

**ECUMENICAL ETHICS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT
OF VATICAN II MORAL THEOLOGY**

by

James T. Bretzke, S.J.

Published in *Josephinum* 6 (Summer/Fall 1999): 18-38.

**ECUMENICAL ETHICS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT
OF VATICAN II MORAL THEOLOGY**

Table of Contents

<u>Introduction</u>	1
<u>Pre-Vatican II Ecumenical Ethics</u>	1
<u>Vatican II's Contribution to Ecumenical Christian Ethics</u>	9
<u>Gaudium et Spes and Dignitatis Humanae</u>	12
Gaudium et spes	12
Dignitatis humanae	14
<u>Unitatis Redintegratio</u>	17
<u>Optatam Totius</u>	18
<u>Paradigm Shifts in Post-Vatican II Moral Theology</u>	20
<u>Conclusion</u>	23
<u>Résumé</u>	25
<u>ENDNOTES</u>	26

ECUMENICAL ETHICS IN THE HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF VATICAN II MORAL THEOLOGY

Introduction

As the 1990s draw to a close we have seen much progress between Catholics and Protestants in the area of ecumenical ethics. Even in locations which a generation ago might have seemed an unlikely venue have fostered deepening ecumenical collaboration.¹ In 1993 the annual convention of the Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA) chose as its theme, "Ecumenism, Interreligious Relations, and Cultural Diversity."² In the Society of Jesus there is an international group of interested Jesuits who have regular scholarly conferences to further practical interest and efforts in ecumenism.³ On the academic level ecumenical collaboration has not been limited either to these occasional special gatherings and convention themes. Catholics and Protestant ethicists study together in graduate schools, participate in each other's professional societies, collaborate in theological journals and the like. While these sorts of activities raise very few theological eyebrows, this would have not have been the case in the not-too-distant past, and a look at our ecumenical history can help us in to put current efforts, successes and difficulties, into their historical context and perspective.

Pre-Vatican II Ecumenical Ethics

Perhaps the main feature of the Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic ecumenical perspective was the so-called "return" model of ecclesial union. Most ecumenists are familiar with the rather negative

official policy of the Magisterium expressed towards the modern ecumenical movement proclaimed less than a half-century ago by Pope Pius XI in his 1927 Encyclical Letter Mortalium animos:

The union of Christians cannot be fostered otherwise than by promoting the return of the dissidents to the one true Church of Christ, which in the past they so unfortunately abandoned; return, we say to the one true Church of Christ which is plainly visible to all and which by the will of her Founder forever remains what He Himself destined her to be for the common salvation of men. ...No one is in the Church of Christ, and no one remains in it, unless he acknowledges and accepts with obedience the authority and power of Peter and his legitimate successors... Therefore, to this apostolic See, founded in the City which Peter and Paul, the Princes of the apostles, consecrated with their blood, to this See which is the `root and matrix of the Catholic Church', may our dissident sons return; let them do so, not with the thought and hope that `the Church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth', will sacrifice the integrity of the faith, but, on the contrary, with the intention of submitting to her authority and government..."⁴

Besides this rather negative official policy stance, any formal ecumenical dialogue in which Catholics might wish to participate was tightly circumscribed both by Canon Law and magisterial vigilance. A good summary of the Catholic Church's former juridical position is found in a dictionary article on "Discussion (Interfaith)" written by a moral theologian of that era, Rev. Cornelius Damen, C.Ss.R., who presented the common theological opinion in these terms:

In view of the dangers, the Church, as guardian of revealed truth and zealous custodian of the sacred mission conferred upon her by Jesus Christ to teach the Catholic Faith, has forbidden all such [ecumenical] debates with non-Catholics except by permission of the Holy See, or, in exceptional cases, by permission of the Bishop (Can. 1325, par. 3). This prohibition was brought to the attention of the faithful once again by a Monitum issued by the Holy Office [former name of the current Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, or CDF] on June 5, 1948 (AAS, 1948 p. 257), on the occasion of Mixed Congresses intended to promote the so-called Ecumenical Movement, whose aim is a closer unity among Christians,⁵

In the same short (one-column) article Damen goes on to explain some of the reasons for the Catholic Church's reticence in that era to engage in ecumenical discussion:

...experience shows that a debate with heretics, particularly a formal one, ... is liable to cause considerable damage to the Catholic Faith. Lack of good faith in some non-Catholics, who sometimes seek propaganda effects rather than objective truth, and the aroused emotions of the hearers could well nullify the honest intent behind such debates and cause confusion among the faithful.⁶

However, just a few short years later at the Second Vatican Council we can note that in regards to ecumenism the paradigm shifted dramatically. Nevertheless, before moving on to a consideration of this paradigm shift at Vatican II, it might be helpful to set the scene briefly by giving

a closer historical look at the ecumenical "moral terrain" which existed before the Second Vatican Council.

As we can surmise from the points already made, before Vatican II this moral landscape was, for the most part, rather rocky and hazardous. In the area of Roman Catholic moral theology Protestant theologians were usually considered only to the extent that their thought might briefly (and often quite inaccurately) summarized, and then "refuted" by the appropriate Roman Catholic counter-position. In an article on "Roman Catholic and Protestant Interaction in Ethics: An Interpretation," the well-known Protestant ethicist, James M. Gustafson, gives a good example of a prevailing anti-Protestant bias on the part of Roman Catholic moralists by quoting from a classic Pre-Vatican II Roman Catholic manual of moral theology. The author of this particular manual contrasted Roman Catholic moral theology with its Protestant counterpart in these terms:

"Catholic Moral Theology is based on the dogmatic teaching of the one true Church. Protestant ethics rests on arbitrary assumptions. ...Catholics acknowledge an infallible authority in questions of both dogma and morals, whereas Protestants possess no objective rule for either, but are buffeted to and fro by winds of subjectivism and error."⁷

Lest we presume that Gustafson has dredged up some odd polemical tidbit, let us consider two other examples. The first instance comes from the popular manual by Antonio Lanza and Pietro Palazzini which was still in widespread use right up to the Second Vatican Council: "The Catholic moral doctrine, and it alone, has in itself the force to resolve fully the greatest problems of life, putting

human activity on the safe way marked out by Christ, while the moral directives of other religious confessions have been shown and continuously show themselves unequal to this task."⁸ The second example comes from the pen of the Palazzini alone, who states his central thesis in these terms: "The lack of solid morals and the inadequacy of [Protestant] moral teaching has one single cause: the perversion of dogma and the same fundamental bases of natural morality found in Protestantism."⁹

Of course, Roman Catholics can also find unflattering pictures of themselves and their moral theology in some Protestant tracts. Vitriolic anti-Catholic rhetoric is quite easy to come by, but what is more surprising and distressing is that even in more measured scholarly works such bias does not entirely disappear. Consider, for example, the following quotations from the well-known French Protestant ethicist, Roger Mehl, taken from his 1968 Warfield Lectures delivered at Princeton Theological Seminary:

In a general way, one can say that this [Roman Catholic] common moral system is lacking the two fundamental dimensions of every Christian ethic: firstly, the personal relationship of the believer with God, which is completely different from the purely juridical relationship between a law and an obedient subject, and secondly, the interpersonal relationship. But these two dimensions introduce risk into the moral life. For every encounter with God and with the neighbor brings with it a sort of endogenous insecurity. We know not where we will be led. Ethical legalism, on the contrary, is assuring and it develops casuistically in order to increase this security.¹⁰

Besides lamenting Roman Catholic moral theology's perceived lack of these "fundamental dimensions of every Christian ethic," Mehl goes on to detail a number of other methodological shortcomings:

Catholic moral theology seeks a foundation in an original and ontological given, which seems difficult to grasp. It is also led to call certain exigencies eternal which in fact are relative and sociologically conditioned (for example, the right of ownership and, a few centuries ago, the divine right of kings). Protestant moral thought, on the other hand, seeks its foundation in an eschatological hope, which, by the weight that it exercises over the present, calls for an incessant renewal of social structures and legislations.¹¹

A generation later, and thus relatively recently, the well-known American Protestant ethicist, Waldo Beach, presents a rather satirical view of what he considers to be what contemporary Roman Catholic moral theology still holds in regards to the inter-relation among natural law, grace, salvation, and ecclesiology: "Though the virtues of the good life and the principles of natural law can be known and observed by all persons, the special grace of God is the province of the church's authority. True salvation, therefore, cannot be realized outside the Roman church."¹²

Though we might like to dismiss tout court the remarks of Koch and Palazzini on the Catholic side, and Mehl and Beach on the Protestant side, ultimately I believe a more helpful approach would be confess our troubled ecumenical history and to redouble our efforts in dialogue in order to grasp better how we understand (or misunderstand!) one another's position. After this process we will then be in a better position to seek to clarify our own teachings and perceptions. Though I hardly wish

to focus on mutual historical recriminations, it might be helpful at least to summarize the principal lines of Protestant and Roman Catholic methodological divergences. James Gustafson, in his excellent and still valuable study, Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics: Prospects for Rapprochement, notes that Protestant ethics is characterized essentially by its concern for the sola scriptura tradition, as evidenced particularly in its use of biblical categories.¹³ Coupled with this strong recourse to Scripture is a stress on human lived experience and ultimate reference to the Word of God as the moral norm, par excellence, in concrete decision making.

Instead, continues Gustafson, the Catholic tradition of moral theology stresses the importance of human reasoning coupled with a careful analysis of concrete cases, usually known as casuistry. Roman Catholic moralists especially would do well to keep in mind that although historically Roman Catholicism has made great and good use of the natural law tradition in its moral theology, this very usage is often seen by Protestants as something distinctively Roman Catholic, and therefore, from the Protestant point of view, any such approach will tend falter in its claim to universalism, at least on methodological grounds.¹⁴

Obviously, also of great importance is the Catholic moral theological "sources" of Tradition and the Magisterium. Closely connected to these two "Catholic" sources are two stumbling blocks of considerable size for non-Catholics: namely, Roman Catholic moral theology's long-standing use of a predominately scholastic theological and philosophical framework, and the moral authority accorded to the Magisterium in the elaboration of moral theology itself, as well as in the formation of the individual Catholic's conscience.

For a Protestant spokesperson of these concerns we can turn once again to Roger Mehl:

Catholic ethics, on the other hand, skips back and forth between two different orientations; Thomism is normative, Scripture also. We propose the following interpretation: the Catholic Church hesitates to abandon completely an ethic that takes its departure in universal affirmations, in a certain number of principles possessing a rational evidentness and capable of being attached to an ontology. Consequently, it hesitates to turn its back on legalism. But this is because it dreads falling into a situational ethic, even when such an ethic would not make the concrete and historical situation the only source of every ethical exigence, even when such an ethic would see the situation only as the occasion offered to the freedom of justified man to come up with a solution. For such a hypothesis would destroy the ecclesiastical magisterium, insofar as it has the power to dictate comportment to consciences through universal rules.¹⁵

In fairness to Mehl on this point, we should note that a good number of Roman Catholic moral theologians (and others!) would essentially agree with the lines of both Mehl's analysis and conclusions. However, Gustafson's own conclusion is primarily hopeful: both Protestant and Roman Catholic traditions of Christian ethics can complement, and therefore enrich, one other. Nor is Gustafson the only Christian ethicist who strikes such a positive note. The German Redemptorist, Bernard Häring, C.Ss.R., who is one of the leading Roman Catholic moral theologians of this century and who was a key "peritus" (theological expert) at Vatican II, offers an excellent overview of various theological, ecclesiological, and practical issues connected with ecumenical ethics in his magisterial manual of moral theology, Free and Faithful in Christ.¹⁶

Vatican II's Contribution to Ecumenical Christian Ethics

On that more positive note, let us now move forward to the ecumenical watershed of Vatican II. Since ecumenical efforts are tied to a wider range of Church policies, problems, and priorities, official ecclesial interest in, and support of, efforts in ecumenism is like to wax and wane according to a number of factors. This empirical institutional observation is true whether the focus be on the Roman Catholic Magisterium, the World Council of Churches, or any other designated governing authority. For this reason, official Church documents are often important resources to help sustain our ecumenical efforts, especially during times when the course to be steered seems to run somewhat counter to the prevailing winds of the moment. Therefore, it is important and helpful to look to these documents for guidance, support and encouragement. Thus, my purpose here is not to offer a critical study of these documents, but rather to see how these documents might be better used to support ongoing efforts in ecumenical ethics, in as much as these documents represent a weighty authoritative voice in the Magisterium of the Catholic Church.

A closer look at Vatican II shows us that we in fact, do find a mandate for our present discussion from a number of aspects of the Council itself, and not only its final promulgated documents. Non-Catholic observers accepted the invitation to the Council, and both John XXIII and his successor, Paul VI, were aware and appreciative, of this ecumenical presence. In the First Session of the Council, during the difficult debate on the sources of Revelation, an important speech, from an ecumenical point of view, was delivered by Msgr. De Smedt, Bishop of Bruges and a member of the then "Secretariat for Promoting Unity," the institutional fore-runner of today's Pontifical Council for the Unity of Christians.

In his speech, Bishop De Smedt noted, by way of introduction, that,

For centuries, we Catholics have thought that it was sufficient to explain our doctrine clearly. Non-Catholics thought the same. Both sides explained their own point of view using their own terminology and from their own point of view only, but what Catholics said was not well received and vice versa. According to this method, no progress was made on the road toward unity, quite the reverse.¹⁷

Bishop De Smedt then went on to outline an ecumenical approach to dialogue, highlighting nine basic criteria which remain valid today and bear recalling:

1. We must understand the doctrines of the Orthodox and Protestants.
2. We must know what they think (rightly or wrongly) about Catholic teaching.
3. We must know what they regard as unclear or lacking in Catholic teaching.
4. Scholastic terminology is not well understood by non-Catholics; on the other hand, by using Biblical or patristic terms we can prevent many errors and prejudices.

5. Expressions must be carefully chosen with regard to their effect on non-Catholics.
6. Judgments must be carefully weighed and account must be taken of the context in which they appear to non-Catholics.
7. Documents must be worded in such a way as to appear convincing to non-Catholics also.
8. All useless controversy must be avoided.
9. Errors should be clearly rejected, but without wounding sensibilities.¹⁸

To a considerable extent I believe it can be demonstrated that the spirit of Bishop De Smedt's guidelines did in fact prevail in most of the Conciliar documents and subsequent ecumenical dialogue. However, it is still so easy to fall back into habits which would impede the progress of such ecumenism, and so I would suggest that these guidelines be looked at afresh by all potential partners in our common project of ecumenical ethics. However, let us move forward and touch down briefly on some of the key documents of Vatican II and their impact for a broadening of the possibilities of ecumenical Christian ethics.

Gaudium et Spes and Dignitatis Humanae

Two Conciliar documents in particular have marked a decisive development in the Roman Catholic approach to important issues of fundamental moral theology.¹⁹ Both the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World, Gaudium et spes, and the Declaration on Religious Liberty, Dignitatis humanae were the results of long debates which in turn clearly showed some of the real divisions which existed in the Church among progressives, moderates, and conservatives.²⁰ Like most of the final documents approved by the Council Fathers, the original schemata drawn up by the Roman Curia for discussion on these two topics were virtually completely redrafted.

The schema De Ordine Morali²¹ was largely the work of three Roman-based redactors, Fr. Francis Hürth, S.J., Fr. Gillon, O.P., and Fr. Francesco Lio, O.F.M.²² Not surprisingly, the schemata stressed the traditional scholastic expression of the objectivity of the moral order which was seen as founded on God's own will. The human response, as a moral agent, would be to conform one's will and actions to this divine plan. Such a moral order was conceived as being objective, absolute, and unchangeable because God, the creator and guarantor of the moral order, was likewise absolute and immutable. In addition, the schemata highlighted the aspect of the sinfulness of fallen human nature.

Gaudium et spes

Though Gaudium et spes (The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World) did not reverse the basic conception of the moral universe and opt for total moral relativism, but clearly the general tone and approach of De Ordine Morali were indeed jettisoned. "Gaudium et spes" (joy and hope) became the key words, though difficulties were not overlooked. In fact the first

sentence of the document has a certain ring reminiscent of Charles Dickens' opening lines of A Tale of Two Cities: "The joy and hope [gaudium et spes], the grief and anguish of the men of our time, especially of those who are poor or afflicted in any way, are the joy and hope, the grief and anguish of the followers of Christ as well."²³ Part One of Gaudium et spes indeed reads a bit like a long discourse on Christian anthropology and fundamental moral theology while Part Two turns to moral problems of particular urgency.²⁴ Gaudium et spes evidences a definite widening of the Christian moral focus, especially as seen through the use of the following litany of key terms: human dignity, respect for persons, rights of all, and dialogue. Additionally the document made greater use of Scripture and key biblical themes and evidenced an increased sensitivity to evangelical themes such as the "ferment of the Gospel" and stressed much more the centrality of the Paschal Mystery. Throughout there is a general theological attentiveness to the fundamental connection of christology with morality as well as a more pronounced and nuanced pneumatology, seen in expressions such as "presence and aid of the Holy Spirit," "reading the Signs of the Times" and the like. Moreover, the entire document manifests a real historical consciousness, coupled with a stress on growth and transformation of both the individual person and society as whole. Therefore, there is less emphasis on a merely "individualistic" morality, while the accent falls instead on social justice and human solidarity. Besides appreciation for the role other churches play, Gaudium et spes also demonstrates an openness and a basically positive, though discerning, attitude towards the world. Thus, we find expressions which deal with commonality and reciprocity. This is clearly a vision that accents the common humanity of all women and men, and in more religious terms, this means that since all peoples are in the same world together they therefore have a common human vocation, which in turn

would put any ecumenical ethical stress more on what unites different religious traditions than on what divides them.

Dignitatis humanae

Dignitatis humanae was probably the most controversial of all conciliar documents; it went through six drafts and was the subject of 120 speeches given in the council aula and 600 written interventions, not to mention consultations with the non-Catholic Observers present at the Council, before its ultimate approval by the Council Fathers. Though a "Declaration"²⁵ and not a "Constitution," like Gaudium et spes, Vatican II's Dignitatis humanae was a major watershed for several reasons. One of the critical issues raised by this document was the controverted notion of development of doctrine. Following the widely accepted theological opinion of that time that "Error has no rights," it seemed to have been the "constant teaching of the Church" that religious liberty and freedom of conscience were in fact not accepted by the Magisterium.

Pope Gregory XVI (1831-1846) in his Encyclical Mirari Vos (15 August 1832), termed as an "absurd and wrong view, or rather insanity" that "freedom of conscience must be asserted and vindicated for everybody" [DS 2730]. The next pope, Pius IX (1846-1878), repeated his predecessor's position in the latter's Encyclical Quanta Cura (8 December 1864) as well as in the famous accompanying Syllabus of [80] Errors (1864) which condemned many other "errors" associated with "Liberalism," such as the following abbreviated litany "erroneous" opinions:

Every one is free to embrace and profess the religion which by the light of reason he judges to be true [DS 2915]; ... The Church has no power to define dogmatically the religion of the

Catholic Church is the only true religion [DS 2921] ... In our age it is no longer advisable that the Catholic religion be the only State religion, excluding all the other cults [DS 2977] ... Therefore it is praiseworthy that in some Catholic regions the law has allowed people immigrating there to exercise publicly their own cult [DS 2978].²⁶

This traditional theological current found strong support in a major figure both prior to and during the Second Vatican Council, Cardinal Alfredo Ottaviani. Ottaviani was head of the Holy Office, and in charge of the preparation of the conciliar schemata which were meant to frame and guide the discussion among the Council Fathers as well as to serve as draft documents for any eventual conciliar pronouncements. In 1953, when he was in charge of the Sacred Congregation for the Evangelisation of Peoples (Propaganda Fide) Ottaviani had advanced his understanding of the Church's position that only one who is in possession of "truth" would have the corresponding "right" to religious freedom, i.e., only members of the Catholic Church. Ottaviani held that only the Catholic religion is in full possession of the truth, and that therefore all other religions, including non-Catholic Christians contain elements of error, and therefore would not have a legitimate right to religious freedom.²⁷

Yet, in the Second Vatican Council the Fathers certainly moved off in a markedly different direction and declared that religious freedom was a fundamental human right, and therefore not circumscribed by considerations of "truth," "error," or membership in the "one true Church." The relevant passage of Dignitatis humanae reads as follows:

The Vatican Council declares that the human person has a right to religious freedom. Freedom of this kind means that all men should be immune from coercion on the part of individuals, social groups and every human power so that, within due limits, nobody is forced to act against his convictions in religious matters in private or in public, alone or in associations with others. The Council further declares that the right to religious freedom is based on the very dignity of the human person as known through the revealed word of God and by reason itself.²⁸

Of course, those prior magisterial statements which suggest a strong contrary view must be read in their particular historical contexts. Nor were the Council Fathers on their part advocating religious indifferentism in their affirmation of religious liberty. Nevertheless, it would be hard to deny that a most significant development had taken place in not only the tone of the Church's teaching, but in the essential aspects of that teaching itself.²⁹ Along with Gaudium et spes, Dignitatis humanae reaffirms that there is to be no essential division between the Church and the world. To quote John Courtney Murray, S.J., who had much to do with the drafting of Dignitatis humanae:

A long-standing ambiguity has been cleared up. The Church does not deal with the secular order in terms of a double standard--freedom for the Church when Catholics are a minority, privilege for the Church and intolerance for others when Catholics are a majority. The Declaration has opened the way toward new confidence in ecumenical relationships, and a new straightforwardness in relationships between the Church and the world.³⁰

Certainly in the years which have followed the close of the Second Vatican Council the influence of Dignitatis humanae has grown beyond that which might be implied by designation of a simple "Declaration," and the document's theme of religious liberty is clearly a key contact point for further ecumenical collaboration.

Unitatis Redintegratio

The Conciliar Decree on Ecumenism, Unitatis redintegratio, gives both an additional mandate for ecumenical collaboration in Christian ethics, as well as a tentative indication of a starting point for dialogue on such moral concerns:

And if in moral matters there are many Christians who do not always understand the Gospel in the same way as Catholics, and do not admit the same solutions for the more difficult problems of modern society, they nevertheless want to cling to Christ's word as the source of Christian virtue and to obey the command of the Apostle: 'Whatever you do in word or in work, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him' (Col. 3:17). Hence, the ecumenical dialogue could start with the moral application of the Gospel.³¹

Clearly we can affirm that much dialogue and cooperation has already taken place on all levels, from the local grass-roots up to the international.³² Yet, there is another important resource for dialogue, cooperation, and mutual enrichment, which resource has also received a strong impetus

from Vatican II. Here I am referring to the use of Scripture in Christian ethics. In the spirit of Bishop De Smedt's nine guidelines, I would hold that any dialogue on moral issues logically must proceed from an understanding of our common accounts of the Christian message, and that therefore Scripture itself enjoys pride of place in any such encounter. We must keep in mind that the Bible is our common book, the unique text which has a "sacred claim" on the entire Christian community. Consequently, in our complicated pluralistic world we can no longer afford to be divided either religiously or methodologically on a methodological principle analogous to that of the Peace of Augsburg, cuius regio, eius religio, e.g., the principle of natural law for the Catholics and sola scriptura for the Protestants.

Optatam Totius

Although the discipline of moral theology as such was not a major focus of Vatican II, in one key document, the Decree on the Training of Priests, Optatam totius, the Council Fathers declared that all seminarians "should receive a most careful training in holy Scripture, which should be the soul, as it were, of all theology."³³ The Decree goes on to affirm that these same students "should learn to seek the solution of human problems in the light of revelation, to apply its eternal truths to the changing conditions of human affairs, and to express them in language which people of the modern world will understand."

In stating that Scripture is to nourish all the branches of theology, Optatam totius claims that Scripture be the guiding and organizing authority (i.e., the "soul"). Moreover, lest moral theologians be tempted to seek some sort of special dispensation for themselves, their discipline came in for particular attention: "Special care should be given to the perfecting of moral theology. Its scientific

presentation should draw more fully on the teaching of holy Scripture and should throw light upon the exalted vocation of the faithful in Christ and their obligation to bring forth fruit in charity for the life of the world."³⁴

Of course, Scripture had always been held, along with Tradition and the Magisterium, as one of the three principal fonts, or sources, of traditional Roman Catholic moral theology. Yet, we must confess that among Roman Catholic moralists there has always existed a certain intramural tension over precisely what practical bearing the Bible should have on the establishment of moral principles and norms, and on the concrete application of these norms to a given problem or case.

For a number of years in the recent past this general debate has centered, especially in Western Europe, on the so-called proprium or "specificity" of Christian ethics. One group of theologians, usually called the Moral Autonomy School (inter alia, Alfons Auer, Josef Fuchs, Bruno Schüller), holds that Scripture in itself adds nothing essentially distinctive to Christian ethics. The position of this school is that, in terms of moral content, Christians have neither any special commands nor a special revelation of a moral nature. Therefore, the demands of the moral life for Christians are identical with those for non-Christians.

However, there is another group of Catholic theologians, often identified as the Glaubensethik or Faith-Ethic School, (i.a. Bernard Häring, Joseph Ratzinger, Heinz Schürmann, Bernhard Stoeckle) which holds that the Bible is a source of moral teaching that is absolutely necessary to aid human reason. This necessity is due to the fact that human reason may be clouded by sin, or unconsciously influenced by other pressures and factors in contemporary secular society. Besides stressing the distinctiveness of the Scriptures in providing moral norms, the Glaubensethik School generally downplays the moral autonomy of the individual and emphasizes instead the necessity of the proper

formation of the individual conscience, guided of course by the teachings of the Magisterium on moral matters (such as the prohibition of artificial contraception.)³⁵

This entire debate may seem bewildering to Protestants, but it is important to note that among Roman Catholic moralists any practical consideration of the proper role of Scripture often depends upon the prior commitment the moralist has to one of these two "schools" of debate. In fact, the polemics over the relation of biblical material to the specificity of Christian morality may well have had a deleterious effect on a proper Roman Catholic consideration of the authority which Scripture must play in any authentically Christian ethics. Leaving that whole debate aside, for the purposes of ecumenical ethics I think it sufficient simply to highlight the stress the Council Fathers did place on the role of Scripture in the reform of Roman Catholic moral theology.³⁶

Paradigm Shifts in Post-Vatican II Moral Theology

The historical and doctrinal developments which have been outlined above certainly suggest a number of definite paradigm shifts in the whole attitude to ecumenism as well as a hint of some of the ramifications these shifts might hold for deepening an ecumenical grasp of Christian ethics. Among the major changes in post-conciliar Roman Catholic moral theology probably the one key development which has been more influential than any other involves what Bernard Lonergan, S.J. calls the shift from a "classical" world-view to a more nuanced historical consciousness.³⁷ This change in one's world view leads to a number of corresponding changes in moral methodology. For example, an older methodology based on the classicist view of nature tended to be largely deductive and stressed the eternal, the universal, the immutable aspects of human nature and natural moral law. Moral theology, like all the other branches of theology, could be relatively free from considerations

of context, history, and culture. A certain interpretation of the natural law, based solidly on the classicist world view, would hold that what was morally true in a given "case" in Rome would have to be equally as valid in similar cases in Ranchi, Rwanda, and Roanoke.

According to the classicist mentality, an important role of the Magisterium would be to pronounce on new moral problems as they arose, as well as to hold the line against the perceived forces of ethical devolution and moral backsliding in the secular arena. Theology done in the classicist view was conceived as a study of the "eternal verities" and the manuals and tracts developed in the various Roman academic institutions could be, in theory, exported readily, and whole cloth, throughout the entire world.

In contrast to this classicist paradigm, a world view which is more conscious of the historical and cultural aspects of human nature would favor a methodology which is more inductive, and therefore accents more the concrete and particular, the individual and personal, cultural and historically conditioned elements which may change and which may not be "universalizable."³⁸ Closely linked with the change of mentality from a static, classicist view to a more dynamic historically and culturally informed mentality is the shift from what is often termed a "physicalist" or "biological" moral paradigm to a more personalist understanding of humankind and the moral life.³⁹ Thus, human nature or what humans share with animals is seen as less the absolute moral norm, and instead what fosters genuine individual growth and well-being, i.e., the human considered as a person, comes to the fore.

The "how" and "where" of theology also become more much important in this historical-cultural model. Thus, the best formulation of theology for each and every part of the world may not that which is expressed in manuals which come from Roman seminaries. The Roman Catholic Church

has undeniably undergone a marked ecclesiological shift of the center of gravity from Rome and the North Atlantic to the Third World, and as one theologian puts it, these factors must force a revision of the traditional approaches to theology, as well as to foster better a "vision and incipient reality of a multicultural Catholic Church."⁴⁰ This involves the whole theme of inculturation and contextualization and ecumenical ethics will have a part to play here in this arena as well. This is clear since in so many parts of the world religious pluralism is both a hard fact and an important challenge. Ecumenical ethics is a moral imperative for any such particular area, and thus for the Church as a whole.

In this regard, Bishop De Smedt's caution raised in the First Session of Vatican II against the over-use of scholastic theology in ecumenical dialogue has some bearing within contemporary Roman Catholic theological circles as well. Due to both the inculturation of Christianity in non-Western European cultures, as well as ongoing developments in various contemporary philosophies, etc., scholasticism can no longer claim the de facto pride of place that it once might have.⁴¹ Though St. Thomas Aquinas remains certainly an important teacher, as I have already stressed above, Scripture would have to be given greater importance over any one particular theological, cultural, and/or philosophical system.⁴² In fact, Thomas himself sought to ground his theological system in Scripture, and some contemporary theologians have sought to "re-capture" and re-emphasize this biblical dimension of Thomistic thought.⁴³

When we consider these several primary paradigm shifts along with the different basic views of the world itself held by various individuals and groups, we can interpret much more easily many of the current debates among Roman Catholic moralists themselves, as well as certain ongoing and, to a degree, inevitable tensions with the Magisterium. These debates raise a host of important issues

such as the role of the natural law, exceptionless concrete moral norms, intrinsically evil acts, the competence of the Magisterium to pronounce on these matters in either a general or detailed manner, theological dissent, and so on. Even Pope John Paul II's recent encyclical on fundamental moral theology, Veritatis splendor, might be interpreted as representing one aspect of the ongoing debates on many of these issues in moral theology.⁴⁴ Certainly there are also a good number of ecumenical ramifications in each of these areas which could be easily elaborated.

Conclusion

In any moment of history in which significant paradigms begin to shift there is bound to be a certain period of unsettledness, discomfort, and even conflict. This stage is marked by what a certain "liminality." Liminality is a concept taken over from both developmental psychology and cultural anthropology, and refers to the experiences which mark the passage from one stage of life to another. We see this most clearly (and painfully!) with adolescence: seemingly nothing is sacred, all values (other than absolute independence) seem to be negated, and so on. Yet, we know that this stage does not last forever. Moreover, this stage seems to be a necessary step on the path to genuine maturity. Perhaps many of the difficulties and conflicts associated with the various paradigm shifts I have touched on above can be likened to this stage of liminality. We are in the process of regaining our bearings, but in this process I believe we are more likely to emerge as more mature Christians, both Protestants and Roman Catholics.

Certainly the last generation has seen greater collaboration among all Christian ethicists, and there remains a firm basis to continue this work. Among Roman Catholics a greater appreciation for the place of Scripture in moral theology, a fuller understanding of the virtues and their role in the

transformation of the moral character of both the individual and the community, a more positive recognition of pluralism as a gift of the Spirit, are just some of the points in which we can meet not only other brothers and sisters in the Lord, but in fact all women and men of good will.

Nevertheless, much work still needs to be done, and genuine differences should not be swept aside in the name of "progress" or a superficial harmony. One of the most practical tasks for furthering better dialogue in ecumenical ethics could be the development of an evaluative model which could be used in common by both Catholics and Protestants to understand better how each tradition uses the four basic sectors of Scripture, Tradition, Human Reason, and Human Experience.⁴⁵ Any viable model for ethics must also meet the basic formal and substantive criteria of internal coherence, comprehensiveness, and overall credibility consonant with lived experience. Christian ethics in turn must demonstrate fidelity to the Scriptures, Tradition⁴⁶ (even if conceived differently), expressed religious authorities as well as the larger ecclesial community of believers and practitioners.

In the past, as we have seen from the polemical views Roman Catholics and Protestants expressed for each other, these criteria have often been defined and used more in terms of exclusion than in the common Christian task of living according to the Spirit in a way consonant with the values of the Kingdom. Yet, we have seen, and continue to witness, much greater collaboration in practical ethical enterprises as well as on-going efforts towards fuller understanding and appreciation of traditionally differing theological approaches which continue to bear fruit. Clearly this must be the path for the future.

Résumé

This article considers the historical context and continued prospects, principally from the Roman Catholic perspective, for the possibility of ecumenical collaboration in the field of Christian ethics. Vatican II is taken as a watershed period for a backward and forward look at such ecumenical efforts. Before Vatican II the atmosphere was marked among both Catholics and Protestants more by polemics and mutual misunderstanding. However, the Council itself, as well as several of its key documents, indicate a paradigm shift in the whole attitude toward ecumenism in general, as well as in the particular approaches Roman Catholic moralists take to their elaboration of fundamental Christian ethics. Several Conciliar documents are briefly analyzed, and a number of other key paradigm shifts in Roman Catholic moral theology are discussed in order to describe a more positive future agenda for continued efforts in ecumenical Christian ethics.

ENDNOTES

1. For example, an extensive seminar (from 22-31 May 1993) was held in Rome, which focused on "The Theology of Moral and Social Issues" sponsored by the Boston Theological Institute (BTI), together with the endorsement of the Office for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs of the Archdiocese of Boston, and the Massachusetts Council of Churches, as well as with the assistance of The Pontifical Council for the Unity of Christians. The seminar concluded its Roman visit with a private audience with Pope John Paul II in the Vatican's Apostolic Palace, and then the group moved on to Geneva where a similar visitation took place at the headquarters of the World Council of Churches (WCC).

2. This was the forty-eighth annual convention of the CTSA and will be in San Antonio from 10 to 13 June 1993, and a record of the various addresses and workshop reports can be in the Proceedings of the CTSA, vol. 48.

3. The most recent meeting of this "International Congress of Jesuit Ecumenists" took place in 1997 in Naples, Italy. In 1994 the group met in Boston, and in 1991 in Chantilly, France.

4. Pius XI (who reigned from 1922 to 1939) wrote his encyclical Mortalium Animos ("On Religious Unity") as a response to the 1927 Faith and Order Conference held at Lausanne, Switzerland. The English translation for this citation is from in The Christian Faith in the Doctrinal Documents of the Catholic Faith. ed J. Neuner, S.J. and J. Dupuis, S.J., 5th ed. (Bangalore: Theological Publications in India, 1991): #907, p. 282. The entire English text of the encyclical can be found in The Papal Encyclicals 1903-1939, comp. Claudia Carlen, IHM, (The Pierian Press, 1990): 313-319. The official Latin text is found in the Acta Apostolicae Sedis 20 (1928): 5-16.

5. Cornelius Damen, C.Ss.R., "Discussion (Interfaith)," in the Dictionary of Moral Theology, comp. and ed. Francesco Cardinal Roberti and Msgr. Pietro Palazzini [later cardinal], trans. from the Second Italian Edition. Under the Direction of Henry J. Yannone, (London: Burns & Oates, 1962): 413. The Italian original edition dates from 1955, and the revised edition, upon which the English translation was made, was issued two years later in 1957 (Roma: Editrice Studium).

6. Ibid.

7. This quotation is taken from A Handbook of Moral Theology by Anton Koch, ed. Arthur Preuss, (St. Louis: Herder, 1918), and is cited by James Gustafson in his "Roman Catholic and Protestant Interaction in Ethics: An Interpretation," Theological Studies 50 (1989): 45.

8. Antonio Lanza and Pietro Palazzini, General Moral Theology: Vol. 1, Principles of Moral Theology, trans. W.J. Collins, M.M., (Boston: Daughters of St. Paul, 1961): 109.

9. "La carenza di una solida morale, l'insufficienza dell'insegnamento morale ha una sola causa: il pervertimento del dogma e delle stessi basi fondamentali della morale naturale, attuata nel Protestantesimo." Msgr. (later Cardinal) Pietro Palazzini, Morale cattolica e morale protestante, «Ut unum sint», 14, (Roma: Edizioni Paoline, 1961): 1-2. This work provides a sustained "consideration" of the perceived deficiencies of Protestantism in Palazzini's eyes, and the series' sub-title («Ut unum sint» ["That they all be one"]) clearly implies a "return" model of moral ecclesiology.

Besides being a well-known Pre-Vatican II moral manualist, Palazzini went on to become a Roman curialist and was Prefect of the Congregation of Saints at the time of his retirement. He was reputedly one of the principal authors of the 1975 Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith [CDF, and still known more familiarly as the "Holy Office"] document, Personae humanae (Declaration on Certain Problems of Sexual Ethics), which document is often used as one of many practical examples of continued deep divisions between Catholics and Protestants in the area of applied ethics.

For a bibliography of Palazzini's vast writings see Msgr. Francesco López-Illana's "Bibliografia ragionata del Card. Pietro Palazzini," in Studi in onore del Card. Pietro Palazzini, ed. Francesco Leoni, (Pisa: Giradini Editori e Stampatori, 1987): 13-54.

10. Roger Mehl, Catholic Ethics and Protestant Ethics, trans. James H. Farley, (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1971): 40. Here Mehl is critiquing the Catechism for the Use of the Dioceses of France, published by the Diocese of Clermont (Bourges: André Tardy, 1938). Though Mehl's lectures were originally given in English, the book itself was first published in French, Ethique catholique et éthique protestante, (Neuchâtel/Paris: Delachaux et Niestlé, 1970).

11. Ibid., p. 63.

12. Waldo Beach, Christian Ethics in the Protestant Tradition, (Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988):
13. Beach also collaborated with the late H. Richard Niebuhr, in their successful history of Christian ethics from the Protestant perspective: Christian Ethics: Sources of the Living Tradition, 2nd ed., (New York: John Wiley and Sons), 1955, 1973.

13. James M. Gustafson, Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics: Prospects for Rapprochement, (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1978). Gustafson divides his work into five chapters: 1) Historical Divergences; 2) Practical Moral Reasoning 3) Philosophical Bases; 4) Theological Bases; and 5) Basic Issues and Prospects for the Future.

14. On the other hand, it is interesting to note that more recently among certain Protestant theologians there has been a renewed interest in the natural law tradition. For a good overview of some positive contemporary views see Carl E. Braaten's article, "Protestants and the Natural Law," First Things (January 1992): 20-26.

15. Roger Mehl, Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics, p. 106.

16. See especially Häring's Chapter 6, "Faith in Ecumenism," in his Free and Faithful in Christ: Moral Theology for Priests and Laity: Volume 2: The Truth Will Set You Free, (Middlegreen, Slough: St. Paul Publications, 1979): 275-233. This text has been widely translated and has made a significant impact throughout the world. Another well-known American Roman Catholic moralist who makes explicit use of Protestant ethicists in his own moral manual is Richard M. Gula, S.S.; see his Reason Informed by Faith: Foundations of Catholic Morality, (New York: Paulist Press, 1989).

17. The English translation for Msgr. De Smedt's Latin address, delivered on 19 November 1962, is found in the section on "The Debate on the `Sources of Revelation'" in Xavier Rynne's [widely reputed to be Francis X. Murphy, C.Ss.R.] Letters from Vatican City, Vol. 1, (Garden City: Doubleday, 1963): 155.

18. *Ibid.*, p. 156.

19. For a good overview of the general vision of the Vatican II documents for moral theology as a whole see Josef Fuchs, S.J.'s essay, "A Harmonization of the Conciliar Statements on Christian Moral Theology," ch. 40 (vol. 2) in Vatican II: Assessments and Perspectives, Twenty-five Years After (1962-1987), ed. René Latourelle, S.J., (New York: Paulist Press, 1989): 479-500. Fuchs is

Professor Emeritus of Moral Theology at the Pontifical Gregorian University in Rome, and has been one of the most important figures in the post-Vatican II renewal of fundamental moral theology.

20. Both of these documents were formally promulgated the day before the Council formally closed (i.e. final approval came on 7 December 1965). Xavier Rynne provides one of the best reports on the debates involving the drafting, revision, and eventual approval of these two documents; see especially his The Third Session and The Fourth Session, (London: Faber and Faber, 1964, 1965, 1966). These volumes continue Rynne's narration of the Council, begun with his Letters from Vatican City, cited above.

21. For a comparison of the moral methodology of this schema with Gaudium et spes see Michael Callahan, "The Changing of Catholic Moral Theology: From the Constitution De Ordine Morali to Gaudium et Spes," Louvain Studies 3 (1970-71): 41-50.

22. Hürth was professor of moral theology at the Gregorian and an important consultant on moral matters for Pope Pius XII and for Cardinal Ottaviani at the Holy Office; Gillon who later became rector of the Angelicum in Rome; and Lio, O.F.M., who later (reputedly) went on to collaborate with Msgr. Colombo and Gustave Martelet, S.J. on the drafting of Humanae vitae (Pope Paul VI's 1968 Encyclical outlawing artificial birth control), as well as being one of the supposed authors of Personae humanae, (the CDF "Declaration on Certain Problems of Sexual Ethics" promulgated on 29 December 1975).

23. [Paragraph #1]. All translations from the documents of Vatican II, unless otherwise noted, are taken from The Documents of Vatican II, trans. and ed. Austin P. Flannery, O.P., (New York: Pillar Books, 1975), and are cited by the respective paragraph number alone.

24. In #46 of Gaudium et spes, which serves as a preface to Part Two, the following moral issues are highlighted for discussion: "Of the many problems which excite general concern nowadays it may be helpful to concentrate on the following: marriage and the family, culture, economic and social life, politics, the solidarity of peoples, and peace."

25. In the documents of Vatican there is a certain hierarchy expressed in their denomination. At the top would be the "Constitutions," (such as on the liturgy Sacrosanctum concilium, Revelation Dei verbum, the Church Lumen gentium, and the Church in the Modern World Gaudium et spes),

followed in turn by "Decrees" (such as on ecumenism Unitatis redintegratio, or the Catholic Eastern Churches Orientalium ecclesiarum), and lastly would be the "Declarations" (such as on religious liberty Dignitatis humanae or the relation of the Church to non-Christian religions Nostra aetate).

26. I am using here the English translation of J. Neuner, S.J., and J. Dupuis, S.J., The Christian Faith. For a complete English translation of Mirari Vos and Quanta Cura see Claudia Carlen's The Papal Encyclicals 1740-1878, (The Pierian Press, 1990), pp. 235-241 and pp. 381-386 respectively.

27. For a discussion of the influence of Ottaviani's opinion on the conciliar debate see Franz Cardinal König's "The Right to Religious Freedom: The Significance of Dignitatis Humanae," in Vatican II Revisited By Those Who Were There, ed. Alberic Stacpole, (Minneapolis: Winston Press; London: Geoffrey Chapman, 1986): 283-290.

28. Dignitatis humanae, #2.

29. For a brief, but interesting reflection on the significance of Dignitatis humanae from the point of view of an American church historian see Msgr. John Tracy Ellis, "Religious Freedom: An American Reaction," in Vatican II Revisited By Those Who Were There, pp. 291-297.

30. From Murray's Introduction to the English translation of Dignitatis humanae, in Walter M. Abbot, S.J., The Documents of Vatican II, (New York: America Press, 1966): 673.

31. Unitatis redintegratio, #23 (in the section on "The Separated Churches and Ecclesial Communities in the West).

32. See, for example, Thomas P. Rausch, S.J., "Ethical Issues and Ecumenism," America 160 (21 January 1989): 30-33. Rausch reports on a 1986-87 ecumenical task force known as the Ad Hoc Ethics Committee (headed by Msgr. Royal M. Vadakin, director of the Los Angeles Archdiocesan Commission for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs) under the auspices of the Vatican's Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity. This task force sought first to identify moral issues of three basic categories, i.e., those of 1) substantial agreement; 2) potential disagreement; and 3) actual conflict (e.g., marriage, divorce).

Following this, the committee sought to find a clear common ground and/or a communal

focus. According to Rausch, "In urging the retrieval of a communal focus, the committee wanted to stress that ethical values and language are acquired through interaction with a faith community that can provide a rich resource in the effort to respond to contemporary questions: 'A recovery and deepened appreciation of the historicity of each of our faith traditions is important lest we 'forget' the roots that ground us. The lack of these roots contributes to the sterile individualism and relativism that often substitute for solid ethical analysis.'" p. 33. In November 1987 the Ad Hoc Ethics Committee submitted its report to the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity.

33. All quotations from Optatam totius in this section are taken from #16.

34. For an early reflection on this conciliar mandate see Josef Fuchs, S.J., "Theologia moralis perficienda; votum Concilii Vaticani II." Periodica de re morali, canonica, liturgica 55 (1966): 499-548. An English translation of Fuchs' article is given as chapter one in his Human Values and Christian Morality. trans. N.H. Heelan, Maeve McRedmond, Erika Young, and Gerard Watson, (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan, 1970): 1-55. Re-reading Fuchs' essay from the perspective of a generation later does provide testimony to how much moral theology as a discipline has in fact been "nourished" and renewed by contact with Scripture.

35. For a good discussion of the Moral Autonomy/Faith-Ethic debate see Vincent MacNamara's Faith and Ethics (Dublin: Gill and Macmillan; and Washington, D.C.: Georgetown University Press, 1985). Also helpful is the collection of articles edited by Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, S.J. in their Readings in Moral Theology, No. 2: The Distinctiveness of Christian Ethics, (New York: Paulist Press, 1980). Lucien Richard, O.M.I., though not a moral theologian, succinctly rehearses positions taken by various Catholic and Protestant theologians in his Is There a Christian Ethic? (New York: Paulist Press, 1988). For an excellent reflection from a Protestant point of view, see James M. Gustafson's Can Ethics Be Christian? (Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press, 1975).

36. For a fuller discussion of the initial attempts at bringing Scripture more to bear on Roman Catholic moral theology, as well as continued bearing Optatam totius should play in moral theology see James T. Bretzke, S.J., "Scripture: the 'Soul' of Moral Theology? -- The Second Stage." Irish Theological Quarterly 60 (1994): 259-271.

37. See Lonergan's "The Transition from a Classicist World-View to Historical-Mindedness," in Law for Liberty: The Role of Law in the Church Today, ed. James E. Biechler, (Baltimore: Helicon Press, 1967): 126-133. Lonergan's essay was originally written for a seminar of the Canon Law

Society of America on "The Role of Law in the Church."

38. For an excellent overview of how this paradigm shift has occurred in Roman Catholic social teaching in the past century see Charles E. Curran's "The Changing Anthropological Bases of Catholic Social Ethics," in Readings in Moral Theology No. 5: Official Catholic Social Teaching, ed. Charles E. Curran and Richard A. McCormick, S.J., (New York: Paulist Press, 1986): 188-218. Curran's article originally appeared in The Thomist 45 (1981): 284-318; and is also found in his own Directions in Catholic Social Ethics, (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 1985): 5-42.

39. For a good analysis of this particular paradigm shift see Brian V. Johnstone, C.Ss.R.'s "From Physicalism to Personalism." Studia Moralia 30 (1992): 71-96.

40. Aylward Shorter, W.F., Toward a Theology of Inculturation, (London: Geoffrey Chapman; Maryknoll: Orbis, 1988): xi. This is probably the most comprehensive work to date on the theological understandings of inculturation, and Shorter stresses the impact that the paradigm shift from a classicist mentality to one which is more historically and culturally informed one has had on the development and expression of the work of inculturation.

41. The use of scholasticism and St. Thomas Aquinas in particular in philosophical and theological studies was mandated officially by Pope Leo XIII (who succeeded Pius IX in 1878 and reigned until 1903) in his Encyclical, Aeterni patris ("On the Restoration of Christian Philosophy"), promulgated on 4 August 1879. The entire English text of the encyclical can be found in Claudia Carlen's The Papal Encyclicals 1878-1903, (The Pierian Press, 1990): 16-27. The official Latin text is found in the Acta Sanctae Sedis 12: 97-15 and Acta Leonis 1: 255-284.

42. Pope Paul VI (who reigned from 1963-1978) stressed in his 1975 Apostolic Exhortation, Evangelii nuntiandi ("Evangelization in the Modern World") that the Gospel message must be transposed "into an idiom which will be understood by the people" [#63] and that such genuine evangelization is not achieved "from without as though by adding some decoration or applying a coat of colour, but in depth, going to the very centre and roots of life [#20]." English translation from Austin P. Flannery, O.P., ed., Vatican Council II: More Post Conciliar Documents, (Collegeville: The Liturgical Press, 1982).

43. See, for example, the work of Servais Pinckaers, O.P., especially his The Sources of Christian Ethics, trans. Sr. Mary Thomas Noble, O.P., (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 1995), and his recent article, "The Use of Scripture and the Renewal of Moral Theology: The Catechism and Veritatis Splendor," The Thomist 59 (1995): 1-19.

44. For collection of essays from an ecumenical perspective on Pope John Paul II's two recent moral encyclicals, Veritatis Splendor and Evnangelium Vitae, see Ecumenical Ventures in Ethics: Protestants Engage Pope John Paul II's Moral Encyclicals, ed. Reinhard Hütter and Theodor Dieter, (Grand Rapids: Wm. B. Eerdmans, 1997).

45. This Four-Sector approach is historically known as the Methodist quadrilateral or quatrefoil, but it has been widely taken over (and re-interpreted) by James Gustafson, who elaborates it in the fifth and final chapter, "Basic Issues and Prospects for the Future," of his Protestant and Roman Catholic Ethics. A number of Gustafson's former students, such as Lisa Sowle Cahill and William C. Spohn, as well as many others, also have adopted this basic model in their teaching and writings.

46. For a helpful essay on the ecumenical aspects on the use of Tradition see George H. Tavard's "Tradition in Theology: A Problematic Approach" in Perspectives on Scripture and Tradition, Essays by Robert M. Grant, Robert E. McNally, and George H. Tavard, ed. Joseph F. Kelly, (Notre Dame: Fides Publishers, 1976): 84-104.