

Why Maritain and Wojtyla hold that Catholic Philosophy is Personalistic

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Abstract:

Taking its cue from the *Vatican II* (1961-5 A.D.) document *Nostra Aetate* (1965 A.D.), this essay argues that contemporary Catholic anthropology can be classified as ‘personalistic’ since it is properly governed by the complementary doctrines of Universal Divine Goodness, *viz.*, that God the Creator leads each person to beatitude and, following from that, a teaching of objective teleology, *viz.*, that each person has permanent union with God the Creator as his/her ultimate purpose. The latter teaching follows from the first since if it is held that God creates each person for beatitude, it is thereby implied that each person is structured for that end. All this stands against an inherited doctrine of Catholic anthropology that also contained teachings of Limited Divine Goodness, *viz.*, that God the Creator only leads some to beatitude and, following from that, a doctrine of subjective teleology, *viz.*, that some persons do not have permanent union with God the Creator as his/her ultimate purpose. This essay argues for the personalistic teaching, *i.e.*, for the universal application of Divine Goodness and objective teleology, by analyzing three essays certain Catholic philosophers published in advance of *Vatican II*. While two of these are by Jacques Maritain (1882-1973 A.D.), the other is by Karol Wojtyla (1920-2005 A.D.). Despite the material differences in their essays, these authors argue for the personalistic doctrine mentioned above, and their principal thesis is further supported by considering certain writings of Wojtyla promulgated before and while he held the office of Roman Catholic Pope (1978-2005 A.D.).

Keywords: Divine Goodness, person, *telos*/teleology, universal, limited, ethics, beatitude

Introduction

Taking my cue from the *Vatican II* (1961-5 A.D.) documents *Nostra Aetate*¹ and portions of *Gaudium et Spes*,² this essay is grounded in the view that *Vatican II*, especially exemplified in the ministries of St. John Paul the Great (2014 A.D. [*aka* Karol Wojtyla (1920-2005 A.D.) and Pope John Paul II [1978-2005 A.D.]])³ and St. Teresa of Calcutta (*aka* Mary Teresa Bojaxhiu and Mother Teresa [1910-97 A.D.]⁴), instructs that what properly centers Catholic teaching in the *saeculum* is Divine *Wisdom*’s, *i.e.*, God’s, doctrine of Universal Divine Goodness. As *Nostra Aetate* (1965 A.D.) states:

One is the community of all peoples, one their origin, for God made the whole human race to live over the face of the earth. One also is their final goal, God. His providence, his manifestations of goodness, His saving design extend to all men, until that time when the elect will be united in the Holy City, the city ablaze with the glory of God, where the nations will walk in His light.⁵

In other words, Catholic speculative and practical instruction should promulgate the teaching, in the spirit of *1 Timothy (Tim) 2.4*,⁶ that God leads each person toward beatitude. Many influential Catholic thinkers like St. Paul (~5-64/5 A.D.),⁷ Origen of Alexandria (185-253 A.D.),⁸ St. Augustine of Hippo (354-430 A.D.),⁹ and St. Thomas Aquinas (1225-74 A.D.),¹⁰ had embraced and/or implied Universal Divine Goodness in speculative matters. But certain Catholic intellectuals, including some of the above, often upheld, in practical or pastoral matters, a teaching of Limited Divine Goodness, *i.e.*, that God does not lead each person toward eternal beatitude.¹¹

Hence, the previously mentioned *Vatican II* documents endeavor to develop contemporary Catholic doctrine by upholding the teaching of Universal Divine Goodness as normative and, therefore, as the proper guide for Catholic practical doctrine. What does this mean? Notably, it signifies that a traditional Catholic understanding that a Self-Sufficient *and* Incarnate Creator God leads each person to beatitude (which undergirds *Gaudium et Spes's* account of human dignity¹²) implies a doctrine of *objective teleology*.¹³ If God leads each to beatitude, it follows that each *telos* consists in eternal beatitude. As the latter is concomitant with God in Himself, *i.e.*, with *Inexhaustible Wisdom*,¹⁴ and in classical Aristotelian ethical doctrine prudence properly instantiates wisdom, Catholic intellectuals should promulgate a teaching on prudence that upholds Universal Divine Goodness. In other words, Catholic practical teaching properly takes its cue from *Wisdom* by placing more emphasis on a person's objective teleology than otherwise. As such, the Christian intellectual properly assesses the moral status of himself and of others in terms of the implications of Universal Divine Goodness rather than by anything less.

Of course, *Vatican II* maintains that subjective teleology properly conforms to objective teleology so that embracing Christian norms is standard.¹⁵ *Vatican II* does not 'throw away the baby with the bathwater.' It continues to maintain that each should seek unity with God. Therefore, the Christian intellectual's fundamental distinction, especially while considering those outside of Christianity, pertains to that person's direction. Is he/she implicitly or explicitly embracing or moving toward seeking unity with God? Is he/she implicitly or explicitly rejecting and, therefore, moving away from that good? While *good will* pertains to embracing God, *bad will* pertains to rejecting Him.¹⁶

That said, this essay argues that the updated *Vatican II* approach to Catholic anthropology—*i.e.*, with a proper focus on Universal Divine Goodness and, therefore, on objective teleology—is instantiated in three essays briefly pre-dating *Vatican II*. Two are by Jacques Maritain (1882-1973 A.D.), *viz.* "The Positions of St. Thomas on the Ordination of the Person to Its Ultimate End," from his *The Person And The Common Good*,¹⁷ and "The Name of Person" from his *Degrees of Knowledge*.¹⁸ These argue that viewing God as Person or, better said, as Personal, is Catholic metaphysics' proper object and goal, *i.e.*, its *alpha and omega*. The other essay is by Karol Wojtyla (better known as John

Paul II and/or St. John Paul the Great), viz., “Analysis of the verb ‘To Use,’” from his 1960 A.D. book *Love and Responsibility*,¹⁹ and it argues much the same thing as Maritain’s essays.

First, I offer a small qualification. In one respect, Wojtyła is more intellectually alert than Maritain. This is because Wojtyła, likely through employing as medium the teachings of Max Scheler ([1874-1928 A.D.], e.g., *Ressentiment*, c. 3)²⁰ and Immanuel Kant (1724-1804 A.D., e.g., *Grounding for the Metaphysics of Morals*, 428-9), seems to use St. Thomas’s teaching on persons as ends-in-themselves from *Summa Contra Gentiles* [SCG], [1259-64 A.D.] 3.112-3 apart from claiming that is St. Thomas’s normative teaching on human personhood. By contrast, Maritain uses SCG 3.112-3 as if it is St. Thomas’s normative doctrine and, therefore, that Universal Divine Goodness has always been Catholic philosophy’s approach in speculative *and* in practical matters. But *S.T. Ia*, 23.7, reply to objection 3, wherein some persons are portrayed merely as means—and against which outlook Wojtyła vehemently argues—shows SCG 3.112-3 is not St. Thomas’s normative teaching. Therefore, although Wojtyła does not identify SCG 3.112-3 as St. Thomas’s authoritative doctrine on persons, his (i) judgement that St. Thomas’s teaching on personhood is truncated and (ii) related push for the prevalence of Universal Divine Goodness are more accurate.²¹

Nevertheless, despite that difference, Maritain and Wojtyła, within writings pre-dating *Vatican II*, commonly claim that the Catholic speculative tradition’s doctrine of Universal Divine Goodness should prevail ‘across the board.’ In this way, their essays both urge and give evidence for the development *Vatican II* advocates and advances.

Analyzing Maritain’s and Wojtyła’s Essays

(i) *Jacques Maritain*. According to Maritain, following and piously developing the thought of St. Thomas Aquinas, philosophy’s proper object consists in ‘understanding’ that God is Person.²² Consequently, ‘being,’ i.e., the created order, is made by God, ‘The Plenitude of Person,’ for the sake of created persons’ development toward God²³ since each person “is ordained directly to God as to its absolute ultimate end.”²⁴ Because God wills and governs persons “for their own sakes,”²⁵ everything else in the universe, including human social institutions, “must ultimately minister to this purpose.”²⁶ As such, man’s practical good, i.e., how to act *in this world*, is properly governed by the *telos* with God to which man is ordained²⁷ and, of course, is understood so by speculative philosophy. Maritain writes: “The good and the end of the speculative intellect are of themselves superior to the good and end of the practical intellect.”²⁸ However, as Maritain, continuing to cite St. Thomas, sees it, the contemplative life’s superiority to the practical life also means “a doctrine of the primacy of the common good.”²⁹ Since man is a social being, life here (in this finite-riddled *saeculum*) can “require that an urgent necessity of a less elevated good, in the circumstances, be given priority.”³⁰

What does Maritain mean by that? To begin with, we might say (taking an Aristotelian approach to ethics) that the *saeculum* as such—or, put differently, that man is developmental—necessarily entails a gap between speculative and practical truth. (Of course, Adam and Eve did not sin because God made them developmental.) Moreover, that distance in man between speculative

and practical truth is exacerbated by this *saeculum*'s circumstances. Due to original sin, humanity has an inordinate affinity toward finite goods. Therefore, as St. Paul remarks in chapter 5 of his *Letter to the Romans*, this can 'weigh down' man's 'natural' affinity toward God. In other words, the circumstances of the *saeculum* exaggerates the gap between the speculative and the practical. But that too does not cause human sin and, more important, God's Plan for humanity has not been altered by original sin, except that the latter has made it more difficult for humanity to see and embrace His Plan. Although Maritain does not say this, it is obvious that 'exaggeration is not contradiction.' Viewed in a certain way (especially in terms of cultivating human piety), exaggeration emphasizes the depth of God's Love for humanity and, therefore, how man's proper response to God consists in gratitude. In any event, Maritain, unlike some earlier Catholic thinkers, maintains that the Catholic intellectual should make practical doctrine agree with speculative doctrine. Stated in terms of the discipline of ethics, the virtue of prudence should instantiate the virtue of wisdom.

To Maritain's mind, it can happen that one acts for an end *contrary* to speculative truth, as purchasing groceries has nourishment as its end. (One should never act for an end *contradictory* to *Wisdom*, like warring against Christianity.) Or, put differently, one can focus on a subordinate love/orientation/inclination and/or good belonging to Natural Law (e.g., *S.T. Ia IIae*, 94.2). For example, one can pursue the education of one's family instead of the entire community's education. But that focus is okay if the agent, whether implicitly or explicitly, views that end as subaltern to the ultimate end, *i.e.*, to Truth. In other words, so long (like Aristotle [384-22 B.C.] implies in *Nicomachean Ethics* 1.1) as purchasing groceries or educating one's family is acknowledged as a proximate, instead of as the ultimate, end, everything is fine. Stated in terms of Christian philosophy, the proper approach is incarnational.

How does this apply to Maritain's doctrine of 'the primacy of the common good'? As Maritain makes clear in his book's subsequent chapters, the logic is essentially the same. Man, as a social being, is destined for the heavenly *City of God*. However, that his social being is now subject to the *saeculum*'s state means that (the *saeculum* being what it is) he can be required to pursue a social good—like a 'just war'—that entails the possibility of personal death. Since this good is contrary (rather than contradictory) to Divine *Wisdom*, it is the ultimate end neither for the community nor for the individual. However, it is okay for the individual and community to pursue this end so long as the latter is agreeable to Divine *Wisdom* and is viewed, at least, subjectively (*i.e.*, in the minds of the individual and/or community), as a means to or as a 'proximate' end rather than as the ultimate end. (It would be wrongly pursued as the ultimate end, and it would be wrong to war against Christianity since those objects contradict Divine *Wisdom*.) As before, Divine *Wisdom* is 'stretched' but not contradicted and, therefore, the act is incarnational. Maritain writes:

Then it is clear ... that the good of the community (the authentic and true common good) is superior to the good of the individual person *in the order of terrestrial values* according to which the person is a part of the community. But these values are not equal to the dignity and destiny of the person. By reason of the law of transcendence ... the person is raised to a higher level than the level at which it is

but a part; at this level, the good of the person is the more elevated. However, at this level, it is still a part, but of a higher community ...³¹

All told, Maritain maintains that man's *telos* is identical with God's *telos* in creating man, *viz.*, it consists in beatitude, and he thereby upholds the doctrine of Universal Divine Goodness. Maritain acknowledges, however, that there is severe tension in this *saeculum* concerning the relationship between the speculative and the practical. Due to original sin, it can more easily happen that objects being pursued and enjoyed are viewed as the ultimate end instead of means to that end. But Maritain understands that, despite human weakness, the norm remains God's Purpose. In other words, even though original sin has weakened humans, the standard of action and of analysis remains man's objective teleology. Christians, therefore, should always behave with charity—especially when, as often occurs, the common good in this *saeculum* mandates the pursuit of some good which, in the ultimate scheme of things, is subordinate to and not contradictory to Divine *Wisdom*. According to Maritain, the Christian (as possible) should take an incarnational approach toward finite goods. So, Universal Divine Goodness reigns, even though that is sometimes stretched by the circumstances. *The primary component* of prudence takes its lead from wisdom, and that component should not be shared with or replaced by human responsibility (including by the disposition of waywardness). Responsibility is, in fact, a properly secondary component.

(ii) *Karol Wojtyła*. Like Maritain, Wojtyła's "Analysis of the verb 'To Use'" from *Love and Responsibility*,³² upholds Universal Divine Goodness while noticing tension concerning pursuing finite goods in the *saeculum*. Wojtyła also urges that practical activity instantiate Divine *Wisdom* and, therefore, Universal Divine Goodness. To Wojtyła's mind, practical activity never contradicts Divine *Wisdom* and, therefore, the intellectual virtue of wisdom so far as the agent governs action toward other persons by 'love' instead of by 'use.' Wojtyła shows this by concentrating on sexual ethics as medium. For although sexual ethics well manifests there can be tension in some specific action between loving people as ends-in-themselves while actively engaging them as means-to-end,³³ that tension can be overcome if the agent subordinates his/her immediate activity to pursuing the ultimate end.³⁴

As Wojtyła (developing the Thomistic tradition)³⁵ sees it, since each person is structured by Divine Presence (because each is loved by God), each owes love to God and to each person. Since God loves each person as end-in-themselves (for which reason persons are 'irreducible' or 'incommunicable'),³⁶ rather than—as occurs with the human treatment of, or can prevail between plants, and animals—considering others as means-to-ends. For Wojtyła, persons owe love to persons and love-governed use to non-persons.³⁷

On this basis, Wojtyła tackles Utilitarian ethics and analyzes sexual activity.³⁸ In general, the Christian properly engages in sexual activity by truly loving their spouse³⁹ and, therefore, in the context of marriage for the purposes of reproduction, right education of offspring, and friendship—encouraging virtue toward the end of beatitude.⁴⁰ By contrast, the Utilitarian engages in sexual

activity with the mindset of ‘use.’⁴¹ Hence, as Confessor Augustine depicts young Augustine in *conf.* 2, the egotistical or narcissistic agent views the other strictly as an instrument of self-seeking pleasure—whether of selfish sensual pleasure, of selfish social pleasure, or of some combination of both.

Viewed in one way, the Christian’s potential difficulty in sexual activity is centered around the fact that the spouse is both means and end. The immediate end, in a certain way, is sexual activity, and that brings sensual pleasure to each spouse. However, the Christian properly subordinates (rather than negates or annihilates) sexual activity, and its concomitant pleasure, to the person’s objective end and, thereby, pursues sexual activity as ordained to its proper end, including (as implied by Plato [~423-7–348 B.C.] in *Republic* 9 and Aristotle in *Nicomachean Ethics* 10), to the pleasure proper thereto. Similar ordering should occur in any social activity. In commercial relations, for instance, one’s relationship with the check-out clerk is centered proximately around ‘use.’ But, since the proper relationship with persons is governed by love, that occasion of ‘use,’ if the agent’s mindset is rightly ordered, is governed by love (and, consequently, the pleasure properly accruing thereto). Again, it is in that way that the character Eric Liddell, in the 1981 A.D. film *Chariots of Fire*, ultimately used his talent for running.

Most important, Wojtyla’s incarnational teaching is essentially the same as Maritain’s. This is because Wojtyla, like Maritain, upholds the primacy of objective teleology. One especially sees this in Wojtyla’s conclusion where the *Personalistic Norm* to love persons is identified with the Biblical injunction to love God and neighbor.⁴² In other words, the ethic Wojtyla advances views people in terms of their objective nature, *viz.*, as loved by God and, therefore, for the sake of eternal beatitude, rather than in terms of what they might think is their nature and *telos*. The problem, then, is obviously not the person’s objective teleology but that, as Utilitarian, he/she *explicitly* embraces a teleology (*i.e.*, a subjective teleology) which spurns objective teleology by advocating treating persons as things. For this reason, the ‘card-carrying’ Utilitarian embraces vice instead of virtue. It is possible that someone ‘practicing’ Utilitarianism might be *moving toward* the Personalistic Norm if they are discovering (and embracing) that persons deserve ‘love.’ But it is impossible for a ‘card-carrying’ Utilitarian, *i.e.*, for someone who judges that persons should be treated as means rather than as ends. So, subjective teleology matters, but it is not the framework whereby or within which moral action is judged. Rather, its value is ascertained within the framework of objective teleology.

Conclusion

It is evident that Maritain and Wojtyla’s respective accounts of the human person, though temporally prior to the *Vatican II* council, explain and embrace *Vatican II*’s implied outlook on Catholic doctrine. This is not only because they uphold a traditional Christian, including Catholic, view that *Wisdom*’s nature is centered in the doctrine of Universal Divine Goodness, but also since they urge that practical activity in this *saeculum* be analyzed and carried out on that basis. Stated in terms of a classical approach to ethics, each maintains that prudence, and therefore practical teaching, should instantiate Divine *Wisdom* in the way that prudence’s *primary component*, following the

intellectual virtue wisdom, ought to embody Universal Divine Goodness. That primary component, whether in whole or in part, should not instantiate human responsibility in general or, particularly, human waywardness. For those latter realities belong to Divine *Wisdom*'s, and therefore, to prudence's secondary and subordinate component.

Thus, Maritain and Wojtyla claim, albeit by employing divergent mediums, that practical activity should be viewed primarily in terms of objective instead of subjective teleology. Maritain and Wojtyla commonly hold that the Christian should consider his spiritual status and that of others from the perspective of Universal Divine Goodness. As Maritain claims in his essays and as Wojtyla argues through analyzing sexual ethics, the Christian intellectual properly considers another's character (especially if the latter is non-Christian) in terms of man's ultimate end. The agent's subjective teleology is significant (for it is a component of Divine *Wisdom* and, therefore, of prudence), but it is only determining if that agrees with (in the case of Christians) or *explicitly* opposes (as we saw in the case of the 'card-carrying' Utilitarian) objective teleology. On this basis, man's ultimate end, including its inclusive character, is better understood, and acknowledged; and human dignity is strongly upheld.

Leaving aside our current essays by Maritain and Wojtyla, we support this thesis by focusing on Wojtyla's implied response, found elsewhere, to the Catholic Church's sometimes dominant, but problematic, Augustinian-Thomistic view of predestination. That is because this shows, especially well, how Wojtyla thinks prudence should instantiate Divine *Wisdom* or, put differently, that Catholic doctrine should be governed by Universal, instead of Limited, Divine Goodness.

Friar St. Thomas Aquinas's doctrine of the eschatological aspect of predestination sets human waywardness *together with* Divine Goodness as the *primary* component of prudence. In this respect, and perhaps for similar pastoral reasons, St. Thomas espouses much the same teaching as had Bishop St. Augustine in *City of God* 21.12.⁴³ Moreover, although many of St. Thomas's treatises imply Universal Divine Goodness (*e.g.*, his treatise on God in *S.T. 1a*, 1-13 and, we now add, on creatures in the earlier [1252-6 A.D.] *De ente et essentia*),⁴⁴ here he supports his argument for an outcome of minority beatitude⁴⁵ by using a wrong-ended analogy. In this context, St. Thomas's analogue is not God but 'nature,' including human nature vitiated by original sin. He writes:

The good that is proportionate to the common state of nature is to be found in the majority; and is wanting in the minority. The good that exceeds the common state of nature is to be found in the minority, and is wanting in the majority. Thus it is clear that the majority of men have a sufficient knowledge for the guidance of life; and those who have not this knowledge are said to be half-witted or foolish; but they who attain to a profound knowledge of things intelligible are a very small minority in respect to the rest. Since their eternal happiness, consisting in the vision of God, exceeds the common state of nature, and especially in so far as this is deprived of grace through the corruption of original sin, those who are saved are in the minority. In this especially, however, appears the mercy of God, that He has chosen some for that salvation, for which very many in accordance with the common course and tendency of nature fall short.⁴⁶

By contrast, *Vatican II*'s *Nostra Aetate* says nothing about humanity's ultimate destiny but, in the spirit of 1 *Tim* 2.4, it makes clear that God, even in the face of original sin, leads each to beatitude. This document unabashedly proclaims a teaching of Universal Divine Goodness. In this instance, Universal Divine Goodness is prudence's primary component. Again, *Nostra Aetate* states:

One is the community of all peoples, one their origin, for God made the whole human race to live over the face of the earth. One also is their final goal, God. His providence, his manifestations of goodness, His saving design extend to all men, until that time when the elect will be united in the Holy City, the city ablaze with the glory of God, where the nations will walk in His light.⁴⁷

How does Wojtyla weigh in on the conflict between Universal and Limited Divine Goodness? In *Love and Responsibility* (1960 A.D.), he upholds *Wisdom*'s account of human personhood by writing that each should be viewed as end-in-himself rather than as means-to-end. To Wojtyla's mind, those thinking like St. Thomas, in *S.T. Ia*, 23.7, reply to objection 3, have reduced humanity or personal nature to the level of the *saeculum*'s common good, *i.e.*, (as Maritain advocated) *to the order of terrestrial values*, and/or to the level of things (*viz.*, of animals, plants, and artifacts). Although the philosophies of Kant and Scheler are (as previously mentioned) an obvious medium within Wojtyla's notion of personhood, it is apparent—at least from this study—that he sets one of St. Thomas's teachings (*e.g.*, *SCG*, 3.112-113) against another (*e.g.*, *S.T. Ia*, 23.7, reply to objection 3). He writes:

Anyone who treats a person as the means to an end does violence to the very essence of the other, to what constitutes its natural right. ... This principle has a universal validity. Nobody can use a person as a means towards an end, no human being, nor yet God the Creator. On the part of God, indeed, it is totally out of the question, since, by giving man an intelligent and free nature, he has thereby ordained that each man alone will decide for himself the ends of his activity, and not be a blind tool of someone else's ends. God allows man to learn His supernatural ends, but the decision to strive towards an end, the choice of course, is left to man's free will. God does not redeem man against his will.⁴⁸

Likewise, in his 1994 A.D. *Vatican II* inspired *Crossing The Threshold Of Hope*, St. John Paul the Great wrote this concerning Christian eschatology:

This truth which the Gospel teaches about God requires a certain change in focus with regard to eschatology. First of all, eschatology is not what will take place in the future, something happening only after earthly life is finished. Eschatology has already begun with the coming of Christ. The ultimate eschatological event was His redemptive Death and His Resurrection. This is the beginning of "a new heaven and a new earth" (cf. Rev 21:1). For everyone [note the universality], life beyond death is connected with the affirmation: "I believe in the resurrection of the body," and then: "I believe in the forgiveness of sins and in life everlasting." This is *Christocentric eschatology* [his italics].⁴⁹

The encyclical *Redemptoris Missio* (1990 A.D.) presents a similar doctrine. St. John Paul II writes:

The universality of salvation means that it is granted not only to those who explicitly believe in Christ and have entered the Church. Since salvation is offered to all, it must be made concretely available to all. But it is clear that today, as in the past, many people do not have an opportunity to come to know or accept the gospel revelation or to enter the Church. ... For such people salvation in Christ is accessible by virtue of a grace which, while having a mysterious relationship to the Church, does not make them formally part of the Church but enlightens them in a way which is accommodated to their spiritual and material situation. This grace comes from Christ; it is the result of his Sacrifice and is communicated by the Holy Spirit. It enables each person to attain salvation through his or her free cooperation.⁵⁰

As I mentioned at the outset regarding *Vatican II*'s counsel, this perspective does not deny that humans should pursue virtue; nor does it assert that God counsels or is responsible for moral evil. Rather, it views human action in terms of what, certainly for the Christian, is OBJECTIVE instead of subjective teleology. Pope John Paul II maintains that moral action is properly assessed in view of Universal instead of Limited Divine Goodness and, therefore, in the context of viewing persons as ends rather than as means. Considering the relationship between objective teleology and the agent's subjective teleology does not entail moral relativism. Indeed, as Pope John Paul II's encyclical *The Splendor of Truth* (1993 A.D.) makes evident, this process requires judging the subject (firstly, oneself) by normative doctrine, *i.e.*, by the moral absolutes belonging to objective teleology.⁵¹ Hence, among other things, murder and adultery and contraception are intrinsically wrong, and understanding why that is so is concomitant with the distinction between viewing persons as means and viewing them as ends.⁵²

In any event, it is obvious that Karol Wojtyla/St. John Paul the Great fashions prudence in the likeness of *Wisdom*.

Hence, Catholic philosophy is intrinsically personalistic since it properly embraces Universal Divine Goodness. Moreover, that *Vatican II* inspired development toward universally applying Divine Goodness in Catholic philosophy is essentially subaltern for that doctrine has long belonged, as Maritain and Wojtyla show, to Catholic thought.⁵³

Finally, the *Vatican II* council's emphasis on promulgating Universal Divine Goodness, as Maritain and Wojtyla obviously advocated and embraced in advance of *Vatican II* (and as Wojtyla did afterward as Pope John Paul II), has helped bring about that development.

Endnotes:

1. *Nostra Aetate, The Documents of Vatican II*, Vatican Edition (Strathfield, NSW; St. Pauls Publishing; 2009), 387-90.
2. *Gaudium et Spes, The Documents of Vatican II*, Vatican Edition (*op. cit.*), 1.12-22, 132-40.
3. As this essay's *Conclusion* shows, St. John Paul the Great wrote many books and encyclicals focusing on ethics that advocated, whether by presupposing or by making explicit, the *Vatican II* approach to Universal Divine Goodness (*e.g.*, *Love and Responsibility* (1960 A.D.), *Man in the Field of Responsibility*

- (1972, 1991 A.D.), *Redemptoris Missio* (1990 A.D.), *The Splendor Of Truth* (1993 A.D.), *Crossing The Threshold Of Hope* (1994 A.D.), and *Fides et Ratio* (1998 A.D.).
4. St. Teresa of Calcutta's practical life, not simply of prayer and pious reflection but also of taking care of the sick and needy, had universal scope. She did not simply care for India's Roman Catholics but for *anyone* sick and needy—whether they be Roman Catholic, Hindu, or otherwise. There can be little doubt that St. Teresa embraced the same kind of philosophical anthropology as St. John Paul the Great. As St. Teresa's 'ministry to everyone' showed, her Christian activity was grounded in doctrine that God is intimately present in each person's life to guide them, by His Love leading to human responsive love, to beatitude. In this respect, St. Teresa's activity's scope, like St. John Paul the Great's, instantiates, in league with *Vatican II's* outlook, the fullness of Divine Goodness. (See also: *Mother Teresa; Come Be My Light, The Private Writings of the "Saint of Calcutta,"* [ed.] B. Kolodiejchuk (New York and London: Doubleday Religion; 2007).)
 5. *Nostra Aetate* (*op. cit.*), 1.2, 387. Cf. *Gaudium et Spes* 10, paragraph 3, 131: "The Church firmly ... problems of our time."
 6. *1 Timothy* 2.4: "for he [*i.e.*, God] wants all men to be saved and come to know the truth." *New American Bible*, translated by members of the Catholic Biblical Association of America (Iowa Falls, IA.: World Bible Publishers; 1976), 1408.
 7. St. Paul, *e.g.*, *Letter To The Romans*, 11.23-36 (55-7 A.D.). I cite this passage since its teaching on the ultimate reconciliation, in God, of 'Jew' and 'Gentile' necessarily includes the teaching that God leads each toward beatitude. For recent commentary see I.L.E. Ramelli, *A Larger Hope? Universal Salvation from Christian Beginnings to Julian of Norwich* (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books; 2019), 41-63.4-19.
 8. Origen of Alexandria, *e.g.*, *On First Principles* (~230 A.D.) 1.6; and 3.6. I cite these texts in Origen since his teaching on universal beatitude necessarily includes the teaching that God leads each person toward beatitude. Recent analysis of Origen's doctrine of universal restoration is found in Ramelli (*op. cit.*), 41-63.
 9. St. Augustine, *e.g.*, *Confessions* (*conf.*), [397-400 A.D.], 1.1.1: 10.27.38; and 13.1.1-2.3. Since Augustine's meaning of *confessio* shows that God structures each person for beatitude because He leads each person thereto, these texts teach that God leads each person toward beatitude. (For recent commentary see B. David, *On The Confessions As Confessio* [London and New York; Bloomsbury Academic; 2022].)
 10. St. Thomas Aquinas, *e.g.*, *Summa Theologiae* (*S.T.*), [~1265-72 A.D.], *Ia*, 1-13. These texts imply that God leads each person toward beatitude since St. Thomas's robust account of God as Self-Sufficient and Creator together with his teaching, implied in those passages, but explicitly stated in *S.T. Ia*, 45.7, brings the inference that God leads each person to beatitude.
 11. This is visible in St. Augustine, *City of God* (412-25 A.D.), 21.12, and in St. Thomas Aquinas, *S.T. Ia*, 23.7, reply to objection 3 (which I consider later), since these teachings on eschatology maintain that human responsibility prohibits *God* from leading each to beatitude.
Although Augustine's earlier *On The Morals Of The Manicheans* (387-8 A.D.), 7.9, had maintained an eschatological outcome of universal beatitude, which certainly implies that God leads each person toward beatitude, he later rejects that teaching in his *Retractations* (426-7 A.D.) I, 7.6.
 12. See *Gaudium et Spes* 1.12-22, 132-40.
 13. The *Vatican II* documents *Gaudium et Spes* and *Nostra Aetate* underscore the normative claim of Universal Divine Goodness by showing how this doctrine implies that each person has an objective teleology. To see this reality, philosophers might find helpful the logical doctrine of subalternation. Since the true A proposition entails that each proposition falling beneath is also true, it follows that Universal Divine Goodness means it is true that God leads (i) each to beatitude, (ii) some to beatitude, and (iii) Tom to beatitude. Hence, these *Vatican II* documents claim that God leads some toward beatitude since He leads each toward beatitude.

14. *Fides et Ratio*, 2.10-11.
15. See ahead, section 3, paragraph 9, and nn. 51-2.
16. Concerning *good will* and *bad will* see *Gaudium et Spes* 1.1.19-22. This topic relates to the document's account of human dignity, meaning not only that man is made for supernatural union with God but also that man properly exercises his God-given abilities to attain that end. While people of *good will* genuinely pursue truth (*ibid.*, 1.1.22), those of bad will, *viz.*, "those who willfully shut out God from their hearts" (*ibid.*, 1.1.19, 137) do not.
17. J. Maritain, "The Positions of St. Thomas on the Ordination of the Person to Its Ultimate End," *The Person And The Common Good*, translated by J.J. Fitzgerald (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press; 1946, 1947, 1966), 15-30.
18. Maritain, "The Name of Person" *Degrees of Knowledge*, translated by G.B. Phelan (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press; 1959, 1995), 245-50.
19. K. Wojtyła, "Analysis of the verb 'To Use,'" *Love and Responsibility* (San Francisco, CA: Ignatius Press; 1960, 1981), 21-44.
20. Concerning Scheler's significant influence on Wojtyła, see P.J. Colossi, "The Uniqueness of Persons in the Life and Thought of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II, with Emphasis on His Indebtedness to Max Scheler," *Karol Wojtyła's Philosophical Legacy*, (edd.) A.B. Curry, N. Mardas, and G.F. McLean (Washington, DC: The Council for Research in Values and Philosophy; 2008), 61-99. This essay was brought to my attention by my colleague, Dr. M. Fedoryka.
21. Again, that is probably related to Wojtyła's using Scheler and Kant as part of his material cause. How so? To begin with, it is obvious that their common focus on universality helped Wojtyła to develop Catholic (including) St. Thomas's teaching, perhaps from *SCG* 3.112-3, into his normative doctrine concerning human personhood. For its part, however, St. Thomas's own account of the matter, whether in *S.T.* or *SCG*, is grounded in understanding that man, in some way, is *imago Dei* (e.g., *S.T. Ia*, 45.7). As a Catholic philosopher, Wojtyła agrees that man is *imago Dei* and, as such, the notion of God (understood with St. Thomas's decisive aid—e.g., *Fides et Ratio* 4.43-4) is, in principle, Wojtyła's primary notion—for, on St. Thomas's view, humans are 'irreducible' by virtue of participating in The Irreducible God. (Cf. *Fides et Ratio*'s counsel [83] that contemporary Catholic thinking should transition 'from phenomenon to foundation.'). However, St. Thomas maintains, on the one hand, that each human is actively *imago Dei* (*SCG*) and, on the other, that only some humans are actively *imago Dei* (*S.T. Ia*, 23.7) In other words, St. Thomas himself maintains that some persons are 'irreducible' but others are not.

For his part, Wojtyła maintains that all humans are actively *imago Dei*. But this is obviously aided by engaging Kant and Scheler. In this respect, Wojtyła agrees with Kant and Scheler that each person is properly viewed as end, but he embraces Scheler's view much more than Kant's since Scheler grounds his doctrine of man's participating in the transcendent 'kingdom of God' (e.g., M. Scheler, *Ressentiment*, translated by L.B. Coser and W.W. Holdheim [Milwaukee, WI; Marquette University Press; 1998, 2003], 72). With Scheler, then, Wojtyła seems to maintain that the universality of 'irreducibility' properly derives from man's relationship with God. For Wojtyła, the Catholic philosopher, this implies that right understanding of God's relationship with man entails understanding that each man is *imago Dei*. Consequently, Wojtyła develops the Catholic, and therefore especially Thomistic (e.g., Colossi [*op. cit.*], 72-3), doctrine of man as *imago Dei* by adding to that notion the sort of universality advocated by Scheler. Viewed in this way, Wojtyła's formal notion holds that each person is irreducible because each participates in God as *imago Dei*. But Wojtyła appears to achieve this through applying to man what he understands as the authentic Catholic, and therefore principally Thomistic, notion of God. Concerning St. Thomas, Wojtyła seems to think that his notion of God is imperfectly embedded in his overall notion of man as *imago Dei*. Thus, Wojtyła's final notion of personhood, maintaining that each man is active *imago Dei*,

stands beyond St. Thomas's original doctrine. But, to Wojtyla's mind, that notion is what the Catholic, and therefore Thomistic, notion really implies.

What, on this view, makes up Wojtyla's formal notion? The reigning Catholic, especially Thomistic, notion of God (which Wojtyla implies that St. Thomas truncates in his original notion of human personhood) functions as primary material cause; St. Thomas's specific view of human personhood functions as a secondary material cause; Scheler's notion functions as tertiary material cause; and Kant's notion functions as fourth material cause. Wojtyla develops St. Thomas's notion of personhood by the dual help of (i) Kant's and Scheler's notion (more Scheler's notion than Kant's), and (ii) the Catholic, including Thomistic, notion of God. By implication, Wojtyla also develops, in a subordinate way, Kant's and Scheler's notions by taking them through his (i) Catholic, especially Thomistic, notion of God and (ii) finished notion of personhood. Hence, if I am right, the most decisive notion (*i.e.*, the primary material cause) within Wojtyla's formal notion is the Catholic, and therefore principally Thomistic, notion of God for it is ultimately by that that Wojtyla measures, evaluates, and relates together the other notions.

Finally, Wojtyla's formal notion of personhood is principally Thomistic since, above all else, his Catholic notion of God relies on St. Thomas's notion of God. In this regard, we see that Wojtyla developed St. Thomas's account of human personhood as *imago Dei*, *i.e.*, made that notion universal, by applying to it St. Thomas's notion of God. In other words, Wojtyla develops St. Thomas's original notion of personhood by adjusting the relationship between the components found therein. In this respect, St. Thomas's original notion of personhood has primary and secondary components, *viz.* concerning God and concerning man. Spurred on especially by Scheler's account of personhood, Wojtyla notices that St. Thomas's original notion truncates its primary component. In other words, the *Dei* component is muted in St. Thomas's notion of *imago Dei*. Therefore, by presenting that component in its fullness, and by relating it to the secondary component, Wojtyla enlarges what it means that man is *imago Dei*. Since God Is Good, He is actively present to all, rather than to only some, men. Consequently, since each human is actively *imago Dei*, each is 'irreducible.' Universality has been attained.

Hence, engaging Scheler's account of person greatly helped Wojtyla because it alerted him regarding the need to develop the Catholic, and particularly Thomistic, notion of personhood. In the latter regard, Wojtyla saw that the universality present in Scheler's account was present, in principle, in St. Thomas's own account and, therefore, helped to motivate Wojtyla to develop the latter notion.

22. Maritain, "The Name of Person," (*op. cit.*). 245-50.

23. *Ibid.*

24. Maritain, "The Positions of St. Thomas on the Ordination of the Person to Its Ultimate End" (*op. cit.*), 15.

25. *Ibid.*, 17.

26. *Ibid.*, 16.

27. *Ibid.*, 25.

28. *Ibid.*

29. *Ibid.*, 28.

30. *Ibid.*, 27.

31. Maritain, "The Person and Society," *The Person And The Common Good* (*op. cit.*) translated by J.J. Fitzgerald (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press; 1946, 1947, 1966), *Ibid.*, "The Person and Society," 47-89, 82.

32. Wojtyla, "Analysis of the verb 'To Use'" (*op. cit.*), 21-44.

33. *Ibid.*, 30-1. Cf. St. Augustine, *City of God* 14.15-26.

34. *Ibid.*, 33-4.

35. Wojtyla's formal and chief material causes appear to depend principally on St. Thomas's doctrine. Other

material causes derive from elsewhere, especially from Scheler. For discussion of these matters see, previously, n. 21. Also view *Fides et Ratio* (1998 A.D.), promulgated by Pope John Paul II, wherein St. Thomas is embraced as exemplar on account of his profound orientation toward the Divine Exemplar, *viz.*, *Wisdom* (4.43-4) and, therefore, that Catholic thought should certainly take guidance from (though not necessarily repeat) St. Thomas's doctrine. (*Cf. Fides et Ratio* 101-103).

36. Wojtyła (*op. cit.*), 24.
37. *Ibid.*, 25-30.
38. *Ibid.*, 34-9.
39. *Ibid.*, 34.
40. *Ibid.*, 34-9.
41. *Ibid.*
42. *Ibid.*, 40-4.
43. Bishop Augustine (354-430 A.D.) probably composes this ~ 423 A.D. But Augustine (see n.11), as Ramelli (*op. cit.*, 154-8) points out, held a doctrine of universal beatitude in 387-8 A.D. while writing against the Manicheans (*On The Morals of the Manicheans*, 7.9). He later repudiates that view (*Retractations* [426-7 A.D.], I, 7.6). It is interesting to note that Augustine espouses this view before being appointed to the episcopate (391 A.D.) and repudiates it while Bishop. There are many ways of interpreting Augustine's actions.
44. See n. 10 concerning *S.T. Ia*, 1-13. I add *De ente et essentia* since that treatise's treatment of how existence and essence is found in creatures instructs how creatures, including each human person, depend on Divine Being, and since God, as Self-Sufficient, creates to share His Goodness, it follows that He leads each person toward beatitude.
45. Arguably, this view of eschatology is twice removed from the teaching of *1 Tim 2.4*. How so? If the latter entails that 'God leads each to beatitude,' this implies that Divine *Wisdom*'s primary component consists in Universal Divine Goodness and its secondary component consists in human responsibility. But a claim of minority beatitude sets the secondary component over the primary component so that what is primary becomes secondary and vice-versa. This means minority beatitude is removed from the ideal. Moreover, a claim of majority beatitude is superior to a claim of minority beatitude since the former claim, in a way, makes each component primary so that some portion of what is secondary becomes primary. This means the claim of minority beatitude is twice removed from the ideal. Therefore, if *1 Tim 2.4* entails setting human responsibility beneath Universal Divine Goodness, a teaching on minority beatitude is twice removed from Divine *Wisdom*.
46. St. Thomas Aquinas, *S.T. Ia*, 23.7, reply to objection 3, translated by *Fathers of the English Dominican Province, S.T.*, vol. 1 (Westminster, Maryland: Christian Classics; 1948, 1981), 132.
47. *Nostra Aetate* (*op. cit.*), 1.2, 387.
48. Wojtyła (*op. cit.*), 1.2, 27.
49. St. John Paul II, *Crossing The Threshold Of Hope* (Toronto, CA: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc.; 1994), 27, 184-5.
50. Pope John Paul II, *Redemptoris Missio* (Dec. 7, 1990), chapter 1, section 10. (https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/encyclicals/documents/hf_jp-ii_enc_07121990_redemptoris-missio.html, accessed Oct. 11, 2023).
51. Pope John Paul II, *The Splendor Of Truth/Veritatis Splendor*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, translated by the United States Conference Of Catholic Bishops (Washington, DC: USCCB Communications; 1993), 3.95-9, 143-9.
52. *Ibid.*, 3.71-83, 108-27.
53. The claim that the teaching on Universal Divine Goodness is essentially subaltern to Catholic philosophy, taken in conjunction with the claim that Maritain's and Wojtyła's development of Catholic thought is principally Thomistic, can raise this question: If Catholic philosophy is personalistic, is Thomistic

philosophy personalistic? Although this matter is worthy of a longer study, this paper, agreeing with *Fides et Ratio*'s view of St. Thomas as guide (e.g., 4.43-4), maintains that Thomistic philosophy is personalistic.

To begin with, Maritain's reliance on Thomistic thought is obvious since he explicitly engages and at least implicitly develops St. Thomas's teaching. What, though, about Wojtyla's thought? Its grounding in Thomistic thought might be less obvious to some, but Wojtyla often mentioned this in conjunction with acknowledging his debt to philosophers practicing phenomenology (e.g., Colossi [op. cit.], 72-3). Therefore, as I argued in n. 21 above concerning Wojtyla's doctrine of personhood, Wojtyla, as a self-identified Catholic philosopher, gave preference (or, in the spirit of 1998's *Fides et Ratio* encyclical, 'pride of place') to St. Thomas's teaching. In the doctrinal development that much of Wojtyla's work manifests (see below), Thomistic teaching is viewed as next to normative (*Inexhaustible Wisdom* is normative) and, consequently, as the primary material cause. It is true that much of the impetus for Wojtyla's development of St. Thomas's doctrine arises from engaging teachings arising within other philosophical schools. However, the latter, as Scheler's teaching on personhood shows, ultimately function in a subordinate manner.

More evidence of Wojtyla's decisive commitment to Thomistic philosophy (in the service of Wojtyla's greater commitment to *Inexhaustible Wisdom*) is found in the following considerations. To begin with, *Love and Responsibility*'s "Analysis of the Verb 'To Use,'" whose account of personhood (we argued in n. 21) is grounded in a Thomistic notion of God, finishes by identifying 'the Personalistic Norm' with the Biblical injunction to 'love God and neighbor' (*Love and Responsibility* [op. cit.], 40-4). Moreover, Wojtyla's final book before becoming Pope, viz., *Man In The Field Of Responsibility* (1972, 1991 A.D.), develops St. Thomas's worthily famous teaching on 'Natural Law,' i.e., concerning rational guidance for moral activity (*S.T. Ia, IIae*, 94.1-6). This is to show that Natural Law is present to *all persons* for the purpose of leading each to embrace God in Christ and, therefore, that upholding objective moral norms (a project subsequently undertaken in *The Splendor Of Truth*) belongs to the pathway whereby humans might be joined with God (*Man In The Field of Responsibility*, translated by K. Kemp and Z. Kieron [South Bend, IN: St. Augustine's Press; 2011], 71-9). By emphasizing the connection between Eternal Law and Natural Law, Wojtyla develops the universal element somewhat camouflaged in St. Thomas's doctrine. Additionally, as stated in *The Splendor of Truth* (op. cit., 2.28, 47), Pope John Paul II noticed that *Vatican II* inaugurated a "development in doctrine" which he, in part, helped to catalyze. Furthermore, while viewing St. Thomas as exemplar in seeking *Inexhaustible Wisdom* and, therefore, St. Thomas's teachings, as *Fides et Ratio* (1998 A.D.) shows, as close to normative as possible, St. John Paul the Great worked to develop certain of those teachings in ethics (e.g., *The Splendor of Truth* [op. cit., 2.71-83]) according to the mindset expressed by *Vatican II*. With that in mind, it is valuable to regress for a moment. *Fides et Ratio* 4.43-4 upholds St. Thomas as exemplar. But, as the previously mentioned passage and the document's 6.73-4 and *Conclusion* (101-2 and 107-8) make crystal clear, this is less because St. Thomas's doctrines are exemplary but more on account of his outstanding zeal for *Inexhaustible Wisdom*. By upholding *Wisdom* as St. Thomas's Exemplar, this document stands as a charter for Thomistic development; and the guidance it offers is manifested, *inter alii*, in many of John Paul II's earlier and later writings.

Most important, what permeates Wojtyla's doctrinal development is the proliferation of an essentially Thomistic doctrine of Universal Divine Goodness. Taking his cue from *Vatican II*'s emphasis on Universal Divine Goodness and from his own Thomistic notion of God, St. John Paul the Great everywhere instructs that each person is, in a way, graced (i.e., structured by Divine Presence), and that the latter's purpose (and, therefore, of acting as person) is for each to embrace God Incarnate *via* Christian grace. As a developer of doctrine, Wojtyla shows himself loyal to Thomistic thought in the service of *Wisdom*. In this respect, Wojtyla's view of Catholic philosophy is much the same as Maritain's.

Therefore, this paper's modest study of Maritain and Wojtyla gives evidence that insofar as Catholic philosophy is personalistic, Thomistic philosophy is also personalistic.

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