

## Posthumous 12

### Clasping, Cherishing, Calling, Craving, Christing

The five words of the title are an expression of religious meaning. They find their place here in our grappling with the meaning of Lonergan's reflections on the derivation of special categories of Christian theology and the focus invited in his listing of five sets of categories as contextualized in *Posthumous* 11. The five words of the title are not directly related to those five sets: the words give us an existential context for the continuation of our searchings of the previous *Posthumous* that led to that list as pointing to new section-headings for a re-writing of chapter 4 of *Method in Theology*.

The one troublesome word in that first paragraph of mine – did you notice it in passing? – is the word *us*. I should really have written *me, give me*.

Let me putter round with this before we begin, or rather before you begin. And is this not the trouble with the phrase, *give us*, the trouble of a new strange beginning?<sup>1</sup>

The five words emerged with vital significance for me after seven half-years, beginning in the early morning hours of a May day in Oxford in 2009. Sally and I had arrived there, despite Icelandic volcanic ash dancing in the London sunshine. My morning climbing was to initiate a focus on that single odd paragraph of Lonergan, which I quote immediately:

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<sup>1</sup> In this first note of this third of three intertwined *Posthumous* essays I appeal with gentle insistence for a life-commitment to a going round and contemplative round. See notes 11 and 14 below. But I can also appeal to re-reading Lonergan as Lonergan appealed in his Epilogue to the *Verbum* articles regarding reading Thomas. And so many other twists and turns are possible regarding, guarding, what is given, given alluringly. I play here for you on an Irish lur (an ancient Celtic wind instrument). Mix, then, if you like, the end of section 4 of *Insight* chapter 13 (p. 407) with the paragraph on “the thesis of progress” of page 711 of that book. That paragraph ends: “the whole world of sense is to be, then, a token, a mystery, of God ....” The chapter 13 section ends: “the given is defined, not by appealing to sensitive process, but by the pure desire regarding the flow of empirical consciousness as the materials of its operation.” But now the materials are in the Clasp of Grace and the regarding is a cosmic guarding of the Field.

But if one asks about the supernatural character of the formal terms, it is pertinent to note the following. First, there are four real divine relations, really identical with the divine substance, and therefore there are four very special modes that ground the external imitation of the divine substance. Next, there are four absolutely supernatural realities, which are never found uninformed, namely, the secondary act of existence of the incarnation, sanctifying grace, the habit of charity, and the light of glory. It would not be inappropriate, therefore, to say that the secondary act of existence of the incarnation is a created participation of paternity, and so has a special relation to the Son; that sanctifying grace is a participation of active spiration, and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit; that the habit of charity is a participation of passive spiration, and so has a special relation to the Father and the Son; and that the light of glory is a participation of sonship, and so in a most perfect way brings the children of adoption back to the Father.<sup>2</sup>

When I said, ‘was to initiate a focus’ - in the paragraph previous to the quotation - I meant a focus of those 3 1/2 years and of my remaining few pilgrim years, a focus to be expressed as I move on now in some further posthumous struggling. It is the focus expressed in the title of this essay. And what might that expression convey to you about the God I have named, provocatively,  $G_{jk}^i$ <sup>3</sup>, the God named in Lonergan’s paragraph?<sup>4</sup>

Of course, it is useful to connect the two expressings, my 5 words and Lonergan’s 182 words, and that can be done simply. Number my words 0, 1, 2, 3, 4. Then 1, 2, 3, and 4 refer to the 4 supernatural realities Lonergan comments on in his paragraph. But what about the zero? It is a sort-of repeat of number 3. What

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<sup>2</sup> *The Triune God: Systematics*, CWL 12, 471 and 473.

<sup>3</sup> See note 54 of *Posthumous* 9 for a reflection on this importation of the terminology of general relativity into theology. It is, I think, to be powerfully sobering and salvific.

<sup>4</sup> Much of our considerations in these *Posthumous* essays is focused on the realities of notional acts in God (see CWL 12, 369-375), presupposing, then, the contemplative climb through the previous pages into the relevant realities in oneself. Regularly in those pages Lonergan begins paragraphs with what one might regard as a laconic phrase, “*Quibus perspectis*,” “these things being understood.”

I take the opportunity to note here that, in recent writings, I have appropriated the name *Grace* to characterize, personalize, the third person of the Trinity, and also I have used the word *Embracing* as that person’s notional act of loving.

sort of repeat? Some clues are found in previous *Posthumous* essays, clues to your climb and my continued climb.<sup>5</sup> The climb has to be positional and poositional in the shockingly full sense posed as a personal reach in the final question of this short essay.<sup>6</sup> I yield here to the temptation to recall Lonergan's talk of another presentation of his about his long economics climb: *experto crede*.<sup>7</sup> But I do not follow his example here of laying out a formal dense presentation. What am I, what are you to do?

Pause illustratively now over the first of the great graces: the *esse secundarium* of the Incarnation. My name for it is *Cherishing*. That word's meaning is a long way from a handy little *esse* somehow attached to Jesus' humanity.<sup>8</sup> Indeed, it is a long way beyond the fascination I expressed about it, fifteen years ago, in the final essay of *The Redress of Poise*: "Grace: The Final Frontier."<sup>9</sup> My word *Cherishing* points towards a distant culture of talking about the "nothing is impossible with God"<sup>10</sup> of Luke's Gospel, the realization of which Luke talks of in the context of the later evident nativity event as involving a heavenly cosmic

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<sup>5</sup> See note 11 below for a general context.

<sup>6</sup> This is a huge topic, treated by me in various ways in the past decade. One has to enlarge the *moi intime* to include a luminous poise-presence of the "position" of *Insight* (p. 413), and one has to add a range of axioms, particularly the axioms of intentionality, of infinity, and of incompleteness. But now one has the fuller position of Faith and its *moi intime* seeking for contemplative friendly yet worshipful understanding. I recommend two of the *Cantowers* that relate to the mood of the searching: *Cantower 4*, "Molecules of Description and Explanation" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/cantower4.pdf>), and *Cantower 5*, "Metaphysics THEN" (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/cantower5.pdf>). The mood is summed up in the song-quote title of section 1.1 of *Cantower 5*, "I will build my Love a Bower," a Tower of Able. *Cantower 4* focuses on the potential of contemporary feminism in the climb.

<sup>7</sup> *For a New Political Economy*, CWL 21, 112. "To discover such terms is a lengthy and painful process of trial and error. *Experto crede*. To justify them, one cannot reproduce the tedious blind efforts that led to them."

<sup>8</sup> A succinct context is provided by *The Ontological and Psychological Constitution of Christ*, CWL 7, 109-115.

<sup>9</sup> See the text there after note 29. The book is available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/redress.pdf>.

<sup>10</sup> Luke 1:37.

singing: an absolutely super shift in finite being. What really happened? Is not that the full contemplative theological question?<sup>11</sup>

Now, let us move to the Lonergan's lead-in to his "unobtrusive, hidden, inviting each of us to join" list of the process of establishing special theological categories in a Clapsed Cherished "world, as it were, a charged field of love and meaning" which, "here and there reaches a notable intensity" but can be as simple as a quiet response to fading light, to the flight of a seagull, to a one-legged dancer's pirouette, to a little Proustian melody, to a sincere "hello"?<sup>12</sup>

The functional specialty, foundations, will derive its first set of categories from religious experience. That experience is something exceedingly simple, and, in time, also exceedingly simplifying, but it also is something exceedingly rich and enriching. .... There is needed in the theologian the spiritual development that will enable him both to enter into the experience of others and to frame the terms and relations that will express that experience.

Secondly, from the subject one moves to subjects.<sup>13</sup>

One could read this lead-in as somehow a beginning, and yes, it is always about a beginning, but this includes the larger realm of fresh beginnings, like Lavoisier's or

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<sup>11</sup> The full question, existentially now, is a Tower Question, per se of the 1833 Overture, one that sublates the question of collaboration raised in the final dozen pages of the 20<sup>th</sup> chapter of *Insight*. It is an "elitist" (*Method*, 351) question. Here it is as well to look back to notes 1, 4, 5, and 6 of *Posthumous* 10 and note 11 of *Posthumous* 11. There is, in many young student's hearts, a vocation, a call to see all, a "cos-mi-c-all" (See the conclusion of chapter 2 of my *Lack in the Beingstalk*, Axial Publishing, 2006). The present ethos of Lonergan studies, or indeed of global culture, does not invite that. The cyclic global dynamic of the future Tower of Able is to invite it in a manner slimly analogous to the world tournaments of expertise: an encouragement of excellence and a realism of desperately-needed talents for plain plane meaning.

<sup>12</sup> I recall here chatting with Lonergan in the late 1970s about the greeting of Beatrice in Dante: he remarked, in rising tones, "that's what life is all about: saying hello!" Is not the list of *Method* 290-1 a deep hello, "inviting each of us to join"? (290) And each of us, as hinted at in my conclusion to the last note, finding the level of our joining so as to move our selves towards an "incarnate" (*Method*, 73) "character" (*Method*, 356) that says **hello** at the level of personal talent.

<sup>13</sup> *Method in Theology*, 290-1.

Maxwell's,<sup>14</sup> and yes, like Lonergan's when he speaks of "being in love with God."<sup>15</sup> "It is up to the theologian working in the fifth specialty to determine in detail what the general and special categories are to be."<sup>16</sup> To be: indeed, and to be thus, a future communal reality, "in the stage of meaning when the world of interiority has been made the explicit ground of the worlds of theory and of common sense."<sup>17</sup> "But we are not there yet. And for society to progress towards that or any other goal it must fulfill one condition .... It must not direct its main effort to the ordinary final product of standard of living but to the overhead product of cultural implements."<sup>18</sup> It is too easy and plausible to carry on theology by passing on the standard of living of the old foundations, the old stale destructive game of commonsense religiosity dressed up now in Lonergan's words. "The old foundations will no longer do .... A new foundation and, I should say, a new type of foundation is needed to replace the old."<sup>19</sup> So, we are back to Lonergan's lead-in to the first set of categories: "there is needed in the theologian the spiritual development that will enable him both to enter into the experience of others" and the single other in focus here is Lonergan with his religious experience of writing *Insight* as "a man of good will in love with God."<sup>20</sup> So, I claim, one is faced – indeed, bluntly and brutally through Lonergan's 1833

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<sup>14</sup> Analogies with Maxwell's work are worth pushing. In Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan. His Life and Leading Ideas*, Axial Publishing, 2010, pp. 173-78, there is a broad consideration of the significance of Maxwell in Lonergan's climb. In my 2007 website book, *Method in Theology, Revisions and Implementations* (available at: <http://www.philipmcshane.ca/method.html>), I draw out a parallel between Lonergan's "4-hypothesis" and the 4-hypothesis that is Maxwell's four equations. Here you might consider my shift to be analogous to the work of the past century that lifted Maxwell's work into the full context of Gauge Theory. In that sense we are to fantasize our work as a theological counterpart of Richard Healey, *Gauging What's Real: The Conceptual Foundations of Contemporary Gauge Theories*, Oxford University Press, 2007. But note that Healey's work needs to be sublated into the fuller context of functional cyclic collaboration.

<sup>15</sup> *Method in Theology*, 105, penultimate line.

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, 291, last three lines.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid.*, 107.

<sup>18</sup> *For a New Political Economy*, CWL 21, 20.

<sup>19</sup> "Theology in a New Context," *A Second Collection*, edited by W.F.J. Ryan S.J. and B.J. Tyrrell S.J., Philadelphia, Westminster Press, 1974, 63.

<sup>20</sup> See *Insight* 721, "the man of good will is in love with God."

Overture – with the challenge of “The Tower of Able: Lonergan’s Dream,”<sup>21</sup> a climb to an overhead product of cultural implements, “a quite different foundation,”<sup>22</sup> quite beyond our present talents but not beyond our overture to our students. We thus would rise to living in the fantasy of ending this century with a feeble Tower Community, positioned beyond *Insight* in Faith, praying with quite new meaning, “Double You Three in me, in all: Claspings, Cherishing, Calling, Craving, Christing.”

But, more humbly, does it bring you and me to pray now and work later towards inviting the next three generations of Lonergan disciples to do what the last three failed to do, climb towards the overhead product hidden in the religious experience of Lonergan’s contemplative writing of *Insight*?

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<sup>21</sup> This is the title of page 163 of Pierrot Lambert and Philip McShane, *Bernard Lonergan. His Life and Leading Ideas*, Axial Publishing, 2010. The Tower is diagrammed there, a three-dimensional simplification of the Metaword **W<sub>3</sub>** presented on page 161. A simple instance of the challenge mentioned in the text is your advertizing seriously to your present meaning of the word *dream*: does it meet the challenge of a positional stance, more fully the challenge of the explanatory of the **comeabout** of *Insight* 537, or, altogether deeper, that of the second canon of hermeneutics?

<sup>22</sup> See note 19.