

---

<sup>180</sup> Martin Luther, “Lectures on Genesis,” in *Luther’s Works*, ed. Jaroslav Pelikan, trans. George V. Schick (St. Louis: Concordia, 1958), 1.

<sup>181</sup> *Ibid.*, 141.

<sup>182</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 463.

person; in fact the acquired virtues are called human virtues. From the above, one can argue that virtue ethics helps in realizing the fuller image of God in the human person.

As we stated earlier, the substantive view has dominated the history of Christian theology. Yet it has not gone unchallenged. Lilley, offers us three prototypes of the challenge: Firstly, the substantive view negates people with mental or physical disabilities because it only emphasises the intellectual dimension of the person.<sup>183</sup> Secondly, the substantive view appears to depart from the original, scriptural context of the *Imago Dei*, by appealing to non-biblical concepts for example the ancient Greek concept of reason.<sup>184</sup> Thirdly, the substantive view ignores the presuppositions of biological evolution. More specifically, it does not take into account the radically embodied nature of human persons, and capitulates to a rudimentary and unsophisticated form of mind-body dualism.<sup>185</sup>

#### **5.4.2 Relational View**

The conceptualization of the human person within the substantive view maintains that the *Imago Dei* resides in the capacity to reason. Contrary to this, the relational view develops a interactive understanding of the Image of God. Theologians in support of this view argue that the image and likeness consists in establishing relationships.<sup>186</sup> Erickson also contends: “Humans can be said to be in the image or to display the image when standing in a particular relationship.”<sup>187</sup>

---

<sup>183</sup> See Ibid., 469.

<sup>184</sup> See David Cairn, *The Image of God in man* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1953), 57.

<sup>185</sup> Lilley, “Essentially Human: A Defense of the Substantive Imago Dei”.

<sup>186</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 463.

<sup>187</sup> Ibid.

The relational view epitomizes a moving away from post-modern critique of individualism.<sup>188</sup> It finds its basis in the “I-thou” personalism of Martin Buber (1878-1965).<sup>189</sup> From this context then, existentialism becomes the philosophy that accentuates the relational view.<sup>190</sup> P. Donati develops Buber’s “I-thou” personalism when he writes:

The human person is someone who, standing in between the natural world (bio-physical) and transcendence, develops through social interaction. At the start, the person is a subject or potential self (“I”) who, through experience (practice), gets out of nature and becomes a primary agent (“me”), then a corporate agent (“we”), then an actor (auctor) (“you”). To me, it is at this point that the dialectic I/you meets the need to cope with the transcendental world. Then the subject returns on to the “I” as self. The “exit” from nature must always pass through the nature again and again. The transcendental reality is treated in the reflexive phase that the subject realizes after having passed through practice and sociality.<sup>191</sup>

Paul K. Jewett gives a theological explanation to Buber’s personalism of “I-thou”. Jewett in *Who we Are: Our Dignity as Human* defines *imago* relationally: “To be created in the divine image is to be so endowed that one lives one’s life in an ineluctable relationship with God and neighbour. The neighbour is that human ‘other’ that ‘thou,’ in relation to whom I know myself as ‘I.’”<sup>192</sup>

Essentially, the relational view finds adequate explanation in the theological anthropology inherent in the doctrine of the trinity.<sup>193</sup> Therefore, theologians in favour

---

<sup>188</sup> Donati, P. *Understanding the human person from the standpoint of the relational sociology* (2006). Memorandum, 11, 35-42. Retrieved / /, from World <http://www.fafich.ufmg.br/~memorandum/a11/donati01.pdf> (accessed November 4, 2014).

<sup>189</sup> Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 143.

<sup>190</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 465.

<sup>191</sup> Donati, *Understanding The Human Person From The Standpoint Of The Relational Sociology*.

<sup>192</sup> Paul K. Jewett, *Who we Are: Our Dignity as Human* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996), 131.

<sup>193</sup> See Stanley J. Grenz, *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei* (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011).

of this view ascertain the image to be strictly in human relationships. For example the neo-orthodox theologian Karl Barth in *Church Dogmatics* holds the relational view of the image of God. Barth argues that the image of God is consisting both in vertical and horizontal relationships; vertical between humans and God, horizontal between humans.<sup>194</sup> By such relationships with God man becomes an associate, a co-creator with God. Interpreting Barth, Erickson captures: “He especially sees this in the male-female relationship, so that the statement “male and female created he them” is in effect a parallel to the statement that God created humans in his own image.”<sup>195</sup> The inference is that the image is found in all humans and at all times. In this sense, the image is never loss even in the state of sin.<sup>196</sup> The most perfect image of God is Christ. For Barth to understand our humanity we must understand the paradigmatic image in Christ.<sup>197</sup>

From the above presentation, the relational view emphasizes that the image is evolving. Stanley J. Grenz in *Created for Community* construes the image as that which one becomes and not something given: God desires that we become the image of God.” He further adds: “Ultimately, the ‘image of God’ is a social reality. It refers to humans as beings-in-fellowship.”<sup>198</sup> This means that humans are only truly human within a social context.

The relational view of the person does have a link to the social content of virtue. To establish this link Milton Fisk in *Ethics and Society: a Marxist Interpretation of Value* argues that we must first decipher the moral sense of goodness which may be personal or corporate: personal when it advances the needs of he

---

<sup>194</sup> Karl Barth, *Church Dogmatics* (Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958), 184.

<sup>195</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 464; Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 143.

<sup>196</sup> See Barth, *Church Dogmatics*, 197-198.

<sup>197</sup> *Ibid.*, III/2, 88-89, 208.

<sup>198</sup> Stanley J. Grenz, *Created for Community* (Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988), 215 & 80.

individual independent of the needs of the group and corporate when it advances the realization of the needs characteristic of a group.<sup>199</sup> When we apply this conception to our study, personal goodness must be done within the parameters of internal historical needs of the community, a social whole. In this sense therefore, the virtuous person is not an isolated person but one who is in tune with the tendencies characteristic of his community:

Virtues are among the tendencies needed for groups. Virtues are behind the systematic continuous efforts to advance group interests without which a group could not persist. And so if social entities do not exist without virtues and if good actions advance the purposes of social entities, the good actions do not exist without virtues.<sup>200</sup>

Virtue therefore becomes both a necessary theological and ontological condition for adequate relationality.<sup>201</sup>

In the relational view of the human person, theologians do not show a distinction between the “image” and “likeness” as we saw in the substantive view. This view too does not go unchallenged. According to Erickson, the view that the image of God is totally a relational matter is problematic.<sup>202</sup> He highlights two of the problems; the first is the universality of the image; “In what sense can it be said that those who are living in total indifference to God, or even in hostile rebellion against him, are (or are in) the image of God? Second, “what is it about humans that enables them to have this relationship no other creature is able to have”?<sup>203</sup>

---

<sup>199</sup> Milton Fisk, *Ethics and Society: a Marxist Interpretation of Value* (Sussex: The Harvester Press, 1980), 150-152.

<sup>200</sup> Ibid.

<sup>201</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>202</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 468.

<sup>203</sup> Ibid.

### 5.4.3 Functional View

This view treats the human person as an operational being rather than a metaphysical being. The common concept in the functional view is that “the image is not something present in the makeup of the human, nor the experiencing of relationship with God or with fellow humans, but rather consists in something one does. It is a human function”.<sup>204</sup> This view primarily considers the tasks an individual performs rather than the constitutive qualities that make the person.

Traditionally, the functional view interprets the image in relation to the dominion of the material world by the human person.<sup>205</sup> This view attempts to describe the content of the image which was lacking in both the substantive and relational views.<sup>206</sup> According to a *Racovian Catechism* (anti-trinitarian) cited by Erickson: “The exercise of dominion is considered to be the content of the image of God.”<sup>207</sup> For Erickson, the basis of this view is:

In Genesis 1:26 ‘Let us make mankind in our image, in our likeness’ is followed immediately by “so that they may rule over the fish of the sea . . .’ A close connection between these two concepts is found not only in this verse . . . but also in verses 27-28, where we read that God did in fact create humans in the image of God and issue to them a command to have dominion.<sup>208</sup>

Man naming and domesticating the animals further brings out this dominion in Gen. 2:19-20. Again we shall return to this in chapter five. Another text used to support the functional view is Psalm 8:5-6: “You made them a little lower than the angels and crowned them with glory and honour. You made them rulers over the works of your hands; you put everything under their feet.” Although these verses do not use the words

---

<sup>204</sup> Ibid., 466.

<sup>205</sup> Beck and Demarest, *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology*, 141.

<sup>206</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 466.

<sup>207</sup> Ibid.

<sup>208</sup> Ibid.

image of God but it follows that the author is talking about the human person which Genesis says was made in the image and likeness of God.

Gerhard von Rad an Old Testament exegete maintains the functional view of the image of God in his book *Genesis*:

In the ancient world a king erected images of himself throughout the empire to establish his authority to rule. The author of Genesis appropriated this ancient sense of *selem* to conclude that man is placed upon earth in God's image as God's sovereign emblem. He is really only God's representative, summoned to maintain and enforce God's claims to dominion over the earth. The decisive thing about man's similarity to God, therefore, is his function in the non-human world.<sup>209</sup>

Based on von Rad's interpretation, Beck and Demarest conclude that the functional view of the image resounds adequately with modern ecological and environmental concerns.

The functional view also has links with virtue ethics. For example in ancient Greek, philosophers explained virtue in terms of function; humans for them have the function of engaging in rational activity in conformity with rational principles.<sup>210</sup> Functioning here means the carrying out of reasonable actions reasonably. In this sense, the virtuous person is one who acts consistently as human. For the Greeks what determines the function of the human is that the human must play his or her role as a citizen. And according to the functional view what determines a person's image is the exercise of dominion within the material universe. In like manner, the human person must be able to exercise dominion over his capacities, dispositions, emotions and desires.

This view also has its difficulties. Firstly, it reduces the content of human person to mere dominion and therefore draws upon philosophical functionalism.<sup>211</sup>

---

<sup>209</sup> Gerhard von Rad, *Genesis* (Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961), 60.

<sup>210</sup> Aristotle, *NE* 1098a7-10.

<sup>211</sup> Erickson, *Christian Theology*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 467.

Secondly, it equates the function of the person with the image rather than be seen as an aspect or a consequence of the image.<sup>212</sup> Thirdly, it does not show the limits to one's functional ability in relation to another's functional ability.

### ***5.5 Convergences and Divergences: Substantive, Relational, and Functional Views***

The twentieth century has seen a turn to the human person in philosophy and theology. During the Second Vatican Council, the then young Karol Wojtyla observed that the greatest problem of the modern age was the erosion of the dignity of the human person by the depersonalizing strategies of the ideologies of Nazism and communism.<sup>213</sup> In response to his observations, John Paul II, influenced by the Aristotelian-Thomistic tradition and the Phenomenology of Max Scheler, shaped his philosophical-theological ideas on the human person. In *The Acting Person* he argues that the human person is not just a bundle of emotions and sensory perceptions but a real person and operational agent.<sup>214</sup>

At the Vatican Council itself, *Gaudium et Spes* developed and proposed a deeper view of the human person. The document gives a dynamic account of the human person based on biblical data in answering the question “what is man?”. It sought to understand the human person based on revelation but also acknowledging the complexities inherent in the positions of the human sciences.<sup>215</sup> It accepts that an exhaustive and complete account of the mystery of the human person cannot be offered.

---

<sup>212</sup> Ibid.

<sup>213</sup> See Simon F. Nolan, “The Philosopher Pope: Pope John Paul II and the Human Person [www.carmelites.ie/philosopherPope.pdf](http://www.carmelites.ie/philosopherPope.pdf) (accessed December 8, 2014).

<sup>214</sup> Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: Reidel Publishing, 1979).

<sup>215</sup> *Gaudium et Spes* nos. 10-22.

Within the Christian tradition, it is possible to categorise the variety of approaches into three models: substantive, functional and relational views. The three theologians at the centre our study may also be categorised accordingly.

Firstly, Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva are in agreement that virtue ethics concerns the human person. This is seen against the backdrop of other methods of normative ethics like deontology and consequentialism that are action-centered. We have argued that virtue ethics is not only concerned with dispositions and isolated actions of persons but the whole of the person. The three scholars under study all argue that the “image” is a resident quality or capacity in all humans. It means that all virtues both acquired or infused find a *locus* in the human person.

Secondly, the substantive view as formerly detailed is one of the major views in Christian theology because it encompasses reason, will, and spiritual abilities in its conception of the human person. Furthermore, its views are based on the biblical text of Genesis 1: 26-27 which speaks of the human person being made in the image and likeness of God. In general, Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva can be situated within the substantive view of the human person that is expressive of virtue ethics. For example Cessario argues in line with Aquinas’s position when he affirms that the human person is said to be made in the image and likeness of God especially with respect to the end of man; namely God.<sup>216</sup> Cessario himself writes: “Central to a theological view of the human person, such as set forth in the doctrine of the *Imago Dei*, remains the faith-affirmation that ultimate destiny of each individual lies in beatific fellowship with the blessed Trinity . . . God remains our final goal.”<sup>217</sup> For Aquinas the image is present in

---

<sup>216</sup> See chapter, sub-section 1.11.

<sup>217</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 17

all human persons.<sup>218</sup> Since Cessario follows Aquinas's concept of the substantive view it means the above statement counters the criticism by Lilley that the view neglects people with physical disability.<sup>219</sup>

Cessario also follows Augustine's concept of the *Imago Dei* which was adopted by Aquinas.<sup>220</sup> But Augustine goes further by stating that the image is present in humanity only through humanity's response to the image through a righteous or virtuous life. Like Augustine however, Cessario did not show a distinction between image and likeness like did some of the Patristic Fathers.

For Cessario, the human person has to be understood from the perspective of his *telos* which is God. Cessario connects his substantive view with virtue by stating: "The theologian must define virtue only by reference to what contributes to the perfection of the image of God in each individual."<sup>221</sup> Therefore, he gives a transcendental-teleological explanation of the human person. This category has become one of the most dominant features in the whole of Christian anthropology. One can see a merging together between philosophy and theology in Cessario's conceptions of the human person when he insists that the human person discovers God's communication through human reason and revelation in the person of Christ.<sup>222</sup> By so doing, Cessario integrates natural law and theology. Sadly, he does not clearly explain how the concept of the image is inherent in people with no religious beliefs on the triune God.

---

<sup>218</sup> *ST I*, q. 93. a. 4.

<sup>219</sup> See Chapter one, sub-section 1.7.1.

<sup>220</sup> St. Augustine, *De Trinitate* Bk 15, chap 7, no. 10 and Chap. 8, no. 11.

<sup>221</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 56.

<sup>222</sup> *Ibid.*, 83.

The conclusion Cessario arrives at is that in using the concept of *imago Dei* as a theological category simply re-states the origins and destiny of the human person. And the substantive view of the human person in relation to virtue ethics incorporates both the cognitive, affective and appetitive capacities.

As stated in chapter three, the entire theological structure of Keenan's approach on virtue is build around the human person. Keenan accuses other ethicists of depersonalizing ethics.<sup>223</sup> Keenan's answers to the three anthropological questions we explored in chapter three place his conception of the human person on both the substantive view and the relational view. For example his answer to the first question of "who we are?" through a dialogue with Tillmann and Demmer states that we are disciples who are made in the image and likeness of God.<sup>224</sup> He further argues that one's identity is defined based on relationships not only with God but also with others and oneself.<sup>225</sup> Through the above assertions Keenan therefore creates a link between the substantive and relational views. In this sense the substantive view which emphasizes response to God's call is highlighted by Keenan when he writes: "He *God* is the unsurpassable goal who always goes before us, making our call to follow him a dynamic movement."<sup>226</sup> This call is made more practical in the person of Jesus. Thus, the human person through the substantive view can be understood through the person of Christ, because Jesus is the paradigmatic image and likeness of God. However, the fuller understanding is contingent upon the quality of our relationality: through the imitation of Christ, we must love one another as he loved, and forgive as he forgave.

---

<sup>223</sup> See Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," see also MacIntyre, *After Virtue*, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. 6-16, Keenan, "What is Ethics?"

<sup>224</sup> Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 49.

<sup>225</sup> *Ibid.*, 55.

<sup>226</sup> *Ibid.* Italicized word is mine.

The substantive and relational views create a ‘double helix’ understanding of the human person.<sup>227</sup>

Kotva, does not clearly develop the aspect of the concept of the substantive view on the image and likeness, but rather through a synthesis of the Christological approaches of Schillebeeckx, Kraus and Berkhof asserts that Christians know “something of our *telos*, of our true end, because we have seen that end in Christ. By looking to a specific, concrete life within history, we find clues to our true nature.”<sup>228</sup> To this end Jesus becomes a normative figure. For Kotva Jesus is “what humanity can be”.<sup>229</sup> Connecting this view with virtue ethics, Kotva writes: “Virtue ethics, unlike other approaches, can fully embrace the claims Christians make about Jesus’ normative humanity. Theology sees in Jesus the new Human (cf. Rom 5:14; I Cor. 15:22, 45) and views him as exhibiting our true purpose, potential, and act.”<sup>230</sup> To this end, we can categorize Kotva within the functional view. Christ salvific action finds meaning and purpose within the human person who is saved. As the human person recognizes Christ’s role in his life, he is brought into a deeper awareness of who he is or can become.

### ***5.5 The Human Person and Points for Further Consideration for Moral Theology***

The monolithic approach of the manuals that prevailed in the wake of the twentieth century has challenged the need of new and relevant approaches in moral theology especially since Vatican II. This process has begun through *ressourcement* and *aggiornamento*. *Ressourcement* calls for a return to the sources of scripture and

---

<sup>227</sup> See Thomas T. Bretzke, *Engaging Contemporary Moral Theology* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004), 104.

<sup>228</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 86.

<sup>229</sup> *Ibid.*, 89.

<sup>230</sup> *Ibid.*

tradition while *aggiornamento* appeals to the church to re-engage in dialogue with the modern world.<sup>231</sup> This means that moral theology has to be both anthropological and theological in its approach by turning to more operative concepts within its domain. These operative concepts should encompass the realms of God, the human person and the world.<sup>232</sup>

Dialogue on the human person lies at the very core of moral theology. This is however, often taken for granted by theologians. For example, Philip S. Keane in an article “Catholic Moral Theology from 1960 to 2040: Accomplishments and Challenges for the Future” gives an appraisal of moral theology in the past forty years and the future of moral theology in the next forty years, without adequately addressing the place of the human person.<sup>233</sup> Although often implicitly so, the human person must be more explicitly placed at the centre of moral theology.

To this effect, this thesis has been concerned with three theorists and their accounts on virtue ethics with specific interest on the relational value of such a field. By means of three different models or traditions they have presented a theology of virtue ethics that is centred on the human person. In view of the three conceptions of the biblical views of the human person as substantive, relational and functional, this thesis proposes that moral theology and moral theologians could be fashioned or placed according to this schema.

---

<sup>231</sup> Charles Curran, *Catholic Moral Theology in the United States: A History* (Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2008), 84.

<sup>232</sup> Denis Billy, “Dialoguing with Human Experience: A Challenge to Catholic Moral Theology,” in *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*, ed. James Keating (New Jersey: Paulist Press, 2004).

<sup>233</sup> Philip S. Keane, “Catholic Moral Theology from 1960 to 2040: Accomplishments and Challenges for the Future,” in *Catholic Theology Facing the Future: Historical Perspectives*, ed. Dermot A. Lane (Dublin: Columba Press, 2003).

### SECTION 3

#### ***5.6 Convergences and Divergences on The Relational Value of Virtue Ethics***

This thesis is committed to the refutation of virtue ethics' charge for having a narcissistic approach. The focus in this section is to further this commitment. We argue that virtue ethics has a community or relational value. It should be noted that the community value which this thesis advocates is not identifiable with social conformity that vilifies individual self-worth.<sup>234</sup> One of the great motivations of re-echoing the community value of virtue ethics is to de-emphasize quandary ethics and promote formation of character, socialization, spiritual and moral growth.<sup>235</sup> To substantiate our position on the relational value of virtue ethics we need to elaborate on the distinction between liberalism and communitarianism.

Early advocates of liberalism like John Stuart Mill, Herbert Spencer and James Buchanan and Gordon Tullock argue that the primary essential philosophical entity is the human person as an individual.<sup>236</sup> While those who support communitarianism like Michael Sandel, Charles Taylor and MacIntyre criticize liberalism for neglecting communal values in moral life.<sup>237</sup> These argue that the narrative of community and tradition are essential aspects of personality identity, a position that argues against

---

<sup>234</sup> Maureen Junker-Kenny, "Virtues and the God who makes Everything New," in *An Irish Reader in Moral Theology: The Legacy of the Last Fifty Years*, vol. 1 Foundations, ed. Enda McDonagh and Vincent MacNamara (Dublin: The Columba Press, 2009), 174.

<sup>235</sup> *Ibid.*, 175.

<sup>236</sup> See John Stuart Mill, *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*, ed. J. M. Robson (Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1963; William H. Spencer, *Social Statics*, New York: Robert Schalkenback Foundation, 1995); Buchanan James M. and Gordon Tullock *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy* Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1966).

<sup>237</sup> See Rui Silva, "Virtue Ethics And Communitarianism" [http://www.ifp.ubi.pt/publicacoes/SILVA\\_Rui\\_Sampaio-VIRTUE-ETHICS-AND-COMMUNITARIANISM.pdf](http://www.ifp.ubi.pt/publicacoes/SILVA_Rui_Sampaio-VIRTUE-ETHICS-AND-COMMUNITARIANISM.pdf) (accessed February 23, 2015).

individualist anthropology of liberalism.<sup>238</sup> Society is not a ‘heap’ of individuals according to Spencer’s view but an organism with a composite internal life.<sup>239</sup> It means that we cannot interpret people’s identity independent of their community.

Liberalism and communitarianism have their extremes; the former endorses extreme individualism while the latter considers an individual as the complete product of the community. Hence, our concern here is to show the community value of virtue that eschews both extremes. The aim here is to emphasize the relational nature of virtue ethics. This is not to say that the virtue ethics favours community over an individual. We argue here that virtue ethics promotes standards of moral excellence that are consistent to both individuals and communities. Individual moral excellence rather has social content.

To understand the social content of virtue Fisk argues that we must first grasp the moral sense of goodness which is both personal and communal.<sup>240</sup> Personal goodness as used by Fisk only advances the needs of an individual while communal or corporate goodness are those that advance the realization of the needs representative of a group. However, the needs characteristic of a group are based on internal historical needs brought about by group membership.<sup>241</sup> This means that personal goodness or virtue must be done within the parameters of the internal historical needs of the community. In this context, the virtuous person is not an isolated person, but one in total agreement and conformity to the characteristic needs of the community to which

---

<sup>238</sup> See Michael Sandel, *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982); Charles Taylor, *Sources of the Self* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990); MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.

<sup>239</sup> See D.G. Ritchie, *Principles of State Interference*, 2nd ed. (London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1896), 13. See also *Stanford Encyclopedia of philosophy*, s.v. “Liberalism.”

<sup>240</sup> Fisk, *Ethics of Society: A Marxist Interpretation of Value*, 152.

<sup>241</sup> *Ibid.*

he or she belongs. The virtuous person naturally internalizes corporate tendencies and capacities and directs his dispositions, actions and emotions towards the good of the community.<sup>242</sup> Fisk further argues: “Virtues are among the tendencies needed for groups. Virtues are behind the systematic and continuous efforts to advance group interests without which a group could not persist.”<sup>243</sup> Therefore, we argue that virtue is more than a logical condition for being good or doing a good action but it is also an indispensable ontological condition for community living.<sup>244</sup> This is because virtue is the disposition required within a social whole and it directs other capacities to fit into social purposes.<sup>245</sup>

It follows that individuals shape themselves and the narrative of virtuous individuals that make the community further shapes their communal understanding. However, in the light of Fisk assumption, a definition of such narrative is made possible through and within a community’s relationships. This thesis argues that virtue ethics is foundational to the entire field of social ethics irrespective of the particular cultural context; black African, Latin American, American, European, Asian etc. In this sense, virtue becomes an animating force within all cultural contexts.

Therefore, the relational value of virtue ethics is sensitive to the concerns of Beck and Demarest whose relational concepts of external and internal relations we have adopted.<sup>246</sup> It should be noted that our approach here takes into cognizance their suggestions that any genuine theology of the human person must incorporate both the external and internal relations.

---

<sup>242</sup> Ibid., 153.

<sup>243</sup> Ibid.

<sup>244</sup> Ibid.

<sup>245</sup> See Ibid., 151.

<sup>246</sup> I refer the reader to the general introduction, iv.

First, virtues are innate or cultivated over time. Virtues are cultivated via social and political institutions, the family, the society, the school etc. Social institutions like the schools and family become the nucleus of formation of virtuous life. Cessario, Keenan and Kotva do not adequately further this course in their works. Perhaps this is to de-emphasize how virtue ethics becomes institutionalized within the above-mentioned social units.<sup>247</sup> However, to counter the gross individualism within Western culture, these social units especially the family must take centre stage within virtue ethics.

Second, to understand the relational or community value of virtue ethics we need to understand how Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva differ in approaches. For example Cessario is more concerned with the transformation of sinful or disordered habits than the formation of the habits. He sacramentalizes his approach by arguing that the transformation of sinful behaviours of Christians comes about through Christ's action within the community of the church.<sup>248</sup> He also gives an ecclesiological and soteriological explanation to the relational value of virtue ethics by appealing to ascetic theology. This is evident in his use of terms like image-restoration and transformation.<sup>249</sup> Cessario holds that there are three kinds of community: the natural family, the political community and the church which is the new community.<sup>250</sup> All three communities serve the common good.<sup>251</sup> However, Cessario gives the impression that the church is the community par excellence.<sup>252</sup>

---

<sup>247</sup> Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*, 33.

<sup>248</sup> Cessario, *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*, 73.

<sup>249</sup> Ibid.

<sup>250</sup> See section 2.6.2.

<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> Secularism in contemporary world challenges this position.

Similarly, Kotva accepts the relational value of virtue ethics but his approach is different from Cessario and Keenan. His approach is biblical in nature, which is identifiable with the Reformed Tradition. Within this approach he identifies with Cessario's soteriological element when he discusses about Matthew's procedure for dealing with sins (18:15-20).<sup>253</sup> For him sins are not just personal matters but affects larger groups. For Kotva, Matthew insistence on involving community in issues contrary to internal norms within the Christian community expresses the value virtue ethics has on a living community.<sup>254</sup> This context is further expressed by the Matthew's emphasis on the virtue of forgiveness that forms a basis of community living among early Christian life. Ogletree explains:

The early church was a community gathered from the nations. Many natural supports for human association-family, kinship ties, a common language and culture, ethnic and racial identity- could no longer contribute directly to stable social order. The diversity of the community with regard to these factors actually increased the likelihood of unintended misunderstandings . . . communities transcending family, language, culture, and national identity could only sustain themselves through continual acts of forgiveness.<sup>255</sup>

It means forgiveness is a necessary virtue for safeguarding and continuance of community. Kotva therefore concludes that our "social context is more than mere scenery or backdrop: we are morally interdependent."<sup>256</sup> Furthermore, Kotva's biblical link is a buttress upon the fundamental aspect of Matthew's ethics which is Christological. He argues that God in Christ invites us into a relationship with himself and one another.<sup>257</sup> A relationship that is both individual and corporate. He provides a context for this relationship which is discipleship. However, Kotva's biblical

---

<sup>253</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 109.

<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

<sup>255</sup> Ogletree, *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*, 121. See also Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 109-110.

<sup>256</sup> Kotva, *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*, 110.

<sup>257</sup> Ibid., 108.

perspective ignores the general anthropological links with people of no religious beliefs.

Keenan also agrees that the morality of virtue ethics is fundamentally relational in nature. What makes him different from Cessario and Kotva is that his approach is highly anthropological and partly theological. At the anthropological level virtue ethics is person-centered and the virtues are consciously interiorized and practiced at both individual and communal levels by all people regardless of religious affiliations. Keenan's personalist current makes this anthropological approach more pragmatic. He argued that we are relational in three ways; generally, specifically and uniquely.<sup>258</sup> At the theological level he situates it within a communal setting of the Eucharist as seen in chapter three. We can thus argue that the Eucharist provides a dialogical setting that brings together both the anthropological and theological levels of the human person as a relational being with God as the source of our relationality.

Keenan emphasises the relational nature of virtue ethics than Cessario and Kotva. For example he interlaces virtue ethics with sexual ethics, an approach which Cessario and Kotva neglected. Keenan argues that one of the best avenues that practically display the relational nature of the human person is found in human sexuality.<sup>259</sup> He argues that sex is a form of communication.<sup>260</sup> Communication whether verbal or non-verbal is central in all relationships. The culmination and enhancement of this relational aspect of sex is attained with procreation. He therefore concludes that virtues do not perfect powers within the person but perfect the relationships we have with one another. However, Keenan himself does not produce a

---

<sup>258</sup> See section 3.2 of chapter three of this thesis.

<sup>259</sup> See sections 3.7; 3.7.1; 3.7.2.

<sup>260</sup> Ibid.

comprehensive account of the relationship between virtue ethics and sexual ethics as he fails to account fully on how virtue ethics can respond to contemporary sexual issues like contraception, homosexuality and pornography.

All three theologians as we have repeatedly stated accept the relational value of virtue ethics. But their relational and communal concepts are only restricted to interpersonal relationships. This is what we may call anthropocentric alienation. The huge gap in their works is that they failed to reflect the wider Christian context of relationship with the non-human world of nature, depicted in the ecological depredations of modern civilization.<sup>261</sup> This gap is not only noticeable in the works of Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva but until very recently there has not been an official church document solely on humanity and environment. The recent encyclical by Pope Francis *Laudato Si'* on care for our common home, addresses ecological issues in relation to humans with their ethical and moral consequences.<sup>262</sup>

Until now, some church documents only make references to the relational nature between humans and the environment only in passing: For example, *Mater et Magistra*,<sup>263</sup> *Populorum Progressio*,<sup>264</sup> *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*,<sup>265</sup> *Centesimus Annus*.<sup>266</sup> Pope John Paul II spoke during addresses to groups of the ardent need to

---

<sup>261</sup> See Thomas Berry and Thomas Clark, *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*, ed. Stephen Dun and Anne Lonergan (Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991), 114-5.

<sup>262</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, *On Care for our Common Home* (Dublin: Veritas, 2015).

<sup>263</sup> John XXIII. Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (15 May 1961), 3: *AAS* 53 (1961). See paragraphs 196, 197, 204.

<sup>264</sup> Pope Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967): *AAS* 59 (1967), See paragraph 17.

<sup>265</sup> Ioannes Paulus PP. II, *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, *The Social Concerns of the Church*. 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1987: *AAS* 40 (1988), See paragraph 34.

<sup>266</sup> John Paul II. Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1 May 1991), 46: *AAS* 83 (1991), See paragraph 37.

address issues associated with global warming and pollution. Pope Benedict in a speech during the World Peace Day of 2010 followed John Paul II by arguing that it is a moral imperative to develop a good environmental attitude. Furthermore, in *Caritas Veritatis* Benedict made the case for protecting the environment for posterity.<sup>267</sup> As an example Pope Benedict had installed solar panels in the Vatican and so made the Vatican the World's first carbon-neutral state.<sup>268</sup> *Laudato Si'* in being the first church document to addressing the issue, implicitly identifies that there was a lacuna.

### **5.6.1 The Human Relationality and Environment**

A close look at the creation account in Genesis 2 reveals how the narrative of the creation of the natural world has a connection with the narrative of the creation of humans; the man names the creatures which God had made before him.<sup>269</sup> It implies that the creation of man and woman and the established relationship between them does not become the completion of the work of God. By naming the animals and the other created things man acknowledges them as creatures with which he shares the universe.<sup>270</sup> According to Claus Westermann in *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*:

In the biblical Creation narrative, humanity is considered to be God's creation in all its relationships. Integral to the creation of the man is his environment (the garden), his food (the fruits of the garden), his work (v.15), his community (vv. 18-24), and in all of these his relationship to

---

<sup>267</sup> Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (29 June 2009), 32: AAS 101(2009), no. 48-52.

<sup>268</sup> Henry Longbottom, "Pope Francis' Ecological Encyclical-What can we Expect?" <https://Thejesuitpost.org/2014/...Encyclical-what-can-we-expect/> (accessed April 22, 2015).

<sup>269</sup> See George W. Ramsey, "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2: 23 and Elsewhere?" *CBQ* 50 (1988): 24-35.

<sup>270</sup> Richard Bauckham, "Humans, Animals, and the Environment in Genesis 1-3," in *Genesis and Christian Theology*, ed. Nathan MacDonald, Mark W. Elliot and Grant Macaskill (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2012), 186.

his creator. God has created the human race as a totality that includes these elements of its existence.<sup>271</sup>

In the same light Pope Francis re-echoes citing Pope Benedict:

The world cannot be analysed by isolating only one of its aspects, since the book of nature is one and indivisible, and includes the environment, life, sexuality, the family, social relations and so forth. It follows that the deterioration of nature is closely connected to the culture which shapes human coexistence.<sup>272</sup>

Therefore, human relationality is incomplete without reference to the environment. “If we take God seriously as Creator of the human race, we must acknowledge that God is also concerned with the environment, sustenance, work, and community.”<sup>273</sup> From this perspective, our consideration of virtue ethics as a having a relational value will be deficient if we do not consider our relationship with the environment. At the same time humanity’s relationship with other created things cannot be placed at par with the relationship between humans. In as much as humanity does not treat other creatures with insensitivity, it should not as well try to humanize these creatures. A balance needs to be established. Unfortunately, the needed balance seem obscured by the way humanity relates to and uses the universe.

According to Häring, ecological issues are special relational problems, because they reveal the highest forms of disorder within social processes and relationships.<sup>274</sup> In modern times, ecological issues have generated a series of reactions leading to

---

<sup>271</sup> Claus Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*, trans. David E. Green (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1987), 19.

<sup>272</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 6. See Pope Benedict XVI, Encyclical Letter, *Caritas in Veritate*, 51: AAS 101 (June 29, 2009): 687.

<sup>273</sup> Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*, 19.

<sup>274</sup> Häring, *Free and Faithful in Christ*, vol. 3, 167.

different paradigms.<sup>275</sup> There are those who argue that due to humanity's unrestrained activities of exploiting nature, the human life is at the brink of possible extinction. One of the early advocates of this extreme position is Gordon Taylor in *The Doomsday Book: Can The World Survive?* He vehemently argues that human life stands the risk of extinction due to the destruction of nature.<sup>276</sup> Conversely, there are those who deny there is an ecological problem and criticized the above as being over dramatic. For example Thomas R. Shepard in an article titled "Disaster Lobby" claims that the earth is becoming cleaner and safer and the human species is not in anyway threatened.<sup>277</sup>

But Henlee H. Barnette in *The Church and The Ecological Crisis* tries to take a middle position between the two extremes expressed above. He writes: "Somewhere between the radical position of those who see doomsday is around the corner and those who deny that there is any environmental problem at all lies the truth of the matter."<sup>278</sup> Barnette agrees there are ecological issues that need attention. For example, water pollution, air pollution, eco-backlash-causing flooding, drought and warmer temperatures etc. that have been caused by anthropocentrism, technology, consumerism and overpopulation.<sup>279</sup> Biologists approximates that about one thousand

---

<sup>275</sup> See Paulachan P. Kochappilly, *Celebrative Ethics: Ecological Issues in the Light of the Syro-Malabar Qurbana* (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 1999), 261-314.

<sup>276</sup> Gordon Taylor, *The Doomsday Book: Can The World Survive?* (Cleveland: World Press, 1970). There are other writers who share Taylor's views; Paul Ehrlich, *The Population Bomb* (New York: Ballantine, 1970); William and Paul Paddock, *Famine 1975! Americas: Who will Survive* (Boston: Little-Brown, 1967).

<sup>277</sup> Thomas R. Shepard, "Disaster Lobby", *IMA* April 1971, 1.

<sup>278</sup> Henlee H. Barnette, *The Church and The Ecological Crisis* (Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1972), 14.

<sup>279</sup> *Ibid.*, 21-34. For further reading see Peter Schrag, "Life on a Dying Lake," *Saturday Review*, Sept. 20, 1969; Gaylord Nelson, "This Generation's Strategy to Save the Environment," in *Agenda For Survival*, ed. Harold W. Helfrich, Jr. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970).

plants and animal species become non-existent annually (three per day).<sup>280</sup> But there is scientific consensus today about the environmental problems facing humanity.<sup>281</sup> This means that the order of Genesis has been grossly compromised. Richard Bauckham in an article “Humans, Animals, and the Environment in Genesis 1-3” writes:

The order of the cosmos portrayed in Genesis has been unprecedentedly disrupted by modern humanity’s scientific-technological project of unlimited domination of the whole world. Modern humans have overfilled the earth and grossly depleted its resources without regard to the fate of other species. Genesis 1 coheres closely with the lesson taught over and over by ecological catastrophe, already happening or unavoidably imminent: that humans must exercise their right to put the earth to use within strict ecological limits and that they exceed these limits at their own peril, as well as that of other species and the planet itself. Our modern knowledge of the interconnectedness of all life on earth can provide us with renewed appreciation of the portrayal in Genesis 1 of the ordered interrelationships of the creatures, while its emphasis on variety warrants contemporary concerns about biodiversity.<sup>282</sup>

Very recently, there are some scientists who argue that the current global warming is not due to “anthropogenic and natural forcings” but due to solar variability.<sup>283</sup> They produce a composite that implies warming trends during the periods of 1880s-1940s and 1980s-2000s. According to them the estimates imply a more prominent cooling trend during the 1950s-1970s. Therefore they concluded the relative warm of the mid 20<sup>th</sup> century is comparable to the recent warm period.<sup>284</sup> It means that the trend is cyclical. However, they arguments do not deny the pollution

---

<sup>280</sup> Tobias Winright, “From Saving the Whales to Protecting the Planet as a ‘Duty Incumbent on Each and All,’” in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, ed. Tobias Winright (Minnesota: Anselm Academic, 2011), 2.

<sup>281</sup> See Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, “IPCC, 2007: Summary for Policymakers,” in *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 10.

<sup>282</sup> Bauckham, “Humans, Animals, and the Environment in Genesis 1-3,” 185.

<sup>283</sup> Willie Soon, Ronan Connolly, and Michael Connolly, “Re-Evaluating the Role of Solar Variability on Northern Hemisphere Temperature Trends Since the 19<sup>th</sup> Century,” *Earth-Science Reviews* 150 (2015): 409-452.

<sup>284</sup> *Ibid.*, 448.

inherent in both land and sea due to human activity. The danger here is to ignore care of the earth and business as usual becomes the order of the day.

Nonetheless, in the last century to date, humanity has come to realize the need to take care of the environment. This challenge is echoed by International and national Organizations, government and non-governmental organizations, for example, United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), World Nature Organization (WNO), Climate Action Network (CAN-Europe) etc. Until recently, religious organizations have been more concerned with issues of war, social justice, sexual ethics e.t.c than ecological issues.<sup>285</sup> There is a challenge before us and today the church recognizes this challenge.<sup>286</sup> For example Pope Benedict XVI in *The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology* writes:

We need to care for the environment: it has been entrusted to men and women to be protected and cultivated with responsible freedom, with the good of all as a guiding criterion. Human beings, obviously are of supreme worth vis-à-vis creation as a whole. Respecting the environment does not mean considering material or animal nature more important than man. Rather, it means not selfishly considering nature to be at the complete disposal of our own interest, for future generations also have the right to reap its benefits and to exhibit towards nature the same responsible freedom that we claim for ourselves.<sup>287</sup>

The Pontiff further avers the earth is “our common home” and must be protected.<sup>288</sup>

Mark I. Wallace in *Green Christianity: Five Ways to a Sustainable Future* concludes:

“Today, many North American churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of

---

<sup>285</sup> Winright, “From Saving the Whales to Protecting the Planet as a ‘Duty Incumbent on Each and All,’” 3.

<sup>286</sup> John Paul II, *Centesimus Annus*, The Hundreth Anniversary Of *Rerum Novarum* [http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf\\_jp-ii\\_enc\\_01051991\\_centesimus-annus.html](http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_01051991_centesimus-annus.html) (accessed March 25th 2015).

<sup>287</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology*, ed. Maria Milvia Morciano with forward by Arch Bishop Jean-Louis Brugues (Washington, D. C: The Catholic University Press, 2012), 104.

<sup>288</sup> *Ibid.*, 105.

worship are transforming themselves into forward-based earth-care centers committed to protecting God’s creation, sustainable lifestyles, and safeguarding the public health.”<sup>289</sup>

There are ways to protect the earth which have been proffered by institutions and international organizations, for example Montreal Protocol. The scientist can provide us with the needed information about the depletion of the earth and the consequences. However, science cannot answer the ethical questions like “why should endangered species or polluted oceans or disappearing rain forests, drying up of small rivers and drought in so many places matter morally at all?”<sup>290</sup> Such ethical or moral question finds answers within ethics, precisely virtue ethics. But how can we through virtue ethics respond to the ecological issues as part of the wider concept of our engagement within a relational model?

This thesis has argued that in doing virtue ethics there is a link between our identity that is who we are and our actions that is how we ought behave. Therefore, the kind of people we are and how we live our lives can have impact on the environment. In the words of Benedict XVI: “The way humanity treats environment influences the way it treat itself, and vice versa”.<sup>291</sup> This highlights the relational link between humanity and the environment. And Gustafson calls us to be aware that: “Man

---

<sup>289</sup> Mark I. Wallace, *Green Christianity: Five Ways to a Sustainable Future* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010), 16.

<sup>290</sup> Winright, “From Saving the Whales to Protecting the Planet as a ‘Duty Incumbent on Each and All,’” 4

<sup>291</sup> Benedict XVI, *Caritas in Veritate*, no. 51.

(individual persons, communities, and species) is a participant in the patterns and processes of interdependence of life in the world.”<sup>292</sup>

From the foregoing this thesis shall propose an all-inclusive relationality via a triad of ecological virtues based on the gap identified earlier: “ecological-justice”, “ecological-love”, and “ecological-prudence”.

### **5.6.2 An All-Inclusive Relationality**

In 1933 Albert Schweitzer in *Out of My Life and Thought* observed that “the great fault of ethics hitherto has been to deal only with man’s relationships to man.”<sup>293</sup> Shockingly, thirty-three years later the environmentalist Aldo Leopold in *Sand County Almanac* wrote: “No ethic dealing with man’s relations to land and of the animals and plants which grow upon it.”<sup>294</sup> Both Schweitzer and Leopold underscored a lacuna and proposed that ethics should be more holistic by considering the relationship between humanity and their environment. Michael S. Northcott in an article “Ecology and Christian Ethics” argues that moral values situated “within certain capacities of persons be extended to beings in, and/or features of, the non-human world”.<sup>295</sup> Therefore, we are part of nature and “we use our environment as a way to express our identity”.<sup>296</sup> In effect, nature cannot be conceived only as a location in which humans exist but as an integral part of our existence.

---

<sup>292</sup> James Gustafson, *Ethics From a Theocentric Perspective* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1984), 2.

<sup>293</sup> Albert Schweitzer, *Out of My Life and Thought* (New York: Holt, 1933), 133.

<sup>294</sup> Aldo Leopold, *Sand County Almanac* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1966), 218.

<sup>295</sup> Michael S. Northcott, “Ecology and Christian Ethics,” in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed., ed. Robin Gill (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012), 228.

<sup>296</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no.147.

Willis Jenkins in *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* argues that humans have the tendency to connect their ideas about the virtues stringently to independence which does not reflect the Christian call for relationality.<sup>297</sup> It means that the Christian call to relationality provides a wider context best expressed by Curran as “relationship with the world.” It follows that there is need for humans to engage more with the world of nature in order to preserve it and consequently perpetuate the human specie. To this end, Curran writes: “Our relationship with the world calls for care, concern, reverence, and solidarity with our environment, we might call this virtue ecological stewardship.”<sup>298</sup>

In what follows, the next sub-sections shall examine what we may call “ecological virtues”. Our aims here are three: First, to create a cross-disciplinary dialogue between moral theology and ecology that will emphasize the relevance of particular virtues and the environment as well. Note that Aquinas’s starting point in his theology is God’s creation, “he makes the doctrine of creation a major framework within which he places moral theology. The creation is one large and directed whole, and people experience this in their own beings.”<sup>299</sup> Aquinas argues that at the fall, creation did not impede the intellectual ability of man to attain human potentialities. And Vandermeersch comments that these potentials are engraved in the human heart through God’s plan of creation.<sup>300</sup> Therefore, Aquinas interlaces this framework with Aristotle’s ideas in order to attain ultimate happiness through the virtues. Such a connection has been lost in the history of moral theology. Therefore, this thesis is

---

<sup>297</sup> Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008), 134-5.

<sup>298</sup> Curran, “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today,” 68.

<sup>299</sup> Patrick Vandermeersch, “Passions and the Virtues,” *Aiming at Happiness: The Moral Teaching in the Catholic Catechism*, ed. F. Vosman and K.-W. Merks (Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996), 102.

<sup>300</sup> *Ibid.*

committed to the resurgence of this Thomist framework. Second, to further expand the relational value of virtue ethics with respect to the non-human world of nature as an intrinsic aspect of the human relationality. Third, to further articulate that virtue ethics is about the formation of good people who invariably become good ecological participants; other humans, plants, animals, water etc.<sup>301</sup> Fourthly, to further encourage what we may call environmental justice for its sustainability.

Connecting virtue ethics with the environment means that a person whose character towards the environment is one of care will necessarily be sensitive to other people whom he or she interacts. For example John Muir expressed that his encounter with animals changed his perception of humanity and it increased his generosity and joy at being a part of the universe.<sup>302</sup> In the light of Northcott's proposal and the gap demonstrated in the works of Keenan, Cessario, and Kotva and the assertions made by Schweitzer and Leopold, in the succeeding sub-sections, this thesis will fill in the gap.

#### **5.6.2.1 “Ecological-Justice”**

Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* writes: “We have to realize that a true ecological approach always becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor.”<sup>303</sup> The term “ecological-justice” depicts the intrinsic connection between God, human person, and creation. Leonardo Boff in *Ecology and Liberation* writes:

God is present in reality, profoundly immanent, and becomes transparent through medium of all created beings. This transparency is tarnished and obscured by the aggression that one creature, the human

---

<sup>301</sup> Nancy M. Rourke, “The Environment Within: Virtue Ethics,” in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, ed. Tobias Winright (Minnesota: Anselm Academic, 2011), 165.

<sup>302</sup> John Muir, *Nature Writings* (New York: Penguin Literary Classics, 1997), 48, 78.

<sup>303</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, no. 49.

being, practices on other creatures, and, tragically indeed, on his or her own kind. What should prevail instead is ecological justice-Respect for the otherness of beings and things.<sup>304</sup>

The concept of ecological-justice is intended to refute man's absolute domination over creation and its consequent implications to the exploitation of the earth's resources and the inherent injustices therein for both contemporary society and posterity. This is what Pope Francis calls "intergenerational solidarity".<sup>305</sup> The failure to consider this is what Sean McDonagh calls the anthropocentric bias deeply rooted in our use of the earth's resources.<sup>306</sup> It is a bias that is rooted in the misinterpretation of the Priestly narrative of creation in Genesis 1: 26 "subdue the earth and have dominion over the fish of the sea and the birds of the air and every living thing that moves on the earth." McDonagh objects to the absolutism of humanity over creation. He writes:

The Genesis account of creation is not entirely anthropocentric. One of the best examples of this wider vision is the Book of Job, which deals with the predicament of a just man who is made to suffer . . . Yahweh demands to know whether the Proud Job understands or can account for all the natural phenomena in the world around him. Yahweh asserts that not everything which he has created is meant for human use. Other creatures have their legitimate needs and Yahweh, as creator of all provides them with their unique habitat.<sup>307</sup>

Thus, the domination or control of the natural world by man is to be considered from the perspective of perfecting it rather than exploiting it.<sup>308</sup> McDonagh citing Gustavo Gutierrez comments on Job 38: 25-27, 39:5-6 further argues:

God's speeches are a forceful rejection of a purely anthropocentric view of creation. Not everything that exists was made to be directly useful to

---

<sup>304</sup> Leonardo Boff, *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*, trans. John Cumming (New York: Orbis, 1995), 17. Originally printed in Portuguese with the title *Ecologia, Mundialização, Espiritualidade*, Published by Editora Atica, São Paulo, 1993.

<sup>305</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si'*, no. 159

<sup>306</sup> Sean McDonagh, *The Greening of the Church* (New York: Orbis, 1990), 176.

<sup>307</sup> *Ibid.*, 151-2.

<sup>308</sup> Peter Harrison, "Having Dominion: Genesis and the Mastery of Nature," in *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspectives- Past and Present*, ed. R. J. Berry (London: T & T Clark International, 2006), 18.

human beings. Therefore they may not judge everything from their point of view. The world of nature expresses the freedom and delight of God in creating.<sup>309</sup>

To explicate more on the concept of ecological-justice, we appeal to *Gaudium et spes* no. 34. The church in this document observes that although man was given mandate over the earth, yet he is called to rule over it with justice and holiness. Jürgen Moltmann in *God and Creation* argues that theology has the task of imparting modern scientific culture to look at the world as God's creation rather than mere nature. That every creature has their own sanctity and integrity and is not ordinary matters to be manipulated for human purpose.<sup>310</sup> Unfortunately, man understands only the command to subdue the earth but fails to comprehend the need and challenge to protect the earth for posterity. The consequent result is an unstrained consumption and exhaustion of the natural resources with no concern for future generations.

There are three implications to ecological-justice: First that the otherness of things be respected and protected. Second that there is a call to consciousness that other human beings somewhere in the world are suffering more the exploitation of the nature and so ecological-justice has deep links with social injustice and even racism. For example in America: "Advocates of ecojustice note that toxic-waste dumps, chemical works, nuclear power stations, polluting factories and landfill sites are almost exclusively located in the neighbourhoods of poor people and people of colour."<sup>311</sup>

Northcott further argues:

Developed countries are beginning to address some of these internal environmental equity problems by removing their dirtiest technologies and manufacturing facilities from poor neighbourhoods to poorer countries in the developing world, where labour is cheap and environmental regulations often non-existent.<sup>312</sup>

---

<sup>309</sup> Ibid., 152-3.

<sup>310</sup> See Jürgen Moltmann, *God and Creation* (Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985).

<sup>311</sup> Northcott, "Ecology and Christian Ethics," 232.

<sup>312</sup> Ibid.

This situation is decried by Pope Francis: “There is also the damage caused by the export of solid waste and toxic liquids to developing countries, and by the pollution produced by companies which operate in less developed countries in ways they could never do at home, in the countries in which they raise their capital.”<sup>313</sup> Citing the Regional Bishops of Patagonia-Comahue Argentina, the Pontiff concludes:

We note that often the businesses which operate this way are multinationals. They do here what they would never do in developed countries or the so-called first world. Generally, after ceasing their activity and withdrawing, they leave behind great human and environmental liabilities such as unemployment, abandoned towns, the depletion of natural reserves, deforestation, the impoverishment of agriculture and local stock breeding, open pits, riven hills, polluted rivers and handful of social works which are no longer sustainable.<sup>314</sup>

Additionally, the toxic waste from such companies cause a lot of health hazards- causing cancer, asthma and other respiratory diseases- to communities within which they are situated.

Third, there is need to use earth’s resources bearing in mind the generations yet unborn. To this effect, Pope Francis writes:

We can no longer speak of sustainable development apart from intergenerational solidarity. Once we start to think about the kind of world we are leaving for future generations, we look at things differently; we realize that the world is a gift which we have freely received and must share with others. Since the world has been given to us, we can no longer view reality in purely utilitarian way, in which efficiency and productivity are entirely geared to our individual benefit. Intergenerational solidarity is not optional, but rather a basic question of justice, since the world we have received also belongs to those who will follow us.<sup>315</sup>

---

<sup>313</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 51.

<sup>314</sup> See *Ibid.*

<sup>315</sup> Pope Francis, Encyclical Letter *Laudato Si’*, no. 159.

To place the second implication into perspective we wish to consider the impact of global warming has to the third world. By discussing this second implication, the other two will fall in place.

In recent decades, scientists have proven that there is global warming which is human-induced and is moving at an unprecedented ratio for the past one thousand three hundred years.<sup>316</sup> To be more precise in 2006, Al Gore in *An Inconvenient Truth* argues that the world is warmer than ever, and twelve warmest years in human history have occurred in the past twelve years.<sup>317</sup> The consequences of this are serious. According to J. A. Church and N. J. White, there is a global rise in sea levels of about seventeen centimeters (6.7 inches) in the last century, but the rate in the last decade is nearly twice that of the last century.<sup>318</sup> This explains the erratic weather conditions experienced across the globe, increased occurrences of flash floods, drought and hurricanes. Unfortunately and fortunately, when these occur, the western world is well able to a large extend deal with them because of their technological and economic strengths.<sup>319</sup> Sadly, the third world is always worst hit by such disasters because of poverty and lack of necessary technologies: “The deleterious effects will have greater impact on the populations that are already marginalized or with low incomes, such as those of sub-Sahara Africa.”<sup>320</sup> The ripple effects of these also affect the areas of drought causing famine in many sub-Saharan countries. The issue of social justice is raised here: where in one part of the world people and animal lives are loss because of

---

<sup>316</sup> See B. D. Santer, K. E. Taylor, T. M. L Wigley et al, “A Search for Human Influences on the Thermal Structure of the Atmosphere,” *Nature* Vol. 382, (4 July, 1996), 39-46.

<sup>317</sup> Al Gore, *An Inconvenient Truth* (London: Bloomsbury, 2006).

<sup>318</sup> J. A. Church and N. J. White, “A Twentieth Century Acceleration in Global Sea Level Rise,” *Geophysical Research Letters*,” vol. 33 (2006). See Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 23.

<sup>319</sup> Nick Spencer and Robert White, *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living* (London: SPCK, 2007), 40.

<sup>320</sup> *Ibid.*

hunger while in another part of the same planet people are obese due to over eating, with a dominant throw-away culture.

Therefore, ecological-justice calls for respect for and proper use of mother earth. It calls present generations to become more conscious of generations yet unborn for their sustainability. To this end the Encyclical Letter of Pope Paul VI *Populorum Progressio* reiterates this fact:

We are the heirs of earlier generations, and we reap benefits from the efforts of our contemporaries; we are under obligation to all men. Therefore we cannot disregard the welfare of those who will come after us to increase the human family. The reality of human solidarity brings us not only benefits but also obligations.<sup>321</sup>

It also challenges a pattern of thought process and initiatives as to the awareness of the deeper crisis of environment. “Ecological-justice” as a virtue enhances the quality of every human life and the conservation of Mother Nature.

#### 5.6.2.2 “Ecological-Love”

One of the general principles of eco-theology today is to draw a link between religion and nature or rather ethics and cosmology.<sup>322</sup> It means we seek to understand nature through theological-ethics. Robert Fancy in an article “The Exploitation of Nature and Teilhard’s Ecotheology of Love,” explains how Teilhard de Chardin works out a theology of Jesus Christ that is centered on Ecotheology of love.<sup>323</sup> Barnette is more precise when he argues: “The norm of an Eco-ethic is love or otherwise called Agape”.<sup>324</sup> Agape as used in this context means:

To will the welfare of all living creatures and things. It is grounded in God, whose being is love (1 John 4:8); and it extends, as does God’s love, to the whole creation . . . Love constrains us not only to will the

---

<sup>321</sup> Pope Paul VI, Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967): AAS 59 (1967).

<sup>322</sup> Conrad Bonifazi, *A Theology of Things* (Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1967).

<sup>323</sup> Robert Fancy, “The Exploitation of Nature and Teilhard’s Ecotheology of Love,” *Journal of Religion, Nature and the Environment*, vol. 10, Issue 2 (August, 2005): 181.

<sup>324</sup> Barnette, *The Church and The Ecological Crisis*, 36.

welfare of our neighbour, but also to preserve and promote the kind of environment that maximizes the possibility of full selfhood for each.<sup>325</sup>

Consequently, nature must be treated with love because it is God's creative work of love. Also it is a platform for a fuller realization of all human potentials.

“Ecological-love” illustrates the interdependence between humanity and nature that has long existed. According to Barnette: “Both biblical and biological views of nature see the interconnection and interdependence of man and his environment. Man is intrinsically related to nature that when he sins against God, nature suffers; and when he obeys God, nature rejoices.”<sup>326</sup> For example the disobedience of Israel always brought down the wrath of God even on nature, seen in the lack of rain which causes drought and consequently starvation (cf. 1 Kings 18). Prophet Isaiah captures this in 24: 1-6:

Now the LORD is about to lay waste the earth and make it desolate, and he will twist its surface and scatter its inhabitants. And it shall be, as with the people, so with the priest; as with the slave, so with his master; as with the maid, so with her mistress; as with the buyer, so with the seller; as with the lender, so with the borrower; as with the creditor, so with the debtor. The earth shall be utterly laid waste and utterly despoiled; for the LORD has spoken this word. The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt; therefore the inhabitants of the earth dwindled and few people are left.

The deuteronomistic-historian expresses the same idea in Deuteronomy 28:1-14 more profoundly. Pope Francis further details the consequences of a ruptured relationship: “Disregard for the duty to cultivate and maintain a proper relationship with my neighbour, for whose care and custody I am responsible, ruins my relationship with my

---

<sup>325</sup> Ibid.

<sup>326</sup> Ibid., 37. Also see, Pope Ben XVI, *The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology*, 14. See also Westermann, *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*, 19.

own self, with others, with God and with the earth.”<sup>327</sup> This shows cyclical connection between creation, humanity’s actions and consequences.

The concept of ecological-love here used is intended to emphasize the appreciation of the spirituality of the earth which is a combination of both Christian community through historical heavenly Jerusalem and the journey of primordial matter in the earth.<sup>328</sup> It means whatever way one looks at nature either as an evolutionary process or created matter in theology, humanity has to see beyond the exploitation of the earth. Its sacramentality has to be realized.

Since we are arguing from the standpoint of theology, God remains the *telos* of the Christian moral life. Similarly, he remains the *telos* of created things. Humanity may have been given the authority to use the goods of the earth, yet God remains its *telos*. Therefore, our understanding of the God of love should impact on our use of earth resources. To this end, T. S. Eliot observes: “A wrong attitude towards nature implies, somewhere, a wrong attitude towards God, and the consequence is an inevitable doom.”<sup>329</sup> This is not to imply that nature is equated with God in the Pantheist conception, but rather in the sense that God is involved as creator and sustainer of the universe.<sup>330</sup> Ecological-love consequently enables people to see themselves as “co-creators” with God and as tenants and stewards of the universe as well.

This approach is not uncomplicated. According to Northcott, there is the tendency for humanity to turn our control or stewardship of the earth into replacement

---

<sup>327</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 70.

<sup>328</sup> See Thomas Berry, *The Dream of the Earth* (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1998); Berry and Thomas Clark, *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*.

<sup>329</sup> Cited by Dorothy Sayers, *Creed or Chaos* (New York: Harcourt-Bruce, 1949), 41.

<sup>330</sup> Barnette, *The Church and The Ecological Crisis*, 68.

for God and we end up worshipping the creature instead of the Creator.<sup>331</sup> This is not to place man side by side with God but used in a sense of enhancing the original created work of God.

Therefore, the love of God should serve as the basic foundation to our love of nature because “idolatry-of technology, of consumer goods, of human control and corporate power- is at the heart of the collective and individual sins that constitute the environmental crisis”.<sup>332</sup> And James Nash in *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility* argues that we are called to love creation, because we share with creation in the restoration that is promised us in and through God’s work of redemption in Christ.<sup>333</sup> In conclusion we hold:

Envisaging the human relation to nature in terms of love has profound implications for the modern social form; for the cost-benefit calculus that insures that billions of animals every year are imprisoned in cruel and valueless life to provide cheap protein for humans; for the corporate and intergovernmental calculus that sets as a price for international debt repayment the systematic clear-cutting of ancient forest and environmental exclusion of peasant farmers and tribal peoples from their ancestral lands.<sup>334</sup>

Therefore: “ We can hardly consider ourselves to be fully loving if we disregard any aspect of reality: ‘Peace, justice and the preservation of creation are three absolutely interconnected themes, which cannot be separated.’”<sup>335</sup>

### **5.6.2.3 “Ecological-Prudence”**

The Yahwistic narrative of creation in Gen. 2:4b-25 presents humanity not as mere explorers who dominate the earth as expressed in the priestly narrative of Gen 1:26 but rather as keepers and custodians of the earth: “The Lord God took the man and put him

---

<sup>331</sup> Northcott, “Ecology and Christian Ethics,” 235.

<sup>332</sup> Ibid.

<sup>333</sup> James Nash, *Loving Nature: Ecological Integrity and Christian Responsibility* (Nashville: Abingdon, 1992), 68.

<sup>334</sup> Northcott, “Ecology and Christian Ethics,” 235-6.

<sup>335</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 92.

in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it” (Gen. 2:15). This verse shows that man was and is given a task “to till and keep it”. The two Hebrew words used in this verse are *abad* and *shamar*. *Abad* is the root word for other words related to service. It can be used either as a noun or a verb. As a noun it refers to a servant and as a verb it means “to serve”. While *shamar* means to protect or keep. There are other couplets that resonate with *abad* and *shamar*; serve and preserve, enhance and protect.<sup>336</sup> According to Pope Francis tilling and keeping “implies a relationship of mutual responsibility between human beings and nature.”<sup>337</sup> While nature provides our needs we too must preserve nature.

Therefore, man is given the task to improve his environment as well as protect it from waste and depletion. By implication corporal or material exertion is not enough but humanity will need the ability to exercise their powers of right judgment which we here call ecological-prudence in order to “keep and till” the earth. It means that modern human knowledge based on scientific investigations about the earth should enable us know the workings of nature and use them not for our selfish interest but for the good of nature itself and posterity.<sup>338</sup> And “a fragile world entrusted by God to human care, challenges us to devise intelligent ways of directing, developing and limiting our power”.<sup>339</sup>

Our task to cultivate and keep the earth should not in any way make humanity attempt to supplant God with the creature as explicit Renaissance humanism

---

<sup>336</sup> Rolf Bouma, “Genesis 2:15” A Science of Religion Commentary [http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/essays/src/Genesis\\_2\\_v15.pdf](http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/essays/src/Genesis_2_v15.pdf) (accessed March 23, 2015).

<sup>337</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 69.

<sup>338</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>339</sup> *Ibid.*, no. 78.

portrayed.<sup>340</sup> This extreme is further cautioned by C. F. D. Moule in *Man and Nature in the New Testament*:

Man is placed in the world by God to be its Lord. He is meant to have dominion over it and to use it . . . but only for God's sake, only Adam in paradise, cultivating it for the Lord. As soon as he begins to use it selfishly, and reaches out to take fruit which is forbidden by the Lord, instantly the ecological balance is upset and nature begins to groan.<sup>341</sup>

Consequently, there is a need for ecological-prudence in the use of resources. This is to create the proper ecological balance as intended by its creator and also the sake of generation yet unborn. To this end, Pope Benedict insists:

Humanity today is rightly concerned about the ecological balance of tomorrow. It is important for assessments in this regard to be carried out prudently, in dialogue with experts and people of wisdom, uninhibited by ideological pressure to draw nasty conclusions, and above all with the aim of reaching agreement on a model of sustainable development capable of ensuring the well-being of all while respecting environmental balances. If the protection of the environment involves cost, they should be justly, distributed, taking due account of the different levels of development of various countries and the need for solidarity with future generations.<sup>342</sup>

Ecological-prudence has various ramifications: First we have to take responsibility over our mismanagement of the resources of the earth. Taking responsibility expresses the awareness of where we are and how our actions have impacted negatively on the earth. Sadly, taking this responsibility lacks leadership on the one hand and on the other hand vitiated by certain economic powers as noted by Pope Francis. He writes:

Economic powers continue to justify the current global system where priority tends to be given to speculation and the pursuit of financial

---

<sup>340</sup> See Richard Bauckham, *God and the Crisis of Freedom: Biblical and Commentary Perspectives* (Louisville: Westminster John Know, 2002), 154-59.

<sup>341</sup> C. F. D. Moule, *Man and Nature in the New Testament* (Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964), 14.

<sup>342</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *The Garden of God*, 104-5.

gain, which fail to take the context into account, let alone the effects on human dignity and the natural environment. Here we see how environmental deterioration and human and ethical degradation are closely linked. Many people will deny doing anything wrong because distractions constantly dull our consciousness of just how limited and finite our world really is. As a result, ‘whatever is fragile, like the environment, is defenceless before the interests of a deified market, which become the only rule.’<sup>343</sup>

However, we appreciate the little vestiges of steps taking by president Obama in trying to reduce green house gasses in America.

Second, concerted efforts by taking the right decisions on how to use the goods of the earth, and how to equally protect it: “It means being committed to making joint decisions, decisions aimed at strengthening that covenant between human beings and environment.”<sup>344</sup> Third, the awareness that the depletion of earth resources causes untold hardship to millions around the world. MadHav Gadgil in an article “Cultural Evolution of Ecological Prudence” captures:

The imperative of survival for the poor of the Third World countries whose very existence is threatened by the rapid depletion of the natural resource base on which they depend for many of their basic necessities. The dawning of this amongst the majority of the world’s human population will perhaps ultimately lead to the re-establishment of . . . ecological prudence in the modern world.<sup>345</sup>

Summarily, all human activity in the earth should not be driven towards transcending mother nature but understanding the limited context within which the earth has been given to us to till and keep. Considering the challenges which the world faces today, it is pertinent that the virtues of ecological- justice, ecological-love and ecological-prudence should resonate with contemporary project of scientific-

---

<sup>343</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si’*, no. 56.

<sup>344</sup> Pope Benedict XVI, *The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology*, 105.

<sup>345</sup> MadHav Gadgil, “Cultural Evolution of Ecological Prudence,” *Landscape Planning* vol. 2 (1985): 297. See also, L. R. Brown, *Building a Sustainable Society* (New York: Norton, 1981).

technological breakthroughs not from the context of dominance but forming a culture of interaction and interdependence.

### **5. 7 Concluding Remarks**

The central thrust of this chapter has been to compare and contrast the teachings of Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva on virtue ethics based on their traditions and particular themes. We started this chapter by legitimizing the concept of commensurability. This enabled us to further articulate how each of the scholars under study is influenced by his tradition. Our study has substantially affirmed the observations made by Kerr that there are indeed different versions of Aquinas. Accordingly, the various interpretations of Aquinas bring up more theological and hermeneutical problems. For example, Karl Barth theology may look at Aquinas from a protestant lens that may not be justifying to a Catholic or Aquinas himself. Also there may be philosophical development that are non-Christian but may reject Aquinas' Christian perspective.<sup>346</sup> Hence, Kerr concludes: "Sometimes this or that interpretation must be regarded as simply mistaken".<sup>347</sup>

Therefore, identifying Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva within a tradition has enabled us not only to encase within a common factor but further recognized their differences both within the same tradition and variances in approaches, methodology and theologizing. More importantly, it has shown us on the one hand the different strands within a particular tradition and on the other hand the interactions or dialogue between different theological traditions.

This chapter has also shown that the human person is central in any moral inquiry but particularly in virtue ethics. It proposes an understanding of the human person that takes into consideration Erickson's three views: substantive, relational, and

---

<sup>346</sup> Kerr, *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomism*.

<sup>347</sup> *Ibid.*, 209.

functional. In considering them together, one will suggest that the substantive view which is essentially more theologically based should serve as a linkage between the relational and functional views, with virtue ethics as an intrinsic cartilage.

This chapter also forms part of the re-appraisal of virtue ethics to refute the narcissistic charge. Hence, this chapter appealed to a more relational-oriented approach by highlighting the relational value within virtue ethics. However, a more systematic approach is needed to further elucidate the social networking within virtue ethics to make it a more credible normative principle. We propose here therefore, a more engaging and a more in-depth inter-disciplinary inquiry into field of ecology. A comprehensive narrative of relational value of virtue ethics must take this into account. This is imperative because: “We have lost the contact with the earth and its rhythms that our ancestors had. We have lost contact with ourselves, and our own natural being, and are driven by an imperative of domination that condemns us to ceaseless battle against nature both within and around us.”<sup>348</sup> This thesis therefore proposes a change in ideological and epistemological perceptions that warp our understanding and use of the earth.<sup>349</sup>

Therefore, we further propose the need of a Christian theology that is less anthropocentric but stresses a concrete relationship between God, us and our environment.<sup>350</sup> For “our relationship with the environment can never be isolated from our relationship with others and with God. Otherwise, it would be nothing more than

---

<sup>348</sup> Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity*, 94.

<sup>349</sup> The epistemological perceptions can be traced back to the enlightenment when modern humans considered ethics not part of the universe and the natural world is considered as an autonomous, uncaused mechanism. The resultant effect of such perception is that there are not moral consequences to the exploitation of nature. But J. Baird Callicott argues that the diverse and mutually dependent communities of life within the ecosystem are collectively judged to be morally considerable. See J. Baird Callicott, *In Defence of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy* (New York: State University of New York Press, 1989), 25.

<sup>350</sup> Pope Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 116.

romantic individualism dressed up in ecological garb, locking us into a stifling immanence.”<sup>351</sup> At the same time all ecological approaches must take into account the value of the human person. Pope Francis in *Laudato Si'* calls this “integral ecology”.<sup>352</sup> For this to be achievable the roles of ethicists, environmentalist, and scientists must be duly given and a synthesis of the data they provide must be made to promote consistent dialogue.

---

<sup>351</sup> Ibid., no. 118.

<sup>352</sup> Ibid., 137

## 5.8 GENERAL CONCLUSION

Salie McFague in *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language* writes that the: “Dominant model of Christianity is a personal, relational one: the Divine and the human have been envisioned in terms of responsible interaction”.<sup>1</sup> The preponderance of Christian virtue ethics furthers the course of a model that is both personal and relational. Our commitment in this thesis was to advance a relational understanding of virtue ethics through a conversation with three theologians, Romanus Cessario, James F. Keenan, and Joseph J. Kotva Jnr. It sought to do two things: Firstly, to present the salient positions of our interlocutors insofar as they relate to the theme of our study. Secondly, to carry out a comparative reading of their ideas by showing the degree of convergence and divergence, and perhaps uncover problem(s) and point to a supplementary way of going forward. As this study has navigated through these two goals, it is appropriate to here summarize the proceedings so far and also offer some concluding remarks.

The historical background to the entire study was presented in chapter one. This chapter began by reading backwards by identifying the reasons for the eclipse of virtue within the history of moral theology and the need for the retrieval of virtue in the current philosophical and theological landscape. The historical-intellectual tradition this thesis followed was the Aristotelian-Thomist tradition because the account of virtues by this tradition is more systematic and encompassing. The influence of such tradition is the pioneering works of Elizabeth Anscombe and later on Alasdair MacIntyre and even on present Aristotelian-Thomist philosophers and theologians. The challenge for contemporary theologians to appropriately contextualize the language and theology of virtue in other areas still remains.

---

<sup>1</sup> Salie McFague, *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language*

The three chapters that followed positioned Cessario, Keenan, and Kotva as our conversation companions. Beginning with a brief biographical data, they were situated within a general moral landscape and placed within a particular theological tradition: Cessario as *ressourcement* Thomist, Keenan as revisionist-Thomist, and Kotva as Neo-Aristotelian and Reformed Tradition. This enabled us to understand the development and application of their ideas on virtue based on the selected themes that relate to the general subject of this thesis.

Chapter five was a comparative reading drawing upon particular themes offered in preceding chapters. It began by justifying importance of a comparative study. It then showed how the theological tradition of each of the theologians impacts on their various styles and approaches on the virtues. Through a selection of particular themes which I considered encompassing, the thesis looked at the convergences and divergences. Some of the divergences may not have offered a complete contrast in notions but rather are a shift in emphasis. However, based on the general theme of our study a huge gap was noted namely, the non-recognition of our extensive relationality with the world of nature. The thesis offered a way forward by proposing three ecological virtues of “ecological-justice”, “ecological-love”, and “ecological-Prudence”. This thesis does not claim that the proposed list is exhaustive. For example Laura Ruth Yordy in *Green Witness: Ecology, Ethics, and the Kingdom of God* also proposes the ecological virtue of Patience.<sup>2</sup>

While this thesis at a general level defends the relevance of virtue ethics, at a particular level I wish to take a stand on the three theorists based on their traditions. Although, I appreciate the theological and academic rigors of Kotva from the

---

<sup>2</sup> Laura Ruth Yordy, *Green Witness: Ecology, Ethics, and the Kingdom of God* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2008), 153-60.

Reformed tradition with a correlational model, however I am more drawn to the approaches of Cessario as a *ressourcement* Thomist and Keenan as a revisionist Thomist for the following reasons.

Firstly, since after Vatican II Church renewal has prominently come through *ressourcement* as a method. Retrospectively, *ressourcement* seeks meaning from primary sources of revealed truth which offers readers the opportunity to dialogue with narratives of the past. This will help situate the appropriate readings within a concept of continuity and growth in theology. In this sense, I will call it a neo-patristic approach- a going forward by looking backwards to the patristic Fathers. Perhaps, such a link with the past is a panacea against liberal or so-called progressivists and simplistic narratives of contemporary era especially within moral theology. It should be noted that the inspiration for such an approach to theology is more pastoral than academic. Cessario displays such a motivation towards theology via virtue ethics. The rich resource in such a tradition should be explored more deeply by theologians.

Secondly, revisionism which seeks to further the renewal of moral theology cannot be dismissed either.<sup>3</sup> It rejects the manualist tradition with its proclivity towards rigorism. It aims at entering into dialogue with contemporary society and ethics while integrating the broader vision of theology. Keenan's revisionist approach is foundationally relational and so it is important in of stimulating virtue ethics in many directions: sexuality, gender ethics, bio-ethics etc. Revisionism can facilitate theological innovation especially on topical issues.

There is the temptation to presume that *ressourcement* and revisionism are polemical. But I posit that they do not stand in utter contrast to each other. As a point

---

<sup>3</sup> Mircea L. Senea, *Moral Theology and Spiritual Theology: The Recovery of the Centrality of Virtue and Grace for Moral Discourse*. Thesis for Licentiate in Sacred Theology presented to St. Patrick's College Maynooth, 2000.

for further study I suggest that a dialogue between these two traditions should be enhanced especially within moral theology. This is with a view to reducing the extremes of rigorism on the one hand and liberalism on the other hand. It will inevitably create a synthesis of moral theology that is encompassing and can relate to people of different eras.

Based on the core theme of our study, relational value of virtues, I wish to make some general suppositions to justify the above position. Firstly, the human person is dialogical in nature. It means that no human person can come into existence, through the processing of life and achieve self-understanding without what George Mead calls “significant others”.<sup>4</sup> This point is captured in Mead’s model of society in which an individual is related to the social process as bodily parts are related to bodies:

The self is something which has a development; it is not initially there, at birth, but arises in the process of social experience and activity, that is, develops in the given individual as a result of his relations to that process as a whole and to other individuals within that process.<sup>5</sup>

The same can be said of virtue ethics. As individuals we can hold an opinion about particular non-moral issues like the kind of sports we enjoy, the kind of cars we choose to drive. These may have no moral significance. But no one can stand-alone when it involves overarching subjects of identity, formation of character or habits which are principal aspects of virtue ethics. In this context, developing and sustaining a virtuous life is not narcissistic but in dialogue with “significant others” who could be our parents, siblings, and friends.<sup>6</sup> This dialogue continues all through human life and can take different forms.

---

<sup>4</sup> George Herbert Mead, *Mind, Self and Society* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1934).

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. 135.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Taylor, *The Ethics of Authenticity* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 33.

Secondly, to say that a person is self-centered is to hold that such a person is motivated by his or her own moral values with no reference to normative principles or faith beliefs. The same cannot be said of virtue ethics. This is because a virtuous person is guided by basic general principles of natural law and characteristic faith based principles which are summed up in acquired and infused virtues. In this sense the virtuous person is concerned with issues that transcend the self be they religious, political, epistemological or historical.<sup>7</sup> For example a hermit is drawn to his lover namely God. He may be considered selfish but he is drawn by something that transcends him and in this case it is God.

Thirdly, virtue ethics may be considered egoistic only when viewed independent of human actions or practices. However, actions of the virtuous individual like magnanimity, forgiveness, sincerity, and empathy are always extended to others. We cannot isolate the virtuous person from his or her practices that are always relational. In this sense the virtuous person celebrates friendship. However, the concept of friendship within virtue ethics needs further development.

Therefore, the entire arena of virtue ethics highlights the importance of social existence. Our relational nature as beings becomes the central *locus* of self-understanding and growth within the context of the common good. It means that to desire to be this kind of a person through internalized qualities is to recognise and promote the common good of others including non-human world of nature.

---

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. 14.



## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOURCES

- Abrams, M.H. *A Glossary of Literary Terms*. 4th ed. New York: Holt, 1981.
- Achtemeier, Paul J. *Romans: Interpretation*. Louisville: John Knox Press, 1985.
- Aelred of Rievaulx's. *Spiritual Friendship*. Translated by Mark F. Williams. Scranton: University of Scranton Press, 1994.
- Aikoye, Musa John. "The Nature, Role and Formation of Conscience in the Thoughts of John Henry Newman, Germain Grisez, and Linda Hogan: An Assessment of their Thoughts in Relation to Church Teaching." A Doctoral Thesis presented to Pontifical University of St. Patrick, Maynooth, Ireland. 2013.
- Al Gore. *An Inconvenient Truth*. London: Bloomsbury, 2006.
- Aldridge, Alan. *Religion in the Contemporary World: A Sociological Introduction*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2000.
- Allport, Gordon W. *Pattern and Growth in Personality*. London: Holt, Rinehart and Wiston, 1969.
- Amberg, Joel Van. *A Real Presence: Religious and Social Dynamics of the Eucharistic Conflicts in the Early Modern Augsburg 1520-1530*. Leiden: Brill, 2012.
- Andolsen, Barbara Hilkert. "Whose Sexuality? Whose Tradition? Women, Experience and Roman Catholic Sexual Ethics." In *Readings in Moral Theology, Feminist Ethics and the Catholic Moral Tradition*, no. 9. Edited by Charles Curran, Margaret Farley, and Richard McCormick, 207-239. New York: Paulist Press, 1996.
- Annas, Julia. "Virtue Ethics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Ethical Theory*. Edited by David Copp, 515-536. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006.
- Anscombe, Elizabeth. "Modern Moral Philosophy." *Philosophy* 33 (1958): 1-19.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thought and Action in Aristotle." In *Articles on Aristotle 2, Ethics and Politics*. Edited by Jonathan Barnes et al., 61-71. New York: St. Martin's Press, 1977.
- Aristotle. *Eudemian Ethics*, Books I, II, and VIII. Translated by Michael Woods. Oxford University Press, 1982.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Christopher Rowe. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002.
- Ashley, Benedict. *Theologies of the Body: Humanist and Christian*. Massachusetts:

- The Pope John Center, 1985.
- Ashok, Swain, Ramses Amer and Joakim Öjenda. *Globalization and Challenges to Building Peace*. London: Anthem Press, 2007.
- Austin, Michael W. *Virtues in Action: New Essays in Applied Virtue Ethics*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013.
- Bardenhewer, Otto. *Patrology: The Lives and Works of the Fathers of the Church*. Translated from the second edition by Thomas J. Shahan. Freiburg: B. Herder, 1908.
- Barnes, Jonathan. *The Complete Works of Aristotle, (Princeton 1984) Physics II*. Ch1. See also Angela M. McKay, *The Infused And Acquired Virtues In Aquinas' Moral Philosophy: A Dissertation*. Graduate Program in Philosophy Notre Dame, Indiana April 2004 [etd.nd.edu/ETD/Theses/available/etd-0452004-125337/unrestricted/McKayAMO52004.pdf](http://etd.nd.edu/ETD/Theses/available/etd-0452004-125337/unrestricted/McKayAMO52004.pdf) (accessed May 16, 2013).
- Barnette, Henlee H. *The Church and The Ecological Crisis*. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1972.
- Baron, Marcia W., Philip Pettit, and Michael Slote. *Three Methods of Ethics*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 1997.
- Barth, Karl. *Church Dogmatics*. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1958.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Doctrine of the Word of God: Church Dogmatics*, vol.1, Part 1. Translated by G.T Thomson, Edinburgh, 1939.
- Barton, John. "Virtue in the Bible" *Studies in Christian Ethics* 12/1 (1999): 12-22.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ethics and the Old Testament*. Harrisburg: Trinity, 1998.
- Bartsch, Shadi. *The Mirror of the Self*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2006.
- Bauckham, Richard. "Humans, Animals, and the Environment in Genesis 1-3." In *Genesis and Christian Theology*. Edited by Nathan MacDonald, Mark W. Elliot and Grant Macaskill, 175-189. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *God and the Crisis of Freedom: Biblical and Commentary Perspectives*. Louisville: Westminster John Know, 2002.
- Beach, Waldo and H. Richard Niebuhr. *Christian Ethics*, 2nd ed. New York: Ronald Press, 1973.
- Beauchamp, Tom and James Childress. *Principles of Biomedical Ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1989.

- Beck, James R. and Bruce Demarest. *The Human Person in Theology and Psychology: A Biblical Anthropology for the Twenty-First Century*. Grand Rapids: Kregel Publications, 2005.
- Beesing, Maria. *Enneagram: A Journey of Self Discovery*. Denville: Dimension Books, 1984.
- Bejczy, Istva P. *The Cardinal Virtues in the Middle Ages: A Study in Moral Thought from the Fourth to the Fourteenth Century*. Leiden: Brill, 2011.
- Bell, Alan and Martin Weinberg. *Homosexualities: A Study of Diversity Among Men and Women*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1978.
- Benestad, J. Brian. *Church, State, and Society: An Introduction to Catholic Social Doctrine*. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2011.
- Benett, William J. *The Book of Virtues: A Treasury of Great Moral Stories*. New York: Simon and Schuster, 1993.
- Bentham, Jeremy. *An Introduction to the Principles of Morals and Legislation*. Edited by J. Burns and H. L.A. Hart. London: Athlone Press, 1970.
- Berkhof, Hendrikus. *Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of Faith*. Revised edition and Translated by Sierd Woudstra. Grand Rapids: Wm. B Eerdmans, 1986.
- Berkhof, Louis. *Systematic Theology*. Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1996.
- Berry, and Thomas Clark. *Befriending the Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth*. Connecticut: Twenty-Third Publications, 1991.
- Berry, Thomas. *The Dream of the Earth*. San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1998.
- Birch, Bruce B., and Larry L. Rasmussen. *Bible and Christian Ethics*. Minneapolis: Augsburg Publishing, 1976.
- Blackburn, S.W. "Moral Realism." In *Morality and Moral Reasoning: Five Essays in Ethics*. Edited by John Casey, 101-124. London: Methuen, 1971.
- Bloesch, Donald G. *Freedom for Obedience: Evangelical Ethics in Contemporary Times*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1984.
- Blondel, Maurice. *Action (1893): Essay on a Critique of life and Science of Practice*. Translated by Oliva Blanchette. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.
- Boff Leonardo. *Ecology and Liberation: A New Paradigm*. Translated by John Cumming. New York: Orbis, 1995.
- Bohr, David. *Catholic Moral Tradition*. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 1999.

- Boland, Vivian and Thomas McCarthy. *The Word is Flesh and Blood: The Eucharist and Sacred Scripture*. Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2012.
- Bole, William. "Politics of Forgiveness: A Catholic Perspective." [http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A\\_politics\\_of\\_forgiveness.pdf](http://www.thepowerofforgiveness.com/pdf/A_politics_of_forgiveness.pdf) (accessed February 4, 2014).
- Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. *The Cost of Discipleship*. New York: Macmillan, 1963.
- Bonifazi, Conrad. *A Theology of Things*. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1967.
- Bossy, John. "The Mass as a Social Institution 1200-1700." *Past and Present* 100 (1983): 29-61.
- Bouma, Rolf. "Genesis 2:15" A Science of Religion Commentary [http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/essays/src/Genesis\\_2\\_v15.pdf](http://ministrytheorem.calvinseminary.edu/essays/src/Genesis_2_v15.pdf) (accessed March 23, 2015).
- Bourdieu, Pierre. *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*. Translated by Richard Nice. London: Routledge Keegan and Paul, 1984.
- Boyd, John H. *Christianity versus the God of Calvin*. Florida: Xulon Press, 2006.
- Boyle, Leonard E. "The Setting of the Summa Theologiae of St. Thomas Aquinas-Revisited." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 1-16. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Brandt, R. B. "The Structure of Virtue." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*. Edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein, 64-82. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Bretzke, James. "Christian Ethics and Scripture." [www.usfca.edu/Fac-staff/bretzkesj/BretzkeScriptureEthicsCourseNotes.htm](http://www.usfca.edu/Fac-staff/bretzkesj/BretzkeScriptureEthicsCourseNotes.htm) (accessed January 21<sup>st</sup>, 2014).
- Bretzke, Thomas T. *Morally Complex World: Engaging Contemporary Moral Theology*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2004.
- Brink, David. "Moral Realism and the Sceptical Arguments from Disagreement and Queerness." In *Ethical Theory: Classical and Contemporary Readings*. Edited by Louis P. Pojman, 420-429. California: Wadsworth Publishing, 1989.
- Bristow, Peter. *Christian Ethics and the Human Person: Truth and Relativism in Contemporary Moral Theology*. Oxford: Family Publications, 2009.
- Brody, Nathan and Howard Ehrlichman. *Personality Psychology: The Science of Individuality*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1998.
- Brown, L. R. *Building a Sustainable Society*. New York: Norton, 1981.

- Brown, Peter. "Late Antiquity." In *A History of Private Life, from Pagan Rome to Byzantium* vol. 1. Edited by P. Veyne. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Body and Society: Men, Women, and Sexual Renunciation in Early Christianity*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1988.
- Brunas-Wagstaff, Jo. *Personality: A Cognitive Approach*. London: Routledge, 1998.
- Brunt, John, and Gerald Winslow. "The Bible's Role in Christian Ethics." *Andrews University Seminary Studies* vol. 20, no. 20 (Spring 1982): 3-21.
- Bultmann, Rudolf. *Theology of the New Testament*. London: SCM, 1952.
- Bum, William M. *Understanding Behaviorism: Science, Behaviour and Culture*. New York: HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994.
- Burggraeve, Roger. "From Responsible to Meaningful Sexuality: An Ethics of Growth as an Ethics of Mercy for Young People in This Era of AIDS." In *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention*, ed. James F. Keenan et al, 303-316. New York: Continuum, 2000.
- Burghardt, W. J. *The Image of God in Man According to Cyril of Alexandria: Studies in Christian Antiquity* 14. Washington, D C: Catholic University Press of America, 1957.
- Burkitt, Ian. "Technologies of the Self: Habitus and Capacities," *Journal for the Social Behaviour* 32:2<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/1468-5914.00184/asset/1468-5914.00184.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).
- Burkitt, Ian. "Technologies of the Self: Habitus and Capacities." *Journal for the Social Behaviour* 32:2<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/store/10.1111/1468-5914.00184/asset/1468-5914.00184.pdf> (accessed August 30, 2013).
- Burrow, Rufus. *Personalism: A Critical Introduction*. Atlanta: Chalice Press, 1999.
- Burrows, Millar. "Old Testament Ethics and The Ethics of Jesus." In *Essays in Old Testament Ethics*. Edited by James L. Crenshaw and John T. Willis, 225-244. New York: Ktav Publishing House, 1974.
- Buschart, David. *Exploring Protestant Traditions: An Introduction to Theological Hospitality*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press, 2006.
- Bynum, Caroline Walker. *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*. Berkeley: University of California, 1987.
- Cahill, Lisa Sowle. *Sex, Gender and Christian Ethics*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Global Common Good in the Twenty-First Century." In *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues*. Edited by James Keating, 233-251. New York: Paulist Press, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Between the Sexes: Foundations for a Christian Ethics of Sexuality* Philadelphia: Fortress and Paulist Press, 1985.
- Callicott, J. Baird. *In Defence of the Land Ethic: Essays in Environmental Philosophy*. New York: State University of New York Press, 1989.
- Cairn, David. *The Image of God in man*. New York: Philosophical Library, 1953.
- Carl, Maria. "Law, Virtue and Happiness in Aquinas' Moral Theory." *The Thomist* 61, 1 (January 1997): 425-447.
- Carlisle, Clare. *On Habit: Thinking in Action*. London: Routledge, 2014.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Question of Habit in Theology and Philosophy: From *Hexis* to Plasticity." *Body and Society* 19, nos. 2 and 3 (2013): 30-57.
- Carney, Frederick. "They Virtue-Obligation Controversy." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 5-19.
- Carver, Charles S. and Michael F. Scheier. *Perspectives on Personality* 4th edition. Boston: Allyn and Bacon, 2000.
- Casey, Christopher. "Grecian Grandeurs and the Rude Wasting of Old Times: Britain, the Elgin Marbles, and Post-Revolutionary Hellenism." *Foundations* Vol. III, no. 1 (October, 2008): 6-25.
- Cessario, Romanus. *The Christian Faith and the Theological life*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1996.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Moral Virtues and Theological Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Meaning of Virtue in the Christian Moral Life: Its significance for Human life Issues", *The Thomist* 53, 1 (January 1989): 173-196.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Theology at Fribourg," *The Thomist* 51 (1987): 325-366.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Casuistry and Revisionism: Structural Similarities in Method and Content," in *Humanae Vitae: 20 anno dopo, Atti dell II Congresso Internazionale di Teologia Morale* (Milano: Edizioni Ares, 1989), 385-409.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Short History of Thomism*. Washington, D, C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to Moral Theology*. Washington D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2001.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Virtues and the Examined Life*. London: Continuum, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Theological Virtue of Hope." In *Ethics of Aquinas*. Translated by Grant Kaplan and Frederick G. Lawrence and ed. Stephen Pope, 232-241. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Chang R. ed. *Incommensurability, Incomparability and Practical Reason*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Chatman, Seymour. *Story and Discourse: Narrative Structure in Fiction and Film*. New York: Cornell University Press, 1978.
- Chenu, M.-D. *Introduction to the Thought of St. Thomas Aquinas*. Translated by A.-M Landry and D. Hughes. Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1964.
- Christopher, Vogt. "Fostering a Catholic Commitment to the Common Good: An Approach Rooted in Virtue Ethics." *Theological Studies* vol. 68, 2 (June 2007): 394-417.
- Church J. A., and N. J. White. "A Twentieth Century Acceleration in Global Sea Level Rise." *Geophysical Research Letters* vol. 33 (2006).
- Clark, Patrick M. "The Case for an Exemplarist Approach to Virtue in Catholic Moral Theology." *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 54-82.
- Cloninger, Susan C. *Personality Description, Dynamics and Development*. New York: W. H Freeman and Company, 1996.
- Cloutier, David and William C. Mattison III. "Review Essay: The Resurgence of Virtue In Recent Moral Theology." *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 228-259.
- Cochran, Elizabeth Agnew. "Faith, Love, and Stoic Assent: Reconsidering Virtue in the Reformed Tradition." *Journal of Moral Theology*, Vol. 3, No. 1 (2014): 199-227.
- Colby, May. "Patristic Theology: Final Paper [www.academia.edu/614479/Patristic\\_Theology\\_final\\_Paper](http://www.academia.edu/614479/Patristic_Theology_final_Paper) (accessed July 22, 2014).
- Coldrey, Barry M. "The Sexual Abuse of Children: The Historical Perspective." *Studies* 85/340 (1996): 370-380.
- Colish, Marcia. *Peter Lombard*. Leiden: Brill, 1994.
- Collins, Raymond F. *Christian Morality: Biblical Foundations*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sexual Ethics and the New Testament: Behaviour and Belief*. New York: The Crossroad, 2000.
- Congar, Yves. "The Brother I have Known." Translated by Boniface Ramsey. *The Thomist* 49 (1985): 495-504.
- Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith*. "Letter to the Bishops of Catholic Church on some Aspects of Christian Meditation," of December 14, 1989.
- Conly, Sarah. "Flourishing and the Failure of the Ethics of Virtue." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*. Edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein, 83-96. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Connery, John R. "Prudence and Morality." *Theological Studies* 13 (1953): 564.
- Cook, Mark. *Levels of Personality* 2nd edition. London: Cassell, 1993.
- Cortez, Marc. *Embodied Souls, Ensouled Bodies: An Exercise in Christological Anthropology and its Significance for the Mind/Body Debate*. London: Continuum, 2008.
- Cosgrove, William. *Christian Living Today: Essays in Moral and Pastoral Theology*. Dublin: Columba Press, 2001.
- Crock, Clement H. *Virtue and Vice: Catholic Dogma and Christian Living*. New York: Joseph F. Wagner, 1939.
- Crook, Tom. "Habit as Switchpoint," *Body and Society* 19, nos. 2 and 3 (2013): 275-81.
- Cross, R. C., and A. D. Woozley. *Plato's Republic: A Philosophical Commentary*. London: MacMillan Press, 1964.
- Curran Charles E. "Virtue: The Catholic moral Tradition." In *Readings in Moral Theology 16: Virtue*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 51-78. New York: Paulist Press, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 51-78. New York: Paulist Press, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Role and Function of Scripture in Moral Theology." In *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 178-212. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Role and Function of Scriptures in Moral Theology." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology*. Edited by Charles Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 178-212. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1999.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Origins of Moral Theology in the United States: Three Different Approaches*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1997.

D'Holbach, Baron. *The System of Nature or Laws of the Moral and Physical World* vol. II. Translated by H.D. Robinson, 3 ebrary.com/lib/nuim/docDetail.action?docID=5001753 (accessed 26 August, 2013).

Dahlsgaard, Katherine, Christopher Peterson, Martin E. P. Seligan. "Shared Virtue: The Convergence of Valued Human Strengths Across Culture and History." *Review of General Psychology* vol. 9, no. 3, www.jpkc.ccnu.edu.cn/.../shared%20virtue.pdf (assessed November 18, 2010).

Daly-Denton, Margaret. "When in Music God is Glorified." In *The Word is Flesh and Blood: The Eucharist and Sacred Scripture*. Edited by Vivian Boland and Thomas McCarthy, 54-64. Dublin: Dominican Publications, 2012.

Dardis, John. "Speaking of Scandal," *Studies* 89/356 (2000): 309-323.

Davies, Brian. *Aquinas*. New York: Continuum, 2002.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Thought of Thomas Aquinas*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992.

Davis, Ellen F. "Preserving Virtues: Renewing the Tradition of the Sages." In *Character and Scripture: Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by William P. Brown. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002.

de Chardin, Teilhard. *Phenomenon of Man*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

de Lubac, Henri. *Catholicism*. Translated by Lancelot C. Sheppard and Elizabeth Englund. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988.

Deem, Michael. Culture and Theology: The Ressourcement Movement (Part 1) vox-nova.com/2008/03/30/culture-and-theology-ressourcement-movement-part-1 (accessed August 15, 2013).

\_\_\_\_\_. Part II: The *Ressourcement* Movement: Henri de Lubac percaritatem.com/2006/10/25/part-ii-ressourcement-movement-henri-de-lubac/ (accessed August 15, 2013).

Delgado, Richard. *Justice at War: Civil Liberties and Civil Rights during times of Crisis*. New York: New York University Press, 2003.

Demmer, Klaus. *Shaping the Moral Life: An Approach to Moral Theology*. Edited by James F. Keenan, translated by Roberto Dell'Oro. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2000.

- Descartes. "Principles of Philosophy 1." In *Descartes: Key Philosophical Writings* (London: Wordsworth, 1997).
- DeveHere, Raymond J. *Introduction to Virtue Ethics: Insights of the Ancient Greeks*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Doherty, Kevin. "The Paschal Dimension of the Forty Days as an interpretive Key to a Reading of the New and Serious challenges of Faith in the Roman Catholic Church in Ireland 1990-2010," a Doctoral Thesis Presented to Mater Dei Institute of Education, 2011.
- Dominian, Jack. "Sexuality and Interpersonal Relationship." In *Embracing Sexuality: Authority and Experience in the Catholic Church*. Edited by Joseph A. Selling, 3-21. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.
- Donahue, James A. "The use of Virtue and Character in Applied Ethics." *Horizon* 17 (1990): 228-43.
- Donati, P. Understanding the human person from the standpoint of the relational sociology (2006). Memorandum, 11, 35-42. Retrieved / /, from World <http://www.fafich.ufmg.br/~memorandum/a11/donati01.pdf> (accessed November 4, 2014).
- Donne, John. "Devotions Upon Emergent Occasions." In *The Works of John Donne, with a Memoir of His Life*, 6 Vols. Edited by Henry Alford, 574-575. London: John W. Parker, 1839.
- Doris, John M. *Lack of Character: Personality and Moral Behaviour*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002.
- Douglas J. Zaggi "The Moral Virtue Of Prudence In St. Thomas Aquinas: Its Relevance In Christian Moral Life" A Thesis Submitted To The Faculty Of Moral Theology In Partial Fulfillment Of The Requirements For A Master's Degree In Theology Of The Pontifical University Of St. Patrick, Maynooth, May 2011.
- Douglas, Mary. *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo*. London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966.
- Driver, Julia. *Ethics: The Fundamentals*. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2007.
- Duffy, Stephen J. *The Dynamics of Grace: Perspectives in Theological Anthropology, New Theology Studies 3*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1993.
- Dulles, Avery. "Catholicism and Capital Punishment." In *Readings in Moral Theology no. 13: Change in Official Catholic Moral Teaching*. Edited by Charles E. Curran, 132-144. New York: Paulist Press, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A History of Apologetics*. London: Hutchinson, 1971.

- Durkheim, Emile. *The Elementary forms of the Religious Life*. London: Allen and Unwin, 1915.
- Edel, Abraham. *Method in Ethical Theory*. New Brunswick: Transaction Publishers, 1994.
- Edwards, Jonathan. The Nature Of True Virtue, <http://depts.washington.edu/lsearlec/TEXTS/EDWARDS/VIRTUE.HTM> (accessed September 10, 2014).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Nature of True Virtue*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1960.
- Egelkraut, L. H. *Jesus' Mission to Jerusalem: A Redaction Critical Study of the Travel Narrative in the Gospel of Luke, Luke 9:51- 19:48*. Frankfurt: Lang, 1976.
- Ehrlich, Paul. *The Population Bomb*. New York: Ballantine, 1970.
- Eichrodt, Walter. *Theology of the Old Testament*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1967.
- Enns, P. P. *The Moody Handbook of Theology*. Chicago, Moody Press, 1989.
- Erickson, Millard J. *Christian Theology*. 3rd ed. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic: 2013.
- Faber, Dr. J. "Modern Trends In Christology: The Person Of Jesus In H. Berkhof's Christology" [http://www.spindleworks.com/library/faber/006\\_mod.htm#1](http://www.spindleworks.com/library/faber/006_mod.htm#1) (accessed May 21, 2014).
- Fancy Robert. "The Exploitation of Nature and Teilhard's Ecotheology of Love." *Journal of Religion, Nature and the Environment*, vol. 10, Issue 2 (August, 2005): 181-195.
- Farley, B.W. *In Praise of Virtue: An Exploration of the Biblical Virtue in a Christian Context*. Grand Rapid: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1995.
- Farrell, Walter and Dominic Hughes. *Swift Victory*. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1955.
- Ferrero, Michele. *The Cultivation of Virtue in Matteo Ricci's "The True Meaning of the Lord of Heaven"*. Taipei: Fu Jen Catholic University Press, 2004.
- Fiddes, Paul S. *Participating In God: A Pastoral Doctrine of the Trinity*. Westminster: John Knox Press, 2000.
- Fields, Stephen M. "Ressourcement and the Retrieval of Thomism for the Contemporary World." In *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*. Edited by Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray, 355-371. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.

- Fisk, Milton. *Ethics of Society: A Marist Interpretation of Value*. Sussex: Harvester Press, 1980.
- Fitzmyer, Joseph A. *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*. New York: Doubleday, 1985.
- Flanagan, Owen. *Varieties of Moral Personality: Ethics and Psychological Realism*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1991.
- Flynn, Gabriel. "The Twentieth-Century Renaissance in Catholic Theology." In *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*. Edited by Gabriel Flynn and Paul D. Murray, 1-22. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Fonagy, Peter and Anna Higgitt. *New Essential Psychology: Personality Theory and Clinical Practice*. London: Methuen, 1984.
- Foot, Philippa. *Virtues and Vices and Other Essays in Moral Philosophy*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1978.
- Forster, E. M. and M. H. Abrams. *Aspects of the Novel*. New York: Harcourt, 1954.
- Fowl, Stephen E. and L. Gregory Jones. *Reading in Communion: Scripture and Ethics in Christian Life*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 1991.
- Frankena, William K. *Ethics*. 2nd ed. New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, 1973.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Ethics of Love Conceived as the Ethics of Virtue." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 1 (1973): 21-31.
- Fuchs, Josef. *Natural Law: A Theological Investigation* (New York: Sheed and Ward, 1965).
- \_\_\_\_\_. 'Theologia moralis perficienda; votum Concilii Vaticani II', *Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgia*, Rome, 55 (1966): 499-548.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is there a Christian Ethics?" In *The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*, ed. Charles Curran and Richard McCormick, 3-19. New York: Paulist Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Moral Theology According to Vatican II." In *Human Values and Christian Morality*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1979.
- Gadgil, Madhav. "Cultural Evolution of Ecological Prudence." *Landscape Planning* vol. 2 (1985): 285-299.
- Gallagher, John A. *Time Past, Time Future: A Historical Study of Catholic Moral Theology*. New York: Paulist, 1990.
- Gamwell, Franklin I. "Moral Realism and Religion." *Journal of Religion* 73 (1993): 479-495.

- Gardiner, P. "A Virtue Ethics Approach toward Dilemmas in Medicine." *Journal of Medical Ethics*, vol. 29 (2003): 297-302.
- Geach, Mary. "Introduction." In *From Plato to Wittgenstein: Essays by G. E. M. Anscombe*. Edited by Mary Geach and Luke Gormally, XIII-XX. Charlottesville: Imprint Academic, 2011.
- Geach, Peter. *The Virtues*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977.
- Genovesi, Vincent. *In Pursuit of Love: Catholic Morality and Human Sexuality*. Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1987.
- Gerardi, Renzo. *Storia della morale: Interpretazioni teologiche dell'esperienza Cristiana*. Bologna: Edizioni Dehoniane, 2003.
- Gergen, Kenneth J. "Narrative, Moral Identity and Historical Consciousness: a Social Constructionist Account" [http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/Narrative\\_Moral\\_Identity\\_and\\_Historical\\_Consciousness.pdf](http://www.swarthmore.edu/Documents/faculty/gergen/Narrative_Moral_Identity_and_Historical_Consciousness.pdf) (accessed July 10, 2014).
- Gilby, Thomas. *Purpose and Happiness (1a2ae.1-5)*, Vol.16. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1968.
- Gilleman, Gérard. *The Primary of Charity in Moral Theology*. Westminster, MD: Newman Press, 1959.
- Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge: Harvard University, 1982.
- Gilson, Etienne. *The Philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas*. Cambridge: W. Heffer & Sons Ltd, 1924.
- Glenn, H. Patrick. *Legal Traditions of the World*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2000.
- Grabowski, John. *Sex and Virtue: An Introduction to Sexual Ethics*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University America, 2004.
- Graburn, Nelson H. H. "What is Tradition?" <https://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/gender-sexuality/What%20is%20tradition.pdf> (accessed October 6, 2014).
- Greeley, Andrew M. *The Cardinal Virtues*. New York: Warner Books, 1990.
- Greenwell, Andrew M. "Ambrose and the Cardinal Virtues," <http://lexchristianorum.blogspot.ie/2012/09/st-ambrose-and-cardinal-virtues.html> (accessed July 22, 2014).
- Gregory Naziazan, *Orat.* 8, c. 6 (PG 35, 795).

- Gregory of Nyssa, *De beatitudinibus*, 1:PG 44, 1200D.
- Grenz, Stanley J. *The Social God and the Relational Self: A Trinitarian Theology of the Imago Dei*. Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 2011.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Created for Community*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 1988.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles*. New York: Franciscan Herald Press, 1983.
- Grisez, Germain and Russell Shaw. *Fulfillment in Christ: A Summary of Christian Moral Principles*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Way of the Lord Jesus, Vol. I: Christian Moral Principles*. Quincy, IL: Franciscan Press, 1983.
- Guba, Egon G. and Yvonna S. Lincoln. "Competing Paradigms in Qualitative Research." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research*, ed. Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln, 105-117. Thousand Oaks: Sage, 1994.
- Gudorf, Christine E. *Body, Sex, and Pleasure: Reconstructing Christian Sexual Ethics*. Ohio: The Pilgrim Press, 1994.
- Guidon, Andre. *The Sexual Language: An Essay in Moral Theology*. Ottawa: University of Ottawa Press, 1976.
- Gula, Richard M. "A Review of *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*, by Daniel J. Harrington, and James F. Keenan. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality*. New York: Paulist, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Shifting Landscape of Moral Theology," *Church* (Spring, 2009)[http://www.churchmagazine.org/issue/0903/upf\\_shifting\\_landscape.php](http://www.churchmagazine.org/issue/0903/upf_shifting_landscape.php) (accessed October 17, 2013).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Moral Discernment* (New York: Paulist Press, 1997).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Just Ministry: Professional Ethics for Pastoral Ministers*. New York: Paulist Press, 2007.
- Gunn, David M. *The Story of David*. Sheffield: JSOT Press, 1978.
- Gurgess, Jack G. "Notice to the dead and Dying: You are Standing on a Generation." *Los Angeles Free Press*, April 25, 1969.
- Gustafson, James M. "The Changing us of the Bible in Christian Ethics." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 4: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology*. edited by

- Charles Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 133-150. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics: Prospects for Rapprochement*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Roman Catholic and Protestant Interaction in Ethics: An Interpretation." *Theological Studies* 50/1 (March 1989): 44-69.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Theology and Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell, 1981.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. *A Theology of Liberation*. New York: Orbis Press, 1973.
- Hall, Douglas John. *Imaging God: Dominion as Stewardship*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing Co., 1986.
- Hamann, Johann and Kenneth Haynes ed. *Writings on Philosophy and Language*. Leiden: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- Hamel, Edouard. "Scripture: The Soul of Moral Theology." In *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 105-132. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- Hamilton, Phyllis and Paul Williams. *Secret Love: My life with Father Michael Cleary*. Dublin: Mainstream Publishing, 1995.
- Hanigan, James. *As I have Loved You: The Challenge of Christian Ethics*. New York: Paulist Press, 1986.
- Harak, G. Simon. *Virtuous Passions: The Formation of Christian Character*. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
- Harakas, Stanley. *Toward Transfigured Life*. Minneapolis: Life and Light, 1983.
- Häring, Bernard. *The Law of Christ*. vol. one. Cork: Mercier Press, 1963.
- Harkness, Georgia. "Christian Ethics." <http://www.religion-online.org/showchapter.asp?title=802&C=1078> (accessed December 2, 2014).
- Harrington, Daniel and James F. Keenan. *Jesus and Virtue: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. and James F. Keenan. *Paul and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges Between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. Lanham: Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2010.
- Harrington, Daniel J. *The Gospel of Matthew*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1991
- Harrison, Peter. "Having Dominion: Genesis and the Mastery of Nature." In *Environmental Stewardship: Critical Perspectives- Past and Present*. Edited by R. J. Berry, 17-31. London: T & T Clark International, 2006.

- Hartwig, Michael. *The Problem of Abstinence and the Poetics of Sexual Intimacy*. New York: Peter Lang, 2000.
- Hauerwas Stanley, and Charles Pinches. *Christians Among the Virtues: Theological Conversations with Ancient and Modern Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1997.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. "The Virtues of Alasdair MacIntyre." *First Things* 176 (Oct. 2007): 35-40.
- Hauerwas, Stanley. *A Community of Character*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Character and the Christian Life: A Study in Theological Ethics*. San Antonio: Trinity University Press, 1985.
- Haven, Cynthia. "'Historical Consciousness' can be a Double-Edged Sword, says Historian." <http://news.stanford.edu/news/2009/february25/james-campbell-history-022509.html> (accessed July 10, 2014).
- Henry, Michael. *Philosophy and Phenomenology of the Body*. The Hague: Nijhoff, 1979.
- Herms, Eilert. "Virtue: A Neglected Concept in Protestant Ethics." *Scottish Journal of Theology* 35 (6): 481-495.
- Hibbs, Thomas S. "Interpretations of Aquinas's Ethics since Vatican II." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 412- 425. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Hill, William J. *The Three-Personed God*. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University America Press, 1982.
- Himes, Kenneth R. "Scripture and Ethics: A Review Essay." *Biblical Theology Bulletin* 15 (April 1985): 65-73.
- Hittinger, Russell. "Natural Law and Catholic Moral Theology." In *The First Grace: Rediscovering the Natural Law in a Post-Christian World*. Wilmington: ISI Books, 2003.
- Hollenbach, David. *The Common Good and Christian Ethics*. New York: Cambridge Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Is Aquinas an Act-Ethicist or an Agent-Ethicist?" *The Thomist* 70, 2 (April 2006): 237-65.
- Houlden, Leslie. *Ethics and New Testament*. Revised Edition. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1992.

- Houser, R. E. *The Cardinal Virtues: Aquinas, Albert, and Philip the Chancellor*. Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 2004.
- Hudson, Stephen. "Character Traits and Desires." *Ethics* 90 (1980): 539-549.
- Hultgreen, Arland J. *Paul's Letter to the Romans: A Commentary*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2011.
- Hume, David. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. Edited by Ernest C. Mossner. London: Penguin, 1955.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A Treatise on Human Nature*, eBook  
[http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4705/4705-h/4705-h.htm#link2H\\_4\\_0086](http://www.gutenberg.org/files/4705/4705-h/4705-h.htm#link2H_4_0086)  
 (accessed September 10, 2014).
- Hutchinson, D. S. *The Virtues of Aristotle*. London: Routledge & Keegan Paul, 1986.
- Hütter, Reinhard and Matthew Levering eds. *Ressourcement Thomism: Sacred Doctrine, the Sacraments and the Moral Life, Essays in Honour of Romanus Cessario*. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2010.
- Hynes, Julia. "Virtue Theory: A Defence Against Consequentialism and Deontology in Medical Ethical Arena." In *Thomas Aquinas: Teacher and Scholar. The Aquinas Lectures at Maynooth, Vol. 2:2002-2010*. Edited by James McEvoy, Michael W. Dunne and Julia Hynes, 184-211. Dublin: Four Courts Press, 2012.
- Igham, Mary Beth and Metchtild Dreyer. *The Philosophical Vision of John Duns Scotus: An Introduction*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 2004.
- Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. "IPCC, 2007: Summary for Policymakers." In *Climate Change 2007: The Physical Science Basis*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007.
- International Theological Commission, *Communion and Stewardship: Human Persons Created in the Image of God*, 2002.
- Irenaeus, *Against Heresies* 5.6.1.
- Irwin, Kevin W. "Sacramentality of Creation and the Role of Creation in Liturgy and Sacraments." In *Preserving the Creation: Environmental Theology and Ethics*, ed. Kevin W. Irwin and Edmund D. Pellegrino, 67-111. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Models of the Eucharist*. New York: Paulist Press, 2005.
- Irwin, Terence. *The Development of Ethics: A Historical and Critical Study*, Vol. II: from Suárez to Rousseau. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

- Jack Dominian, *Sexual Integrity: The Answers to Aids* (London: Darton, Longman and Todd, 1987).
- Jackson, Timothy P. "The Gospels and Christian Ethics," in *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics* ed. Robin Gill, 29-62. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- James, Buchanan M. and Gordon Tullock. *The Calculus of Consent: Logical Foundations of Constitutional Democracy*. Michigan: The University of Michigan Press, 1966.
- Janssens, Louis. "Artificial Insemination: Ethical Considerations." *Louvain Studies* 8 (1980): 3-29.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Personalist Morals." *Louvain Studies* 3 (Spring 1970): 5-16.
- Jenkins, Willis. *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.
- Jewett, Paul K. *Who we Are: Our Dignity as Human*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1996.
- Jewett, Robert. *Paul's Anthropological Terms*. Leiden: Brill, 1971.
- John H. *The Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1972.
- John, Art. "A Theory of Hippies; Part One: 'What have you Got?'" *Fifth Estate* (Nov. 1966): 15-30.
- Johnstone, Brian. "What Does it Mean to be a Person?" *Studia Moralia*, 48/1 (2010): 125-129.
- Jones, Gregory L. "Formed and transformed by Scripture: Character, Community, and Authority in Biblical Interpretation." In *Character and Scripture: Moral Formation, Community, and Biblical Interpretation*. Edited by William P. Brown, 18-33. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans, 2002.
- Jonsen, A. and S. Toulmin. *The Abuse of Casuistry: A History of Moral Reasoning*. Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1988.
- Jonsson, Gunnlaugur A. *The Image of God: Genesis 1:26-28 in a Century of Old Testament Research*. Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1988.
- Jung, C. G. *Dreams*. London: Ark Paperbacks, 1985.
- Junker-Kenny, Maureen. "Virtues and the God who makes Everything New." In *An Irish Reader in Moral Theology: The Legacy of the Last Fifty Years*, vol. 1 Foundations. Edited by Enda McDonagh and Vincent MacNamara, 169-186. Dublin: The Columba Press, 2009.

- Jurgens, William A. *The Faith of the Early Fathers: A Source-Book of the Theological and Historical Passages from the Writings of Saint Augustine to the end of the Patristic Age*, vol.3. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1979).
- Justin Martyr, *Apology* 1.28 [ANF, 1:172].
- Kaczor, Christopher Robert. *Proportionalism and the Natural Law Tradition*. Washington, D. C: Catholic University of America Press, 2002.
- Kamtekar, Rachana. "Ancient Virtue Ethics: An Overview with an Emphasis on Practical Wisdom." In *The Cambridge Companion to Virtue Ethics*. Edited by Daniel C. Russell, 29-48. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Kant, Immanuel. *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals In Ethical Principles*. 2nd ed. Translated by James W. Ellington. Indianapolis: Hackett, 1999.
- Kasper, Walter. *Jesus the Christ*. New York: Paulist Press, 1976.
- Kauffman, Richard ed. *A Disciple's Christology: Appraisals of Kraus's Jesus Christ our Lord*. Indiana: Institute of Mennonite Studies, 1989.
- Kaufman, Stephen. "Samaritan Political Identity." A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment for an M. A in Middle Eastern History, Tel Aviv University, 1998.
- Keane, Philip. "The Objective Moral Order: Reflections on Recent Research." *Theological Studies* 43 (1982): 260-278.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Sexual Morality: A Catholic View*. New York: Paulist, 1977.
- Keen, Robert. "Virtue is a Necessity," *Tablet* (8 November 2008): 4-5.
- Keenan, and Joseph Kotva, ed. *Practice what you Preach: Virtue, Ethics, and Power in the Lives of Pastoral Ministers and Their Congregations*. Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999.
- Keenan, James F. *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences*. New York: Continuum, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A History of Moral Theology in Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences*. New York: Continuum, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The History of Catholic Moral Theology." In *In the Service of Charity and Truth: Essays in Honour of Bishop Lucius Ugorji*. New York: Peter Lang, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Christian Perspectives on the Human Body," *Theological Studies* 55 (1994): 330-346.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "Genetic Research and the Elusive Body." In *Embodiment, Medicine and Morality*. Edited by M. Farley and L. S. Cahill, 59-73. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academics, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Proposing Cardinal Virtues." *Theological Studies* 56, 4 (1995): 709-729.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Virtue of Prudence (IIa IIae, qq. 47-56)." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 259-271. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue Ethics: Making a Case as It Comes of Age." *Thought* 67 (1992): 115-127.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "What is Virtue Ethics," *Priests and People*, vol. 13, no. 11 (1999): 401-405.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Review of *Confronting the Truth: Conscience in Catholic Tradition*." by Linda Hogan, *The Tablet* (April 21, 2001): 508.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Innovation: The Recovery of History and Scripture for Moral Theology." Center for Catholic Studies and Social Thought. Summer Lectures Series July 9<sup>th</sup> 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Learning the Virtue of Justice," *Church* 9/3 (1993): 38-40.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ten Reasons Why Thomas Aquinas is Important for Ethics Today." *New Blackfriars* 75 (1994): 354-363.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Ten Reasons why Thomas Aquinas is Important for Ethics Today." *New Blackfriars* 75 (1994): 354-363.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Virtue of Fidelity," *Church* 9/2 (1993): 38-39.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue Ethics and Sexual Ethics." *Louvain Studies* 30, 3 (2005): 180-197.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue Ethics: Setting an Agenda." *Thought* 67 (1992): 113-114.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue Ethics." In *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*. Edited by Bernard Hoose, 84-94. London: Cassell, 1998.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: From Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences*. London: Continuum, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ethics of the Word: Voices in the Catholic Church Today*. Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Goodness and Rightness in Thomas Aquinas' Summa Theologiae*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1992.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition*, 2nd ed. Lanham: A Sheed and Ward Book, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2004.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Works of Mercy: The Heart of Catholicism*. Lanham: Sheed & Ward, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Virtue for Ordinary Christians*. Franklin: Sheed & Ward, 1999.
- Kelly, Kevin T. *New Directions in Moral Theology: The Challenge of Being Human*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1992.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *New Directions in Sexual Ethics: Moral Theology and the Challenge of Aids*. London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1998.
- Kelsey, David. *Uses of Scripture in Recent Theology*. Philadelphia; Fortress Press, 1975.
- Kent Reames, "A Review of Christian Case." <http://www.academicroom.com/bookreview/christian-case-virtue-ethics> (accessed March 27, 2014).
- Kerr, Fergus. *After Aquinas: Versions of Thomisms*. Malden: Blackwell, 2002.
- Kerr, Gaven. Aquinas: Metaphysics, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy: A Peer-Reviewed Academic Resource [www.iep.utm.edu/aq-meta/](http://www.iep.utm.edu/aq-meta/)(accessed September 9, 2013).
- Keys, Mary M. *Aquinas, Aristotle, and the Promise of the Common Good*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2006.
- Kingsbury, Jack Dean. *Matthew as Story* 2nd edition. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1988.
- Kirby, Peadar. "The Death of Innocence: Whither Now? Trauma in Church and State." *Studies* 84/335 (1995): 257-265.
- Klima, Gyula ed. *Medieval Philosophy: Essential Readings with Commentary*. Malden: Blackwell, 2007.
- Klubertanz, George. *Habits and Virtues*. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1965.
- Kosel, Clifford G. "Natural Law and Human Law (Ia IIae, 90-97)." In *Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 169- 195. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Kotva, Joseph J. *The Christian Case for Virtue Ethics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1996.

- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Appeal for a Christian Virtue Ethic." *Thought* (June 1992): 158-180.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "An Ethical Reading of The Gift of Presence: Nursing and the Relevance of Virtue." *Mennonite Medical Messenger* (April-June 1993): 34-39.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Christian Virtue Ethics and the 'Sectarian Temptation'." *The Heythrop Journal* (January 1994): 35-52.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Clergy Ethics as Modeling Vulnerability." *AMBS Alumni News* (Fall 2000): 1-2.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Seeking Out Good Friends." In *Practice What you Preach: Virtues, Ethics, and Power in the Lives of Pastoral Ministers and their Congregation*. Edited by James F. Keenan and Joseph Kotva, 71-80. Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Anabaptist Tradition: Religious Beliefs and Health Care Decisions," *Park Ridge Center Handbook Series*, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Christian Pastor's Role in Medical Ethics." *Second Opinion* (March 2001): 22-48.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Transformed in Prayer." In *Practice What you Preach: Virtues, Ethics, and Power in the Lives of Pastoral Ministers and their Congregation*. Edited by James F. Keenan and Joseph Kotva, 147-156. Wisconsin: Sheed & Ward, 1999.
- Kraus, Norman C. *Jesus Christ Our Lord: Christology from a Disciples' Perspective*. Ontario: Herald Press, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *God Our Saviour: Theology in a Christological Mode*. Scottdale: Herald Press, 1991.
- Kretzmann, Norman and Eleonore Stump ed. *The Cambridge Companion to Aquinas*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993.
- Kronman, Anthony Townsend. "Precedent and Tradition." *Yale Law Journal* vol. 99 (1990): 1029-1068. Faculty Scholarship Series. Paper 1059. [http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss\\_papers/1059](http://digitalcommons.law.yale.edu/fss_papers/1059) (accessed April 15, 2015).
- Kruschwitz, Robert B., and Robert C. Roberts eds. *The Virtues: Contemporary Essays on Moral Character*. Belmont: Wadsworth, 1987.
- Kuhn, T. S. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1962.
- Kumar, Ranjit. *Research Methodology* 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Los Angeles: Sage, 2011.
- Lactantius, *Complete Works*. Translated by William Fletcher. In *The Ante-Nicene Christian Library*, vol. 21-22. Edinburgh, 1871.

- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ante-Nicene Fathers*. vol. 7. Translated by William Fletcher and ed. Alexander Roberts, James Donaldson, and A. Cleveland Coxe. Buffalo: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1886.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Divine Institutes*. Translated With introduction and notes by Anthony Bowen and Peter Garnsey. Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2003.
- Lawler, Michael G. and Todd A. Salzman. "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian." *Theological Studies* vol. 74. No. 2 (June 2013): 442-473.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Karl Rahner and Human Nature: Implications for Ethics." *Irish Theological Quarterly* 74 (2009): 289-418.
- Lea, Henry. *The History of Auricular Confession and Indulgences in the Latin Church*. Philadelphia: Lea Brothers, 1896.
- Leahy William k. and Anthony T. Massimini, eds. *Third Session Council Speeches of Vatican II*. Glen Rock: Paulist Press, 1966.
- Lebacqz, Karen. "Justice." In *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*. Edited by Bernard Hoose. London: Cassell, 1998.
- Ledoux, Stephen F. *Origins and Components of Behaviorology*. 2nd ed. New York: ABCs of Canton, 2002.
- Lehmann, Paul L. *Ethics in Christian Context*. Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Christian Foundation and Pattern of Christian Behaviour," in *Christian Faith and Social Action*. Edited by John A. Hutchinson. New York: Scribner Publishers, 1953.
- Leigh-Bennett, Ernest. *Handbook of the Early Fathers*. London: Williams & Norgate, 1920.
- Leopold, Aldo. *Sand County Almanac*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1966.
- Lewis, Michael. "Models of Development." In *Advances in Personality Science*. Edited by Daniel Cervone and Walter Mischel. New York: The Guilford Press, 2002.
- Lilley, Christopher. "Essentially Human: A Defense of the Substantive *Imago Dei*" [http://www.academia.edu/3591810/Essentially\\_Human\\_A\\_Defense\\_of\\_the\\_Substantive\\_Imago\\_Dei](http://www.academia.edu/3591810/Essentially_Human_A_Defense_of_the_Substantive_Imago_Dei) (accessed October 23, 2014).
- Locke, John. *An Essay Concerning Human Understanding*. Edited by Peter H. Nidditch Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1979.
- Lohse, Eduard. *Theological Ethics of the New Testament*. Translated by M. Eugene Boring. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.

- Lombard, Peter. *The Sentences*.
- Lonergan, Bernard J. F. *Method in Theology*. London: Darton, 1972.
- Long, Edward LeRoy. *A Survey of Recent Christian Ethics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1982.
- Louden, Robert. "Some Vices of Virtue Ethics." In *Ethical Theory Classic and Contemporary Readings*. 1st ed. Edited by Louis Pojman, 311-320. Belmont: Wadsworth, 1989.
- Louf, Andre. *Tuning to Grace: The Quest for God*. Kalamazoo: Cistercian Publications, 1992.
- Lukacs, John. *Historical Consciousness: The Remembered Past*. New Jersey: Transaction Publishers, 2009.
- Luke, Steven. *Emile Durkheim His Life and Work: A Historical and Critical Study*. London: Penguin Books, 1973.
- Luther, Martin. "Lectures on Genesis." In *Luther's Works*. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan, translated by George V. Schick, 60-70. St. Louis: Concordia, 1958.
- Luther, Martin. *Freedom of Christians, Luther's works*. Edited by Jaroslav Pelikan, Hilton C. Oswald, & Helmut T. Lehmann. St. Louis: Concordia, 1986.
- Lutz, Christopher Stephen. *Tradition in the Ethics of Alasdair MacIntyre: Relativism, Thomism, and Philosophy*. Lanham: Lexington Books, 2009.
- Macbeth, Jessica. *Sun Over Mountain: A Course in Creative Imagination*. Dublin: Gateway, 1991.
- MacDonagh, Joseph, Carol Linehan and Rebecca Weldridge. *Behavioural Science for Marketing and Business Students*. 2nd ed. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan 2002.
- MacGinty, Gerard. *The Rule of St. Benedict: Themes Texts and Thoughts*. Dublin: Dominican Publications, 1980.
- MacIntyre, Alasdair. *After Virtue*. 2nd ed. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Nature of the Virtues." *Hastings Center Report* Vol. 11, no. 2 April (1981): 27-34.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. 3rd ed. London: Duckworth, 2007.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry: Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition*. London: Duckworth, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Whose Justice? Which Rationality?* London: Duckworth, 1988.

- MacNamara, Vincent. *The Call to be Human: Making Sense of Morality*. Dublin: Veritas, 2010.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Truth in Love: Reflections on Christian Morality*. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1988.
- Macquarrie, John. *Principles of Christian Theology*, 2nd edition. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1977.
- Maher, Michael. *Genesis*. Delaware: Michael Glazier, 1987.
- Mahoney, John. *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of Roman Catholic Tradition*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1987.
- Malherbe, Abraham J. *Paul and the Popular Philosophers*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1989.
- Maloney, George. "On Bridging the Generation Gap-Can we Work it Out?," *Spokane Natural* (1968): 16-29.
- Marcia, Homiak "Moral Character," *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Spring 2011 Edition), Edward N. Zalta (ed.), URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/spr2011/entries/moral-character/>> (accessed November 27, 2014).
- Maréchal, Joseph. *A Maréchal Reader*. Translated by Ed. Joseph Donceel. New York: Herder and Herder, 1970.
- Maritain, Jacques. *Person and the Common Good*. Translated by John J. Fitzgerald. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1972.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Rights of Man*. Geoffrey Bles: Centenary Press, 1944.
- Marmion, Declan, and Mary E. Hines eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Karl Rahner*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005.
- Martin, Leonard. "I Fed you with Milk': Missionary Morals in Brazil in a Time of AIDS." In *Catholic Ethicists on HIV/AIDS Prevention*. Edited by James F. Keenan et al, 128-134. New York: Continuum, 2000.
- Martyn, J. Louis. *Theological Issues in the Letters of Paul*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.
- Marxsen, Willi. *New Testament Foundations for Christian Ethics*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 1993.
- Mascall, E. L. A. "Review of Jesus: An Experiment in Christology." *Religious Studies* Vol. 16, No. 2 (June, 1980): 242-245. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20005655> (accessed January 20, 2014).

- Masters, William and Virginia Johnson. *Human Sexual Response*. Boston: Little, 1966.
- Matera, Frank J. *God's Saving Grace: A Pauline Theology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2012.
- Mattison III, William C. *Introducing Moral Theology: True Happiness and the Virtues*. Grand Rapids: Brazos Press, 2008.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thomas's Categorization of Virtue: Historical Background and Contemporary Significance." *The Thomist* 74. No. 2 (April, 2010): 189-235.
- May, William E. "The Liberating Truth of Catholic Teaching on Sexual Morality." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 8: Dialogue About Catholic Sexual Teaching*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 513-524. New York: Paulist Press, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *An Introduction to Moral Theology*. 2nd ed. Huntington: Our Sunday Visitor, 2003.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtues In Professional Life." In *Virtue Readings in Moral Theology no. 16*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 95-116. New York: Paulist Press, 2011.
- McCool, Gerald. "Neo-Thomism and the Tradition of St. Thomas." *Thought* 62 (1987): 132-150.
- McCormick, Richard A. "Does Religious Faith Add to Ethical Perception?" In *Readings in Moral Theology, no.2 The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 156-173. New York: Paulist Press, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "A Commentary on the Commentaries." In *Doing Evil to Achieve Good*. Edited by Richard McCormick and Paul Ramsey, 42-45. Chicago: Loyola University, 1978.
- McDonagh, Enda. *Gift and Call*. Indiana: Abbey Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Moral Theology Renewed*. Dublin: The Furrow Trust, 1965.
- McDonagh, Sean. *The Greening of the Church*. New York: Orbis, 1990.
- McFague, Sally. *Speaking in Parables*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1975.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Metaphorical Theology: Models of God in Religious Language*. London: SCM Press, 1982.

- McGrath, Alister E. *Christian Theology: An Introduction*. 3rd ed. Malden: Blackwell, 2001.
- McInerney, Ralph. *Ethica Thomistica: The Moral Philosophy of Thomas Aquinas*. Washington, D.C: Catholic University of America Press, 1982.
- McKenny, Gerald. *The Analogy of Grace: Karl Barth's Moral Theology*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010.
- McKinnon, Christine. *Character, Virtue Theories, and the Vices*. Toronto: Broadview Press, 1999.
- Mead, George Herbert. *Mind, Self and Society*. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1934.
- Mealey, Ann Marie. *The Identity of Christian Morality*. Surrey: Ashgate, 2009.
- Medley, Mark S. *Imago Trinitas: Toward a Relational Understanding of Becoming Human*. Lanham: University Press of America, 2002.
- Meeks, Wayne A. *The Origins of Christian Morality*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1993.
- Mehl, Roger. *Catholic Ethics and Protestant Ethics*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1971.
- Meilaender, Gilbert. *Faith and Faithfulness*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1991.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Friendship: A Study in Theological Ethics*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1981.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Theory and Practice of Virtue*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1984.
- Melina, Livio. *Sharing in Christ's Virtues: For a Renewal of Moral Theology in the Light of Veritatis Splendor*. Translated by William E. May. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2001.
- Merleau-Ponty. *Phenomenology of Perception*. Translated by Colin Smith. New York: The Humanities Press, 1962.
- Mill, John Stuart. *Collected Works of John Stuart Mill*. Edited by J. M Robson. Toronto: Toronto University Press, 1963.
- Miller, Timothy S. *Hippies and American Values*. Tennessee: Tennessee Press, 2011.
- Mills, Mary E. *Biblical Morality: Moral Perspectives in Old Testament Narratives*. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.

- Minkema Kenneth P. et al. eds. *Miscellany 682, The Works of Jonathan Edwards 26 vols.* New Haven: Yale University Press, 1957-2008.
- Mohrlang, Roger. *Matthew and Paul: A Comparison of Ethical Perspectives.* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Moltmann, Jürgen. *God and Creation.* Minneapolis: Fortress, 1985.
- Moule, C. F. D. *Man and Nature in the New Testament.* Philadelphia: Fortress, 1964.
- Mounce, Robert H. *Romans: The New American Commentary* Vol. 27. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1995.
- Muir, John. *Nature Writings.* New York: Penguin Literary Classics, 1997.
- Murphy, Annie and Peter DeRosa. *Forbidden Fruit: The Story of my Secret Love Affair.* New York: Warner Books Inc., 1994.
- Murphy, Mark. "Theological Voluntarism." *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy* (Winter 2014 Edition). Edited by Edward N. Zalta URL = <http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2014/entries/voluntarism-theological/> (accessed March 3, 2015).
- Murphy, William F. "Revisiting Contraception: An Integrated Approach in the Light of the Renewal of Thomistic Virtue Ethics." *Theological Studies* Vol. 72, Issue 4 (Dec. 2011): 812-847.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*." *Josephinum Journal of Theology.* Vol. 18, no. 1(2011): 4-36.
- Nelson, Gaylord. "This Generation's Strategy to Save the Environment." In *Agenda For Survival.* Edited by Harold W. Helfrich, Jr. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1970.
- Newman, Henry. *Parochial and Plain Sermons.* San Francisco: Ignatius 1987.
- Newsweek* of June 29, 1998.
- Neyrey, Jerome. "Body Language in 1 Corinthians." *Semeia* 35 (1986): 129-170.
- Nichols, Aidan. "Thomism and the *Nouvelle Théologie*." *The Thomist* 64 (2000): 1-19.
- Niebuhr, H. Richard. *The Responsible Self.* New York: Harper Row, 1963.
- Niebuhr, Reinhold. *Love and Justice: Selections from the Shorter Writings of Reinhold Niebuhr.* Edited by D. B. Robertson. Louisville: Westminster, 1957.
- Nolan, Simon F. "The Philosopher Pope: Pope John Paul II and the Human Person [www.carmelites.ie/philosopherPope.pdf](http://www.carmelites.ie/philosopherPope.pdf) (accessed December 8, 2014).

- Northcott, Michael S. "Ecology and Christian Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Edited by Robin Gill, 219-238. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Nussbaum, Martha. *The Fragility of Goodness: Luck and Ethics in Greek Tragedy and Philosophy*. New York: Cambridge University, 1986.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*. Edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling, Jr. and Howard K. Wettstein, 32-53. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Nygren, Anders. *Agape and Eros*. New York: Harper & Row, 1969.
- O'Brien, David J., and Thomas A. Shannon. *Catholic Social Thought: The Documentary Heritage*. New York: Orbis, 1992.
- O'Connell, Timothy. *Principles for a Catholic Morality*. San Francisco: Harper One, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Making Disciples: A Handbook of Christian Moral Formation*. New York: Crossroads, 1998.
- O'Donovan, Oliver. *The Problem of Self-Love in Augustine*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980.
- O'Malley, John W. *What Happened at Vatican II?* Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2008.
- O'Meara, Thomas Franklin. *Thomas Aquinas: Theologian*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1997.
- O'Toole, Robert F. *Who is a Christian? A Study in Pauline Ethics*. Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1990.
- Odozor, Paulinus Ikechukwu, *Richard A. McCormick and the Renewal of Moral Theology*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Moral Theology in an Age of Renewal: A Study of the Catholic Tradition since Vatican II*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2003.
- Ogletree, Thomas W. *The Use of the Bible in Christian Ethics*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1983.
- Oraison, Mark. *Morality for our Time*. Translated by Nels Challe. New York: Image Books, 1968.
- Origen, *The Song of Songs: Commentary*. Translated by R. P. Lawson. London: Ancient Christian Writers, 1957.

- Osmer, Richard R. *Practical Theology: An Introduction*. Michigan: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 2008.
- Oster, Stefan. "The Other and the Fruitfulness of Personal Acting." In *Love Alone is Credible: Hans Urs von Balthasar as Interpreter of the Catholic Tradition* vol. 1. Edited by David L. Schindler, 303-316. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 2008.
- Paloutzain, Raymond F. James T. Richardson, and Lewis R. Rambo. "Religious Conversion and Personality Change." *Journal of Personality* vol. 67, no.6 (1999): 1047-1079.
- Pannenberg, Wolfhart. *Theology and the kingdom of God*. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press, 1975.
- Patte, Daniel. *The Gospel According to Matthew: The Structural Commentary on Matthew's Faith*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1987.
- Patterson, Colin Peter *Freedom. Virtue and Narrative: A Comparative Study of the Work of Alasdair MacIntyre and Stanley Hauerwas. Excerptum theseos ad Doctoratum in S. Theologiae, Romae*, 2011.
- Pecklers, Keith F. "Ressourcement and the Renewal of Catholic Liturgy: On Celebrating the New Rite." In *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, 318-332. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Pereira, Jose. *Suarez: Between Scholasticism and Modernity*. Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2007.
- Philip, Derek L. "Authenticity or Morality?" In *The Virtues: Contemporary Essays on Moral Character*. Edited by Robert B. Kruschwitz and Robert C. Roberts. Belmont: Wadsworth, 1987.
- Pickel, Andreas. The Habitus Process: A Biopsychosocial Conception, working paper CSGP05/1 [www.trentu.ca/globalpolitics/documents/pickel1051.pdf](http://www.trentu.ca/globalpolitics/documents/pickel1051.pdf) (accessed August 22, 2013).
- Pieper, Josef. *Faith, Hope, Love*. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1997.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Cardinal Virtues*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude and Temperance* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1996).
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Hope*. Translated by Mary Frances McCarthy. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986.
- Pierse, Garrett. *Virtues and Vices*. Dublin: Browne and Nolan, 1935.

- Pinckaers, Servais. "Virtue is not a Habit." *Cross Currents* 12 (1962): 65-82.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Morality the Catholic View*. Translated by Michael Sherwin. Indiana: St. Augustine's Press, 2001.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Sources of Christian Ethics*. Translated from the third edition by Mary Thomas Noble. Edinburgh: T&T Clark, 1995.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Meaning of Virtue in the Christian Moral Life: Its significance for Human life Issues." *The Thomist* 53, 1 (January 1989): 173-196.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Sources of the Ethics of St. Thomas Aquinas." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 17-29. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Pincoffs, Edmund L. *Quandaries and Virtues: Against Reductivism in Ethics*. Lawrence: University Press of Kansas, 1986.
- Pohier, Jacques-M. "Psychology and Virtue." *New Blackfriars* 50 (1969): 483-490.
- Pope Benedict XVI. *The Garden of God: Toward a Human Ecology*. Edited by Maria Milvia Morciano with forward by Arch Bishop Jean-Louis Brugues. Washington, D. C: The Catholic University Press, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Virtues*. Collected and edited by Jacquelyn Lindsey. Indiana: Our Sunday Visitor, 2010.
- Pope John Paul II. *The Theology of the Body*. Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1997.
- Pope, Stephen. "Overview of the Ethics of Thomas Aquinas." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 30-53. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Porter, Jean. "The Virtue of Justice (IIa IIae, qq. 58-122)." In *Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen J. Pope, 272-286. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Virtue Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*. 2nd ed. Edited by Robin Gill, 87-102. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Recovery of Virtues: The Relevance of Aquinas for Christian Ethics*. Westminster: The Westminster Press, 1990.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Fundamental Option, Grace, and the Virtue of Charity." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 16: Virtue*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 159-187. New York: Paulist Press, 2011.
- Powell, John. *Fully Human Fully Alive*. Allen: Tabor Publishing, 1976.
- Przywara, Erich. *An Augustine Synthesis*. London: Sheed and Ward, 1936.

- Quinn, Philip. "A Response to Hauerwas: Is Athens Revived Jerusalem Denied." *Asbury Theological Journal* 45 (1990): 49-57.
- Rachlin, Howard. *Introduction to Modern Behaviorism* 3rd edition. New York: W. H. Freeman and Company, 1991.
- Rahner, Karl. "The Commandment of Love in Relation to the other Commandments." in *Theological Investigations* 5. Translated by Karl H. Kruger, 439-539. Baltimore: Helicon, 1969.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Christian at the Crossroads*. London: Burns and Oats, 1977.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Foundations of Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*. Translated by William V. Dych. New York: Seabury Press, 1978.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Hearer of the Word: Laying Foundation for a Philosophy of Religion*.
- Ramsey, Boniface. *Beginning to Read the Fathers*. New York: Paulist Press, 1985.
- Ramsey, George W. "Is Name-Giving an Act of Domination in Genesis 2: 23 and Elsewhere?" *CBQ* 50 (1988): 24-35.
- Ramsey, Paul. *The Patient as Person: Explorations in Medical Ethics*. New Haven: Yale University, 1970.
- Rausch, Thomas. *Reconciling Faith and Reason*. Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 2000.
- Rawls, John. *A Theory of Justice*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1971.
- Reames, Kent. "A Review of Christian Case for Virtue Ethics. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1996. Joseph Kotva. [www.academicroom.com/bookreview/Christian-case-virtue-ethics](http://www.academicroom.com/bookreview/Christian-case-virtue-ethics) (accessed February 24, 2014).
- Rehnman, Sebastian. "Virtue and Grace." *Studies in Christian Ethics* Vol. 25 (2012): 473-493.
- Richard of St. Victor. *De Trinitate IV*. Translated by Gaston Salet. Paris: Sources Chr tiennes, 1959.
- Richard, A. ed. *Christological Controversy*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.
- Richer, Duncan. *Ethics After Anscombe: Post "Modern Philosophy"*. Dordrecht: Kluwer Academic Publishers, 2000.
- Ricoeur, Paul. "Love and Justice." In *Radical Pluralism and Truth: David Tracy and the Hermeneutics of Religion*. Edited by Werner G. Jeanrond and Jennifer L. Rike. New York: Crossroad, 1991.

- Rist, John M. *Augustine: Ancient Thought Baptized*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994.
- Ritchie, D. G. *Principles of State Interference*. 2nd ed. London: Swan Sonnenschein, 1896.
- Rogerson, J. W. "Christian Morality and the Old Testament." *Heythrop Journal* vol. 36 (1995): 422-430.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "The Old Testament and Christian Ethics." In *The Cambridge Companion to Christian Ethics*. 2nd ed. Edited by Robin Gill, 28-40. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2012.
- Rondet, Henri. *The Grace of Christ: A Brief History of the Theology of Grace*. Translated and edited by Tad W. Guzie. Westminster: Newman Press, 1966.
- Root, Michael. "Aquinas, Merit, Reformation Theology after *The Joint Declaration of the Doctrine of Justification*." *Modern Theology* 20, No. 1 (2004): 5-22.
- Rorty, Amelie O. "Virtues and Their Vicissitudes." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*. Edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein, 136-148 Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Rorty, R. *Philosophy and the Mirrors of Nature*. Princeton: University Princeton Press, 1979.
- Rosemann, Philipp W. *The Great Medieval Thinkers: Peter Lombard*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004.
- Roszak, Theodore. *The Making of Counter Culture*. New York: Doubleday, 1969.
- Rourke, Nancy M. "The Environment Within: Virtue Ethics." In *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*. Edited by Tobias, 163-182. Winright. Minnesota: Anselm Academic, 2011.
- Rousselot, Pierre. *The Intellectualism of Saint Thomas*. Translated by James E. O'Mahoney. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1935.
- Ryan, Thomas. "Christian Ethics: Moral Dilemmas or Something More, *Compass: A Review of Topical Theology* 46, 1 (2012): 33-37 <http://compassreview.org/autumn12/6.pdf> (accessed October 17, 2013).
- Saint Ambrose Letters*. Translated by Sister Mary Melchior Beyenka. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1954.
- Saint Augustine. "Treatise on Various Subjects: The Christian Life, Lying, Against Lying, Contenance, Patience, The Excellence of Widowhood, the Work of Monks, The Usefulness of Fasting, The Eight Questions of Dulcitius." In *The Fathers of*

- the Church*, vol. 14. Translated by Mary Sarah Muldowney et. Al and edited by Roy J. Deferrari. Washington, D.C: Catholic University Press, 1952.
- Salisbury, Joyce. *Church Fathers, Independent Virgins*. London: Verso, 1991.
- Salzman, Todd A. *What are they Saying About Catholic Ethical Method?* New York: Paulist Press, 2003.
- Sampley, Paul. *Walking Between Times: Paul's Moral Reasoning*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1991.
- Sandel, Michael. *Liberalism and the Limits of Justice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1982.
- Sanders, Jack T. "The Question of the Relevance of Jesus for Ethics Today," *Readings in Moral Theology: The Use of Scripture in Moral Theology no. 4*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 45-65. New York: Paulist Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ethics in the New Testament: Change and Development*. Philadelphia, 1975.
- Sankey, H. *Rationality, Relativism and Incommensurability*. Aldershot: Ashgate: Harvard University Press, 1997.
- Santer, B. D., K. E. Taylor, T. M. L Wigley et al. "A Search for Human Influences on the Thermal Structure of the Atmosphere." *Nature* Vol. 382, (4 July, 1996): 39-46.
- Scally, John. "When Greed is not Good: Business Ethics in a Fast-changing World." In *Ethics in Crisis*. Edited by John Scally, 71-81. Dublin: Veritas, 1997.
- Schaefer, David Lewis. *Illiberal Justice: John Rawls Vs. the American Political Tradition*. Columbia: University of Missouri Press, 2007.
- Schalf, Philip. "On the Duties of the Clergy." [http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0339-0397,\\_Ambrosius,\\_De\\_Officiis\\_Ministrorum\\_Libri\\_Tres\\_\[Schaff\],\\_EN.pdf](http://www.documentacatholicaomnia.eu/03d/0339-0397,_Ambrosius,_De_Officiis_Ministrorum_Libri_Tres_[Schaff],_EN.pdf) (accessed July 28, 2014).
- Schillebeeckx, Edward. *Jesus: An Experiment in Christology and Christ*. Translated by Herbert Hoskins. New York: Crossroad, 1979.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *On Christian Faith*. Translated by John Bowden. New York: Crossroad, 1987.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Experience of Jesus as Lord*. Translated by John Bowden. New York: Crossroad, 1980.
- Schnackenburg, Rudolph. *The Moral Teaching of the New Testament*. New York: Herder & Herder, 1965.

- Schneewind, J. B. *The Invention of Autonomy: A History of Modern Philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998.
- Schockenhoff, Edward. "The Theological Virtue of Charity (IIa-IIae, qq. 23-46." In *Ethics of Aquinas*. Translated by Grant Kaplan and Frederick G. Lawrence and edited by Stephen Pope, 244-258. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- Schrag, Peter. "Life on a Dying Lake." *Saturday Review*, Sept. 20, 1969.
- Schrage, Wolfgang. *The Ethics of the New Testament*. Translated by David E. Green. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1998.
- Schüller, Bruno. "The Debate on the Specific Character of a Christian Ethics: Some Remarks." In *Readings in Moral Theology No. 2: The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics*. Edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, 207-233. New York: Paulist Press, 1980.
- Schweitzer, Albert. *Out of My Life and Thought*. New York: Holt, 1933.
- Seasoltz, R. Kevin. *A Virtuous Church: Catholic Theology, Ethics, and Liturgy for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*. New York: Orbis Books, 2012.
- Seligman, Martin E.P. *Authentic Happiness: Using the New Positive Psychology to Realize your Potential for Lasting Fulfillment*. London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002.
- Selling, Joseph. "The Development of Catholic Tradition and Sexual Morality." In *Embracing Sexuality: Authority and Experience in the Catholic Church*. Edited by Joseph A. Selling, 149-172. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2001.
- Senea, Mircea L. *Moral Theology and Spiritual Theology: The Recovery of the Centrality of Virtue and Grace for Moral Discourse*. Thesis for Licentiate in Sacred Theology presented to St. Patrick's College Maynooth, 2000.
- Senior, Donald. *Matthew*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1998.
- Shannon, Thomas A. "Methods in Ethics: A Scotistic Contribution." In *The Context of Casuistry*. Edited by James F. Keenan and Thomas A. Shannon, 3-24. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1995.
- Shepard, Thomas R. "Disaster Lobby." *IMA* April 1971, 1.
- Sherman, Nancy. *The Fabric of Character: Aristotle's Theory of Virtue*. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1989.
- Shortall, Michael. "Human Rights and Moral Reasoning: A Comparative Investigation by way of Three Theorists and their Respective Traditions of Enquiry: John Finnis, Ronald Dworkin and Jurgen Habermas," Doctoral

- Dissertation Tesi Gregoriana Serie Teologia 172. Roma: Editrice Pontificia Universita Gregoriana, 2009.
- Sigmund, Paul E. *St. Thomas Aquinas on Politics and Ethics*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1988.
- Silva, Rui. "Virtue Ethics And Communitarianism." [http://www.ifp.ubi.pt/publicacoes/SILVA\\_Rui\\_Sampaio-VIRTUE-ETHICS-AND-COMMUNITARIANISM.pdf](http://www.ifp.ubi.pt/publicacoes/SILVA_Rui_Sampaio-VIRTUE-ETHICS-AND-COMMUNITARIANISM.pdf) (accessed February 23, 2015).
- Simon, Yves R. *The Definition of Moral Virtue*. Edited by Vukan Kuic. New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.
- Skinner, Burrhus Frederic. "Are Theories of Learning Necessary?" *Psychological Review*, 57 (1950): 193-216.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Science and Human Behaviour*. New York: Macmillan, 1953.
- Slater, Thomas. *A Manual of Moral Theology for English-Speaking Countries*. vol. 1. 3rd ed. New York: Benziger Brothers, 1908.
- Slyke, James Van. *Theology and the Science of Morality: Virtue Ethics, Exemplarity, and Cognitive Neuroscience*. Edited by G.R. Peterson, K.S. Reimer, W.S. Brown and M.L. Spezio. New York: Routledge, 2012.
- Solomon, David. "Internal Objections to Virtue Ethics." In *Midwest Studies in Philosophy Vol. XIII Ethical Theory: Character and Virtue*. Edited by Peter A. French, Theodore E. Uehling and Howard K. Wettstein, 428-441. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1998.
- Solum, Lawrence B. "Virtue Jurisprudence: An Aretaic Theory Of Law" <http://web.law.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/microsites/law-theory-workshop/files/Solum.pdf> (accessed March 24, 2015).
- Spencer, Nick and Robert White. *Christianity, Climate Change and Sustainable Living*. London: SPCK, 2007.
- Spencer, William H. *Social Statics*. New York: Robert Schalkenback Foundation, 1995.
- Spohn, William C. "Return of Virtue Ethics." *Theological Studies* 53 (1992): 60-75.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *What are they Saying about Scripture and Ethics?* Mahwah: Paulist Press, 1984.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Go and Do Likewise: Jesus and Ethics*. New York: Continuum, 1999.
- Spong, John Shelby. *Living in Sin? A Bishop Rethinks Human Sexuality*. San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1988.

St. Ambrose. *De Officiis Ministrorum*.

\_\_\_\_\_. *De paradiso* 3.14-18, CSEL 32.1:273-277.

\_\_\_\_\_. "On the Death of Satyrus." In *Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, Second Series, Vol. 10. Translated by H. de Romestin, E. de Romestin and H.T.F. Duckworth and edited by Philip Schaff and Henry Wace. Buffalo, NY: Christian Literature Publishing Co., 1896.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Commentary on Luke*, BK 2, (CCL 14:39).

St. Ambrose. *De officiis, vol. 1* 1.25.118. Translated by Ivor Davidson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2001.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Seven Exegetical Works: Isaac, or the Soul, Death and the Happy Life, Joseph, the Patriarchs, Flight from the World, the Prayer of Job and David*, trans. Michael P. Hugh. Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1972.

St. Augustine, *De Doctrina Christiana*, BK. 1, chap. 23, (PL 34, 27).

\_\_\_\_\_. *Enarrationes* Psalms 38.

\_\_\_\_\_. Galat. Exposition, n.28 (PL 35, 2125).

\_\_\_\_\_. *On Free Choice of the Will*, Bk. 1.

\_\_\_\_\_. *On the Trinity* 12.7 [NPNF, 3; 158-60].

\_\_\_\_\_. *Retractiones*, 1, 9. PL. 32, 597.

\_\_\_\_\_. *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae (On the Morals of the Catholic Church)* 15.25 [PL 32:1322].

\_\_\_\_\_. *On Grace and Free Will*. Translated by Peter Holmes and Robert Ernest Wallis, and revised by Benjamin B. Warfield, *From Nicene and Post-Nicene Fathers*, First Series, Vol. 5. Ed. Philip Schaff. New York: Christian Literature Publishing, 1887. Revised and edited for New Advent by Kevin Knight. <<http://www.newadvent.org/fathers/1510.htm>> (accessed December 2, 2014).

\_\_\_\_\_. *The City of God*. Translated by Marcus Dods. New York: Modern Library, 1994.

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Life-Style of the Catholic Church* 1.15.25.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope and Love*

\_\_\_\_\_. *The Perfection of Justice* 2.4; 3.5-6; *Sermon* 26.7-10; 155.10.10.

St. Benedict. *Rule of St. Benedict: A Guide to Christian Living*. Translated by Monks of Glenstal Abbey. Cork: Four Courts Press, 1994.

- St. Gregory of Nyssa. *The Lord's Prayer and the Beatitudes*. Translated by Hilda Graef. Westminster: Ancient Christian Writers, 1954.
- St. Jerome, *In Ezechielem*, lib. 11, c. 37 (PL 25, 347-48).
- St. Therese of Lisieux. *The Story of a Soul*. Translated by John Clarke. Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 1976.
- St. Thomas Aquinas. *Summa Theologica*. Complete English Edition in Five Volumes. Translated by Fathers of the English Dominican Province. Indiana: Christian Classics, 1948.
- Staddon, John. *The New Behaviorism: Mind, Mechanism, and Society*. Philadelphia: Psychology Press, 2001.
- Statman, D. "What is Virtue Ethics All About?" In *Virtue Ethics: A Critical Reader*. Edited by D. Statman, 42-55. Washington, D. C.: Georgetown University Press, 1997.
- Stroumsa, Gedaliahu. "Caro salutis cardo: Shaping the Person in Early Christian Thought." *History of Religions* 30 (1990): 33-44.
- Stuhlmacher, P. *Paul's Letter to the Romans*. Louisville: Westminster, 1994.
- Sullivan, John Edward. *The Image of God: The Doctrine of St. Augustine and Its Influence*. Dubuque: Priory Press, 1963.
- Talbot, B. *Retrieval of Ethics*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009.
- Taylor, C. *Sources of the Self: The Making of the Modern Identity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1989.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Ethics of Authenticity*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991.
- Taylor, Gordon. *The Doomsday Book: Can The World Survive?* Cleveland: World Press, 1970.
- Taylor, Richard. *Ethics, Faith and Reason*. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1985. 22-25.
- Tertullian, *Adversus Marcionem*, Lib. 5, c. 20: *noster Municipatus* (Kr., p. 649).
- The New York Times/CBS News Poll* June 1, 1994.
- Thompson, J. W. *Moral Formation According to Paul: The Context and Coherence of Pauline Ethics*. Grand Rapids: Baker Academic, 2011.
- Thompson, Mel. *Ethical Theory*. 3rd ed. London: Hodder Education, 2005.

- Tilley, Maureen H. and Susan A. Ross. *Broken and Whole: Essays on Religion and the Body*. Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1994.
- Tillich, Paul. *Systematic Theology*. vol. 1. Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1951.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Theology and Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1959.
- Tillmann, Fritz. *The Master Calls: A Handbook of Morals for the Layman*. Translated by Gregory J. Roettger. Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1960.
- Timmons, Mark. *Moral Theory: An Introduction*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2002.
- Torrell, Jean-Pierre. *Saint Thomas Aquinas*. Vol. 1 revised ed. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Aquinas's Summa: Background, Structure, and Reception*. Translated by Benedict M. Guevin. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2005.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Person and His Works Vol. 2 Spiritual Master*. Translated by Robert Royal. Washington, D.C: The Catholic University of America Press, 2003.
- Tracy, David. *Blessed Rage For Order: The New Pluralism in Theology*. New York: Seabury Press, 1975.
- Trianosky, Gregory. "What is Virtue Ethics All About?" *American Philosophical Quarterly* 27 (1990): 335-344.
- Truth and Reconciliation Commission Report*, vol. 2, Cape Town: Juta, 1998.
- Tugendhat, Ernst. *Self-Consciousness and Self-Determination*. Translated by Paul Stern. Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1986.
- Tutu, Desmond. *No Future without Forgiveness*. New York: Doubleday, 1999.
- Vacek, Edward Collins. *Love Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics*. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1994.
- \_\_\_\_\_. "Towards a Phenomenology of Love Lost." *Journal of Phenomenological Psychology* 20 (Spring 1989): 3-6.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Love, Human and Divine: The Heart of Christian Ethics*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1994.
- Vandermeersch, Patrick. "Passions and the Virtues." *Aiming at Happiness: The Moral Teaching in the Catholic Catechism*. Edited by F. Vosman and K.-W. Merks, 93-112. Kampen: Kok Pharos, 1996.
- Van Huyssteen, J. Wentzel *Alone on the World? Human Uniqueness in Science and Theology*. Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing, 2006.

- Velasquez, Manuel, Claire Andre, Thomas Shanks and Michael Meyer. "Ethics and Virtue," Santa Clara University. <http://www.scu.edu/ethics/practicing/decision/ethicsandvirtue.html> (accessed August 30, 2013).
- Vergote, Antoine. "The Body Understood in Contemporary Thought and Biblical Categories" *Philosophy Today* 35 (1991): 35-105.
- Verhey, Allen. *The Great Reversal: Ethics and the New Testament*. Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1984.
- Vermigli, Pietro Martire. *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*. Edited by Emidio Campi and Joseph C. McLellard. Kirksville: Truman State University Press, 2006.
- Vernon Bourke. "The Role of *Habitus* in the Thomistic Metaphysics of Potency and Act." In *Essays in Thomism*. Edited by R. E. Brennan, 103-109. New York: Sheed and Ward, 1942.
- Vesey, Godfrey. *Personal Identity*. London: MacMillan Press, 1974.
- Viviano, Benedict T. "The Renewal of Biblical Studies in France 1934-1954 as an Element in Theological Ressourcement." In *Ressourcement: A Movement for Renewal in Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology*, 305-317. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012.
- Volger, Candace. "Aristotle, Aquinas, Anscombe and the New Virtue Ethics." [http://www.academia.edu/2500806/Aristotle\\_Aquinas\\_Anscombe\\_and\\_the\\_New\\_Virtue\\_Ethics](http://www.academia.edu/2500806/Aristotle_Aquinas_Anscombe_and_the_New_Virtue_Ethics) (accessed November 5, 2014).
- von Balthasar, Hans Urs. "Nine Propositions on Christian Ethics." In *Principles of Christian Morality*. Edited by Joseph Ratzinger, Heinz Schurmann, and Hans Urs von Balthasar, 77-102. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986.
- von Rad, Gerhard. *Genesis*. Philadelphia: Westminster, 1961.
- von Wright, Georg Henrik. *The Varieties of Goodness*. London: Routledge and Keegan, 1963.
- Waddell, Paul. *Friendship and the Moral Life*. Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 1989.
- Wallace, Mark I. *Green Christianity: Five Ways to a Sustainable Future*. Minneapolis: Fortress, 2010.
- Wallace, William A. "Scholasticism" <http://www.encyclopedia.com/topic/scholasticism.aspx> (accessed July 29, 2014).
- Wawrykow, Joseph. *God's Grace and Human Action: 'Merit' in the Theology of Thomas Aquinas*. Notre Dame: Notre Dame Press, 1995.

- Webber, Jonathan. "Cultivating Virtue." In *Phenomenology and Naturalism*. Edited by Havi Carel and Darian Meacham. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Webber, Robert E. *Ancient-Future Faith: Rethinking Evangelicalism for a Postmodern World*. Grand Rapids: Baker Books, 1999.
- Wells, Samuel ed. *Christian Ethics: An Introductory Reader*. Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2010.
- Wensveen, Louke van. "Virtue, Feminism, and Ecology." In *Readings in Moral Theology 16: Virtue*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 137-155. New York: Paulist Press, 2011.
- Werpehowski, William. "'Agape' and Special Relations." In *The Love Commandments*. Edited by Edmund Santurri and William Werpehowski, 138-56. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 1992.
- Westermann, Claus. *Genesis: A Practical Commentary*. Translated by David E. Green. Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1987.
- Whetstone, J. Thomas. "Principles of Reformed Worship." <http://theaquilareport.com/principles-of-reformed-worship/> (accessed February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2014).
- Whybray, R.N. *The Succession Narrative: A Study of II Samuel 9-20, I Kings 1 & 2*. London: SCM Press, 1968.
- Wieland, Georg. "Happiness (Ia-IIae, qq. 1-5)." In *The Ethics of Aquinas*. Edited by Stephen Pope. Washington, D.C: Georgetown University Press, 2002.
- William of Auxerre, *Summa aurea III*.
- Williams, Bernard. "Justice as a Virtue." In *Essays of Aristotle's Ethics*. Edited by A. Oksengerg Rorty, 189-199. Berkeley: University of California, 1980.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Ethics and the Limits of Philosophy*. London: Fontana, 1985.
- Williams, D. H. *Retrieving the Tradition and Renewing Evangelicalism: A Primer for Suspicious Protestants*. Grand Rapids; Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1999.
- Williams, Rowan. "Making Moral Decisions." In *The Cambridge Companion of Christian Ethics*. Edited by Robin Gill, 3-15. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001.
- Williams, Sam K. *Galatians*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1997.

- Williams, Scott. "Self-Awareness and Personal Development," <http://www.wright.edu/~scott.williams/LeaderLetter/selfawareness.htm> (accessed 18th March, 2014).
- Williams, Thomas D. "Personalism," Stanford encyclopedia of Philosophy [plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism](http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/personalism) first published 12<sup>th</sup> November, 2009 with a substantive revision 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2013 (accessed 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2014).
- Wilson, J. R. *Gospel Virtue: Practicing faith, Hope & Love in Uncertain Times*. Downers Grove: Intervarsity Press, 1998.
- Winright, Tobias. "From Saving the Whales to Protecting the Planet as a 'Duty Incumbent on Each and All.'" In *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*. Edited by Tobias Winright, 1-15. Minnesota: Anselm Academic, 2011.
- Wishloff, Jim. "The Land of Realism and the Shipwreck of Idea-ism: Thomas Aquinas and Milton Friedman on the Social Responsibilities of Business." *Journal of Business Ethics* 85 (2009): 137-155.
- Wojtyla, Karol. *Love and Responsibility*. Translated by H.T. Willets. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Person and Community*. Translated by Peter Lang. New York: 1993.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *The Acting Person*. Dordrecht: Reidel Publishing, 1979.
- Woodill, Joseph. *The Fellowship of Life: Virtue Ethics and Orthodox Christianity*. Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1998.
- Wright, N. T. *Paul and the Faithfulness of God* Book II, Part III & IV. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2013.
- \_\_\_\_\_. *Virtue Reborn*. London: SPCK, 2010.
- Wright, Tom. *Luke for Everyone*. London: SPCK, 2001.
- Wulf, M. De. *Scholasticism Old and New: An Introduction to Scholastic Philosophy Medieval and Modern*. Translated by P. Coffey. Dublin: M. H. Gill & Son, 1907.
- Yearley, Lee H. *Mencius and Aquinas: Theories of Virtue and Conceptions of Courage*. Albany: State University of New York Press, 1990.
- Yiu, Solomon & J. M. Vorster. "The goal of Christian virtue ethics: From ontological foundation and covenant relationship to the Kingdom of God." *In die Skriflig/In Luce Verbi* 2013, 47(1), Art. #689, <http://dx.doi.org/10.4102/ids.v47i1.689> (accessed May 1, 2014).
- Yoder, Howard. *Politics of Jesus*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1972.

Yordy, Laura Ruth. *Green Witness: Ecology, Ethics, and the Kingdom of God*. Eugene: Cascade Books, 2008.

Young, Frances. *God's Presence: A Contemporary Recapitulation of Early Christianity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013.

Yves Simon, R. *The Definition of Moral Virtue*, ed. Vukan Kuic. New York: Fordham University Press, 1986.

Zaccharias, Ronaldo. "Virtue Ethics as a Framework for Catholic Sexual Education: Towards the Integration between Being and Acting in Sexual Education." STD Dissertation, Weston Jesuit School of Theology, Cambridge, MA, 2003.

## MAGISTERIAL SOURCES

Benedict XVI. Encyclical Letter *Deus Caritas Est* (25 December 2005), 1: AAS 98 (2006).

\_\_\_\_\_. Encyclical Letter *Caritas in Veritate* (29 June 2009), 32: AAS 101 (2009).

*Catechism of the Catholic Church*. Dublin: Veritas, 1994.

John Paul II. Encyclical Letter *Centesimus Annus* (1 May 1991), 46: AAS 83 (1991).

\_\_\_\_\_. Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor* (6 August 1993), 116: AAS 85 (1993).

\_\_\_\_\_. Apostolic Letter *Mulieris Dignitatem*, on the Dignity and Vocation of Women on the occasion of the Marian Year 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1988.

\_\_\_\_\_. *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, The Social Concerns of the Church. 30<sup>th</sup> December, 1987: AAS 40 (1988).

John XXIII. Encyclical Letter *Mater et Magistra* (15 May 1961), 3: AAS 53 (1961).

National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Economic Justice for All*. Washington, DC: USCCB Publishing, 1997.

Paul VI. Encyclical Letter *Humanae Vitae* (25 July 1968), 13: AAS 60 (1968),

\_\_\_\_\_. Encyclical Letter *Populorum Progressio* (March 26, 1967): AAS 59 (1967).

Pius XI. Encyclical Letter *Quadragesimo Anno* (May 15, 1931): AAS 23 (1931).

Pius XII. Encyclical Letter *Humani Generis* (12 August 1950): AAS 42 (1950).

Vatican II. *Optatam Totius*, Degree on the Training of Priests, 1965: AAS 58 (1966).

Vatican II, *Dignitatis Humanae*, Declaration on Religious Freedom on the Right of Person and of Communities to Social and Civil Freedom in Religious Matters. 1965, *AAS* 58 (1966).

Vatican II, *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World. 1965: *AAS* 58 (1966).