Self-Giving and Human Fulfilment: Critical Reflections on Self-giving in the Thought of Pope John Paul II in Dialogue with Psychology

MURJAN, AMANDA

Self-giving and Human Fulfilment: Critical Reflections on Self-giving in the Thought of Pope John Paul II in Dialogue with Psychology

Amanda Murjan

Abstract

Pope John Paul II is credited for introducing a long-awaited "heart" to the Church's teaching on marriage through *A Theology of the Body* and its affirmation of spousal love. JPII's emphasis on love made his defence of *Humanae Vitae's* key teaching that marriage must be open to procreation more appealing and compelling to some than earlier papal expositions. I propose that JPII's emphasis on spousal love was not the authentic affirmation of love that it appeared but rather an appealing distraction from the deep essentialism at the heart of his thinking. This essentialism did more than restate the primacy of procreation; it raised the stakes for compliance with papal teaching that marriage must be open to procreation by claiming it as the highest form of love, the closest exemplar in human experience of being formed into the image of the Trinity. Rooted in personalistic language uncommon to papal teaching, JPII's self-claimed "integral approach" to self-giving as human fulfilment combined a form of Thomistic personalism with traditional papal teaching on natural law. JPII defended *Humanae Vitae* through a theology of self-giving by framing the inseparability of the ends of marriage outlined by Paul VI as the pinnacle of human fulfilment in total spousal self-giving. These claims were further supported by tying self-giving in both love and suffering with human flourishing. I propose that JPII's chief concern in *A Theology of the Body* might not have been, as he claimed, to exposit and affirm spousal love, but instead to validate and

extol *Humanae Vitae*. I draw on psychology to examine JPII's empirical claims. Applying Carl Jung's theory of individuation, I explore the role of wholeness in human realisation. Drawing on positive psychology, I challenge JPII's reverence of suffering and corresponding neglect of positive emotions in orienting our lives towards the other.

Self-giving and Human Fulfilment: Critical Reflections on Self-giving in the Thought of Pope John Paul II in Dialogue with Psychology

Amanda Murjan

Thesis submitted for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

The Department of Theology and Religion

Centre for Catholic Studies

Durham University, 2024

Contents

Introduction ……10

1. Self-giving in the thought of Wojtyla/JPII ……12
2. Lenses and key features ……15
3. Conversations with psychology ……19
4. Limitations ……21
5. Chapter summaries ……22
6. Aims and contributions ……24

Chapter 1 A Context for a Theology of the Body……..……..27

1. St. John of the Cross: The mystical union and self-giving……..……..27
2. Love and Responsibility: Sexuality and human flourishing……34
3. Vatican II and the Papal Commission on Population, the Family, and Birth-rate……..42
    i. Developments in papal teaching on marriage……..42
    ii. Vatican II and the personalistic shift……45
    iii. The Papal Commission on Population, the Family, and Birth-rate……53
    iv. *Humanae Vitae*……..……..……..57
4. The Acting Person: Self-mastery, *Humanae Vitae* and Self-giving……60
5. Holy suffering and self-giving: The diminishment of positive emotions in spiritual growth……..……..……..65
    i. Redemptive suffering and JPII's reliance on self-giving……..……..65
    ii. A mistrust of pleasure and the desire for positive experiences……..68
    iii. Self-gift and suffering in the priesthood……..70
6. Conclusion ……72

Chapter 2 Psychology and Theology in Dialogue ……..74

1. The disciplinary intersection ……74
    i. Faith and Reason ……77
    ii. The centrality of integral personhood ……79
    iii. Theological claims to empirical realities as sites of psychological

reflection ……82
2. Jung's psychoanalytic theory ……84
i. Psychoanalysis: History and current status ……84
ii. The birth of Jung's Psychoanalytic theory ……87
iii. Jung's theory of Individuation ……89
iv. Jung on relationships and wholeness: The role of the other ……96
v. Contested boundaries between Jung and Catholicism ……100
vi. Individuation and self-giving ……105
3. Positive Psychology ……107
I. Positive psychology: History and current status ……107
II. Defining positive psychology ……112
– Functions of positive emotions……113
– The good life ……115
– Character strengths and virtues ……118
III. Positive psychology and self-giving ……121
IV. Challenges to bringing positive psychology and Catholicism into dialogue ……124
4. The relationship between Jung and positive psychology ……127

Chapter 3 A Theology of the Body and Self-giving ……129
1. Reception of A Theology of the Body ……130
2. A Theology of the Body ……136
I. The lens of human realisation in wholeness ……137
II. The wholeness of original innocence, unity and human flourishing ……139
III. Reflections on Jung's theory of individuation ……145
IV. Self-giving as human flourishing in "the beginning," within history and in the eschaton ……155
V. A Theology of the Body applied to *Humanae Vitae* ……163
3. Conclusion ……167

Chapter 4 Human Suffering and Self-giving ……170

1. Responses to *Salvifici Doloris* ……170
2. *Salvifici Doloris* on suffering and love ……174
3. Self-giving as "kenotic love" in Balthasar's Trinitarian theology ……180
4. Marriage and suffering as human realisation in self-giving ……184
5. Self-giving without loss: Reflections on positive psychology ……189
6. Positive emotions and self-giving positive psychology ……192
7. Conclusion ……202

Conclusion ……206

1. Developing a theology of self-giving ……206
2. Applying self-giving to *Humanae Vitae* ……211
3. The role of suffering in self-giving ……213
4. The intersection with psychology ……215
5. Contributions and limitations ……220

Bibliography ……223

Statement of Copyright

Acknowledgements

My heartfelt gratitude goes to my primary supervisor, Karen Kilby, who has guided me with grace and wisdom over the years. I am thankful for the clarity she brought to so much of this project which began and unfolded with an intuition that was sometimes not easily articulated before it seemed ready. I also extend my gratitude to my secondary supervisor, Mike Higton, for his contributions early in the project and his continual offer of support throughout its development.

I am indebted to the Sisters of the Religious of Christian Education and the generous Louis La Fosse Scholarship which made this PhD possible. I wish to thank Theresa Phillips for her incredible administrative support throughout the PhD and all staff at the Centre for Catholic Studies for their warmth, kindness and inspiration. I also want to thank my friend and colleague, Rhona Knight, for her unwavering positivity and confidence in me from the very start of this doctorate.

I wish to thank Carissa Sharp and the team on my fellowship at the University of Birmingham for their patience and tremendous support in the last stages of the PhD. I also extend my deepest gratitude to my friends and colleagues on the fellowship, especially Carlton Turner and Alison Woolley, for their heartfelt and inspiring encouragement which brought me no end of clarity and strength when it was most needed.

Finally, I would like to thank my family for their support in my return to academia. Especially, and perhaps most importantly, to thank my children, Ava and Ezra, for grounding and inspiring me to pursue my own ‘individuation’ in self-giving love.

~

I am the one surrounded by wild, scrappy, noisy, dirty little boys, carrying a runny-nosed baby. Vomiting at intervals with my next pregnancy; overwhelmed with noise, dirt, spilled foods, overflowing diaper pails, broken furniture and unpaid bills. I am Job, robbed of everything and seated on a dunghill . . . I tried offering my days and they became so difficult I wept with frustration . . . [I come to terms with my life] by grasping the cross more firmly the heavier it becomes.

Anonymous, "Mother of 12 Appeals for Realistic Spiritual Guidelines," an article published in Patty Crowley's (a principle lay advisor on the Commission) CFM (Christian Family Movement) news magazine, ACT, in 1964 addressed to "my friend the theologian"

For God's sake and in his name, would the Church please review its attitudes on marriage, childbearing and related areas? We need help now or an awful lot us will fall down under our cross.

Anonymous appeal published in Patty Crowley's CFM news magazine, ACT, in 1964

The human body with its sex – its masculinity and femininity – seen in the very mystery of creation, is not only a source of fruitfulness and of procreation . . . but contains "from the beginning" the "spousal" attribute, that is, the power to express love: precisely that love in which the human person becomes a gift *and – through this gift – fulfils the very meaning of his being and existence*

Pope John Paul II, A Theology of the Body, 15:3

What is called into question by the rejection of this teaching is the very idea of the holiness of God.

Pope John Paul II, cited in Janet E. Smith, Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later, 253

~

Introduction

As a new mother experiencing undiagnosed postpartum anxiety, I recall speaking about my fears for the first time with my priest in confession. Difficult though it was admitting that I felt weak, inadequate, and overwhelmed, his response was in some ways even harder to bear. When I finished speaking (and crying), he smiled, and said, "Did you notice how frequently you said 'I'? *I* want, *I* need, *I* feel. Can you hear how you've made this all about yourself?" He then spoke to me about the practice of "offering up," which he said would allow me to use my suffering to focus less on my own needs and more on those of others. The concrete situation did not need changing – God had brought the suffering and was in the suffering. Far better, he explained, to accept the difficulties given to me as God's will and see them as opportunities to play a small but valuable part in the Redemption: offer up, be still, and let God provide. In my weakened state, I mistakenly walked away from this confession believing my depletion and distress at the boundaries that I had for too long and at great cost laid bare meant I was (successfully) being formed in the image of Christ. That to be small, quiet, submissive, emptied, passive and wounded was, at this moment, my call to holiness.

In hindsight, it is easy to see that this was harmful advice. The priest's words reinforced my false perception of weakness and powerlessness by calling it redemptive – by making it holy. Years later, and after my second child, I frequently wondered how this approach to suffering shaped my parenting and close relationships. Had the act and disposition of "offering up" my suffering meant I could give more to others or did the sense of self-negation diminish my capacity? Did this practice help me to release and recover from anxiety, to flourish in the typical psychological sense of the word, or did it make it valuable to me? Did my embrace of suffering increase my desire and capacity to be present and attentive to others and myself, or did it lead me to relinquish the active pursuit of healing in favour of pursuing what I believed was God's will for me to become a living sacrifice? What difference would less suffering have made to how much I could have given others?

This thesis was born out of these questions. It arose from my own experience of seeking to navigate the balance between self-giving and its costs; the desire to learn how to suffer well in our love for others. In a sense, the priest was speaking to this very point. He was advising me how to suffer well, but it seemed paradoxical. The solution to the suffering appeared to be that which multiplied the suffering. Arguably, self-giving without limits was not in any apparent way the solution but a significant part of the problem. Something was missing. While it would be unfair and inaccurate to claim that the priest was affirming a complete forgoing of personal boundaries, his advice, and perhaps the practice more broadly, can muddy the waters, creating an ambiguity that can too easily be swayed towards an affirmation of self-abnegation, even when this is unintended.

This thesis is not however primarily about suffering and self-giving, despite its origins in my experience of suffering in motherhood. The relationship between love and suffering may have initially been the inspiration, but early literature reviews into self-giving in the context of marriage and family led me to Pope John Paul II, which introduced an interesting new perspective. It became apparent that JPII viewed self-giving as human flourishing, fulfilment or realisation. I have used these terms interchangeably throughout this thesis, but JPII himself referred to this process as "individuation."[1] After spending much time with his work, I wondered if we might even go so far as to call it *theosis*. This is to say that he viewed self-giving as the means by which one attains the highest level of union with God in human experience. One of the most interesting and distinguishing features of JPII's approach is this emphasis on human fulfilment in self-giving within marriage. I sense that JPII wants to persuade his audience of the truth of his writings on the grounds they lead to authentic love and happiness in union with God; even his writings on suffering are framed by love and the possibility of human transformation.

This thesis then became shaped by JPII's focus on self-giving as not merely a way to grow in happiness through love and compassion but as central to our human flourishing in faith. This thesis explores JPII's thinking about the connections between self-giving and human fulfilment, and the role of spousal love and suffering in this relationship. However, a key feature of this exploration will be the extent to which his theology points to the experience of human fulfilment in radical orientation to the other. To this feature, I then

[1] Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. and intro. by Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books Ltd., 2006), par. 14:2.

add the caveat that this is a *critical* reflection on JPII's theology of self-giving in which I expound and challenge his account of how self-giving leads to human flourishing in love and suffering.

Self-giving in the thought of Wojtyla/JPII

Much of what follows will be discussed in greater depth in Chapter 2. Still, it will be helpful at the outset to provide an initial summary of self-giving in papal teaching around the time of JPII's papacy and Wojtyla/JPII's engagement with self-giving to introduce the trajectory of his thought, his major texts and major influences on his writings.

JPII frequently returns to one single passage on self-giving from *Gaudium et Spes*. Self-giving came to a new prominence through *Gaudium et Spes*, The Pastoral Constitution of the Church in the Modern World, issued by the Second Vatican Council in 1965.[2] The ways in which *Gaudium et Spes* expressed self-giving had important implications for JPII's writings.

> Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, "that all may be one. . . as we are one" (John 17:21-22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself.[3]

There are two important features of self-giving to highlight in this text. First, *Gaudium et Spes* claims that the nature and purpose of self-giving are derived from humanity's likeness to the Trinity. Secondly, it claims that the human person 'finds themselves' (is fulfilled or realised) by paradoxically giving away that which makes them uniquely human, here identified as their will.[4]

---

[2] While self-giving was brought to the fore in *Gaudium et Spes*, Pius XII's *Address to Midwives on the Nature of their Profession* (1951) had previously spoken to the "reciprocal gift of husband and wife."
[3] Pope Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965), par. 24.
[4] Self-giving is also referenced in paragraphs 25 and 51 of *Gaudium et Spes*.

Those familiar with Wojtyla/JPII's work will notice an immediate similarity between the account of self-giving in *Gaudium et Spes* and one given by Wojtyla himself in his first major work, *Love and Responsibility*, published five years earlier in 1960. *Love and Responsibility* explores marriage and sexual ethics and has a strong emphasis on self-giving as a defining feature of spousal love. In the passage below, Wojtyla explains a crucial aspect of his approach to self-giving which we see mirrored in *Gaudium et Spes* concerning how it is possible that one can 'give away the self' in the context of marriage.

> Can a person give himself to another person? After all it was stated that every person by his essence is non-transferrable – *alteri incommunicabilis*. So he is not only his own master (*sui iuris*), but also cannot impart or give himself. The nature of the person opposes such self-giving . . . However, what is not possible and correct in the order of nature or in the physical sense can be accomplished in the order of love and in the moral sense. In this sense, the person can give himself to another person, both to a human person and to God, and through this giving a particular shape of love, which we define as spousal love is formed.[5]

Wojtyla had then some five years earlier laid out a comprehensive analysis of self-giving as the source of authentic love and happiness, or human flourishing, in *Love and Responsibility*. The only significant difference between Wojtyla's account and that given in *Gaudium et Spes* was that Wojtyla had tied self-giving to spousal love. Notwithstanding this difference, Vatican II appeared to affirm Wojtyla's earlier writings on the importance and relevance of self-giving to human fulfilment. However, perhaps most importantly, JPII himself believed his approach to marriage had been supported by Vatican II.[6]

Wojtyla's focus on self-giving in *Love and Responsibility* is largely ethical, emphasising a person's responsibility to adhere to the traditional teaching that marriage must be open to procreation. What is distinctive about his approach in this text is that he engages marriage and questions of sexual ethics through the lens of love. Wojtyla appears to want to persuade

[5] Karol Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, trans., endnotes and Foreword by Grzegorz Ignatik, first published in Polish by Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL: Lublin, 1960 (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2013), p. 79.
[6] JPII outlined his views on the meaning of Vatican II and how it shaped his writings in *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, trans. by William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, first published in Polish by Pol. Tow. Teol., Cracow in 1972 (London: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, 1980).

his reader of his argument not primarily by recourse to familiar claims about duty, but by appeal to the claim that his account offers the possibility for the highest form of love in the total self-giving of the spouses. The emphasis on spousal love – specifically, the *experience* of spousal love – reflected Wojtyla/JPII's personalistic leanings, which were crucial in forming his later approach to self-giving. Because we will return to Wojtyla/JPII's personalism later in this chapter and subsequent chapters, it will suffice here to say that his interest in subjectivity – on "experience lived through" – shaped his thinking on spousal love as self-giving in distinctive ways that proved far more compelling to some than earlier papal accounts.

Wojtyla's next major writings on self-giving were during his papacy in his weekly lectures on *A Theology of the Body*, which ran between 1979 and 1984. These talks laid out a comprehensive exposition of marriage through the lens of self-giving. In *A Theology of the Body*, JPII's exploration of marriage is framed by the "dimension of gift . . . [which]. . . stands at the very heart of the mystery of creation," by which every human person "bears within itself the sign of the original and fundamental gift."[7] Taken in their broadest sense, the lectures examine human sexuality, with a strong scriptural emphasis. Within this broader vision, JPII sets out his thinking on the nature and purpose of marriage. Framed by this broader hermeneutics of gift, marriage is viewed as an expression of total self-giving in and through God. *A Theology of the Body* concludes with an application of these arguments to a defence of *Humanae Vitae*, promulgated in 1968. This controversial encyclical outlined Pope Paul VI's response to the findings of the Pontifical Commission on Birth Control, which ran from 1963 to 1966 to discuss the impact of artificial birth control on the church. In what proved to be an unpopular stance, Paul VI reaffirmed the church's traditional position that marriage must remain open to procreation. The details of Paul VI's argument in *Humanae Vitae* will be discussed in greater depth in Chapters 2 and 4.

JPII's exploration of marriage in *A Theology of the Body* is through a self-claimed "integral approach" which combines a Thomistic personalism with traditional teaching on natural law in the context of marriage. JPII uses this approach to express how the person in their *wholeness* flourishes in adhering to papal teaching on marriage. He claims that in marriage the subjective (or "personalistic") integrates with the objective (or "cosmological")

[7] Pope John Paul II, *Man and Woman He created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans., Intro. and App. by Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books and Media), par. 13:3-4.

aspects of the human person in total self-giving to form the person in the *imago Dei*. For JPII, the spouses flourish in total self-giving because it engages the totality of their personhood. In *A Theology of the Body*, JPII argues that total spousal self-giving is the divinely instituted possibility of being united to God in and through the other by becoming co-creators through procreation, in which the spouses become an image of the Trinity as love and gift. This integral approach, which claims to efficiently marry the personalistic or the experience of marriage with traditional teaching on the natural law, is the foundation of JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

However, there is one further feature of JPII's writings on self-giving that is important for us to engage. In this thesis, I argue that JPII's theology of self-giving is not restricted to spousal love. It also traverses into suffering and loss. In 1984, JPII issued *Salvific Doloris*, an Apostolic letter in which he examined the meaning of human suffering. While his exposition of suffering in this text is not explicitly articulated through self-giving, I suggest there are strong parallels between JPII's account of self-giving in love through *A Theology of the Body* and self-giving in suffering in *Salvifici Doloris*. I claim that JPII's writings on suffering can be mapped onto a structure of self-giving that is very similar to spousal love in which there is an offering, union, and realisation of creative potential. Pressing this connection further, I also suggest there is a deeper relationship between JPII's application of self-giving to love and suffering that has implications for how we approach his defence of *Humanae Vitae* in *A Theology of the Body*.

Over the course of these subsequent chapters, I intend to show how Wojtyla's thinking about self-giving develops in complexity and breadth from *Love and Responsibility* through to *Salvifici Doloris*, its connections to *Humanae Vitae*, and how self-giving in love appears connected to self-giving in suffering and its implications for reading *A Theology of the Body*.

Lenses and key features

In what follows, I will discuss four key features of Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-giving that have shaped this thesis. The first is Wojtyla/JPII's personalism and the ways in which, I will

suggest, it informs his "integral approach" to marriage and suffering. The second is JPII's use of the motif of wholeness, specifically as a signal of human fulfilment. The third is JPII's unique defence of *Humanae Vitae* engaged through his integral approach in *A Theology of the Body*. And the fourth is the connection between love and suffering in JPII's writings.

As later chapters will reveal, Wojtyla's personalistic approach was shaped by his engagement with Thomistic personalism and the writings of St. John of the Cross on the mystical union. Wojtyla is interested in the "irreducible" in man, "what is primordially or essentially human . . . what constitutes the entire originality of man in the world."[8] He identifies subjectivity as the synonym for all that is "irreducible" in the person. To understand this uniquely human quality, Wojtyla claims, requires us to examine the "experience lived through."[9] This is more than a question of the person as "the acting subject or the agent of his deeds and experiences . . . [but] . . . the person as a subject living through his own deeds and experiences, and thanks to all this, his own subjectivity."[10] For Wojtyla, the human person is best understood in their totality. This necessitates that we understand the person in their subjective (or personalistic) context by "dwelling on the irreducible" and in their objective (or cosmological) context by understanding them within the world.

> The experience of man cannot be exhausted by way of "cosmological" reduction. It is necessary to dwell upon what is reducible in him, upon what is only and unique in him, upon that which makes him simply a person, a subject, and not just "that man." Only then shall the image of man be correct and complete.[11]

The personalistic does not compete with the cosmological – it is its complement. Wojtyla/JPII's "integral approach" is rooted in his interest in personalism, in questions of how we can think about and understand the human person.

This integral approach is expressed, and logically so, through a motif of wholeness. The concept of wholeness allows JPII to account for an "image of man . . . [that is] correct

[8] Cardinal Karol Wojtyla, 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man', in *Analecta Husserliana*, VII (1978), 107-114, (p. 108).
[9] Ibid., p. 110.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Ibid., p. 111.

and complete" only when the person is considered in the totality of their personalistic and cosmological dimensions. For JPII, wholeness points to more than a sense of "integral personhood" in which the human person is viewed as a composite of complementary and relational parts forming an integral whole. Wholeness also signals human fulfilment. It is human flourishing because wholeness indicates a harmonious, integrated, interior state that can only be attained when the person is properly ordered to God.

In this thesis, I suggest the motif of wholeness serves several different functions in JPII's theology of self-giving, allowing him to say things that would otherwise not be possible. First, the concept of wholeness allows JPII to stress, what he claims to be, an irrefutable connection between the subjective (experience of love) and the objective (the sexed body which reveals the significance of procreation) in marriage. Wholeness means that love and procreation are complementary parts that are somehow deeply connected in their belonging to the unified whole of the human person. Second, wholeness allows JPII to argue that integrating these aspects (cultivating a life in which they are realised) is human fulfilment because it signals an interiority ordered to God. To put this another way, a life lived according to the truth of the human person. Third, these two points combine to allow JPII to construct a novel and, for some, compelling defence of *Humanae Vitae*, emphasising aspects of marriage that many felt had for too long been minimised or even negated by papal teaching. Finally, wholeness allows JPII to construct a relationship between self-giving in love and self-giving in suffering, and this is significant because JPII identifies self-giving with human fulfilment. The relationship between love and suffering raises several vital questions about theological engagement with the general concept of human flourishing, but especially in the context of self-giving.

In this thesis, I make the case that JPII provides a unique defence of *Humanae Vitae* that proved, for some, far more persuasive than earlier papal expositions on the primacy of procreation in marriage. Janet E. Smith describes JPII as, "The most energetic proponent and expositor of the doctrine of *Humanae Vitae* in recent years," who led the way in answering the invitation from Vatican II to perfect moral theology through Scripture so that it may shed light on the dignity of the human vocation in Christ.[12] In his commentary on a *Theology of*

[12] Janet E. Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1991), p. 230.

the Body, Waldstein claims that while JPII's Theology of the Body "is often cast as an extended catechesis on marriage and sexual love . . . it is so much more."[13]

> Through the mystery of the incarnate person and the biblical analogy of spousal love, John Paul II's catechesis illumines the entirety of God's plan for human life from origin to eschaton with a splendid supernatural light . . . the theology of the body is one of the Catholic Church's most critical efforts in modern times to help the world become more "conscious of the mystery and reality of the Incarnation" – and, through that, to become more conscious of the humanum, of the very purpose and meaning of human life . . . And his theology of the body is nothing but an extended commentary of this fundamental truth: Christ fully reveals man to himself through the revelation – in his body – of the mystery of divine love . . . Thus in a bold theological move, John Paul II, concluded "that man became the image of God not only through his own humanity, but also through the communion of persons, which man and woman form right from the beginning."[14]

They are not alone in praising JPII's contribution to how Catholicism makes sense of the relationship between human flourishing, marriage and gender roles.[15] I suggest that JPII's unique defence of *Humanae Vitae* and his relative success in doing so was rooted in his integral approach with its personalistic components, engaged through a motif of wholeness. As will be discussed in subsequent chapters, Paul VI's position on the reports from the Pontifical Commission for Birth Control issued in *Humanae Vitae* was more stated than it was explained, leaving a 'gap' that JPII's integral approach was somewhat ideally suited to fill. How JPII did so and why it proved more compelling to some than earlier papal attempts to exposit this teaching is a vital question for this thesis. Specifically, how his integral approach allowed him to respond to criticism of the encyclical is of key interest.

---

[13] JPII, *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, xxvii (preface by Michael Waldstein).
[14] Ibid., xxvii – xxviii.
[15] See Kathleen Curran Sweeney, 'The perfection of Women as Maternal and the Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla,' *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, vol. 9, 2 (2006), 129-153, and Prudence Allen, Man-Woman Complementarity: The Catholic Inspiration, *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture,* vo. 9, 2 (2006), 87-108.

The final aspect of JPII's theology of self-giving that has significantly shaped this thesis is the connection between love and suffering, which we have already touched upon. This connection is theologically interesting because of the relationship between self-giving and human fulfilment in JPII's writings. This point will be explored most fully in Chapter 4 when I suggest that the relationship between self-giving in love and self-giving in suffering might be more than one in which love and suffering are simply tied. I claim rather that JPII might elevate suffering over love as a privileged means of union with God and thereby human flourishing in self-giving.

Conversations with psychology

Psychology has been introduced as an interlocutor in this thesis in response to a desire to reflect on and challenge empirical claims made by JPII on the nature and process of human flourishing in wholeness and suffering. These claims situate aspects of JPII's theology of self-giving at the intersection between theology and psychology, making psychological reflection a useful resource for deepening theological engagement with the texts. There is no attempt to integrate the disciplines in this project. Psychology is maintained throughout as a conversation partner whose role is to support broader theological reasoning in two areas: first, the relationship between self-giving, wholeness and human fulfilment, and; second, the role of suffering and conversely, positive emotions in human flourishing found in the radical orientation towards the other. Carl Jung's psychoanalytical theory of individuation is used to explore the meaning of wholeness in human realisation, and the role of suffering and more specifically positive emotions will be examined through aspects of positive psychology.

Jung is brought into dialogue with JPII because he offers a different yet comparable conception of wholeness as human realisation. Jung's theory of individuation expresses how individuals move from being a fragmented piece of a collective to a unique whole. Individuation, Jung claims, describes a natural developmental process in which, with greater consciousness, an individual heals splits between conscious and unconscious aspects, between what they know and don't know about themselves, and attains a greater sense of

meaning, purpose, and joy. Jung attributes an eminent value to religion, especially Catholicism, in supporting individuation, which he claims depends upon a person's willingness to respond to the calls of the God archetype to be realised in the integration and unification of the psyche. Jung's theory is not however without a relational component. Individuation also depends on the integration of the shadow and the feminine archetype which have strong relational features and implications. Jung's theory of individuation offers an alternative viewpoint on the meaning of human flourishing in wholeness and how it might shape an orientation to the other.

Positive psychology is an umbrella term for multiple perspectives which adopt a strength-based approach to human flourishing. This thesis draws primarily on the research of Martin Seligman on authentic happiness, Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's theory of Flow, and Barbara Fredrickson's Broaden and Build theory of positive emotions. The chief aim of this dialogue is to counter JPII's overt emphasis on suffering in self-giving with an account of how positive emotions can shape and support a radical orientation to the other. Seligman claims that authentic happiness is realised when a person fully engages in meaningful tasks oriented to a good beyond themselves. Positive emotions arise from engagement in meaningful tasks and often lead us into the task in the first instance; they are both the cause of orienting our resources to something larger than ourselves and its reward. Csikszentmihalyi's Flow describes how full engagement supports authentic happiness and optimal performance by conferring a singular focus on a task – or, in the case of this thesis – a singular focus in self-forgetting towards the other. Fredrickson's Broaden and Build hypothesis offers an evolutionary psychological approach to how positive emotions support us in cultivating and sustaining positive social relationships. Fredrickson also speaks to the inhibitory effect of negative emotions in orienting us towards the other. These branches of positive psychology offer insights into how positive emotions can facilitate a theological sense of self-giving, and conversely, how negative emotions can inhibit this process.

Limitations

This thesis touches on the intersection of numerous areas that might have been legitimately engaged as primary themes in this project. The area of sacrifice has clear connections with self-giving. Is there a paradoxical link between self-sacrifice and human fulfilment? How can we understand self-sacrifice in ways that do not lead to self-abnegation but the fullness of being? Julia Meszaros speaks to the tenacious place that sacrifice, and especially in more recent years, self-sacrifice, holds in Christian theology. Meszaros claims that while the concept is "ambiguous and sometimes dangerous . . . often easily exploited for all manner of purposes," it is difficult to do away with or entirely dismiss notions of self-sacrifice.[16] I would argue that while not explicitly referenced, the question of self-sacrifice – *how much is too much* – in some sense, is the backdrop of this thesis. However, sacrifice remained in the background because the primary focus of the thesis is to examine the conditions that support rather than inhibit human flourishing.

It is important to acknowledge that this thesis could have also easily strayed into questions of sexual ethics in its references to traditional teaching on birth control and sexual relations in marriage. While the focus of this thesis is not moral theology, I must also acknowledge it is virtually impossible to read Wojtyla/JPII's writings without reference to morality and ethics. Questions of what one must do to become the person one can and should be are often, if not always, very much in the foreground of his writings. Therefore, as with sacrifice, I have attended to sexual morality as a secondary resource for getting to my chief concern to better understand self-giving as human flourishing in JPII's thought.

One may further notice an absence of any attempt to reconstruct self-giving. This potential of the thesis remained unfulfilled due to time constraints. I would admittedly be delighted to pursue an interdisciplinary reconstruction of self-giving as human flourishing in the future.

A final limitation I pointed out earlier is that this thesis is not intended to integrate theology and psychology but to use psychology as a resource for deeper theological reasoning specifically on the empirical claims JPII's makes about human nature and its flourishing in self-giving. To put this another way, psychology allows for deeper reflection on

[16] Julia T. Meszaros, *Sacrifice and Modern Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), p. 66.

aspects of Wojtyla/JPII's theology that fall within the disciplinary intersection between theology and psychology. It is not considered to provide a more "truthful" account of these aspects, but to allow us to reflect on the coherence between theological and psychological discourses on relevant sites of human experience.

Chapter summaries

Chapter One sets the context for *A Theology of the Body*, providing a chronological overview of the ideas and events that shaped JPII's theology of self-giving in marriage and suffering, and his defence of *Humanae Vitae*. The chapter begins with a brief literature review, followed by an account of how JPII's personalism was shaped by his reading of St. John of the Cross, particularly St. John's writings on the mystical union. I then discuss how Wojtyla's personalism developed in his exposition of spousal love in *Love and Responsibility*, first published in 1960. I introduce the "integral approach," which combines Wojtyla's personalistic leanings with traditional teaching on natural law in the context of marriage. I then discuss how Vatican II introduced a personalistic emphasis and a new interpersonal approach to marriage into papal teaching, which set the stage for JPII's personalism. The Pontifical Commission for Birth Control is next addressed, which ran concurrently with Vatican II between 1963 and 1966. I discuss the findings of this Commission and the outcomes of a treatise written by Wojtyla and a group of fellow Polish moral theologians, "*Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life,*" which argued that the Church could not change its position on artificial birth control because it was simply true.[17] I then outline Pope Paul VI's response to the Commission's findings in *Humanae Vitae*, which restates the traditional teaching that marriage must remain open to procreation. Next, I discuss *The Acting Person,* published in 1969, which offers an account of the relationship between ethics and human flourishing focusing on the importance of self-mastery and wholeness, which would be key

[17] Karol Cardinal Wojtyla et al.*, 'The Foundations of the Church's Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life: A memorandum composed by a group of moral theologians from Kraków,' in *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, 10, 2 (2012), 321–59. * The Metropolitan Archbishop of Kraków, a group of Krakovian moral theologians—Rev. Stanislas Smolenski, Rev. Thadeus Slipko, S.J., and Rev. Jules Turowicz, professors of theology in the Great Seminary of Kraków; Rev. Georges Bajda, professor at the Seminary of Tarnów, and Rev. Charles Meissner, O.S.B.

to JPII's account of self-giving in *A Theology of the Body*. The chapter ends with an overview of JPII's writings on suffering, drawing on *Salvific Doloris* (1984) and *Pastores dabo vobis* (1992), and reflections on the role of positive emotions in his writings.

Chapter Two examines the psychological approaches used in this thesis and how they will be applied. Its chief aim is to situate the disciplines in the context of their application to self-giving and to show their value to theological inquiry into self-giving while highlighting points of interdisciplinary tension. The chapter begins with a rationale for psychological reflection on JPII's theology of self-gift. I then explore the disciplinary intersection, the connections between faith and reason as grounds for interdisciplinary dialogue, a shared interest in the study of integral personhood, and the question of how theological claims to epistemological realities can be sites for psychological reflection. This is followed by a detailed account of Jung's psychoanalytical theory. This section covers its development and current status, an outline of Jung's theory of individuation, applications for self-giving, and caveats. An account of positive psychology follows. This section outlines the development and current status of the discipline, the function of positive emotions, Seligman's work on character strengths and virtues, applications for self-giving and caveats. The chapter ends with points of connection between Jung and positive psychology on self-giving.

Chapter Three is an exposition of *A Theology of the Body*. Its broad aims are two-fold: (a) to show how total self-giving is positioned as human flourishing within a motif of wholeness by appealing to the rediscovery of the original state of innocence and fulfilment in the eschaton, and (b) to show how this approach to self-giving underpins JPII's validation and defence of *Humanae Vitae*. The chapter begins with a brief literature review drawing on responses from David Matzo McCarthy, Lisa Sowle Cahill, and Luke Timothy Johnson. The rest of the chapter is divided into four sections. The first examines the motif of wholeness as a fundamental framework for JPII's theology of self-giving. The second explores human flourishing as a return to the wholeness of original innocence which draws on Jung as an interlocutor to offer an alternative way of approaching human realisation in wholeness. The third examines the temporal dimension of JPII's theology of self-giving, which can be categorised as "the beginning," within history, and the eschaton. The final section examines how JPII applies his theology of self-giving to a defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

The fourth chapter is on *Salvifici Doloris*. The broad aims of this chapter are to show how JPII constructs self-giving in suffering as human flourishing and how a reading of Hans Urs von Balthasar's trinitarian theology, specifically how divine love is expressed as an act of kenosis, can help elucidate this claim. It begins with a literature review outlining responses from Dalmacito A. Cordero Jr., Raymond-Marie Bryce, and Lisa Sowle Cahill. The rest of the chapter is divided into four sections. The first is an exposition of *Salvifici Doloris* through the lens of total self-giving as human flourishing in an image of Trinitarian love. The second draws on Balthasar's view of Trinitarian love as kenosis to help elucidate the connection between total self-giving in love and suffering. The third examines the relationship between self-giving in marriage (self-giving in love) and self-giving in suffering and how this connection relates to JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae*. The final section explores the role of positive emotions in cultivating and sustaining relationships and orienting us to a good beyond ourselves in literature from positive psychology. This is intended to provide a counterbalance for what I will suggest is JPII's mistrust and minimisation of positive emotions in favour of suffering and loss.

Aims and contributions

This thesis examines Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-giving as human fulfilment in love and suffering. The primary texts used in the analysis are *A Theology of the Body* and *Salvifici Doloris*. This thesis is shaped by the following key questions: What is Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-giving and why does it lead to human flourishing? What is the connection between self-giving in love and self-giving in suffering and what implications might follow from this connection? And finally, what is JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae* and why did it prove more compelling for some than earlier papal expositions on marriage? These questions and the texts used within this project are approached through a lens of wholeness and in conversation with Jung's theory of individuation and aspects of positive psychology.

This project responds to an absence of literature exploring how JPII's defence of the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae* is shaped by his integral approach and why this very approach may account for the relative support it garnered over earlier papal approaches.

The findings of this thesis offer novel contributions to our knowledge of the relationship between love and suffering in JPII's writings and the human impact of Wojtyla/JPII's thought on marriage and suffering, wholeness and human fulfilment in self-giving.

It's worth understanding the appeal of JPII's approach not only because it was perceived as more compelling than previous expositions (which stated in essence the same argument) but because it significantly shaped the trajectory of magisterial teaching. In 1981, JPII appointed Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger as Prefect for the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF). Ratzinger shared JPII's conservative leanings, defending and affirming traditional Catholic teaching on issues such as birth control, marriage and inter-religious dialogue. However, a CDF document issued in 1986, "*A Letter issued to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care for Homosexuals,*" reveals the extent to which JPII's writings shaped Ratzinger's views.[18] JPII's language of self-giving as human realisation in the *imago Dei* through love and suffering echo through this text. Ratzinger refers to human realisation in unity with God through procreation in sexual complementarity:

> He fashions mankind, male and female, in his own image and likeness . . . and in the complementarity of the sexes, they are called to reflect the inner unity of the Creator. They do this in a striking way in their cooperation with him in the transmission of life by a mutual donation of the self to the other.[19]

There are specific references to self-giving in sexual complementarity reflecting a 'correctly ordered sex drive:'

> Homosexual activity is not a complementary union, able to transmit life; and so it thwarts the call to a life of that form of self-giving which the Gospel says is the essence of Christian living. This does not mean that homosexual persons are not often generous and giving of themselves; but when they engage in homosexual

[18] Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, "*A Letter issued to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care for Homosexuals*," Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1986)
[19] Ibid., par. 6

> activity they confirm within themselves a disordered sexual inclination which is essentially self-indulgent.[20]

Ratzinger's description of the 'virtuous self-mastery' required for self-denial further resonates with JPII's writings on self-giving in suffering in *Salvifici Doloris*:

> Just as the Cross was central to the expression of God's redemptive love for us in Jesus, so the conformity of the self-denial of homosexual men and women with the sacrifice of the Lord will constitute for them a source of self-giving which will save them from a way of life which constantly threatens to destroy them.[21]

A further justification then for examining JPII's theology of self-giving as human flourishing is that there is evidence to suggest it shaped the trajectory of magisterial teaching through Ratzinger, who would in 2005 become Pope Benedict XVI.

[20] Ibid., par. 7
[21] Ibid., par. 12

Chapter 1

A Context for A Theology of a Body

This chapter offers a chronological account of the major influences upon Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-gift. It has three broad aims. First, I will set *A Theology of the Body* in the context of key magisterial events and Wojtyla/JPII's writings before and after *A Theology of the Body*. Second, to show how his theology of self-gift developed through his theology of marriage and human sexuality, and what distinguished it from traditional magisterial teaching in this area. Third, to invite a reading of Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-gift as human realisation through a motif of wholeness. In what follows, I examine how the following texts and events shaped Wojtyla's unique contribution to magisterial teaching on marriage and family. This chapter explores the following key texts, events, and influences: (1) The theology of the mystical union of St. John of the Cross and its influence on Wojtyla's personalism; (2) *Love and Responsibility,* in which Wojtyla offers an account of self-gift as an expression and fulfilment of spousal love; (3) Wojtyla's response to Vatican II and the tensions surrounding the Pontifical Commission for Birth Control and *Humanae Vitae*; (4) *The Acting Person,* which offers a comprehensive account of self-gift in terms of the actualisation of the whole person through self-mastery, and; (5) *Salvifici Doloris* on the relation of suffering and loss to self-gift, alongside key ideas on sacrificial suffering in the priesthood in *Pastores Dabo Vobis*.

St. John of the Cross: The mystical union and self-giving

This section will explore how Wojtyla read and interpreted the writings of St. John of the Cross. I aim to outline Wojtyla's perception of how St. John's writings on the mystical union shaped his understanding of human flourishing as a process of self-giving and how this specifically related to human flourishing in the spousal relationship. Wojtyla's reflections on St. John's account of the mystical union are vital to understanding how he came to believe

that self-giving, specifically *total* self-giving, was human fulfilment. In this section, I will suggest that Wojtyla/JPII does something with the spousal analogy of the mystical union that is not at all common. I will propose that he uses the spousal metaphor as more than a way to think about the soul's relationship to God. Rather he uses the image to think about the actual nature of spousal love.

Wojtyla/JPII claimed that St. John was one of the most significant influences on his spiritual formation. Wojtyla described the mystical doctor as "a friend and master who has shown me the light that shines in the darkness for walking always towards God."[22] Through the writings of St. John, Wojtyla deepened his understanding of how faith became an experience and a means of union between God and the person. This union would ground his theology of self-giving.

Central to Wojtyla's reading of St. John was the claim that mystical faith and dogmatic or intellectual faith are not opposing concepts, but different aspects of the single virtue of faith. While scholasticism had viewed faith as a virtue of the intellect, in the writings of St. John we see that, in the dark night of faith, the intellect can say nothing of God, which leads to an emphasis on the experience of God. In his doctoral thesis, Wojtyla proposed that intellectual faith and mystical faith were the same virtue:

> The doctrine we shall study is a testimony of experience. It is expressed in scholastic-mystical language, using words and concepts well-known to Scholastic theology, but its primary value and significance is a witness of personal experience. It is there, in fact, that we can discover the living and dynamic reality of the virtue of faith, its activity in the human intellect, its corollaries and the effects on the movement of the soul towards union with God.[23]

Faith for St. John is an "essential likeness" to God, which by the power of an "excessive light," alters the natural operation of the intellect so that God and the human person can be united.[24] In his reading of St. John, Wojtyla distinguished between dogmatic faith and

[22] JPII, *TOB*, p. 26.
[23] Pope John Paul II, *Faith according to St. John of the Cross* (Oregon, USA: Wipf and Stock, reprint edition, 2009), p. 23.
[24] Ibid., 238-239.

mystical faith.[25] He described the union with God as both ontological and psychological – a psycho-spiritual journey. Dogmatic faith provides an "ontological transcendence" in which the intellect is proportioned to be capable of uniting to God, yet because the intellect remains limited by its natural tendency towards conceptual knowledge the union conferred by faith must require more than the intellect.[26] For Wojtyla, the texts of St. John showed that union with God is more than an intellectual enterprise through dogmatic faith; it is a dynamic process in which, "all the elements that contribute to union will be discovered, not through an abstract and theoretical consideration, but as actuated in the unifying process itself."[27] This dynamic unifying process requires a mystical faith, which transforms the experience of God into a union of love. Mystical faith is not opposed to dogmatic faith but rather expresses how the intellect illuminates a trajectory towards God that is made complete in the experience of love. Wojtyla cites the origins of his personalism in this idea that love, over faith, draws the whole person into a real ontological and psychological union with God.

Wojtyla showed particular interest in the assimilation of faith in the lived experience of personal subjectivity. The experience of God was neither the origin nor measure of faith. Personal experience of exalted feelings was not to be set against the objective content of faith. Wojtyla was clear that experience could not replace faith. Consistent with his reading of St. John, Wojtyla claimed that the starting point of an experience of Christ is always faith. This idea was also consistent with the enrichment of faith sought by Vatican II, which expressed how only a 'more conscious faith' could inform and transform a person's whole experience.[28] For Wojtyla, faith transforms the experience of God and is then subordinated to the resulting union with God in love. To this end, Wojtyla reasoned that faith matures only through the engagement of the whole person. Only when the subjective is exposed to the light of faith can transformation in union with God be realised:

> Man cannot live without love. He remains a being that is incomprehensible to himself . . . The man who wishes to understand himself thoroughly . . . must, so

[25] Ibid.
[26] Thomas Petri, OP., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), p. 96.
[27] JPII, *Faith according to St. John of the Cross*, p. 110.
[28] Pope Paul VI, *Decree on the Apostolicam Actuositatem* (1965), par. 4.

> to speak, enter into Him with *all* his own self, he must "appropriate" and assimilate the *whole* of the reality of the Incarnation and redemption in order to find himself.[29]

Wojtyla's personalism grew through his reading of St. John, which convinced him that the transformation of faith occurred in the lived experience of subjectivity. From this viewpoint, human flourishing depends upon the extent to which we allow faith to touch and enrich every dimension of our being. Wojtyla claimed that faith was transformed into love through self-giving, and this was most profoundly captured in *The Living Flame of Love*.

> Since God gives himself with a free and gracious will, so too the soul (possessing a will more generous and free the more it is united with God) gives to God, God himself in God; and this is a true and complete gift of the soul to God . . . It is conscious there that God is indeed its own and that it possesses him by inheritance, with the right of ownership, as his adopted child, through the grace of his gift of himself . . . Having him for its own, it can give him and communicate him to whoever it wishes. Thus it gives him to his Beloved, who is the very God who gave himself to it . . . A reciprocal love is thus actually formed between God and the soul, like the marriage union and surrender, in which the goods of both . . . are possessed by both together. They say to each other what the Son of God spoke to the father through John: All that is mine is yours and yours is mine, and I am glorified in them [Jn 17:10].[30]

The union between the soul and God is filial and conjugal based on the adoptive communication of grace and the power of love. It is our perfection and fulfilment because through this reciprocal self-giving the soul becomes "God by participation," and by participation, it possesses divinity itself.[31] In this union, the soul's will becomes "entirely occupied in the same objectives as the divine will, namely, loving God and giving to him in

[29] Pope John Paul II, *Redemptor Hominis* (1979), par. 10 (emphasis mine).
[30] St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love,* commentary on st. B 3, par. 78-80, in The Collected Works, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), pp. 705-6.
[31] JPII, *Faith according to St. John of the Cross*, p. 230.

love that which it has from him in participation–divinity itself, not only through the lover's will but as God loves, by the movement of the Holy Spirit."[32] Wojtyla viewed this as the "Trinitarian" mystical teaching of the *Spiritual Canticle*, which would ground his understanding of human vocation as realising the "Trinitarian nature" in divine union through self-giving.

Wojtyla's reading of St. John's mystical union shaped his thinking on how human beings attain realisation in union with God. He reasoned that human realisation must also be found in the form of self-giving described in the mystical union – a supposition that would become the foundation of his personalism and theology of marriage. From Wojtyla's perspective, the spousal analogy not only described the soul's relationship to God: it described the actual nature of spousal love, which had significant consequences for how marriage is understood.

Michael Waldstein offers a way to think about how Wojtyla makes the connection between human realisation in self-giving in St. John's mystical union and human realisation in self-giving in marriage. Waldstein helpfully describes Wojtyla's account of total spousal self-giving in terms of a "Sanjuanist Triangle" with three points of contact with *The Living Flame of Love*.[33] The first implies a cycle of the mutual and supreme giving of the self. The second views the spousal relationship between a man and woman as the paradigmatic example of self-giving in human experience. The third explains that the Trinity is the archetype of this love and gift from which divine-human love and the love between persons derive as an imitation and participation.[34] It is worth exploring each of these points further because they map rather closely onto how JPII describes the ways in which St. John shaped his thinking on spousal self-giving as union with God and thereby human realisation. To this end, it will be helpful to explore Waldstein's three points in more depth.

The first point of the Sanjuanist Triangle refers to the total and mutual surrender made in the spiritual espousal between the soul and God, in which the bride "surrenders herself wholly to him in the desire to be totally his and never to possess anything but him . . . [to be] totally given to God without keeping anything back, just as God has given himself

[32] Ibid., p. 230.
[33] JPII, *TOB*, p. 29.
[34] Ibid.

entirely to her."[35] For the purposes of the current analysis, it is particularly important to notice that Wojtyla considered the highest gift of self as a *total* gift of self in which nothing is held back, which is reflected in a total orientation of affection towards the spouse. The union that arises from this total gift of self transforms the "lovers" as "each gives possession of self to the other, each leaves and exchanges self for the other."[36] The second point of the triangle refers to the analogy St. John draws between "spiritual marriage" and the consummation of love by sexual union in marriage. Just as "in the consummation of carnal marriage there are two in one flesh . . . so also when the spiritual marriage between God and the soul is consummated"[37] each surrenders the entire possession of self to the other in a certain consummation of love by which the soul becomes divine through participation. For St. John, the surrender of self-possession marks spiritual marriage as superior to spiritual betrothal. It is more than attraction, desire, or goodwill; it is a giving of one's person to the other. The final point of contact between Wojtyla/JPII and the mystical union according to St. John concerns the Trinity. In *The Living Flame of Love*, we read that the reciprocal total gift of self occurs first in the Trinity in the Son of God's offering to the Father. Both the soul's filial/spousal relation to God and the marriage union and surrender between man and woman are derived as images from this first cycle of self-giving within the Trinity.

> Truly, the Father has sent his Son into the world that we, united to him and transformed by him, might be able to restore to God the same gift of love that he gave to us. . . Starting from this gift of love we can better understand and realise within us the eternal life of God, which consists in participating in the total and complete gift of the Son to the Father in the love of the Holy Spirit.[38]

Wojtyla/JPII's personalism in the context of the spousal relationship developed through this Sanjuanist triangle, with the chief aim of understanding how the spouses are realised in the

[35] St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, commentary on st. B 27, par. 5-7.
[36] St. John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love*, commentary on st. B 12, par. 7. This language of exchanging self would later be important for Wojtyla's understanding of self-mastery and self-possession–of an authentic subjectivity and interiority–in our capacity to offer a total and thereby transformative gift of self.
[37] St John of the Cross, 'The Spiritual Canticle,' commentary on st. 22, par. 3, in *The Collected Works*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), p. 474.
[38] Pope John Paul II, 'Homily at Buenos Aires' (March 10, 1987), in *Insegnamenti*, 10, 1 (1987), pp. 1202-11, par. 2.

divine-human relationship through self-giving. He claimed that St. John's writings shaped his views on the structural depth of the person and their potential for transformation in self-giving in ways that allowed him to see how the spouses are drawn into a real ontological and psychological union with God through the gift of self. To this end, the nature, purpose and potential of the human person became understood through a dynamic wholeness in union with the divine, incorporating the intellect and experience, and its realisation through human relations. The spousal analogy, then, became the template by which Wojtyla/JPII developed his understanding of human realisation as a sense of wholeness in self-giving in marriage. For Wojtyla/JPII, the spousal analogy was directly applicable to the actual nature of spousal love; it provided a way to articulate how the whole person is realised through a total gift of self in the vocations of marriage and parenthood, which would become a central theme of JPII's pontificate.

However, Wojtyla/JPII's appropriation of St. John's spousal analogy is not without its problems. One might question the validity of Wojtyla's direct application of the mystical union to the spousal relationship – as a metaphor for thinking about the actual nature of spousal love in human marriage. While it is not uncommon to use the spousal image to think about the soul's relationship to God, JPII was doing something new by applying this image to spousal love. Shifting the context of the union does not seem plausible, even responsible, without an account of how the richness, complexity and egoic tendencies of human nature are brought into union with one another and with God. As appealing as the spousal analogy may be, a simplistic, unnuanced application risks camouflaging the very real need for self-awareness, self-care, and boundaries with others, even as we seek the good of the other. This is especially pertinent given the intimacy and intensity of the spousal relationship. Wojtyla's simplistic application risks romanticising marriage. Despite a strong affirmation of the role of human experience in faith, Wojtyla/JPII's application of the mystical union has surprisingly little to say of the lived experience of marriage as an ordinary, complex, sometimes painful human endeavour.

The concern I propose here is that Wojtyla/JPII's application of the spousal analogy is a theological overreach. In his writings, the image goes beyond being a useful way to think about the soul's relationship with God to become an image of the very nature of the spousal relationship between men and women. Karen Kilby touches on this idea when, in writing about the problems of projection in social doctrines of the trinity, she claims there are

inherent risks in projecting qualities onto God that support a particular vision in which one is invested that is not God.[39] Though referring specifically to projection in the context of doctrine, Kilby's point on "reverse projection" is applicable here: "Projection, then, is problematic . . . because what is projected onto God is immediately reflected back onto the world, and this reverse projection is said to be what is important about the doctrine.[40]

> Theologians are of course free to speculate about social or any other kind of analogies to the trinity. But they should not, on the view I am taking, claim for their speculations the authority that the doctrine carries within the Christian tradition, nor should they use the doctrine as a pretext for claiming such an insight into the inner nature of God that they can put it to work to promote social, political or ecclesiastical regimes.[41]

I argue that, in one sense, Wojtyla/JPII does indeed 'put the spousal analogy to work' for his ecclesiastical intentions to affirm a traditional magisterial understanding of the importance of marriage centred on its openness to procreation. This particular vision of spousal love as union with God in total self-giving in the image of the mystical union became the foundation of his theology of marriage that we see expressed in the key text, *Love and Responsibility* and in the lecture series, a Theology of the Body.

Love and Responsibility: Sexuality and human flourishing

Love and Responsibility was published in 1960, two years before the Second Vatican Council. In *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyla's personalism is developed through an exposition of the relationship between spousal love, sexuality, and human flourishing. Part of the appeal of the text was its novel and compelling articulation of the relationship between sexual morality and human flourishing. In its appeal to subjectivity as fundamental to faith, it

[39] Karen Kilby, 'Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity," in *God Evil and the Limits of Theology* (London: T & T Clark Ltd., 2020) pp. 5-16.
[40] Ibid., p. 15.
[41] Ibid., p. 16.

approached marriage and family from a new angle. While previous approaches had prioritised the biological end of marriage (which I will explore shortly), *Love and Responsibility* spoke to the role of feelings and emotions, love and happiness. In contrast to physicalist approaches, Wojtyla's personalism emphasised that sexual ethics were in service of love. They ensured that the part was not taken for the whole – that love embraced and affirmed the whole person. Wojtyla claimed that, at its heart, sexual ethics spoke to human dignity, to the person's inherent longing for love and authentic happiness.

Drawing on Immanuel Kant's categorical imperative,[42] Wojtyla stressed that a person could not be used as a mere means for pleasure; this reduces the person to an object or thing and is contrary to their human dignity. He rejected the increasing utilitarianism that he believed constituted the "perennial bedrock" upon which modern life flowed.[43] Utilitarianism was the ego-driven desire to use another for one's own sake for maximum pleasure and it stood in the way of love. It was incompatible with a union of persons because it reduced the person to simply being another object in the world. Wojtyla developed Kant's imperative by introducing a teleological aspect to human relations: "Whenever a person is an object of action in your conduct, remember that you may not treat him merely as a means to an end, as a tool, but [you must] take into account that the person himself has or at least should have his own end."[44] A central concern for Wojtyla was to show that sexual morality ensures a person is not used for a particular dimension of their personhood but rather loved as a whole person.

Key to establishing the significance of sexual ethics as a fulfilment and protection of human dignity was to show that human flourishing is a condition of living according to the truth of our being. To order our lives from and towards the truth of our highest good engages and realises the totality of the person. This vision of wholeness would be supported by *Gaudium et Spes* (1965), which explained that this totality includes all the natural and supernatural aspects of our humanity:

> At the same time, however, there is a growing awareness of the exalted dignity proper to the human person, since he stands above all things, and his rights and

[42] Ibid.
[43] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 18.
[44] Ibid.

> duties are universal and inviolable. Therefore, there must be made available to all men everything necessary for leading a life truly human, such as food, clothing, and shelter; the right to choose a state of life freely and to found a family, the right to education, to employment, to a good reputation, to respect, to appropriate information, to activity in accord with the upright norm of one's own conscience, to protection of privacy and rightful freedom even in matters religious . . . In the midst of these conflicting requirements, human culture must evolve today in such a way that it can both develop the whole human person[45]

Wojtyla referred to these aspects of the human person as the subjective and objective or the "personalistic" and "cosmological" (this will be explored later in the chapter).[46] In both Gaudium et Spes and Wojtyla's writings, the truth of our being which realises the whole person is revealed in Revelation and natural law as existence, which is the fundamental good from which all other goods proceed. What was distinctive about Wojtyla's approach was his understanding of precisely how the sex drive realises existence in both "biological" *and* existential ways, through the objective and subjective aspects of being. Moreover, it was to support traditional teaching on the *inseparability* of these ends. He aimed to advance a personalistic account of the sex drive and its relationship to human fulfilment which fully aligned with traditional magisterial teaching on natural law in relation to marriage.[47]

For Wojtyla, the sex drive is not merely biologically significant–it was existentially significant because it produced more than biological beings. The sex drive produced human persons capable of participating in the order of creation. This existential quality meant that the sex drive must be subject to the principles that apply to the human person.[48] Wojtyla

---

[45] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 26 and 56.

[46] The subjective and objective aspects of the person are described as the personalistic and cosmological in 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man.'

[47] Traditional papal teaching on the natural law in the context of marriage refers to the argument for the complementarity of men and women based on the apprehension of practical reason, which underpins two key arguments that marriage is a heterosexual union and must be open to procreation. This will be addressed in more detail later in the chapter.

[48] In *Love and Responsibility*, we see this concern worked through a reformulation of Kant's practical imperative. By introducing a teleological angle, Wojtyla affirms that a person must never be the means of our actions not merely because each person is an end in themselves, but also because they are ordained to ends outside themselves that are protective of them and their freedom. Wojtyla's "personalistic principle" encompasses the ontological depth of the human person, the dignity associated with being called into a beatific union with God. Our relations with others are predicated on a recognition of the other's interiority, which reveals their vocation to their final end. Wojtyla's personalistic principle aims to defend against the

considered the sex drive to be more than an instinct. It was a "certain orientation, a certain direction of the whole human being linked to his very nature."[49] The sex drive was a property of the human being which did not so much determine action as mean that,

> . . . something happens in man, that something starts to happen without any initiative on his part, and this interior "happening" creates a substratum, as it were, for certain actions, in fact for reflective actions, in which man determines himself; he himself determines his acts and takes responsibility for them. In this place, human freedom meets drive.[50]

The sex drive is an orientation of the whole person which turns them towards the "other sex," and this tendency towards the other "complementary" sex is the possibility for love. Procreation *and* love are the proper and inseparable ends of the sex drive because "love can be properly formed only inasmuch as it is formed in close harmony with the proper finality of the drive."[51] Wojtyla even goes so far as to say that an incorrectly ordered sex drive not only jeopardises spousal love but also spiritual maturity: "The spiritual life cannot develop correctly . . . when the elementary lines of human existence are thoroughly tangled in the spheres of matters involving the body."[52] Perfection occurs in the full personalistic and cosmological aspects of our humanity only when we live in ways that respect the objective truths of our reality (the natural law). A correctly ordered sex drive confers not merely the objective good of humanity's survival, but the subjective goods that arise from living in accord with our human dignity. Wojtyla claims that when properly used the sex drive constitutes a vast potential to realise personal and universal goods.

Wojtyla's personalism offered an exposition of the unitive aspect of marriage and its connection to the procreative from an entirely new angle. Traditional Magisterial teaching had long held to the inseparability of the hierarchical ends of marriage from pronouncements dating back to Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Arcanum* (1880), to the 1917

---

utilitarianism he perceived in Kant's approach. It posits a way of relating in conformity with "what the person is, with the value they represent." See, Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 302.

[49] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 30.

[50] Ibid.

[51] Ibid., 37.

[52] Ibid., 50.

Code of Canon Law, and Pope Pius XI's encyclical, *Casti Connubii* (1930). Yet precisely why the unitive was tied to the procreative had never been expounded in any depth – a point to which we shall return later in the chapter. Wojtyla's personalism filled this gap. His unique contribution was to link a comprehensive personalistic account of the ends of marriage with that of the natural order, and in doing so, he offered a novel exposition of traditional Magisterial teaching that proved significantly more appealing than the approach taken by *Casti Connubii*.

Wojtyla's case rested on establishing the spousal relationship as distinct from all others–a distinction that was predicated on both procreation *and* love, and he did this through self-giving. Wojtyla claimed in *Love and Responsibility* that spousal love was the highest form of love because it involved a total gift of self. The love of spouses transcends the love of goodwill because it involves a man and a woman becoming a gift to one another. This "betrothed love" consists in paradoxically surrendering that part of their being that is incommunicable.

> Self-giving, the giving of one's own person, can be fully-mature only when it engages the will and is the will's work. For precisely thanks to his free will, the person is a master of himself (*sui iuris*); he is someone incommunicable and non-transferrable (*alteri incommunicabilis*). Spousal love, the love of self-giving, commits the will in a particularly thorough way. It is evident here that the whole "I" must be engaged, one must "give the soul," speaking in the language of the Gospel.[53]

The language Wojtyla uses to describe the surrendering of the self resonates with the mystical union. For St. John, the union of love produced such likeness in the lovers precisely because "each gives possession of self to the other and each leaves and exchanges self for the other."[54] Wojtyla claimed that while the person's nature is incompatible with such surrender, what is impossible in the natural order can come about in the order of love.[55]

[53] Ibid., p. 108.
[54] St. John of the Cross, *The Spiritual Canticle*, commentary on st. B 12, par. 7.
[55] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 96.

Betrothed love is distinguished as the highest form of love by the total surrendering of the self-possession of each spouse.

Drawing again on St. John, Wojtyla explained that the self-giving of betrothed love is total–it holds nothing back. In essence, it is the full potential of the person to fulfil their Christian vocation in accord with the truth of their being, which is to participate in the order of creation through procreation. Withholding this possibility, for Wojtyla, was incompatible with the development of authentic total self-giving and was therefore incompatible with love. In *The Spiritual Canticle*, st. B 27, we read that the bride "gives herself to him," holding nothing back. In his commentary on this stanza, St. John writes:

> . . . the bride tells of the mutual surrender made in this spiritual espousal between the soul and God . . . she most willingly and with intense delight surrenders herself wholly to him in the desire to be totally his and never to possess in herself anything other than him . . . she is really and totally given to God without keeping anything back, just as God has freely given himself entirely to her. The union is so effected that the two wills are mutually paid, surrendered, and satisfied . . . [56]

The union of love, for Wojtyla, is only possible in the mutual and total offering of the spouses in all the dimensions of their being, but most profoundly in their essential natures as co-creators, by which they become an image of Trinitarian reciprocal love and gift. While procreation is shaped by and gives rise to love, Wojtyla maintained that if procreation is blocked, so is the unitive aspect of marriage. Love cannot be a primary nor independent end of marriage. Through this understanding of spousal self-giving as the highest form of love, which "can only be properly formed in close harmony with the finality of the sex drive,"[57] Wojtyla provided, what was a novel and, for some, compelling case for traditional Magisterial teaching on the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage.

Wojtyla's integration of the personalistic approach with traditional magisterial teaching on the natural law affirmed that the marital relationship was far more than a union of persons–a reciprocal relationship between a man and woman. It was a union of persons

[56] St. John of the Cross, *The Spiritual Canticle*, commentary on st. B 27, par. 5-7.
[57] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 37.

affected by the possibility of procreation, of participation in the order of creation. For this reason, some theologians regarded *Love and Responsibility* as the first positive step in Wojtyla's writings to "synthesize ontology with an experienced-based methodology (phenomenology)."[58] Cormac Burke succinctly expresses this idea that Wojtyla had successfully begun to develop an authentic synthesis between the ontological and phenomenological:

> The greatest expression of a person's desire to give himself is to give the seed of himself. Giving one's seed is much more significant, and in particular is much more real, than giving one's heart. "I am yours, I give you my heart; here, take it" remains poetry, to which no physical gesture can give true body. But, "I am yours: I give you my seed; here, take it" is no poetry; it is love. It is conjugal love embodied in a unique and privileged physical action whereby intimacy is expressed ("I give you what I give no one else") and union is achieved.[59]

In the expositions and critiques that follow in subsequent chapters of a Theology of the Body and *Salvifici Doloris*, I will explore how Wojtyla/JPII uses the theme of wholeness as a framework for his account of total self-giving as human realisation in union with God. The attempts to integrate the subjective and objective, the phenomenological and ontological, that we see in *Love and Responsibility* lay the foundations for a wider application of integration leading to a wholeness that is human flourishing. Wojtyla's use of wholeness as a motif for human flourishing in *Love and Responsibility* can be summarised as follows: (1) the whole person in their objective and subjective aspects is realised by living in accord with the truth of their being revealed by Revelation and natural law; (2) human realisation occurs when Revelation and the natural law are allowed to permeate and orient the whole person, and; (3) without a commitment to being oriented in our totality by the truth of our being,

[58] Petri, OP., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of JPII's Anthropology*, p. 111. See also, Rocco Buttiglione, *Karol Wojtyla: the Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, trans. by Paolo Guietti and Francesca Murphy (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997).
[59] Cormac Burke, 'Marriage and Contraception' in *Creative Love: The Ethics of Human Reproduction*, ed. by John Boyle (Front Royal: Christendom Press, 1989) pp. 151-176, (p. 154). Note that Burke expresses this union from the male perspective.

spiritual maturity and the highest form of love are impossible because this total orientation is a prerequisite of self-giving and total self-giving is a prerequisite of love.

In developing a way to integrate the personalistic approach with the natural law approach, Wojtyla succeeded where his predecessors had failed in making (to recall the words of Burke) the "unpoetic" poetic. The effect of couching teaching on the primacy of procreation in the language of the mystical union was to situate the sex drive within a vast transcendent framework that romanticised sexual intercourse and childbearing. Affirming the sex drive as fundamentally both existential (participation in God's creative order) and personalistic (uniting persons together in a freely chosen act whose meaning and consequences transcend both persons) proved a successful defence against the accusations of "physicalism" and biological determinism to which his predecessors had been subjected. It moreover somewhat veiled the essential aim of affirming that the "conjugal act" must remain open to the transmission of life by reframing the correctly ordered sex drive as the source of spousal love, well-being, and spiritual development, along with a host of other goods essential for human flourishing.

As appealing as many found Wojtyla's personalism (and continue to do so), his project to reframe Magisterial teaching on marriage and family within the context of wholeness camouflaged a deceptively reductive approach to human vocation and flourishing. The vastness of this framework coupled with a romanticised analogy of the mystical union can easily misdirect attention from its fundamental claims. Even as Wojtyla claims that marriage and parenthood realise the whole person in both the subjective and objective dimensions of their humanity, he affirms that love is subjugated to the objective reality of natural law–where love and spiritual maturity are seen as very heavily dependent on a correctly ordered sex drive. The role of interiority in faith, of a participation of our essence in spiritual growth is diminished. To this end, the self-giving presented in *Love and Responsibility* constitutes less an "integral" approach and more a veiled romantic diminishment of the very human experience it claims to illuminate and elevate.

Vatican II and the Papal Commission on Population, the Family, and Birth-rate

Developments in papal teaching on marriage

The Second Vatican Council heralded for many a turning point in magisterial teaching towards the interpersonal.[60] It was a turn from an external understanding of marriage as defined by duties and responsibilities to a more internal understanding of the interpersonal bonds of the spousal relationship. The magisterial shift to a personalistic understanding of marriage had been a progressive movement from Pope Leo XIII's *On Christian Marriage* (1880). Leo XIII outlined the significance of Christ's institution of marriage as a sacrament and technicalities like the church's position on divorce and mixed marriages. The encyclical spoke of marriage as a contract marked by unity and indissolubility. In short, it dealt with the outwardly defined roles within marriage. Leo XIII explains that when Christ raised the marriage contract to the dignity of a sacrament, "mutual rights and duties were secured to husband and wife; mutual rights and duties between parents and children were also asserted: to the former, authority to govern and the duty of training; to the latter, the right to parental care and the duty of reverence."[61] The first order of marriage is cited as the "propagation of the human race . . . to the bringing forth of children for the Church."[62] The second is the importance of interpersonal bonds, but largely within the language of duty.

> Secondly, the mutual duties of husband and wife have been defined, and their several rights accurately established. They are bound, namely, to have such feelings for one another as to cherish always very great mutual love, to be ever faithful to their marriage vow, and to give one another an unfailing and unselfish help. The husband is the chief of the family and the head of the wife. The woman, because she is flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone, must be subject to her husband and obey him; not, indeed, as a servant, but as a companion, so that her obedience shall be wanting in neither honor nor dignity. Since the

[60] David Matzko McCarthy, *Sex and Love in the Home* (London: SCM Press, 2001), p. 112.
[61] Pope Leo XIII, *Arcanum* (1980), par. 10.
[62] Ibid.

> husband represents Christ, and since the wife represents the Church, let there always be, both in him who commands and in her who obeys, a heaven-born love guiding both in their respective duties.[63]

In 1917, the Code of Canon Law reiterated, "The primary end of marriage is the procreation and education of children; the second [end] is mutual support and a remedy for concupiscence."[64] There is no mention of the mutual love of spouses as either the primary or secondary end of marriage. In 1930, Pope Pius XI issued the encyclical, *Casti Connubii*, in response to the Lambeth Conference (1930) in which Anglican bishops, with a vote of 193 to 67, approved the following resolution:

> Where there is a clearly-felt moral obligation to limit or prevent parenthood, the method must be decided upon Christian principles. The primary and obvious method is complete abstinence…Nevertheless in those cases where there is a clearly-felt moral obligation to limit or avoid parenthood and where there is a morally sound reason for avoiding complete abstinence, the conference agrees that other methods may be used, provided that this is done in light of the same Christian principles.[65]

The encyclical was issued less than five months after the conference and Pius XI was explicit in his intention that it should be a response to the Anglican Bishops. In a direct challenge to the Lambeth Conference, Pius XI writes:

> Therefore, since there are some who, manifestly abandoning the Christian doctrine, taught from the beginning and never modified, have in our days, in this matter, publicly claimed to proclaim another, the Catholic Church, to whom God himself entrusted the mandate of teaching and defending the purity and honesty

[63] Ibid., p. 11.
[64] *Codex Iuris Canonici* (Citta del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1917), can. 1013, §1. This passage is on page 352 in the unofficial English translation: Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 Pio Benedictine Code of Canon Law in English Translation with Extensive Scholarly Apparatus* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001).
[65] Lambeth Conference, Resolution 15. Cited in John T. Noonan Jr., *Contraception: A History of its Treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge, UK: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986), p. 409.

> of morals, considering the existence of so much corruption of morals, in order to preserve the chastity of the nuptial consortium from so much turpitude, loudly proclaims, through Our word, as a sign of her divine mission, and decrees again that any use of marriage, in which through human malice the act is deprived of its natural procreative virtue, is against the law of God and of nature, and that those who dare to commit such actions are guilty of grave guilt . . . there can be no reason, however grave, that can make that which is intrinsically against nature conformable and honest. And since the act of marriage is, by its very nature, directed to the generation of offspring, those who in using it studiously make it incapable of this effect, act against nature, and commit an action that is shameful and intrinsically dishonest.[66]

As uncomfortable as Pope Pius XI's *Casti Connubii* is for many contemporary readers, it nonetheless claims a unitive function of love in marriage that had so often been minimised or entirely neglected.

> The [mutual] holding of husband and wife, this determined effort to perfect each other, can in a very real sense . . . be said to be the chief reason and purpose of matrimony, provided matrimony be looked at not in the restricted sense as instituted for the proper conception and education of the child, but more widely as the blending of life as a whole and the mutual interchange and sharing thereof.[67]

John Gallagher argues that while Pius XI uses physicalist language to condemn contraception, in the context of the whole encyclical "it seems that 'what is according to nature' is to be determined not by considering the physical aspect by itself but by looking at the nature and purpose of matrimony."[68] For all Pius XI's physicalist language, he affirms

[66] Pope Pius XI, *Casti Connunbii* (1930), par. 56.
[67] Ibid., par. 24.
[68] John Gallagher, 'Magisterial Teaching from 1918 to the Present' in *Human Sexuality and Personhood, Proceedings of the Workshop for the Hierarchies of the United States and Canada Sponsored by the Pope John Centre Through a Grant from the Knights of a Columbus* (Braintree, Mass.: Pope John Centre, 1990), pp. 191-211, (p. 196).

there are goods to be gained apart from conception, such as mutual aid and mutual love. Gallagher suggests that the pope may have been attempting to express an idea for which the theology of his day did not have adequate language.[69] To whatever degree, one could argue that Casti Connubii played its part in the personalist shift that would later be embodied in Vatican II, as Thomas Petri OP explains,

> In effect, Pius XI's attempt to articulate the importance of the spouses' life of love, even as he was committed to the terminology of primary and secondary ends, was just the beginning of a shift to an emphasis on the personalist value of marriage.[70]

Vatican II and the personalistic shift

Wojtyla's appeal to an integral understanding of traditional teaching on the divine-human relationship found new expression and validation in the Second Vatican Council, which met between 1962 and 1965. *Gaudium et Spes* (1965) was the turning point of Magisterial teaching towards the interpersonal, which fully supported Wojtyla's personalistic approach. This subjective turn, explains Lisa Sowle Cahill, was expressed in *Gaudium et Spes* as a shift in Magisterial teaching on the traditional purposes of sexual acts as procreation and unity.[71] Unlike *Casti Connubii*, *Gaudium et Spes* mentioned both ends equally. Though lengthy, this is worth quoting in full because it reflects this emphasis on spousal love.

> This love God has judged worthy of special gifts, healing, perfecting and exalting gifts of grace and of charity. Such love, merging the human with the divine, leads the spouses to a free and mutual gift of themselves, a gift providing itself by gentle affection and by deed, such love pervades the whole of their lives:(11) indeed by its busy generosity it grows better and grows greater. Therefore it far

[69] Ibid., p. 195.
[70] Petri OP., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology*, p. 51.
[71] Lisa Sowle Cahill, 'Catholic Sexual Ethics and the Dignity of the Person: A Double Message,' *in Theological Studies*, 50, (1989), 120-50, (p. 121).

> excels mere erotic inclination, which, selfishly pursued, soon enough fades wretchedly away. This love is uniquely expressed and perfected through the appropriate enterprise of matrimony. The actions within marriage by which the couple are united intimately and chastely are noble and worthy ones. Expressed in a manner which is truly human, these actions promote that mutual self-giving by which spouses enrich each other with a joyful and a ready will. Sealed by mutual faithfulness and hallowed above all by Christ's sacrament, this love remains steadfastly true in body and in mind, in bright days or dark. It will never be profaned by adultery or divorce. Firmly established by the Lord, the unity of marriage will radiate from the equal personal dignity of wife and husband, a dignity acknowledged by mutual and total love. The constant fulfilment of the duties of this Christian vocation demands notable virtue. For this reason, strengthened by grace for holiness of life, the couple will painstakingly cultivate and pray for steadiness of love, large heartedness and the spirit of sacrifice.[72]

It spoke not of a hierarchy, but a need to harmonise "conjugal love" and "the responsible transmission of life."[73] In placing a greater emphasis on the unitive aspect of marriage, Vatican II not only spoke to the importance of love as an end in its right; it also began to change how the church understood the relationship between the procreative and unitive ends of marriage. From this viewpoint, conjugal love was set as "the context in which to broach questions about the good of contraception."[74] *Gaudium et Spes* changed the locus of marriage to love, which invited the possibility for reform in traditional teaching on contraception and gender roles.

The Magisterial personalistic turn, for Wojtyla and later JPII, did not justify however reforms to traditional teaching on marriage. While Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-gift participated in this personalistic turn, it was equally and uncompromisingly rooted in the primacy of the natural law, which Wojtyla would claim, was entirely in the spirit of Vatican II. In 1972, Wojtyla's views on how Vatican II ought to be implemented were published in *Sources of Renewal*. In this text, Wojtyla explains that Vatican II provided the solid ground to

[72] Ibid., par. 49.
[73] Ibid., p. 121.
[74] McCarthy, *Sex and Love in the Home*, p. 113.

consider the possibility of an enrichment (not reform) of faith from the viewpoint of the personal subject in their wholeness. Vatican II gave Wojtyla the language and means to situate his personalism within traditional teaching through a motif of wholeness or oneness, which showed how the person is fulfilled and realised in faith. In *Gaudium et Spes*, we read, "As a mutual gift of two persons, this intimate union and the good of the children impose total fidelity on the spouses and argue for an unbreakable *oneness* between them."[75]

> This love is an eminently human one since it is directed from one person to another through an affection of the will; it involves the good of the *whole* person, and therefore can enrich the expressions of body and mind with a unique dignity, ennobling these expressions as special ingredients and signs of the friendship distinctive of marriage.[76]

The pastoral constitution claims faith is not wholly dependent on the will but relates to our "*whole* personal structure and dynamism."[77]

> It is a self-abandonment to God in which we do not simply accept a set of propositions, but rather a vocation and a sense of existence . . . This implies freedom – free disposal of self – because we couldn't abandon ourselves to God if it were not for this freedom . . . The fundamental interior dimension of faith, springing from the supernatural reality in which God is encountered is at the heart of an enrichment of faith.[78]

Wojtyla saw Vatican II's aim to open the Church to hearing and responding to the concerns raised by modern social and cultural changes as supporting an integration of the "fundamental interior dimension" or the subjective experience of faith into dogmatic faith. For Wojtyla, this response to modern concerns was not a question of 'What should people believe?' but 'What does it mean to be a believer, a Catholic and a member of the

[75] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 58 (my emphasis).
[76] Ibid., p. 49 (my emphasis).
[77] JPII, *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, p. 20 (my emphasis).
[78] Ibid.

Church?'[79] The enrichment of faith to which Vatican II speaks always begins, he explained, from the person's nature as ontological, psychological, and ethical; it involves the body, the entire personality, and a profound responsibility as regards a response to God's revelation. One of the clearest ways in which Vatican II spoke to the importance of incorporating the personalistic into an integrated concept of faith, which involved and elevated the whole person, was through the concept of self-giving. In *Gaudium et Spes*, we read,

> Indeed, the Lord Jesus, when He prayed to the Father, "that all may be one. . . as we are one" (John 17:21-22) opened up vistas closed to human reason, for He implied a certain likeness between the union of the divine Persons, and the unity of God's sons in truth and charity. This likeness reveals that man, who is the only creature on earth which God willed for itself, cannot fully find himself except through a sincere *gift of himself*. (GS, 24:3, emphasis added)

Wojtyla/JPII frequently returned to this passage to support his claims of an integral personalism in which "the believer's whole existence constitutes his response to the gift of God, which is Revelation."[80]

For Wojtyla, Vatican II affirmed a vision of oneness and unity central to his personalistic account of self-giving and human flourishing, which involved an integration of the subjective and objective aspects of humanity. The subjective experience was not the sole domain of modernity. Rather, interiority had long been part of the Church's understanding of the integral unity of the human person, such that interiority was not something that lay outside faith, but was and always had been an integral part of faith. The Church's understanding of subjectivity differed, however, in crucial ways from that of modernity. Contrary to modern claims, the subjective self was not based in thoughts and feelings, but in a Thomistic and Aristotelian metaphysics of *being*. Wojtyla claimed that unlike modernity, a Christian subjectivity of being "did not divide, nor did it exclude,

[79] Ibid., p. 17.
[80] Ibid., p. 24.

dimensions of the person,"[81] but respected all the natural and supernatural aspects of the human being.

Vatican II's vision of wholeness was further expressed in the call to dissolve the perception of a distinction between earthly affairs lying somewhere outside the Church and the Church itself. This created an opening to speak of an interiority or subjectivity shaped by and in service of God. Reclaiming subjectivity, for Wojtyla, rested on the Church's understanding of the person in their wholeness. For Wojtyla, Vatican II affirmed the importance of living in conscious awareness that God creates the world, maintains it in being, and is encountered without ceasing. That there could be a material world independent of God was at variance with the church's understanding of God's creation. To this end, Wojtyla claimed that consciousness of the Church is in a sense consciousness of the world, and on account of the Creator, awareness of the world becomes awareness of the Church.[82]

> The truth that God creates the world and maintains it being reveals to us his transcendence and his basic presence in the world, as man encounters it without ceasing. The Church proclaims this truth at the beginning of its Creed, and the Council helps us to see it as not merely a reality 'outside' the Church's consciousness, but to bring it within that consciousness . . . On account of the work of creation, the consciousness of the Church is also in a sense consciousness of the world, and conversely awareness of the world, being permeated by the truth concerning creation and the Creator, becomes awareness of the Church at its very foundation, on which we shall continue to build.[83]

The primary consequence of this unity between the consciousness of the world and the Church is that the vision of Vatican II, "…does not so much proceed from an awareness of the creation to the truths proclaimed in the Creed, but rather begins with those truths and

[81] Kenneth L. Schmitz, *At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II* (United States of America: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993), p. 48.
[82] JPII, *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, p. 52.
[83] Ibid.

proceeds to awareness of the creation, which it thus provides with a richer context of faith."[84] That is to say, the oneness and unity of faith emanated from Revelation and the natural law. For Wojtyla, faith would be enriched through the capacity of Revelation and the natural law to shed light on modern concerns. Faith would show how the Church can reveal, integrate, and elevate the whole.

To divide and segregate creation, separating it from God and placing it under the sole jurisdiction of humanity, was to deny the ontological character of the human person.

> The dogma of creation defines reality in the profoundest way. Not only does the concept of 'creation' make no sense without that of a Creator, but the reality which we thus define cannot exist without Him who gave it its life and continually keeps it in being . . . Hence the 'autonomy of earthly affairs', if conceived as a negation of God the Creator, is at the same time a negation of creatures and a denial of their ontological character: 'once God is forgotten, the creature is lost sight of as well' – and this leads to a fundamental disorientation of man's cognitive and active powers.[85]

This perception of the world and the person's place within it jeopardised humanity's flourishing because human affirmation and realisation depended upon the person becoming an integral part of the order of creation. This order, claimed Wojtyla, revealed the vocations of marriage and parenthood as central to our participation in the divine and therefore to our flourishing. To this end, the partnership between a man and a woman is the primary communion from which all others proceed.[86]

> From the very beginning, however, man as an individual was created and called on to live in a state of community. 'God did not create man a solitary being: . . . "male and female he created them" (Gen. 1 : 27). This partnership of man and woman constitutes the first form of communion between persons from which all others arise. For by his innermost nature man is a social being, and of he does

[84] Ibid.
[85] Ibid., p. 51.
[86] Ibid., p. 114.

> not enter into relations with others he can neither live nor develop his gifts' (GS 12).[87]

We are "one" with all creation and God when we embrace the truth of our being through the spousal relationship by which we flourish in the realisation of our fundamental human vocation to become co-creators.

Wojtyla's vision of subjectivity and its importance to faith was not merely supported by Vatican II's emphasis on wholeness and integration, but also by traditional teaching on the nature and function of the conscience. Wojtyla disputed modernity's understanding of the conscience as independently determining the criteria of good and evil, claiming that it led to an "individualistic ethic" where each person had their own truth. It was a radically subjectivist concept of moral judgement that led to a denial of human nature, to a "crisis of truth."[88] Wojtyla explained that while the Church understands that each individual has the right to be respected in their own search for truth, "there exists a prior moral obligation, and a grave one at that, to seek the truth and adhere to it once it is known."[89] From this viewpoint, the subjective is essentially an interior *recognition* of the truth of natural law. The significance of this connection between human freedom and natural law would later be expressed in the encyclical *Veritatis Splendour* (1993), in which Wojtyla describes the natural law as "nothing other than the light of understanding infused in us by God, whereby we understand what must be done and what must be avoided."[90] This recognition was a profound encounter with God in our "innermost sanctuary," and it was where we encountered the objective moral order. For Wojtyla, there is no experience of being without an experience of "God's law," which he claimed was fully supported by *Gaudium et Spes*:

> Deep within his conscience man discovers a law which he has not laid upon himself but which he must obey . . . For man has in his heart a law inscribed by God. His dignity lies in observing this law, and by it he will be judged. His

[87] Ibid., p. 115.
[88] Pope John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendour* (1993), par. 32.
[89] Ibid., p. 34.
[90] Ibid., p. 40.

> conscience is man's secret core, and his sanctuary. There he is alone with God, who echoes in his depths.[91]

Further support for this claim can be found in Pope Paul VI's, *Inter Mirifica*:

> The Council proclaims that all must accept the absolute primacy of the objective moral order. It alone is superior to and capable of harmonizing all forms of human activity . . . Only the moral order touches man in the totality of his being as God's rational creature, called to a supernatural destiny.[92]

The possibility of an authentic encounter with God, of a true experience of love, is then synonymous with encountering the truth of the objective moral order revealed in Revelation and the natural law through the conscience. To put this another way, to encounter God is to accept that our embodiment as man or woman reveals the means of our realisation. If our thoughts or feelings should resist the Magisterial claims of natural law, then for Wojtyla, either we have not authentically encountered God, or we are subject to the inclinations of an ill-formed conscience. An authentic experience of interiority, Wojtyla claims, will itself reveal the truth of natural law and Revelation.

Wojtyla claimed that Vatican II fully supported his integral approach affirming the primacy of natural law in human flourishing through self-giving. From Wojtyla's perspective, the Council spoke to a wholeness manifested through self-giving and an understanding of the subjective experience as revealing the objective moral order, which fully supported his concept of betrothed love as human flourishing. Wojtyla's integral approach further appeared to embody the spirit of Vatican II in its response to modern secular challenges regarding marriage, family, women's status and role in society, and birth control. Yet for Wojtyla, Vatican II's promise of greater mediation and reciprocity between faith and culture could not lead, as many had hoped, to Church reform. The widespread hope in the evolving mission of the Church to "make sense of the world in light of Christian belief and experience, and to make sense of Christian belief in the light of our experience and

[91] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 16.
[92] Paul VI, *Inter Mirifica*: *Decree on the Means of Social Communication* (1963), par. 6.

knowledge of the world we live in"[93] would not find its fulfilment in Wojtyla's development of Vatican II. Wojtyla's understanding of the Council was not that opening dialogue with the culture would lead to reflection on Church practices, but that this openness would allow the Church to merely re-present its traditional teaching.

The Papal Commission on Population, the Family, and Birth-rate

The Papal Commission on Birth Control met in Rome from 1963 to 1966, and its outcome was set to have strong implications for long-held Magisterial teaching on marriage and family. Robert McClory explains that the Commission represented an experiment in the Church finding new ways of approaching the tensions arising from modern challenges to Church teaching and doctrine.[94] In the spirit of Vatican II, it would be a sign of the Church's commitment to the idea that the Holy Spirit's presence was not just in the Magisterium, but in "the faithful of every rank."[95] There was growing support among theologians for the "consent of the faithful" to be included as one of the factors that identified the Church's actual belief.[96] Amidst great tensions, the Commission hoped to be an open space to discuss and clarify concerns surrounding the doctrine of artificial contraception.

While concerns for marriage and the family were on the agenda for Vatican II, the use of artificial contraception by married couples was never opened to general discussion on account of the Commission. When Pope John XXIII died mid-way through the Council, Paul VI took over the Commission and expanded its membership to include more laity and married couples. From being a small, interdisciplinary all-male group, the Commission expanded to fifty-eight worldwide members. By the end, there were thirty-four laypersons, including five women and three married couples.[97]

The basic question asked of the Commission was whether the Church could and should change its teaching on the use of artificial birth control in marriage. In 1930, Pope Pius XI stated in *Casti Connubii* that artificial birth control was "intrinsically evil:"

---

[93] Paul F. Knitter, *Without Buddha I Could not be a Christian* (Great Britain: One World Publications, 2009), p. xi.
[94] Robert McClory, *Turning Point* (New York: Crossroad, 1995), p. 4.
[95] Ibid., p. 5.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid., p. viii.

> But no reason, however grave, may be put forward by which anything intrinsically against nature may become conformable to nature and the morally good. Since, therefore, the conjugal act is destined primarily by nature for the begetting of children, those who in exercising deliberately frustrate its natural power and purpose sin against nature and commit a deed which is shameful and intrinsically vicious . . . it is an offence against the law of God and of nature, and those who indulge in such are branded with the guilt of grave sin.[98]

Casti Connubii restated in clear terms the Church's consistent opposition to birth control. Yet despite this, many Catholics were being drawn towards a growing secular movement which embraced birth control as a basic human right.[99] *Casti Connubii* unambiguously presented the doctrine of artificial birth control in marriage as a universal prohibition based on natural law; a position that would be difficult to change without an admission of error.

The debate centred on the conflict between new personalist understandings of marriage (largely advanced by theologians working within the curia) and supporters of the teaching of *Casti Connubii*. That is, between those who challenged the old distinction between the primary and secondary ends of marriage, and those who wished to affirm the distinctions. Yet as the commission progressed, it became clear that its majority was leaning towards change, with a growing agreement that the love of a husband and wife should not be ranked among the secondary ends of marriage.[100] Thomas Burch, a married father of three explained:

> The more we engaged in rational discussion, the more we looked at world poverty, the more we recognised that procreation also includes the responsibility to educate, the more we talked of marriage as the blending of two lives – our attempts to operate out of the old theology seemed silly. The questions shouldn't any longer be about sperm meeting egg or whether someone has good enough reason to take the pill to regularise her period. What

[98] Pius XI, *Casti Connubii*, par. 54.
[99] McClory, *Turning Point*, p. 5.
[100] Ibid., p. 50.

about the life of the husband and wife and the kids they've already got? I found myself asking, how much are we supposed to sacrifice to protect the integrity of the act?[101]

Despite the majority favouring an end to traditional teaching on the primacy of the procreative end of marriage, the opposition remained formidable. The path to providing Pope VI with a final decision was fraught with conflict and it was not until 1966 that minority and majority reports were submitted. The minority report stated that the Church could not change its position because the teaching was simply true. It concluded that since procreation was a "fundamental human good," any voluntary action that frustrates its intent is intrinsically evil, and that no exceptions were conceivable.[102] In contrast, the majority report, entitled "*Responsible Parenthood*," made the following arguments: (a) while history is important, so is dialogue between the Church and the world; (b) sexual abstinence in marriage is impossible and undesirable; (c) contraception attacks no real value but only a biological process; and, (d) when contraception adds to the marital good as a whole it becomes allowable.[103] Despite the overwhelming support of the Commission in favour of doctrinal change, on July 29th, 1968, Pope Paul VI rejected the majority report and issued his response in *Humanae Vitae*, which reaffirmed the received Catholic and magisterial teaching of *Casti Connubii* on the immorality of contraception.[104] It was a devasting blow to many of the commission members, especially the laity.[105]

Immediately after the Commission, Wojtyla along with a group of moral theologians in Krakow, Poland, wrote a lengthy treatise, "*Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life*," which restated the current teaching of the Church and much of what would be later issued in *Humanae Vitae*. The research began in 1966 and was completed in 1968. The report affirmed the legitimacy and infallibility of the Church's pronouncements on birth control because they involve matters of morality and natural law. It condemned contraception as being morally evil and impermissible on the grounds of its consistency with the teaching of

[101] Ibid., pp. 54-55.
[102] Ibid., p. 110.
[103] Charles, W. Norris, 'The Papal Commission on Birth Control—revisited,' in *The Linacre Quarterly*, 80, 1 (2013), 8–16 (p. 10).
[104] Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, 1968.
[105] See, McClory, *Turning Point*, for the complex and controversial ways in which the Minority report was accepted and responses from Commission members.

the ordinary Magisterium of the Church. The report explained that the condemnation of contraception is considered "a norm of natural law, and therefore an objective norm flowing from nature, immutable and obligatory for all, and not only for Catholics."[106]

The report restated traditional teaching on the ontological nature of the person, human dignity, and the importance of "conjugal love and the good of the family," which requires self-mastery, self-gift, and disinterestedness and leads to generosity, patience, self-control, and sexual maturity.[107] In view of the importance of self-gift to this thesis, it is worth quoting the report's full commentary on self-gift as justification for the church's condemnation of contraception.

> The power of transmitting life is a gift of God, and it forms part of the totality of the human person. It is precisely in terms of this nature, taken as a whole, that man must reckon with this power and its specific structure. Therein his intellect discovers a biological law, which, although biological, is related to the human person as a unity of body and soul. This law cannot be conceived as deriving solely from nature understood in the broadest sense. It follows that it is one thing to act on the surrounding environment to transform it (including the animal world), and another thing to intervene in the biological laws of the human person.20 The use of contraceptives constitutes an active intervention into the structure of the sexual act, and therefore of the action of the person; in this way, it is a violation of the person as a being gifted by sexuality, and of his biological laws. This is therefore not a case of employing a means that is in itself indifferent (such as a weapon, for instance) and that can be used well or badly, depending on the intention of the acting subject.[108]

The report explained that while spouses have an equal right to the full flourishing of their own vocations according to their human dignity, their different sexes must be considered. Moreover, "that contraception makes no contribution to the woman's personal rights and, if

[106] Wojtyla et al., 'The Foundations of the Church's Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life: A memorandum composed by a group of moral theologians from Kraków', p. 327.
[107] Ibid., pp. 331-332.
[108] Ibid., pp. 329-330.

used, she becomes the occasion for the male's pleasure and can lead to sexual slavery."[109] The report made final references to the evidence of Original Sin in the strength of the sex drive and by restating abstinence as the only permissible means to control family numbers. This treatise would foreshadow many of JPII's Pontifical concerns.

Humanae Vitae

Paul VI's rejection of the Birth Commission's Majority report was issued in *Humanae Vitae* in July 1968. The encyclical affirmed the sanctity of life, that procreation is at the heart of marriage and that a marriage open to procreation affirms the dignity of women. In rejecting the Majority Report, Paul VI crucially restated the church's traditional position on the immorality of artificial birth control by stating that, "Each and every marital act must of necessity be intrinsically ordered to the procreation of human life."[110] The Majority Report had called for more than an acknowledgement of the significance of spousal love in its own right; it had called for an appraisal of how the relationship between the two ends should be understood, for a shift away from the hierarchical language of primary and secondary ends. While Paul VI did not respond to the content of the Majority Report, his dismissal was categorical:

> . . . the conclusions arrived at by the commission could not be considered by us as definitive and absolutely certain, dispensing us from the duty of examining personally this serious question. This was all the more necessary because, within the commission itself, there was not complete agreement concerning the moral norms to be proposed, and especially because certain approaches and criteria for a solution to this question had emerged which were at variance with the moral doctrine on marriage constantly taught by the magisterium of the Church.[111]

[109] Ibid., p. 334.
[110] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, p. 11.
[111] Ibid., p.6.

The encyclical outlines the church's position on artificial contraception within the context of "responsible parenthood," which entails "an awareness of and respect for" the proper functions of biological processes underlying the procreative faculties and exercising reason and will to control innate drives and emotions.[112] Responsible parenthood is exercised by those who "prudently and generously decide to have more children, and by those who, for serious reasons and with due respect to moral precepts, decide not to have additional children for either a certain or an indefinite period of time."[113]

> Responsible parenthood . . . has one further essential aspect of paramount importance. It concerns the objective moral order which was established by God, and of which a right conscience is the true interpreter . . . From this it follows that they are not free to act as they choose in the service of transmitting life, as if it were wholly up to them to decide what is the right course to follow. On the contrary, they are bound to ensure that what they do corresponds to the will of God the Creator. The very nature of marriage and its use makes His will clear, while the constant teaching of the Church spells it out.[114]

Following a restatement of the immorality of abortion and sterilisation as a means of birth control, the pope expresses the Church's position on the immorality of artificial contraception.

> Similarly excluded is any action which either before, at the moment of, or after sexual intercourse, is specifically intended to prevent procreation—whether as an end or as a means . . . Neither is it valid to argue, as a justification for sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive, that a lesser evil is to be preferred to a greater one . . . it is never lawful, even for the gravest reasons, to do evil that good may come of it — in other words, to intend directly something which of its very nature contradicts the moral order, and which must therefore be judged unworthy of man, even though the intention is to protect or promote the welfare of an individual, of a family or of society in general. Consequently, it

[112] Ibid., p. 10.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.

> is a serious error to think that a whole married life of otherwise normal relations can justify sexual intercourse which is deliberately contraceptive and so intrinsically wrong.[115]

While traditional in approach, *Humanae Vitae* did more than restate the established position on birth control. In a way all too easily missed, it altered the trajectory of magisterial reasoning on marriage by a simple shift in how the relationship between the procreative and unitive is understood. Paul VI's unique contribution to the discussion on birth control is revealed in article 12 of *Humanae Vitae*:

> This particular doctrine, often expounded by the magisterium of the Church, is based on the inseparable connection, established by God, which man on his own initiative may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act. The reason is that the fundamental nature of the marriage act, while uniting husband and wife in the closest intimacy, also renders them capable of generating new life—and this as a result of laws written into the actual nature of man and of woman. And if each of these essential qualities, the unitive and the procreative, is preserved, the use of marriage fully retains its sense of true mutual love and its ordination to the supreme responsibility of parenthood to which man is called.[116]

The significance of this passage is that while *Casti Connubii* had affirmed the primary and secondary ends of marriage and cited the natural law as justification for the primary end, it had not made any specific claims to the relationship *between* the ends. In contrast, Paul VI used natural law not only to justify a hierarchy of ends (albeit with a greater emphasis on the unitive than *Casti Connubii*) but to justify the very *inseparability* of both ends. Paul VI's reasoning combined personalism with natural law to argue that the procreative and unitive aspects of the conjugal act were not "almost indivisible," as the Majority report had claimed, but rather *inseparable ends of an act specified by the nature of man and woman*.[117] This was an explicit papal endorsement of Wojtyla's exposition of the relationship between

[115] Ibid., p. 14.
[116] Ibid., p. 12.
[117] Thomas Petri, OP., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology*, p. 82.

the procreative and unitive ends of marriage in *Love and Responsibility*. Paul VI used the personalistic turn behind the Commission's Majority report which argued that the unitive should become the new locus of marriage to affirm its very antithesis. The pope did not explain this inseparability, but merely stated that the nature of marriage reveals "that an act of mutual love which impairs the capacity to transmit life which God the Creator, through specific laws, has built into it, frustrates His design which constitutes the norm of marriage and contradicts the will of the Author of life."[118] It was a subtle but important shift. Paul VI's failure to address the precise nature of the inseparability of the procreative and unitive–that is, of the relationship between personalism and the natural law in marriage–would become central to JPII's papacy.

According to Paul VI's biographer, Peter Hebblethwaite, *Humanae Vitae* came with its own cost to the pope. In the wake of widespread dissent over the encyclical, Hebblethwaite notes that the pope entered "a period of dark night, of depression, of deep agonizing over his stewardship . . . Was he a good pope? The answer was far from self-evident to him."[119] Despite holding the papacy for another ten years, *Humanae Vitae* was Paul VI's last encyclical. Unlike Paul VI, however, JPII would suffer no such dissonance in upholding the arguments expressed in *Humanae Vitae*. The encyclical would form part of his wider project to reconnect theology with the subjective experience through a personalism entirely in accord with the natural law. JPII's integral approach would affirm, and more significantly perhaps, complete what was left wanting, in *Humanae Vitae.*

The Acting Person: Self-mastery, Humanae Vitae and self-giving

While Wojtyla/JPII had long since demonstrated an interest in marriage and the family, much of his pontificate can be seen as a defence of *Humanae Vitae*. JPII's major works of a Theology of the Body (1979-84), *Familiaro Consortio* (1981), *Mulieris Dignitatum* (1988), *Veritatis Splendour* (1993), and *Evangelium Vitae* (1995) all affirm *Humanae Vitae's* vision of marriage. JPII's unique contribution to Magisterial teaching on the role of the family was his

[118] Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, p. 13.
[119] Peter Hebblethwaite, *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993), p. 594.

development of an approach to marriage that integrated personalism and the natural law. It argued for the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of the conjugal act and was applied with little concern for dissent. On one occasion the pope was noted as saying that, "because the Church's Magisterium has been instituted to enlighten the conscience . . . any appeal to this conscience in order to contest the truth of what has been taught by the Magisterium involves the rejection of the Catholic concept of both the Magisterium and of the moral conscience."[120] *Humanae Vitae* and the tradition it upheld were to shape the trajectory of JPII's pontificate.

I have suggested that the key to understanding JPII's appeal despite the widespread dissent of *Humane Vitae* is that his emphasis on the subjective, the unitive end of marriage, far outweighed that of his predecessors. JPII's emphasis on the subjective was crucially achieved without compromising the primacy of the procreative end and its professed inseparability with the unitive. To this end, owing to the argument for inseparability on the grounds of natural law, he presented what appeared to be a holistic view of marriage in which the Church acknowledged (and, in fact, always had acknowledged) the significance of love and human experience in marriage even while affirming the spouse's obligations towards procreation. It was an approach which not only claimed that the fulfilment of natural law leads to human flourishing, but rather presented in compelling depth precisely the nature of this flourishing in ways that spoke to the deepest human desires for authentic love and happiness.

For JPII, self-mastery was key to understanding how the procreative and unitive, the cosmological and personalistic, harmonise to bring about our fulfilment. Without self-mastery, a person's subjective and objective dimensions could not be brought into harmony in the divine. The parts could not be brought into the whole – the source of our flourishing. Self-mastery was necessary for realising authentic love and happiness because it was essential for self-giving, and self-giving was the condition for the possibility of the highest form of love and union in the divine. Pope Paul VI also extolled the virtues of self-discipline in *Humanae Vitae*. In article 21, we read spouses must, "acquire complete mastery over themselves and their emotions . . . only then will the expression of love, essential to married life, conform to right order."[121] Concerning periodic continence, Paul VI explains that self-

[120] Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*, p. 228.
[121] Pope Paul VI, *Humanae Vitae*, p. 21.

discipline gives the spouses' love "a more truly human character" allowing them to "develop their personalities and to be enriched with spiritual blessings."[122] It brings "abundant fruits of tranquillity and peace" to the family, fosters mutual "thoughtfulness and consideration," repels "inordinate self-love," raises "consciousness of responsibilities," and allows parents to educate their children better.[123] In *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyla spoke of the properly ordered sex drive as the expression of the fundamental good of existence from which all other goods proceed. This text, like *Humane Vitae*, speaks to the good of continence, and in a later text, *Reflections on Humane Vitae* (1984), JPII explained that continence protects the dignity of the conjugal act, frees the person from inner tensions and deepens personal communion.[124]

Wojtyla developed this idea in *The Acting Person*, published in 1969, a year after *Humane Vitae*. In *The Acting Person*, Wojtyla is concerned with showing the relationship between ethics and human flourishing. He argues that what makes a person become good or evil can only be understood through an account of being. This was in part in response to Max Scheler and Immanuel Kant's work in ethics. Wojtyla claimed that both Scheler and Kant's accounts failed to explain how the *whole person* is perfected by moral action. Neither Scheler's ethics of value nor Kant's ethics of duty provided a complete picture of how a person develops a moral character. Both value and duty are, Wojtyla explained, parts of a "total ethical experience," yet these were placed into competition by Scheler and Kant, who respectively made value and duty claim the whole of the ethical act.[125] In contrast, Wojtyla considered them "essential but partial aspects of an indivisible unity of ethical experience and action."[126] Kenneth Schmitz explains that Wojtyla sought to develop an anthropology that did not divide or exclude dimensions of the person, but maintained the integrity of the whole person.[127] For Wojtyla, argues Schmitz, only an account of being incorporating Thomistic and Aristotelian metaphysics could explain how the whole person, rather than parts of the person, are drawn into goodness. That is, how a person cultivates a strong, ethical character such that ethical values are who they are, not simply something they do.

---

[122] Ibid.
[123] Ibid.
[124] Pope John Paul II, *Reflections on Humanae Vitae* (Boston, USA: The Daughters of St. Paul, 1984), pp. 61-80.
[125] Schmitz, *At the Centre of the Human Drame: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II*, p. 47.
[126] Ibid..
[127] Ibid., 48.

Wojtyla's personalism is grounded in the claim that a person performing an action also fulfils themselves in it: "The personalistic value consists in the fact that the person actualises himself in the action."[128] While this implies a strong interrelation between the ethical and personalistic, they remain strictly distinct. The personalistic refers to the process by which the person is actualised in their action through the appropriate use of self-governance and self-possession. The ethical value is, rather, rooted in the performance of the action; "it develops as a substratum of the personalistic, which it permeates but with which it is not identified."[129] *The Acting Person* explains that every choice reveals and forms who we are. There is a profound and reciprocal nature to the relationship between our actions, character, and values. They cannot be compartmentalised but are to be viewed within the integrative whole of our being. From this viewpoint, our choices form our ethical character and by developing a stronger ethical character we are better placed to perceive and act in accord with the truth. As Janet Smith notes: "our character and values determine choices, but our choices also determine our actions, character and value."[130]

Self-mastery is the key to exercising our best judgement and becoming the best of ourselves. As *Humanae Vitae* explains, self-mastery perfects us because it allows us to orient our passions towards the good, disposing us to better perceive and act in accord with the good, and thereby become a better self. For Wojtyla, this was especially true in the case of the sex drive on account of the strength of its influence. Self-mastery allows a person to exercise control over their sexual passions, such that a person no longer feels at their mercy. This liberation means the person can better perceive and respond to the truth revealed through the passions. Wojtyla claimed that to authentically express their deepest values through their action in line with the objective truth a person must have "possession" of themselves.

> The experience lived through reveals not only the acts of the acts and experiences of man in their profound dependence on his own "I"; it also reveals the whole personal structure of self-determination in which man discovers his own "I" as the one who possesses himself and dominates himself . . . he is

[128] Pope John Paul II, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979), p. 322.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later,* p. 234.

> simultaneously given to himself as a gift and imposed on himself as a task . . . Each of us experiences the structure of self-possession and self-domination as essential to the personal "I", as forming the personal subjectivity of man, while he is experiencing a moral value, good or evil . . . Morality determines the personalistic dimension of man in a fundamental way . . . [It is] the fundamental expression of the transcendence proper to the personal "I". The decisions of man's conscience manifest at every step that he is a person consummating himself and outgrowing himself towards values accepted in truth and therefore realised with a deep sense of responsibility.[131]

Total self-giving is impossible without self-mastery because it requires the total surrender of our incommunicable "I." Put simply we cannot give what we do not possess. Grzegorz Ignatik, translator and author of endnotes and foreword of the original Polish text of *Love and Responsibility*, observes:

> From what man is as a person, that is, a being that possesses itself and governs itself, follows that he can "give himself," he can make himself a gift for others, without thereby violating his ontic status. The "law of the gift" is inscribed, so to speak, in the very being of the person . . . The Creator inscribed in the nature of the personal being the potency and power of giving oneself, and this potency is closely joined with the structure of self-possession and self-governance proper to the person, with the fact that he is "*sui iuris et alteri incommunicabilis*" . . . Only a and exclusively a being that possesses itself is able to "give itself," that is, to make itself a gift." [132]

The Acting Person developed Wojtyla's position in *Love and Responsibility*. It explained that love and authentic happiness were behind the Church's insistence on self-discipline–it was impossible to cultivate love, especially the highest form of love, without self-mastery. The total self-giving of betrothed love required self-mastery because it was the very act of giving the self–of surrendering individual freedom to a mutual greater good–that perfected the

[131] Wojtyla, 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man', p. 112.
[132] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, Appendix 281-282.

person. Moreover, for Wojtyla, self-discipline was necessary to meet the demands of the total gift of self required for betrothed love; to break our attachment to pleasure and overcome our aversion to pain, to be integrated and made whole, to be correctly ordered. Self-mastery was essential to human realisation through the gift of self.

Holy suffering and self-giving: The diminishment of positive emotions in spiritual growth

The purpose of introducing Wojtyla/JPII's ideas on human suffering, and conversely on pleasure and the desire for positive experiences, is that both are deeply connected to his understanding of human flourishing through self-giving. JPII's exposition of the meaning of human suffering was outlined in the apostolic letter, *Salvifici Doloris*, during the final year of the weekly lecture series on a Theology of the Body.[133] In this apostolic letter, JPII identified a crucial link between suffering and love, which drew narratives of Redemptive suffering and loss into his concept of self-giving as human realisation. Two features of JPII's approach to suffering are relevant to this project. The first is a reverence of suffering and loss. The second, tied to the former, is a mistrust of pleasure, or a concern for an attachment to positive experiences to the aversion of painful experiences. This final section will conclude with a reflection on Redemptive suffering and loss as self-giving in the priesthood, and its parallels to spousal self-giving. This section sets the context for the exposition of *Salvifici Doloris* in chapter five by showing how JPII's theology of total self-giving as human fulfilment appears to have shaped, and has been shaped by, his theology of suffering.

Redemptive suffering and JPII's reliance on self-giving

In *Salvifici Doloris* we read that suffering has a special value in the eyes of the Church: "It is something good, before which the Church bows in reverence with all the depth of her faith

[133] Pope John Paul II, *Salvifici Doloris*, 1984.

in the Redemption."[134] JPII asks us to view our suffering (and logically that of others) as union with Christ, through which we participate in the Redemption. In our suffering and dying, Christ is united to us in a privileged way through the Cross, and as we share in his suffering, so we share in his glory.

> Human suffering reached its culmination in the Passion of Christ. And at the same time it has entered into a completely new dimension and a new order: it has been linked to love . . . to that love which creates good, drawing it out by means of suffering[135] . . . In bringing about the Redemption through suffering, Christ has also raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption.[136]

Suffering is how we most fully participate in the *whole* life of Christ, as we complete through our suffering "what is lacking in Christ's afflictions" in the eternal salvific act.[137] Human realisation depends, for JPII, on a willingness to participate not only in the glory of Christ's resurrection but in Christ's abundant suffering. To share in the sufferings of Christ is to simultaneously suffer for the Kingdom of God, which is the supreme expression of a person's "moral greatness" and "spiritual maturity."[138] Christ's "emptying of himself" was at the same time "his being lifted up" by God: "In his weakness he manifested his *power*, and in humiliation he manifested all *his messianic greatness*."[139] Human pain can manifest virtue because Christ's pain manifests virtue. Suffering and loss open the human soul to profoundly receive Christ, to "rediscover" ourselves in a privileged experience of God's abundant love.[140]

> . . . *to suffer* means to become particularly *susceptible*, particularly *open to the working of the salvific powers of God*, offered to humanity in Christ. In him God has confirmed his desire to act especially through suffering, which is man's

[134] Ibid., par. 24.
[135] Ibid., par. 18.
[136] Ibid., par. 19.
[137] Ibid., par. 24.
[138] Ibid., par. 22.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid., par. 24.

> weakness and emptying of self, and he wishes to make his power known precisely in this weakness and emptying of self.[141]

Key to JPII's approach to human suffering is the creative potential of suffering when "offered up" to Christ. The profound union with Christ achieved through the offering of suffering creates the possibility for participation in the Redemption. The offering itself is the condition for the possibility of glory.[142] JPII's reverence of suffering and loss is on account of what he believes it attains when united to Christ's suffering and loss.

While self-giving is not explicitly mentioned in *Salvifici Doloris*, I will make the case that it is strongly implied, that there are clear parallels with JPII's account of spousal self-giving. Like spousal self-giving, the union attained in the offering of suffering holds a generative potential, through which we discover a "creative character of suffering" that allows us to participate in the creation of the Kingdom of God that results in abundant love.[143] When united to Christ's suffering, our suffering results in the experience of a distinctive and privileged unity with God through which we participate in the creation of virtue. From this perspective, the offering of suffering becomes a "gift" in its generative potential in the divine-human union.

But to truly speak of self-giving, the offering must consist of more than suffering and loss. It needs to be the very offering of *self* that attains the glory of this distinctive union. The "offering up" of our suffering can be drawn further into the language of self-gift when a distinction is made between pain and suffering. While pain engages the body, suffering engages the mind–it is a subjective experience. With close attention we see that while the offering includes the body as "a living sacrifice," the offering is more than our experience of *pain*, but our experience of *suffering as a response to the evil that is pain*. *Salvific Doloris* expresses the importance of bearing whatever disturbs and causes harm, of emptying all resistance to pain, because God will be known in our weakness. In one sense, we also offer to Christ our aversion to pain. To offer our suffering is to offer our *freedom to resist* pain. It is, then, our interiority, our very self that we offer to Christ. From this viewpoint, while JPII makes no explicit mention of self-giving in *Salvifici Doloris*, the very possibility for realisation

[141] Ibid., par. 23.
[142] This point will be expanded in chapter 5.
[143] JPII, *Salvifici Doloris*, p. 24.

in the divine-human union through the "offering up" of our pain and resistance to suffering implies that a gift of self–a *total* self-giving–lies at the heart of this possibility. In identifying suffering and loss as a privileged means of offering a total gift of self, of realising love, suffering must be viewed as bearing an intrinsic goodness that confers a potential to increase our capacity to benefit the world in and through the divine.

A mistrust of pleasure and the desire for positive experiences

The valorisation of suffering also diminishes the value of positive emotions in supporting our desire and capacity to self-give. The mistrust of pleasure, and more broadly, the desire for positive experiences to the aversion of painful experiences is a strong theme in *Love and Responsibility*. Wojtyla approaches positive experiences from a critique of utilitarianism: an egoic state in which the pursuit of maximum pleasure (to the exclusion of pain) becomes the norm of action, which leads to using the person as a means to an end, rather than viewing the person as an end in themselves.

> . . . if pleasure is the only and indispensable good and end of man, if it alone constitutes the whole basis of moral norms in human conduct, then consequently everything in that conduct must be treated as a means to this good and end. So even the human person, both my own as well as any other, everyone, must be presented in that role . . . [as] a means to attain maximum pleasure.[144]

Being predicated on ego gratification rather than human dignity, relationships grounded in utilitarianism are incapable of realising authentic love and happiness. Wojtyla wants us to resist the "perennial human tendency" to allow pleasure to determine our understanding of what is morally good and morally evil so that we avoid allowing concupiscence of the flesh to lead us into a "false" love in which the other becomes an object for sensual desire alone. For Wojtyla, this "hedonization of love in theory and practice" is grounded in an egoism

[144] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 21.

seeking above all an authenticity of lived experience disposed exclusively towards its own "I," without taking the other into account.[145] Wojtyla is keen to show that misdirected sexual urges threaten our perfection:

> Man should master the concupiscence of the flesh; he should master it when it makes itself heard and demands it to be satisfied against reason, against what reason acknowledges as right, as truly good . . . If a person does not do this, he jeopardises his natural perfection . . . The person defends himself against the "invasion" that comes from the side of sensuality and the concupiscence of the flesh . . . because first and foremost it threatens his natural power of self-determination.[146]

Most would agree that "using" another person for personal ends causes suffering. Equally, we would want to agree that being entirely at the mercy of our thoughts, emotions and desires also causes great suffering. Rather I wish to address the fearful way in which Wojtyla approaches positive emotions and the centrality of this narrative of positive experiences as temptation to Wojtyla's understanding of self-giving. For Wojtyla, Pleasure poses a consistent, profound threat to our natural powers of self-determination, and in doing so, is one of the strongest threats to self-giving. As will be shown in greater depth in Chapter 5, pleasure and the desire for positive experiences are frequently identified with all that inhibits our ability to orient our lives to another and to find authentic happiness. While attachment to pleasure and aversion to pain is a universal human experience, Wojtyla's fearful approach to pleasure limits the capacity of positive emotions to draw us into lives of benefit to others. This approach neglects the role of positive emotions, and yes, even pleasure, in increasing our desire and capacity to self-give.

[145] Ibid., pp. 135-6.
[146] Ibid., pp. 178-181.

Self-gift and suffering in the priesthood

The connection between suffering and love in self-giving is made explicit in JPII's writings on the priesthood. Like self-giving in the spousal relationship, the self-giving of the priesthood results in a union through which the priest becomes a reflection of the unity-in-communion of God. Viewing the priest's vocation through a lens of self-giving is not however a new idea that can be credited to JPII. In 1965, Pope Paul VI issued *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, in which he claimed that the priest attains union with God through virginity or celibacy in which he is consecrated to Christ. In offering himself as a "chaste virgin" for Christ, the priest adheres to Christ more easily with an "undivided heart," and becomes "apt to accept, in a broad sense, paternity in Christ."[147]

Spousal and priestly self-giving, for JPII, is always conditioned by human sexuality. When virginity and celibacy are at the heart of self-giving, JPII explains, chastity retains its original meaning and is "lived as a genuine sign of and in precious service to the love of communion and gift of self to others." [148] The correct expression of human sexuality secures an interior unity, a singular orientation of the person's vital energies towards God. Self-giving involves union and generation that is mediated through human sexuality as the fundamental good of existence from where all goods arise.

In *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* promulgated in 1992, JPII explains that self-giving is essential to the priesthood. The spiritual life of the priesthood is configured to Christ through pastoral charity, of which the essential content is the gift of self; "the total gift of self to the Church following the example of Christ."[149] The gift of self manifests Christ's love. Like spousal self-giving, JPII affirmed Paul VI's stance in *Presbyterorum Ordinis* that the self-gift of the priest has no limits.[150] The pastoral character of the priest's obedience is lived as a "constant readiness to allow oneself to be taken up, as it were 'consumed,' by the needs and demands of the flock."[151] Like Christ, the priest is the suffering servant of God–he is both priest and victim.

[147] Pope Paul VI, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (1965), par. 16.
[148] Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis,* (1992), par. 29.
[149] Ibid., par. 23.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ibid., par. 28 (my emphasis).

The connection between suffering and love in self-giving as obedience to God explicit in *Pastores Dabo Vobis* echoes the same narrative of the priesthood as martyrdom in *Presbyterorum Ordinis.* In the same way that the priest is offered for total "consumption" by the laity, Paul VI states that priestly "perfection" will be attained when the priest's response to the overwhelming demands that will certainly befall him is to accept that his only "food" should be to follow the will of him who had sent him to accomplish his work.[152] The priestly unity, the singular orientation, that allows the priest to balance all these tensions will be attained only when the priest adopts a posture of "docile obedience" to God.[153] While Paul VI acknowledges the very real danger of a complete "dissipation of energy" in the perfection sought by the priest in their total self-giving, there is no mention of the necessity for legitimate self-care. Self-care is frequently synonymous with selfishness and egocentricity within the suffering servant narrative.

The self-giving of the priest is a passive offering of his whole being to the laity in service of the Church. While the priest ought not to consider the cost to himself, this cost is, in another sense, deeply significant because the greater the sacrifice, the greater the union with Christ. "Self-loss" in self-giving holds a greater potential to unite the priest more fully with Christ. In the same way that total self-giving in spousal love attains a privileged union with God for the spouses, the suffering and loss experienced by the priest in total self-giving to the Church attains an equally privileged union with God. While the generative potential for unity and goodness of spousal self-giving is realised in the total gift of self to the spouse by which new life is created, the generative potential of the priest's self-giving is in sacrificial loss through which the Kingdom of God grows and is renewed by the priest's participation in Christ's sufferings.

The purpose of introducing the concept of suffering to conclude this chapter is to show that, for JPII, suffering and loss add to the potency of self-giving; they are part of the generative potential of self-giving. In JPII's writings on spousal love, we see this theme expressed as a pervading sense of anxiety over the constant threat of attachment to pleasure and positive emotions to the aversion of pain. In his writings on the priesthood, we find a more explicit articulation of the value of suffering and loss in self-giving, to the detachment from all considerations of self. These aspects of self-giving fundamentally point

[152] Paul VI, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, par. 16.
[153] Ibid., 17.

to different degrees of the same idea: suffering and loss are more conducive to self-giving than positive experiences of pleasure and authentic happiness. Self-giving which involves pain and suffering is viewed as the possibility for a greater union with the divine than self-giving where suffering is absent or where self-giving involves primarily positive emotions. Privileging sacrifice and loss in self-giving diminish the role of authentic happiness in increasing our desire and capacity to self-give.

Conclusion

This chapter provided a context to engage a Theology of the Body. It showed how the strands of Wojtyla/JPII's thought on the divine-human relationship and human flourishing led to the weekly lecture series on the body as a natural expression of spousal love. Wojtyla/JPII's texts and responses to events before and after a Theology of the Body reflected a concern to show that traditional magisterial teaching could embrace the fullness of human existence in its wholeness. It was a project to reclaim the body as revealing the source of our realisation in a relationship of gift. Wojtyla/JPII achieved this by integrating his personalism grounded in the writings of St. John with traditional magisterial teaching on the natural law in the context of marriage, which offered a new and compelling exposition of key magisterial teaching on the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage, and at the heart of this exposition was self-gift. The magisterium's resolute adherence to the idea that spousal love could only be cultivated in marriage open to the transmission of life was justified through a concept of "betrothed love" as a total gift of self. Only a total gift of self in which nothing was held back would provide the grounds for the highest form of love.

Couched in the poetic language of the mystical union, Wojtyla/JPII's exposition of spousal love presented a romantic image of marriage, which appeared to respond to the deepest human desire for love and authentic happiness, for completion in union with God, others, and the world. Spousal self-giving drew the parts into the whole. Situating traditional teaching within a vast conceptual framework of wholeness softened the very

same message that had been so often delivered with a detachment that left many feeling the Church neither understood nor cared for the lived experience of its members. Wojtyla/JPII's approach affirmed the subjective experience and offered a compelling case for why the Church's defence of natural law demonstrated that the Church always had been concerned with the authentic flourishing of the whole person.

Yet beneath the poetic grandeur of his approach rests the very same argument behind the mass dissent to *Humanae Vitae*. Wojtyla/JPII simply found a way to transmute long-held unpopular teaching into something bearing a holistic, romantic appeal. Even suffering had its place within this vast framework. Suffering in the pursuit of total self-giving was elevated to a new dimension of love, union with God, and participation in the Redemption, as offering the completion for which we all yearn.

The subtle reliance on self-gift that permeates Wojtyla/JPII's understanding of the divine-human relationship and human flourishing grounds his exposition of magisterial teaching on marriage and family. One might say that self-giving as the means for human flourishing through the body as a natural expression of spousal love, of a relation of gift, became a key if not defining feature of his pontificate.

Chapter 2

Psychology and theology in dialogue

The aim of the current chapter is to exposit and call into question two key claims embedded in JPII's theology of self-gift. First, that self-giving is human flourishing because it is the divinely given means by which the 'whole' person is drawn into grace. Second, that suffering and loss offer a privileged opportunity for total self-giving. JPII's claims on the connections between self-giving as human flourishing and wholeness will be engaged in dialogue with Jung's theory of individuation. The relationship between suffering, self-giving and human realisation will be explored using positive psychology. This chapter is divided into three main sections. First, it explores the broader value and boundaries of interdisciplinary dialogue between Catholic theology and psychology in the context of JPII's theology of self-gift. Second, it offers an overview of Jungian and positive psychology's development and key features. Finally, it asks why and how Jungian and positive psychology can support a critical reading of JPII's theology of self-gift as human flourishing.

The disciplinary intersection

> Because of its broad focus on human thought and behaviour, psychological science can and does reach into many areas that concern theologians . . . Theological questions commonly concern humanity's relationship to God, what it means to flourish and live the sort of lives God intends for us, and how the Church should go about advancing the Kingdom of God. Consequently, theological inquiry may advance more rapidly with an infusion of insights from the human sciences – perhaps especially the psychological sciences.[154]

[154] Justin L. Barrett, *Theo-Psych: A Psychological Primer for Theologians* (Blueprint.org, 2022), pp. 13-14.

Psychological resources can be useful to theologians due to the overlap in disciplinary interests. At the broadest level, theology and psychology have a mutual interest in the ethical questions they seek to ask and answer. While the questions typically asked by empirical scientists are not those typically asked by theologians and vice versa,[155] there is a common interest in ethics. Psychology is an ethical science, claims Robert Kugelmann, because it seeks to understand and speak to how we should live our lives.[156] It offers implicit guidelines for conduct which describe and prescribe how to thrive in life and how to remedy suffering. While this suggestion would be controversial in some schools of psychology, Kugelmann explains that this is not an indictment of psychology, "for there is great effort to be fair and neutral within the field; it is simply stating the obvious case that no science that describes and explains human behavior and mental life can avoid indicating better and worse ways to act, think, and feel."[157] Theology is also concerned with how we ought to live, how we flourish, and experience and manage pain and loss. The quest to understand human nature, how it thrives, and what to do when it does not, is then perhaps the broadest way to describe the intersection between theology and psychology.

On more specific levels, Justin L. Barrett (a psychologist with an interest the study of religion), suggests that psychology may prove beneficial when theologians are: (1) making descriptive psychological claims; (2) making normative claims supported by descriptive psychological claims; (3) making claims about what effects texts, rituals and practices have on people, and; (4) constructing an argument that uses intuitions as premises.[158] These points are not an exhaustive list, but they give some idea of the lines upon which interdisciplinary dialogue may be engaged.

Not all theological inquiry however benefits from psychological input. Psychological reflection is neither useful nor important to all areas of theology and there are important divergences and contested boundaries between the disciplines. Psychological schools of thought emerged in the nineteenth century into a landscape of philosophical inquiry long

[155] John Perry and Joanna Leidenhag, *Science-Engaged Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023), p. 5.
[156] Robert Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), p. 1.
[157] Ibid.
[158] Ibid., p. 14.

occupied by religion. Psychologists took positions on grounds deemed sacred and protected by the Church, which gave rise to interdisciplinary tensions.[159] The 1918 Code of Canon Law referred to the philosophical presumptions of some prominent psychologists as being entirely antithetical to the Catholic faith.[160] Some Church officials and Catholic psychologists claimed that psychotherapeutic practices were immoral.[161] Moreover, while Catholic higher education participated in and benefited from the growth of psychology, some believed that the study of psychology in principle took place within a philosophical context defined for it by Catholic higher education.[162]

In contrast, however, others have welcomed the advancement of psychology. In 1945, Catholic psychologists in the US established The American Catholic Psychological Association (ACPA). The ACPA sought to integrate psychology with Catholic thought by creating "a bridge for Catholics into psychology and for Catholic psychologists to participate more fully in the mainstream."[163] The rapid development of the discipline also resulted in the emergence of schools of thought that took religion seriously in a scientific age. Compared to the dominant behaviourist and early psychoanalytic approaches of the time, humanistic psychology was a good fit for Catholic psychologists because it took spiritual concerns seriously and criticized the dominant psychologies in the same terms as did the neo-scholastics.[164] Jungian psychoanalytical theory also supported a positive and constructive engagement with religion and theology. Jung took Catholicism seriously, and for this reason, many Catholics also took Jung seriously.[165] For all its challenges, many Catholic thinkers did not shy away from addressing challenges raised by psychology but chose instead to engage with and cultivate the emerging disciplinary intersection.

In this connection, one chief reason to bring theology into dialogue with psychology is the rich disciplinary intersection and history of engagement. On the broadest level, this

[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid., p. 1.
[161] Ibid.
[162] Since the 1920s, Catholic higher education had striven to actualize the ideal of a neo-scholastic framework for the undergraduate liberal arts curriculum set by Pope Leo XIII's encyclical, *Aeterni Patris* (1879), which aimed to advance and restore Christian philosophy in Catholic schools.
[163] Robert Kugelmann, 'The American Catholic Psychological Association: A Brief History and Analysis,' in *The Catholic Social Science Review* 5 (2000), 233–249 (p. 233).
[164] Robert Kugelmann, 'An Encounter between Psychology and Religion: Humanistic Psychology and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Nun,' in the *Journal of The History of Behavioural Sciences*, 44, 4 (2005) 347-365 (p. 348).
[165] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries,* p. 204.

intersection reflects a shared concern for ethics. *What are the best ways to live? How can one find happiness? How do we manage pain and suffering? What is human nature?* There are clear overlaps in the questions asked by theology and psychology. Catholic thinkers have long demonstrated that intersectional boundaries, even when contested (and perhaps especially when contested) are important sites of creative engagement that present novel possibilities for disciplinary advancement.

Faith and Reason

The receptivity of Catholics to engage with psychology reflects a wider receptivity to multidisciplinary dialogue arising from traditional Catholic teaching on the unity of faith and reason. Through its diverse voices, Catholic thought has long striven to maintain a fruitful dialect between these principles. In 1879, Pope Leo XIII issued the encyclical, *Aeterni Patris*, intended to revive Thomistic philosophy in Catholic education. The encyclical focused on the profound and indissoluble unity between faith and reason.

> But the natural helps with which the grace of the divine wisdom, strongly and sweetly disposing all things, has supplied the human race are neither to be despised nor neglected, chief among which is evidently the right use of philosophy. . .Therefore, Divine Providence itself requires that, in calling back the people to the paths of faith and salvation, advantage should be taken of human science also - an approved and wise practice which history testifies was observed by the most illustrious Fathers of the Church. They, indeed, were wont neither to belittle nor undervalue the part that reason had to play, as is summed up by the great Augustine when he attributes to this science "that by which the most wholesome faith is begotten . . . is nourished, defended, and made strong."[166]

Kugelmann notes that Leo XIII's call to reintroduce Thomistic principles of the relationship between faith and reason into Catholic education ignited a "Catholic Renaissance" in the

[166] Pope Leo XIII, *Aeterni Patris* (1879), par. 2-3.

1920s across American Catholic higher education that some claim provided a philosophical context for the expansion of psychology in America.[167] The centrality of the dialectic between faith and reason to the Catholic tradition was again emphasized in 1998 by JPII in *Fides et Ratio*. In this encyclical JPII claims that "Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth."[168]

> The world and all that happens within it, including history and the fate of peoples, are realities to be observed, analysed and assessed with all the resources of reason, but without faith ever being foreign to the process. Faith intervenes not to abolish reason's autonomy nor to reduce its scope for action, but solely to bring the human being to understand that in these events it is the God of Israel who acts. . . Therefore, reason and faith cannot be separated without diminishing the capacity of men and women to know themselves, the world and God in an appropriate way. There is thus no reason for competition of any kind between reason and faith: each contains the other, and each has its own scope for action.[169]

Catholic teaching on the harmony between faith and reason is indebted to the writings of Thomas Aquinas who believed that faith and natural reason exist in a balance that supports both their unity and autonomy. Natural reason, Aquinas claimed, is in one sense independent of faith when considered as that which assents to non-evident statements.[170] It has an indispensable autonomy because it relies on evidence which moves the intellect or senses towards a certainty that can only be attained by rational investigation which functions without being under the influence of faith.[171] Yet Aquinas believed that grace perfects nature. The "pre-ambles of faith" (knowledge attained through natural reason) pave the way for grace, simultaneously possessing autonomy and the capacity to point to

[167] Robert Kugelmann, 'The American Catholic Psychological Association: A Brief History and Analysis,' *The Catholic Social Science Review*, 5 (2000), 233-249 (p. 233).
[168] Pope John Paul II, *Fides et Ratio* (1998), Introduction
[169] Ibid., pp. 16-17.
[170] Robert Di Ceglie, 'Faith Reason and Charity in Thomas Aquinas's Thought,' *The International Journal of Philosophy and Religion*, 79 (2016), 133-146 (p. 137).
[171] Ibid., p. 143.

faith itself. Natural knowledge has the potential to affirm that God can be known in all that exists.

Aquinas balanced the primacy of faith and the autonomy of reason. While faith and reason are in one sense incompatible since they have different objects (unseen and seen), they are in another sense inseparable because a person's love for and pursuit of God includes all things that are related to God, which means all that exists. Faith can never contradict reason because grace never destroys or contradicts nature. Reason can then support faith "from its own principles," bringing clarity to the truths of faith. From this perspective, theological interdisciplinary engagement is justified by the potential of rational knowledge to confirm faith and the principle that its pursuit reflects "the love for the truth believed."[172]

The centrality of integral personhood

Sections of theological and psychological inquiry seek to advance knowledge of the complexity and transactional nature of the human person and to ask what this tells us about how human beings thrive.[173] Within their respective disciplinary parameters, each aims to explain why and how the diverse aspects of the human person appear oriented to the possibility of human flourishing. Fraser Watts claims that progression in the study of human nature in both disciplines reflects a trajectory of working within the questions raised by what it means to be an integral person.[174] That is, to acknowledge the many aspects of humanity, their complex interaction, the consequences of this interaction for ourselves and others, and the need to attain some degree of integration.

Given the heterogeneous nature of both disciplines, the fact that both appear to be moving in similar directions speaks to the value of *intra*disciplinary dialogue as much as it does *inter*disciplinary dialogue. Watts cites the tensions between theological accounts of the body-soul unity and their relation to human flourishing and suggests that the emphasis

[172] Ibid., p. 142.
[173] The term "transactional" refers here, in a psychological sense, to the idea of the reciprocal interaction and interdependence of various aspects of personhood for optimal functioning. This is to be distinguished from any connotation from its meaning in other disciplines which might imply a tendency towards utilitarianism.
[174] Fraser Watts, *Theology and Psychology* (London: Routledge, 2018).

on relational accounts has led to a neglect of the bodily aspects of being human. "But perhaps," Watts claims, "the problem is not that we have a wealth of relational accounts but rather the assumption if it exists, that theology's relational accounts have not had sufficient contact with those that emphasize the bodily aspects of being human."[175] The heterogeneity of psychology results in similar tensions. Watts points to the long-standing tension between social constructionism and biological determinism. At their extremes, these disciplines become exclusive, but a broad social/biological discipline is becoming a real possibility in their weaker forms.[176]

> The claim is that Christian theology and contemporary science are at one in emphasizing the unity of the human person. It is held that both take an integrated view of body or brain on the one hand, and of mind, soul, personality, or spirit on the other. This argues that science is not as reductively physicalist as it seems and that the Judeo-Christian tradition is not as dualist as is sometimes supposed.[177]

There is value in applying integrated or multidisciplinary approaches to studies of integral personhood. The motif of wholeness which often subtly upholds the pursuit of integral personhood can appear as much a theoretical as methodological consideration for theologians and psychologists. The desire to understand how the parts fit into the whole in ways that lead to our flourishing often underpins this inquiry. Wholeness, taken as a fluid concept of 'completeness,' appears intuitively important to our understanding of how human beings thrive and may be best studied through an interdisciplinary approach.

Catholic theologians have long drawn on psychology to advance their understanding of spiritual development as wholeness. Psychology offers methods and tools that help reveal the supportive and inhibitory factors involved in spiritual progression. The profound connection between spiritual and psychological maturity speaks to the value of employing empirical resources to study processes of spiritual development. Sr. Noreen Cannon, a Sister and Jungian psychoanalyst, claims that wholeness speaks to how one balances the

[175] Ibid., p. 69.
[176] Ibid., p. 66.
[177] Ibid.

"paradoxical struggle between being wholly worldly and wholly devoted to God…of living a holy and Christlike life while affirming all the energies of one's human nature."[178] Writing on the relationship between holiness and wholeness, Cannon explains that spiritual maturity is deeply tied to psychological maturity.[179]

> The problem of how to be both holy and whole is universal. We all experience both the longing for self-fulfilment and the longing for self-transcendence. It is the tension created by these seeming opposites that constitutes the problem of holiness and wholeness…Spiritual directors have gradually realized that growth in the spiritual life is intrinsically related to psychological maturity and that the pursuit of holiness can be destructive when it ignores the natural laws of human growth and development.[180]

How one approaches the struggle of being "wholly worldly and wholly devoted to God" (which Sr. Cannon refers to as one's "spirituality") is important because how religious and psychological needs are met affects the vitality of one's life.

> If one accepts human nature with its conflicting desires and its paradoxes (perhaps this is what it means to "take up one's cross"), the soul seems to thrive, and develops in a uniquely creative way. If, however, one ignores or rejects a part of oneself (often in the name of holiness), the soul suffers and rebels in some form of spiritual illness, either psychological or physical.[181]

From this perspective, intersectional reflection can advance research into human flourishing as wholeness. Theology is interested in the whole picture; how the whole person moves from their origins to their end according to their nature. While one could argue that theology and psychology differ in their aims – the psychologist investigates reality in itself whereas the theologian investigates all things as they are related to God – one could equally

---

[178] Sr. Noreen Cannon, "The Problem of Holiness and Wholeness," in *Catholicism and Jungian Psychology*, ed. by J. Marvin Spiegelman, PhD (Tempe, Arizona, USA: New Falcon Publications, 1994), pp. 15-27 (p.16).
[179] Ibid., p.17.
[180] Ibid., pp. 15-17.
[181] Ibid., p. 16.

argue that there can be nothing omitted from the wonder of the theologian because *all* reality is in relation to God and so perhaps the more resources theologians have at their disposal the better.

Theological claims to empirical realities as sites of psychological reflection

More particularly, JPII's theology of self-giving invites psychological reflection because he makes claims about empirical realities. Concerning Barrett's points of discernment, JPII makes descriptive psychological claims about the human impact of magisterial and doctrinal teaching. These empirical realities are engaged through JPII's personalism, which forms one strand of his "integral approach" in which he explains how specific subjective and objective aspects of personhood are integrated through self-giving in ways that lead to human flourishing. His approach attends to the subjective experiences of love, self-mastery, sexuality, marriage, suffering and loss, and their relation to faith, doctrine, and wider church teachings. His theological anthropology seeks to explain the meaning and function of psychological states and to this end, opens itself to empirical reflection.

While noting the value and relevance of psychology to the study of JPII's theology of self-gift, this is not an interdisciplinary project; I seek neither to assimilate nor integrate the disciplines.[182] Rather this thesis draws on relevant psychological insights to explore and challenge JPII's integral approach. Put another way, this project aims to use psychology as a resource for theological reasoning. While this does lend some measure of theological authority to psychology, this is not to suggest that theological claims need to be verified by psychology to be meaningful or rational, nor that psychology "should be used as a lazy trump card to win theological debates."[183] John Perry and Joanna Leidenhag explain that the sciences are, after all, complex and diverse. They are historically, politically, philosophically,

[182] Further information on these methods of interdisciplinary working can be found here: Fraser Watts, *Theology and Psychology* (London: Routledge, 2018); W.S. Brown, 'Resonance: A Model for Relating Science, Psychology and Faith', The *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 23, 2 (1990) 110-120; John Carter and Bruce Narramore, *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan, 1979); Steven J. Sandage and Jeannine K. Brown, *Relational Integration of Psychology and Christian Theology* (New York: Routledge, 2018).

[183] Perry and Leidenhag, *Science-engaged Theology*, p. 4.

and even geographically contingent.[184] Within the institution of science, it is taken for granted that,

> …scientists disagree with each other, that their findings are always in process and provisional, that the mechanisms of power and prestige play into any equation and that any knowledge we claim to discover is relativised by those facts. But this is true of the humanities (including theology) as well as the sciences.[185]

While theologians might want to disagree that all theology is provisional, the connection between disciplinary complexity and universal human fallibility points to the epistemic virtue of opening oneself up to multiple sources of correction.[186] To this end, this project aims to show how psychology can enrich and deepen theological inquiry.

The project draws on two areas of psychology to correspond with two key ideas in JPII's theology. The first is that human realisation can be understood as a wholeness arising through total self-giving, and the second is that suffering and loss offer privileged, divinely instituted, opportunities for this total self-giving.

Jung's psychoanalytical theory addresses the idea that human flourishing attains to and results in wholeness. His theory of individuation is a theory of personality development which claims that human realisation occurs in a process of integration and wholeness. There are multiple convergences in how Jung and JPII envisage processes of integration and wholeness in human flourishing. Reflecting on these points of agreement may help clarify why the motif of wholeness is important to JPII and what he is trying to achieve. There are also points of divergence, some of which are irreconcilable and point, as we shall see below, to important interdisciplinary boundaries.

Positive psychology incorporates an array of perspectives on how human beings thrive. This project focuses on Martin Seligman's theory of authentic happiness paying particular attention to the role of positive emotions in orienting a person towards a good larger than themselves. While the reflection using Jung was on a shared point of interest

[184] Ibid., p. 3.
[185] Ibid.
[186] Ibid.

(wholeness as human realisation), the reflection using positive psychology centres on divergent points of interest; that is, research from positive psychology into the role of positive emotions in orienting a person to a good larger than themselves. This project will reflect on the role of positive emotions in cultivating a desire and willingness to 'give ourselves' to a cause greater than our own to counterbalance JPII's privileging of suffering and loss over positive emotions in spiritual growth.

Jung's psychoanalytic theory

Psychoanalysis: history and current status

The school of psychoanalysis developed from Sigmund Freud's theory of psychodynamics which emerged during the late 19th century. Freud emphasised the importance of drives and other forces in human functioning, especially those within the unconscious, and held that childhood experience is the basis for adult personality and relationships. The school of psychodynamics later developed under Freud, Carl Jung and Alfred Adler into the school of psychoanalysis. The school of psychoanalysis includes a theory of personality, a philosophy of the nature of humanity and a procedure for psychotherapy. It was one of five primary schools of psychological research into mental illness and emotional states that rose to prominence in the West during the early 20th Century, alongside the schools of structuralism, functionalism, gestalt and behaviourism.[187]

By the 1930s, psychoanalysis and behaviourism became leading schools of thought as interest dwindled in structuralism, functionalism and gestalt psychology. By the middle of the 20th century, research became more diverse and open to internal collaboration, which heralded two important developments. First, there was a general acceptance of the empirical method, which extended to most areas of the discipline and favoured quantitative research. Second, there was a movement of psychologists from the university to employment in public affairs, clinical practice and human services work. In the 1930s almost

[187] See Michael Wertheimer, *A Brief History of Psychology* (London: Psychology Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2012) for a comprehensive account of these schools and their development.

all psychologists were in academic positions, but by 1950 more than half were working outside the university in corporate or healthcare human-service roles.[188] This movement generated a gradual shift in emphasis from the science of psychology as an academic discipline with its roots in experimental psychology to a concern with helping people to understand and overcome problems.

The discipline of clinical psychology was first proposed in the late 19th century and rapidly pioneered new ways of drawing together and developing the various strands of therapeutic practice concerned with helping people with a broad range of mental illnesses and emotional problems. Clinical psychology is a vast and diverse field that seeks to diagnose and treat mental and emotional disorders, as well as research the causes of these disorders and the effects of therapy. It rose to formidable prominence during the 20th century and is now the most popular area of study in psychology.

This development would have a significant impact on psychoanalysis. Until this point, the appeal of the psychoanalytical movement had been limited to psychiatrists – it exerted very little influence over the discipline of psychology as a whole. The growth in clinical psychology firmly established psychoanalysis as a major influence on contemporary Western psychology. While clinical psychology was developed relatively independent of psychoanalysis, "dynamic theory" was utilised in many clinical programs which has a distinctly Freudian essence, and psychotherapy (an umbrella term for one-to-one therapeutic interventions, which includes but is not limited to psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy[189]) became largely informed by psychoanalytic practice. These developments served to generate a renewed and broader interest in psychoanalysis and its application.

The increasing demand for therapeutic interventions in corporate and healthcare settings did not, however, ultimately benefit the position of psychoanalysis in mainstream clinical treatment. Over time, these settings required increasingly targeted and measurable, brief clinical interventions, which psychoanalysis could not offer. Finding itself ill-equipped

[188] Wertheimer, *A Brief History of Psychology*, p. 208.

[189] It may be useful here to note the difference between psychodynamic and psychoanalytic therapy. Psychodynamic is the Freudian theory of psychic drives, which was the founding theory of the school of psychoanalysis. Psychoanalytic theory refers to Jung's development of Freud's psychodynamic theory. Psychoanalysis refers to the theory and therapeutic practice of Freud's psychodynamic theory and all the theories and practices to which it gave rise.

to meet this new clinical application, the influence of psychoanalysis in mainstream clinical psychology slowly diminished. This development paved the way for the current dominance of cognitive behavioural therapy (CBT). Specialising in brief solution-focused therapy, CBT was a natural fit for these new applications.

The displacement of psychoanalysis from mainstream clinical psychology did not diminish its contemporary relevance, however, as an independent school. Following Jung's death in 1961, psychoanalytic theory has been subject to an explosion of professional therapeutic interest.[190] The endurance of psychoanalysis as a thriving albeit peripheral school of thought reflects the breadth of perspectives held in tension and complementarity within the discipline of psychology as a whole. Being far from monolithic, psychology has always been subject to interior critique and advanced because and not despite its diversity. In the "post-Jungian" period of the late 20th century, three major schools of psychoanalysis have evolved: (1) the *classical* school, which followed the traditional methods of Jung with a focus on self and individuation; (2) the *developmental* school, which has a specific focus on the effects of infancy and childhood on the evolution of adult personality, and an equally stringent emphasis on the analysis of transference/ countertransference dynamics in clinical work, and; (3) the *archetypal* school, which plays with and explores images in therapy, paying the greatest respect to images just as they are without seeking an interpretive conclusion.[191] Academics are also showing a renewed interest in evaluating the origins of Jung's ideas and practices, and his split from Freud. Art and literary criticism influenced by psychoanalytical psychology are flourishing, even though it is still often based on somewhat out-of-date applications of Jungian theory.[192] Anthropological, social, and political studies are exploring Jung's intuitions about directions for the future, and Jung's influence in theology continues to grow.[193]

[190] Andrew Samuels, 'New Developments in the Post-Jungian Field Field,' in The *Cambridge Companion to Jung*, ed. by Polly Young-Eisendrath and Terence Dawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 1-16 (p. 8).
[191] Ibid., p. 9.
[192] Ibid.
[193] Ibid.

The birth of Jung's Psychoanalytic theory

In 1913, after seven years of close discipleship under Freud and at a time of rapid growth and influence in psychoanalysis, Jung famously separated from the Freudian school of psychoanalysis. The differences between their theory and application had proved irreconcilable and Jung sought independence to develop his branch of psychoanalysis. The schism would lead to Jung's most significant and original contributions to psychoanalysis. For the current purposes, it will suffice to focus on three aspects of the separation which significantly informed Jung's theory of individuation and his understanding of the role of religion in psychic development. These were the role of the sex drive, the purpose of psychoanalysis, and the existence of the "religious function."

The first of these differences lies in the importance Freud ascribed to sexuality in personality development and mental illness. Freud considered sexuality to be the fundamental driving force of humanity. While Jung affirmed the importance of the sex drive, he believed Freud's analysis of the human psyche to be overwhelmed with the terminology of sex. Jung preferred to speak rather of psychic energy in a play of opposites that transcended while underpinning biological instincts and drives. For Jung, only the opposite urge of life – the spirit – can free us from the "fleshy bond." Freud, he argued, would not learn that "God is his father."[194]

> We moderns are faced with the necessity of rediscovering life in the spirit; we must experience it anew for ourselves. It is the only way in which to break the spell that binds us to the cycle of biological events.[195]

The keys to understanding and resolving personality development and mental illness resided not in the sex drive, claimed Jung, but rather in unifying the opposites of flesh and spirit – of living a more integrated, authentic life in the totality of our psyche.

[194] Carl Gustav Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, trans. by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1933), p. 119.
[195] Ibid.

The second difference concerns the purpose of psychoanalysis. Jung was uncomfortable with Freud's emphasis on the pathological states of the mind through which the person is viewed largely through their defects. Jung was interested in the healthy mind, preferring rather "to look at man in the light of what in him is healthy and sound, and to free the sick man from just that kind of psychology which colours every page Freud has written."[196] Jung claimed that Freud showed "stubborn resistance" to a psychology of health and religious experience because he was unable to move beyond his psychology. According to Jung, Freud could not envisage a psychology of the healthy mind because "his views arose from uncritical, likely unconscious view of the world which serves to narrow the field of human experience and limit one's vision."[197] Jung was interested in examining the nature and process of self-actualisation on the deepest level of the psyche. He desired more than to correct what was going wrong; he wanted to understand and develop an individual's potential so they might be completely and wholly "at home" with themselves.

The final difference concerns Jung's mystical leanings. Jung was renowned for his interest in the paranormal, he was known to incorporate astrology into his therapeutic work and collaborated with the pioneering ESP (Extrasensory Perception) researcher, J. B. Rhine for all of which he was strongly criticised.[198] In response, Jung claimed that he could not hold himself responsible for the fact that "man has, always and everywhere, spontaneously developed a religious function, and that the human psyche from time immemorial has been shot through with religious feelings and ideas."[199] He went on to say that "whoever fails to see this is blind, and whoever tries to explain it away has no sense of reality."[200] Jung believed religion to be natural to the person, and therefore the "religious function" had a crucial role to play in individuation. He affirmed that religion (when at its best) was essential to the realisation of Self because it facilitated the integration of conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche and was then key to personality development.[201] It was also then crucial to realising our highest human potential.

---

[196] Ibid., pp. 119-120.
[197] Ibid.
[198] Gary Lachman, *Jung the Mystic: The Esoteric Dimensions of Carl Jung's Life and Teachings* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2012).
[199] Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul,* p. 120.
[200] Ibid., p. 121.
[201] The term 'Self' with a capital 'S' in Jungian psychology refers to the dynamic archetype of the Self, which is marked by the unification of the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche. The alternative 'self' refers to the personal self, which is a part of the ego identity.

> The psychotherapist must not allow his vision to be coloured by pathology, he must never allow himself to forget that the ailing mind is a human mind and that, for all its ailments, it unconsciously shares the whole psychic life of man. He must even be able to admit that that the ego is sick for the very reason that it is cut off from the whole, and has lost its connection not only with mankind but with the spirit. The ego is indeed the "place of fears," as Freud says in *The Ego and the Id*, but only so long as it has not returned to its "father" and its "mother."[202]

Jung's emphasis on the dominance of psychic energy (or spirit) over the sex drive, a preference for health, growth and religious experience over pathological states of mind, and the identification of a religious function within the psyche were key to his separation from Freud. They would also ground his most original contribution to psychology: his theory of Individuation.

Jung's theory of Individuation

Jung's theory of individuation describes a development of the personality in which "a person becomes a psychological 'in-dividual;' that is, a separate, indivisible unity or 'whole.'"[203] Being whole, for Jung, means integrating conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche and bringing them into union. This can also be referred to as the union of opposites. Given that psychology had long since considered the whole personality to be contained more or less exclusively within the conscious realm, Jung's radical emphasis on the influence and significance of the unconscious (which reached far beyond Freud's concept of the unconscious), forged a new path both within psychoanalysis and in psychology as a whole. Jung's theory of individuation has four key themes: (1) the union of opposites through the integration of conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche; (2)

[202] Jung, *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, p. 121.
[203] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation,' Part 6, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 212-226 (p. 212).

the archetypes and the collective unconscious; (3) the Self as the God-image, and; (4) the role of the "religious function."

Individuation is the process in which the personality is realised in the union of conscious and unconscious elements of the psyche, which Jung referred to as the union of opposites. In line with traditional psychoanalysis, Jung held that the conscious elements of the psyche held the conscious awareness of existing and a continuing sense of personal identity. Consciousness is the bearer of the personality and stands at the junction between inner and outer worlds. The ego lies at its centre and confers a sense of 'I-ness.' However, Jung's theory of the unconscious was far more original and distinctive than the Freudian concept. Jung proposed the unconscious was more than repressed memories. It was rather a "collective unconscious" which held archaic, collective patterns of behaviour known as "archetypes," which were crucial to personality development.

Jung believed that the whole personality is present in *potentia* from birth and comes into consciousness through interaction with environmental stimuli. In other words, the personality is more than a product of environmental forces. It emerges as an inherited repertoire of behaviours; "an inherited mode of functioning, corresponding to the inborn way a chick emerges from a nest."[204] In the same way that evolution transmits genetic material, the collective unconscious transmits and connects an individual to the history of humanity's thoughts and behaviours. The archetypes are the psychic structures within the collective unconscious that make this transmission possible. They hold universal concepts that are instinctively known. One might call them the psychic counterpart of the biological instinct. Examples of archetypes are the person (how we see ourselves), the parent (figure of power) or the child (innocence, salvation). Individuation, the process of becoming whole through the integration of conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche, realises the prime, most important archetype of all–the Self.

Jung regarded the Self as a God-image or God-symbol. It signifies the union of opposites within the psyche or the "transcendent function:" the ultimate union between inner and outer worlds, body and spirit.[205] Jung explains: "Unity and totality stand at the highest point on the scale of objective values because their symbols can no longer be

[204] Ibid., p. 215.
[205] Ibid., p. 226.

distinguished from the *imago Dei*."[206] To strive for this unity and realise the archetype of the Self is, for Jung, to be guided by an "integrating factor" which is crucially not of our making. It is to be guided by a force that is experienced as transcendent. This "integrating factor" causes a shift from the ego and will towards "an attitude that is beyond the reach of emotional entanglements and violent shocks–a consciousness detached from the world."[207] The Self is a God-image because it corresponds to the highest degree of unity and coherence in the psyche, achieved by means beyond the individual's control.

The individuation process is, for Jung, a spiritual journey. Whether we realise it or not, when we pursue individuation, we are embarking on a religious quest to realise the highest part of ourselves in and through a transcendent potential. To realise the Self through individuation is to become a totality that Jung believes is indistinguishable from the *imago Dei* – the "God-image." It is worth clarifying here that Jung's understanding of the *imago Dei* differs somewhat from a traditional Christian-theological understanding. For Jung, the *imago Dei* represents the attainment of individuation because the complete unity and wholeness by which it is marked is consistent with the Christian image of God. He holds that the Christian God is a projection of the archetype for psychic unity, which is our innate desire for psychic wholeness and integration. For Jung, the *imago Dei* is a state we *become*, rather than in the traditional theological sense, being something we *are*. Some ambiguity however remains in the suggestion that the God-image is explained as not only something we attain or realise but also as that which rises from within, which suggests an ontological aspect to the archetype. The theological concern with what our relationship with God implies about who we are and what we have the potential to become is not of interest to Jung. His concern is rather to observe and explain how the image of the Christian God responds to a need and capacity for psychic wholeness and well-being. To venture into the ontological implications of the existence of the God archetype would be to inquire into the source of the archetype and this, Jung consistently maintained, would transcend the bounds of legitimate psychological inquiry.

Yet what exactly does Jung mean when he speaks of God? Did Jung believe in God? Though often a murky area, the question itself has little relevance to how Jung himself

[206] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Confrontation with the Unconscious,' Part 7, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 229-235 (p. 229).
[207] Ibid.

understood his work. Jung was clear that his business was psychology, not theology or philosophy. His commitment to staying within the bounds of science was rooted in his conviction that it was futile to engage in speculation. Jung was not interested in explaining God as an entity in itself. He was only concerned with the meaning and purpose of the *experience* of God; in the *psychological effects* of a cause which might or might not be transcendent to the person, rather than the cause itself. God was the sum of God's effects. If psychology is to remain a legitimate source of scientific enquiry it must not stray beyond its parameters by inquiring into the nature of a cause that cannot be empirically known. Rather it must leave this matter to those disciplines qualified to answer such questions.

Jung's thinking on the experience of God was shaped by Rudolf Otto's *numinosum* experience. This describes a dynamic agency or effect not caused by an arbitrary act of will: "The *numinosum*–whatever its cause may be–is an experience of the subject independent of his will."[208] Jung claims that the experience of God or the *numinosum* is central to individuation. It is a powerful feature of the God-image that drives individuals towards unity–towards the realisation of the Self. For this reason, Jung called the *numinosum* the "integrating factor." The God-image is the most powerful archetype of all and the strongest and most effective state the psyche can reach: "[It is] the most decisive factor in any individual psyche and compels the same belief or fear, submission or devotion to which a God would demand from man."[209]

The power of the God-image meant it could unify or fragment. Its strength was such that, "Anything despotic and inescapable is in this sense "God," and it becomes absolute unless, by an ethical decision freely chosen, one succeeds in building up against this natural phenomenon a position that is equally strong and invincible."[210] We are free therefore to decide whether "God" will be a "spirit" or a natural phenomenon, or rather to choose our object of worship.[211] Will "God" be a beneficent or destructive force in our lives? For Jung, the "equally strong and invincible" force required to realise this archetype was religion, and more specifically, the Catholic Church.

[208] Ibid., 239.
[209] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Psychology and Religion,' Part 7, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 239-250 (p. 245).
[210] Ibid.
[211] Ibid.

Jung considered the Catholic Church, in its institutional form, "the greatest objectification of psychic symbols the West has ever known." The objectification or externalisation of psychic symbols is an essential component of individuation because it is how the conscious encounters the unconscious and integration occurs. To say it another way, objectification allows an encounter with the archetypes of the collective unconscious. Jung believed the Catholic Church to be an absolute necessity for many people because, by placing the psychic symbols outside the individual, it provides an indirect, protected means of integrating the powerful forces of the unconscious.[212] What Jung meant by this is that the indirect encounter with archaic symbols in the Church protects the person from the incalculable consequences that flow from a direct encounter with the unconscious, which can easily overwhelm the ego.[213] Jung provides the example of the Mass as a representation of the inner change that corresponds with the person's experience of individuation. Christ, the saviour archetype, is shown as a living quantity and reality in whom God's sacrifice is consummated and offers us salvation anew every day through transubstantiation.[214] Jung distinguishes between the *personal* production of symbols, in which the practitioner is brought into closest possible contact with the unconscious (for example in yoga), and the more "insulated" production of symbols in the Catholic Church.

> . . . the Catholic exercises replace the personal production of symbols by carefully chosen elements, so that the individual is insulated against the perils of the soul – but also, be it noted, against its beneficent influences. He gets the experience of the Catholic dogma, but not of his own psyche.[215]

The unique ability of the Catholic Church to externalise aspects of the unconscious and safely guide us into an encounter with these archetypes so that they might be integrated into the development of personality is not, however, without risk. These external projections must resonate with the person–intuitively recognised as part of their psyche–to become living symbols because only living symbols will induce profound change. A

[212] Hans Shaer, *Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology* (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1951), p. 161.
[213] Ibid., p. 162.
[214] Ibid., p. 164.
[215] Ibid.

successful therapeutic outcome for Jung was when a person could be guided back to the symbolism of the Catholic Church. That is to say, to a meaningful symbolism that facilitates the expression of the Self archetype. For Jung, when Christianity functions at its best it relates the inner and outer worlds of the person in a way that surpasses any other human experience. Operating according to its highest and deepest meanings, though not without risk, Christianity succeeds in creating the totality and unity conferred by the *imago Dei*.

Jung acknowledges, however, that this is not always the case, but claims that religion cannot be blamed for the "human incompetence" that reduces Christianity to "superficialities and disastrous misunderstandings."[216] Jung had much to say about the catastrophic effects of poor formation. His overarching concern was that an over-emphasis on external objects of worship prevented these transformative symbols from penetrating the depths of the psyche. The *numinosum* experience must balance the Church's objectification of symbols; the Church cannot be a substitute for the experience of God.

> The Churches stand for traditional and collective convictions which in the case of many of their adherents are no longer based on their own inner experience but on unreflecting belief . . . Belief is no adequate substitute for inner experience, and where this is absent even a strong faith which came miraculously as a gift of grace may depart equally miraculously. People call faith the true religious experience, but they do not stop to think that actually it is a secondary phenomenon arising from the fact that something happened to us in the first place which instilled . . . into us . . . trust and loyalty.[217]

The imitation of Christ should, Jung claims, develop and exalt the inner person, not leave them fragmented and untouched in the deepest part of themselves. Religion should and must allow a person to realise the ideal of Christ on their own account in their own individual life. Only when this happens can the union of opposites be realised and the personality enriched and developed. Jung claimed that a psyche that remains fragmented in

[216] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Problems of Alchemy,' Part 7, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 253-287 (p. 267).
[217] Carl Gustav Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, first published in 1957 by Gegenwart und Zukunft (this edition, Oxford: Routledge, 2002), p. 26.

unresolved conflict can weaken or jeopardize the personality. The realisation of wholeness in the expression of the religious function is denied when a person intuits that there is a part of their psyche that the Catholic Church has no wish to know. The symbols no longer work for them because they do not reflect their whole being, or as Jung explains: "The Christ of the Church bears no likeness to the 'whole' man."[218] For these individuals, the symbols lose some degree of meaning–they are no longer alive. If a person feels that an intuited part of their psyche is either ignored or repressed by the Church, they may find themselves unable to "believe" and may look for something in which the experience of religion equates more closely to an experience of their psyche in its totality.

Jung believed that the God-symbol can "die" when it loses its meaning. People who experience the death of "God" experience life as meaningless. Jung's concern was that if we fail to realise the God-image through an authentic experience of God in religion, we will substitute it with an aspect of ourselves. "The tragedy of Zarathustra," Jung claims, "is that, because his God died, Nietzsche himself became a god," in his demise, he was split from himself.[219] If the God-image finds no expression or when the God-image is not acknowledged, "egomania develops, and out of this mania comes sickness."[220] Recall that the God-image is the strongest and therefore most decisive factor in any individual psyche because it compels our highest good. In so doing, it compels the same belief or fear, submission or devotion, to which a God would demand from man: "Invoked or not invoked, the god will be present."[221] For this reason, the religious function was central to Jung's theory of individuation.

At its best, religion functions as an expression of something entirely natural to the person. It offers a means to encounter and integrate archetypal unconscious material and progress towards individuation. A religion which unifies the inner and outer worlds through the externalisation of the collective unconscious and the *numinosum* facilitates individuation, realises the Self, and confers healing and wholeness.

[218] Shaer, *Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology,* p. 166.
[219] Jung, 'Psychology and Religion,' p. 245.
[220] Jung, 'Confrontation with the Unconscious,' p. 238.
[221] Ibid.

> I want to make it clear that by the term "religion" I do not mean a creed. It is, however, true that every creed is originally based on the one hand upon trust or loyalty, the experience of the *numinosum*, and on the other hand upon faith and confidence in a certain experience of a *numinosum* nature and in the change of consciousness that ensues . . . We might say, then, that the term "religion" designates the attitude peculiar to a consciousness which has been changed by the experience of the *numinosum* . . . this is not a matter of indifference – it is our life's work.

Jung on relationships and wholeness: The role of the other

Jung's theory of individuation has much to say about how the nature and processes of interior transformation are shaped by personal agency. In the context of self-giving, however, it will be necessary to account for the role of the other in this transformation. What does Jung have to say about the role of the other in our quest for wholeness and realisation? Jung believed that individuation increases our sense of relatedness to others because it leads to increased clarity of the Self. When the Self is seen more clearly, so are others and the world. This idea is represented in two aspects of the union of opposites in individuation: the "compensatory perspective of the unconscious," and the realisation of the feminine archetype. These two aspects illustrate the connection between personal and collective transformation in Jung's psychoanalytical theory.

The "compensatory perspective of the unconscious" is the aspect of individuation in which the shadow is integrated. The shadow is one of the most powerful features of the unconscious and it consists of the areas of our psyche we reject or repress. For Jung, when we suppress or repress parts of our psyche, we project them onto the world. Put another way, when we don't open our consciousness–our ego–to the growth prompted by the spontaneous breaking-through of the unconscious, we project this psychic material into the world. If we refuse to integrate our shadow, we project our denied conflicts and shadow characteristics onto those around us or the world or force them into our bodies as physical

illnesses.[222] Jung believed that shadow aspects that have not been integrated and claimed, disturb and impede authentic relations.

One important function of individuation is therefore the integration of the shadow. When we attend to and integrate an aspect of our psyche, we no longer project it. Jung considered that authentic human relations are only possible without projection. When we stop projecting our unconscious, we can relate to the world and others as they are, rather than relating to our own psychology. One of the key contributions of individuation for self-giving is a clarity of vision and authentic encounter with the other.

Jung believed Christianity facilitated the reclaiming of the shadow through its doctrine of sin. Religion, he claimed, affirms personal responsibility for humanity's inherent capacity for evil and owning this potential reduces the possibility of projection. But, for Jung, Catholicism did not go far enough. The differences between Jung's position and a traditional Catholic understanding of evil were brought to light in his renowned conversations with Fr Victor White, a Dominican priest. In line with Jung's belief in the logical equivalent of opposites, his theory of individuation acknowledged the goodness and evil in the person in equal nature and measure. Jung famously took great dispute with the concept of *privatio boni* on account that it "nullified the reality of evil."[223] Good and evil were, for Jung, co-existent parts of the human person. To this end, Jung advocated an *integration* of evil. White, however, working in the tradition of *privatio boni*, advocated an *overcoming* of evil by good. Jung's concern was that people would not take their shadow seriously as long as evil is not seen as a reality within itself (the condition of a soul opposed to virtue). For Jung, the future of humanity depended upon recognising the shadow "because evil is psychologically speaking – terribly real [and] it is a fatal mistake to diminish its power and reality even merely metaphysically."[224] The combined effect of a Christ symbol that represented only the good, and a concept of evil in which evil is only understood in relation to the good, encouraged a collective denial of evil. Jung was emphatic that to lose consciousness of evil is to increase its power. White could find no evidence to support Jung's views on *privatio boni*:

---

[222] Bud Harris, *Becoming Whole: A Jungian Guide to Individuation* (London: Daphne Publications, 2016), p. 15.
[223] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Christ, A Symbol of the Self,' Part 8, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 229-307 (p. 301).
[224] Ann Conrad Lammers, Adrian Cunnigham, and Murray Stein, *The Jung-White Letters* (New York: Routledge, 2007), p. 143.

> The rites and teachings of the Church are calculated to prevent unconsciousness, and consequent repression, of evil. The rites preceding baptism should arouse awareness of evil and the Christian ego's opposition to it – not, it must again be emphasised, opposition to an integral part of reality or of psychic wholeness, but to privations of it or to forces which would so deprive it.[225]

White rather believed the whole Christian life to be formed by an attentiveness to evil:

> The anamnesis of evil – archetypal in the forms of the world, flesh and devil, personal in the form of one's own specific failings and inclinations to be made and kept conscious by self-examination and confession – is encouraged throughout the whole life of a practicing Christian.[226]

While Jung remained unconvinced by White's defence of *privatio boni*, perhaps both parties may have agreed on the importance of self-awareness in managing harmful proclivities. Denying, suppressing or repressing a part of ourselves inhibits our perception and sense of relation to the world. The "compensatory perspective of the unconscious" highlights the importance of a sense of *interior* transparency to an *external* sense of transparency, where self-knowledge and acceptance increase our desire and capacity to be present to the other. The interplay between self-knowledge and clarity can serve to illuminate supportive and inhibitory factors to authentically relating to others and thereby to self-giving.

The connection between clarity and relatedness was further explored by Jung through the feminine principle. Jung regarded the feminine principle as the foundation of our creative receptivity, the ability to nurture new beginnings and develop wholeness in our personalities.[227] The feminine archetype affects how we are "being" in life and how we are "being a person" rather than simply existing.[228] It is the formative power of life that works through relatedness–through love in its many forms. Jung's approach describes three

---

[225] Victor White, *Soul and Psyche: an enquiry into the Relationship of psychotherapy and religion* (London: Collins and Harver Press, 1960), p. 162.
[226] Ibid., p. 62.
[227] Harris, *Becoming Whole: A Jungian Guide to Individuation*, p. 20.
[228] Ibid.

aspects of the feminine principle: (1) being grounded in one's nature; (2) having authentic relations with others, and; (3) being personally related to life. Individuation involves integrating all three aspects of the feminine archetype. When we are rooted in the feminine archetype, Jung claimed, we experience ourselves as grounded in the instinctual aspects of the unconscious and feel grounded within ourselves. From feeling at home within ourselves, "an unforced mode of 'doing' evolves–one that is inspired."[229] When the feminine archetype is resisted, false 'doing' that isn't grounded in the Self ensues, which manufactures a hollow or false sense of identity and accomplishments. The feminine archetype denotes the capacity for detachment and discernment, where we no longer feel the need to control the world and others to feel safe. Jung claimed that this sense of being at the core of ourselves is the foundation that gives us the security to be with another and to be in full relationship with life.

> Being in the core of ourselves removes the fear of being abandoned or overwhelmed by other people in life. The journey of individuation is in this sense a continuous coming home to ourselves that gives us the ongoing courage to face the suffering involved in allowing our buried talents to emerge, and to realise the innate wisdom within us – that can only be forged by the fires of feelings and passion that bring our soul to an inner glow.[230]

In one sense, while Jung's theory of individuation may initially appear rather individualistic, a closer look reveals an intrinsic relationship between personal and collective transformation. The realisation of the Self endows one with the ability to be truly related to the other and life, and feeling related and thereby responsible for the wellbeing of others is central to cultivating lives of meaning, purpose and fulfilment. This might be what Victor White meant when he claimed that Jung's work offered practical help in navigating the daily challenges of a good and flourishing life. Jung's theory offers a praxis for human flourishing in which attention to our growth when oriented to the highest value in our lives, serves to improve and never diminish the collective good. Individuation is more than a theory of personal transformation. It encourages us to see that the impulse towards personal

[229] Ibid., p. 21.
[230] Ibid., p. 23.

coherence and unity is always deeply connected to cultivating a more profound union with others and the world. To this end, when I desire and actively pursue the highest good for my life, whether I realise it or not, I am desiring and pursuing the very same good for others and the world.

Contested boundaries between Jung and Catholicism

Catholicism's history of engagement with Jung's analytical theory reflects a plethora of responses and applications of his work far beyond the scope of this project. It will suffice here to reflect on three areas of dispute that relate directly to self-giving. The first is Jung's claims that religion is for the sake of the psyche, or to say it another way, that psychic wholeness is the end to which religion aspires. The second concerns Jung's concept of the Self archetype as representing a self-determined idealised version of oneself. The last concerns issues raised through the Jung-White conversations on God's transcendence, the archetypes, and the nature of good and evil.

The first and, perhaps most common criticism of Jung by Catholic thinkers, is that he considers the dynamism of the soul towards wholeness as *the* basis of religion, where psychic wholeness is the end in itself. Agostino Gamelli, a Neoscholastic psychologist, argues that Jung "does not really understand the dogmas and the rites of Christianity about which he speaks."[231] For Jung, Catholic dogma is "a useful and sometimes indispensable surrogate for those who are not in a condition to face the direct experience of the *numinosum*."[232] The dynamism of the human soul is not the end to which religion attains. Rather the "clear and certain knowledge of God by means of his natural and positive revelation is the basis of religion."[233] Dogma and traditions reveal objective truth, not irrational and affective impulses. For Gamelli, this points to the limits of empirical science. For psychology to grasp the more central truths, it would need to defer to other sciences (in the broadest sense to include theology). Gamelli goes on to claim that beyond science is faith, a gift in which God is revealed as transcendent to any possible religious experience. For the Neoscholastics in

[231] Agostino Gamelli, *Psychoanalysis Today* (Oxford: P. D. Kenedy, 1955), pp. 58-9.
[232] Ibid., p. 108.
[233] Ibid., p. 142.

particular, religious experience, "no matter how intense or *numinous*, did not necessarily signify anything unless and until it was evaluated against the objective content of Revelation, as preserved within the dogmas of the Church."[234] In Jung's defence, he did consider religious dogmas and symbols as *psychically* real and would have agreed that empirical science has its limits–boundaries which he explicitly sought to maintain. Yet when all's said and done, from a Christian perspective, religion cannot be for the sake of psychic wholeness. A sense of psychic unity may be a consequence of religion and may deepen faith, but it cannot be the full story.

While stances such as Gamelli's later proved less troubling to Catholic engagement,[235] this remains an important interdisciplinary boundary. Different conceptions of wholeness in different disciplines can result from divergent frames of reference concerning human nature. Jung sees the possibility for human nature to attain completeness in this life through unification with "God" through the unconscious. Many Christians, however, would argue that authentic wholeness is impossible in this life because we are fundamentally incomplete in our desire for the Other. The human soul is marked by a radical lack of self-sufficiency that points to the need for otherness. In one sense, this dichotomy is true. Yet in another, the matter is complicated. Jung's refusal to stray from his commitment to empirical research by speculating on the cause of the God-archetype was firm. Yet a refusal to speculate is not the same as denying the existence of anything beyond the psyche. The driving force of the God-archetype is the "transcendental factor," which is beyond the caprice of any individual or group. Perhaps part of Catholicism's long-standing interest in Jung is attributable to his refusal to overreach psychoanalysis into theology and the opening for interdisciplinary engagement which this invited.

The second point concerns Jung's theory of the archetypes. Jung's archetype of the Self is independently or subjectively determined and thereby represents an ideal or perfect sense of Self. Catholic psychologists have responded by suggesting that while individuation may give rise to the self-ideal, this self is not an idealised version of oneself, but rather,

> human nature at its best incarnated in a concrete person, [that we] strive not toward *something* but toward *someone* whose perfection we gradually make

[234] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries,* p. 214.
[235] Ibid.

> our own. In all human history there is only one man so perfect that even his enemies have to acknowledge him as such: Jesus Christ.[236]

The ideal-self here is not the self I want to be, but the self I ought to be.[237] It is not a psychological construct but a "transcendent, objective, absolute standard" derived from knowledge of human nature.[238] This idea of the Self is far more communal and traditional than Jung's Self and implicitly binds the person to the community to which he or she belongs.[239] While Jung did not deny the role of the other in the realisation of the Self and affirmed relatedness as a function and consequence of the realisation of the Self, he also held that the ultimate determining factors shaping the Self varied between individuals. In contrast, Catholic theology claims that authentic self-knowledge is attained through a fundamental sense of otherness.

The final point concerns the Jung-White conversations. Jung and White dramatically disagreed on God's transcendence and the archetypes. Jung's archetypal theory troubled White because Jung claimed that *the* source of religion is the psyche and that the psyche is therefore intrinsically capable of attaining wholeness and fullness. Jung arrived at this claim through his therapeutic observations of God or god images within the life experiences of patients. White sought to address specifically how the archetypes could be integrated into a Catholic view of the human person. Was Jung intuiting something decidedly Catholic in his archetypal theory? While other theologians had dismissed Jung on his archetypal theory, White saw in the archetypes "the raw material of religion, the endopsychic, 'built-in' determinants and patterns of religious behaviour."[240] For White, what Jung presented as the psyche was in fact the "nature" of the soul that grace perfects. It made the transition from nature to grace thinkable and practicable.[241] White was not uncritical of Jung's archetypes but sought to disentangle what he felt to be confusions in his writings on how the archetypes related to that which transcended the psyche.

---

[236] John Augustine Gasson, 'Personality Theory: A Formulation of General Principles,' in *The Human Person: An Approach to an Integral Theory of Personality*, ed. Magda Arnold and John Gasson (New York: Ronald, 1954), 165-221, p. 193.
[237] Ibid., p. 194.
[238] Ibid.
[239] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries*, p. 215.
[240] Victor White, *God and the Unconscious*, p. 205.
[241] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries*, p. 245.

White did not believe the archetypes to be the source and end of religion as Jung claimed, but rather evidence that "the soul is naturally Christian."[242] Drawing on his Thomist tradition, White claimed that in coming to know something, human beings come to "transcend in various ways and degrees the limitations of their own identity and in a certain sense *become another.*"[243] Our capacity for knowledge implies an insufficiency which encompasses not only a potential for knowledge but also an incompleteness experienced as longing or *desire*. This desire, for White, brought Thomistic thinking to a "purely psychological phenomenon" and proved the source of his interest in the unconscious.[244]

Another way to think about White's Thomist position on the archetypes is that they intuit the participation of the divine goodness in the soul, not by nature, but by mode. This draws on Karl Rahner's theory of the *supernatural existential*. Rahner's supernatural existential is a mode of being through which we experience God's self-communication as a perpetual and free offer of grace, and on account of which we experience a natural desire for God.[245] In this mode, grace remains distinct from nature, yet always part of our existential experience. Jung's description of the God-archetype as being far beyond the caprice of the individual and that which calls us into a perpetual response to participate in the unifying realisation of our highest good resonates with the supernatural existential. From this viewpoint, Jung's archetypes might not prove as troubling as first imagined. Could the archetypes represent rather a profound "capacity" for the transcendent?

One way to interpret Jung's archetypal theory is to argue that the archetypes represent an innate capacity to receive a perpetual offering of grace from a God who transcends any human experience–a God who transcends even the archetypal forces of the objective psyche.[246] This would allow us to draw on Jung's archetypes while claiming that all the experiences of the archetypes, no matter how powerful or life-changing, are not God, even if these experiences call us to a religious approach to living. To this end, God is not the God-image in the same way that the *real* mother is not the mother-complex. With this in

[242] Here White cites Tertullian's claim, see Victor White, Soul and Psyche: An inquiry into the Relationship between Psychotherapy and Religion, (London: Collins and Harvill, 1960), 206. For a more detailed account of White's proposals on the relationship between archetypes and the natural and supernatural, see Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries*, pp. 247-250.
[243] Victor White, 'Thomism and "affective knowledge (III)', in *Blackfriars*, 25, 294 (1944) 321-28 (p. 321).
[244] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries*, p. 241.
[245] See chapters 1 and 2 of Karen Kilby, *The SPCK Introduction to Karl Rahner* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2007).
[246] Kugelmann, *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries*, p. 246.

mind, White asked, "Why then, do Jung and his followers so consistently confuse God and the God-image or 'archetype of Deity'?"[247] Jung's theory of psychic wholeness may point to a distinctly theological sense of wholeness that deeply involves and yet entirely transcends the human psyche.

A second point of divergence between Jung and White was the question of whether God contains evil. As already stated, Jung asserted that God or the God-image must contain evil as well as good, which White claimed, ran counter to the doctrine of *privatio boni*. While a Christian rejection of the presence of evil in God need not pivot on the principle of privatio boni (which is not after all a formally accepted doctrine), the principle was central to the Jung-White disagreement on the nature of good and evil. The key issue for White was that no evil could be attributed to God. Not only was the question of the presence of evil in God a point of tension, but the question of how individuals should attend to the evil within themselves. In contrast to Jung, White held that sin must not integrated into the personality. There is much more to say on this issue, but it will suffice here to note that the fundamental incompatibility between good and evil affirmed by Catholic theology was a strong point of conflict between Jung and White. A tension between good and evil may mark human experience, but this does not make them equals. For Catholicism, evil is not to be integrated as a co-existent feature of our humanity–it is to be overcome by goodness.

These points of divergence on Jung's claim that religion is for the sake of the psyche, his concept of the Self archetype as representing a self-determined idealised version of oneself, and the Jung-White conversations on God's transcendence, the archetypes, and the nature of good and evil reflect the partial incompatibility between Jung and Catholic theology. Acknowledging these boundaries to the current interdisciplinary engagement is important because they remind us that the goal is not disciplinary integration or assimilation. If it were, these would be problematic. Rather the goal is to show how Jung's work on individuation, wholeness and human realisation might offer an empirical response to the empirical claims JPII makes about human psychology and flourishing. To this end, Jung remains a helpful conversation partner despite the limits to the incompatibility between his approach and that of JPII and Catholic theology more broadly.

[247] Victor White, *God the Unknown* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 53.

Individuation and self-giving

Two key aspects of Jung's psychoanalytical theory will be used to reflect on JPII's theology of self-giving: (1) Jung's affirmation that human fulfilment is attained in "wholeness," and; (2) the role of religion and the *numinosum* experience in the individuation process.

Self-awareness is a crucial aspect of wholeness. The integration required for wholeness depends on a person's ability to attend to the movements of the psyche. Self-knowledge, acceptance, and personal responsibility are essential for integration and wholeness.[248] Suppression and repression of intuited aspects of the psyche diminish the possibility of integration by causing increased fragmentation. For Jung, individuation was more than integrating what is apprehended with clarity. It involves attending to, cultivating, and discerning our intuited sense of the totality of our psyche–to the inner movements, the quiet still voice of the soul. Through attention to this intuited desire and potential for completeness, we learn how to "be" in the world from our centre–from a sense of being at home within ourselves. Self-care and attention were, then, important aspects of wholeness. While JPII's "integral approach," like Jung's individuation theory, affirms processes of integration and wholeness in human realisation, his position on the role of suffering in self-giving may lead to a rather different position to Jung on the value of self-care. To what extent does JPII's theology allow the *whole* psyche, the *whole* person, to be encountered, accepted, and transformed in self-giving? What role does JPII attribute to self-care in self-giving and human flourishing?

Jung claimed that religion at its best serves to unite inner and outer worlds wherein the person feels acknowledged in the intuited totality of their being, where the *numinosum* experience grounds and forms the acceptance and practice of dogma and traditions. This is to say that Jung believed that religion functioned at its best when its rich symbolism drew out and integrated the archetypes, allowing a person to live from their centre–from a place of coherence and clarity. This process relies on the Church facilitating in equal measure both an *outward* psychic movement in recognition of archetypal content and its significance, and a *returning* movement in which the symbolism is experienced as truthful and meaningful, which realises the potential for integration and wholeness. How does JPII's position on the

[248] Carl Jung, *Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation*, pp. 212-226.

interplay between the experience of God and adherence to dogma and tradition relate to Jung's point of the balance between an interior and exterior movement of faith? To use the language of JPII's integral approach, what is the relationship between the subjective and objective aspects of personhood and how does this relationship lead to human fulfilment?

Jung desired to open our eyes to the fact that we have a soul, and within the soul lies "buried treasure." This treasure, for Jung, is our vast potential for healing, clarity, meaning and purpose. Jung was interested in healing people. He saw in his patients that the absence of religion, of a unifying transcendent factor, caused suffering and he desired to help people overcome this suffering. He didn't primarily write for people with faith, or at least they were not his focus; he wrote for those suffering in its absence, either because they had abandoned religion, or felt that religion had abandoned them.

> I do not expect any believing Christian to pursue these thoughts of mine any further, for they will probably seem to him absurd. I am not, however addressing myself to the happy possessors of faith, but to those many people for whom the light has gone out, the mystery has faded and God is dead.[249]

Jung sought to understand how religion satisfied a fundamental human need and to help people see its importance. He believed this to be our life's work. His psychological evaluation of religion is not intended to be a first step in faith, nor to explain the nature of faith and religion. Rather it seeks to explain, within the parameters of what he considered legitimate empirical research, our intrinsic desire to be made "complete" by something beyond ourselves.[250] Jung's concept of individuation renders insufficient the primary values of a humanist understanding of self-actualisation such as security, self-development, and personal relationships. It is about far more than self-actualisation. People led by the deepest parts of themselves seek no less than complete transformation. Individuation is the realisation of a unique personality in all its strengths and weaknesses, and our willingness to

[249] Jung, *Psychology and Religion*, p. 248.
[250] It should be noted here that while Jung was emphatic that his approach was empirical, many within psychology disputed this claim. See Gary Lachman, *Jung the Mystic: The Esoteric Dimensions of Jung's Life and Teachings* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2012).

live within this complexity.[251] It is to be healed and become "artists of living"–to hold our clarity of vision against the busyness and obligations pressing on us every day.[252] This shared interest in the pursuit of healing and becoming unified with the very best within ourselves to create a better life for ourselves and others grounds this interdisciplinary exchange.

Positive Psychology

Positive Psychology: History and current status

Martin Seligman pioneered positive psychology as an independent field of scientific study in 1998 at his election as president of the American Psychological Association (APA). While often credited with the rise of positive psychology, Seligman acknowledges that contemporary positive psychologists are not the first to have promoted the study of positive emotion, well-being and good character. Rather they have benefitted from a long-standing tradition going back to ancient Greece of subjecting the "good life" to philosophical and religious inquiry. It will however here suffice to limit the historical context of positive psychology to three waves of psychological thought which developed during the late 19th century and 20th century. One will notice that these areas touch on the developments already outlined in the historical account of psychoanalysis. The first of these waves is the disease model, the second is the school of behaviourism, and the third is the rise of humanistic psychology, which laid the foundations for Seligman's contemporary positive psychology that we know today.

During the late 19th century and early 20th century, psychology was largely concerned with psychopathology. Its primary focus was to understand the etiology of mental disorders by focusing on bad events and innate vulnerabilities. The disease model significantly advanced our understanding of the assessment and treatment of mental illness. Previously fuzzy concepts of depression, schizophrenia and anger can now be measured with significant accuracy. It led to empirically validated treatments for a wide range of mental disorders. However, this also meant that research exploring the role of positive emotion and

[251] Bud Harris, *Becoming Whole: A Jungian Guide to Individuation*, p. 12.
[252] Ibid.

strengths in the prevention and treatment of mental illness was limited. This focus on 'all that needs fixing,' neglected the role of positive emotions and strengths in the prevention and treatment of mental illness. Psychologists didn't know what the impact of psychological well-being *in its own right*, not simply as the absence of mental disorder or distress, might have upon an individual. This was the imbalance that Seligman sought to address.

> Viewing even the most distressed persons as more than the sum of their damaged habits, drives, childhood conflicts, and manufactured brains, positive psychology asks for more serious consideration of those person's intact faculties, ambitions, positive life experiences, and strengths of character, and how they buffer against disorder.[253]

Seligman sought to redress the balance by calling for the scientific study of strengths, well-being and optimal functioning. While acknowledging the profound success of the disease model, he understood that a more complete understanding of mental health would better serve psychology. A new "positive psychology" would not seek to usurp, but complement and supplement the disease model. Positive psychology responded to the need to broaden and build upon the well-established disease model so that practitioners could better understand the nature and means of human flourishing.

The school of behaviourism emerged during the early 20th century partly in response to the perceived inadequacy of depth psychology to empirically measure and predict human behaviour.[254] John Broadus Watson was a main figure in the earliest, most radical forms of behaviourism, which attracted strong resistance from mainstream psychology.[255] Watson's extreme environmentalism denied the legitimacy of introspective study by claiming that scientific inquiry should focus purely on observable data. He proposed a theory of learning in which all human behaviour was understood as a simple conditioned stimulus-response. Conditioning was the key to understanding human behaviour and it was limitless. Watson

[253] Angela Duckworth, Tracy Steen, and Martin Seligman, 'Positive Psychology in Clinical Practice', *The Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1 (2005), 629-51 (p. 2).
[254] Readers will recall from the section on the emergence of psychoanalysis that the schools of behaviourism and psychoanalysis surpassed the remaining three schools of functionalism, gestalt and structuralism in their influence and prominence during the late 19th and early 20th century in the field of mental health.
[255] Wertheimer, *A Brief History of Psychology*, p. 162.

famously proclaimed that if given twelve healthy infants, and his own specified world, he could train each infant to become anything he desired–a doctor, artist, beggar or thief.[256]

Watson claimed that free will was an illusion and that human behaviour was largely dependent on the consequences of previous actions. Psychology should then be concerned with human and animal behaviour, and how this behaviour can be predicted and controlled.[257] By the mid-20th century, behaviourism's claim to strict objectivity had amassed a wide and enthusiastic following. Many, however, remained unconvinced of its value. Seligman believed that Watson sought to eliminate two things from science: "mental life, of course, and the future-teleology, forward-looking explanations of action."[258] While contemporary behaviourists recognise that not all human thought, learning and behaviours can be accounted for by this conditioning process, and most now accept the existence of cognitions and emotions, exponents of the more radical, earlier approach significantly impacted psychology.

Behaviourism's influence declined by the late mid-20th century, mostly due to concerns that manipulating behaviour in such a properly structured reward system is open to gross abuse. Its total rejection of free will and cognition in learned behaviour was also, for many, deeply troubling. Despite its critics, behaviourism remained a formidable opponent to positive psychology into the late 20th century. The positive psychology we know today was driven and shaped by this resistance to, and subsequent tensions with, behaviourism. Seligman and his colleagues demonstrated that other important factors were involved in learned behaviours, which were more than a basic stimulus-response association.[259] Proponents of behaviourism eventually conceded in the face of such challenges that states of introspection, expectations and predictions played a role in conditioned behaviour, which led to disciplinary shifts towards a quasi-mentalistic model. Wholesale anti-mentalism

[256] Ibid., p. 164.
[257] See the later work of the highly influential B. F. Skinner (1904-1990) on operant conditioning, which reduced all human behaviour to a single law concerning reward and punishment: Wertheimer, *A Brief History of Psychology*, pp. 169-170.
[258] Martin Seligman, 'My three heavyweight bouts with behaviourism', The Journal of Learning and Motivation, 68 (2019), 629-651 (p. 631).
[259] Ibid., p. 632.

consequently began to lose its stronghold within mainstream psychology. By the 1980s, behaviourism was of little more than historical interest.

The quasi-mentalistic model bridged the gap between strict behaviourism and the emerging field of cognitive psychology, bringing a new focus on thoughts, consciousness, and introspection. This gave rise to the highly influential field of clinical psychology, which would later use cognitive psychology as a central resource in its prolific expansion. The influence of clinical psychology marked a paradigm shift in mainstream psychology from the academic and experimental to the clinical. That is, it represented a shift towards an emphasis on one-to-one therapeutic interventions as a mainstream treatment for emotional and mental distress. Mainstream psychology moved from focusing on viewing people as the sum of their illness or distress to pursuing a more holistic view of how to help people overcome their problems. In doing so, it raised questions about the insufficiency of the dominant objectifying approach of the disease model to measure the uniqueness of human experience, and it became more open to the possibility of asking how psychologists might help increase mental health rather than merely treat mental distress.

This shift in orientation towards questions of mental health and optimum functioning cultivated the ground for a third wave led by Abraham Maslow, known as humanistic psychology. The term "positive psychology" was first coined by Maslow in his ground-breaking book *Motivation and Personality* (1954).[260] Seligman acknowledges his debt to the humanistic psychologists he considers the ancestors of the positive psychology he later developed.[261] This new movement would herald a focus on well-being, potential and agency, and signalled an end to the dominance of a reductive, psychopathological approach to mental health. Humanistic psychology seeks to reconstruct our understanding of mental health, well-being, and how we can realise our potential to live the good life.

The humanistic movement began between 1960 and 1980 with Maslow's agenda for "positive psychology." The movement's key players (Maslow, Carl Rogers, Henry Murray,

[260] Stella Rosnick, Arthur Warmoth, and Ilene Serlin, 'The Humanistic Psychology and Positive Psychology Connection: Implications for Psychotherapy', *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 41, 1 (2001), 73-101 (p. 74).

[261] He further affirms the role that Freud's notion of the pleasure principle, and especially Jung's ideas of personal and spiritual wholeness had in cultivating an interest in a more positive alternative to the mainstream discourses at the time.

Gordon Allport, and Rollo May) grappled with many of the same questions pursued by later positive psychologists.[262] Maslow articulated a new view of the human being as "irreducible to its parts, needing connection, meaning and creativity."[263] Humanistic psychology aims to be faithful to the full richness of human experience and to use this to explore the good life, authenticity, and optimal functioning. From this position, human beings are not just the objects of study that the quantitative epistemological dominance of mainstream psychology had claimed–they are also subjects with a rich inner experience, which could only be captured through a radical new science. Humanistic psychologists challenged the behaviourist's denial of free will by affirming that positive psychology is about learning to choose the greatest good for ourselves, others, and the world. Further, while the psychopathological focus of mainstream psychology had reduced the person to what needed fixing, humanistic psychologists were interested in the whole picture, extolling "the profoundly holistic grounds of human nature in contradiction to the analytic-atomistic Newtonian approach of the behaviourists and Freudian psychoanalysis."[264] They affirmed that the full complexity and nuances of phenomena can only be fully appreciated by maintaining the paradoxes of human nature.

Humanistic psychology shifted the trajectory of mainstream psychology towards the study of consciousness. Through the late 19th and early 20th century, conscious experience had been marginalised by the emphasis on the unconscious by psychoanalysis, and been entirely rejected by the behaviourist's exclusive focus on observable behaviour. Humanistic psychologists sought to position the conscious experience of creative, healthy persons at the heart of psychological investigation.[265] This approach paved the way for a more positive and complex understanding of human well-being, and an emphasis on how we can support one another in better understanding the nature and means of our highest good.

The later positive psychology took many of these ideas, particularly Maslow's work on the characteristics of self-actualised people, to build a new discipline in which the 'whole' person could be engaged through scientific study. Since its emergence in 1998, positive

[262] Duckworth et al., 'Positive Psychology in Clinical Practice', p. 632.
[263] Rosnick et al., 'The Humanistic Psychology and Positive Psychology Connection: Implications for Psychotherapy', p. 75.
[264] Ibid., 77.
[265] Ibid., 79.

psychology has been subject to an explosion of interest in academic, clinical, and popular domains of psychology. Seligman's work has been applied to learned helplessness and the treatment of depression,[266] positive health,[267] education,[268] and most recently to a national programme for the US military, *Comprehensive Soldier Fitness*.[269] Seligman transformed the landscape of psychological inquiry by overcoming the extensive challenges in promoting the scientific study of happiness and well-being alongside the treatment of mental illness. He succeeded in shifting the focus of psychology from the elimination of misery to the more empowering practices of gratitude, resilience, and hope, and is recognised as an authority on interventions that prevent depression and build strength and well-being.

Defining positive psychology

Seligman describes positive psychology as "the scientific study of positive experiences and positive individual traits, and the institutions that facilitate their development."[270] It has three main aims: firstly, to examine the role of strengths and weaknesses in the treatment of mental illness; secondly, to focus on building the best things in life in equal measure to repairing the worst, and; thirdly, to be concerned with making the lives of typical people better and nurturing high talent. While these aims seek to address the imbalance established by the disease model, they also speak to a need to broaden psychological inquiry to address the needs of typically functioning individuals, so that psychology might seek to improve the lives of more than those presenting in clinical settings. In its broadest sense, positive psychology asks how people can live with greater meaning and purpose, and experience authentic happiness. Seligman often refers to his work and positive psychology more generally as a theory of authentic happiness.[271] This thesis draws on three areas of

[266] Maier Steven, Martin Seligman and Keith Holyoak, 'Learned Helplessness at Fifty: Insights from Neuroscience', *Psychological Review*, 123, 4 (2016), 349-367.
[267] Martin Seligman, 'Positive Health', *Applied Psychology*, 57, 1 (2008), 3-18.
[268] Angela Duckworth and Martin Seligman, 'Self-discipline Outdoes IQ in Predicting Academic Performance in Adolescents', *Psychological Science*, 16, 12 (2005), 939-944.
[269] Rhonda Cornum, Michael Matthews, Martin Seligman and Norman Anderson, 'Comprehensive Soldier Fitness', *The American Psychologist*, 66, 1 (2011), 4-9.
[270] Duckworth et al., 'Positive Psychology in Clinical Practice', p. 630.
[271] Martin Seligman, *Authentic Happiness* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002).

positive psychology: (1) the functions of positive emotion; (2) defining the good life, and; (3) Seligman and Christopher Peterson's classification of Character Strengths and Virtues (CSV).

- ***The functions of positive emotion***

Positive psychology has pioneered research on the evolutionary advantages of positive emotions. Research in this area has traditionally focused on the adaptive utility of negative emotions in allowing our ancestors to respond to life-or-death situations. The adaptive advantage of negative emotions is clear: they are associated with action tendencies and physiological changes associated with the flight-or-fight response. The limited research on positive emotions had focused on their role in facilitating "approach" behaviour, which prompted individuals to engage with their environments and partake in activities that were evolutionarily advantageous for the individual, its species, or both.[272] More recent findings have shown that positive emotions do more than facilitate approach behaviour. They point to an evolutionary advantage towards psychological growth and improved psychological and physiological well-being over time.[273] Negative emotions may have evolved to help us in win-loss games, such as deadly competitions or any situations which trigger fear or anxiety. Positive emotions may have conversely evolved to motivate and guide us through win-win games in situations where everyone might benefit, such as hunting, raising children, teaching, planting seeds or learning.[274]

The "broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions" describes this complementary effect of positive emotions.[275] While negative emotions narrow thought-action repertoires, prompting quick and decisive action that carries direct and immediate benefits in life-threatening situations, positive emotions broaden people's thought-action repertoire, widening the array of emotions that come to mind. Love, joy or contentment lead to thought-action tendencies to play, explore, savour or integrate, which broaden habitual

[272] Barara Fredrickson, 'The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, *The Science of Well-being: Integrating Neurobiology, Psychology and Social Science*, 359, 1449 (2004), 1367-1377 (p. 1368).
[273] Ibid., p. 1367.
[274] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 31.
[275] Barara Fredrickson, 'The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions', p. 1369.

modes of thinking or acting.[276] Moreover, broadened mindsets carry indirect, long-term benefits because broadening builds enduring personal resources. The personal resources accrued during states of positive emotions are durable; they far outlast the emotional states that led to their acquisition.

> Through positive emotions, then, people transform themselves, becoming more creative, knowledgeable, resilient, socially integrated and healthy individuals . . . positive emotions broaden the scope of attention, cognition and action, and they build physical, intellectual and social resources.[277]

A key finding of the broaden-and-build model is that positive emotions undo lingering negative emotions.[278] They can loosen the hold that a negative emotion has over a person's mind and body, helping people to place the events in their lives in a broader context which may lessen the resonance of a negative event. Positive emotions are also strongly associated with resilience. While positive emotions are no doubt at times an outcome of resilient coping, "resilient people may also use positive emotions to achieve their effective coping, indicating a reciprocal causality."[279] Moreover, positive emotions fuel physiological well-being. A strong association between positive emotion and mortality was famously evidenced in a study into happiness and longevity using 178 nuns from the School Sisters of Notre Dame.[280] Those nuns who expressed the most positive emotions lived on average 10 years longer than those who expressed the least positive emotions.[281] Nor is this an isolated finding. Several other researchers have found a solid link between feeling good and living longer.[282]

These findings suggest that positive emotions are not only *markers* of health and well-being, they *produce* health and well-being. Positive emotions fuel human flourishing, as defined in psychology as "a state of optimal human functioning, one that simultaneously

---

[276] Ibid.
[277] Ibid.
[278] Ibid., p. 1371.
[279] Ibid., p. 1372.
[280] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness,* p. 3. See also, Deborah D. Danner, David A. Snowdon, and Wallace V. Friesen, 'Positive Emotions in Early Life and Longevity: Findings from the Nun Study', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 5 (2001), 804-813.
[281] Fredrickson, 'The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions', p. 1373.
[282] Danner et al., 'Positive Emotions in Early Life and Longevity: Findings from the Nun Study', p. 805.

implies growth and longevity, beauty and goodness, robustness and resilience, and generativity and complexity."[283] The benefits of positive emotions extend far beyond any hedonistic advantages. Positive emotions appear to predispose us to personal and communal growth.

- ***A vision of the good life***

> The good life consists in deriving happiness by using your signature strengths every day in the main realms of living. The meaningful life adds one more component: using these same strengths to forward knowledge, power, or goodness. A life that does this is pregnant with meaning, and if God comes at the end, such a life is sacred.[284]

In his theory of authentic happiness, Seligman claims that there are three pathways to well-being: pleasure, engagement and meaning.[285] While all three pathways are important in living the good life, their effects are not equal. Frequent pleasurable experiences may predict higher levels of present and longer-term well-being but orientations to meaning and engagement are stronger predictors of life satisfaction.[286] Seligman claims that the good life is far more than pleasant feelings and positive evaluations of one's life. The good life involves both hedonic and eudaimonic pursuits. Well-being is cultivated by "creating meaningful lasting relationships, achieving personal growth, acting autonomously, finding purpose and living in accordance with one's true nature."[287] Seligman claims that the good life flows from experiencing pleasure, but only when these are experienced alongside the pursuit of meaning and engagement.

---

[283] Cory L. M. Keyes, 'Complete Mental Health: An Agenda for the 21st Century', *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-lived*, ed. C. L. M. Keyes and J. Haidt (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2003), 293-312.
[284] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness,* p. 260.
[285] Stephen M. Schueller and Martin E. P. Seligman, 'Pursuit of pleasure, engagement and meaning: Relationships to subjective and objective measures of well-being', *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5, 4 (2010), 253-263 (p. 253).
[286] Ibid., p. 254.
[287] Carol D. Ryff, 'Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57 (1989), 1069-1081.

Seligman defines engagement as entering a state of 'flow,' in which we become engrossed and absorbed in activities. Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi developed the theory of Flow which describes a state in which time seems to stop and there is deep effortless involvement in a task.[288] In flow, we experience a state of high concentration and performance with our whole being; we become completely involved in an activity for its own sake. The self and ego fall away and every action, movement and thought, follows inevitably from the previous one. It is a state of optimal functioning. Flow is distinct from pleasure and, in some cases, from meaningful activity. Positive emotions are occasionally mentioned in retrospect but never experienced during flow, and not all meaningful activities lead to flow and flow experiences are not always meaningful. Flow is marked by a distinct absence of anything conspicuous or prominent in complete orientation to the task at hand. It is non-emotional and non-conscious.[289] Flow is marked rather by the very absence of emotion, of any kind of consciousness. "Consciousness and emotions," Seligman explains, "are here to correct your trajectory; when what you are doing is seamlessly perfect, you don't need them."[290] This state of 'effortless effort' is strongly associated with personal growth. Unlike pleasures in which we may be consuming rather than accumulating (think of the smell of perfume, the taste of chocolate or the sensual experience of a massage), flow is marked by a growth in psychological resources. In the flow state, we can nurture talents, cultivate interests, and hone skills. Csikszentmihalyi's research suggests that the more we can enter the flow state, the higher our productivity and success, and the accumulated resources lead to an "upward spiral" of increased subjective and objective well-being.[291] There is a transcendent quality of flow that bestows effortless effort with a potency that can surpass all conscious endeavour. It seems that complete orientation to a task in self-forgetting cultivates the best of ourselves with enduring effect. Authentic happiness is then, Seligman claims, pursued through pleasure and by becoming fully engaged in life.

The final feature of the good life involves living with meaning. Our lives are experienced as meaningful when we have a sense of purpose and significance that orders

[288] Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990).
[289] Christopher Peterson, Nansook Park and Martin Seligman, 'Orientations to happiness and life satisfaction: The full life versus the empty life', *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6 (2005), 25-41 (p. 27).
[290] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 116.
[291] Schueller and Seligman, 'Pursuit of pleasure, engagement and meaning: Relationships to subjective and objective measures of well-being', p. 254.

our lives to something beyond ourselves: "Meaning allows one to transcend oneself, either through promoting positive social relationships or connecting to a higher power or purpose."[292] In *Authentic Happiness* Seligman explains that orienting ourselves to "a God endowed with omniscience, omnipotence and goodness as its ultimate end" is the only way to satisfy our desire and potential for a meaningful life.[293] This is not, however, a supernatural God. Nor is it a God that has existed or that exists now. Seligman argues that an omnipotent and righteous God would not allow evil in the world, and free will would be impossible with an existing God that was omnipotent and omniscient.[294] God is, Seligman argues, rather brought into being through the progressive accumulation of goodness in the world; as the final end of an evolutionary process that codes for ever greater complexity and success.[295] Perceiving existence as essentially good and in a movement towards ever greater goodness, Seligman asks: "Toward what, *in the very long run*, is this process of growing power, knowledge and goodness headed?"[296] Since all successful cultures have been predicated upon a ubiquitous group of virtues signalling an intrinsic drive towards goodness, and given that natural selection and cultural selection favour win-win in their increasing complexity, God must be the realisation of the greatest potential for goodness in existence–of *our* greatest potential for goodness.

> A process that continually selects for more complexity is ultimately aimed at nothing less than omniscience, omnipotence and goodness. This is not, of course, a fulfilment that will be achieved in our lifetimes . . . The best we can do as individuals is to choose to be a small part of furthering this process. This is the door through which meaning that transcends us can enter our lives. A meaningful life is one that joins with something larger than we are–and the larger that something is, the more meaning our lives have. Partaking in a process that has the bringing of a God who is endowed with omniscience, omnipotence

[292] Ibid.
[293] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 260.
[294] Ibid., p. 260.
[295] Ibid.
[296] Ibid., p. 258.

and goodness as its ultimate end joins our lives to an enormously large something.[297]

Lives imbued with pleasure, engagement and meaning culminate in this evolutionary coded movement towards the realisation of goodness itself. While engagement and meaning are more strongly associated with our participation in this accumulation of goodness than pleasure, the findings show these three factors exhibit reciprocal causality. Pursuing engagement in meaningful activities increases social connections, purpose and self-relevant goals. These, in turn, boost well-being and positive emotions, which increases our pursuit of engagement and meaning. The pursuit of the good life, it seems, possesses an intrinsic reward system, where happiness both rewards and inspires increasing growth and the building of personal resources, which can enrich our lives with ever-greater levels of happiness and well-being.

Seligman would argue then that, in its highest form, the good life consists in choosing to participate in bringing God (the peak of our evolutionary progress in and towards goodness) into existence. In using our signature strengths to fully engage with the world in every area of our lives and orienting these efforts towards the greatest good, we participate in bringing more goodness into the world and incrementally realising humanity's potential for goodness. This, for Seligman, is authentic happiness. It is fully engaging with our whole being in experiencing and bringing the greatest amount of pleasure, meaning and purpose into the world, where every movement towards our own goodness is simultaneously a movement through which all humanity is drawn into realising the sum of all goodness that is God. The significant differences between Seligman's theology and mainstream Catholic theology will be addressed later in the chapter.

- ***Character strengths and virtues***

The image of the good life thus far sketched is one in which we fully engage in life through our signature strengths and talents, which increases our sense of meaning, purpose and well-being. Our signature strengths are our positive character traits: talents, interests and

[297] Ibid., p. 260.

strengths. Seligman and Christopher Peterson developed the *Classification of Strengths and Virtues* (CSV) as a practical handbook for growing character by developing strengths and their associated virtues. The CSV is positive psychology's attempt to "correct and complement" the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual* (DSM) of the American Psychiatric Association.[298] It affirms that good character can be cultivated and that the study of strengths and virtue are legitimate topics of psychological inquiry.[299] In the context of this thesis, the CSV expresses how personal growth and well-being are connected to the development and well-being of others.

The CSV draws on six virtues–wisdom, courage, justice, humanity, temperance and transcendence–which Seligman and Peterson consider to be the "core characteristics valued by moral philosophers and religious thinkers."[300] These six broad categories of virtues emerged consistently through extensive historical surveys and are "universal, perhaps grounded in biology through an evolutionary process that selected for these aspects of excellence as a means of solving the important tasks necessary for the survival of the species."[301] Character strengths are the "psychological ingredients" that define the virtues, or rather, how a person displays the virtues. The classification identifies twenty-four positive traits or character strengths associated with the six virtues. For example, the virtue of courage is aligned with the strengths of bravery, persistence, integrity, and vitality. Again, Peterson and Seligman argue that these strengths are "ubiquitously recognised and valued" and while an individual will rarely display them all, displaying one or two strengths within a virtue group is sufficient to consider someone as possessing a good character.[302]

Of the ten criteria used to classify the strengths, the first three criteria identify an orientation to the other as a primary feature of a character strength. The first criterion for a character strength is that it, "contributes to fulfilments that constitute the good life, for oneself and others."[303] While strengths and virtues traditionally determine how an

[298] Seligman and Peterson explain that the shortcomings of the DSM include overly heterogeneous diagnostic criteria, categories rather than scales, inattention to an individual's culture and setting, and subordination of validity issues to those of reliability. See Duckworth et al., 'Positive Psychology in Clinical Practice', p. 638.
[299] Christopher Peterson and Martin E. P. Seligman, *Character Strengths and Virtues: A handbook and classification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), p. 3.
[300] Ibid., p. 13.
[301] Ibid. Please see chapter 2 of this book for a comprehensive account of methodology.
[302] Ibid., p. 13.
[303] Ibid., p. 17.

individual copes with adversity, Peterson and Seligman are more concerned with how they fulfil an individual. This affirms that strengths allow us to "break through the zero point" of psychology's traditional concern with disease and disorder to achieve more than the absence of psychological distress and to aspire to authentic happiness and fulfilment. For Seligman, this always involves an orientation to something greater than ourselves and thereby a communal, and better still, transcendent element.

The second criterion states "Although strengths can and do produce desirable outcomes, each strength is morally valued in its own right, even in the absence of obvious beneficial outcomes."[304] By this, Peterson and Seligman suggest that the good life will only be pursued if people are convinced that character strengths produce more than their own reward. To put this another way, the good life will be pursued when a person accepts the possible absence of immediate positive, tangible outcomes in place of the certainty of long-term advantages (such as reducing the likelihood of experiencing distress and dysfunction in the future). The good life will be attained when we cultivate character strengths knowing they are a good in their own right and trust that, even if not immediately apparent, they will lead to positive future gains. It is to pursue a good beyond ourselves with no clear immediate reward. Exercising a strength for its own sake, regardless of tangible benefits, increases our capacity to care for the well-being of others because it involves a displacement of the ego. Moreover, the objective nature of this good means that it will involve more than my own subjective needs and desires.

The third criterion in the classification explains that a character strength must not diminish other people in the vicinity.[305] This is based on the principle that character strengths are characteristics that invoke admiration – they inspire. Positive traits accompany "non-zero-sum games" because witnessing character strengths in others increases our likelihood of displaying those same strengths and vice versa. A character strength must never dimmish others, but only serve for their good.

The CSV invites us to see our characters as pliable, oriented to the good and capable of attaining the good. This potential to live the good life through the cultivation of strengths

[304] Ibid., p. 19.
[305] Ibid., p. 21.

and virtues will fundamentally only be achieved in orientation to the other; to something greater than our desires and, at times, needs. At the heart of the character strengths that lead to the virtues is an essential sense of responsibility to something greater than ourselves. Our growth must involve others, inspire others, and build the common good. In this way, our well-being and happiness are always intrinsically and essentially connected to the well-being and happiness of others, and the ultimate good to which this aspires.

Positive psychology and self-giving

Positive psychology can help us better understand the role of positive emotions, well-being, and growth in self-giving by inviting us to think of authentic happiness as being reliant upon and cultivating an orientation to the other. This opens the possibility of engaging with authentic happiness as a legitimate feature of self-giving, capable of increasing our desire and capacity to give ourselves to others. This idea challenges JPII's affirmation of suffering in self-giving and invites alternative ways of understanding how people cultivate lives marked by an ever-greater orientation to something larger than themselves–to other people, to the world and God. In what follows, I outline four connections between authentic happiness, as understood by contemporary positive psychology and the concept of self-giving. The first and second connections propose that authentic happiness increases our desire and capacity to self-give. The third suggests that it reduces, alleviates, and buffers against negative emotions which can inhibit self-giving. The final point claims that the transcendent quality of flow in authentic happiness points to a boundary between psychology and theology that invites a more nuanced reflection on the relationship between human agency and our participation in grace in self-giving.

The pursuit of authentic happiness can increase our *desire to self-give* because the good life involves a desire to orient the cultivation of positive character traits towards the good of the other and–better still–the transcendent. Authentic happiness requires a full engagement in activities that acquire meaning because they orient us to something greater than ourselves. Put another way, authentic happiness will only be attained when the desire for personal well-being is intrinsically connected to the well-being of others. We can build lives upon the small inward-looking and fearful impulses of the ego, or we can build lives of

participation in the collective effort to realise the common good. Meaningful engagement in life means we commit to realising the best of ourselves in discovering how much we can offer to the world. The desire to self-give is fundamental to authentic happiness; the more we desire to give the best of ourselves to the world, the happier we are. This suggests that authentically pursued positive emotions, well-being and growth motivate us to give ourselves to others.

Authentic happiness not only motivates us to cultivate lives of self-giving, but it also increases our very *capacity to self-give* through the cultivation of character strengths and virtues. Through these positive traits, we accrue psychological resources that allow us to be of greater service to the world. These resources are not only cultivated through intentional efforts to develop character strengths but also through the experience of positive emotions, which "broaden and build" our cognitive and behavioural resources. Positive psychology invites us to see that being authentically happy means we have more to offer others and the world. Authentic happiness increases our capacity to self-give.

While positive emotions motivate and realise our potential to self-give, negative emotions have an opposite and complementary effect. Positive psychology suggests that suffering *decreases* our desire and capacity to self-give. Its findings show that negative emotions associated with suffering narrow our thought-action repertoire, which invokes an attentional bias towards the self and its perceived threat. This concentrated diversion of cognitive resources in response to negative emotions means that our suffering often inhibits our capacity to attend to the needs of others. For this reason, states of positive emotions are, according to positive psychology, more conducive to self-giving than states of negative emotions. They free our cognitive resources to seek mutually beneficial outcomes (win-win as opposed to win-lose) allowing us to respond to others and the world with greater clarity. The broadening of cognitive resources associated with positive emotions also serves to "correct" or "undo" the effects of negative emotions. Positive and negative emotions are somehow incompatible. Owing to this "undoing" effect, positive emotions are also associated with higher levels of resilience and post-traumatic growth. Well-being and development can be affirmed as legitimate ways to realise our potential to self-give because authentic happiness diminishes suffering which can inhibit self-giving.

Finally, positive psychology points to the idea that our potential to self-give is paradoxically realised in a state beyond the parameters of psychology. While Seligman and colleagues affirm the necessity of the intentional and committed pursuit of choices that support the good life, they also claim that true optimal functioning occurs in a non-conscious and non-emotional state. That is, in a state of "flow"–of effortless effort. Flow induces a state of high functioning because all our attentional resources are centred on the activity at hand, where we are entirely oriented to the other. We are singularly focused, undivided, and whole, and the self appears to fall away. As Seligman explains, when what you are doing is seamlessly perfect, you have no need for consciousness or emotion. This transcendent quality of flow invites reflection on the relationship between states of peace and dynamism, stillness, and conscious activity, releasing and engaging our agency in self-giving. Flow speaks to a positive correlation between self-forgetting in full orientation to another and peak performance; to the possibility of psychic growth in a transcendent sense of 'losing one's self' in the other that, crucially, does not involve suffering. It invites us to think about the function and limits of human agency in most fully realising our potential to be present to the other, and perhaps it raises boundary questions that theology is best suited to answer.

In a lecture on authentic happiness, Seligman remarked that he was keen to separate positive psychology from the image of the smiley face. His success in doing so forms the ground upon which the current dialogue with positive psychology will be engaged. While relatively little theological attention has been paid to positive psychology, I hope to prove that it has depths that will allow us to broaden our conception of self-giving. In pointing to the inherent goodness of well-oriented and positive emotions, positive psychology helps us to see that the pursuit of authentic well-being and growth, to whatever extent this is possible, are not in competition with a holy life, but can deepen our connections with others and the world. Cultivating positive traits in orientation to the greater good means we have more to offer and are more resilient in our offering. In sum, it allows us to broaden and deepen our understanding of the vast potential of self-giving in every aspect of our lives, not merely in times of suffering and loss, but also–and perhaps more importantly–in our greatest joys.

Challenges to bringing positive psychology and Catholicism into dialogue

The limitations of engaging positive psychology with theology centre on positive psychology's primary emphasis on positive emotions and intentional action. In what follows, I outline three challenges. The first concerns the role of weaknesses as well as strengths in the pursuit of the good life. The second addresses how positive psychology might account for amplified acts of self-giving amidst suffering and loss. The final point concerns differences in conceptions of the transcendent.

In its focus on the role of positive emotions, positive psychology has little to say of the role that attention to our weaknesses plays in the pursuit of the good life. A theological position would, however, wish to claim that human flourishing involves more than the knowledge and cultivation of strengths and virtues; it involves a simultaneous examination of our weaknesses or sins. The doctrine of original sin (and in large part, our experience), claims that attendance to sin is important because sin impedes our desire and capacity to both know and pursue the good. Growth in goodness is best realised by attending to sin (examination of conscience and repentance), alongside cultivating virtue because of the inherent tensions between good and evil. The prioritisation of growth through strengths minimises our experience of the complex dynamic between good and evil, strengths and weaknesses, virtue, and sin. The oversimplification of this tension makes it difficult for positive psychology to address how sin inhibits our desire for and capacity to attain the good, and how resilience is increased, not simply by developing strengths and virtues, but by overcoming sin through attention to sin itself.

Theological accounts of human flourishing would, then, press for more nuanced views of the interplay of strengths and weaknesses in authentic flourishing and its consequences for self-giving. Put another way, theologians would want to account for how attending to weaknesses can better allow a person to pursue an identified good, and greater meaning and purpose through an orientation to something greater than themselves. While positive psychology helps us to resist the theological seductions of overstating the role of attending to sin to the exclusion of cultivating strengths and virtues, we would also wish to affirm a balance in which attention to both strengths *and* weaknesses, virtue, *and* sin, increases desire and potential to self-give, by opening a person to the very source of their desire and potential to orient themselves to a good beyond themselves.

This minimisation of the tension between positive and negative emotional states by positive psychology poses a second problem: it makes it difficult to account for acts of self-giving involving suffering and loss. How might positive psychology explain an experience of full engagement in an act oriented to something larger than ourselves amid negative emotional states if positive and negative emotions are viewed as fundamentally incompatible? How might positive psychology explain the experience of "peak engagement," or the amplification of strengths and virtues in orientation to the other, while incurring personal loss?[306] While positive emotional states may be involved in self-giving, there are also times when self-giving will require a degree of suffering and loss. That is to say, while positive emotions may cause and be a consequence of self-giving, a radical orientation to the other can still occur without positive emotions, or in cases where positive and negative emotions co-exist. The history of martyrdom in the Church (and the secular value of goodness that is genuinely self-sacrificial) points to the possibility of an orientation to the other of such magnitude that virtues become amplified regardless of the personal costs incurred. Reflecting on self-giving shows that the interaction between positive and negative emotions is far more complex and nuanced than positive psychology is willing, or able, to allow.[307] Though far from an indictment of positive psychology, this merely points to the idea that positive psychology cannot provide the full story.

The final challenge concerns differing accounts of the role of the transcendent. Seligman's understanding of God as a potential for omniscience, omnipotence and goodness as its ultimate end has implications for how one understands what it means to desire and pursue something greater than oneself. Seligman's concept of an orientation to goodness has two key features. First, the intentional cultivation of interior goodness contributes to and participates in a wider evolutionary progression of goodness. Second, the presupposition that this process leads to authenticity because, in our orientation to the

[306] Note that this is distinct from Maslow's "peak experience," which denotes transcendent moments of pure joy and elation that are often likened to a spiritual experience. I use the term "peak engagement" here to emphasize the realisation of a potential for engagement in meaningful activity that may or may not be accompanied by a positive emotional state. It rather refers to a radical orientation to the other that need not involve positive emotion.

[307] One might draw, however, upon Csikszentmihalyi's "flow" to explore a state of optimum performance in radical self-forgetting that surpasses the rules of emotional engagement outlined by positive psychology.

good, we become aligned with the inherent and progressive goodness of evolution. From this position, our orientation to the good consists in developing the best of ourselves–our strengths, talents, and virtues–to contribute to the global goodness unfolding through evolution. When we live aligned to this natural coding for goodness–for ever-greater complexity and success–we create more communal lives of greater authenticity, happiness, and fulfilment.

While I would want to agree that orientation to something larger than ourselves is key to building lives of greater meaning and purpose for ourselves and others, we would also wish to say that the greatest good to which we can orient ourselves already exists and is the possibility for an orientation to goodness. We might even, in one sense, agree that we are "coded" with a desire for and capacity to attain the good, but we would want to press this further to say that this coding is more than a drive towards evolutionary success for its own sake. Rather, that evolutionary progress is for the sake of the final good, for God, for love itself. In contrast, we would want to say that the goodness of evolutionary progress points to and is in service of the final good, which is the condition for the possibility to know, desire and pursue all goods. Seligman's sense of aligning ourselves with the evolutionary drive towards goodness doesn't go far enough in expressing the participatory nature of our relationship with the God that already exists as the alpha and omega.

In conclusion, positive psychology's account of authentic happiness is a valuable resource for thinking more broadly and creatively about self-giving. Seligman's authentic happiness theory shows that authentically pursued positive emotions, well-being and growth are not antagonistic to self-giving. Rather they have the potential to increase our willingness, resources, and commitment to self-give. Through positive psychology, the domain of self-giving is expanded to include the authentic pursuit of personal growth and well-being as a legitimate means of pursuing the good for the other. It points to an evolutionary advantage to positive emotions and well-being that confers a reciprocal upward spiral of human flourishing, in which positive emotions increase our sense of relatedness and responsibility for others and the world. Seligman's work invites the possibility of thinking about self-giving in win-win terms, where the mutual flourishing expounded in *Gaudium et Spes* becomes a reality to be experienced with the whole of our being. From this perspective, we can see self-giving as a potential within every human

experience. To this end, suffering and loss need not be the measure of self-giving. Positive psychology invites us to think we may rather be "wired" to find our happiness in and through the happiness of others.

The relationship between Jung and positive psychology

Despite their differences, there are many interesting and relevant convergences between Jung and Seligman. This is why both approaches and not just one, were chosen for this project. Jung and Seligman are both concerned with human flourishing. While traditionally psychology has sought to advance knowledge of human pathology (what happens when things go wrong), Jung and Seligman seek to understand optimum human flourishing or self-realisation (our capacity to do more of what's good for us and realise our potential). Despite their epistemological differences, both traditions seek to increase human fulfilment by realising human potential. While there are differences in how Jung and Seligman understand self-realisation, they unite on the central idea that through self-knowledge and intentional practice, we possess the creative potential to develop in ways that confer global positive changes in character, improved well-being, and increased capacity and desire for altruism. Put another way, both traditions affirm that self-knowledge and development increase our desire and capacity to become a gift to others.

Jung and Seligman also claim that self-awareness and development–self-knowledge and cultivating strengths and talents–increase our capacity for resilient self-giving. Personality is flexible and our capacity for creative growth is immense; focusing on our positive attributes and creative capacities maximises our potential. Attending to our strengths and talents activates an expansive mindset that confers personal and social benefits. In supporting the realisation of our potential, self-care (to whatever extent is possible) supports the realisation of our potential to self-give.

Finally, if growth and positive emotions can increase our capacity to self-give, then self-giving can no longer be the privilege of sacrifice and loss. Self-giving which occurs within the conscious experience of mutual well-being–where the mutual benefit is apparent and effortless–can be viewed as valuable, authentic, and worthy of cultivation. By inviting the

possibility that sacrifice and suffering need not be intrinsic to authentic self-giving, Jung and Seligman invite the idea that suffering, rather than being a measure of self-giving, tells us something important about ourselves. Refusing to valorise suffering as the measure of self-giving means we can attend to our suffering with compassion and strive to reduce our suffering where possible. It allows us to say that self-giving is not the privilege of suffering and loss, nor powerlessness, fragility, and vulnerability. Jung and Seligman invite us to think of suffering and loss as opportunities to realise new capacities for healing and resilience. To state this another way, to realise new ways for ourselves and others to suffer less.

Jung and positive psychology are not then, mutually exclusive, but rather deeply connected in their orientation to the good and their vision of being unified with the world through being unified with the greatest good–to something far larger than ourselves.

Chapter 3

A Theology of the Body and Self-giving

Between September 5th, 1979 and November 28th, 1984, JPII delivered a series of addresses during his Wednesday audiences on human sexuality. They were intended to defend the spousal meaning of the body through "an integral vision" of the human person. These lectures were later published together under the title *A Theology of the Body*. JPII explained that the addresses fall into two parts: "The first part is devoted to the analysis of the words of Christ, which prove to be suitable for opening up the present topic . . . The second part of the catechesis is devoted to the analysis of the sacrament based on Ephesians. The catecheses devoted to Humanae Vitae constitute only one part, the final part, of those that dealt with the redemption of the body and the sacramentality of marriage."[308] The first part, The Words of Christ, is divided into the following chapters: (1) Christ Appeals to the "Beginning" (lectures 1-23); (2) Christ Appeals to the Human Heart (lectures 24-63), and; (3) Christ Appeals to the Resurrection (lectures 64-86). Part Two, The Sacrament, contains the following chapters: (1) The Dimension of Covenant and Grace (lectures 87-102); (2) The Dimension of Sign (lectures 103-117), and; (3) He gave them the Law of Life for their Inheritance (lectures 118-133).

This chapter approaches *A Theology of the Body* as JPII's exposition and validation of the key teaching of *Humanae Vitae* on the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage. JPII's weekly lecture series presents a defence of *Humanae Vitae* through a unique "integral approach" combining elements of Thomistic personalism with traditional magisterial teaching on the natural law to explain why total spousal self-giving in marriage open to procreation is human flourishing. I propose that JPII's personalistic angle is key to the persuasiveness of his exposition of *Humanae Vitae*, which allowed him to emphasise the unitive end of marriage using language not commonly associated with traditional magisterial teaching. While this appears to acknowledge calls in dissent from *Humanae Vitae* for greater

[308] TOB, par. 113:1 – 113:4

recognition and affirmation of the subjective experience of spousal love, I suggest that his personalistic emphasis on the unitive aspect is finally undermined by his exposition of the inseparability of the ends of marriage. That is, I posit that the chief aim of JPII's personalistic approach is not as claimed to bring the subjective aspects of personhood into equal standing with the objective aspects to explain human flourishing (that is, to bring the experience of spousal love into equal standing with traditional teaching on the meaning and purpose of marriage according to natural law), but rather to argue for compliance with the key teaching of *Humanae Vitae* that marriage must be open to procreation.

This chapter begins with theological commentaries on *A Theology of the Body* then proceeds to an exposition of *A Theology of the Body* in four sections: (1) human flourishing in wholeness as a foundational framework to a Theology of the Body; (2) original innocence in human flourishing in the return to "the beginning," in which Carl Jung is brought into dialogue with JPII; (3) self-giving in *A Theology of the Body* in "the beginning," in history, and the eschaton, and; (4) JPII's "integral approach" as a defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

Reception of a Theology of the Body

The following critical commentaries on JPII's theology of marriage offer a small reflection of the diverse ways JPII's writings have been approached.

David Matzko McCarthy's reflections on JPII's theology of marriage speak to the divergent ways in which JPII's writings have been received. While admitting limitations, McCarthy speaks to what many have found appealing in JPII's reflections on marriage and family. In *Sex and Love in the Home*, McCarthy explains that JPII's personalism emphasised communion within the interpersonal bonds of the family and the role of the family as "a specific revelation and realisation of ecclesial communion."[309] It articulated that "the family contains the whole" with a new and compelling depth. JPII appeared to emphasise both the subjective (unitive) and objective (procreative) goods of marriage within the Church's broader mission as a sacrament, as the visible social presence of solidarity and unity.

[309] Pope John Paul II, *Familiaris Consortio* (1981), par. 21.

Yet McCarthy also showed that in another sense JPII's personalism risks a closed account of the family as a self-contained communion. Defining marriage by inward relations rather than outward roles and duties means that "connections between interpersonal harmony and the social function of the family become loose," depriving the family of social and kinship resources.[310] The "complete complementarity" of JPII's theology, for McCarthy, threatens to minimise friendship and social relations, and isolate the family, which makes it both "unworkable" and "uninteresting" in social terms.[311]

While conceding that JPII participated in the personalistic trajectory of magisterial teaching, McCarthy claims there was no consensus or clear idea from the magisterium on how personalist ideas could be applied to specific areas, like marriage. For the majority of the Birth Control Commission, the personalistic turn of the magisterium was the possibility of opening dialogue around contraception and gender roles. For JPII, it rather provided new ways to reaffirm traditional views. McCarthy argues that theological personalism points to the importance and significance of the interpersonal bonds of love through which the family is placed within an order of love. That is, within the church as a social body in imitation of God's love in the world. McCarthy claims that JPII's narrowing of the family's foundation through a "complete complementarity" is, however, counterbalanced by his wider consideration of the social role of the family as "the way of the Church" through which he locates household communion in a social body larger than itself.[312] For McCarthy, the limitations of JPII's personalist approach to marriage appear outweighed by the social role JPII attributes to the family.

Ambiguities surrounding the integration of personalistic ideas into magisterial teaching have been further addressed by Lisa Sowle Cahill who claims that the "practical expression" of these understandings by the magisterium has been "ambivalent if not schizophrenic."[313] Cahill claims that because the process lacked coherence, it resulted in practical expressions that did not reflect the hopes and expectations of the magisterial turn towards the personal. In mapping this personalistic turn, Cahill notes that *Casti Connubii*'s shift towards personal mutuality as the foundation of marriage is "as significant as it is

[310] David Matzko McCarthy, *Sex and Love in the Home*, (London: SCM Press, 2001), p. 113.
[311] Ibid., 123.
[312] Ibid., p. 124.
[313] Lisa Sowle Cahill, 'Marriage: Institution, Relationship, Sacrament', in *One Hundred Years of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. John A. Coleman, S.J (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 103-120, here p. 108

poorly integrated with the primacy still given to procreation."[314] This shift was advanced by *Gaudium et Spes* which situated marriage within the context of love, in which sexual expression was viewed as the outcome of conjugal love, and procreation as the fulfilment of love rather than the purpose of marriage.

Cahill explains that Pope Paul VI's attempt in *Humanae Vitae* to reconcile the significance of the unitive aspects of marriage expressed in *Gaudium et Spes* with an emphasis on traditional understandings of natural law and procreation essentially did no more than affirm the traditional stance regarding the primacy of procreation in sexual expression and women's roles as essentially maternal and domestic.[315] JPII's theology of marriage reinforced and advanced these ambiguities in *Humanae Vitae* such that,

> Many married couples will wonder whether their experiences of the relational value of sexuality have not been co-opted in the service of an impossible (and hence judgemental and discouraging) ideal, which far from supporting true mutuality, continues to subordinate women and to narrow stereotypically the roles of both sexes.[316]

Developing an understanding of marriage which integrates modern understandings of the person with traditional norms concerning the outcome of the conjugal act has proved to be an awkward and difficult task. Cahill's point seems to be that while the personalistic trajectory provided hope for a dialogue between doctrine and experience, its expression in *Humanae Vitae* and JPII's theology of marriage showed no guarantees that this hope would be realised. Paul VI's and JPII's personalistic focus on human nature, freedom, and experience differed significantly from *Gaudium et Spes* and The Commission for Birth Control.

In a change of emphasis, Luke Timothy Johnson offers a critical commentary on *A Theology of the Body*. While Johnson echoes the issues raised by McCarthy and Cahill concerning the reductive foundations of JPII's personalism, his focus is on assessing the validity of a Theology of the Body as an account of the human body as the arena for God's

[314] Ibid., p. 109.
[315] Ibid., p. 108.
[316] Ibid., p. 110.

self-disclosure.[317] In a detailed and very critical commentary, Johnson claims that *A Theology of the Body* "falls far short of adequate theological thinking on the human body," and that because of this theological weakness, it is incapable of responding to "the anxieties of those who, seeking a Christian understanding of the body and human sexuality, look for practical guidance for their lives as sexually active adults."[318]

Johnson is especially critical of JPII's use of Scripture in *A Theology of the Body*. He claims that JPII's reading of Scripture is overtly selective, that he focuses on a few select (albeit important) passages while excluding other rich texts that would better show the complexity and ambiguity of sexual relations.[319] He argues that JPII's "flat, surface reading of texts fails to deal with the difficulties presented by the passages he has selected to discuss,"[320] and that he seems "unaware of the dangers of deriving ontological conclusions from ancient narrative texts."[321] Johnson is especially critical of JPII's claims to draw on a phenomenological approach, arguing that JPII appears to have paid little attention to actual human experience and its role in God's ongoing revelation.

> If we believe – and this is a crucial point – that revelation is not exclusively biblical but occurs in the continuing experience of God in the structures of human freedom, then at least an occasional glance at human experience as actually lived might be appropriate even for the magisterium.[322]

The result of JPII's "inadequate" reading of Scripture and phenomenological analysis is a clear reduction of human love to human sexuality. With a lack of perception, described by Johnson as akin to a sunset being painted by the unsighted, JPII's treatment of love is narrow even within the bounds of a normative framework.[323] JPII's lectures reduce sexuality and the complexity of embodiment to the act of intercourse, which is of interest only in terms of its "openness" to reproduction.[324] It is difficult, Johnson remarks, to avoid the conclusion that

[317] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Revelatory Body: Theology as Inductive Art* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 2015), p.22
[318] Ibid., p. 23.
[319] Ibid., p. 25-26.
[320] Ibid., p. 26.
[321] Ibid., p. 26-27.
[322] Ibid., p. 25.
[323] Ibid.
[324] Ibid., p. 28.

the entire lecture series was not directed to a defence of *Humane Vitae*; there is "almost nothing in that defence, when it comes, that is given actual support by the conferences preceding it."[325] The idea that this lengthy text could be in service of defending *Humanae Vitae* adds weight to Johnson's perceptive claim that what often appears as description subtly serves as a prescription: "human love and sexuality can appear in only one form."[326]

Feminist theology has also problematised JPII's writings and the ideas they uphold. Emily Reimer-Barry argues that *Humanae Vitae* has had "far-reaching damaging effects on many Catholic women and their spirituality, moral agency, and fertility."[327] Feminist theologians have critiqued JPII's approach to "gifted relationality" as human flourishing. Tina Beattie questions not only the "the dynamics of power and control that allow a celibate male Pope, writing in the context of an exclusively male hierarchy, to claim authority to speak about the incarnational significance of the female body," but also JPII's reaffirmation of a highly conservative approach to marriage, and his application of "gifted relationality."[328] Feminists, such as Beattie, argue that the language of self-gift is problematic because women have historically been largely, if not exclusively, defined by their function and utility to others in relationships and consequently needed to create autonomous space in resistance to relationships of subordination and control.[329]

However, Beattie also suggests that JPII's *Theology of the Body* is as promising as it is problematic because it contributes to vital reflections on a theological reclamation of the body.[330]

> . . . a recovery of the sense of the giftedness of the self, which brings with it an absolute valuing of the dignity of the self as the gift of God, made in the image of God, may offer feminist theology a new model of relationality that is not

[325] Ibid.
[326] Ibid., p. 27.
[327] Emily Reimer-Barry, 'On Women's Health and Women's Power: A Feminist Appraisal of Humanae Vitae,' *Theological Studies*, 79, 4 (2018), pp. 818-840, p. 818.
[328] Ibid.
[329] See also: Michele M. Schumacher, 'The Nature of Nature in Feminism, Old and New: From Dualism to Complementary Unity,' in Schumacher (ed.), *Women in Christ*, *Christ: Toward a New Feminism,* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2004), pp. 33-4; Katy M. Grimes, "Theology of Whose Body? Sexual Complementarity, Intersex Conditions and La Virgen de Guadalupe," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 32, 1 (2016): pp. 75-93.
[330] Tina Beattie, *New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory* (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006), p. 46.

> parasitic upon the autonomous subjectivites of modernity, nor prey to the many forms of subordinationism and subjugation which haunt the Christian theology of women.[331]

Catholic theology shows there are many ways of being a gendered body. Beattie claims it offers ways to understand gender beyond sexual dualities, "to open up a dazzling proliferation of relational performances in the gap between male and female bodies."[332] This approach points to a middle way capable of resisting oppressive narratives on gender and self-giving while offering space to reconsider feminist sacramentality, "which begins not with a woman's experience but with the body's grace."[333] Reimer points out that notwithstanding the damage done by continued papal support for *Humanae Vitae*, feminist critiques of this teaching "must also take seriously the experiences of Catholic women who express that practicing natural family planning has brought empowerment, good health, and increased spousal intimacy."[334] JPII's theological anthropology may have held a seductive appeal for some, but feminist theologians testify that women's voices on his writings and the teachings they uphold are far from unified.

These accounts coalesce on the idea that JPII's theology of marriage, family and the body is reductive and detached from real human experience. While agreeing with these claims, I approach *A Theology of the Body* from a different perspective. The question at the heart of the current exposition is why JPII's defence of the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae*, which found expression through his theology of marriage and family, was and continues to be found more compelling and persuasive by many readers than that of his predecessors. I have proposed that the appeal of JPII's theology and what makes it distinctive is his self-claimed "integral approach," which through a framework of wholeness claims to integrate personalistic ideas with magisterial teaching on natural law. In a technical sense, this allowed JPII to complete what was lacking in *Humanae Vitae*; a comprehensive exposition of the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage. In a pastoral sense, however, perhaps more importantly, it allowed him to construct this exposition through language not

[331] Ibid., p.47.
[332] Ibid.
[333] Ibid.
[334] Reimer-Barry, 'On Women's Health and Women's Power: A Feminist Appraisal of Humanae Vitae,' p. 818

commonly associated with traditional magisterial teaching; such as individuation, human realisation, liberation, authentic love, and happiness. I propose that this angle was crucial to the appeal of JPII's defence of *Humanae Vita*e in *A Theology of the Body*.

To this end, I wish to press further Johnson's key claim that *A Theology of the Body* reduces human love to human sexuality by rooting the expression of authentic love in the body as feminine or masculine. The focus of the current exposition is not essentially to *critique* JPII's use of self-giving as human realisation through a reductive account of human love and sexuality. It is rather to *explain* how his use of self-giving through his integral approach serves to camouflage the reduction of love to sexuality and to claim this veiling of his essentialism as a contributory factor in his distinctiveness and appeal. JPII's personalistic emphasis was a defence against the accusations of biological reductionism to which his predecessors had been subjected and upon which his theology pivoted. I will propose that couching his affirmation of the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae* in the 'language of the heart,' in the language of the depths of human longing and experience, was key to this defence. Key to this exposition is the claim that JPII's appeal is partly rooted in an elaborate distraction from the essentialism lying at the very heart of his theology, in his integral approach which professes to recognise and dignify the person in their totality.

A Theology of the Body

This exposition focuses on how JPII defends *Humanae Vitae's* claims to the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage and shows how this defence is expressed through self-giving as human flourishing in wholeness. The exposition is divided into four sections: (1) human flourishing in wholeness as a foundational framework to *A Theology of the Body*; (2) original innocence as human fulfilment in the return to "the beginning," where JPII is brought into dialogue with Jung; (3) self-giving in *A Theology of the Body* in "the beginning," in history, and the eschaton, and; (4) JPII's "integral approach" as a defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

The lens of human realisation in wholeness

A Theology of the Body is explicitly framed by the question of how human beings realise their highest good. It centres on the presupposition that our human realisation is found in being most fully formed in the *imago Dei* through both our individual humanity and the communion of persons.

> The account in Genesis 2, by contrast, does not speak of the "image of God," but reveals, in the manner proper to it, that the complete and definitive creation of "man" (subject first to the experience of original solitude) expresses itself in giving life to the *communio personarum* than man and woman form . . . we can deduce that man became the image of God not only through his own humanity, but through the communion of persons, which man and woman formed from the very beginning.[335]

A person is most fully in the image of God not only through their essential humanity but also through the communion of persons established in "the beginning" in the duality of man and woman. JPII claims that in passing from original solitude to unity, the person's consciousness and attitudes are transformed to express and realise the value of the body and sex in service of the "communion of persons" by which they most fully embody the image of God.[336] The *communio personarum* is "precisely the 'help' that derives in some way from the very fact of existing as a person 'beside' a person."[337] Existing *for* the other is "the possibility of being and existing within a particular reciprocity" by which a person mirrors not only themselves but "the image of an inscrutable divine communion of Persons."[338]

> In this way, the meaning of man's original unity through masculinity and femininity expresses itself as an overcoming of the frontier of solitude and at the

[335] JPII, TOB, par. 9:3.
[336] Ibid., par. 45:3
[337] Ibid., par. 9:2
[338] Ibid., par. 9:3.

> same time as an affirmation – for both human beings – of everything in solitude that constitutes "man" . . . The man's solitude is . . . thus [an] opening toward and waiting for a "communion of persons."[339]

For JPII, human realisation refers then to the process by which a person becomes most fully in the image of God both in their humanity, and most importantly, in their recognition of the body as revealing the truth that they are created for love in male and female complementarity to realise the communion of persons. Human realisation in the communion of persons is the "affirmation of the person,"[340] "the realisation of essence,"[341] "interior freedom,"[342] "individuation,"[343] "original happiness"[344] and the highest form of love by which a person realises their trinitarian nature as love and gift. The communion of persons symbolises a unique 'wholeness' and 'completeness' attained when the complementary others unite in marriage. For this reason, JPII claims that "consciousness of the 'spousal' meaning of the body, constitutes the "fundamental component of human existence in the world."[345]

In *A Theology of the Body*, JPII examines the meaning and purpose of the body through its relationship to human flourishing. How does the body reveal God's plan for human flourishing? The answer is, in one sense, simple: human flourishing occurs in a wholeness arising through the communion of persons. This theme is a distinctive and compelling feature of his theology. JPII often returns to human flourishing through the related questions of how we can draw the parts into the whole and how our deepest longing for authentic, lasting love and happiness can be satiated. To convince us of his views on the meaning and purpose of the body JPII does more than situate his views in doctrine and magisterial teaching as his predecessors had done. Rather he frames many of these arguments within the overarching theme of human fulfilment, which gives the appearance of providing the 'heart' to traditional teaching that all too often felt clinical and detached from human experience. Human flourishing was an ideal focus for a project intended to shift

[339] Ibid., par. 9:2.
[340] Ibid., par. 15:4
[341] Ibid., par. 16:1.
[342] Ibid., par. 15:3
[343] Ibid., par. 14:3
[344] Ibid., par. 16:2
[345] Ibid., par. 15:5

focus away from *Humanae Vitae*'s reaffirmation of the primacy of procreation in marriage, from accusations of biological determinism and disregard for the lived experience of magisterial teaching on artificial contraception. From this new perspective, magisterial teaching appeared framed by the highest pastoral intention.

The wholeness of original innocence, unity, and human flourishing

The lectures on *A Theology of the Body* began one year before the ordinary assembly of the Synod of Bishops on the topic of "*De muneribus familiae christianae*" (The Duties of the Christian Family), which aimed to explore community and family Christian life as it had been "from the beginning." This appeal to the "beginning" was taken from Christ's exchange with the Pharisees on divorce in the Gospels of Matthew and Mark.[346] JPII claimed that *A Theology of the Body* foreshadowed the chief concerns of the synod. A *Theology of the Body* proposed that Christ's words cause us to reflect on how, "in the mystery of creation, man was formed precisely as 'male and female,' in order to understand correctly the normative meaning of the words in Genesis."[347] In this reading, the creation of the human person as male or female is intrinsically tied to the original love and happiness revealed in the original state. JPII claimed that the original state allowed the "historical person" to understand and realise their potential for union in and with God, and so realise their potential for lasting peace, love, and joy. For JPII, the human person flourishes when they discover the meaning of original innocence, a return to "the beginning," in our lives today.

JPII refers to the state of original innocence as the "*status naturae integrae*" or the "state of integral nature," which is contrasted with the "*status naturae lapsae*" or the "state of fallen nature."[348] For JPII, the person is realised in the *imago Dei* in the transition from original solitude to unity in which the subjective and objective aspects of personhood are

[346] The exchange from Matthew's Gospel: Some Pharisees came to him to test him and asked him, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason?" And he answered them, "Have you not read that from the beginning the Creator created them male and female and said, 'For this reason a man will leave his father and his mother and unite with his wife, and the two will be one flesh'? So it is that they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore, what God has joined let no man separate." They objected, "Why then did Moses order to give her a certificate of divorce and send her away?" Jesus answered, "Because of the hardness of your heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but from the beginning it was not so." (Mt 19:3-8)
[347] JPII, TOB, par 1:4.
[348] Ibid., par. 3:3.

fully integrated. In original solitude, subjectivity refers to the development of personal identity – self-consciousness and self-determination. Through these attributes, the person distinguishes themselves from other species, not only on the grounds of their rational nature but also their subjectivity and awareness of will and responsibility.

> Thus, the created man finds himself from the first moment of his existence before God in search of his own being . . . in search of his own "identity" . . . Thus, consciousness reveals man as the one who possesses the power of knowing with respect to the visible world. With this knowledge, which makes him go in some way outside of his own being, man at the same time reveals himself to himself in all the distinctiveness of his being . . . Man is alone because he is different from the "visible" world . . . This process also leads to the first delineation of the human being as a human person, with the proper subjectivity that characterises the person . . . with the aspect of choice and self-determination . . . as a subject of the covenant, that is, a subject constituted as a person, constituted according to the measure of "*partner of the Absolute* . . . "[349]

The objective aspects of the person intersect with the subjective at this early stage not only as a visible marker of physical difference but also insofar as the body reveals the person by allowing them to become the author of genuinely, singular human behaviour, such as 'cultivating and subduing the earth.'[350] Personhood is then revealed from the "beginning" not only through subjectivity but through the body which is the "penetrable and transparent aspect of personhood that makes it clear who man is (and ought to be) thanks to the structure of his consciousness and self-determination."[351] The body is not merely in service of the intellect; it reveals its significance in allowing the person to know the truth of their being and fulfil their singular human purpose.

However, the body reveals its significance most fundamentally in the original union of man and woman. JPII claims that discovering the meaning of original innocence in our

[349] Ibid., par. 5:5-6:1.
[350] Ibid., par. 7:2.
[351] Ibid.

lives as the possibility for human flourishing involves understanding how the body reveals the person and the person reveals the body through sexual complementarity.

> Following the narrative of Genesis, we observed that the "definitive" creation of man consists of the unity of two beings. Their unity denotes above all the identity of human nature; duality, on the other hand, shows what, on the basis of this identity, constitutes the masculinity and femininity of created man.[352]

Drawing on Aquinas' distinction between the natural aptitude of the soul and the graced use of this aptitude, JPII explains that we are in the image of God through our humanity and our sexual complementarity as the potential for the communion of persons; through our very existence and through choosing and cultivating the vocation of marriage open to the transmission of life (or celibacy). He states, "Man becomes an image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion."[353] The return to "the beginning" affirms that the human person is only complete in the imago Dei in the communion of persons realised in the recognition of the opposite sex as the complementary other and the consummation of this union. The original unity realised through the body "indicates from the beginning not only the 'body,' but also the 'incarnate' communion of persons."[354] The body reveals the person; it reveals the sacramental and ethical dimensions of the *communio personarum* that realises "reciprocal enrichment."[355]

JPII is then claiming that our relation to the sexual instinct determines our fullest realisation in the *imago Dei*. The sex drive is an essential part of realisation in the *communio personarum*. In *Love and Responsibility*, he explains that in its biological and existential aspects, it is the possibility for the highest form of love ("betrothed love") in self-giving by which we become co-creators in the image of the Trinty as love and gift:

> Precisely this connection with the very existence of man and of the species *Homo sapiens* confers on the sexual drive its objective greatness and meaning.

[352] Ibid., par. 9:1.
[353] Ibid., par. 9:3.
[354] Ibid., par. 9:5.
[355] Ibid.

> But this greatness appears in the consciousness only when with his love man takes up what is contained in the natural finality of the drive. . . The order of human existence, the order of being, does not remain in conflict with the love of persons, but is closely harmonised with it.[356]

When fully and properly expressed, the sexual instinct realises the truth of being, the fundamental essence that is existence itself. In its duality of biological and existential aspects by which the subjective and objective are united, the sexual instinct embodies the integration and unity of the core subjective and objective aspects of the person that JPII claims are key to our flourishing. The conjugal act as the consummation of the *communio personarum* is our fullest realisation in the *imago Dei* because it is the most complete expression of the coherence and harmony of the integrated original state of innocence. JPII claims that human realisation is shown from the "beginning" to arise from a profound wholeness that reveals the truth of being through union in male-female complementarity.

The natural consequence of an openness to grace is then, for JPII, that a person cultivates a life ordered to the realisation of the spousal meaning of the body. The rediscovery of original innocence occurs through the correctly ordered sex drive, which is the possibility for the *communio personarum.* His personalism and theological anthropology in a Theology of the Body centres upon establishing an explicit connection between the wholeness of the original state as human realisation, and the vocation of heterosexual marriage open to the transmission of life. JPII's exposition of the meaning of original innocence affirms traditional magisterial teaching on sexual complementarity and the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage as human realisation.

The meaning of the original wholeness and its consequences for the historical person is, for JPII, revealed not only in the original state of innocence but the original state of "shame." He claims that original "shame" is the "boundary" experience that marks the transition from original innocence to historical sinfulness.[357] This is expressed as the transition from an interior state of transparency and unity to opaqueness and dissonance in the disorder between the subjective and objective aspects of personhood. While he argues that original shame is not truly about the body, but rather a resistance to God, he maintains

[356] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, p. 36.
[357] Ibid., par. 11:4.

that this shame is primarily "sexual" because it is marked by hiding the visible signs of femininity and masculinity.[358] Original nakedness signifies the "full acceptance of the body in its whole human and thus personal truth."[359] JPII claims that the Yahwist text shows that,

> . . . the words "they did not feel shame" can only signify an original depth in affirming what is inherent in the person, that is, what is "visibly" feminine and masculine, through which the "personal intimacy" of reciprocal communication is constituted. To this fullness of *"exterior" perception*, expressed by physical nakedness, *corresponds the "interior" fullness of the vision of man in God*, that is, *according to the measure of the "image of God."*[360]

Shame, in contrast, impedes the graced vision that allows a person to perceive the truth of the spousal meaning of the body–it "limits and deforms" this way of "living in the body."[361] In the state of original shame, difference is perceived as opposition rather than complementarity because the body is no longer subject to the spirit. The rejection of God caused a "fracture in the person's interior, a breakup, as it were, of man's original spiritual and somatic unity,"[362] a disturbance which was felt most profoundly, claims JPII, in the "destruction" of the "original power of communication" through the *communio personarum* according to masculinity and femininity.[363]

> Its shame bears within itself a specific humiliation mediated by the body . . . that threatens in some way man's unity as a person, that is, the unity of the moral nature that plunges its roots firmly into the very constitution of the person . . . What disappears is the simplicity and "purity" of the original experience, which helped to bring about a singular fullness of mutual self-communication.[364]

[358] Ibid., par. 28:2.
[359] Ibid., par. 11:3.
[360] Ibid., par. 12:5.
[361] Ibid., par. 32:1.
[362] Ibid., par. 28:2.
[363] Ibid., par. 29:2.
[364] Ibid., par. 28:2–29:2

JPII claims that the fundamental rejection of God causes a dissonance that impairs a person's capacity to recognise and grasp the spousal meaning of the body, which in turn impairs their capacity to perceive and respond to the world with clarity; "a specific difficulty in sensing the human essentiality of one's own body, which is not a problem in the original state."[365] JPII claims that if one cannot grasp the significance of sexual complementarity and the communion of persons, if one cannot order their lives to this reality, then one cannot hope to see the real significance of anything else in the world. The dissonance within is the lens through which all else is perceived and engaged.

JPII's claims build on the presupposition that the original state of innocence is marked by a sense of "transparency;" of a certain permeability to the human person that is the condition for the possibility of the original fulfilment. It involves a radical openness to grace by which the person sees what is real and true. JPII's concept of transparency speaks to the Thomistic idea of being correctly ordered to essence; that a person flourishes when they become an expression of being.[366] To this end, it expresses a fluidity and permeability of the original state of innocence that is the possibility for human realisation because it permits grace to fully integrate, unify and order the person in their totality. JPII wants us to believe that rediscovering original innocence in the communion of persons involves a radical openness to grace, a sense of being correctly ordered in wholeness, and a divine perceptual clarity by which we are situated in authentic relation with the world and actively cultivate lives that allow us to deepen and express this reality as the truth of being. It is to experience a perceptual clarity that reveals and confirms sexual complementarity as the expression of graced wholeness, the meaning of original innocence in our lives today. This allows him to argue that the reality and truth revealed in the radical openness to grace in the original state *is* the spousal meaning of the body. JPII uses the concepts of transparency and wholeness to claim that human realisation occurs in the communion of persons because it is a natural organic expression of the original integrated state of wholeness–the person's fullest expression in the *imago Dei*.

---

[365] Ibid., par. 28:2.

[366] Aquinas considered the original state to be marked by full harmony and right order within the human self, whereby the different powers of the lower soul were subject to the higher soul by which the person observed the rule of reason. To this end, the body and soul were in perfect harmony. Joesph P Wawrykow explains that the first people were ordered to eternal life and the beatific vision through grace, which was not only responsible for the original harmony, "not only of the person before God, but within the person, and of the person with various others. See, Joesph P Wawrykow, *A-Z of Thomas Aquinas* (London: SCM Press, 2005) 101.

While I agree there is value in conceiving human flourishing as a radical openness to grace experienced as wholeness (or to say this another way, the absence of dissonance) and to tie this concept to the possibility of a divine perceptual clarity capable of operating beyond the ego, I disagree with JPII's conclusions. JPII uses these concepts to express how marriage realises his essentialist understanding of human nature and human flourishing. The potential breadth of what it might mean to be radically open to grace, to perceive with the divine vision and to experience wholeness in orientation to the other is reduced to a realisation of the centrality of male and female complementarity as the truth of human nature. For JPII, what one finds in the inner sanctuary with God and sees in grace through a lens unobstructed by the ego is confirmation that well-being and holiness, psychological and spiritual maturity, are only possible when the sex drive is 'properly orientated' because all our cognitive perceptual and reasoning capabilities are, he claims, impeded when this fundamental truth is not central to our lives.

It seems intuitive that we flourish in the absence of interior dissonance, when the world and our place within it make sense to us. But the exclusivity with which JPII understands how one realises this state diminishes the diverse contexts, times and places which shape its development. Moreover, it limits the breadth of personality development and disregards our human experience which tells us human flourishing in-relation, in orientation to the other, is found in a plethora of ways far beyond, though not to the exclusion, of marriage. In short, it limits the very human potential in grace for mutual flourishing that he claims to affirm.

Reflections on Jung's theory of individuation

Jung also draws on a concept of transparency connected to perceptual clarity and wholeness. This idea derives its significance from Jung's belief that human experience is shaped not by external stimuli but by internal states. While an objective reality exists, how we see and relate to that reality will be determined by our personality, which means the psyche determines how we perceive and respond to the world. Individuation is important because, through processes of integration and unification, the psyche attains its optimal state. In realising the God-archetype, the psyche is aligned in and to the "transcendental

factor" or the *numinosum*, wherein perception and action become ordered in and to the highest dimension of the person. Interior order confers interior transparency, which confers an exterior or perceptual order, clarity, or transparency. The more we allow the transcendental factor to shape and order our psyche, the greater our interior clarity and harmony, the more we perceive and act in ways conducive to our personal and communal highest good. This process happens in three key ways: first, in the *numinosum* experience through religion; second, through the integration of the shadow, and; third, through the integration of the feminine archetype.

Jung claimed that for most, religion played an important role in individuation. Being one of the first to view psychological wholeness as a religious problem, he claimed that psychoneurosis must be understood as "the suffering soul which has not discovered its meaning."[367] Religion offers resources to cultivate a meaningful life. Through religion individuals encounter and integrate the God archetype–the most powerful and decisive archetype in the collective unconscious. Yet religion for Jung was not the creed, but rather religion "designates the attitude peculiar to a consciousness that has been changed by experience of the *numinosum*."[368] The Church facilitates this interior transformation by affecting in equal measure both an *outward* psychic movement in recognition of archetypal content and its significance, and a *returning* movement in which the symbolism is experienced as truthful and meaningful.[369] The wisdom contained within religious teachings becomes concretely and personally experienced and integrated. Authentic religious values are internalised and the sources of our identity and self-esteem are refined and clarified.[370]

While Catholic thought on the nature and experience of God differs in significant ways from Jung's understanding of the "transcendental factor," there is an important shared idea that the degree to which one opens oneself to grace, or the transcendental factor in Jung's case, is the degree to which one realises their highest potential for the good.

> If you sum up what people tell you about their [transcendental] experiences, you can formulate it in this way: They came to themselves, they could accept

[367] Carl Gustav Jung, 'Psychotherapists or the Clergy'*, Journal of Pastoral Psychology*, 7 (1956), 27-41 (p.33)
[368] Jung, 'Psychology and Religion,' p. 240.
[369] Hans Shaer, *Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology* (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1951), p. 161.
[370] Cannon, 'The Problem of Holiness and Wholeness', p. 24.

> themselves, and thus were reconciled to adverse circumstances and events. This is almost what used to be expressed by the saying: He has made his peace with God, he has sacrificed his own will, he has submitted himself to the will of God.[371]

For Jung, religion supports human flourishing through a process of individuation because it opens the psyche to realising the God archetype; the condition for the possibility of interior coherence that confers our greatest capacity to perceive others with clarity and respond with compassion.

Shadow integration (the "compensatory perspective of the unconscious") also plays a key role in cultivating the "transparency" of an ordered psyche. Integrating the shadow, whereby psychic material is integrated rather than projected into the world, increases the psyche's unity and coherence, and leads to perceptual clarity and balance. A lack of shadow integration increases the projection of suppressed and repressed psychic material, increases the fragmentation of the psyche, and leads to an individual perceiving the world through their conflicts and pain.

> We must still be exceedingly careful not to project our shadows too shamelessly; we are still swamped with projected illusions . . . If you imagine someone who is brave enough to withdraw all these projections, then you get an individual who is conscious of a considerable shadow . . . He has succeeded in shouldering at least an infinitesimal part of the gigantic, unsolved social problems of our day . . . How can anyone see straight when he does not even see himself and the darkness he unconsciously carries with him into all his dealings? Wherever the unconscious reigns, there is bondage and possession.[372]

Jung believed that our life's work was to realise our inner goodness in the *numinosum experience* because only then can we realise our potential to bring goodness into the world. Without inner coherence, we remain at the mercy of our drives and impulses because our

[371] Jung, 'Psychology and Religion', p. 241.
[372] Ibid.,, pp. 243-244.

shadow blocks and misdirects the energies of the God archetype compelling us to see the world through our unconscious needs and desires.

> To counter this danger, the free society needs a bond of an affective nature, a principle of a kind like *caritas*, the Christian love of your neighbour. But it is just this love for one's fellow man that suffers most of all from the lack of understanding wrought by projection. It would therefore be very much in the interest of the free society to give some thought to the question of human relationship from the psychological point of view, for in this resides its real cohesion and consequently its strength. Where love stops, power begins, and violence and terror.[373]

Jung claims that the coherence, harmony, and integration of "interior" transparency confers a more accurate perception of the world or "exterior" transparency shaped by the transcendental factor. For Jung, a person's greatest capacity to see and respond to the world with compassion detached from self-interest is realised in the liberation from drives and impulses which impede the full scope of the transcendental factor. Liberation in this sense does not mean that we don't experience drives or impulses or deny the experience of drives and impulses, but rather that we learn that our freedom *for* the transcendental factor is realised in learning to respond rather than react to these tendencies. For Jung, liberation involved learning that we are not at the mercy of thoughts and feelings. To be liberated *from* drives and impulses is simultaneously to be liberated *for* the powerful, unifying force of the transcendental factor. The wholeness of individuation is essential to realise our potential for goodness in the world and, importantly, to not add to its suffering.

Alongside shadow integration, Jung also believed that integration of the feminine archetype was necessary to cultivate the interior and exterior perceptual clarity associated with individuation. The feminine archetype is the formative power of life that works through relatedness–through love in its many forms. Individuation involves integrating three aspects of the feminine principle: to be grounded in one's nature, have authentic relations with others, and feel personally related to life. Jung believed that being rooted in the feminine

[373] Jung, *The Undiscovered Self*, p. 74.

archetype means we experience ourselves as grounded in the instinctual aspects of the unconscious from where arose "an unforced mode of 'doing' evolves–one that is inspired."[374] From an experience of fundamental safety, we are better disposed to exercise detachment and discernment, which allows us to be fully present and responsive to the other because we no longer need to control the world and others to feel safe.[375] Being grounded in the core of our being through the integration of the shadow and feminine archetype in the *numinosum*, we are better able to see and attend to the other without the distractions of the self, and therefore with the full, emerging potential of our souls for disinterested love and compassion.

In *A Theology of the Body*, JPII makes similar claims regarding wholeness and clarity of perception. JPII posits that the original state of innocence reveals that openness to grace through being properly ordered or oriented, confers a perceptual clarity essential for authentic relations with ourselves, others, the world, and God. Original nakedness, for JPII, expresses how categories of the truth of being or reality arise through participation in the perception of the world.[376] The "exterior" aspect of perception is a "direct and, as it were, spontaneous fact, before any 'critical' complication of knowledge and of human experience."[377] For JPII, the body is perceived through the ultimate reality, within the mystery of creation, when perception is radically open to grace. From this perspective, "nakedness" signifies the original good of the divine vision where the "exterior" perception of the world is informed by "an inner dimension of a share in the vision of the Creator himself."[378] JPII claims that original "shame" obstructs the ability to see and know others in the "tranquillity of the interior gaze."[379] In eating the fruit from the tree of knowledge, the person's interior was "fractured;" there was "a break-up as it were of man's original spiritual and somatic unity."[380] The body is no longer subject to the spirit, which "threatens in some

[374] Harris, *Becoming Whole: A Jungian Guide to Individuation*, p. 21.
[375] There are parallels here with the concept of Flow, whereby complete orientation to the task at hand produces optimal performance, the full orientation of signature strengths and talents, through "effortless effort."
[376] JPII, TOB, par. 12:3.
[377] Ibid., par. 12:3.
[378] Ibid., par. 13:1
[379] Ibid.
[380] Ibid., par. 28:2.

way man's unity as a person."[381] Like Jung, JPII argues that the mind can impede and misdirect the flow of grace whereby egoic need rather than essence forms perception.

JPII and Jung depart, however, in their thinking on the fine details of *what exactly is revealed* when we perceive the world from a properly grounded position. Jung claims that the grounded position brings clarity without reference to a specific object of this clarity. He is more concerned with *how* we see better by removing obstacles to perceptual clarity so that the God archetype can be realised than *what* we see once those obstacles have been removed. His concern appears to be to guide people through a process which he believes confers their greatest good – the realisation of the Self. Whereas, JPII claims something altogether more specific. He posits that perceptual clarity reveals the truth of the spousal meaning of the body, of the *communio personarum* realised in the complementarity of man and woman.

> To this fullness of the "exterior" perception, expressed by physical nakedness, corresponds the "interior fullness of the vision of the man in God, that is, according to the measure of the "image of God." Seeing each other reciprocally, through the mystery of creation, as it were, the man and woman see each other still more fully and clearly than through the sense of sight itself . . . through the peace and tranquillity of the interior gaze, they communicate in the fullness of humanity, which shows itself in them as reciprocal complementarity precisely because they are male and female.[382]

JPII goes so far as to say "Man's *individuation* is confirmed when he beholds the woman."[383] In a similar process to Jung's idea of the Church facilitating an interior transformation by affecting both an outward and returning psychic movement, so too JPII argues that the spousal meaning of the body is revealed and discovered in the form of the complementary other, who is recognised by the "inner-most sanctuary" as a person who expresses this truth, which confirms and affirms our desire for the highest union in male and female complementarity.

---

[381] Ibid.
[382] Ibid., par. 13:1.
[383] Ibid., par. 14:3.

> Redemption is a truth, a reality, in the name of which man must feel himself called . . . Man *must feel himself called to rediscover*, or even better, to realise, the spousal meaning of the body . . . If he allows them [the words of Christ] to work in him he can at the same time hear in his innermost being the echo, as it were, of that "beginning," of that good "beginning" to which Christ appealed on another occasion to remind his listeners who man is, who woman is, and who they are reciprocally: one for the other in the work of creation . . . Called as a person in the truth of his humanity, and also in the truth of his masculinity and femininity, in the truth of his body. Called in that truth which has been his inheritance "of the beginning," the inheritance of his heart . . .[384]

The truth of the spousal meaning of the body, JPII claims, is deep within a person's "consciousness," it is intuitive and therefore "the fundamental component of human existence in the world."[385] The magisterium's teaching on natural law as sexual complementarity "*is* man, not only in the 'natural' aspect of his existence, but also in the integral truth of his personal subjectivity . . . as male and female [the person is revealed] in his full temporal and eschatological vocation."[386]

To support his claims to the revelation-discovery of the spousal meaning of the body, JPII draws directly on Jung's theory of the *anima* and *animus*, the feminine and masculine archetypes of the collective unconscious. The *anima* and *animus* of the collective unconscious are "a priori" forms guiding functions of the soul. They are filled with content common to all humans, regardless of time and culture, that is decisive for humanity.[387] JPII regards the *anima* and *animus* as "a kind of personal archetype of human bodiliness and sexuality" that is fundamental for understanding who we are and the meaning of the body.[388]

JPII claims that Jung's theory of the *anima* and *animus* supports his claim that the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae* are built into a person's nature and that this truth is confirmed

[384] Ibid., par. 46:5-6.
[385] Ibid., par. 15:5.
[386] Ibid., par. 123:3.
[387] Ibid., par. 21:1, footnote 32.
[388] Ibid.

by authentic introspection. While the truth of the spousal meaning of the body is objectively revealed in the body through sexual complementarity, only an openness to the "archetype" of male-female relations–to an authentic interior divine knowledge of these relations–enables a person to perceive the spousal truth of the body. As Jung believed the *anima* and *animus* archetypes to be realised in the encounter between the conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche through the *numinosum* experience, JPII claims that the person is most fully realised in the *imago Dei* when the personalistic (interiority) and the objective (the sexed body) are integrated and unified.

This premise grounds JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae*. JPII wants to persuade us that *Humanae Vitae's* teachings on marriage are not arbitrary but grounded in a commitment to the truth of the person discovered and realised in the integration of the subjective and objective aspects of personhood regardless of how uncomfortable it may sound in contemporary times. This was a new angle for the magisterium. JPII claimed his teaching was grounded in pastoral concerns to affirm human realisation–the deepest level of human transformation–and doctrinal concerns to affirm revelation and magisterial teaching in equal measure. From this perspective, *A Theology of the Body* expounded Pope Paul VI's claims to the inseparability of the ends of marriage by arguing that its teachings were fundamentally about human flourishing. It was fundamentally about showing us how to go beyond doing the good, to becoming the good.

> Those who believe that the Council and the encyclical [*Humanae Vitae*] do not sufficiently take into account the difficulties of concrete life do not understand the pastoral concern that stood at the origin of these documents. Pastoral concern means seeking the *true* good of man . . . What is at stake here is the *truth*, first *in the ontological dimension* ("innermost structure") and then – as a consequence – in the *subjective and psychological dimension* ("meaning"). The text of the encyclical underlines that in this case we are dealing with a norm of the natural law . . . divine law reflects the integral meaning of conjugal love and impels it towards true human fulfilment.[389]

[389] Ibid., par. 118:6 & 120:6

However, JPII's interpretation of Jung's theory of the *anima* and *animus* departs significantly from Jung's analysis. For Jung, the *anima/animus* reflect the male-female syzygy (conjunction or opposition) that is the most important and commonest in our experience. The projection and integration of these archetypes allow individuals to navigate the tension between these opposites and ultimately unite them as various aspects of their psyche. Jung explained, "[A]n archetype in its quiescent, unprojected state has no exact determinable form but is in itself an indefinite structure which can assume definite forms only in projection."[390] The *anima* and *animus* are our unconscious potential to thrive in the unavoidable encounter with the opposite sex, which represents one pair of opposites among many. In the same way that shadow projections are recognised as important aspects of one's psyche, Jung claimed that those traits we believe belong exclusively to the opposite sex are eventually recognised as our own.[391] In both cases, we see ourselves peering back at us.

Yet with the *anima* and *animus*, Jung argued that we eventually discover that we are not looking at a reflection of ourselves, but rather our complement–the other that we need to become whole. The unity and opposition in the *anima* and *animus* represent the primordial pair of opposites that may occur. Like the Yin and Yang symbols of the I Ching, the *anima* contains complementary masculine traits and vice versa, such that if we went deep enough into the unconscious, we would find little or no masculine experience not available to women, or female experience open to men.[392] Contrary to JPII's understanding, the *anima* and *animus* are not defined by fixed, permanent traits, but rather by the complementary nature of the relationship between opposites of masculinity and femininity. For example, within cultures where men and women have sharply defined roles, the *anima* and *animus* will also be sharply defined.

> . . . I do not wish or intend to give these two intuitive concepts too specific a definition. I use [the anima and animus] . . . as conceptual aids . . . It gives rise to misunderstandings and annoying interpretations in the family circle and among

[390] Carl Jung, 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9, Part 1.* 2nd ed. Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 135-147, p. 142.
[391] Robin Robertson, *Introducing Jungian Psychology* (Maine: Gill and Macmillan, 1992), p. 158.
[392] Ibid., 160.

> friends. This is because it consists of *opinions* instead of reflections, and by opinions I mean *a priori* assumptions that lay claim to absolute truth.[393]

The *anima* and *animus* represent our human potential to make sense of the most fundamental pair of opposites in human experience. They do not, as JPII claims, reflect the complementarity of male and female human persons, but rather the potential to discover and integrate the complementary traits and significance attributed to masculinity and femininity within any given culture and time. Jung is not, then, saying that sexual complementarity is the expression of primordial potentials for integration and wholeness, but rather that a balanced understanding of the tension between humanity's most primordial opposites within our psyche is essential for our flourishing and how we contribute to the flourishing of others.

Jung offers a different way of thinking about human flourishing in orientation to the other through concepts of integration and wholeness. For Jung, individuation supports an orientation to the other because it realises the psyche's greatest potential for wholeness and integration which confers perceptual clarity, a sense of deep relatedness to the world, and therefore a desire and willingness to orient our resources to others. For Jung, religion supports this process by facilitating the integration of conscious and unconscious aspects of the psyche, which confers the greatest possibility for transformation in the transcendental factor. The interior coherence and harmony ("interior transparency") resulting from individuation shape our perception of the self, others, and the world; a perceptual clarity that realises our potential to see and respond to others with disinterested compassion, with *caritas*.

While both Jung and JPII draw on the similar claim that our greatest capacity for self-giving is realised through an interior coherence and harmony formed through the transcendent, the sources, nature and effects of this coherence differ. They diverge most significantly in the possibilities for personality development arising from wholeness and the conditions for the realisation of wholeness.

---

[393] Carl Jung, "The Syzygy: Anima and Animus" in *The Essential Jung: Selected and introduced by Anthony Storr with a new foreword by John Beebe* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 109-118, (p. 111).

For Jung, personality expression is open to innumerable possibilities according to an individual's uniqueness and responses to life. Jung did not believe wholeness was determined by external conditions, but rather by responses to those conditions. Our response to situations is a greater predictor of psychological and spiritual growth than the situations themselves. To this end, for Jung, the realisation and expression of wholeness are limited only by the degree to which one intends their responses to be shaped by the *numinosum* experience or the egoic self. Our capacity to self-give, to orient our life to others, is not determined by the fulfilment of a specific external condition, but by our response in every moment of life.

For JPII, the expression of wholeness is far more circumscribed. Wholeness arises and results in the acceptance of the vocation of marriage, in the truth of a life ordered to the spousal relationship and procreation. The vocation of marriage shapes personality development because it is the condition for the possibility of wholeness and results in personality dispositions that serve the spousal relationship. For JPII, wholeness is expressed in a personality that optimally supports an understanding of marriage shaped by total self-giving and openness to procreation–one that conforms to traditional magisterial teaching. If pressed further, this claim leads to an interesting ambiguity around whether wholeness can be attained in this life. In contrast to Jung, while JPII would argue that wholeness can never be definitively achieved in this life, in another sense he claims that marriage open to procreation represents the highest possible degree of wholeness in this life. Marriage may not be the attainment of wholeness but it is nonetheless the attainment of a maximal potential for wholeness in this life. It is easy to see how JPII's approach to human flourishing significantly raises the stakes for compliance with papal teaching on marriage. While there are parallels between JPII's integral approach and Jungian psychology, and even direct references by JPII to Jung's work, their understanding of the relationship between wholeness and seeing and attending to the other is significantly different.

Self-giving as human flourishing in "the beginning," within history and in the eschaton

JPII claims that self-giving is the model for humanity's fulfilment not only by appeal to the original state – in the "re-discovery" of the meaning of original innocence – but within

history and the eschaton. The wholeness motif that permeates JPII's exposition of love and sexual ethics in *A Theology of the Body* is expressed in this continuity between original, historical, and eschatological states. JPII starts with the "beginning" as the original state of purity and innocence, which reveals the source and means of love and happiness. This is followed by humanity's deviation from this ideal and the rediscovery of the meaning of the original state. Finally, JPII shows how humanity's imperfect realisation in history guided by revelations from the "beginning" is in preparation for realisation in the eschaton. JPII intends a seamless connection between the parts towards the whole of human transformation. At the centre of this process is self-giving, which is the means of human realisation at every stage of existence.

JPII's exposition of self-giving begins in the broader context of a "hermeneutics of the gift" grounded in the original and fundamental gift of God.

> The dimension of gift is decisive for the essential truth and depth of the meaning of original solitude-unity-nakedness. It stands also at the very heart of the mystery of creation, which allows us to build the theology of the body "from the beginning," but at the same time demands that we build it precisely in this way.[394]

The sign of the original gift is one which "each creature bears within themselves."[395] The human person is predisposed to self-giving because, being in the image of God, they fully understand the meaning of God's original gift in the call from nothing to existence. Humanity receives the world as a gift, and vice versa, that the world receives humanity as a gift.[396] For JPII, an awareness of receiving and becoming a gift is an intrinsic part of being in the image of God and reveals an essential characteristic of humanity's essence. The movement from original solitude to unity shows that a person's essence cannot be realised "alone," that the person realises their essence only by existing "with," or better still, "for" someone, which "confirms the process of man's individuation."[397] JPII claims that the fundamental way a

[394] JPII, TOB, par. 13:2.
[395] Ibid., par. 13:4.
[396] Ibid.
[397] Ibid., par. 14:2-3.

person's essence is realised in relation to the other is through masculinity and femininity, which is the "original sign of the creative donation."[398]

> Exactly through the depths of the original solitude, man now emerges in the dimension of reciprocal gift, the expression of which – by that very fact *the expression of his existence as a person* – is the human body in all the original truth of its masculinity and femininity. The body, which expresses femininity "for" masculinity and, vice versa, masculinity "for" femininity, manifests the reciprocity of the communion of persons.[399]

Existing in intrinsic relation is, for JPII, to cultivate lives that affirm the spousal meaning of the body. While this fundamental position was outlined in *Love and Responsibility*, his focus shifts in a Theology of the Body to an extended consideration of the personalistic aspects of spousal self-giving. In *Love and Responsibility*, JPII emphasises the existential and biological role of the sexual instinct as the condition for "betrothed love" – the highest form of love in human experience.[400] In *A Theology of the Body*, he is more concerned with developing the personalistic aspect of his integral approach through an analysis of interior freedom in self-mastery and original innocence. JPII wants to show how rediscovering the meaning of the original state of innocence through the spousal meaning of the body in total self-giving realises interior freedom and an "original happiness rooted in Love." The sexual instinct is addressed largely in the final chapter where JPII outlines a Theology of the Body's application to *Humanae Vitae*.

JPII's exposition of spousal self-giving emphasises "interior freedom" as the condition for and consequence of self-giving by which a person rediscovers the wholeness of original innocence in their life.

> In the context of their beatifying "beginning," man and woman are free with the very freedom of the gift. In fact, in order to remain in the relation of the "sincere gift of self" and in order to become a gift, each for the other, through their whole

[398] Ibid., par. 14:4.
[399] Ibid.
[400] See chapters 1 and 2 of *Love and Responsibility*

> humanity made of masculinity and femininity . . . they must be free exactly in this way. Here we mean freedom above all as self-mastery (self-dominion) . . . [which] lies at the root of nakedness . . . this gift allows both man and woman to find each other reciprocally . . .[401]

JPII claims that interior freedom results from the wholeness of the original state of innocence in which, in their deepest dimension, the person is "determined by grace."[402] Original innocence refers primarily to "the interior state of the human heart, of the will,"[403] it is the "rightness of intention,"[404] the graced single-mindedness that is the possibility for a person to live as reciprocal gift in masculinity and femininity. Interior freedom in original innocence is to be "entirely free from all the constraints of the body and its sex," such that one is liberated to "express precisely that love in which the human person becomes a gift – and through this gift – fulfils the very meaning of his being and existence" in the spousal meaning of the body.[405] It is not only the freedom to see and know the good but also the freedom to choose the good in the conscience. This idea is explained more succinctly in, *Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man*, where JPII explains, "The dynamic structure of self-determination (referred to as self-possession and self-domination) tells man every time anew that he is simultaneously given to himself as a gift and imposed on himself as a task."[406] Through self-possession and self-domination the person "conquers" the dynamic structures of their own "I," which means they are no longer at the mercy of the drives and instincts and thereby free to pursue the good.

The original state of innocence reveals that human realisation involves discovering the meaning of original interior freedom, love, and happiness through self-giving in the spousal meaning of the body. The radical openness to grace revealed in the original state of innocence whereby a person comes to know, desire and will the good is, for JPII, the ability to know, desire and will the spousal meaning of the body.

---

[401] JPII, TOB, par. 15:2.
[402] Ibid., par. 16:3.
[403] Ibid., par. 16:4.
[404] Ibid., par. 17:2.
[405] Ibid., par. 15:1.
[406] Wojtyla, 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man', p. 112.

> Interiorly free from the constraint of their own bodies and of sex, free with the freedom of the gift, man and woman were able to enjoy the whole truth, the whole self-evidence of the human being, just as God-Yahweh had revealed it to them in the mystery of creation.[407]

The meaning of original innocence is, however, only complete in the total spousal self-giving that requires ordering the sex drive to its proper end in procreation. Its meaning is revealed in being "lived" consciously. Marriage open to the transmission of life is a person's entry "into being" because the experience of reciprocal gift in original unity signifies "the fact that creative giving, which springs from Love, has reached man's original consciousness."[408] Total self-giving in the conjugal act reflects original nakedness and reciprocity, the original graced permeability of the "interior" and "exterior," the original coherence, harmony and freedom of wholeness that is the possibility for a person to desire and will the good. It is a person's fullest expression in the image of God, their flourishing. To this end, for all JPII's professed appeal to the personalistic, to the language of love, liberation, and happiness, there is no escaping his final reliance on the sexual instinct, on a traditional magisterial approach to natural law, to explain self-giving as human flourishing in the spousal relationship. In the end, the personalistic component leads less to an account of integral personhood than it does to one rooted in a traditional dependency on the sexual drive and procreation, which is foundational to his defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

JPII supports his claim that total spousal self-giving is God's chosen means of human flourishing by identifying a direct continuity of this teaching through the original state, in history and the eschaton. The motif of wholeness is invoked to not only express an intrapersonal and interpersonal unity through the personalistic and cosmological aspects of personhood, but a unity within all creation and time. Interior freedom, self-possession, and self-mastery, as core aspects of interiority, are essential in self-giving at every stage of life: their meaning and purpose are revealed through the body in original innocence, unity, and shame; they are cultivated in history through the proper ordering of the sexual instinct in marriage or celibacy, and; they are finally perfected in the eschaton in God's most personal

[407] JPII, TOB, par. 15:3.
[408] Ibid., par. 14:5.

self-communication. The total self-giving of spouses prepares them for the final revelation of God's most personal "self-giving," in the eschaton.

JPII holds that the "eschatological experience" will involve a process of "spiritualisation," in which the body will return to perfect unity with spirit:

> "Eschatological" man will be free from this opposition . . . the body will return to perfect unity and harmony with the spirit . . . "*spiritualisation*" signifies not only that the spirit will master the body, but, I would say, that it will also fully permeate the body and the powers of the spirit will permeate the energies of the body.[409]

It will also include a process of divinization, in which God's self-communication will be revealed not only to the soul, but to the "whole psychosomatic subjectivity."[410]

> . . . divinisation should be understood not only as an "interior state" of man (that is, of subject) able to see God "face to face," but also as a new formation of man's entire personal subjectivity according to the measure of union with God in his trinitarian mystery and of intimacy with him in the perfect communion of persons.[411]

Personal subjectivity will not be lost in the eschaton, it will be perfected. JPII claims that the spousal meaning of the body, in an eschatological sense, is the "virginal" meaning of being man or woman for it is in the personal subjectivity of masculinity or femininity alone that we will be united to God in reciprocal self-gift.[412]

> In this reciprocal gift of self by man, a gift that will become completely and definitively beatifying as the response worthy of a personal subject to God's gift of himself, the "virginity" or rather virginal state of the body will manifest itself

[409] Ibid., par. 67:1.
[410] Ibid., par. 67:1-3.
[411] Ibid., par. 67:3.
[412] Ibid., par. 68:2.

> completely as the eschatological fulfilment of the "spousal" meaning of the body, as the specific sign and authentic expression of personal subjectivity as a whole.[413]

JPII can then argue that the eschatological future of humanity shows that the spousal meaning of the body is not fundamentally about marriage or procreation, but communion.

> Marriage and procreation do not definitively determine the original and fundamental meaning of the body nor of being, as a body, male or female. Marriage and procreation only give concrete reality to that meaning in the dimension of history . . . The spousal meaning of the body in the future life will be perfectly personal . . . and communitarian.[414]

This crucially means that JPII can also argue that the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae* cultivate the ground for the eschatological experience. Self-giving is revealed as the source of human flourishing in the original state, it is practised in history and is our perfection in the eschaton. This specific type of self-giving by which the interiority is formed through the spousal meaning of the body is the condition for our ability to receive, or at the very least, our best preparation to receive, God's self-giving in the eschaton. The magisterium's teachings on marriage are not arbitrary rules to be followed. They are concerned with the person's deepest and final realisation. From this perspective, dissent from *Humanae Vitae* is not essentially dissent from the papal teachings of Paul VI, but dissent from God's revealed means of realising authentic love and happiness in this life in preparation for our divinisation in the next.

JPII constructs a vast conceptual framework that appears ordered to human flourishing, to an authentic account of integral personhood, in which the human experience of love and marriage is claimed to be significant across the breadth of human existence. Self-giving is presented as a natural consequence of a life ordered to the truth of being, to the truth of the spousal meaning of the body. His return to "the beginning" positions total self-giving as the source of the original *communio personarum*, the fullest realisation in human

[413] Ibid., par. 68:3.
[414] Ibid., par. 69:4.

experience of the *imago Dei*, which invokes an ethical imperative for the "historical person" to "rediscover" the meaning of original innocence in their life as the source of their highest good. Only our "rediscovery" of the total self-giving revealed in "the beginning" through the vocation of marriage open to the transmission of life will satiate our intrinsic desire to experience authentic love and happiness. JPII's professed embrace of the personalistic appears finally as mere camouflage for his chief intention to validate and uphold *Humanae Vitae*'s teaching on the inseparability of the two ends of marriage while restating the primacy of procreative. Tying the possibility of divinisation to a progressive realisation in this life of the meaning of original innocence offers a seductively tidy and complete explanation of human flourishing that both supports and calls for compliance with *Humanae Vitae*.

Johnson speaks to the contradiction of JPII's claims to a personalistic approach affirming the subjective experience when there is "no real sense of human love as actually experienced" in any of his reflections.[415]

> John Paul II thinks of himself as doing "phenomenology," but seems never to look at actual human experience . . . In the pope's formulations, human sexuality is observed by telescope from a distant planet. Solemn pronouncements are made on the basis of textual exegesis rather than living experience . . . [wherein a] "vast" conceptual framework serves to camouflage a distressingly narrow view of things.[416]

For all the grandeur of JPII's approach, it lacks an authentic exposition of the role of human experience in marriage and, as Johnson points out, a degree of intellectual modesty. JPII has little to say to ordinary people because he shows so little awareness of ordinary life.[417] Johnson claims that at the root of *A Theology of the Body* is little more than a concentration on the transmission of life - on the primary end of marriage – in defence of *Humanae Vitae*.

[415] Luke Timothy Johnson, 'A Disembodied 'Theology of the Body:' JPII on Love, Sex and Pleasure,' *Commonweal* (January 6th, 2001), p. 12
[416] Ibid., pp. 12-13
[417] Ibid., p. 12.

> By the time he reaches his explicit discussion of *Humanae Vitae*, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that every earlier textual choice and phenomenological reflection has been geared to a defence of Paul VI's encyclical.[418]

A Theology of the Body applied to Humanae Vitae

The third and final part of *A Theology of the Body* is an application of its arguments to a defence of *Humanae Vitae*. While, for the most part, JPII has so far spoken to the personalistic aspects of marriage, the last section is marked by a significant shift in tone and approach. The final part focuses on an exposition of the inseparability of the procreative and unitive ends of marriage. Drawing on previous chapters and traditional magisterial teaching on natural law, JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae* is also engaged through an overarching affirmation of a person's responsibility and obligation to conform to papal teaching.

JPII begins his exposition with a firm restatement of magisterial authority in moral teaching. He claims *A Theology of the Body* and the moral norm expressed in *Humanae Vitae*, while not explicit in Scripture, are teachings contained within "the Tradition and the magisterium" that reveal "the fuller whole . . . flowing from the biblical sources."[419] The magisterium teaches with benevolence and divine authority – it seeks humanity's highest good. Those who argue that *Humanae Vitae* failed to consider the difficulties of concrete life "do not understand," claims JPII, "the pastoral concern that stood at the origin of these documents," which aimed to show how the "*one and only true good of man*" is realised in the discovery of God's plan for human love.[420] Quoting *Gaudium et Spes*, he argues spouses must conform themselves to this teaching:

> But in their manner of acting, spouses should be aware that they cannot proceed at will, but must always be governed according to a conscience dutifully conformed to the divine law itself, and should be docile towards the Church's teaching office, which authentically interprets that law in the light of the Gospel.

[418] Ibid., p. 14
[419] JPII, TOB., par. 119:4.
[420] Ibid., par. 120:6.

> That divine law reveals and protects the integral meaning of conjugal love and impels it toward a truly human fulfilment.[421]

JPII affirms Paul VI's claims that for spouses, as with everyone else, "the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life," and one can only press on with "humble perseverance" to "overcome their own faults and sins in the sacrament of Penance."[422] Spouses must "face up to the efforts needed" to live according to the truth of their being, "imploring God for divine help" to fulfil "their proper vocation even to perfection."[423] This "pray more, try harder" approach to sexual norms allowed JPII to press primacy of obedience to papal teaching over its lived experience.

Having affirmed the magisterium's teaching authority and the laity's obligation to conform to this teaching, JPII moves on to exposit the inseparability of the ends of marriage through the natural and moral law.[424] Quoting Paul VI, he argues that this principle, as expressed in *Humanae Vitae*, has a "deeply reasonable and human character." [425]

> . . . [It concerns] not only the truth in the ontological dimension, that is, what corresponds to the real structure of the conjugal act. It concerns also the same truth in the subjective and psychological dimension, that is to say, *the right understanding* of the innermost structure of the conjugal act, that is, the adequate rereading of the meanings that correspond to this structure and their inseparable connection in view of morally right behaviour.[426]

The moral law and corresponding ordering of human acts in the sphere of sexuality are found, JPII claims, within this principle; "the norm is identical with rereading the 'language of the body' in the truth."[427] From the outset, JPII states that he is primarily interested in how the subjective and psychological reveal and affirm the *right understanding* of

[421] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 50.
[422] JPII, TOB, par. 127:4-5.
[423] Ibid., par. 126:3-5.
[424] The inseparability principle has also been advanced in Michael J. Barberi and Joseph A. Selling, 'The Origin of Humanae Vitae and the Impasse in Fundamental Theological Ethics,' *Louvain Studies* 37 (2013), pp. 364-89.
[425] Ibid., par. 119:1.
[426] Ibid., par. 119:2 (original italics).
[427] Ibid., par. 119:2.

procreation as the primary end of marriage. JPII's interest in the subjective is limited to how it confirms the truth of personhood according to magisterial teaching on natural law. The spousal meaning of the body *is* the norm, and the moral value expressed within this norm is part of the "natural law" (it conforms to reason). Acts which conform to this norm are morally right and acts that do not conform are intrinsically illicit.[428]

From this viewpoint, the natural law is the "integral whole of the person" revealed in the body as masculine and feminine.

> In fact, the subject of the natural law is man, not only in the "natural" aspect of his existence, but also in the integral truth of his personal subjectivity. He is shown to us in revelation as male and female in his full temporal and eschatological vocation. He is called by God to be witness and interpreter of the eternal plan of Love by becoming the minister of the sacrament, which has "from the beginning" been constituted in the sign of the "union of the flesh."[429]

JPII uses the term "language of the body" to express how the spouses "speak" the truth of their being through their masculinity and femininity. The "language of the body" is more than sexual reactivity; it includes "gestures and reactions . . . the whole reciprocally conditioned dynamism of tension and enjoyment" of the spouses. [430] It is the "authentic language of the persons."[431] By situating the conjugal act within the broader personalistic context of the "language of the body," JPII shifts attention from the particulars of the biological that have historically attracted accusations of physicalism and towards the integrated whole. In doing so, the conjugal act becomes more than procreation. It becomes poetic. The motif of wholeness allows JPII to keep tying the unpopular idea he wishes to affirm (the necessity of marriage being open to procreation) to that which he thinks will make it more persuasive (the personalistic). Yet despite this personalistic angle, the unitive aspect of marriage is, we are told, fundamentally impossible without the procreative aspect. JPII is not merely bringing an increased emphasis on the unitive that has long been

[428] Ibid., par. 119:3.
[429] Ibid., par. 123:3.
[430] Ibid., par. 123:4.
[431] Ibid., par. 123.5.

diminished in magisterial teaching on marriage; his personalism situates the very roots and possibility for the unitive in the conjugal act, making the unitive and procreative inseparable on the grounds of the necessity for procreation.

It is difficult to escape the sense that his emphasis on the unitive aspect of marriage is entirely designed to increase the appeal of papal teaching. JPII claims that one cannot realise authentic love and happiness in a marriage that is closed to procreation. Keeping marriage open to procreation is not only the possibility for love but also to realise one's greatest potential in the image of God. By consistently tying the parts into the whole, by tying the particulars with the universal, JPII shows that one cannot obtain the whole that is their highest good if one withholds any of the parts, and this is especially true for the conjugal act from which existence itself arises. Given that the spousal union is a communion of persons, the "language of the body" must be judged according to the criterion of truth, which means that the conjugal act by necessity concerns not only love but procreation. The unitive meaning cannot be separated from the procreative meaning because both "belong to the innermost truth of the conjugal act."[432]

> The communion demands, in fact, that the "language of the body" be expressed reciprocally in the integral truth of its meaning. If this truth is lacking, one can speak neither of the truth of the reciprocal gift of self nor of the reciprocal acceptance of oneself by the person. Such a violation of the inner order of conjugal communion, a communion that plunges its roots into the very order of the person, constitutes the essential evil of the contraceptive act.[433]

This passage perhaps succinctly conveys the heart of his endeavour. With close attention, his personalism does not seem driven by a desire to explore and affirm the role of human experience and the subjective in marriage but by a desire to find a means to make the teaching that marriage should be open to procreation more compelling and persuasive.

[432] Ibid., par. 123:6
[433] Ibid., par. 123:7.

Conclusion

I have offered an exposition of *A Theology of the Body* that is chiefly concerned with showing how a Theology of the Body, its personalism and theological anthropology, is in service of defending *Humanae Vitae*'s claims to the inseparability of the unitive and procreative ends of marriage. I have suggested that JPII's exposition of this papal teaching is to some more compelling and persuasive than earlier expositions because it draws on a personalism that appears to acknowledge and affirm the subjective experience of faith and the experience of living papal teachings. That is, it appears to respond to the concerns raised by the Majority Report of the Birth Control Commission. It does so through an "integral approach," which JPII maintains acknowledges and emphasises both the unitive and procreative ends of marriage – the experience of spousal love and the fulfilment of natural law. The "integral approach" intends to explain why the unitive and procreative ends of marriage are inseparable. Put another way, it explains why *Humanae Vitae* was right.

This approach is crafted within a motif of wholeness to the extent that JPII claims that human realisation depends upon ordering the parts into the whole. In the case of marriage, the process of integration towards wholeness centres on the sexual instinct being ordered to its proper end. In its dual function of realising both the subjective (the highest form of love) and the objective (procreation), the sexual instinct is properly ordered when expressed in marriage open to the transmission of life. The conjugal act realises its "greatness" in the total self-giving of the spouses through which the person is realised in the truth of their being in the *communio personarum*, which is their fullest expression in the wholeness of the imago Dei. The spouses "rediscover" the meaning of original innocence in history and are prepared for the final self-giving in the beatific vision. At the heart of *A Theology of the Body* is a theological anthropology that claims to express how the *whole* person in the totality of their subjective and objective personhood is realised by appealing to humanity's *whole* story from "the beginning," through history and into the eschaton.

Drawing on language uncommonly used within papal teaching on marriage, such as human realisation, individuation, and liberation, JPII offers an exposition and defence of *Humanae Vitae* that while appearing to respond to humanity's deepest longings for

authentic love and happiness, does little more than re-present the same teaching from which so many dissented. As Johnson astutely observes,

> What appears in the guise of description subtly serves as prescription . . . By the time he reaches his explicit discussion of *Humanae Vitae*, it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that every earlier textual selection and phenomenological reflection has been directed to a defence of his predecessor's encyclical.[434]

To what extent we may ask then is JPII invested in an authentic integral approach involving the totality of the person; in advancing knowledge of how the integral person might flourish in self-giving? Perhaps what is most troubling about his approach is the potential consequences of its application for the concrete experience of faith. JPII's stance demands compliance with pronouncements that the Majority Report of the Birth Control Commission extensively documented through personal accounts were the cause of prolific and diverse suffering to the faithful.[435] In its clear bias towards the teachings of *Humanae Vitae*, JPII's analysis of spousal love in marriage is shaped not by a desire to understand better the experience of love, but by a desire to have it conform to and validate Paul VI's teaching that marriage must remain open to the transmission of life.

While Jung can't offer the whole story, he can help us to think about the meaning of integration and wholeness in our relations with others and God. He believed that a sense of integration and wholeness – of being at peace within oneself – was important to well-being and that religion played a significant part in this process. The wholeness to which Jung speaks is however attained in a more organic unfolding of personality in response to the concrete conditions of life rather than a vocation defined by any one function of the body. Jung points to the idea that the story of human flourishing cannot be reduced to a single decision regarding our body. If one takes Jung's claims of the importance of being at peace within oneself to mean that one discovers true peace in the measure to which one experiences the truth of the indwelling, all-loving God then human realisation becomes more an issue of how the parts, in their unique and universal aspects, are drawn into a sense of wholeness in love within the concrete conditions of our lives. While this is being done

[434] Johnson, *The Revelatory Body*, pp. 27-28.
[435] The summary points of the Majority Report from the Commission were outlined in Chapter 2.

within theology in ways that are beyond the scope of this thesis, Jung points to the complexity of our psychology and its involvement in human flourishing, and thereby the value of resisting reductive accounts of how the integral human person thrives by orienting their life to the other.

Chapter 4

Self-giving, Suffering and Love in *Salvifici Doloris*

The connection between love and suffering in JPII's writings is key to understanding his construction of self-giving as human realisation. Love and suffering are weaved together in *Salvifici Doloris* in the concept of self-giving as the possibility for transformation in the likeness of the Trinity as love and gift. Put another way, *Salvifici Doloris* presents suffering and loss as privileged opportunities for total self-giving. To help elucidate this claim I draw on Hans Urs von Balthasar's Trinitarian theology. With its "kenotic" emphasis, Balthasar's trinitarian theology can help unpack JPII's claim that total self-giving in suffering expresses divine love. I contrast this position with findings from positive psychology which suggest that positive emotions play an important role in guiding us towards human flourishing in orientation to something larger than ourselves. Moreover, this research points to why experiences of suffering and loss often inhibit rather than support human flourishing in self-giving.

This chapter comprises the following sections: (1) responses to *Salvifici Doloris*; (2) an exposition of *Salvifici Doloris* through the lens of total self-giving as human realisation in an image of Trinitarian love; (3) reflections on Balthasar's view of Trinitarian love as kenosis; (4) an account of how JPII's theology of marriage is connected to his theology of suffering through total self-giving, and; (5) reflections from positive psychology on the potential value of positive emotions in orienting a person to something greater than themselves.

Responses to Salvifici Doloris

Salvifici Doloris does not appear to have been subject to widespread academic commentary and the slim commentary that one finds is strikingly positive. A recurring theme of these positive appraisals is the credibility that JPII appears to hold because of his well-documented

personal suffering. As a pope with a long history of enduring pain and loss, JPII is viewed by many as a valid and reliable witness to the meaning of human suffering. Dalmacito A. Cordero Jr. explains that "[his] reflection on suffering flows from his own experience of bereavement, pain, sickness, and trials when he survived the assassination attempt in 1981. . . he had experienced pain throughout his life . . . he indeed knows what it is to suffer and be in agonising pain."[436] It is important to acknowledge that some consider JPII's views on human suffering valid and credible because of their assumed root in experience. JPII appears as a valid source not merely because he was a pope but because he was a pope who suffered, whose suffering was well-documented, and whose response to his suffering became, for some, a significant and defining aspect of his papacy.

That is not to say, however, that his teachings on human suffering have not in themselves attracted praise. Across the positive appraisals of *Salvifici Doloris* one finds a consensus that JPII imbues human suffering with a new and profound sense of meaning and purpose. Fr. Raymond-Marie Bryce argues that JPII offers a way of making sense of suffering, especially that which is unavoidable. The pope indeed does view suffering as something positive. For JPII, suffering has the potential to "internally integrate the sufferer around the highest moral good (union with God)."[437] In line with his personalistic approach, JPII emphasises the importance of one's relationship to pain and suffering. He argues that the "narrative lens which shapes and interprets the experience" is key to understanding "the opportunity present in suffering for justification and sanctification."[438] Suffering is a "meaning-filled matrix" open to the potential for "self-actualisation," which affirms the importance of the Paschal mystery and our willingness to partake of it.[439] Byrce argues that the possibility of continued participation in the "co-redemptive act" through all stages and conditions of life offers profound consolation. It overcomes the depressive states that can arise when a person feels their suffering has neither meaning nor purpose. To this end, Bryce argues that *Salvifici Doloris* offers meaning, purpose, and hope in the experience of suffering through a sense of increased agency and unity with God.

---

[436] Dalmacito A. Cordero Jr, 'Sákit Pighati and Pag-Asa: A Pastoral Reflection on Suffering During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines,' *Journal of Religion and Health*, 60 (2021), 1521-1542 (p. 1532).
[437] Raymond-Marie Bryce, 'Does Suffering Lack Meaning? A Contemporary Christian Response,' *New Blackfriars*, 98, 1076 (2017), 436–456 (p. 18).
[438] Ibid., p. 19.
[439] Ibid.

Cordero Jr., in his study into the experience of Filipinos during the COVID-19 pandemic, also concludes that *Salvifici Doloris* offers meaning, purpose and consolation in suffering. Using *Salvifici Doloris* as an interpretative lens, Codero reflects on the experience of *sákit* (pain), *pighati* (grief), and *pag-asa* (hope) during the pandemic. Codero found that *Sákit* (emotional and physical pain) often led to a sense of helplessness. JPII's affirmation of suffering as inseparable from human existence, claims Cordero, helps people to accept their pain and the pain of others as an intrinsic part of life, allowing them to process and heal their pain. This acceptance of the ever-present reality of suffering moves one from a sense of helplessness to positive action; from a preoccupation with one's suffering towards the "unselfish gift of one's 'I' on behalf of other people, especially those who suffer."[440] In this way, *Pighati* (grief) presents an opportunity to experience a more profound encounter and unity with God in the "offering up" of pain and suffering, which allows a person to transcend their suffering and provide consolation to others. The final stage of *pag-asa* (hope) is realised in uniting one's "sacrifice" to that of Christ. This "sacrifice" is the "precious offering" of the members of the Church towards Christ's ongoing salvific act: "*Pag-asa* is in this sense brighter for them because they find meaning as they suffer."[441] Cordero claims, like JPII, that suffering possesses an intrinsic value that when "offered up" is the possibility for consolation and participation in Christ's ongoing salvific act.

In the field of bioethics, Lisa Sowle Cahill explores the practical application of the idea of "redemptive suffering." Cahill examines changes in the meaning of "redemptive suffering" in the medical setting and how these changes have influenced the provision of end-of-life care. She notes that while patients and carers continue to be encouraged to affirm God's presence in suffering and the possibility that the patient's suffering can have a redemptive meaning, there is a preference for an "activist stance" towards pain and suffering which focuses on eliminating pain and suffering as far as possible. *Salvifici Doloris* shows she claims that the rubric of redemptive suffering has not entirely disappeared despite challenges to traditional ideas of "redemptive suffering" as sin and punishment and a preference for the elimination of suffering.[442] The "redemptive meaning" of suffering

[440] Cordero, 'Sákit Pighati and Pag-Asa: A Pastoral Reflection on Suffering During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines', p. 1532.
[441] Ibid., p. 1537.
[442] Lisa Sowle Cahill, 'Suffering: A Catholic Theological-Ethical View', *Suffering and Bioethics* (2014), https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199926176.001.0001 (pp. 231-248), p. 237.

continues to be affirmed, by which the patient is thought to share in the salvific work of Christ, even while patients and caregivers are encouraged to take far-reaching measures to reduce suffering.[443] What explanation might be offered for its continued appeal? Cahill explains that, quite simply, redemptive suffering "provides a way to see even unavoidable suffering as voluntary and purposeful."[444] Reflecting on *Salvifici Doloris*, Cahill writes that,

> Like Jesus, Paul suffers as result of his fidelity to a mission. Like end-of-life patients, he does not seek out suffering, but it finds him. Paul is confronted with suffering that he cannot escape. He finds its meaning by seeing his own mission as a participation in that of Christ. His suffering is not meaningless, but purposeful. Suffering is not forced upon him; he embraces the good it might bring.[445]

This allows the patient in the grip of uncontrollable pain, loss or loneliness to regain dignity and a sense of self-determination by perceiving their suffering as in a sense being "'chosen' for a higher purpose."[446] Cahill claims that this is the "creative character" of suffering to which JPII refers.[447] For Cahill, it is significant that *Salvifici Doloris* culminates in the parable of the Good Samaritan which resists identifying the salvific meaning of suffering with passivity, and rather compels one "to do good by [their] suffering and to do good to those that suffer."[448] She explains that this approach to suffering can inspire resilience and compassion. At a time in life when a person can experience a sense of great futility and loneliness, *Salvifici Doloris* may offer hope that their life remains valuable, significant, and important to the end.

While this may be true, Cahill also implicitly draws attention to an important distinction in thinking about what it means for a person to consider their suffering as "redemptive." When speaking of St. Paul's approach to his suffering, she distinguishes between *the suffering itself* and *the good that may come from the suffering*: "Suffering is not

[443] Ibid.
[444] Ibid., p. 239.
[445] Ibid., p. 240.
[446] Ibid.
[447] JPII, *Salvifici Doloris*, par. 46.
[448] Ibid., par. 30.

forced upon him; *he embraces the good it might bring*."[449] This subtle yet significant distinction is important because it differentiates between, broadly speaking, approaches to redemptive suffering in which value is attributed to the suffering itself, and those in which value is attributed to the capacity to perceive the good *despite and through* the suffering.

While Cahill draws on *Salvific Doloris* as an example of the latter approach, I will propose that JPII's writings on human suffering rather participate in the former. JPII's approach falls within a broader phenomenon within theology in which Karen Kilby claims suffering is not merely esteemed but "embraced."[450] This phenomenon to which Kilby refers draws on the language of "kenosis," self-abnegation, vulnerability, and fragility, and unlike *Salvifici Doloris*, has attracted significant criticism.[451] To this end, it would be inaccurate to claim that Salvifici Doloris has not attracted critical appraisal, but rather that its criticism can be found indirectly in the challenges to approaches which in their various ways have sought to valorise suffering. The chief concern, however, of this chapter is not to show how JPII's approach to suffering might be situated within this broader movement but to examine how JPII applies the concept of self-giving as human realisation to his theology of human suffering, and how this relates to his understanding of self-giving in marriage.

Salvifici Doloris on suffering and love

Salvifici Doloris is an Apostolic Letter that was issued in February 1984. It outlines JPII's theology of human suffering with particular emphasis on salvific or redemptive suffering. The document can be divided into three sections. In the first section, JPII explores the claim that while suffering happens to individuals, properly engaged, it leads to communion and solidarity. In the second, he examines the idea that suffering is a temporal experience

[449] Cahill, 'Suffering: A Catholic Theological-ethical View', p. 240.
[450] Karen Kilby, *God, Evil and the Limits of Theology* (London: T & T Clark Ltd., 2020), p. 132.
[451] For critical analysis of the language of kenosis see the following: Karen Kilby and Rachel Davies, eds. *Suffering and the Christian Life* (London: T & T Clark, 2020), Chapter 14 ("The Seductions of Kenosis" by Karen Kilby) and Chapter 15 ("On Vulnerability" by Linn Tonstad); Linn Marie Tonstad, *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude* (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2015), Chapter 3 (Speaking "Father" Rightly: Kenotic Reformation in Sonship in Sarah Coakley), and; Karen Kilby, God, Evil and the Limits of Theology, (United Kingdom: T&T Clark, 2020), Chapter 10 (Julian of Norwich, Hans Urs von Balthasar and the status of suffering in Christian theology).

through which we can recognize that we are meant for eternal life in Christ. Finally in the third section he links suffering to hope and love.

Salvifici Doloris begins by situating the problem of human suffering in the context of the revelation of divine love. The text outlines explanations of suffering as punishment for sin and correction leading to conversion before affirming the most profound meaning of suffering as the revelation of God's love. Love is "the fullest source of the answer to the question of the meaning of suffering."[452] Christ's salvific act in the Paschal mystery unites love with suffering in human experience and only within this union, JPII claims, can the meaning of human suffering be understood.

> God gives his Son to "the world" to free man from evil, which bears within itself the definitive and absolute perspective on suffering. At the same time, the very *word* "gives" ("gave") indicates that this liberation must be achieved by the only-begotten Son through his own suffering. And in this, love is manifested, the infinite love of both that of the only-begotten Son and of the Father who for this reason "gives" his Son. This is love for man, love for the "world": it is salvific love.[453]

JPII develops this passage by first explaining the evil from which God sought to free humanity. The Son was given to humanity primarily to protect against definitive evil and suffering – sin and death. Only indirectly is humanity freed from suffering in the temporal and historical dimension owing to its complex relationship with sin. Christ's suffering did not alleviate temporal pain and suffering. This, for JPII, tells us something important about the meaning and purpose of human suffering in the Redemption. Christ's suffering throughout his life was, he claims, in some way the condition for the possibility of his compassion for the suffering.

> Christ drew close above all to this world of suffering through the fact of having taken on *this suffering upon his very self*. During his public activity, he experienced not only fatigue, homelessness, misunderstanding even on the part

[452] JPII, *Salvifici Doloris*, par. 13.
[453] Ibid., par. 14.

> of those closest to him, but, more than anything, he became progressively more and more isolated and encircled by hostility and the preparations for putting him to death . . . Christ goes towards his Passion and death with full awareness of the mission that he has to fulfil precisely in this way.[454]

JPII explains that Christ drew "closer to the world of suffering in which man shares" because Christ's own experience of suffering was an essential part of his commitment to feeding the hungry, consoling the afflicted, and healing the sick; only in entering the "world of suffering" could Christ heal those already present within that "world." [455] Christ gave himself to, or "entered," this world by being "given" by the Father.[456] To this end, JPII claims that Christ's suffering throughout his public service, which is to say his experience of being perpetually "delivered" into suffering, allowed him to accomplish the works of salvation. To say this another way, Christ's love was manifested through the perpetual suffering into which he was delivered throughout his life.

JPII connects self-giving in suffering with the most profound expression of love. He suggests that personal suffering was in some way the possibility for Christ's radical orientation towards the other. It was not love alone that moved Christ to alleviate the suffering of others, but rather his love alongside his suffering – his participation in the suffering of humanity – that moved Christ towards others. Christ's suffering not only manifested God's love in the broader context of the Redemption but also in the expression of love in the fine details of human life. This argument does more than affirm that personal suffering has the potential to increase compassion and willingness to help others through identification with their suffering; it claims that personal suffering is somehow a *precondition* for the realisation of human compassion and a willingness to help others. From this viewpoint, suffering is a precondition for our deepest love, or greatest desire and willingness to be in service of the other.

Crucial to this line of reasoning and its ties with self-giving is however that Christ suffered voluntarily. Christ's response to suffering is significant; Christ was "given" into

[454] Ibid., par. 16.
[455] Ibid.
[456] Ibid., par. 15.

suffering to manifest salvific love and yet also "gave himself" in love to the world and humanity.

> Christ goes towards his own suffering, aware of its saving power; he goes forward in obedience to the Father, but primarily he is united to the Father in this love with which he has loved the world and loved man in the world. And for this reason Saint Paul will write of Christ: "He loved me and gave himself for me."[457]

Christ gives himself in love, taking on suffering in a "totally voluntary way."[458] JPII emphasizes Christ's obedience to the Father in being given over to suffering out of love for the world, his obedience to becoming "gift" without counting the cost to manifest love, and in this self-gift human suffering entered a new dimension:

> . . . it has been linked to love . . . to that love which creates good, drawing it out by means of suffering, just as the supreme good of the Redemption of the world was drawn from the Cross of Christ, and from that Cross constantly takes its beginning.[459]

For JPII human suffering is the medium which expresses "the love which creates good."[460] Humanity can share in the suffering through which all suffering was redeemed because Christ raised human suffering to the level of the Redemption. Through this participation, one finds a new content and meaning to their suffering, by which they perceive that Christ lives in the one who suffers because this is how Christ loved, through his own suffering and death.[461] A unique union is formed "*through the Cross*"[462]– a particular union of love born of mutual suffering. JPII quotes the words of St. Paul, "We are being given up to death for Jesus' sake, so that the life of Jesus may be manifested in our mortal flesh."[463] Like Christ,

[457] Ibid., par. 16.
[458] Ibid., par. 18.
[459] Ibid.
[460] Ibid.
[461] Ibid., par. 20.
[462] Ibid.
[463] Ibid.

the apostle is being "given" and "gives" himself to God knowing the creative potential for union in his sacrifice. A creative potential is realised in the union with Christ in the offering of the suffering self, which allows the person to become a "co-redeemer." This is the "victorious power"[464] or "creative character"[465] of suffering. It is not simply that God draws closer to us in our suffering, in our greater need, but rather that the suffering *itself* is a divinely chosen medium and offering through which a privileged grace, union, and "realisation" is experienced.

> . . . .to suffer means to become particularly susceptible, particularly open to the working of the salvific powers of God, offered to humanity in Christ. In him God has confirmed his desire to act especially through suffering, which is man's weakness and emptying of self, and he wishes to make his power known precisely in this weakness and emptying of self.[466]

For JPII, self-giving in suffering is "self-loss," it is a "self-emptying" through which a person "rediscovers the 'soul'" which they thought they had "lost."[467] This self-emptying in suffering is a sign of "moral greatness" and "spiritual maturity"[468] whereby one becomes "mature enough" to enter this Kingdom and share in Christ's glory.[469] JPII explains that St. Paul first experienced the "power of the Resurrection" and only later reached the level of "sharing in his sufferings," which is how one becomes worthy of the Kingdom of God.[470] The link between suffering and glory is key to *Salvifici Doloris* in which "Christ's emptying of self" is simultaneously "his being lifted up."[471]

While "self-giving" as a human response to suffering appears only in the context of the story of the *Good Samaritan* in *Salvifici Doloris*, one could argue that throughout the text redemptive suffering for humanity assumes the structure of "gift." It is more than pain and loss that is offered – it is the *self*. While the offering includes the body as "a living sacrifice,"

[464] Ibid., par. 25.
[465] Ibid., par. 24.
[466] Ibid., par. 23.
[467] Ibid.
[468] Ibid., par. 22.
[469] Ibid., par. 21-22.
[470] Ibid., par. 21.
[471] Ibid., par. 22.

the offering is more than our experience of *pain*; it is our experience of *suffering as a response to the evil that is pain*. For JPII, God is known in our weakness when we bear whatever disturbs and causes harm and let go of all resistance to pain. From this viewpoint, our aversion to pain is offered to Christ – our *freedom to resist* pain through exercising our self-determination and self-possession. It is, then, our interiority, our very self that we offer to God. In a person's total self-giving to Christ, in the "offering up" of their pain alongside the self in a total self-emptying, a privileged and unique union of love is formed between the person and Christ "through the Cross," by which the person participates in Christ's ongoing salvific act in service of the Redemption.

In some of JPII's other texts and earlier papal teachings concerning the priesthood, the connection between self-giving and suffering is explicit. Pope Paul VI explains in *Presbyterorum Ordinis* that the priest is consecrated to Christ through offering himself as a "chaste virgin" by which he adheres to Christ more easily with an "undivided heart," and becomes "apt to accept, in a broad sense, paternity in Christ."[472] For Paul VI, if the priest accepts with "docile obedience"[473] that his only "food" should be to follow the will of him who had sent him, the overwhelming demands of the priesthood result in priestly "perfection."[474] Some thirty years later, JPII issued *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, claiming that the essential content of the priest's configuration to Christ is the total gift of self, which manifests Christ's love.[475] Like Paul VI's stance in *Presbyterorum Ordinis,* JPII affirmed that the self-gift of the priest has no limits.[476] The priest is the suffering servant of God whose obedience is expressed as a "constant readiness to allow oneself to be taken up, as it were 'consumed,' by the needs and demands of the flock."[477] The self-giving of the priest is an offering of his whole being to the laity in service of the Church; the greater the sacrifice, the greater the union with Christ. The total self-giving of the priest follows a similar pattern to spousal self-giving: the generative potential of the priest's self-giving is in sacrificial loss through which the Kingdom of God grows and is renewed by the priest's participation in

[472] Paul VI, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, par. 16.
[473] Ibid., par. 17.
[474] Ibid., par. 16.
[475] JPII, *Pastores Dabo Vobis*, par. 23.
[476] Ibid.
[477] Ibid., par. 28 (my emphasis).

Christ's sufferings; the generative potential for spousal self-giving is realised in the total gift of self to the spouse in the conjugal act by which new life is created.

From this perspective, human suffering becomes the possibility for human realisation in self-giving because it is the condition for the supreme act of love, the manifestation of spiritual maturity and greatness which, like the 'Paschal path' taken by St. Paul, confers the privilege of sharing in Christ's glory. By interpreting the Paschal mystery through the lens of total self-emptying love, JPII affirms total self-giving in suffering as a divinely instituted means by which a person is formed into an image of the Trinity as love and gift, and through which they participate in Christ's ongoing salvific act.

Self-giving as "kenotic love" in Balthasar's Trinitarian theology

While JPII does not explicitly refer to divine love as "kenosis," it is strongly implied in the language of self-emptying love. One way to explore this supposition is to take a Trinitarian lens to *Salvifici Doloris* to supplement JPII's Christological approach. In what follows, I will suggest that Balthasar's understanding of Trinitarian love as "kenosis" offers a useful way to think about and fill out the connections between self-giving, love, suffering, and ultimately human realisation in JPII's theology. Balthasar's "kenotic" approach can help elucidate how humanity's total self-giving in suffering is shown to mirror and participate in the Trinity in *Salvifici Doloris*. JPII held Balthasar in high regard: they collaborated on the theological journal *Communio* in 1971; JPII awarded Balthasar the first Paul VI International Prize for his contributions to theology, and; in 1988, a few months before Balthasar died, JPII announced his intention to appoint him cardinal. For these reasons, one can assume a significant alignment between JPII and Balthasar's theological perspectives. Balthasar's exposition of "kenotic" Trinitarian love is then not only useful because it makes theological sense to exposit JPII's claims of the connections between love and suffering through the lens of Balthasar's concept of Trinitarian love as "kenosis," but also because JPII admired and supported Balthasar's theological perspective.

For Balthasar, God's nature *is* kenotic love; "an eternal absolute self-surrender."[478] In an initial or "primal" kenosis at the heart of God's being, the Father generates the Son and gives all he has to the Son and this initial or "primal" kenosis. It is an absolute renunciation.

> . . . the Father's utterance in generation of the Son is an "initial" kenosis within the Godhead that underpins all subsequent kenosis. For the Father strips himself, without remainder, of his Godhead and hands it over to the Son. He "imparts" to the Son all that is his . . . The Father must not be thought to exist "prior" to this self-surrender (in an Arian sense): he is the movement of self-giving that holds nothing back.[479]

Balthasar claims that, while the Father gives away his divinity without reserve, in such a way that the Son's possession of it is "equally substantial," the Father does not experience loss in self-giving.

> For in this self-surrender, he is the whole divine essence. Here we see both God's infinite power and his powerlessness; he cannot be God in any other way but in this "kenosis" within the Godhead itself.[480]

The Son receives the Father's love, the Son can only "*be* and *possess* the absolute nature of God," in the mode of receptivity by which he receives "this unity of omnipotence and powerlessness" from the Father.[481] God is manifested in the identity of "gift-as-given and the gift-as-received in thanksgiving whereby the gift is not only the presupposition of an unsurpassable love: it is also the realised union of this love."[482] Trinitarian love, for Balthasar, is total self-giving in which nothing is held back. It is surrender, self-renunciation and self-emptying for the other as a simultaneous, paradoxical expression of absolute power and powerlessness.

---

[478] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol 4: The Action* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988), p. 324.
[479] Ibid.
[480] Ibid., par. 326
[481] Ibid., par. 327.
[482] Ibid.

How does suffering feature in Balthasar's account of the relation between Trinitarian love and humanity? Balthasar claims that "Scripture clearly states that the events of the Cross can only be interpreted against the backdrop of the Trinity and through faith."[483] One of the key features of Balthasar's Trinitarian theology is that the Cross is viewed as both salvific and revelatory. The Cross offers salvation *and* reveals God's eternal nature. It removes sin *and* allows humanity to share in God's Trinitarian nature. Divine kenotic self-emptying love accomplishes the Redemption and reveals God's nature to humanity. Jacob H Friesenhahn explains that, for Balthasar, "While God does not suffer in his imminent nature, the economic suffering of Christ . . . points us to God's inner life of kenotic love."[484] The Cross connects human suffering and the Trinity, for the Cross contains both and heals all suffering in the Trinity.

Self-giving lies at the heart of this connection. The self-giving kenotic love that is the possibility for Christ's death and suffering is the very same self-giving kenotic love that unites the Father and the Son in the Trinity.

> . . . the God-forsakenness of the Son during the Passion was just as much a mode of his profound bond with the Father in the Holy Spirit as his death was a mode of his life and his suffering a mode of his bliss.[485]

Balthasar claims that "God's eternal self-emptying in the mutual self-surrender of the Persons of the Trinity" is the possibility for Christ's self-emptying on the Cross.[486] The Son's 'death' is an image of the Father's primal kenosis – his "supra-death" – in which he fully gave over life without any remainder in the generation of the Son. Balthasar claims that while the Father does not experience suffering, his absolute self-emptying in the original kenosis is a kind of death that corresponds to human pain and suffering.

---

[483] Ibid., par. 319.
[484] Jacob H Friesenhahn, *The Trinity and Theodicy: The Trinitarian Theology of von Balthasar and the problem of evil* (London: Routledge, 2016), p. 141.
[485] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *Theo-drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol 5: The Last Act* (San Francisco: St. Ignatius Press, 1998), p. 257.
[486] Ibid., p. 234.

> This total self-giving, to which the Son and the Spirit respond by an equal self-giving, is a kind of "death," a first, radical "kenosis," as one might say. It is a kind of "super-death" that is a component of all love that forms the basis in creation for all instances of "the good death," from self-forgetfulness in favour of the beloved right up to that highest love by which a man "gives his life for his friends."[487]

Love, death, and new life appear, in a sense, equally substantial in Balthasar's theology. Love is equated with a kind of "death" by which life is formed. Kenotic love is "that love which *creates* good" and this good seems directly proportionate to the degree of self-loss or self-emptying. There is an *absolute* quality to Balthasar's thinking on Trinitarian love; a maximal way of thinking about love, loss, and creation in which they are – and uncomfortably so – pushed to their very limits. While Balthasar argues that only the Son and not the Trinity itself experiences pain and death owing to his human nature, love and loss are so tightly woven that it becomes difficult to imagine that love and suffering could ever be truly separated. Kilby notes that the "theological atmosphere" of Balthasar's writings grants sin and suffering "as much reality, as much ontological status, as God's good creation."[488]

> . . . in his thought we do not just find love and suffering close together – rather we see the distinction between them blurred. They become mutually internal to each other, so that fundamentally, Balthasar's instinct seems to be something like this: if you plumb the depths of suffering you find love, and any genuine love must have a central dimension, a central motif, of suffering.[489]

Humanity is called to become an image of the Trinity and thereby express the same kenotic love of the Trinity within the bounds of its human nature. But while Balthasar holds that kenotic love within the Trinity does not cause the Trinity to suffer, the same cannot be said for human beings. Balthasar suggests that humanity will inevitably suffer in endeavouring to

[487] Ibid., p. 84.
[488] Karen Kilby, 'Julian of Norwich, Hans Urs von Balthasar and the status of suffering in Christian theology' in *God, Evil and the Limits of Theology* (United Kingdom: T&T Clark, 2020), p. 130.
[489] Ibid.

replicate the total self-renunciation of the Trinity. While the "loss" of self-emptying within the Trinity is not loss in a real sense because the Father never becomes less, the human emulation of this kenotic outpouring results in real suffering and loss. From this viewpoint, human beings will suffer in realising their Trinitarian nature; the greater their outpouring of love, the greater their suffering. To this end, human suffering in total self-giving can appear as a sign of Trinitarian love, of the highest form of love, and of a person being formed into an image of the Trinity as love and gift.

This troubling connection between love and suffering – between the experience of love and suffering within the Trinity and human relations – means suffering becomes associated with the good. As JPII explains, suffering has "a special value in the eyes of the Church. It is something good, before which the Church bows down in reverence with all the depth of her faith in the Redemption."[490] For humanity, the pain incurred in total self-giving is no less than symbolic of becoming an image of the Trinity. For JPII and Balthasar, human realisation involves continually offering ourselves up to this suffering. From this perspective, suffering is not a hindrance to spiritual progression nor a challenge to be overcome on the spiritual path, but in a sense rather the very sign of transformation in faith, of *theosis*.

> Suffering thus becomes a sharing in the kenotic love of the Trinity and hence becomes not a mark against God, but rather a gift of man's *theosis*. The goal of human life is deification or divinization, and human suffering becomes through Christ a mode of participating in the very life of the Trinity.[491]

Marriage and suffering as human realisation in self-giving

I will now press the connection between total self-giving and human realisation or *theosis* in JPII's writings. *A Theology of the Body* reveals that total self-giving is important to JPII because he considers it the highest expression of humanity in the *imago Dei*. In *Salvifici Doloris*, the total self-giving that attains human realisation assumes a self-emptying quality,

[490] JPII, *Salvifici Doloris*, par. 24.
[491] Friesenhahn, *The Trinity and Theodicy: The Trinitarian Theology of von Balthasar and the problem of evil*, p. 148.

which is far less pronounced in *A Theology of the Body*. I have suggested that in *Salvifici Doloris*, JPII claims that human suffering lends itself to the possibility of human realisation because it allows for the peculiar type of self-emptying self-giving that mirrors the kenotic love of the Trinity. It provides "a mode of participating in the very life of the Trinity."[492] In what follows I hope to show that marriage and suffering are connected in JPII's writings in their mutual call to human realisation in total self-giving as an expression of divine kenotic love and that this presupposition opens JPII's theology to a reading that grants (at least) equal status to love and suffering.

JPII claims that human realisation occurs in a privileged and fullest way through the spousal relationship and suffering. While all instances of self-giving are a divinely given means of realising our Trinitarian nature, marriage and suffering are privileged routes to human realisation because they provide the conditions for the unique absolute self-giving that resembles the total self-emptying of the Trinity. In the language of JPII's "integral" approach, they provide the conditions for the gift of self that involves the whole person in the totality of their subjective and objective dimensions, which is to say, in their wholeness. In the spousal relationship, the spouses offer their "irreducible 'I'" in "surrendering" their will to one another (the subjective) through which they are united both with one another and God. When the subjective is given alongside the body's reproductive capacity (objective) the whole person is offered as gift and the spouse's creative potential to participate in the created order is realised. The same applies to suffering in which one offers the irreducible "I" in 'surrendering' the will to Christ (the subjective) through which one is united to Christ. When the subjective is given alongside the suffering of the mind and body (objective) to form a united whole, the creative potential to participate in the Redemption is realised.

This divine-human union realises a creative potential, which in marriage corresponds to participation in the created order through reproduction, and in suffering to participation in the Redemption. In both cases, the total gift of self results in a kind of personal transformation. The spouses become the closest image of the Trinity as love and gift in human experience; they realise the highest form of love ("betrothed love") in "rediscovering" the meaning of original innocence. In suffering the person becomes an image of Christ; they cultivate a new spiritual maturity through which they "rediscover the

[492] Ibid.

'soul'" which they thought was "lost" because of suffering.[493] It becomes clear then that JPII applies his understanding of human realisation as wholeness to both suffering and marriage. Total self-giving in marriage and suffering integrates all the dimensions of being in unity with God from the "beginning," in human history, and the eschaton. Total self-giving in marriage and suffering makes us 'whole,' it allows us to rediscover the meaning of original innocence in our lives and prepares us for "spiritualisation" and divinization in the eschaton.[494]

There is also a sacramental connection between total self-giving in marriage and suffering. JPII implies that the sacrament of baptism is in a sense consummated in suffering in the same way that the sacrament of marriage is consummated in the conjugal act. The following passages from St. Paul are quoted in *Salvifici Doloris* to make this point:

> We are . . . fellow heirs with Christ provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him . . .[495]

> Now I rejoice in my sufferings for your sake, and in my flesh, I complete what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the Church . . .[496]

> Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ?[497]

JPII uses these passages to claim that suffering is a "call to virtue," to participation in the Church as the Body of Christ into which we are baptised. This draws on the words of St. Paul: "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptised in Christ Jesus were baptised into his death?"[498] JPII explains that in the Paschal mystery, Christ began the union with humanity through the Church, which is the dimension in which the redemptive suffering of Christ can be constantly completed through humanity's suffering.[499] The Church is continually being built up spiritually as the Body of Christ through the infinite resources of the Redemption and our participation in Christ's redemptive suffering.

---

[493] Ibid., par. 23.
[494] JPII, TOB, par. 67:1-3.
[495] Ibid., par. 22 (Rom 8:17).
[496] Ibid., par. 23 (Col. 1:24).
[497] Ibid., (1 Cor. 6:15).
[498] Romans 6:3-4
[499] JPII, *Salvifici Doloris*, par. 24.

> The mystery of the Church is expressed in this: that already in Baptism, which brings about a configuration with Christ, and then through his Sacrifice – sacramentally through the Eucharist – the Church is continually being built up spiritually as the Body of Christ. In this Christ wishes to be united with every individual, and in a special way he is united with those who suffer . . . [this] highlights the truth *concerning the creative character of suffering* . . . The good in itself is inexhaustible and infinite. No man can add to it. But at the same time, in the mystery of the Church as his Body, Christ has in a sense opened his own redemptive suffering to all human suffering . . . the Redemption, accomplished through satisfactory love, *remains always open to all love expressed in human suffering.*[500]

But are these "calls to virtue" the same in love and suffering? Is the capacity for human realisation in total self-giving in marriage equal to that in suffering? I propose that JPII's theologies of marriage and suffering can be read in such a way as to speak to not only an intrinsic connection between love and suffering in which suffering appears to assume an ontological status but also to suggest that the human experience of love is in some sense subordinated to the human experience of suffering.

In *Salvifici Doloris*, JPII explains that St. Paul first experienced the "power of the Resurrection" of Christ on the road to Damascus, and it was in this paschal light that he was enabled to share in the sufferings of Christ.[501] The experience of the "power of the Resurrection" was that which allowed Paul to suffer with Christ: "*sharing in the Cross of Christ comes about through the experience of the Risen One*."[502] In the sharing of Christ's sufferings Paul suffered for the Kingdom of God, and in doing so, became worthy of this Kingdom.

> Thus to share in the sufferings of Christ is, at the same time, to suffer for the Kingdom of God. In the eyes of the just God, before his judgement, those who

[500] Ibid., par. 24 (my emphasis)
[501] Ibid., par. 20.
[502] Ibid., par. 21.

> share in the suffering of Christ become worthy of this kingdom . . . Christ has led us into this Kingdom through his suffering. And also through suffering those surrounded by the mystery of Christ's Redemption become mature enough to enter this Kingdom.[503]

Suffering appears in JPII's writings as the 'final proof' of obedience to God and loyalty to the Kingdom. The "truth of love," explains JPII, is proved through the "truth of suffering" as was shown in Christ's words in the Garden of Gethsemane.[504] Suffering appears to constitute the 'threshold' to share in the glory of Christ as a "co-redeemer;" it is the offering in the self-gift, even as the conjugal act is the 'threshold' to participation in the created order as a "co-creator." This follows JPII's claims that Christ was perpetually being "delivered" into suffering throughout his public service, that he entered the "world of suffering" so that he might accomplish the work of salvation in feeding the hungry, consoling the afflicted, and healing the sick. Christ's love was, for JPII, manifested through the perpetual suffering into which he was delivered throughout his life. While JPII claims that spousal self-giving is the realisation of the highest form of love in the formation of our Trinitarian nature, we read in *Salvifici Doloris* that love must in the end be "proved" by suffering if it is to prepare us for the Kingdom of God. Is JPII claiming that love's highest potential in human experience is realised in suffering?

Such a reading would certainly be supported by Balthasar's account of Trinitarian love as kenosis in which we read that the outpouring of love within the Trinity is a simultaneous "death" which is analogous to human pain, where Trinitarian love is expressed as the willingness to give all, even life itself. For JPII and Balthasar humanity is always in some way being drawn to realising itself in the image of the Trinity through cultivating relationships of total self-giving. Yet while the Trinity suffers no loss in its self-renunciation, the same cannot be said for humanity. To this end, to be formed in the image of the Trinity is in a sense to experience suffering and loss in total self-giving. For JPII and Balthasar, suffering appears as the very *sign* of Trinitarian love, a natural expression of the highest form of love. Defined in this way, suffering is not problematic, but rather intrinsic to love.

[503] Ibid., p. 21.
[504] Ibid., p. 18.

There is a distinction to be made, however, between the claim that our deepest love *requires* suffering and the claim that suffering is *inevitable* in human love. The former positions suffering as intrinsic to love, necessary and even desirable for the end to which it attains. In the latter position, while suffering is inevitably experienced in love, it is not love itself nor is it required for love. This distinction is important because it shapes how we relate and respond to our suffering and the suffering of others. It is not that God is simply present in human suffering and therefore that our suffering is always open to the possibility of growth, to being transcended. Rather suffering itself is the expression of the highest form of love and therefore stands, in some sense, alongside human love until the eschaton where humanity will experience the self-emptying nature of divine love not as pain but as divinisation.

Self-giving without loss: Reflections on positive psychology

How did JPII's views on suffering influence his position on positive emotions and their value to self-giving? In what follows, I will suggest that JPII's reverence for suffering meant that he approached pleasure with more than a traditional Christian concern to affirm the good of pursuing the final good over lesser goals. Pleasure and positive emotions more broadly were viewed with suspicion not only because they all too easily became sought for their own sake, but crucially because attachment to pleasure increases aversion to pain. JPII's approach embodied the sentiment expressed in *Gaudium et Spes* that "the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life."[505] His writings affirmed the value of suffering and, therefore, the importance of adhering to the good regardless of cost, and this fundamental concern shaped his views on the value of pleasure in human realisation.

In *Love and Responsibility* JPII sets out the problem of the relationship between pleasure and pain:

> Thus, undertaking an act for the sake of pleasure itself as the exclusive or highest end naturally clashes with the proper structure of human acts . . . I may

[505] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 127:4-5

> not treat this pleasure (contrasting it with pain) as the only norm of action, and even less so as a principle based upon which I declare and judge what is morally good and morally evil in my acts or the acts of another person. For it is known that sometimes what is truly good, what morality and conscience demand of me, is accompanied precisely by some pain and demands forgoing some pleasure. This pain, however, or the pleasure that I forgo in a given case, is not the criterion for my rational conduct.[506]

While stating that pleasure is not itself an evil, but a specific good and that his concern is really to warn of "the moral evil . . . contained in the disposition of the will to pleasure alone,"[507] he has very little to say about the supportive role of positive emotions, even pleasure, in orienting a person to the highest good. Positive emotions are mere "accidents" rather than functional, meaningful goods.

> . . . the principle of utility (*principium utilitatis*) proclaims the maximum pleasure of pleasure for the greatest possible number of people with, of course, the simultaneous minimum of pain for that number. At first sight this principle seems right and attractive, for it is difficult to imagine that people could act otherwise . . . However, a more thorough analysis must reveal the weakness and superficiality of this way of thinking . . . Pleasure in its essence is something collateral, accidental, something that may occur when acting. Thus, undertaking to act for the sake of pleasure itself as the exclusive or highest end naturally clashes with the proper structure of human acts.[508]

In *A Theology of the Body* and *Love and Responsibility*, JPII is first concerned with affirming control over the body and only secondly affirming the good of pleasure when experienced in orientation to God. In *Love and Responsibility*, pleasure appears primarily in the context of discourses on utilitarianism in which pleasure and happiness lead straight to egotism.[509] The

[506] Wojtyla, *Love and Responsibility*, pp. 20-21.
[507] Ibid., p. 140.
[508] Ibid., p. 20.
[509] Ibid., p. 22.

"joy" arising from the marital union is discussed alongside the consistent threat posed by pleasure to the authentic joy of spouses, to the cultivation of sufficient self-control, and to resisting humanity's proclivity towards utilitarianism.[510] Positive emotions are often minimised as *consequences* of moral acts to which we must be on our guard. They appear in his writings as the ever-present threat to our spiritual progression – the ultimate distraction from the good. Johnson argues that JPII's emphasis in a Theology of the Body on controlling the body denies the importance of thinking and experiencing the pleasure of sexual love as God's gift.[511]

> I find the constant emphasis on "controlling the body" exactly contrary to such humility in the face of mystery . . . I am not suggesting that lack of continence (i.e., intemperance) is necessarily desirable. But neither is "self-control" the entire point of sexual love . . . Valuing the body its willingness to be controlled should include some appreciation for the goodness of sexual pleasure – and, for that matter, any bodily pleasure. The lack of any such appreciation in the pope's discussion is striking, if not altogether unsurprising . . . But pleasure is God's gift . . . In papal teaching, sexual passion and pleasure appear primarily as an obstacle to authentic love.[512]

On the brief occasions when JPII considers the meaning and function of pleasure, it is framed as an accidental by-product marked more by risk than value. The distinct absence of discussion on the value of positive emotions coupled with a tendency to frame their slim mention within discourses of temptation at best minimises the role of positive emotions in cultivating a desire and willingness to be of benefit to the other and at worst depicts them as antagonistic to this pursuit. There is little mention of pleasure as a *causal factor* in moral acts – as supporting and elevating progression in and towards the good. The absence of positive regard for the role played by pleasure (and other positive emotions) in self-giving feeds the sense that JPII does appear to elevate the human experience of suffering over love, the experience of pain over joy, and the experience of self-control over ease. It is easy

[510] Ibid., p. 70.
[511] Johnson, *The Revelatory Body: The Body as Inductive Art*, p. 28.
[512] Ibid., p. 29.

to see then how JPII's diminishment of pleasure aligns with not merely an affirmation of the pursuit of the final good over other goals, but an affirmation of the good of suffering itself.

Positive emotions and self-giving in positive psychology

Can we find a more nuanced way to think about the relationship between pleasure and self-giving? How can we think about the role of pleasure in pursuing the highest good? Positive psychology provides a different angle from which to explore the role of suffering in self-giving by in contrast drawing attention to the role of positive emotions in turning us towards the other. While positive psychology supports JPII's concerns that positive emotions are not an unmitigated good, it also claims that positive emotions play an important role in helping us cultivate lives oriented to the benefit of others.

As we saw in Chapter 2, Seligman's theory of authentic happiness suggests that human flourishing relies on positive emotions and engagement in meaningful activities. Authentic happiness arises when a person orients their strengths and talents towards a good beyond themselves in a life imbued with meaning and purpose, and positive emotions can support or hinder this pursuit. Seligman explains that positive emotions arising from the exercise of strengths and virtues are conducive to authentic happiness, and those arising from the myriad of shortcuts to feeling good (drugs, chocolate, loveless sex, shopping, and television) are not. While the former supports well-being, the latter leads to restlessness and low life satisfaction.

> The belief that we can rely on shortcuts to happiness, joy, rapture, comfort, and ecstasy, rather than being entitled to these feelings by the exercise of personal strengths and virtues, leads to legions of people who in the middle of great wealth are starving spiritually. Positive emotions alienated from the exercise of character leads to emptiness, to unauthenticity, to depression, and as we age, to the knowing realisation that we are fidgeting until we die.[513]

[513] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 8.

Seligman's claim that the good life necessitates the pursuit of virtue in orientation to the other suggests that self-giving is intrinsic to authentic happiness. Seligman recounts an assignment he undertook with his students in which they engaged in one pleasurable activity and one philanthropic activity and wrote about both experiences. [514] The results, he explains, were life-changing. The effects of the pleasurable activity (meeting friends or watching a film) paled in comparison to the after-effects of the activity involving kindness. The act of kindness resulted in a positive emotion not because the action was accompanied by a separate stream of positive emotion, like joy, but rather because the action led to a sense of gratification. This is because "kindness consists in total engagement and the loss of self-consciousness."[515] Put another way, the self-forgetting involved in acts of kindness is strongly associated with well-being. When well-being arises from our strengths and virtues, it has a quality of authenticity that imbues our lives with authenticity.[516] Seligman explains that positive emotions are important when they arise alongside meaning and purpose– when they enrich our character. When pleasure is associated with strengths and virtues, it supports authentic happiness.

As we saw in Chapter 2, the Broaden-and-Build Theory of positive emotions explains this finding. By way of a recap, this theory explains the significance of positive emotions in terms of their evolutionary advantage in increasing authentic happiness. Fredrickson explains that people "transform themselves" through positive emotions, "becoming more creative, knowledgeable, resilient, socially integrated, and healthy individuals."[517] Fredrickson claims positive emotions do more than *signal* optimal functioning–they *produce* optimal functioning. They do so not simply in the present, but also over the long term, and not just for ourselves, but also for others.

> The bottom-line message is that people should cultivate positive emotions in themselves and in those around them, not just as end-states in themselves, but also as a means to achieving psychological growth and improved psychological and physical well-being over time.[518]

[514] Ibid., p. 9.
[515] Ibid.
[516] Ibid.
[517] Fredrickson, 'The Broaden–and–Build Theory of Positive Emotions,' p. 1396.
[518] Ibid., p. 1367.

Positive emotions facilitate "approach behaviour," which prompts people to engage with their environments in ways that are evolutionarily adaptive for the individual, its species or both.[519] Contrast this with the effect of negative emotions like fear, sadness, and anger, which lead people to respond in very different ways to their environment by prompting the fight-or-flight response. This response dominates in win-loss games, and the more serious the outcome, the more intense and desperate the emotions.[520] The aversive feelings of disgust, fear, repulsion, and hatred, signal a sensory warning that a win-loss game is looming and mobilizes the individual to discover and eliminate the threat. This culminates in the quick and decisive action to fight or flee. While negative emotions cause a defensive response towards the environment in the impetus to attack or withdraw, positive emotions, in contrast, result in an openness towards exploring, participating, and contributing to the environment.

The inclination to engage with our surroundings or defend through attack/retreat triggers a respective narrowing or broadening of thought-action repertoires. In life-threatening situations, thought-action repertoires narrow to promote "quick and decisive action that carries direct and immediate benefit . . . the sort of actions that worked best to save our ancestors' lives and limbs in similar situations."[521] Positive emotions have a complementary effect: they broaden thought-action repertoires, widening the possibilities of thoughts and actions. Joy creates the tendency to "play, to push limits and be creative" not only in social and physical behaviour but also in intellectual and artistic behaviour.[522] Interest leads us to explore and expand the self. Contentment urges us to contemplate current life circumstances and integrate these circumstances into new views of the self and the world. Love, viewed as a blend of positive emotions experienced within safe, close relationships "creates recurring cycles of urges to play with, explore and savour our loved ones," and to seek their well-being.[523] These tendencies to play, explore, or savour and integrate, represent ways in which positive emotions broaden habitual ways of thinking and

[519] Ibid., p. 1368.
[520] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 31.
[521] Barbara, 'The Broaden–and–Build Theory of Positive Emotions,' p. 1369.
[522] Ibid., p. 1369.
[523] Ibid.

acting.[524] Moreover, the personal resources accrued in the experience of positive emotions are found to be durable, which is to say that they outlast the transient emotional state that led to their acquisition.[525] In sum, positive emotions have a purpose that far exceeds the delight they produce. Seligman summaries Fredrickson's findings as follows:

> So, a chilly, negative mood activates a battle-stations mode of thinking: the order of the day is to focus on what is wrong and eliminate it. A positive mood, in contrast, buoys people into a way of thinking that is creative, tolerant, constructive, generous, undefensive and lateral. This way of thinking aims to detect not what is wrong, but what is right. It does not go out of its way to detect sins of omission, but hones in on the virtues of commission. It probably even occurs in a different part of the brain and has a different neurochemistry from thinking under a negative mood.[526]

The broadening of thought-action repertoires explains the strong association between positive emotions and altruism.[527] While one might expect that unhappy people would be more altruistic owing to a greater identification with the suffering of others, positive psychology claims that authentically happy people are, in fact, consistently found to display higher levels of altruism.

> When we are happy, we are less self-focused, we like others more, and we want to share our good fortune even with strangers. When we are down, though, we become distrustful, turn inward, and focus defensively on our own needs. Looking out for number one is more characteristic of sadness than of well-being.[528]

It seems that positive emotions can support a theological sense of self-giving when they are oriented to a good beyond themselves. Authentic happiness produces an orientation to the

[524] Ibid.
[525] Ibid.
[526] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, p. 35.
[527] Ibid., p. 43
[528] Ibid.

other and this orientation, in turn, produces authentic happiness. Seligman explains that lives imbued with pleasure, engagement and meaning culminate in an "evolutionary coded movement towards the realisation of goodness itself."[529] While engagement and meaning are more strongly associated than pleasure with the "accumulation of goodness," positive psychology suggests they exhibit reciprocal causality. Pursuing meaningful activities increases social connections, purpose, and self-relevant goals, which boosts well-being and positive emotions, and increases our pursuit of engagement and meaning. The pursuit of the good life, it seems, possesses an intrinsic reward system: happiness both rewards and inspires increasing growth and the building of personal resources, which are oriented to the other, and which in turn, enrich our lives with ever-greater levels of happiness and well-being.[530] Positive psychology suggests that when orientated to something larger than themselves, positive emotions are important to cultivating lives of benefit to others. Being authentically happy increases our desire and capacity to self-give and the more we practice self-giving the more authentic happiness we experience.

Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow may also be helpful here in thinking about the meaning of "self-loss." Its key premise is that flow requires an orientation to something larger than ourselves; a single-pointed focus in which all attentional capacities are focused away from the self. Flow is marked by a distinct lack of self-consciousness wherein we are no longer concerned by the typical fears of the ego-self. The self seems curiously absent; this absence is the very possibility for full attentional focus on a task. Csikszentmihalyi explains that the limits of our attention or "psychic energy" can only be invested in a task to produce a state of flow when we are no longer distracted by the self. Shifting focus from the ego-self frees vast attentional capacities that can then be directed to our chosen task. The worry about how we are doing and how others perceive us is a tremendous drain on our

[529] In *Authentic Happiness,* (p258-260)*,* Seligman explains that orienting ourselves to "a God endowed with omniscience, omnipotence and goodness as its ultimate end" is the only way to satisfy our desire and potential for a meaningful life. Seligman defines God, however, not as something supernatural but rather as brought into being through the progressive accumulation of goodness in the world; as the final end of an evolutionary process that codes for ever greater complexity and success. Existence is essentially good and in a movement towards ever greater goodness. God must, for Seligman, be the realisation of the greatest potential for goodness in existence–of *our* greatest potential for goodness. "A process that continually selects for more complexity is ultimately aimed at nothing less than omniscience, omnipotence, and goodness. A meaningful life is one that joins with something larger than we are–and the larger that something is, the more meaning our lives have. Partaking in a process that brings a God endowed with omniscience, omnipotence and goodness as its ultimate end joins our lives to an enormously large something."

[530] Seligman, *Authentic Happiness*, 260.

attentional resources, which reduces the attention we can give others. For Csikszentmihalyi, "self-loss" is an essential component of flow.

> It is difficult to notice the environment as long as attention is mainly focused inward, as long as most of one's psychic energy is absorbed by the concerns and desires of the ego. People who know how to transform stress into enjoyable challenge spend very little time thinking about themselves. They are not expending all their energy trying to satisfy what they believe to be their needs, or worrying about socially conditioned desires. Instead their attention is alert, constantly processing information from their surroundings.[531]

From this viewpoint, "self-forgetting" or "self-loss" holds our greatest potential to direct our resources to the other–to benefit others. Yet Csikszentmihalyi's "self-loss" is not the loss of *Salvifici Doloris*: there is no self-abnegation, vulnerability, or fragility, for *only* the ego-self is "lost," or more accurately, temporarily forgotten. Shifting our attention outwards away from the personal, Csikszentmihalyi claims, not only distracts us from our fears allowing us to cultivate happiness and resilience, but also allows the self to grow in complexity, making it more than it was before. The self-forgetting in flow is that which expands and magnifies the self thereby liberating resources for a greater good beyond our own.

We saw in Chapter 3 and have recapped here that Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow offers an alternative way to view the idea of self-loss. At this stage, it is worth introducing another contribution that Csikszentmihalyi can make to this discussion, which involves two processes that are key to flow: *differentiation* and *integration*.[532] Differentiation involves a movement towards uniqueness and separation because overcoming challenges inevitably makes a person feel more capable and more skilled: "After each episode of flow a person becomes more of a unique individual, less predictable and possessed of rare skills."[533] Integration occurs because, in the deep state of concentration, consciousness is "unusually well ordered," where thoughts and feelings are harmoniously ordered to the same goal.[534]

[531] Ibid., p. 204.
[532] Ibid., p. 41.
[533] Ibid.
[534] Ibid.

When the flow episode ends "a person feels more 'together' than before, not only within themselves but with other people and the world."[535] Flow appears to create an internal order through single-pointed focus ("*psychic negentropy*"), which contrasts with the typical state of internal disorder ("*psychic entropy*") marked by a preoccupation with the personal. This means that flow brings order to our typical state of interior fragmentation–it unifies and makes whole. Csikszentmihalyi stresses that a balance of both differentiation and integration is required for complexity. Too much differentiation and a person may accomplish great things, but risk self-centred egotism. Too much integration and a person may feel connected and secure but lack autonomous individuality. Avoiding both selfishness and conformity is our best chance of growing in complexity. When we combine, then, a goal that transcends our own interests, concentrating our full attention on the task for its own sake, we grow in complexity and thereby cultivate enduring resources of personal and communal benefit. This is to say that we grow and we feel happier when we fully utilise our resources in a task for its own sake, desiring that it should ultimately serve a greater good than our own.

> Paradoxically, it is when we act freely, for the sake of the action itself rather than for ulterior motives, that we learn to become more than we were. When we choose a goal and invest ourselves in it to the limits of our concentration, whatever we do will be enjoyable . . . Flow is important both because it makes the present more enjoyable, and because it builds the self-confidence that allows us to develop skills and make significant contributions to humankind.[536]

Resilience not suffering is given priority in this framework. Csikszentmihalyi explains that resilience is, in fact, key to the integrity of the self. By developing positive coping strategies, most negative events can be neutralised, and possibly even used as challenges that will help make us stronger and more complex.[537]

> The ability to take misfortune and make something good come of it is a very rare gift . . . they are exceptional people who have overcome great hardships, and

[535] Ibid.
[536] Ibid., p. 42.
[537] Ibid., p. 202.

> have surmounted obstacles that would daunt most men and women. In fact, when average people are asked to name the individuals they admire most, and to explain why these men and women are admired, courage and the ability to overcome hardship are the qualities most mentioned as a reason for admiration.[538]

Resilience involves a turning away from the ego-self and a turning towards the environment. The more we can concentrate our psychic energies on the environment and away from the fears and concerns of the ego self, the happier, more resilient, and more productive we will be. For Csikszentmihalyi, this important evolutionary advantage allows us to take neutral or destructive events and turn them into positive ones. By turning us away from inner egocentric disorder (that is, by reducing our suffering) and turning us towards 'self-forgetting' or a lack of self-consciousness, we better see and attend to our environment, and grow stronger in the process. The outward focus increases the likelihood of experiencing happiness, of building resilience, and coping strategies. In psychological terms, an orientation to the other serves humanity because it is a significant factor in decreasing our suffering, which frees resources for the other.

Perhaps the key to the argument that flow supports self-giving is the component of integration, which leads to a sense of oneness and unity with our environment. The rock climber Yvon Chouinard describes the experience as a "unity with our joyous surroundings" in which one experiences an "*ultra-penetrating perception*."[539] Like Seligman's claims that authentic happiness leads to a deep sense of relation with the world, Csikszentmihalyi claims that the state of flow leads to the ability to better perceive and respond to the world.

> . . . the person whose attention is immersed in the environment becomes part of it – she participates in the system by linking herself to it through psychic energy. This, in turn, makes it possible for her understand the properties of the system, so that she can find a better way to adapt to a problematic situation.[540]

[538] Ibid., p. 200
[539] Ibid., p. 205
[540] Ibid.

Flow seems to point to an evolutionary advantage for human beings to realise their strengths and talents, and to experience optimal well-being building social relations in which a person's resources work for the greater good of the whole. The flow experience leads to the "broadening and building" (growth and positive development) that cultivates and maintains social relations. It is an essential component of win-win encounters because it cultivates an expansive, tolerant, and creative mindset, and these positive emotions maximise social, intellectual, and physical benefits.[541]

Positive psychology suggests that human beings have become evolutionarily programmed to grow and build communities through positive emotions. It appears intrinsic to human nature to thrive in orientation to the other, where personal and communal flourishing are mutually supportive. From this viewpoint, any theological concept of self-giving will be limited if we are too quick to underestimate the role of authentic positive emotions in self-giving, to diminish them in favour of the growth that may arise in suffering (not least because it may not arise). Positive psychology supports an approach in which the practice of bestowing gifts–desiring and willing others to thrive and utilising personal resources to this end–creates and sustains positive relationships, upholds mutually supportive social bonds, and allows the greatest possibility for the greatest number to flourish.

Similarly, Seneca stated in *On Benefits* (*De Beneficiis*) that bestowing gifts "finds its *telos* in creating and sustaining positive relationships, binding fellow humans together and upholding the structure of society."[542] Gift-giving unleashes the power of social creativity in mutual reciprocity, which forms and maintains relational bonds.[543] Must self-giving then be framed by sacrifice, suffering and loss? Must the love that wishes to give all involve self-limitation and self-subtraction? Logan Williams argues that this misrepresents the self-giving quality of love:

> I think that claiming . . . that love 'just is' the sacrifice of one's own interests not only is based upon a misconstrual of certain texts but is also reductionistic, as it

[541] Ibid., p. 44.
[542] Logan Williams, 'Giving the self through death: A Crucified Christ as Gift in Galatians', in *Suffering and the Christian Life*, ed. by Karen Kilby and Rachel Davies (London: T&T Clark, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2020), pp. 23-32 (pp. 25-26).
[543] Ibid., pp. 25-26.

> takes one aspect of love (self-limitation) and foregrounds it as the primary quality of love to the (intentional or unintentional) exclusion of other integral aspects of love.[544]

Williams draws on *De Beneficiis* to argue that because gift-giving aims at constructing relationships, we should judge gifts not by their content "but by the giver's *animus* – her spirit, attitude, or intention with which she gives."[545] The most precious item to give is oneself without which we are unable to give anything at all.[546] In Seneca's treatise, there is no loss, no risk to the giver. Williams claims St. Paul's words that Christ 'loved me and gave himself for me' must mean more than just self-subtraction, self-limitation, or self-negation.[547]

> The phrase 'gave himself' signals not that Christ gives himself away in death but that through his death he gives himself into relationship; Christ does not die in order to give just something to others, but someone – himself – and thus he dies for others so that, on the other side of death, he would exist with others . . . The point of Christ's self-giving is not just to benefit believers per se but to benefit them by existing with them – and this hope for mutuality and reception is internal to love itself.[548]

William's approach helps us to reflect on the significance of the 'heart' or intention in guiding our orientation to the other. It allows us to view human realisation in self-giving love in ways that are no longer determined by the ties JPII establishes between the self and specific aspects of embodiment, but rather by the diverse possibilities of a free, imaginative offering of personal resources given in the hope of the other's flourishing. JPII's integral approach distorts the simple idea, supported by positive psychology, that human relations thrive when built upon a mutual intention to use our resources to benefit others. The simplicity of thinking about self-giving as a gift of our very *animus* – our intention for the

[544] Ibid.
[545] Ibid., p. 28.
[546] Ibid., p. 29.
[547] Ibid.
[548] Ibid., p. 32.

other to thrive – perhaps even more accurately encompasses the totality of the person in which JPII claims to be so invested.[549] From this viewpoint, there are no limits to how we choose to apply our diverse personal resources for the good of the other, for the gift of self does not depend on a specific expression – on the giving of a particular resource – but rather finds its expression within the unique context in which it finds itself moved. Positive psychology points to the idea that self-progression oriented to a good beyond ourselves not only increases our resources to offer others, but also leads to our authentic happiness – a joy that is not simply for ourselves but becomes part of the very gift we offer others.

Conclusion

JPII claims that the answer to the meaning of human suffering is found in kenotic self-emptying love. The Cross reveals God's love for us and the nature of this love as self-renunciation. While the Trinity loses nothing in its expression of kenotic love, Balthasar claims that this love is analogous to human pain; that for humanity to become an image of Trinitarian love and gift involves suffering and loss. Through this lens, we see that if the very expression of divine love involves a "death" of some kind, a paradoxical emptying without loss expressed in human nature as actual pain and loss, then JPII's centralisation of total self-giving becomes altogether clearer. For JPII, total self-giving is human realisation because it is the expression in humanity of God's nature as gift and therefore the realisation of our trinitarian nature. *Salvifici Doloris* then outlines JPII's understanding of the meaning of human suffering as a privileged source of human realisation in total self-emptying.

I have argued that one can draw together the threads of JPII's thought through the lens of Balthasar's trinitarian theology in such a way as to suggest that he establishes a connection between suffering and love, weaving them together as an expression of divine love as kenosis. Through his "integral" approach, JPII explains that marriage and suffering are divinely given means of human realisation because they provide the conditions for the total gift of self, in which the whole person in their subjective and objective aspects is

[549] *Animus* refers here to "spirit" rather than the Jungian archetype.

offered as gift. In both cases a creative potential is realised in union with God: we are "co-redeemers" in the total gift of self in suffering, and we are "co-creators" in the total self-gift in marriage.

There is the suggestion, however, in *Salvifici Doloris* that love and suffering are not merely tied in human experience but that the human experience of love is in a sense subordinated to that of suffering. I have suggested that while maintaining that divine love is the final end, JPII also suggests that human love is "proved" in suffering because, from the viewpoint that I am proposing, suffering in love is the closest example in human experience of Trinitarian love. Love is positioned as the final end to which suffering attains, and yet also, within humanity, as that which attains to suffering so that it may be prepared for that final end. Like the 'maximal' nature of Balthasar's writings on trinitarian love, JPII's total self-giving involves more than an understanding of the totality of the person in the sense of drawing all the dimensions of personhood into the offering in which human realisation occurs (though these dimensions are far from representing the totality of the person). JPII's total self-giving also refers to a maximal offering of these dimensions, which it is suggested ultimately involves pain and loss. His attention, like Balthasar's, is focused on the extreme. It is as though JPII is saying that love cannot ascend to its highest form until it is tested; that is, when it becomes uncomfortable, difficult, and painful. It seems that love and suffering, at the very least, appear as equally substantial and tied in ways that make it impossible to rule out the possibility that JPII ultimately subordinates the human experience of love to suffering.

The nature of self-giving love is, however, limited when viewed primarily as sacrifice and loss. Self-giving can be viewed as a means for the social creativity and mutual reciprocity that forms and maintains social bonds. Seneca claimed that gift-giving aims at constructing relationships; that it is not the content but the giver's *animus* (the spirit, attitude, or intention behind the gift) that is most important.[550] The self-claimed drive behind JPII's personalism is indeed, like Seneca, to affirm that the most precious item to give is oneself without which one is unable to give anything at all. Yet JPII cannot ultimately affirm the precedence of the *animus* in self-giving because his personalism is not intended to be taken independently of its objective corollary within the broader context of his

[550] Williams, 'Giving the self through death: A Crucified Christ as Gift in Galatians,' p. 28.

"integral" approach. The *animus* is only truly given, for JPII, alongside a specific objective feature of personhood determined by natural law, doctrine, or magisterial teaching.

JPII's complex relationship with love and suffering is challenged by positive psychology which claims that positive emotions rather than negative play a key evolutionary role in cultivating and sustaining human relations. For positive psychology, authentic happiness rather than pain and loss increases our desire and willingness to use our resources for a good beyond our own. It also suggests that the "self-loss" which permits a radical orientation to the other does not diminish, but rather expands and strengthens the self, for what is lost is merely the preoccupation with our own fears, needs and desires. This "self-loss" is instead rather a "self-forgetting" in which we are temporarily distracted from the ego-self. There is no self-abnegation in the self-loss of single-focused engagement that, for positive psychology, is the condition for the possibility of orienting ourselves to a good larger than ourselves. The claim that positive emotions play an important role in self-giving challenges JPII's minimisation of positive emotions in self-giving in preference for suffering and loss. Flow speaks to the idea that self-forgetting in a radical orientation to the other is supported by positive emotions and, in fact, inhibited by negative emotions. From this perspective we could say, then, that positive emotions are conducive to self-giving because they are more strongly associated with a self-forgetting orientation to the other than negative emotions, which in contrast, are associated with a preoccupation with the ego-self.

The interweaving of love and suffering in *Salvifici Doloris* can be viewed to support the claim made in earlier chapters that JPII's "integral" approach in a Theology of the Body is in service of defending the key teaching of *Humanae Vitae*. Promulgated the same year as the final lecture of a Theology of the Body, one could suggest that *Salvifici Doloris* allows JPII to reframe challenges to the teaching that marriage must remain open to the transmission of life in a new light. The dissent from this teaching on the grounds of the suffering many claimed it produced is, we read in *Salvifici Doloris*, a sign that spousal love is being made ready for the Kingdom of God. The pain is not a sign that something is wrong, but rather that the spouses are being transformed into an image of the Trinity as love and gift. From this viewpoint, *Salvifici Doloris* reframes the causes of dissent from *Humanae Vitae* as calls to a 'higher,' privileged union with Christ. The suffering incurred in total self-giving in upholding magisterial teaching on marriage becomes human realisation because it is the

closest image of Trinitarian kenotic love in human experience. Notwithstanding the consolation and hope, the self-efficacy and even joy that some claim can be found in practising JPII's approach to suffering, there are perhaps good reasons to doubt its more general application, to question its intention and lived consequences.

Conclusion

This thesis aimed to reflect critically on JPII's theology of self-giving as human flourishing using psychology. The emphasis on self-giving as human fulfilment, or *theosis*, was intentional. This is because self-giving is presented in JPII's writings as more than a general orientation to the other that cultivates humility and compassion. JPII developed a detailed concept, which when taken at its extreme, claimed to be the closest possibility in human experience to be realised in the image of God, in the image of the trinity as love and gift. I have suggested that this concept was developed through a motif of wholeness in which self-giving was presented as the possibility for authentic human flourishing involving the totality of the human person. I further proposed that *Humanae Vitae* and the widespread response to its key teachings on the immorality of artificial birth control provided a unique context to develop, apply and fully express JPII's thinking of self-giving as human fulfilment. At the heart of my argument, then, was the claim that JPII's defence of the key teaching of *Humanae Vitae* that marriage must be open to procreation rested on the fundamental proposition that self-giving is human realisation. This concept was most fully laid out in a *Theology of the Body*, which concluded with a defence of the encyclical rooted in JPII's understanding of self-giving as a divinely instituted means of human fulfilment in the context of marriage.

Developing a theology of self-giving

In this thesis, I have suggested that St. John's writings on the mystical union were one of the primary influences on JPII's theology of self-giving. The spousal images St. John used to describe the divine-human union became the foundation for an account of human fulfilment rooted in radical spousal self-giving. For JPII, the mystical union was more than an analogy applied to explore human spousal relationships. It described the actual nature of marriage. From this viewpoint, the total self-giving of the mystical union revealed the truth of marriage as union with God through total self-giving. But what exactly were the spouses

giving in their total self-gift? JPII claimed that his reading of St. John led him to see that total self-giving required offering the subjectivity of the person, which is "the synonym for all that it is irreducible in man . . . [the] concrete 'I'."[551] If the spousal analogy did indeed provide an image of the very nature of marriage, as Wojtyla claimed, it spoke to the vital role played by the subjective in the total self-giving of the spouses in bringing them into union with God. To this end, radical spousal self-giving meant the spouses gave themselves wholly to one another and therefore wholly to God not only through the body in the capacity to procreate (objective) but also in offering their "I" (subjectivity) by which they were brought into a union – into a wholeness – with God.

Just how this wholeness was formed through the integration of specific subjective and objective dimensions of the person and what this wholeness attained was developed in *Love and Responsibility*. In this text, Wojtyla approached sexual morality through the lens of human fulfilment. The text explores why and how "humanity's natural predisposition towards utilitarianism" cannot lead to authentic love and happiness before it makes the case for procreation as the key to attaining the very highest form of love, which he calls "betrothed love." I have proposed that the concept of wholeness is central to this argument. Wojtyla claims that marriage is the possibility for spouses to realise betrothed love because it provides a unique context in which the *whole* person can be given to the other and in doing so to God. In *Love and Responsibility*, Wojtyla defines the whole person as the sum of specific subjective and objective dimensions located within the sexual instinct. He claims the sexual instinct possesses biological qualities (reproductive capacity) and existential (capacity to produce human persons), which when "properly ordered" realise existence itself, or the truth of being. Furthermore, as the origin of all attraction between men and women, the sexual instinct must, he claims, also be the condition for the possibility of authentic love.

The key point here is that, for Wojtyla, outside celibacy, the sexual instinct can only be ordered through marriage open to procreation because only the total self-giving of the spouses allows for both the subjective and objective aspects of the instinct to be fully ordered to their natural, divine end. Put another way, human fulfilment occurs most fully in marriage open to the transmission of life because it is the possibility for the whole person to be given to the other and therefore to God. Wojtyla argues this total self-giving of the

[551] Wojtyla, 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man', pp. 109 and 111

spouses realised in and through the "power" of the sex drive by which they participate in the created order carries a transformative potential to be realised in the image of the Trinity as love and gift.

In this thesis, I have then claimed that Wojtyla's use of self-giving as human flourishing in wholeness in *Love and Responsibility* claims spiritual maturity and the highest form of love requires a person to be oriented in their totality to and by the truth of existence in total self-giving which is rooted in the correct ordering of the sex drive. In sum, for Wojtyla, because marriage open to the transmission of life is the condition for wholeness, of being formed in the *imago Dei*, the curia's teaching on marriage, far from being dogmatically prescriptive, expresses the divine union between the personalistic aspects of humanity and traditional teaching on natural law in the context of marriage to show how this wholeness is realised.

I have further proposed that the personalistic turn of Vatican II provided a platform for JPII's theology of self-giving. Not only did the Council make explicit reference to self-giving in *Gaudium et Spes* in which we read that "man cannot fully find himself except through a sincere gift of himself"[552], it changed the locus of marriage from the language of duties to interpersonal relations. Vatican II shifted the focus of papal and wider Church discourses from the importance of procreation in marriage to the value and significance of spousal love, and with this shift came the possibility that the unitive aspects of marriage might become a new context in which to broach conversations about gender roles and contraception. The personalistic turn of Vatican II can then be viewed as a progressive movement from the traditional hierarchical understanding of marriage espoused by *Casti Connubii* as defined by its primary end of procreation, towards a greater emphasis on the subjective or unitive aspects of marriage. Put another way, it was a movement from an understanding of marriage as oriented to primary (procreative) and secondary (unitive) ends to a more holistic appreciation of the relationship between these ends. For Wojtyla, Vatican II affirmed and gave expression to the personalistic emphasis that had come to mark his theology of marriage.

The Pontifical Commission for Birth Control, which ran alongside Vatican II to examine the impact of oral contraceptives on the Church, further influenced Wojtyla's

[552] Paul VI, *Gaudium et Spes*, par. 24

approach to marriage. I have shown that Wojtyla contributed to the Commission's Minority Report, which presented the case that magisterial teaching on marriage, being rooted in traditional teaching on the natural law, could not be changed because it was simply true. This contrasted with the Majority Report which called for a departure from a hierarchical understanding of marriage and a new emphasis on the significance of love. In the immediate aftermath of the Commission, Wojtyla, along with several Polish theologians, presented a treatise to the curia entitled, "*Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life*," in which they affirmed the legitimacy and infallibility of the Church's position on birth control on the grounds of morality and natural law. They considered the condemnation of contraception as "a norm of natural law, and therefore an objective norm flowing from nature, immutable and obligatory . . . "[553]

Pope Paul VI's response to the Commission in *Humanae Vitae*, while a firm restatement of the Church's traditional position on artificial birth control, cast the conversation in a slightly new albeit ambiguous light, which I have claimed was crucial to the development of Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-giving and marriage. Our key interest here was Paul VI's emphasis on the ends of marriage as *inseparable* rather than hierarchical; a description which he offered without any real explanation. I have suggested this left a 'gap' in the encyclical's teachings that Wojtyla/JPII's integral approach was well-suited to fill. How did JPII complete the arguments laid out in *Humanae Vitae*? In this thesis, I have answered that JPII filled the gaps left by Paul VI through his weekly lecture series, a *Theology of the Body*. Through a lens of wholeness, JPII rooted his defence of this teaching in total spousal self-giving as human fulfilment. Wholeness became then a central motif through which JPII expressed his thinking on the relationship between spousal self-giving, human flourishing and papal instruction that marriage must remain open to the transmission of life.

The exposition of *A Theology of the Body* in this thesis focused on three key areas. The first explored JPII's expression of human fulfilment as wholeness; his presupposition that human realisation requires the parts to become integrated into the whole in the communion of persons realised when the complementary others unite in marriage. The "consciousness of the 'spousal' meaning of the body," is for JPII, the "fundamental

[553] Wojtyla et al., 'The Foundations of the Church's Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life: A memorandum composed by a group of moral theologians from Kraków', p. 327.

component of human existence in the world."[554] This key theme of wholeness in unity is a distinctive and compelling feature of his writings which he claims answers the person's deepest longing for authentic and lasting love and happiness. I have argued that framing his arguments within the overarching theme of human fulfilment gave the appearance of providing the 'heart' to traditional teaching, which imbued this teaching with the highest pastoral intent, while simultaneously distracting dissenting voices. I have suggested it was a novel and effective approach that appeared to change the locus of discourses on marriage from procreation to authentic love and happiness.

The second key theme I explored was JPII's appeal to the "beginning," to the original state of innocence. JPII claims that the original state of innocence or "state of integral nature" reveals that the *imago Dei* is realised in the transition from original solitude to unity. A person is most fully complete in the *imago Dei* in the communion of persons realised in the recognition of the opposite sex as the complementary other and the consummation of this union. JPII argues that from the "beginning" human realisation is shown to arise from a profound wholeness, unity and harmony, a sense of transparency and openness to grace, that reveals the truth of being through union in male-female complementarity. This radical openness to grace or being correctly ordered in wholeness that marks the original state of innocence (which is the antithesis of the dissonance and obstruction to grace which he claimed marks the state of original shame) confers a divine perceptual clarity, a divine vision, through which the self and the world are viewed. In the appeal to the "beginning," JPII positions the correctly ordered sexual instinct at the root of human fulfilment as the possibility for the communion of persons and our greatest capacity to see and attend to self and the world with love and compassion. I have argued that a structure of spousal self-giving is by now apparent in his writings. For JPII, spousal self-giving involves the reciprocal offering of the subjective (irreducible "I") and the objective (the reproductive capacity), a union between the spouses and God, and the realisation of a creative potential in which the spouses become co-creators by participating in the created order.

The third key idea was JPII's claim that self-giving is the key to human realisation at every stage of life. JPII identifies a direct continuity between the original state, human history and the eschaton, which is to say he proposes a unity or a wholeness within all

[554] JPII, TOB, par. 15:5.

creation and time. The qualities that secure this wholeness at every level of human experience are those required by and resulting from self-giving: interior freedom, self-possession, and self-mastery. Interior freedom is the key feature of wholeness that confers "rightness of intention" – our capacity to know, desire and will the good. JPII claims that knowing, desiring and willing the spousal meaning of the body as the truth of being is a fundamental requirement of knowing, desiring and willing the good in all other matters. Another way to approach this idea is to say interior divine clarity confers exterior divine clarity. How one cultivates "rightness of intention" through interior freedom, self-possession, and self-mastery was explored in depth in *The Acting Person*, which considered how one becomes the good over merely doing the good. Within a *Theology of the Body*, JPII sets out how these qualities are expressed through the breadth of human experience. He claims that these qualities are revealed through the body in original innocence, unity, and shame, they are cultivated in history through the proper ordering of the sexual instinct in marriage or celibacy and are finally perfected in the eschaton in God's most personal self-communication. To this end, the spouse's total self-giving is preparation for the final revelation of God's most personal "self-giving," in the eschaton, for their divinisation and spiritualisation. I have suggested that this vast conceptual framework gives the appearance that his approach is ordered to human flourishing, to integral personhood, in which the experience of love and marriage is vital across the breadth of human existence.

Applying self-giving to Humanae Vitae

The final part of *A Theology of the Body* applies its key arguments to a defence of Humanae Vitae. In this section, JPII explicitly details the nature of the inseparability of the ends of marriage referenced by Paul VI. I have claimed that while in one sense JPII's personalism can indeed be read positively as emphasising the unitive aspect of marriage, the very fact that it situates *the roots and possibility for the unitive in the conjugal act, making the unitive and procreative inseparable on the grounds of the necessity for procreation*, fundamentally undermines such a positive reading. The impression that JPII affirms spousal love more than his predecessors can be attributed in part to the somewhat poetic literary devices employed

to describe spousal intercourse. One example is when he describes sexual intercourse as the "language of the body" by which the spouses "speak" the truth of their being. I have argued that the romanticising of the conjugal act serves to detract accusations of physicalism. To this end, authentic love and happiness require a marriage to be open to procreation. By consistently tying the parts into the whole, JPII argues that the highest good will not be attained if one withholds any of the parts; that is, if one withholds the full expression of the sexual instinct in the conjugal act.

In arguing that total spousal self-giving is human flourishing and that it requires the proper ordering of the sexual instinct which, in marriage, translates to an openness to the transmission of life, JPII spoke to humanity's deepest longings for authentic love and happiness. Furthermore, positioning it as vital to divinisation and spiritualisation in the final and complete union with God in the eschaton significantly raised the stakes for compliance with this teaching. These factors, I have argued, intersected to produce a defence of the key teachings of *Humanae Vitae* that proved for some to be altogether more compelling than earlier papal expositions. Smith claims that JPII led the way in answering the invitation from Vatican II to perfect moral theology through Scripture so that it may shed light on the dignity of the human vocation in Christ.[555] Waldstein posits that JPII's Theology of the Body "is one of the Catholic Church's most critical efforts in modern times to help the world become more 'conscious of the mystery and reality of the Incarnation' – and, through that, to become more conscious of the humanum, of the very purpose and meaning of human life."[556]

However, I have proposed that JPII's defence of *Humanae Vitae* is not an authentic affirmation of the unitive end of marriage because it cannot offer an account of love independent from the sex drive. For JPII, love is fully dependent on what he terms a sex drive 'ordered to the truth of being' in marriage open to the transmission of life. JPII's account simply does not resonate with our human experience of marriage, human flourishing, and love in all its forms. For all JPII's "personalistic focus" through which he claims to affirm the significance of love and all that is irreducible in the person, he finally reduces marriage to procreation with little regard to human experience. From this perspective, self-giving is reduced to serving the essential requirement of marriage to

[555] Smith, *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later*, 230.
[556] Ibid., xxvii – xxviii.

transmit life, with all other unitive aspects reduced to mere consequences of this vital function. JPII's approach makes it impossible to broach the question of what it might mean to authentically thrive in orientation to the other and through the other in ways that lead to mutual growth in virtues, skills and character strengths. Moreover, to examine the profound relationship between spiritual and psychological maturation and its role in human flourishing.

The role of suffering in self-giving

In this thesis, I have also pointed to a connection between Wojtyla/JPII's theology of self-giving in love and self-giving in suffering. While not explicit, JPII's writings on the meaning of human suffering in *Salvifici Doloris* take the form of self-giving as human realisation. JPII situates suffering within the context of divine love, claiming that Christ was given into suffering for love and Christ suffered willingly for love, and that this suffering was the possibility for his radical orientation in love towards humanity. Christ and humanity are joined in a union "through the cross" in which human suffering is imbued with the divine potential to express "the love which creates the good." I have claimed then that suffering assumes the structure of self-giving because *Salvifici Doloris* makes it clear that it is more than pain and loss that is offered – it is the *self*. The offering includes the body as "a living sacrifice" (objective aspect), but also the experience of *pain* (subjective aspect); it is the experience of *suffering as a response to the evil that is pain*. Put another way, it is the aversion to pain that is offered to Christ – the *freedom to resist* pain through exercising our self-determination and self-possession.

From this perspective, the structure of gift becomes clearer. In the total self-giving to Christ, in the "offering up" of pain alongside the self, a privileged and unique union of love is formed between the person and Christ "through the Cross," by which the person participates in Christ's ongoing salvific act in service of the Redemption. First, there is the offering of gift in both subjective and objective dimensions that make the offering whole and total. Second, there is a union between the person and Christ. Third, there is the realisation

of a creative potential in the person through becoming a co-redeemer by participating in Christ's ongoing salvific act.

In this thesis, I have suggested that another way to approach the idea that JPII views suffering as the potential for human realisation in self-giving is through the lens of Balthasar's trinitarian theology. For Balthasar, God's nature *is* kenotic love. Trinitarian love is total self-giving, surrender, self-renunciation and self-emptying in a paradoxical expression of absolute power and powerlessness, such that Christ's self-giving on the Cross expresses the connection between love and suffering. The same self-giving kenotic love is both the possibility for Christ's death and suffering and the possibility for unity within the Trinity. However, while this self-emptying love causes no loss within the trinity, Balthasar claims it corresponds to human pain and suffering. In this sense, love, death, and new life seem equally substantial in his theology. I have claimed that from this perspective, human suffering in total self-giving appears as a sign of Trinitarian love, of a person being formed in the very image of the Trinity. It must then be associated with the good. Through the lens of Balthasar's trinitarian theology, the connection between love and suffering in JPII's theology is made a little clearer. Suffering not only realises the good. It appears to be the good itself.

I have suggested that there not only exists an intrinsic connection between love and suffering in JPII's writings in which suffering is given some sense of ontological status but that love may actually be subordinated to suffering. In *Salvifici Doloris* we read that the "truth of love" is proved through the "truth of suffering." Pointing to St Paul's experience on the road to Damascus, JPII explains St. Paul first experienced the "power of the Resurrection" of Christ which allowed him to suffer with Christ and only by doing so become worthy of the Kingdom of God. Suffering appears as the 'threshold' to participate in the redemption. This would indicate that even the "betrothed love" of the spouses, which he claims is the highest form of love, must finally be "proved" by suffering.

Tying love and suffering, and going so far as to elevate suffering over love, as I have suggested might be the case in JPII's writings, has profound consequences for how we view and attend to our own suffering and the suffering of others. Granting at least equal if not higher status to suffering as a graced path to human realisation will shape our motivation to minimise and alleviate suffering. This approach is far removed from affirming the openness of all human experience to grace. Rather, it accords pain and suffering a privileged and critical status in human flourishing, in *theosis*.

The intersection with psychology

I began this project by citing numerous reasons for bringing theology into conversation with psychology. However, the primary reason for doing so in this context arose in response to Wojtyla/JPII's personalism through which he draws many empirical observations on human nature and its flourishing, thoughts, feelings and emotions. Specifically, I wanted to explore a psychological response to Wojtyla/JPII's application of human realisation as wholeness and his minimisation of positive emotions in favour of suffering in self-giving. The reflections were just that – reflections. It was never my intention to embark on any attempt to integrate the disciplines, but rather to explore alternative ways of approaching key ideas that might help to bring a greater degree of theological clarity to Wojtyla/JPII's writings on self-giving. Drawing on the interdisciplinary intersection on the level of reflection rather than integration omitted many but certainly not all of the typical challenges and limitations associated with more in-depth multidisciplinary engagement, many of which were discussed in Chapter 3. The dialogue between theology and psychology was intended to facilitate deeper theological reasoning in the hope of getting closer to the heart of what it might mean to say that self-giving is human flourishing. Alternatively, at the very least, to get closer to identifying what kinds of thinking about self-giving might be incompatible with its conception as human flourishing.

This interdisciplinary conversation began with the subject of wholeness. Jung and JPII identify a direct relationship between wholeness, self-giving and human fulfilment. Both authors claim that human fulfilment arises from a progressive integration of psychical content that leads to a growing sense of interior order, coherence and harmony, which is symbolic of wholeness. The cause of this movement towards integration and wholeness was, in some senses, similar for both authors. While Jung claimed that wholeness resulted from a radical openness to the transcendental factor, JPII claimed it resulted from a radical openness to grace. In both cases, wholeness facilitates self-giving because the 'unobstructed flow' of the transcendental factor and grace leads to perceptual clarity, or in JPII's words, divine perception. Let us summarise this in a little more depth.

For Jung, this radical openness to the transcendental factor or *numinosum* experience results in the integration of the God archetype, the most powerful of all

archetypes. This is an essential aspect of individuation because through it a person forms a sense of the self. A key feature of this integration of conscious and unconscious matter is the integration of the shadow by which repressed and suppressed psychic material is brought into consciousness. It is a process of self-knowledge, acceptance and transformation, wherein a person comes to know and accept themselves. Once seen with clarity, the person is liberated from the bind that unconscious material has over the mind. The person no longer encounters the shadow through its projection onto the world but through the interior clarity of the conscious mind. This is how Jung believed wholeness or interior clarity leads to seeing the world more clearly. Once integrated, our perception of the world ceases to be obscured allowing us to better engage with the world; to engage with a detached compassion rooted in a grounding sense of transcendent well-being. Along with the integration of shadow, another key archetype that facilitates this sense of perceptual clarity is the feminine archetype. In the progressive integration of this archetype, we experience a sense of oneness and embeddedness within the world. For Jung, the integration of the shadow and the feminine archetype were key features of the broader integration of the God archetype. Guided by the transcendent factor, the process of individuation brought the parts of the psyche into an increasingly harmonious and coherent whole conferring the capacity to perceive and therefore act in the world in ways not determined by the ego but rather the most transcendent and healthy part of the self.

In JPII's writings, grace serves a strikingly similar function. Drawing parallels with how Jung describes the operation of the transcendental factor, JPII claims that grace has the potential to orient all aspects of the person towards the good, bringing a sense of harmonious order, single-mindedness, and divine vision. In JPII's writings, this singular orientation to God in radical openness to grace is the essence of the original state of innocence or "state of integral nature." JPII claims that original innocence is marked by a sense of full interior integration and thereby wholeness, which is attributable to a singular orientation to the truth of being revealed in the spousal meaning of the body through the communion of persons. The divine perceptual clarity of the original state of innocence directly resulted from this interior order. When JPII claims we need to rediscover the meaning of original innocence in our lives he means we must seek the harmonious interior integration and wholeness that confers the divine vision unobstructed by egoic needs and

desires by which we know, desire and will the truth of the spousal meaning of the body and we do this by choosing to live according to this truth.

I suggested that while Jung and JPII may agree on the importance of some sense of integration and wholeness to human fulfilment, they diverge on what precisely is integrated to attain wholeness. Jung focuses on the integration of the archetypes and shadow, while JPII focuses on the subjective (personalistic) and objective (cosmological) aspects of the person; that is, how we are made whole when the irreducible "I" and the physical body, as revelations of the truth of being, become integrated. For Jung, perceptual clarity and the desire and will to do the good for the other, are products of the integration of the shadow and feminine archetype. While, in contrast, JPII claims that perceptual clarity results when a person becomes ordered to the truth of being in the spousal meaning of the body.

Jung's theory of individuation points to a potential to think about the function of grace within the human psyche in a more fluid sense that contrasts with the more rigid essentialism which often imbues JPII's thinking. For JPII, human fulfilment occurs in wholeness in marriage because the total self-giving of the spouses realises the kinds of virtues that cultivate and sustain an orientation to the other and God. The opportunity for total self-giving is an opportunity for individuation. But this means that for JPII, individuation, which is personality development, will be shaped by the qualities which support a marriage defined according to the curia's teachings. However, Jung is more concerned with describing the process of individuation than the personality to which it gives rise, which is open to multiple possibilities.

To this end, reflecting on Jung's theory of individuation offers the possibility of thinking about wholeness as human fulfilment in the context of self-giving in less prescriptive ways than JPII. By this, I mean that Jung's writings could help theologians think about the ways in which faith might support the development of specific personality traits or states of mind that are important for self-giving. For example, theologians might consider the role of spiritual practices in cultivating a compassionate receptivity to engaging with the shadow aspects of our psyche. Or perhaps, the role of faith in cultivating a sense of groundedness and connection to the world. The utility of wholeness in nurturing a theological sense of orientation to the other may be far broader and certainly less hierarchical than JPII imagines.

However, theology has its own contributions to make to the disciplinary intersection of wholeness and self-giving. One of the most significant is the connection between relationships and wholeness. In Jung's approach, the person's relationship with the world and with the transcendental factor appear substantially different. Those with the world are marked by mutuality and reciprocity and those with the transcendental factor primarily (or even exclusively) by openness and receptivity to its transformative potential. Even withstanding the conceptual differences between the God of theology and Jung's transcendental factor, I suggest that an account of a more reciprocal relationship with the transcendental factor is not beyond the realms of Jung's approach and in fact of vital significance. A Jungian analyst could push back this idea for two reasons. First, they might argue this would necessitate the disciplinary overreach of offering some kind of account for the nature of the transcendental factor. To which I would respond that it could rather be found in the empirical observations of the human experience of being in relationship with the transcendent. Second, they might argue that Jung was speaking primarily to those he perceived were negatively affected by the *absence* of religion in their lives. To this end, it would make no sense to inquire about a conscious relationship with God because the person was unlikely to have one. At the risk of overstepping my own disciplinary boundaries, it is not my place to say how this observation would play out in the therapeutic context. However, this seems like an important consideration in the interdisciplinary space because the human-divine relationship is the possibility and model for human relationships in theology. The experience of God as one of mutual love and intimacy is a vital component of how theologians conceptualise the divine-human relationship. In theology, God is a force that transforms human beings not in the sense of the oceans transforming coastal lines, but in a profound reciprocity that goes beyond yielding – it is wholly participatory. How might a Jungian account of wholeness incorporate a more theological account of being in relationship with God? This I shall leave to the psychologists.

In this thesis, I have also drawn on positive psychology to reflect on JPII's valorisation of suffering and the role of positive emotions in self-giving. What does positive psychology have to say about the relationship between suffering and our capacity to desire and will the good of the other? How conducive is suffering to self-giving? I have pointed to research which shows that cognitive stress responses do not naturally appear to orient us towards the other because the flight-or-fight response causes a sharp reduction in the focus of cognitive

resources on identifying and resolving a perceived stressor. This primarily, though not exclusively, amounts to a focus on the egoic self: *How can I eradicate this perceived threat? How can I protect myself?* In contrast, studies have found that positive emotions broaden cognitive processes by drawing us *into* our environments and *away* from the self. Fredrickson claimed that positive emotions are far from being an end in themselves; they not only signal optimal functioning, they produce optimal functioning. People cultivate enduring psychological resources through positive emotions. I have claimed that these findings challenge JPII's claims that suffering is more conducive to orienting us to the other than positive emotions because the former leads to a cognitive response more disposed to drawing us towards self-preservation and the latter leads to a response more disposed to drawing us away from the self and into relationships.

Positive psychology can, I have claimed, also help theologians to think more deeply about the meaning of "self-loss" or "self-forgetting" in self-giving. Self-loss is a key feature of Csikszentmihalyi's concept of flow. It refers to the temporary "forgetting" of the egoic self, or more accurately, to our temporary distraction from the egoic self which occurs when attentional resources are diverted to a singular focus on a task resulting in a state of optimal functioning. In a theological sense, we might say that flow supports the idea of self-giving as human fulfilment because it suggests that we function at our best when we focus all our personal resources towards the other. Crucially, there is no suffering or loss involved in optimal performance attained in flow.

I have claimed that flow can help theologians think more deeply about the *lived experience* of "self-loss" in self-giving. While the lived experience of a theological concept and the concept itself may cohere, it is important to acknowledge that this is not always the case. The assumption of a strong coherence can lead theologians to neglect the human impact of theological claims. While suffering can lead to growth, this need not lead to a valorisation of the suffering itself, an affirmation of self-loss as self-abnegation, but rather to a valorisation of the remarkable human potential to grow despite suffering – to use all experiences without exception to draw closer to God.

Positive psychology speaks to the importance of positive emotions in self-giving in its claims that orienting ourselves to something larger than our personal needs and desires is intrinsic to authentic happiness and the pursuit of the good life. For Seligman, authentic happiness is cultivated when we fully engage in meaningful tasks that imbue our lives with

pleasure and are oriented to a cause beyond ourselves. These findings suggest a mutual dependency between the type of happiness arising from authentic happiness and an orientation to the other. The pursuit of the good life appears to carry an intrinsic reward system in which happiness both rewards and inspires increasing growth and personal resources which enrich our lives with greater levels of happiness and well-being. From this perspective, positive emotions have an important role to play in cultivating and sustaining an orientation to the other.

But again, theology can make its own contributions to how we understand the role of suffering and positive emotions in orienting our lives to the other. As theologians, we may question how positive psychology might account for acts of self-giving in the midst of suffering. Both secular and religious history point to the human capacity for a radical orientation to the other in situations where we would expect cognitive resources to be diverted to the personal preservation of life in the flight-or-fight response. In the interdisciplinary space, we can ask what is occurring that allows the body's natural stress responses to be overridden in ways that have always inspired humanity towards greater humility and compassion, and drawn us into deeper relationships with the world and God.

Contributions and limitations

When I tell fellow academics the subject of my thesis, I am often met with a subtle (and sometimes less subtle!) aversive response. The words "self-giving" and "JPII" can often trigger some degree of discomfort in others, especially women. It's not difficult to see why. JPII uses self-giving to press acceptance and compliance with papal teaching on traditional gender roles based on complementarity, affirming women's primary vocation as motherhood. I hope to have shown in this thesis that the concept of self-giving is far broader than the restrictive sex-based limitations placed upon it by JPII. With this in mind, one of the limitations of this project is that the diverse possibilities for thinking about self-giving have not been explored, which may be a matter for future research. A further limitation tied to the absence of an attempt to reconstruct self-giving was the lenses through which JPII's theology of self-giving was engaged. While the lenses of wholeness and the impact of

Humanae Vitae were valuable, this focus limited the scope of the thesis to engage with other potentially valuable themes, such as gender, sacrifice or sexual morality. To this end, it is worth noting that there are many different ways in which JPII's theology of self-giving might have been approached, and this too might be a matter for future study. However, by reflecting on what we may not want to say about self-giving, I hope to have pointed in the broadest sense to something we might actually want to say about self-giving. At this point in the thesis, what we might want to say about self-giving is that it is a simple yet powerful orientation of our "hearts" to the other in which we move into an ever-intimate relationship with God and ourselves; an orientation that sees clearly the good in the other because it sees the good in ourselves and seeks their well-being, prosperity, and the profound realisation of their potential because we see the same divine potential within ourselves. I doubt that many would find this definition too troubling and perhaps I shall now preface every introduction to my work with something along these lines.

I hope this thesis will also contribute to theology's continued wrestling with the role of suffering in faith, spiritual growth and human flourishing. While it may be seductive to drift into binary thinking on these matters, this thesis suggests that the meaning and outcomes of suffering for psycho-spiritual health and development are complex. But, at the very least, I hope to have shown that any value to suffering needs to be held alongside the value of positive emotions in increasing our well-being and drawing us deeper into faith. Authentic happiness appears to be self-perpetuating. Psychology suggests we are wired for this type of happiness and thrive in groups which facilitate the ever-deepening experience of this happiness for all its members. To this end, I hope this thesis will press the imperative for theological discourses to attend to human flourishing in at least the same measure it attends to suffering. To echo the aims of positive psychology, there is much to be learned about what we do that works and causes us to thrive in addition to how we engage with our problems and challenges.

A final hope for the contributions of this thesis is that it encourages exploration of the intersection between theology and psychology. In my discussions with fellow academics and non-academics, I have noted an increasing awareness, an intuitive recognition, of the importance and indeed necessity of viewing spiritual maturity and psychological maturity as inseparable. I intended to show that when the interdisciplinary spaces are approached and

engaged with humble and curious receptivity, we find that different perspectives can enrich and deepen theological inquiry.

As a final thought, I will attempt my own "return to the beginning," which is to say, to those experiences that led me to JPII's theology of self-giving. Do I now feel any closer to answering the questions I posed in the introduction concerning my own experience of "offering up" suffering in motherhood? Perhaps I am a little closer. Reflecting on this thesis, I might want to offer some gentle advice to that mother who was so filled with fear. I would tell her that self-care, self-compassion, and authentic happiness are not irrelevant, dispensable aspects of our love for others – they bring vitality, life and resilience to love. It would be to remind her that she can only give what she possesses and to ask her what kind of self she then wants to give. To which I am sure her simple response would be, *one filled with love and wholly free to love*.

Bibliography

Allen, Prudence., Man-Woman Complementarity: The Catholic Inspiration, *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture,* vo. 9, 2 (2006), 87-108.

Balthasar, Hans Urs von., *Theo-drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol 4: The Action* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1988)

- *Theo-drama: Theological Dramatic Theory, Vol 5: The Last Act* (San Francisco: St. Ignatius Press, 1998)

Barberi, Michael J., and Selling, Joseph A., 'The Origin of Humanae Vitae and the Impasse in Fundamental Theological Ethics,' *Louvain Studies* 37 (2013) 364-89

Barrett, Justin L., *Theo-Psych: A Psychological Primer for Theologians* (Blueprint.org, 2022)

Beattie, Tina., *New Catholic Feminism: Theology and Theory* (London: Routledge Taylor and Francis Group, 2006)

Brown, Warren S., 'Resonance: A Model for Relating Science, Psychology and Faith', *Journal of Psychology and Christianity*, 23, 2 (1990) 110-120

Bryce, Fr. Raymond-Marie., 'Does Suffering Lack Meaning? A Contemporary Christian Response,' *New Blackfriars*, 98, 1076 (2017) 436–456

Burke, Cormac., 'Marriage and Contraception' in *Creative Love: The Ethics of Human Reproduction*, ed. by John Boyle (Front Royal: Christendom Press, 1989), pp. 151-176

Buttiglione, Rocco., *Karol Wojtyla: the Thought of the Man Who Became Pope John Paul II*, trans. by Paolo Guietti and Francesca Murphy (Grand Rapids, Mich.: Eerdmans, 1997)

Cahill, Lisa Sowle., "Catholic Sexual Ethics and the Dignity of the Person: A Double Message," *in Theological Studies*, 50 (1989), pp. 120-50

- 'Marriage: Institution, Relationship, Sacrament', in *One Hundred Years of Catholic Social Thought*, ed. John A. Coleman, S.J (New York: Orbis Books, 1991), 103-120
- 'Suffering: A Catholic Theological-Ethical View', in *Suffering and Bioethics,* ed. Ronald M. Green, and Nathan J Palpant (New York: Oxford University Press, 2014). https://doi.org/10.1093/acprof:oso/9780199926176.001.0001 (pp. 231-248)

Cannon, Sr. Noreen., 'The Problem of Holiness and Wholeness,' in *Catholicism and Jungian Psychology*, ed. by J. Marvin Spiegelman, PhD (Tempe, Arizona, USA: New Falcon Publications, 1994), pp. 15-27

Carter, John and Narramore, Bruce., *The Integration of Psychology and Theology: An Introduction* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1979)

Ceglie, Roberto Di., 'Faith Reason and Charity in Thomas Aquinas's Thought', *The International Journal of Philosophy and Religion*, 79 (2016), 133-146

Codex Iuris Canonici (Citta del Vaticano: Typis Polyglottis Vaticanis, 1917) can. 1013, §1. This passage is on page 352 in the unofficial English translation: Edward N. Peters, *The 1917 Pio Benedictine Code of Canon Law in English Translation with Extensive Scholarly Apparatus* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2001)

Cordero, Dalmacito A. Jr., 'Sákit Pighati and Pag-Asa: A Pastoral Reflection on Suffering During the COVID-19 Pandemic in the Philippines', *Journal of Religion and Health*, 60 (2021) 1521-1542

Cornum, Rhonda., Matthews, Michael., Seligman, Martin., and Anderson, Norman., 'Comprehensive Soldier Fitness', *The American Psychologist*, 66, 1 (2011), 4-9

Csikszentmihalyi, Mihaly, *Flow: The Psychology of Optimal Experience* (New York: Harper and Row, 1990)

Danner, Deborah D., Snowdon, David A., and Friesen, Wallace V., 'Positive Emotions in Early Life and Longevity: Findings from the Nun Study', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 80, 5 (2001), 804-813

Duckworth, Angela., Steen, Tracy., and Seligman, Martin., 'Positive Psychology in Clinical Practice,' *The Annual Review of Clinical Psychology*, 1 (2005), 629-51

Duckworth, Angela and Seligman, Martin., 'Self-discipline Outdoes IQ in Predicting Academic Performance in Adolescents', *Psychological Science*, 16, 12 (2005), 939-944

Fredrickson, Barbara., 'The broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions', *Philosophical Transactions: Biological Sciences*, *The Science of Well-being: Integrating Neurobiology, Psychology and Social Science*, 359, 1449 (2004), 1367-1377

Friesenhahn, Jacob H., *The Trinity and Theodicy: The Trinitarian Theology of von Balthasar and the problem of evil* (London: Routledge, 2016)

Gallagher, John., 'Magisterial Teaching from 1918 to the Present' *Human Sexuality and Personhood, Proceedings of the Workshop for the Hierarchies of the United States and Canada Sponsored by the Pope John Centre Through a Grant from the Knights of a Columbus* (Braintree, Mass.: Pope John Centre, 1990), 191-211

Gamelli, Agostino., *Psychoanalysis Today* (Oxford: P. D. Kenedy, 1955)

Gasson, John Augustine., 'Personality Theory: A Formulation of General Principles,' in *The Human Person: An Approach to an Integral Theory of Personality*, ed. Magda Arnold and John Gasson (New York: Ronald, 1954), 165-221

Grimes, Katy, M., 'Theology of Whose Body? Sexual Complementarity, Intersex Conditions and La Virgen de Guadalupe,' *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion*, 32, 1 (2016), 75-93

Harris, Bud., *Becoming Whole: A Jungian Guide to Individuation* (London: Daphne Publications, 2016)

Hebblethwaite, Peter., *Paul VI: The First Modern Pope* (New York: Paulist Press, 1993)

Jung, Carl Gustav., 'Christ, A Symbol of the Self,' Part 8, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 229-307

- 'Confrontation with the Unconscious,' Part 7, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 229-235
- 'Conscious, Unconscious and Individuation,' Part 6, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 212-226
- *Modern Man in Search of a Soul*, Trans. by W. S. Dell and Cary F. Baynes, (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1933)
- 'Psychotherapists or the Clergy', *Journal of Pastoral Psychology*, 7 (1956) 27-41
- 'Psychology and Religion,' Part 7, *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 239-250
- 'Problems of Alchemy,' Part 7, in *The Essential Jung*, ed. by John Beebe and Anthony Storr, (Princeton, New York: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 253-287
- 'The Archetypes and the Collective Unconscious' in *Collected Works of C. G. Jung, Vol. 9, Part 1.* 2nd ed. Princeton University Press, 1968), pp. 135-147
- 'The Syzygy: Anima and Animus' in *The Essential Jung: Selected and introduced by Anthony Storr with a new foreword by John Beebe* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2013), pp. 109-118
- 'The Undiscovered Self,' first published in 1957 by Gegenwart und Zukunft (Oxford: Routledge, 2002)

John of the Cross, *The Living Flame of Love,* commentary on st. B 3, par. 78-80, in The Collected Works, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), 639-641

- 'The Spiritual Canticle,' commentary on st. 22, par. 3, in *The Collected Works*, ed. Kieran Kavanaugh, rev. ed. (Washington, DC: ICS Publications, Institute of Carmelite Studies, 1991), 471-477

John Paul II, Pope., *Faith according to St. John of the Cross* (Oregon, USA: Wipf and Stock, reprint edition, 2009)

- *Familiaris Consortio* (1981)
- *Fides et Ratio* (1998)
- Homily at Buenos Aires (March 10, 1987), in *Insegnamenti*, 10, 1 (1987), 1202-11
- *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, trans. and Intro. by Michael Waldstein (Boston: Pauline Books Ltd., 2006)

- *Pastores Dabo Vobis* (1992)
- *Redemptor Hominis* (1979)
- *Reflections on Humanae Vitae* (Boston, USA: The Daughters of St. Paul, 1984)
- *Salvifici Doloris* (1984)
- *Sources of Renewal: The Implementation of the Second Vatican Council*, Trans., William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, first published in Polish by Pol. Tow. Teol., Cracow in 1972 (London: William Collins Sons & Co Ltd, 1980)
- *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: Reidel, 1979)
- *Veritatis Splendor* (1993)

Johnson, Luke Timothy., *The Revelatory Body: Theology as Inductive Art* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdman's Publishing Company, 2015)
- A Disembodied 'Theology of the Body:' John Paul II on Love, Sex and Pleasure, *Commonweal*, (January 6th, 2001)

Keyes, Cory L. M., 'Complete Mental Health: An Agenda for the 21st Century', in *Flourishing: Positive Psychology and the Life Well-lived*, ed. C. L. M. Keyes and J. Haidt (Washington, DC: American Psychological Association, 2003), pp. 293-312

Kilby, Karen and Davies, Rachel. eds., *Suffering and the Christian Life* (London, UK: T & T Clark, 2020)

Kilby, Karen., *God, Evil and the Limits of Theology* (London: T & T Clark Ltd., 2020)
- 'Perichoresis and Projection: Problems with Social Doctrines of the Trinity,' in *God Evil and the Limits of Theology* (London: T & T Clark Ltd., 2020)
- *The SPCK Introduction to Karl Rahner* (London: Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, 2007)

Knitter, Paul F., *Without Buddha I Could not be a Christian* (Great Britain: One World Publications, 2009)

Kugelmann, Robert., 'An Encounter between Psychology and Religion: Humanistic Psychology and the Immaculate Heart of Mary Nun,' in the *Journal of The History of Behavioural Sciences*, 44, 4 (2005), 347-365
- *Psychology and Catholicism: Contested Boundaries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011)
- 'The American Catholic Psychological Association: A Brief History and Analysis,' *The Catholic Social Science Review* 5 (2000), 233–249

Lachman, Gary., *Jung the Mystic: The Esoteric Dimensions of Carl Jung's Life and Teachings* (London: Penguin Publishing Group, 2012)

Lammers, Ann Conrad., Cunnigham, Adrian., and Stein, Murray., *The Jung-White Letters* (New York: Routledge, 2007)

Leo XIII, Pope, *Aeterni Patris* (1879)
- *Arcanum* (1980)

Maier, Steven., Seligman, Martin., and Holyoak, Keith., 'Learned Helplessness at Fifty: Insights from Neuroscience', *Psychological Review*, 123, 4 (2016), 349-367

McCarthy, David Matzko., *Sex and Love in the Home* (London: SCM Press, 2001)

McClory, Robert., *Turning Point* (New York: Crossroad, 1995)

Meszaros, Julia T., *Sacrifice and Modern Thought* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014)

Noonan, John T. Jr., *Contraception: A History of its Treatment by Catholic Theologians and Canonists* (Cambridge, UK: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1986)

Norris, Charles W., 'The Papal Commission on Birth Control—revisited,' in *The Linacre Quarterly*, 80, 1 (2013), 8–16

Paul VI, Pope., *Apostolicam Actuositatem,* Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (1965)
- *Gaudium et Spes*, Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World (1965)
- *Humanae Vitae*, (1968)
- *Inter Mirifica*: *Decree on the Means of Social Communication* (1963)
- *Presbyterorum Ordinis* (1965)

Perry, John and Leidenhag, Joanna., *Science-Engaged Theology* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2023)

Peterson, Christopher and Seligman, Martin., *Character Strengths and Virtues: A handbook and classification* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004)

Peterson, Christopher., Park, Nansook., and Seligman, Martin., 'Orientations to happiness and life satisfaction: The full life versus the empty life', *Journal of Happiness Studies*, 6 (2005), 25-41

Petri, Thomas OP., *Aquinas and the Theology of the Body: The Thomistic Foundations of John Paul II's Anthropology* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2016)

Pius XI, Pope., *Casti Connunbii* (1930)

Pius XII, Pope., *Address to Midwives on the Nature of their Profession* (1951)

Ratzinger, Joseph Cardinal., "*A Letter issued to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Pastoral Care for Homosexuals*," Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (1986)

Robertson, Robin., *Introducing Jungian Psychology* (Maine: Gill and Macmillan, 1992)

Rosnick, Stella., Warmoth, Arthur., and Serlin, Iilene., 'The Humanistic Psychology and Positive Psychology Connection: Implications for Psychotherapy,' *The Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 41, 1 (2001), 73-101

Ryff, Carol D., 'Happiness is everything, or is it? Explorations on the meaning of psychological well-being', *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 57 (1989), 1069-1081

Samuels, Andrew., 'New Developments in the Post- Jungian Field,' in *Cambridge Companion to Jung*, ed. by Polly Young-Eisendrath and Terence Dawson (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008), pp. 1-16

Sandage, Steven J. and Brown, Jeannine K., *Relational Integration of Psychology and Christian Theology* (New York: Routledge, 2018)

Schmitz, Kenneth L., *At the Center of the Human Drama: The Philosophical Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla/Pope John Paul II,* (United States of America: The Catholic University of America Press, 1993)

Schueller, Stephen M. and Martin E. P. Seligman, 'Pursuit of pleasure, engagement and meaning: Relationships to subjective and objective measures of well-being', *The Journal of Positive Psychology*, 5, 4 (2010), 253-263

Schumacher, Michele M., 'The Nature of Nature in Feminism, Old and New: From Dualism to Complementary Unity,' in Schumacher (ed.), *Women in Christ*, *Christ: Toward a New Feminism,* (Grand Rapids, Mich: Eerdmans, 2004)

Seligman, Martin., *Authentic Happiness* (London: Nicholas Brealey Publishing, 2002)
- 'My three heavyweight bouts with behaviourism,' The Journal of Learning and Motivation, 68 (2019), 629-651
- 'Positive Health', *Applied Psychology*, 57, 1 (2008), 3-18

Shaer, Hans., *Religion and the Cure of Souls in Jung's Psychology* (London: Routledge, Taylor and Francis Group, 1951)

Smith, Janet E., *Humanae Vitae: A Generation Later* (Washington: Catholic University of America Press, 1991)

Sweeney, Kathleen C., 'The perfection of Women as Maternal and the Anthropology of Karol Wojtyla,' *Logos: A Journal of Catholic Thought and Culture*, vol. 9, 2 (2006), 129-153.

Tonstad, Linn Marie., *God and Difference: The Trinity, Sexuality, and the Transformation of Finitude*, (New York: Taylor & Francis Group, 2015)

Watts, Fraser., *Theology and Psychology* (London: Routledge, 2018)

Wawrykow, Joesph P., *A-Z of Thomas Aquinas* (London: SCM Press, 2005)

Wertheimer, Michael., *A Brief History of Psychology* (London: Psychology Press, Taylor & Francis Group, 2012)

White, Victor, *God the Unknown* (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956)
- *Soul and Psyche: an enquiry into the Relationship of psychotherapy and religion* (London: Collins and Harver Press, 1960)
- 'Thomism and affective knowledge (III)', *Blackfriars*, 25, 294 (1944), 321-28

Williams, Logan., 'Giving the self through death: A Crucified Christ as Gift in Galatians', in *Suffering and the Christian Life*, ed. by Karen Kilby and Rachel Davies (London: T&T Clark, Bloomsbury Publishing Plc, 2020), pp. 23-32

Wojtyla Karol, *Love and Responsibility*, trans., Endnotes and Foreword by Grzegorz Ignatik, first published by Towarzystwo Naukowe KUL: Lublin, 1960 (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 2013)
- 'Subjectivity and the Irreducible in Man,' in *Analecta Husserliana*, VII (1978), 107-114

Wojtyla, Karol et al.*, 'The Foundations of the Church's Doctrine Concerning the Principles of Conjugal Life: A memorandum composed by a group of moral theologians from Kraków,' in *Nova et Vetera*, English Edition, 10, 2 (2012), 321–59. * The Metropolitan Archbishop of Kraków, a group of Krakovian moral theologians—Rev. Stanislas Smolenski, Rev. Thadeus Slipko, S.J., and Rev. Jules Turowicz, professors of theology in the Great Seminary of Kraków; Rev. Georges Bajda, professor at the Seminary of Tarnów, and Rev. Charles Meissner, O.S.B.