

An Integral Perspective on Developmental Psychology

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The promise of salvation is one of communion in Christ. Modern psychology recognizes that the goal of human development is integration of the person, but falls short because it does not tie that integration to the Beatitude. For example, theoretical psychology fails to speculate about what that integrity would mean in terms of moral judgments and the behavior of the individual. On the other hand, the Magisterium, because it is Christocentric, offers a perspective of human development that is consistent with human experience and completes what is still absent in modern social science, thereby bringing extraordinary meaning to what the social sciences have observed and providing a means for applying these observations to our lives. This perspective is centered in the hope that faith and grace will bring us integration and a share in the life of the Trinity. These Magisterial teachings with respect to human development are reviewed in this paper. Because, in the end, the person is an integrity, As social scientists, we must reconsider the fragmented state of the social sciences to bring a better understanding of who we are in Christ.

Responsibility for Behavior

Recent events involving elected officials raise interesting challenges to the traditional views of moral responsibility for one's actions. Specifically, a distinction has been made in the press between personal and public life, as though there are actions for which we can be held accountable and actions for which we bear no responsibility. Actually, this distinction reflects a more general social disposition to evaluate behavior for its instrumental value without reference to its moral value. People are generally judged as good or bad, and that judgment, rather than any moral consequences cover the actions of people.

At its base, this approach to human moral responsibility divides the individual into factions: one responsible to a spouse, an employer, the Church, children or parents, and one fraction each to as many others as is convenient to justify trusting the individual in one or more arenas. That is, being untrustworthy or unfaithful in one of these arenas can be held irrelevant to a general judgment of worth for other endeavors.

This view of humanity is cynical and stifling, and serves as sharp contrast to the view of saved humanity in union with Our Lord Jesus Christ. In particular, social sciences developing in this culture of fractionated mankind, cannot describe people as fulfilled, and must, instead, present a limited and static perspective of humanity, somewhat static as opposed to dynamic in character, directionless as opposed to meaningful and directed toward salvation, and relational rather than isolated. This fulfilling perspective can be discerned from the Magisterium and serve to complete the work of social science by providing its purpose and meaning. Moreover, this perspective defines integrity for us, as the state of wholeness and of concordance of behavior and judgment with an underlying life view of faith, hope, and love of humanity and God.

A common basic error in thought underlies contemporary society and social science that promotes an incomplete, fractionated, and unfulfilled characterization of man. This error is termed disintegrity in this paper, and holds that our worth as people can be evaluated through some general choice or option for good that need not be reflected in our behaviors.

The Fundamental Option

Perhaps a central theme of the fractionated contemporary view of life is the premise that as long as we consider ourselves to be basically good, we can ignore those moments where we fail to be charitable. The Catholic reader will recognize in this reasoning a derivative of what the Holy Father calls the fundamental option, or fundamental characterization of ourselves by choice:

“Particular acts which flow from this option would constitute only partial and never definitive attempts to give it expression; The immediate object of such acts would not be absolute good (before which the freedom of the person would be expressed on a transcendental level), but particular (also termed ‘categorical’) goods.¹ (#65, p. 83)

The Holy Father goes on to explain how these acts, in this erroneous view of the fundamental option are held to be signs of an underlying, and often subconscious, choice, but are not in themselves considered determinates of personal freedom. The response described above to the actions of the elected officials is an example of this view. The person himself or herself is considered to be independent of his or her moral actions. The person is believed to retain moral freedom through immoral activity. Actions that would seem to contradict a capacity for moral certitude in judgment are considered personal or in some other way held to be distinct from the fundamental moral disposition of the person. In other words, the basic moral character of a person is held to be invariant despite evidence in the person's actions to the contrary.

Moreover, Christianity offers a radical redefinition of freedom. To be free is to approach fulfillment, and fulfillment does not simply mean the capacity to choose one's actions. Rather, freedom to the Christian is the capacity for moral behavior through well-formed conscience.

In contrast to this distorted and disintegrated view of the person, the Holy Father offers a true fundamental option, which leads to freedom:

“Jesus’ call to ‘come follow me’ marks the greatest possible exaltation of human freedom, yet at the same time it witnesses to the truth and to the obligation of acts of faith and of decisions which can be described as involving a fundamental option.”² (#66, p. 85)

Obviously, to follow Jesus is a sacramental and Eucharistic imperative leading to the Beatitude and communion in Christ. In this, Christianity avoids the social science debates over freedom of action and its representation as mere choice to act. Rather, it reconceptualizes individual behaviors in the obedience of faith,³ moved by prevenient grace and realized in sanctifying or Uncreated grace through the sacraments. Behavior, than, cannot be separated from the action of grace on the individual as an integrated whole, and the expression of freedom is the willful expression of love for others and for God rather than the mere ability to act.

This sacramental view of human development is the key to completing what is still lacking in the understanding that the social sciences have of who we are. To follow Christ is to follow Him through human experience and through human development. If we are to be saved, we must become the human that He is, one living in a life of grace, one destined to a union of natures and a communion of persons.

The life of Jesus within us, as Uncreated grace moves us to the Eucharist and therefore integrated life:

“Anyone who loves me
will be true to my word,
and my Father will love him;
we will come to him and
make our dwelling place with him.”⁴

Very simply, sharing the life of Christ, and ultimately, communion in Christ cannot be piecemeal. It necessarily means integrity, because every aspect of who we are must join seamlessly in that integration. There can be no social science that does not recognize that we are all called to this integrity. There is no other way than the way of the Lord, no integrity that is not the influence of grace.

Components of Integrity

The absence of sensitivity to the integrating movement of grace in psychological theory is expressed in the failure of modern social science both to address adequately the directionality of human development toward integrity, and to appreciate that development is both directional and purposeful. The moral reasoning literature, for example, develops a hierarchy of moral reasoning based on the use of abstract cognitive processes.⁵ Without being directional, and without reference to a moral norm that is served by that reasoning, the theory attributes the

highest degrees of moral reasoning to people who come to completely opposite moral conclusions.

Similarly, personality theory in general suffers because it undervalues the potency of integrity in human development. For example, in the description of his eight stages of development, Erikson⁶ comes close to an idea of communion and the final beatitude, but falls short of describing the fundamental truths on which that final stage must be built. In his description of ego integrity of the last stage, integrity vs. despair, he says:

“It is the ego’s accrued assurance of its proclivity for order and meaning. It is a post-narcissistic love of the human ego – not of the self – as an experience which conveys some world order and spiritual sense, no matter how dearly paid for. It is the acceptance of one’s one and only life cycle as something that had to be and that, by necessity, permitted of no substitutions..”⁷ (p. 168).

Cognitive theory begs the same question. For example, in general, cognitive theorists account for human development in terms of a child’s growing capacity to construct a meaningful environment from his or her interactions with that environment. In the course of this development, the child experiences accelerated capacities in some areas and less in others, but always toward some end of discovery and construction of the world. The real issue is whether this world has any meaning beyond the child, whether there exists some truth that is discoverable and that focuses human development toward some common end. For the believer, that common end must be the Beatitude, and it cannot be an idiosyncratic construction, but must be a communion of people if we are all destined to share in the Body of Christ.

Three central differences separate our Christian hope for fulfillment in the beatitude from the more shallow fulfillments offered by psychological theory and also separate the Christian fundamental option from ambiguous theoretical versions:

1. Development of a dynamic route to integration through

- cooperation with God;
2. Promotion of a directional, teleological, and purposeful perspective rooted in the beatitude;
 3. Belief in an active pursuit of freedom through development of a well-formed conscience, prudence, and docility and the uncompromising obligation to the truth.

At its base, a social science that is indifferent to the drive toward integration in Christ can only address components of human nature rather than the whole of it. Integration in Christ means we will be integrated, as well, with all other who are members of His Mystical Body. Without this understanding, the social sciences will fail to appreciate the profound nature of the social and dynamic character of humans. On the other hand, a person who is not integrated is incapable of full communion with others, because only the whole of that person can share in the Body of Christ.

At the psychological level, this integrity is expressed with complete consistency of action and intent, with willing for the good of others, of practicing charity in life, and in discerning the movement of the Spirit in our lives. When there is no common goal of existence, no development toward an understood end, then people can act both inconsistently and independent of social norms.

Finally, as we move through life toward communion we are called upon to accept sacrifice for the sake of others. Christian directionality must be open to sacrifice and charity. Popular theories of psychology too often fail to acknowledge the path of sacrifice and charity to fulfillment, while faith leads us to view charity, expressed in sacrifice, as the basic component of relationship. We have learned from Jesus to express our love for others in the desire for their welfare, even above our own.

These popular theories do offer insights about humanity that completed by the Church's teachings concerning human nature. These teachings, moved by grace, are responses to historical challenges to the dignity of man. They offer to the social sciences a means of fulfillment, not only for people, but also for the theories themselves, which represent incomplete views of who we are.

Church Teachings on Human Development

The Magisterium is an unlikely source of developmental theory for the modern social scientist. Nevertheless, much of our understanding of Church teachings comes from the elucidation of our beliefs in confronting the heresies of history. Holy Mother Church has defined human nature by emphasizing the integrity of man and God in the Incarnation, and hence, the fulfillment of each of us as humans in communion with God as a member of the Mystical Body of Christ. The Magisterium, moved by the Holy Spirit, expresses a view human development as the avenue of ultimate communion in Christ.

The central question addressed by the Magisterium was addressed first to the first pope: "Who do you say I Am?"⁸

In answer, the heresy of gnosticism sought to develop gradations of divinity, with Jesus occupying one level and the Father another. This basic disintegrated view of God was followed by another disintegrated derivative, separation of the body from the spirit, which ultimately resulted in the denigration of the physical. This false separation has enormous implications for the contemporary social sciences, which like these ancient heresies tend to consider human nature in isolated components, distinct from each other, from the social environment, and from the grace, which moves us toward integration. For example, the dependent infant is viewed as

incomplete because of that very dependence. Babies' dependence for satisfaction of physical needs is viewed as primitive, while in reality, it is uniquely human because it is moved not just by hunger, but by will, and it cannot be separated from the social environment in which we are created.

Poor regard for the physical persists in the social sciences, and is evident in a whole range of theoretical dispositions. From analytical theory to self-actualization, psychology's views of the developing person are often expressed as movement from dependence on the physical⁹ to some sort of personal immunity from physical need. Notice that this necessarily implies movement inward and away from the social, relational world especially because physical need necessarily implies dependence on others.

The fact is that dependence, often hidden in references to interdependence, is not a stepping back in development, but is, rather, the human condition, one that is shared by Our Lord in His relationships to others. Our Lord's reference to His Father, and reference to Himself as the Son clearly provides insight into this alternative, and relational perspective of our existence. This relationality is evident, as well, in the human nature of Our Lord, Who is incarnate like us in a social environment. He comes into the world as we do, and unlike Adam and Eve, as a baby in the womb. The infant Jesus, in a dependent relationship with others is a sacramental sign for us who share in the relationship and dependency of infancy. Our sharing in Christ as a developing infant distinguishes us from Adam and Eve, and serves as a teleological sign of union that presages the final beatitude of union in Christ. To follow Christ, is to arrive in the world as He did and to live through the experience of life as He did.

In the womb, Christ has both the divine and human natures. Because He is wholly human in the womb, than, to share in His human nature, we, too, must be wholly human in the womb.

This state of physical dependence, then, is a sign of our sharing with Christ, and confers on the infant in the womb the sanctity of sharing, the sanctity of life. A truly integrated social science, therefore, must recognize this sanctity.

Part of our difficulty in reconciling the divine and human natures of Christ has been the limitations of our human faculties. Like the beatitude itself, our understanding of Jesus and our ultimate communion with Him both must depend on grace. We too often judge Who Christ is through the perspective of our limited personal experience of unfulfilled humanity. The heresies try to define Christ within the context of unfulfilled humanity rather than through the experience of Divine Revelation. That limitation restricts our understanding of Jesus to whatever view of humanity we can construct from personal experience. So, too, human social science is built within the restrictive boundaries of our personal human experience rather than in the perspective of fulfillment in grace.

In union with Christ, we are in union with human nature as a whole and participants in the dynamic and integrating economy of grace. This view invites a reconstruction of social science.

The Church, through the councils, provides the opportunity to develop a view of humanity moved by the Holy Spirit. Her experience of Christ is one of Divine Revelation. As Pope Saint Leo the Great proclaims in his Tome:

“Thus was true God born in the undiminished and perfect nature of a true man, complete in what is his and complete in what is ours.”¹⁰

The Holy Father answers Our Lord’s question, as did Saint Peter, proclaiming the integral Christ as an act of faith. In so doing, he also defines a human nature that is fulfilled in Christ, and that provides an integral perspective for the social sciences.

The Holy Spirit gives the councils the basis of a social science based on human integrity through reference to Jesus. This is the element that is missing from the contemporary social sciences, that there is a norm for fulfillment, and that human development can be interpreted from through reference to that norm.

That reference brings progressive improvement in their understanding of the human nature we share with Christ and of the development of integrity, and thus offers to us a new social science. The basis of our understanding rests on the act of faith that Jesus is the incarnate second person of the Trinity, Our Lord and Our God. The exposition, that is, the norm for fulfillment is the Divine Revelation Who is Jesus, not only having the nature of God, but also having the nature of man.

The developing person can be better understood from this revealed truth, so the developing person is understood through revealed truth, specifically: rejection of heretical and disintegrated definitions of humanity, and promotion of integral human dignity. At once, this suggests that our understanding of human nature is explicated in the Magisterium and that human social science can itself be enriched through reference to human integration. In a real sense, this improvement in the social sciences is analogous to Saint Thomas' improvement of our understanding of natural law. Both can benefit by going beyond mere structure and statics, to an understanding of structure as it is fulfilled, function as it is fulfilled.

The Magisterial view of human development is that it is fulfilled in radical dependence on God in our lives. More recent secular views have suffered from failure to embrace this central dimension. Being devoid of the communion dynamic, they can only build an artificial and disintegrated account of the very human nature through which we come to communion with Christ:

“By the mystery of this water and wine, may we come to share in the divinity of Jesus, Who humbled Himself to share in our humanity.”¹¹

The disintegrated view of modern science extols an independence from others as a false sign of maturity. Of course, this is inconsistent with the human thirst for communion with Christ and with all others who share in His Mystical Body.

The human person is neither a passive recipient of direction and impulse nor a static unresponsive and unchanging being. Rather, people accept the grace of God and choose to cooperate with it. This implies a dynamic view of development, interactive, in relationship with God.

Static vs. Dynamic Views of Development

A strictly structural view of the human mind, and a static view of the human person are inconsistent with the Church’s teachings concerning the individual in relationship to God and to all others through that relationship. This is the theme of a Christocentric anthropology: There is not only a direction to existence, but also an active path to fulfillment. This dynamic view holds that we are disposed toward charity in our interactions with others.

A static view understates human sensitivity to the needs of others. The rational and sensitive human person seeks charitable solutions to progressively more complex challenges posed by the natural and social environment.¹⁵ This dynamic character of humanity serves as

stark contrast not only to the structural views of early psychology, but also to those of instrumental behaviorism. The latter acknowledges man's great capacity for adaptation, but fails to recognize that this capacity serves a well-defined goal of fulfillment. That is, behavior is seen as instrumental to some personal and more immediate outcome rather than as evidence of grace.

Of course, the believer understands that the construct of the economy of grace gives development its dynamic character. Grace is not a word likely to be used by contemporary social scientists, but the construct should not be overlooked because the vocabulary is ignored. Human facilities alone, though necessary for integrity, cannot develop this dynamic character to the extent demanded by the social environment.¹³ Man is energized by grace and develops created facilities in response because we are continually infused with the life of Christ, as a vine feeds the branches. Jesus:

“continually infuses strength into those justified, which strength always precedes, accompanies and follows their good works.”¹⁴

So, grace funds our response to the world, not only as instrumental or pleasure seeking, which are not ends in themselves, but, rather, as people seeking a common end, a means of fulfillment in life. Our continual encounter with Jesus gives human development its ontological character, because His indwelling life is the source of our fulfillment. The economy of grace, giving humanity a dynamic character explains the human drives for love and intimacy not only in given isolated behaviors, but in the integration of behaviors toward an end.

This theme, the foundation of Catholic theology, need not be the property of the theologians. Rather, it offers the social sciences an end that is missing in available theories. Yet, it has been available for centuries, through judgments of the councils.¹⁵ Fulfilled human nature is a dynamic integrity because it involves exchange and interaction toward an understood and

common end. This necessarily means dynamic integrity is the character of the life of Jesus, as we witness in His eternal responsiveness to humanity, and receptivity to the Father, and is present in us in the economy of grace and charitable hearts. Rooted in communion with Christ as it is, this dynamic character must involve integration of the person: body, will, and intellect, and the process of personal integration toward communion becomes the hallmark of human development.

The Dynamic Character of Integration

As described above, the Gnostics and similar heresies attempt to explain Christ by fractionating not only the Trinity, but also the human person. For example, in decree #1 the Church proclaims that Our Lord assumed the

“parts of our nature united together from which he himself true God became true man: namely the human, passable body and the intellectual or rational soul truly of itself and essentially informing the body.” (emphasis mine)¹⁶

The decree continues that denying the relationship of form between body and soul is contrary to the ultimate beatitude of communion with Christ as integrated people, not as disparate parts.

In a way, the social sciences are trapped into the same error. Methodological considerations often mean that control must be exerted over all variables that are not of interest. This forces the scientists into a micro view of behavior and of human interaction. That micro view becomes the object of study as scientists continue to improve on experimental methods to gain greater control over sources of noise (error variance). Disciplines arise focused on particular aspects of being, and the integrative person is lost in the myopia. At best, the relationship of one aspect of the person to another aspect is considered rather than considering the whole of the person in dynamic relationship to the social and physical environment.

Nevertheless, our lives are replete with signs from God of human integrity in communion, starting with the Trinity as a communion of persons, and manifest, as well, in the union of the human and divine natures in the single person of Jesus. Most familiar to us is holy matrimony as a sign of God's relationship to His Church.

Saint Cyril's response to Nestorius, who characterized Our Lady as Christotokos rather than as Theotokos, thus denying, the integrity of the hypostatic union, goes beyond merely stating that Christ has a relationship with a human body. Rather, he presents the Catholic view that Christ has made His body His own in the hypostatic union.¹⁷ Through the lens of faith, the council fathers could see that Our Lord's human body and rational soul are in union with His divinity as one person. At Constantinople III (680-681), the council fathers reaffirmed that Our Lord is at once consubstantial with the Father in divinity and with us in humanity.¹⁸ This is the dynamic character of integration, interaction throughout our lives with the life of Christ, in union with Him in human nature and in hope of communion in Him through grace.

A static structure cannot accommodate the Jesus we know. The increasingly integrated human person is a dynamic reality in relationship with God, and must be considered, to the extent possible, as a whole.

In condemning the fifth error of the Beguines and Berghards at Vienne, the bishops reaffirmed that human development is nurtured by the dynamic interaction of each person with God. Clearly, this is the integrating movement of grace at work in the person, as the fathers denied that any intellectual faculty without grace is insufficient to achieve communion with God. Integrity in this breakthrough depends on Uncreated grace, the life of God within us.¹⁹ The Church's teaching on communion in Christ and Uncreated grace provides a consistent theme that

our destiny to salvation and our share in the Divine life cannot be fractionated. Most simply, as we move toward integrity in Christ, we must find integrity in self.

Directionality of Development

This teleology requires a life view that mirrors the same theme: our existence is meaningful and ordered to the Beatitude of communion in Our Lord. The life of Christ within us and the development of created gifts stimulated by that life give voice to an active faith, that is manifest in our interactions with others. Trent took up the defense of faith as an active whole, against the depiction of faith as a disjointed psychological disposition. In doing so, the council expresses a theory of human nature that is not an isolated reaction to stimuli and circumstance, but is itself a metaphysical theory of being.

The indwelling of Christ is the source of the grace that moves development

“God’s love for men is so great that He recognizes in our love the love of His Son, because that Love permeates our love through and through, fulfills and animates it, and brings it back to Himself.”²⁰

He is the source of our capacity to live good lives and the energy for development.²¹ The fathers at Trent offer a dynamic developmental perspective that builds on the refutations of earlier heresies. Human development

1. is not linear, or straight;
2. Neither is it cyclical and meaningless, but directed toward the beatitude;
3. is unitive, Christ centered, and grace filled;
4. is experienced in freedom; each person participates freely to his or her own salvation.

Direction, then, is a complex consideration. Issues of union have been addressed by

psychology in the past in personality theory in terms of development of intimacy, but here, that development takes a direction toward a particular communion of persons saved in Christ.

In the Tridentine view, human development is the product of the economy of grace expressed in charitable works. Justifying grace, the grace that makes us just, increases in us through our submission to the commandments and our faith manifest in our good works. Note here, that it is submission and good works that characterize development, not necessarily instrumental behaviors related to some personal outcome. The first movement is thus God's. His predisposing grace moves us toward communion in Christ, even after we are separated by original and personal sin, we are disposed again through grace to conversion and justification.²²

The fathers at Trent provided an eight-stage developmental perspective that is integrative.

We:

1. receive our faith through the senses and are moved to seek God in freedom;
2. perceive our own sinfulness;
3. fear divine justice;
4. contemplate divine mercy;
5. hope that God will be favorable disposed toward us for the sake of Christ's meritorious passion;
6. love Christ because He is the source of all justice;
7. reject sin and repent in response to Christ's divine mercy to reject sin, to repent;
8. seek baptism, resolving to new birth and life in the commandments.²³

We see in Trent a developmental psychology that foreshadows the Holy Father's notion of the true fundamental option toward sacraments and fulfillment in Christ. Even sin has a dynamic sacramental remedy in the movement of faith to sacramental reconciliation and

reparations of an integrated person's charity, prayer, and fasting.²⁴ This cycle is neither closed, raising us to a point from which we fall and raising us to that point again, nor predetermined or meaningless. Rather, the fathers understood that our life's quest is purposeful: to be with God, to become human as Christ is human, and to live in the hope of fulfillment in Jesus.

Justification to the fathers at Trent brings us access to the divine virtues of faith, hope, and charity, which in turn, strengthen us in the quest for integral communion. Only with hope and charity can faith integrate us into the Body of Christ. This integrative perspective of the gift of the virtues is consistent with the Catholic view that faith is in concert with hope and charity.²⁵ The fathers provide us with the hopeful account of human life against the errors of the day that cast faith as a disjointed psychological disposition rather than an integral center of our lives and the way we live them.

The Catholic understanding of grace as a free gift we can accept or reject, answers the static view of grace covering the person by imputation without the need for cooperation from the person. Imputation involves no true economy of grace, and, strictly speaking, is not integrative, dynamic, nor developmental because it does not depend on an ultimate ontological unity in response to justification. Again, in the Catholic view expounded at Trent, development involves cooperation in this economy. Integration is achieved as an act of freedom, overcoming the inherited weakness of original sin.²⁶

Finally, Trent delineates five types of causes of justification that lead to integration in Christ, and as shown above, to freedom. Clearly these are more precisely analogously causal, because justification is not caused, but is a freely given gift from God. Nevertheless, these causes witness the integrating presence of God in our lives, a presence that would complete the picture and understanding of humanity that evades the contemporary social sciences.²⁷

Freedom as An Expression of Integrity in the Councils

The Catholic perspective, then, can be distinguished from others in this basic succession:

1. Human development involves a succession of free choices for a sacramental and charitable life;
2. These choices are aimed toward the Beatitude of communion in Christ;
3. Communion in Christ necessarily involves personal integration;
4. The fundamental option of orientation toward God is expressed in freedom;
5. God provides us with the gifts we need to support our choices, but He never coerces us, and our choices always have meaning.

Freedom involves a tension of choices among alternatives. In *Gaudium et Spes* the Vatican II fathers delineated seven sources of imbalance between the individual and society that provide a tension underlying the fundamental option for God. These seven sources are rooted in conflict between:

1. a practical and modern perspective and a failure to master and integrate all of the person's ideas;
2. practicality and moral conscience;
3. the demands for social living and the reflective needs of the individual;
4. a narrower and specialized view as opposed to an overall view of reality;
5. economic, social, generational, sexual, and demographic differences;
6. races and social classes;
7. international pressures for peace in opposition to ideological hegemony.

Support in these conflicts is provided by divine gifts. Challenges to the intellect, the body, and the will come from all directions. Maintaining our choice for God must involve integration: "man considered whole and entire, with body and soul, heart and conscience, mind

and will.”²⁸ Clearly, one chooses the path to integrity, and does not passively receive it on the basis of some general and early option toward the good that is then ignored when evil is confronted. The early view of the councils again provides a means for deliverance from the trap set by modern and popular accounts of human worth that has no expression in human behavior.

Disintegrity of the person has had disastrous social consequences. This disintegration is commonly expressed in emphasis on the accumulation of wealth and material comfort and on physical development apart from spiritual development. The outcome is a diminished the capacity of social remedies of transcendent and permanent values to address the current challenges.²⁹

Most important, the emphasis on acquisition that marks disintegrity turns one’s attention from others and onto self. Such a lack of charity is dangerous, because it salvation involves integration with others in the Mystical Body, and it is the love of others that brings us to that fulfillment.

Love is the Answer

The fathers of Vatican II recognized that grace is expressed in moral development. That development is exercised in freedom, that is, in choosing for the good of others, in choosing to love and in seeking union with others in Christ. The teleological reality of human development is realized in following the Lord in His love of others.³⁰

Both Vatican I and Vatican II fathers understood that this charitable disposition involves the whole person, all faculties necessarily integrated and ordered toward charity.

The fathers of Vatican II, were particularly concerned with depersonalization brought about by such factors as urbanization. In contemporary society there are

increasingly more interpersonal encounters, but they are also increasingly more shallow, and they afford very little opportunity for personal development.³¹ Failure to develop is failure to integrate, and the person

“feels himself divided, and the result is a host of discords in social life.”³²

To love like Christ is to become a member of Christ. This integrative aim of life is the remedy to depersonalization. It is not shallow, but is Eucharistic because it is realized in communion in Christ. We cannot have communion unless we are first integrated people. This means controlling ourselves to do what we would do.³³ If we are to love God and neighbor as Christ loves, then we must submit our entire selves to the intimacy required to love with,

“all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind.”³⁴

Submissive love is an expression of freedom. Our Lord uses the word, “all” for very good reasons, because He means for us to hold nothing back. It would be very difficult in contemporary social science to find theory concerning the virtues of submission, or, as we have said before, of sacrifice.

The fathers of Trent, Vatican I, and of Vatican II responded to the heretical attempts to divide the person into pieces by building a theology of the integrated person. These attempts began by conceiving Christ either in His human nature or will or in His divine nature or will. Ultimately, gnosticism, as expressed by the Albigensians, disdained the material. Later, in the Reformation, these divisions were expressed as a faith that was primarily psychological and devoid of expression in physical works.

Trent gave greater voice to the attention given by the Gospel to a more phenomenological teleology, involving physical manifestations in fasting and almsgiving, and giving greater

attention to the integration of body and spirit. In response to the errors of the Reformation, the fathers at Trent understood that faith and hope must be integrated with the physical acts of charity for union with Christ.³⁵

The fathers of Vatican I understood that the obligation of faith requires submission of the entire person:

“Since human beings are totally dependent on God as their creator and Lord, and created reason is completely subject to an uncreated truth, we are obliged to yield to God the revealer full submission of intellect and will by faith.”³⁶

The Spirit of unity strengthens us through illumination and integration to submit our entire and integrated person by inspiration and illumination. These gifts of the Holy Spirit are realized through the assent of faith, the obedience of faith, submission to the faith.³⁷

Vatican II develops the theology of integrity in terms of the obedience of faith even further:

“By faith man freely commits his entire self to God, making ‘the full submission of his intellect and will to God who reveals’ and willingly assenting to the Revelation given by Him.” (emphasis mine)³⁸

The Vatican II fathers may have expressed the central importance of integration of the person in *Dei Verbum*. For example, the expression of faith is presented as an integration of words and deeds:

“By this revelation, then, the invisible God, from the fullness of his love, addresses men as his friends and moves among them, in order to invite and receive them into his own company. This economy of revelation is realized by deeds and words, which are intrinsically bound up with each other.”³⁹

In this dynamic reality, the Holy Spirit and His gifts continually move us toward integration in Christ, and continually moves us to a deeper penetration of the mysteries of Divine Revelation. This teleological view of integrative development involves dynamic commitment to God, and dynamic cooperation with the Holy Spirit.⁴⁰ Christ is the goal and the means of this integration of person.

That cooperation is best supported by the right formation of conscience. It cannot be realized by some imaginary option to be a good person. It must be realized through grace, realized through the sacraments, expressed in charity, and active in our life choices in freedom.

Conscience and the Law

Right formation of conscience in grace is a powerful tool for freedom in development. Through conscience, we have greater capacity to discern truth and the divine law.⁴¹ This leads us to God and to integration and union in Christ. The fathers of Vatican II integrated strands of understanding from earlier councils in order to explain the dynamic principle that integral human fulfillment depends on the integration of the human faculties, the inspiration and movement of grace, and Divine Revelation.

Conscience formation, then, is a dynamic imperative. It must involve the use of reason and free will. These faculties bind us to seek the truth and to cling to it when we find it. Recent attention to false divisions of a life, as in a public and private life, permit the erroneous claim that there are aspects of our lives that are immune to the obligation to truth. These accounts are inconsistent with the moral and integrative view of human development explained by the council fathers. Vatican II makes very clear that integrity is an obligation of our whole lives to “the

demands of truth;”⁴² that is, the demands to understand and live in harmony with God’s natural law. The

“highest norm of human life is the divine law itself – eternal, objective and universal, by which God orders, directs and governs the whole world. God has enabled man to participate in this law of his so that, under the gentle disposition of divine providence, many may be able to arrive at a deeper and deeper knowledge of unchangeable truth.”⁴³

The natural law is the imperative to live in freedom through devotion to the common good and respect for others.⁴⁴ The development of conscience:

1. requires integration of human faculties, and
2. obliges us to truth revealed in natural law.

Right conscience enables our ultimate union in Christ and orders our lives to active charity and Christ’s commandment to love. Right conscience, then, is a most powerful tool, overlooked by the social sciences, to bring us to an organic whole. Understanding and integrating this into all other observations of human development is the key to a meaningful social science and an accurate portrayal of human development.

The Organic Church

As the Body of Christ, the Church is obliged to present the integrated and consistent whole of enduring and transcendent truth, that is, to present Our Lord Jesus Christ:

“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.”⁴⁵

This obligation springs from human nature, and encompasses how the Church in her teachings represents the integrating directionality of human nature.

The Social Sciences

Finally, this realization that the Lord beckons us all to Him, as integrated and fulfilled images of the Father, demands a new social science. This social science would be more organic itself, and would be a Christocentric anthropology because it would need to address the integral human being, the body, the will, and the intellect as a system becoming something magnificent under grace.

This new science would address the ontological changes brought on by the abiding Christ within us and would help mankind by its concern for the pitfalls to integrity, how to avoid them, how to reconcile ourselves to the Father and the path we must choose to salvation.

This new social science would respect the dynamic and thoughtful character of man, and would respect the central importance of a charitable disposition, and equally important, or charitable behavior. Mankind has been created in the image and likeness of God. This is an overwhelming understanding that cannot be ignored in any of our accounts of people and of who we are. There is an opportunity here to reunite the good and thoughtful study and reflection upon ourselves with what we have learned from our intimate relationship with Jesus. Our love of Christ, and our love of the social sciences compel us to take this opportunity as an act of charity, as an act of freedom, to position the new social science to serve mankind.

¹ John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor*. (Washington, D.C.:

Pauline Books and Media, 19) , #65, p. 83.

² *Ibid.*, #66, p. 85.

³ *Ibid.*, #66, p. 84.

⁴ John 14: 23.

⁵ DeMauro, G. E. “A critique of the moral reasoning literature from the perspective of Catholic moral theology,” *the Catholic Social Science Review* (Steubenville, Oh.: The Society of Catholic Social Scientists, 2000), pp. 191-202.

⁶ Erickson, E. H. *Childhood in Society* (2nd Edition) (N.Y.: W. W. Norton & Co., 1963) pp. 168-169.

⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁸ Mark 8: 27-30.

⁹ c.f. Maslow, A. *Motivation and Personality* (2nd Edition). (New York: Harper and Row, 1970).

¹⁰ Tanner, N. P. (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. Two volumes

(London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990).

¹¹ As the deacon or priest proclaim in the preparation of the gifts.

¹³ Mark 10: 26-27.

¹⁴ Schroeder, H. J. (trans.), *Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent*,

(St. Louis: Herder, 1941). Session 6, Chapter XVI, p. 41.

¹⁵ Tanner, N. P. (ed.), *Decrees of the Ecumenical Councils*. Two volumes,

(London: Sheed & Ward; Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1990). Council of Vienne, decree #1.

A letter of the bishops gathered at Constantinople states “that in the last days he became fully man for the sake of our salvation,” clearly putting the union of human nature at the service of human salvation.

¹⁶ *Ibid.*.

¹⁸ Tanner, *Op. Cit.*, #4.

¹⁹ *Ibid.* Similarly, the bishops at Vienne also condemned the seventh error of the Beguines, again related to disintegrity of the person. This error held that kissing a woman is inconsistent with human nature and is therefore a mortal sin. That erroneous teaching, is static, separates human will from human nature, and reduces human nature to a disintegrated structure.

²⁰ Fransen, P. *The New Life of Grace* (Antwerp: Declee Co., Inc., 1969) p. 102.

²¹ Schroeder, H. J. (translator) *The Canons and Decrees of the Council of Trent.* (Rockford, Ill.: Tan Books and Publishers, Inc., 1978), Session 6, Chapter X, p. 36.

²² *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter X, pp. 36 and then Chapter V, pp. 31-32.

²³ *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter VI, p 12.

²⁴ *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter XIII, p. 39.

²⁵ *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter VII, p. 34.

²⁶ *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter I, p. 30.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, Session 6, Chapter VII, p. 33.

These causes are:

Final	The glory of the Father and Son and eternal life;
Efficient	The merciful gift of the Holy Spirit, Who sanctifies us, cleanses us of impurity and promises salvation;
Meritorious	The passion and death of Our Lord for our sakes, meriting justification for us;
Instrumental	Baptism;
Formal	The justice with which God makes us just, dispensed to us through the Holy Spirit in accord with our cooperation and disposition.

²⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, #3 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume I: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*, (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), p. 904.

²⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 906.

³⁰ John 13: 34-35.

³¹ Flannery, A. *Op. Cit.*, #6, p. 907.

³² Flannery, A., *Op. Cit.*, #10, p. 910.

³³ (cf. Romans 7: 14, ff. As quoted in *Gaudium et Spes* immediately before the excerpt above.).

³⁴ Luke 10: 25-27.

³⁵ Schroeder, H. J., *Op. Cit.*, Session 6, Chapter VII, p. 34.

³⁶ Tanner, N. P. (ed.), *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic faith*. In *Op. Cit.*, Chapter 3, #1 (Vatican I).

³⁷ *Ibid.*, Chapter 3, #6 (Vatican I).

³⁸ *Dei Verbum*, In Flannery, A., *Op. Cit.*, p. 752; Interior quote is from *Dogmatic Constitution on the Catholic Faith*, cited from H. Denzinger, *Enchiridion Symbolorum*, 32nd edition, 1963 (*Collection of More Important Church Documents*).

³⁹ *Ibid.*, Chapter I, #2, p. 751.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, Chapter I, #5, p. 752.

⁴¹ *Dignitatis Humanae*, #3 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume 1: The Conciliar and Post*

Post Conciliar Documents. (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company,

1998), p. 801.

⁴² *Dignitatis Humanae*, #2 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume I: The Conciliar and Post Conciliar Documents*. (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), p. 801.

⁴³ *Dignitatis Humanae*, #3 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume I: The Conciliar Post Conciliar Documents*. (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), p. 801.

⁴⁴ *Dignitatis Humanae*, #7 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume I: The Conciliar Post Conciliar Documents*. (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), p. 805.

⁴⁵ *Dignitatis Humanae*, #14 in Flannery, A. (ed.), *Vatican Council II, Volume I: The Conciliar Post Conciliar Documents*. (Northport, N. Y.: Costello Publishing Company, 1998), p. 811.