

Prehumous 5

Foundational Prayer II: All Saints' Reaching

There is the difficulty of carrying forward the search and the sharing of what we are about, (about)³.¹ What are we about, (about)³, as humans? Somehow we are about prayer, and prayer is about us, a triple sanctus about us. But this first day of November I ventured on with the search with no bent towards communication, except the general bent to climb in and with the tradition towards some improvement of my frail inner word. I present here, immediately, in section 1, the result of the climb that began in the morning's dark and ended at 10.00 a.m.² I cannot but think of that strange fellow, Cezanne, heading out in the predawn light to try once more to capture, canvas echoing his molecules, Mt. St. Victoire. Here, then, is what I canvassed this morning. Where it is leading me and us: that is the topic of the second section and indeed of the indefinite series to follow.³

¹The addition of that final strange word tunes you into the core difficulty, but not threateningly: it simply points to an unknown context, a context lurking, indeed, in Lonergan's sketch of a first chapter on *Method* in 1965, which he began elaborating then but to which he never returned. Section 2 of chapter 2 of *ChrISt in History* is on the topic (about)³.

²I leave the text as it emerged, with bracketed references, and without revision. But I add footnotes to it now, additions that perhaps at a first read you might best ignore.

³The indefinite series depends on questions and collaborative reflections. I recall another indefinite series, the one which led me to abandon the Cantower project (see note 25 below), a series which focused on page 250 of *Method*: the *SOFDAWARE* series and the *Quodlibets*. This present series can be seen as part of the challenge of that page, but I would have it taken here as raising elementary questions and hopes. That previous series was undertaken in collaboration with an Australian group interested in dialectic: here I would hope for a looser collaboration of those interested in kataphatic prayer. I welcome questions and pointers and note that, unless you explicitly allow it, your contributions will be regarded as private and used only in an anonymous manner. My e-mail is pmcshane@shaw.ca.

1. November 1, 2007.

The core of prayer is thinking; the core of foundational prayer is thinking about thinking. The core of pushing the question “what is prayer?” is thinking (about)³ thinking. The pushing means a future of functional recycling. But now we are seeing, seizing, being seized by, that recycling as prayer. The thinking is in the Presence, since it is in Faith, and Faith opens up to the fully real, beyond the 26th place of *Insight* chapter 19, beyond the 31st place of chapter 20, to the Trinitarian context pointed to by Thomas “27th place”, palace, mansion. We are all together seeking our word of The Word.⁴

The thinking is in the Presence: there’s the rub. Nature is God’s silent communing, and it is overlaid, seamlessly⁵, by the Word-Person’s presence. This has introduced a strange presence in finitude, and a strange invitation that, as it were, caresses the core of the cyclic What-is-prayer? It is intended from the beginning, so molecules are zealous⁶ in the quest these past 13.7 billion years. The Tri-Personal valuating is bringing the cosmos along in the molecular Word-Person’s outrageous outreach. Our problem is to reciprocate that outrageous outreach by letting the caressed core BE and be thinking IN, INTO, outrageously outreaching, inreaching, that caressed core’s caressing. The curiosity that lives in our phantasm, called here and there in that shadow of the real that is reached by curiosity’s inner is-ing, an inner is-ing boosted to

⁴I am thinking here of the final lines of Question 32 in Lonergan’s *Systematics of the Trinity*. The seeking is to remain as a component of the eschaton’s eternal surprise.

⁵“The tunic was seamless, woven in one piece”(John, 19:23). I am lifting John’s symbolization into a fuller context of the secondary determinations of the concrete form of our supernaturalization.

⁶It is an integral Trinitarian zeal, weaving us into a mystery of endlessly-growing intimacy. Here and now there is the challenge of a joyous repenting (*Insight*, 700[722]) of the neglect of the Word’s imaging in emergent explanatory science, a luminous shift of good will. “Good will wills the order of the universe, and so it wills with that order’s dynamic joy and zeal” (*Insight*, 700[722]). The fuller context of that challenge is touched on below, notes 18-25.

obediential limits by the caress so that the caress named Faith places us, darkly, in circumincessional being.

But back to the rub. Can nature's silent love - no metaphor here but a creature-fact - be overlaid better in our pilgrimage? Or, back to this morning's minion me, minion you, how do we stay pilgrim-real within proximate calls, herenow in the surrounds of binocular benefits and the music of the ears, of felt bottom, arm-muscles, touching fingertips?

Only, it would seem, but not alonely, by habituating trickery.⁷

My curiosity, your curiosity, is alive in the caress: is there not a twist, herenow, in some sense nowhere yet in the wherenow of the this and that of phantasm, so that curiosity is alive TO the caress? Or at least to curiosity caressed. But there is a doubleness of the twist. The curiosity comes alive to its natural achievement, a slow natural achievement of, say a climb to the end of chapter 19 of *Insight*, And the curiosity comes alive to its supernatural achievement, a Gift outrageously given.

Now the question I entertain, with you, is, What is this coming alive? What is its track and its tricks?

Certainly it is an effortful shift, twist. Thomas tells us vaguely about effort when he puzzles about "whether charity in this life can be perfect?" (*Secunda Secundae*, q. 24, a. 8). There is human infirmity which can be twisted towards "studied holidaying -

⁷I mean trickery in the best sense, the twisting mentioned shortly in the text. It is a very deep issue, that of our feeble sprite's friendship with Infinite Light. I recall spontaneously, of course, my favorite parable, which nudges us to consider that "the children of this world are wiser than the children of light" (*Luke* 16:8). Later (note 26) I mention the *Idiot's Guide to Shamanism*. We need a new set of tricks, beyond traditional instructions in the ways of the spirit. And - is this not brutally evident? - we need quite different types of gatherings. I think of lines of Jane Hooper (quoted in Cynthia Bourgeault, *The Wisdom Way of Knowing. Reclaiming an Ancient Tradition to Awaken the Heart*, Wiley, 2003, 27). "Please come home. Please come home into your own body, / Your own vessel, your own earth. / Please come home into each and every cell, / And fully into the space that surrounds you". The full poem is quoted on pages 38-40. Link this with the reflections of note 22 below, on feminism.

Holy-daying - with God and divine things.”⁸ This is a many-faceted issue, indeed the issue of our reflections. The core infirmity is curiosity’s emptiness; the core trickery is curiosity’s labour towards its own contextualization which is the genesis within it [not **itself**, but **it**: the self is the full human person] of a sort of skinbump of spirit’s mind, an inner word. Here I think of Lonergan writing “we have to admire Aristotle”, but now I am thinking of Augustine: yes, we have to admire Augustine, admired more in so far as he is “encountered” (*Verbum*, 6: but see note d on *Verbum* page 254, “the encounter, the meeting, the keeping company, living together”) and listened to, inner-wordily, when he writes “all these things which the human mind knows, it holds firmly established in the treasury of memory” (quoted in *Verbum*, 7, note 8). But now I think that the trickery, and Thomas’ pointing towards frailty, shifts a word in Augustine’s remark, a noised out condition, noised now from within that very treasure, from *firmly* to *feebly*. The treasure is the “context” written of in *Verbum* 238, but now, with a studied effort of perhaps years, the context is to contain theorems of incompleteness, both pilgrim and eschatological.⁹

The incompleteness that concerns us now is that which relates to the fact [one to

⁸“Ut homo studium deputet ad vacandum Deo et rebus divinis”(*Secunda Secundae*, q.24, a.8). Perhaps here is a good place to come to the heart of the matter, the topic that is to occupy us in the next several essays on foundational prayer. Thomas is dealing here with a high calling. But is not the global call of Faith seeking pragmatic understanding that high call globalized? And is not that the call of cosmopolis, identifiable now methodologically as functional specialization? “It would be unfair not to stress the chief characteristic of cosmopolis. It is not easy.”(*Insight* 241[266]). So I would claim, bluntly, that foundational prayer is the core of the challenge of cosmopolis, the heart of that collaboration mentioned 29 times in the second-last section of chapter 20 of *Insight*. It is to be “not only a new and higher collaboration of intellects through faith in God, but also a mystery that is at once symbol of the uncomprehended and sign of what is grasped and psychic force that sweeps living human bodies, linked together in charity, to a joyful, courageous, whole-hearted, yet intelligently controlled performance of the tasks set by a world order in which the problem of evil is not suppressed but transcended.”(*Insight*, 723[745]). Are we not close to the mood of the appeal in the verse quoted at the end of the previous footnote? And there are the further pointers of notes 18-25 below.

⁹See note 23 below.

be discovered and enlarged with effort!] that it takes effort within curiosity to be thoroughly [within human limits: recall the problem of the word *thoroughly* in the slogan in *Insight*] objective. What is the real? The real is being: we are in and on page 388[413] of *Insight*, with a piece of an answer. It is a heuristic, a lonely, answer. The word *then* raises the loneliness in intensity, “What, then, is being?” (*Insight*, 642[665]). An answer, is given, Dark Gift, in Faith. Core given, but also cosmic-given in Incarnation.

The question is personal and existential and normatively creative. Core curiosity, a layer of an embodied self, is reaching for the being that is the minding of God meshing with the history-towards-eschatology of the tribe of cores, cors, Corpus Christi upwised. What is the **this** in which we are emerging in a cosmic callsomeness allsomeness?

The question is interpersonal, geohistorical, allsome, but with Tower-called shaman¹⁰ shamas¹¹ cyclic dance of molecular curiosity, dancing round Incarnation, refining and echo-sharing trickery.

The echo-sharing is the Tower-goal, but the shaman-searching is the foundational focus. And here we are again, once again, ever once more: as the Zulu proverb has it, “the *isisusa* wedding dance is always appreciated by being repeated.”¹²

Foundational fantasy reaches beyond present fantasy (about)³ study and

¹⁰See note 26 below.

¹¹The reference is to the Hebrew *shamash*, with double meaning of servant and light.

¹²I quote the proverb from Mageme M. Fuze, the first major work in Zulu, written around 1900. The translation is by H.C.Lugg, *The Black People and Whence They Came*, University of Natal Press, 1979, Prologue. These note references help to keep the global focus regarding the human reach for the divine and perhaps Whitson’s *Coming Convergence of World Religions* comes to mind. My recent republication of *Music That Is Soundless. A Fine Tuning for the Lonely Bud A*, Axial Publishing, 2005, has an “Editorial Conclusion: Shobogenzo”, on the struggles of Dogen(1200-53). Some might think of that other contemporary of Thomas, Jalaluddin Rumi (1207-73).

stewing¹³. The context achieved, generation after generation in all meanings of *generation*,¹⁴ shading off into the Utter Darkness of Infinite Light from the familiar home of patterned molecular phantasm's source. And the tunnel between is curiosity's skin-bumped molecule-meshed presence to its own light delight. The problem of the trickery, and the need for trickery, is that the **being in the real**, by which I tried to pin down the What of prayer, is not natural to molecular curiosity. The inner **is** of knowing and belief and Faith has the limited context - limited fact-essences, unfamiliar allessness flickeringly included - that restricts the concomitant circuminced caressing to the patterns of the day's dance. Curiosity's turn to curiosity's presence - an experience business of foundational prayer-wheeling - is a struggle to lift that presence and its skin-bump into a more focused affirmation, confirmation, caressing of the Dark Real.

Has our morning's wheeling round the naming of prayer as "resting and questing in the real" brought us a little light, a lift of shabby context, (about)³ the manner in which we deputize our curiosity to stew over and in, as much as is permitted by pilgrim wayfaring, the Divine?

2. November 2

What I wrote yesterday was climbing-writing, not an effort at communicating. It is something that I am familiar with from physics, and it happens to a lesser extent in other zones that are less developed than that simplest of sciences. It was written in reasonably simple English, and so deceptively: somewhat like those articles in *Scientific American* on advanced physics, which can be read insightfully only if you are already in the ballpark.

I write today in an effort to communicate, and the primary communication is

¹³Chapter 3 of *Lack in the Beingstalk* (Axial Publishing, 2007) treats of tricks, beginning with the relation of stewing to study.

¹⁴See the conclusion of *Quodlibet* 8, "The Dialectic of My Town, Ma Vlast", which turns round various meanings of *generations*.

about a difficult but fantastic task ahead for the functional collaborating community, though here my focus is on the community of dialecticians and of foundations-thinkers.¹⁵ We are at least a hundred years away from a shared Standard Model of patterned searchings for patterned searchings for pilgrim intimacy with God. For the seeing of this, the seizing by this, we must pray foundationally, even as beginners. We have to carry forward an inner singing that lift's "Lead Kindly Light"¹⁶ into a slow onward - I do not write inward - journey that caresses the sprite - I do not write light - of Faith.

This seems to me to be a world foreign to most of present Lonergan studies. How many really take the time and the life to caress that flickering sprite of curiosity, to find its patience and its sprite-push, its skin-bumps called inner words, words of truth and of Truth that are a caul of clasping joy.

But, as my previous footnote intimates, I am compacting again, where what is needed is a spelling out of little steps by a patient community in our early feeble climbing towards the third stage of meaning, the second time - both ontogenetic and phylogenetic are meant - of human loneliness.¹⁷ Clasping joy? Can we climb up into a new reading of scripture and tradition, so as to enlarge for the future Thomas' joy in writing about joy in those four wondrous articles of the *Secunda Secundae* about joy?¹⁸

¹⁵My focus indeed is on the genesis of such a community, beginning with the random interested few who are open to be dark knights and damsels of adventure.

¹⁶I refer to Newman's hymn, written by him while sailing on the Mediterranean, June 16, 1833.

¹⁷The pointing here is, briefly, to the first and third stages of meaning as coincident with the two times of the temporal subject that Lonergan writes of in his Systematic Treatise on the Trinity, at Question 21. The second stage of meaning can then be identified as the bridge zone between the two times, and with a long Axial period in history, our present zone of decline, but a zone too of incline.

¹⁸The primary reference here is to q. 28, a. 1 of the *Secunda Secundae*, "Whether joy is an effect of charity in us?". The primary objective in this brief section, and in these notes, is to invite you to fantasize about joyfilled kataphatic possibilities. These notes circle that possibility

There is to be the joy of intimately and astonishingly¹⁹ identifying the sprite-joy processions within that light-zone sprite-zone, so that one is freshly luminous in the joy of reading that piece from John that Thomas quotes at the end of his response in the first of those four articles: “Qui manet in caritate, in Deo manet at Deus in eo.”²⁰ One thus reads one’s way towards that zone where “God is not an object.”²¹

I would like to think that I have reached here some beginners in a way that, say,

of prayer-joy. Perhaps you would find it useful to bring into your reaching that great push of Lonergan, regarding processional psychology, that he has at the end of the first doctrinal volume on the Trinity? What are he and John talking about? What was Jeremiah talking about when he wrote “I will put my law in their minds”(Jeremiah 31: 33)? Go back, in this context, to the challenge in chapter 7 of *Method in Theology* to “know the object”. This, mused over long enough, should give you a loving joyfilled sense of a future reading of scripture and history. The following notes add helpful contexts.

¹⁹In notes 22 and 23 below I add a curious parallel between my effort here and that of Herman Weyl in his obscure essay that lifted physics to a still-blossoming gauge theory. The essay was not well received, and indeed it had its various clumsinesses. Perhaps someone will look back in a hundred years or so, like my old colleague Lochlainn O’Raifertagh does for Weyl, (see note 23 below) and see a messy beginning in my twist on prayer? At all events, I would claim, broadly and bluntly and briefly, that there is a massive need for a luminous shift to kataphatic conversation with God. With the help, of course, of the conversations of Thomas and of John illustrated in the following note.

²⁰I John 4:16, quoted at the conclusion of the *Corpus Articuli*, IIa IIae, q.26, a.1. From various translations, I choose Charles Williams’ as provocative, as focusing our pointing. He writes, not in terms of abiding, but of union: “Whoever continues in love continues in union with God”. One may think of all the writing and thinking of union with God, present or eschatological. The pointing here, and in the previous *Prehumous*, is towards a cherished precision regarding and guarding that union’s cultivation. The complex contexted inner word from the sprite of faith is caressed by that inwardness called will (think now of that marvelously simple failure to communicate our task that sits there in *Insight* 18.1.2, at the beginning of Lonergan’s prose about “*The Notion of Will*”, a sentence inviting naivete, “Will, then, is intellectual or spiritual appetite”!). The caressing is a clinging that is clinged to in this life by the anxious molecules of self within the ancient cosmos, where *anxious* should call to minding both Paul’s talk of cosmic groaning and Harry S. Sullivan’s view of core anxiety.(See the indices of both *Insight* and *Phenomenology and Logic* under *Sullivan*). In the *eschaton* the molecules enter an open genetic dynamics of circumincession.

²¹*Method in Theology*, 342.

the writings of Herman Weyl might attract some young first-year-physics lady²² to take physics seriously.²³ I am back, of course, at the beginning both of *Insight* and of *Method*: little steps are needed on the analogy with successful science.²⁴ Perhaps I could also say that I am back at the end of my *Cantowers*, where I left off, writing about Policy or Doctrine.²⁵ The Doctrine, one of slow adult growth through gentle attending, is

²²I mention above young ladies of any age, and it led me to think of an unpublished essay of earlier this year, “Lonergan Studies: A Road Not Taken: Why not Functional Feminism?” in which I grappled with my failure to conjure up interest in functional collaboration. The essay is not worth reviving now: at all events it is an old view of mine: see, for example, Cantower IV, “Molecules of Description and Explanation” with Candace Pert at centre-stage, and also the article in the Archives of the Website, “Foundational Ethics, Feminism, and Business Ethics.” Is there not fresh hope in the feminist movement, including that which comes from feminist re-reading, fresh integrative reading, of scripture? I think now of the pointing of the two final chapters of a recent book by Alessandra Drage, *Thinking Woman*: “Women in History: Turning the Tide” and “Feminism in the Future”(Axial Publishing, 2004). I think of a sublation of Molly Bloom’s claim: “it would be much better for the world to be governed by the women in it.”(James Joyce, *Ulysses*, Penguin, 1998, 640), of a ferment forward of ancient poetic yearnings: see *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women*, edited by Jane Hirsfield, New York, Harper Collins, 1994. Relevant, too, are my musings in “Our Journaling Lonelinesses”, *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis* 3(2003) 324-342. (<http://www.mun.ca>)

²³Herman Weyl’s suggestions were taken seriously by the international physics community, but for a beginner perhaps a better analogy is with the youthful , who in his teens took Fermat’s Last Theorem seriously enough to give it a decade of silent contemplation. Is there a young lady among my readers who might take Philmc’s Last Theorem seriously?! Then she might move to rescue talk of ordinary and extraordinary and eschatological prayer from metaphor and descriptiveness and surround them, and us, in the real, with glorious theorems of incompleteness. The “taking physics seriously”of the end of this sentence has meaning on all levels, from first year university devotion to present revolutionary transformation, e.g to a clear geometrization of physics anticipated by both Weyl and Lonergan. On the blossoming of Weyl’s insights, see Lochlainn O’Raifeartaigh, *The Dawning of Gauge Theory*, Princeton University Press, 1997.

²⁴*Insight*, chapter 1, paragraph 1; *Method in Theology*, chapter 1, paragraph .

²⁵See note 3 above. I halted at *Cantower 41*, on Doctrines; the full project was 117 Cantowers (See Cantower 24 for the list). And I may be seen now to be cycling back to note 18 above, thinking of how Thomas moves forward from there in the *Secunda Secundae* to consider peace and mercy, qualities to be associated with enlightenment, a topic that would have come later in the Cantowers.

massively remote from present accepted meaning. Yet it is something so evident in science, in the searchers of Zen, even in the oddities of contemporary shamanism. “The way to tap into these shamanic insights is to access your own inner shaman. Though it takes years and years of training to become a professional shaman who offers counseling and healing to others, you can still develop this intuitive, receptive, creative force within yourself....”²⁶ What I would wish you to develop within yourself is an operative sense of the mysterious redemptive future that pivots on present lonely patient cherishing of sprite.

And perhaps I could halt here, conveniently and abruptly, with my own words of 18 years ago, written to conclude the book *Process*: they make vastly more sense to me now; let us pray that they make redemptive sense to you.²⁷ The footnotes added are the original notes, but shortened here.

“The third stage of global meaning, with its mutual mediation of an academic presence, is a distant probability,²⁸ needing painfilled solitary reaching towards a

²⁶Gini Graham Scott, *Shamanism*, (Complete Idiot’s Guide to), Pearson Education Inc., 2002, 70. Obviously, the altered state of consciousness to be reached by what I recommend is different from that of the various shamanic traditions: the issue here is devoted exercise in a lifetime of accelerating growth.

²⁷The book *Process. Introducing Themselves to Young (Christian) Minders*, was written in the academic year of 1988-89: it is available on the usual Website. Chapters one and five parallel, section for section, the search for self and the search for God, lifting the *Bhagavad-Gita* into a fresh context.

²⁸The title of the Preface to McShane, *Searching for Cultural Meaning*, University Press of America, 1985, is “Distant Probabilities of Persons Presently Going Home Together in Transcendental Process”, pp. i-xxii.

hearing of hearing,²⁹ a touching of touching, 'in the far ear,'³⁰ 'sanscreed,'³¹ making luminously present - in focal darkdream - our bloodwashed bloodstream. It is an new audicity, a new hapticity, to which we must aspire, for which we must pray."

²⁹"Merced Mulde!" "Yssel that the limmat?" (*Finnegans Wake*, p. 212, line 26; p. 198, line 13). See John Bishop, *Joyce's book of the Dark: Finnegans Wake*, University of Wisconsin Press, 1986, 342. This heuristic transposition of Joyce, of course, demands precision of, and 'boning up' on, the notion of the notion of thing, pushing on from Aquinas, *Prima Pars*, q. 76, a.8., on the soul's bodipresence.

³⁰See Bishop. *op. cit.*, 343-46.

³¹*Finnegans Wake*, 215, line 26.