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according to Avery Dulles

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Presentation

Abstract: Avery Dulles is one of the best known and most prolific American theologians of the Twentieth Century. In an unprecedented move, John Paul II conferred on him the honour of Cardinal in 2001 in recognition of his service to the Church.

The person of Dulles is not exempt from controversy, thus we dedicate the first chapter to sifting the true Dulles from at times even contradictory claims about him.

In chapter two, the thesis deals with Dulles' views on Revelation. Given the reciprocal relationship between Revelation and faith, a study of Dulles' views on Revelation may furnish one with relevant information on the theologian's position regarding faith.

The third chapter underlines Dulles' method in approaching the notion of faith and other generic presuppositions. The chapter closes with a study of Dulles' contribution to the debate on how the relationship between faith and reason is conceived in Catholic thought.

A convert himself, Dulles was greatly marked by his experience and thus wrote extensively on conversion. The fourth chapter considers how Dulles' experience leaves a mark on his proposals regarding conversion.

Finally, the fifth chapter studies perhaps the most delicate issues in the theology of faith to date; that is, salvation, justification and evangelization. To these questions Dulles dedicated most of his attention in his later years.

Keywords: Conversion, Evangelization, Salvation.

Resumen: Avery Dulles es uno de los teólogos más conocidos y prolíficos de América durante el siglo XX. En una acción sin precedentes, Juan Pablo II le otorgó el honor del cardenal en 2001 en reconocimiento a su servicio a la Iglesia.

La persona de Dulles no está exenta de controversia, por lo que dedicamos el primer capítulo a cuestiones biográficas para valorar las afirmaciones, incluso contradictorias, que a veces se han hecho de él.

El capítulo segundo de la tesis estudia las ideas de Dulles sobre la Revelación. Teniendo en cuenta la relación recíproca entre la Revelación y la fe, un estudio del pensamiento de Dulles sobre la Revelación puede aportar información relevante para comprender mejor la posición que toma al tratar la fe.

El tercer capítulo hace hincapié en algunos presupuestos generales y en el método que Dulles emplea para acercarse a la noción de la fe. El capítulo se cierra con un estudio de la contribución de Dulles al debate sobre la relación entre la fe y la razón en el pensamiento católico.

Siendo él mismo un converso, su experiencia de conversión dejó en Dulles una huella profunda. En el cuarto capítulo se examina cómo esta experiencia influye en sus propuestas teológicas sobre la de conversión.

Por último, el quinto capítulo trata de algunos de los temas quizás más delicados actualmente en la teología de la fe, a saber, la salvación, la justificación y la evangelización. A estos temas Dulles les dedicó una gran atención en sus últimos años, ofreciendo aportaciones importantes.

Palabras clave: Conversión, Evangelización, Salvación.

In April 2008, Baltimore, the oldest diocese in the United States celebrated its bicentennial. For an institution like the Church, which has existed for two thousand years and is destined for Eternity, two hundred years is nothing to write home about. But all said and done, it would be a misnomer to continue counting the Church in the United States among the young Churches.

Over these two hundred years, the American Church has brought many joys to the Catholic world. Of interest to us is the contribution it has made to the intellectual heritage of the Church. Perhaps most known is the role that the American Council Fathers made at the Second Vatican Council during the debates that resulted into the conciliar document on religious freedom, *Dignitatis Humanae*. It was still debated whether at the Council U.S theologians made a substantial contribution. But only until 2001, for in that year his Holiness Blessed John Paul II put it to rest. He elevated the then 82 year old Avery Dulles, S.J. to the rank of Cardinal without naming him bishop. This is a privilege reserved only for theologians who have been outstanding in the exposition of the Church's faith.

Avery Dulles saw his appointment not as a merely personal landmark but rather one for American theology as a whole. But nevertheless, it is worthwhile to look closely at the thought of the man in whom the strengths of American theology have been incarnated.

After the Council, the leadership abilities of Avery Dulles began to show through. He was appointed to various positions of responsibility. Perhaps the most significant ones were: Consultor to the Papal *Secretariat for Dialogue with Non-Believers* (1966-73), *United States Catholic Bishops' Advisory Council* (1969-75), President of the *Catholic Theological Society of America* (1975-76) and of the American Theological Society (1978-79).

A multifaceted and prolific theologian, Avery Dulles' impressive corpus treats nearly all topics across the theological spectrum. His ecclesiology has received wide acclaim as has his theology of Revelation and apologetics. In his later years, Avery Cardinal Dulles always spoke of faith as the central theme of his entire theology. In a 2001 interview, for instance, he makes the following confidence: «My work is circled very much around the problem of faith. Can one believe? Should one believe? What should one believe? I think that implicitly answers everything else about what one should do and love and so forth»*.

* «Cardinal Dulles recalled for brilliance, simplicity, kindness» in *The Catholic Standard & Times, The Official Newspaper of the Archdiocese of Philadelphia*. See: <http://www.cst-phl.com/> «Cardinal Dulles», 12/18/08. Accessed 28th May 2012.

Although Avery Dulles treasured his theology of faith, it surprisingly remains largely unknown. In the thesis we sought to present the theology of faith as conceived by Avery Dulles. On that occasion, we deemed it necessary to begin by first of all placing the American theologian in his vital context, thus dedicating the first chapter to this end. Given the reciprocal relationship between Revelation and faith, a study of Dulles' views on Revelation may furnish one with relevant information on the theologian's position regarding faith. We thus dedicated the second chapter to this end.

From the third to the fifth chapter, the thesis dealt with questions that properly speaking fall in the realm of theology of faith. The issues that came up include: models of faith, the relationship between faith and reason, what place experience occupies in faith, the nature of conversion to faith, faith and salvation and evangelization.

In partial publication of the thesis, we have excerpted some salient features from the theology of faith in Avery Dulles, that is; models of faith; faith and reason; conversion experience; salvation and justification.

Having applied the models method to ecclesiology and Revelation with resounding editorial success, Avery Dulles fronts the same method to deal with faith. With the lessons learnt from the criticism of his earlier usage of models, some novelties can be seen in «models of faith». It is not a follow up of the models of faith as one would have expected but Dulles rather seeks to rework the models of faith *ex novo*, as it were. If all along models were just a starting point, in «models of faith» they seem to be an end in themselves. We therefore linger on here to find a way of accounting for the way of proceeding Dulles opts for. Given the traditional role that reason plays in Catholic faith, Dulles repeatedly emphasised it. In so doing he comes up with interesting ways of driving home the point that reason is central in Catholic faith. He therefore warmed up to the idea even more when Blessed John Paul II published the landmark encyclical *Fides et ratio* (1998).

After a tortuous and long search, Dulles embraced the Catholic faith. This event influenced not only his life but even the way of doing theology. Dulles would therefore accord a privileged position in the whole of Fundamental Theology. Having witnessed the impotency of reason to see a conversion to the last consequences, Dulles esteemed the role of experience in conversion.

Of perennial interest in the theology of faith is the question of who can be saved. During the first half of the last century, the question took centre

stage in Boston. Individuals close to Dulles gave a radical interpretation to the adage *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. Their position was condemned by the local Church authorities as well as the Holy See. Dulles revisited the question on several occasions which will also be the object of our study.

As Dulles was engaged in ecumenical dialogue, the question of salvation surfaced again. His Protestant interlocutors clung to the claim Reformers' claim that justification was on the basis of only faith. Agreements were reached in Ecumenism although Dulles cautioned against what he saw as exaggerated optimism.

Well as there are contact points between the Catholic position and that of the Protestants regarding salvation, for some decades now, some theologians propound a position which is poles apart from the Church is teaching. They claim that salvation does not necessarily call for embracing Christianity but it is rather within reach for non-Christians so long as they adhere to the teachings of religious founders such as Buddha and Krishna. The Church had always condemned such positions and so when the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued the declaration *Dominus Iesus* in the year 2000, it was only a restatement of the same old doctrine albeit in an unequivocal way. *Dominus Iesus* was greeted by an uproar of protests but Avery Dulles came out to defend it. We shall see the nature of Dulles' spirited defence of *Dominus Iesus*.

It is at the end of these introductory lines that we would like to execute the most pleasurable task of all: adding a vote of thanks to all those people without whose help this doctoral thesis would never have come to life. In the first place, to Prof. Juan Alonso thanks to whose vast knowledge and foresight encouraged us to research on this important figure in American theology. His availability has been key at times when the going had gotten tough. We are greatly indebted to *Fundación Horizonte* who has catered for all our expenses so that we may dedicate all our energies to the research that a doctoral thesis supposes. The residents of Colegio Mayor Aralar earn our gratitude for their boisterous support and their patience to listen to all our ranting after discovering what hit us as interesting. And finally we would like to thank Tobechi whose advice has been priceless.

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Abbreviations in the Thesis

AAS	<i>Acta Apostolicae Sedis</i>
ASS	<i>Actae Sanctae Sedis</i>
DF	Vatican I, Constitution <i>Dei Filius</i> on the Catholic Faith.
DI	Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith Declaration, «Dominus Iesus. On the Unicity and Salvific Universality of Jesus Christ and the Church», 6th August 2000, AAS 92 (2000) 742-765.
DS	<i>Enchiridion Symbolorum, Definitionum et Declarationum de Rebus Fidei et Morum.</i>
DT	C. IZQUIERDO <i>et al.</i> (eds.), <i>Diccionario de Teología</i> , EUNSA, Pamplona 2006.
DV	Vatican II, Constitution <i>Dei verbum</i> on Divine Revelation.
EN	Paul VI, Apostolic Exhortation <i>Evangelii nuntiandi</i>
GS	Vatican II, Dogmatic Constitution <i>Gaudium et spes</i> on the Church in the Modern World.
NA	Vatican II, Declaration <i>Nostra aetate</i> on Non-Christian Religions
PG	J. P. MIGNE (ed) <i>Patrologiae Cursus Completus Accurante. Series Graeca</i> , Librairie Orientaliste Paul Geuthner, Paris 1928-1936.
PL	J. P. MIGNE (ed) <i>Patrologiae cursus Completus. Series Latina</i> , Paris 1844-1890.
ScrTh	<i>Scripta theologica</i> , Facultad de Teología de la Universidad de Navarra, Pamplona.
STh,	St. Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologiae</i> .
UR	Vatican II, Decree <i>Unitatis redintegratio</i> on Ecumenism.
<i>Testimonial</i>	A. DULLES, <i>A Testimonial to Grace and Reflections on a Theological Journey</i> , Sheed and Ward, Kansas City 1996.
<i>A Model Theologian</i>	P. W. CAREY, <i>Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J. A Model Theologian, 1918-2008</i> , New York and Mahwah, New Jersey, Paulist Press 2010.
<i>Models of Revelation</i>	A. DULLES, <i>Models of Revelation</i> , Maryknoll, Orbis, New York, Books 1992.
<i>Assurance.</i>	A. DULLES, <i>The Assurance of Things Hoped for</i> , Oxford University Press, New York 1994.
<i>Turning.</i>	E. GRIFFIN, <i>Turning. Reflections on the Experience of Conversion</i> , Doubleday, Garden City, New York 1980.

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A. MODELS, FAITH AND REASON

At the onset of dealing with any theological issue, Avery Dulles applied the method of models to it. Having applied this method with success especially to ecclesiology and Revelation, he does likewise to faith. After briefly introducing Dulles' main works on faith, we shall review in the first place the classification that the Jesuit scholar makes of contemporary views regarding faith. Although he terms the panoramic study of faith as «models of faith», this time our author's approach differs from earlier usage of models. One notes that the «models of faith» are an end in themselves well as in earlier works like *Models of the Church* and *Models of Revelation* they were a stepping stone before Dulles could make other proposals.

Also of interest to us in this section is to see how Avery Dulles handles the perennial problem of the relationship between faith and reason which has proved mind boggling to philosophers and theologians throughout the ages. Although Dulles dealt with the question with a lot of urgency with the publication of the encyclical *Fides et ratio* the theme is also present in many of his earlier works and he even sees the encyclical as a confirmation of what he had always taught.

1. *Dulles' works on Faith*

In the rich Dullesian corpus in which there is hardly a topic across the theological spectrum which is not dealt with, a good amount of space is dedicated to faith.

Avery Dulles' prominence in part derives from his having been a prolific writer who dealt with themes. Well as he may not stand out as a thinker who

dedicated his life to dealing with faith-related topics, he churned out a decent amount of work on the subject.

From the onset Avery Dulles had it clear that in the Catholic conception, faith and Revelation are correlative. This meant that his writings on faith came out hand in hand with those on Revelation. Essays on Revelation-related topics written between 1956 and 1966 were published in his 1968 book *Revelation and the Quest for Unity*. The counterpart of this book dealing with faith is *The Survival of Dogma* (1971).¹ This book is a result of lectures and conferences that Avery Dulles delivered between 1968 and 1970. Since the book deals with diverse topics ranging from faith to Dogma, it carries as a sub-title «Faith, Authority, and Dogma in a Changing World.» This book is hailed as one of Dulles' most original works. In it he employs the philosophy of personal knowledge of Michael Polanyi –as he had earlier done in *Models of Revelation*. Dulles finds particularly interesting the distinction that Polanyi makes between tacit and explicit knowledge to explore the relation between faith and doctrine. Polanyi first advanced the concept of tacit knowledge in the Gifford lectures he gave in 1951-52 at the University of Aberdeen. The first part of *The Survival of Dogma* entitled «Faith and Inquiry.» It contains essays like: «The changing forms of faith», «Authority and insight in the assent of faith» and «Faith, reason, and the logic of discovery.»

In a the 2001 interview² which we have already referred to in the last chapter, Brian McGuire of the *National Catholic Register* asks Dulles which of his works he is most proud of. After some hesitation—as expected from a prolific author—Dulles singles out *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*.³ Reflecting on Vatican II, Avery Dulles grew increasingly convinced that the Council asked «for an updated theology of faith.»⁴ This book is the answer to this need. If there was any hesitation to undertake such a task, he was urged on by the fact that there was scant material especially in English dealing with theology of faith. It is basically divided into two parts, one of a historical nature and another systematic. In the first part Avery Dulles treats the biblical foundations and history of theological reflection on faith in the Greek and Latin Fathers, quick strokes on the mediaeval epoch and modern period. He achieves this feat in barely 170 pages. He dedicates the last 110 pages to a systematic consideration of aspects of faith such as its nature and object, the certitude of faith, the birth, growth, and loss of faith; and faith and salvation. In *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, Avery Dulles kicks off the systematic reflection with a chapter that he calls «Models and issues.» While handling faith, Dulles had not pursued

the idea of models that much but he employed the models approach in an article in a collection of articles on Fundamental theology⁵ edited by Michael Kessler.

Writing in the *Thomist* he produced a thought-provoking article on the relationship between conversion and Fundamental theology.⁶ This article was included in his 1992 work *The Craft of Theology*⁷ which was by and large treating questions to do with method in theology.

Another set of works of Avery Dulles on faith are articles of a panoramic nature which he wrote as contributions to works of a collective nature. Among these we can mention the following articles «A Catholic Perspective of the theology of faith»⁸ and «faith» in *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*⁹.

In addition to these works, Avery Dulles also has many other articles dealing with different aspects of faith.¹⁰

2. *Faith in Models*

I. The Method of Models

The dominant approach to theology in Catholic circles from late 19th century to mid-20th century was Neo-Scholasticism. Neo-Scholasticism was an approach within philosophy and theology which sought to revive, develop, and defend Scholastic thought in general and Thomism in particular as an alternative to the various schools of modern thought. It is not merely the resuscitation of a philosophy long since defunct, but rather a restatement in our own day of the *philosophia perennis*¹¹ which, elaborated by the Greeks and brought to perfection by the great medieval teachers, has never ceased to exist even in modern times.

Neo-Scholasticism reigned supreme from the issuance of the encyclical *Aeterni Patris*¹². But at the eve of Vatican II it was slowly by slowly complemented or totally dislodged by other methodologies. Walter Kasper would later claim that «there is no doubt that the outstanding event in the Catholic theology of our century is the surmounting of neo-scholasticism»¹³. As the *bête noir* of all the ills in Catholic scholarship, criticism began pouring in from all sides against neo-scholasticism. Etienne Gilson (1884-1978) called the Leonine project a «brew of watered-down *philosophia aristotelico-thomistica* concocted to give off a vague deism fit only for the use of right-thinking candidates for high school diplomas and arts degrees...»¹⁴ Alasdair MacIntyre's

analysis of Leonine Thomists too is harsh. He blames them for «deforming central Christian positions for apologetic purposes»¹⁵.

Among the approaches that were presented as alternatives to Neo-Scholasticism or to mitigate its supposed weaknesses was the *Ressourcement*¹⁶ propounded by theologians like Henri de Lubac (1896-1991), Jean Daniélou (1905-1974) and Hans Urs von Balthasar (1905-1988). With their method, the *Ressourcement* movement sought to «reinvigorate the ancient ideal of appropriating all human wisdom in service to Christian faith. Aquinas... was a unique theological master, but we are called to do today what Aquinas did fearlessly in own time: integrate the breadth of human learning with the word of God.»¹⁷

In such a panorama, Avery Dulles found solace in the models. «My own turn toward the method of models», Dulles explains, «is partly in continuity with, and partly in reaction against, the neo-scholastic system in which I was trained in my own philosophical and theological studies»¹⁸

Models were employed in the natural sciences before they found their way into theology and the social sciences. Models are «... a construction or conceptual category taken from experience and history that serve to interpret or shed light on the meaning of a mystery of the Christian faith.»¹⁹ Before models were popularised by Avery Dulles, Robert P. Scharlemann²⁰, David Tracy²¹, Peter Schineller²² and Thomas F. O'Meara²³ too had applied them in theology. Among the reasons that Professor José Morales gives to account for this phenomenon is «the reaction against the neo-Scholastic system and its rigid method of the thesis, as well as the overcoming of polemical theology that gave way to more dialogical approaches. It has been markedly emphasized in the consciousness how impossible it is to establish the content of Revelation in closed and exclusivist categories.»²⁴

On the first occasion that he employed this method, Dulles explained that «when an image is employed reflectively and critically to deepen one's theoretical understanding of a reality, it becomes what is today called a *model*.»²⁵ He defines a model as «a relatively simple, artificially constructed case which is found to be useful and illuminating with realities that are more complex and differentiated.»²⁶ With the theological scene becoming increasingly pluralistic, models or types help to reconcile positions which are seemingly far removed from each other thus creating an atmosphere which is conducive for dialogue.

The models approach in part accounts for the unrivalled popularity which Avery Dulles still enjoys on the American scene. Using the models method as

a pedagogical tool, the Jesuit theologian knew how to put his great erudition within reach of anyone who would come into contact with his work²⁷.

In 1974, when Dulles wrote *Models of the Church*, in some circles it was misinterpreted. Over 20 years later, he writes lamenting: «Some people read my *Models* book as though I were encouraging the reader to make a choice among the *Models*, but my intention was rather the opposite.»²⁸ To avoid such confusion in *Models of Revelation*, Dulles takes painstaking effort to clarify his intentions in adopting the models method and the shortcomings of such an undertaking.

Avery Dulles agrees with Richard Niebuhr, an author who had ably used the models approach, by conceding that «... the method of types does not do full justice to the complexities of individual positions, many of which cannot be neatly pigeonholed.»²⁹

II. Models of Faith

Bringing with him all this bulk of experience regarding the strengths and drawbacks of the models method, Avery Dulles uses it henceforth to map out the various positions in the vast panorama of faith and other aspects of theology which he would subsequently deal with. In his 1992 *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, Dulles includes an essay entitled «Models of faith» and careful to spell out what he intends to do, he underlines a model to be «a relatively simple, artificially constructed case which is found to be useful and illuminating with realities that are more complex and differentiated.»³⁰

Dulles is convinced that employing the models will make it possible to synthesise and put right insights from earlier thinkers by pointing out where they depend on limited aspects of reality. At the end of this, Dulles hopes to have made some strides in clarifying various ideas about faith. While dealing with faith, he identifies the following five models: propositional, transcendental, fiducial, affective-experiential, obediential, praxis, and personalist.

- *Propositional Model*

The propositional model holds that much as Revelation does not come to us as verbal statements, it can nevertheless be formulated in declarative statements like «The Word was made flesh», «The Lord is risen» etc. Dulles clarifies that «the propositions are not the spoken or written sentences but rather the meanings or truth-claims of such sentences.»³¹

Propositionalists consider the assent to revealed truths as necessary for salvation although not sufficient. This is because one must not only believe in God's word but trust him, love him and keep his commandments.

Among all the models of faith, the propositional model enjoys the longest tradition. It is rooted in Sacred Scripture as the Catholic and Pastoral letters of the New Testament show: Faith is conceived as a fixed treasure already established. The Letter of Jude talks of such a treasure as entrusted «once and for all to all the saints» (Jude 3). Writing to Timothy³², St. Paul uses more familiar terminology, «deposit of faith» of which bishops are the custodians.

This view is widespread among the Fathers³³, the Schoolmen and even baroque Scholasticism-Catholic as well as Protestant-adheres to it.

Not even the rationalism of the Enlightenment abandons the propositional model. John Locke, would forcefully take faith to be «the assent to any proposition not thus made out by the deductions of reason, but upon credit of the proposer, as coming from God, in some extraordinary way of communication», that is to say, by Revelation.³⁴

In recent times, the propositional model has been championed by neo-scholastics. At their zenith-which was during Vatican I, one finds definitions of the Magisterium that take divine and Catholic faith as believing «all those things which are contained in the word of God, written or handed down, and which the Church, either by solemn judgment or by its ordinary and universal Magisterium, proposes from outside by hearing, whereby we accept as true, on the authority of God who is supremely truthful, that which has been said, attested, and revealed by the personal God, our Creator and Lord.»³⁵

Conservative Evangelicalism too is in this line, just that it only fronts the Bible and not the Church as the primary teacher.

On the contemporary scene, the moral theologian Germain Grisez takes faith to be «a definite body of truths articulated in human language and proposed by the Church.»³⁶ His position is endorsed by fellow American William Marshner who holds that: «To complete the classical definition it must be added that the propositions are immutable and that they bespeak mysteries... what is revealed and believed (a dogma) must be a sentence.»³⁷

Grisez and Marshner hold this position in opposition to theologians like Karl Rahner, Gerald O'Collins, Richard P. McBrien, Gabriel Moran, and Edward Schillebeeckx who take faith to be a quasi-mystical intuition

in which God's intelligible communication of himself, given in conceptual language is adopted.

The longevity of the propositional model attests to its advantages: The authority of Sacred Scripture is upheld and the Church stands out as a community of faith. This allows faith to provide answers to recurring hard questions.

Avery Dulles finds fault with the propositional model for neglecting the latent and mystical dimensions of human knowledge. Without clarifying further, Dulles closes the discussion on faith as conceived by the propositional model by affirming that: «Great thinkers such as Thomas Aquinas and John Henry Newman, while holding to the realism of faith-judgments, overcame the limits of propositionalism.»³⁸ This is due to the fact that all these two great minds were able to overcome the handicaps that Dulles sees as inherent in the propositional model which was not the case with their contemporaries.

- *Transcendental model*

While dealing with this model, the names Avery Dulles fronts are those of Jesuit theologians Karl Rahner, Bernard Lonergan and Pierre Rousselot.

In this model, the starting point is the Scholastic idea that the act of faith can only be exercised by he or she who possesses the virtue of faith, that is to say, *habitus fidei*. Another distinction they bring on board is that of *fides qua creditur*³⁹ and *fides quae creditor*.⁴⁰ They give priority to *fides qua creditur*.

Pierre Rousselot⁴¹, who was thought to be destined for a brilliant theological career before his premature death, recovered St. Thomas' concept of «light of faith» (*lumen fidei*). Without denying that faith is assent to the Church's teaching, Pierre Rousselot and his followers hold that whether we believe or not depends on whether we have the divinely infused light that enables us to see the credibility of revealed truths. That light attunes us to the content of faith; it imparts an existential affinity («connaturality»).

The much talked about influence of the German idealists and Kant on Karl Rahner shows through in his handling faith. Bernard Lonergan too borrows heavily from Kantian and idealist epistemology. Dulles summarises the position Rahner and Lonergan as follows: Both will say that «God's grace... is operative even among persons who have never encountered the biblical message and have perhaps never heard the name of Jesus Christ. Such persons may have faith in the transcendental sense without any specifically Christian

beliefs and even, it would seem without any knowledge derived from special (or «categorical») Revelation.»⁴²

Advocating for such a transcendental component of faith is said to cast a new light on everything such that room is made for judgments and opinions not attained without it, accepting Revelation as credible. Basing himself on these ideas, Rahner takes faith as an acceptance of the nearness of God as absolute mystery.⁴³

Karl Rahner agrees that the encounter with mystery must be mediated by some experience of the world but such mediation should not be necessarily «religious»; therefore everyone has faith. «It can be found in people who consciously believe they are and must be atheists, as long as they are completely obedient to the demands of conscience, that is, to use our terminology, they accept themselves unconditionally, without self-rejection, fulfilling that primordial capacity of freedom which involves the subject as a whole.»⁴⁴

Avery Dulles notes that: «The strategy of defining faith as a spiritual attitude that does not depend on acceptance of the biblical message makes it relatively easy to deal with the problem of the salvation of the unevangelized...»⁴⁵ At this juncture we may ask, does this not pose problems for those who have already embraced the faith? It seems to us that such a way of presenting Christian faith deems it as an unnecessary burden since all men who let their lives be governed by the dictates of reason have faith.

Dulles merely talks of a «tension» between transcendental theory and what Sacred Scripture tells us, *fides ex auditu*. Unfortunately there is a lot more in play, such a conception of faith undercuts all the Church's missionary fervour. Avery Dulles rightly points out that the Transcendental model «leaves some unclarity as to whether central Christian doctrines such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, are matters of faith or simply 'beliefs'.»⁴⁶

While Dulles merely points to the tension inherent in the term anonymous Christianity, the term has been at the centre of a controversy. Karl Rahner explains it as follows:

The 'anonymous Christian' in our sense of the term is the pagan after the beginning of the Christian mission, who lives in the state of Christ's grace through faith, hope and love, yet who has no explicit knowledge of the fact that his life is orientated in grace-given salvation to Jesus Christ.⁴⁷

The harshest criticism was from the Swiss theologian Hans Urs von Balthasar. Von Balthasar found fault with the underlying philosophy of Rah-

ner's thought. He opined that Rahner was reductive in identifying love of neighbour with love of God, and thereby turning religion into ethics and losing sight of the true nature of Christian life.⁴⁸

Instead of a frontal disagreement with Rahner's theory of «anonymous Christian», Yves Congar prefers more subtle criticism:

Should we speak of «anonymous Christian»? (...) I find it difficult to see how one can deny that such a condition exists. But the expression «anonymous Christian» is not a happy one, for «Christian» implies the profession of the Faith proclaimed and received, following baptism.⁴⁹

Joseph Ratzinger, once in the same intellectual circle as Karl Rahner⁵⁰ found the theory of «anonymous Christian» disturbing from the onset.⁵¹ He was aware that isolating and making this catchphrase absolute would give way to assertions like mission has no other concern than «that the Hindu become a better Hindu, the Buddhist a better Buddhist, the Moslem a better Moslem.» This prompts Ratzinger to quiz: «Then one can also has to say a cannibal ought to be a 'good cannibal' and a convinced ss-man ought to be a thorough-going ss-man?»

Finally we shall consider the observations of the Spanish theologian Juan Luis Lorda. After pondering on the concept of «anonymous Christian», the University of Navarre professor notes that «there is a sense in which this expression can be accepted: any upright person may receive grace and unite himself or herself to Christ even though he or she does not know it.»⁵² But analysing the question in the totality of Karl Rahner's theology, Lorda raises two objections against «anonymous Christian»:

1) It seems that it reduces grace to a dimension of the human conscience (openness), although it refers to a dimension of man elevated in his origin.

2) It seems that the history of salvation, with the Paschal mystery at its centre, and the personal incorporation through the acceptance of the Gospel, the sacraments and the Church do not add anything important. But grace, which is the effect of the presence of the Holy Spirit, is a historical fruit of the Paschal mystery. The Holy Spirit, given in history, can reach all men and identify them with Christ, but it cannot be reduced to its anthropological structure given at creation.⁵³

Professor Lorda finishes his argument pointing out that the Church is the «vineyard» that grows in history and transmits the life of Christ. Lorda argues that, by the action of the Holy Spirit, non-Christians may form part of the Church without knowing it, and so they are anonymous Christians.

- *Fiducial Model*

The fiducial model is an exclusively all-Protestant club. If Protestant theologians disagree among themselves on a number of theological issues, finally Dulles points out in what they all concur, faith. Unlike the propositional and the transcendental models which underline the intellectual aspect of faith, the fiducial model identifies faith more closely with trust.

For Scriptural support for their position they look up to the Old Testament especially Genesis, the Psalms and Isaiah and in the New Testament, the Synoptic Gospels, Pauline letters, above all Romans and Galatians and the Epistle to the Hebrews. From these inspired writings they point out that *pistis* is best translated to English as «trust» and not «faith.» The close relation between faith and knowledge found in St. John was highlighted during the Patristic era although Origen talked of the element of trust. In the Medieval epoch the clear-cut distinctions saw faith being handled as an intellectual virtue while hope was rooted in the will.

Faith was among the contentious points during the Protestant Reformation. Luther sought to dismantle the Aristotelian system on which the edifice of Christian thought rested. In the new system that Luther put forward, he distinguished faith as acceptance of what God says as true and trust or confidence in God as able and willing to deliver what he has promised.⁵⁴ *Sola fide* refers to the latter.

The Augsburg Confession appeals to Augustine in claiming that «faith» in the Sacred Scripture means «confidence in God, assurance that God is gracious to us, and not merely such knowledge of historical events as the devil also possesses.»⁵⁵ Luther's followers maintained that faith was not just knowledge but rather a desire to accept and grasp what Christ promised. They therefore lashed out at the Scholastic distinctions that tended to down play the importance of feelings.

John Calvin attempted a balance between the intellectual and the effective elements in faith by considering faith as «a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence towards us, founded upon the truth of the freely given promise in Christ, both revealed to our minds and sealed upon our hearts through the Holy Spirit.»⁵⁶

Liberal Protestantism which changed the world view within Protestantism in various aspects held unto the fiducial conception of faith. For Albrecht Ritschl, faith means trust, practical judgment and a loving movement of the will toward God as the highest good.⁵⁷ Fellow Liberal Protestant, Wilhelm

Herrmann sets faith aside for referring to the trustful surrender that is awakened in us by the picture of Jesus in the Gospels, and for the new purpose and courage that are born of such trust.⁵⁸

Wolfhart Pannenberg does not reject that faith has a component of knowledge but he rather thinks that it counts for little seen vis-à-vis trust. She who seeks to believe may undertake a rational investigation of the evidence that God has revealed himself in Christ yet all said and done, the further step of surrendering to that God who reveals himself is what counts. Faith in Pannenberg has a lot to do with the future and can be summarised as follows: «The certainty of faith consists in the completeness of trust, which in turn is grounded in the eschatological meaning of the history of Jesus.»⁵⁹

The lead that Pannenberg provides to Protestant theologians to embrace reason as key to faith does not get an enthusiastic reception as is the case with the idea that faith is ordered towards the future. Agreeing with him on this last point, Jürgen Moltman says that «faith is called to life by promise and is therefore essentially hope, confidence, trust in God who will not lie but will remain faithful to his promise.»⁶⁰

From the insights provided by the various Protestant authors, it is clear that they understand faith not as a purely intellectual act or virtue but as arising from the heart and the will. To the view that truth is the formal object of faith, the proponents of the fiducial model answer that faith goes out to God under the aspect of his saving power rather than primarily his veracity. They therefore view it as a lively confidence in the God who has revealed himself by his great deeds in history as recounted in Sacred Scripture. At a personal and existential level, they maintain that the believer trusts in this God to rescue him or her from the punishment that his or her sins deserve by cancelling out the guilt and giving that person perseverance in hope that ends in eternal happiness.

Credit must be given to these authors for recovering the aspect of trust or hope which according to the testimony of Scripture is part and parcel of faith. But nevertheless their denial that a firm assent to revealed truth is an act of faith is unfounded. On certain occasions these authors have talked of *fides historica* but such an assent, for them, can arise from merely historical study and hence falls short of saving faith. In opposition to the fiducial model, it is often pointed out that mysteries of faith can be affirmed by human reason without recourse to the Word of God, accepted in faith.

- *Affective-Experiential Model*

Dulles reserves the Affective-Experiential model for those theologians who have sought to underline the affective component in faith and the close connection between faith and experience. Among them, some maintain that the believer encounters the living Christ in his word.

For biblical grounding they cite some Pauline and Johannine texts (Romans 8: 16, Galatians 4:6 and 1 John 5:10) in which the inner testimony of the Holy Spirit appears to be something immediately perceived.

Adherents of this model are quick to show in other times other thinkers who have had such a conception of faith. In the Patristic era Pseudo-Dionysius and Maximus the Confessor connected faith with a mystical union with God.

Among the monastic theologians of the Middle Ages-and other theologians of the school of St. Victor and the Franciscan order-there was a tendency to bestow primacy to the affective dimension of faith.

During the Baroque period, some Thomists, Domingo Bañez and the Salamanca Carmelites claimed that one experiences a supernatural attractive power of the light of faith in some way. Blaise Pascal, the German Pietists, the Cambridge Platonists, and Jonathan Edwards made fashionable talk of «reasons of the heart» and of the religious affections as constituents of faith. John Wesley on his part insisted that the full assurance of faith required a perception of the inward witness of the Holy Spirit.

Friedrich Schleiermacher, who thrived during romanticism, understood faith as a state of feeling or pious affections whereby we participate in the perfection and blessedness of Christ. He argued for Christian proclamation which was a testimony to one's own experience with a view to eliciting similar experience in others. Later on, Liberal Protestants like Adolf von Harnack and Auguste Sabatier were to repeat this idea.

Liberal Protestant ideas found their way into Catholicism. George Tyrrell, the English Modernist considered faith as a faculty of religious perception that relates us to a higher world. By virtue of this faculty he claimed that the believer can intuitively re-experience the revelatory events attested in Scripture.

On the contemporary scene, Edward Schillebeeckx can be singled out as a vocal advocate of the link between faith and experience. For Schillebeeckx, believers experience the world in a different way because they belong to a tradition of faith. He says that «Christianity is not a message which has to be believed, but an experience of faith which becomes a message, and as an ex-

PLICIT message seeks to offer a new possibility of life-experience to others who hear it from within their own experience of life.»⁶¹

In Schillebeeckx's way of presenting faith-experience one detects some elements of paradox: «In our human experience we can experience something that transcends our experience and proclaims itself in that experience as unexpected grace.»⁶² Schillebeeckx also took Christian faith to have a «theological» or mystical dimension insofar as it involves a loving union with God, which is intensified in mysticism properly so called.

Embracing the Affective-Experiential Model may bring with it the danger of reducing the divine to the level of everyday empirical reality. In several cases there has been a tendency by advocates of this model to front an individualistic empiricism that undermines the social and ecclesial character of faith. Dulles notes that «[c]onflict may can arise... when the immediacy is understood as a substitute for the authoritative mediation of the content of faith through historical Revelation, prophetic and apostolic testimony, Scripture, Tradition, and the living Church.»⁶³

- *Obediential Model*

The obediential model treasures the Pauline idea of «obedience of faith.» Although its exponents are by and large Protestants, Dulles thinks that in Catholic theology Matthias Joseph Scheeben follows this trend.

Karl Barth talks of three dimensions of faith: in the first place is faith as a certain kind of knowledge (*Erkennen*), second is the faith that defers to Christ as Lord (*Anerkennen*) which leads to, third, confession (*Bekennen*). In this triad, Barth holds that the second should be treasured for it is the obedient act of acknowledgment and compliance.⁶⁴

Rudolf Bultmann's theology of faith is in continuation with his dialectical theology. He therefore considers faith as an abandonment of all attempts to save ourselves and a total surrender to God as our security. Bultmann therefore locates faith on the opposed pole of «boasting» or self-assertion. For Bultmann, faith is not part of man's ostentatious works but rather «the radical renunciation of accomplishment, the obedient submission to the God-determined way of salvation.»⁶⁵

The Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer strongly identified faith with obedience. He writes that «the road of faith passes through obedience to the call of Jesus... Only he who believes is obedient, and only he who is obedient believes.»⁶⁶ Dietrich Bonhoeffer found the slogan «justification by faith

alone» quite disturbing for it may lead some to think that they are excused from living the hard precepts of Christianity. He thus cautions that grace is costly since it cannot be divorced from the demands of discipleship: «The word of cheap grace has been the ruin of more Christians than any commandment of works.»⁶⁷

Dulles notes that «the common thread uniting the representatives of this fifth category is their conviction that the Word of God comes with a sovereign claim over the whole life of the hearer. Most of them understand obedience not in the sense of carrying out specific commands but in the broad biblical sense (*hypakoe, oboedientia*) as a kind of reverent and submissive hearing. The human person, they would say, is receptive in the process of justification, which depends wholly upon the initiative of God.»⁶⁸

On putting the accent too much on God's sovereign initiative, this model runs the risk of blurring the role of human freedom and initiative which are never lost in the believer.

- *Praxis model*

The sixth model that Dulles advances is the praxis model. Although it may be enlarged to embrace Johann Baptist Metz's political theology⁶⁹ it by and large deals with liberation theology. «Praxis» as employed in this case can be understood in the Marxist sense.⁷⁰

The nineteenth century had seen most Latin American countries gain independence. But the dream turned into disillusion due to social disorder and the fall into abject poverty by the majority of the continent's population. Theologians felt called upon to address the gloomy situation and with the then widespread influence of political theology in Europe liberation theology was born.

Liberal theology is an attempt to integrate the aspiration of a just society-with conditions in keeping with human dignity-in a Christian understanding of life and in the social-political context of Latin America from the 60s onwards.⁷¹

Much as there are different positions with liberal theology, the dominant position insists that «liberation is not just a theme which theology may deal with, but to put it more radically, it should be the perspective or criterion from which all theological activity must be structured.»⁷² Although such a radical line was already present in the 60s, it has been championed with much more vigour by the Peruvian author Gustavo Gutiérrez.⁷³ For Gutiérrez the theo-

gy of liberation calls for Christianity which is lived and really experienced only through the effective commitment with the political processes of liberation. Consequently, theology, reflection on Christian existence turns into a science only starting from the endeavour to contribute to the liberation.⁷⁴ Talking about faith, Gutiérrez will therefore say that:

To believe is to love God and to be in solidarity with the poor and exploited of this world in the midst of social confrontations and popular struggle for liberation. To believe is to proclaim the kingdom as Christ does—from the midst of the struggle that led him to his death.⁷⁵

Juan Luis Segundo, another renowned advocate of liberation theology, maintains that faith must be historically concrete through the acceptance of a specific ideology and in a Marxist-like way affirms that «faith without ideologies is dead.»⁷⁶

Dulles finds the position of liberation theology as leaving a lot to desire. «Few Christian theologians question the desirability of an active faith that displays itself in works on behalf of a better social order. But many would prefer to define faith more specifically as an interior adherence to the word of God. They would say that it is possible to be a sincere believer, a person of faith, without having any particular commitment to changing the social order.»⁷⁷

On embracing Marxist social analysis and vocabulary it is not surprising that in practice there has been an eclectic approach combining Christianity with Marxist ideas that are incompatible with the faith.

- *Personalist Model*

Generally speaking, personalism refers «any doctrine which holds the ontological primacy, ethical and social of the person. More than a well-defined system, it is a view without clearly marked off boundaries and is therefore made up of philosophical positions of different tendencies with the exaltation of the dignity of the person as the only denominator.»⁷⁸

Although it was by and large a philosophical system of thought, some most important personalist thinkers were interested in establishing between faith and philosophy. Later on, insights from personalism were widely employed in theological writings.

The personalist model is made of not only authors who are strictly speaking personalist but all those in whom Dulles detects the tendency to «object that it is too restrictive to define faith in terms of powers, faculties, and spe-

cific models of action. (And thus preferring) to define faith in terms of a new personal relationship conferring a mode of life and being.»⁷⁹ The model he refers to as personalist therefore embraces thinkers as varied as Maurice Blondel, Jean Mouroux, Henri de Lubac and Paul Tillich.

While reflecting on faith, Blondel⁸⁰ is keen to point out that any narrow view ought to be abandoned. He affirms that:

If faith increases our knowledge this is not first and foremost because it teaches us, through authoritative testimony, certain objective truths, but because it unites us to the life of a subject, because it introduces us, by loving thought, into another thought and another love... That is why faith terminates in the most realistic of the forms of knowing.⁸¹

In his book on the work of Blondel, César Izquierdo notes that for Blondel, «The action that originates from faith is not simply identified with the works of faith but it implies the beginning of a new existence in which it is the entire human being who is involved. In this way, the necessity of taking faith out of the exclusive dominion of the intellect to put it in relation with the whole person was considered.»⁸²

To Jean Mouroux⁸³, another native of Dijon goes the honour of being the pioneer in carrying out a personalist theology of faith. But as G. Moiola observes, Mouroux was a «solitary master.» Reminiscing on his life in a June 1971 interview with the Canadian theologian Giles Bourdeau, Mouroux confesses that: «I have worked alone, I have been isolated and I have travelled little.»⁸⁴ For Mouroux, «Christian faith is specified in its entirety by Christ; it is a participation in the life of a person, in the mystery of his death and resurrection; thanks to this mediation it is a trinitarian faith, and a sharing in the life of the Three Persons.»⁸⁵

«The main intention of the theology of faith that Jean Mouroux constructs is to show the need of overcoming the analytic and abstract perspective of the classical manualist theology in order to arrive at a synthetic and concrete vision which responds best to the existential conditions of Christian faith.»⁸⁶ To get this, the French theologian relies on St. Thomas and some authors like Newman, Blondel, Rousselot and Maréchal.

Mouroux understands faith to be a personal act, he argues that «faith is, of its essence, the response of the human person to the Personal God, and thus it is *the meeting of two persons*. In the act of faith the *whole* man is involved, and this explains some of the essential characteristics of faith.»⁸⁷

Also in this trend is the French theologian of the *Ressourcement* fame, Henri de Lubac. For the French Jesuit, faith «is not only a mode of knowing. It is something completely different from a simple cognition. It is an essentially personal act which, if rightly understood, involves the depths of one's being. It gives a definite orientation to one's entire being. Hence it has been said that faith is a 'total synthesis.'»⁸⁸

The theology of Paul Tillich⁸⁹ has elements that fit into Avery Dulles' personalist model. For Tillich, «Faith is a total and centered act of the personal self, the act of unconditional, infinite and ultimate concern.»⁹⁰ Tillich holds that faith has repercussions in the cognitive, volitional and affective spheres, but it precedes the distinctions between these functions. We are driven towards faith by an awareness of the infinite, in which we participate, but which we do not own as a possession. He thinks that the infinite, present and active within us, gives us the inner restlessness that is the source of faith.

Dulles credits the holistic approach of the personalist model for «overcoming the fragmentation that can arise from defining faith in terms of special faculties and functions... Faith is after all, a deeply personal relationship to a personal God, who wills to communicate himself in love. It is rooted in a grace that affects the way a person thinks, feels, and wills.»⁹¹

On the other hand, Avery Dulles notes that the Scholastics had gone out of their way to make subtle distinctions between the light of faith, the devout inclination to believe, the judgments of credibility and credentiy, and the act of faith which presupposed all these other ones. Such a view may seem out of fashion to some but could for instance help to form a judgment in a case of those who well disposed towards Revelation but do not believed in any concrete revealed truths because they have not been proposed to them.

Dulles categorically states that in theology it is possible and necessary «to break down the global phenomenon... into a variety of components, some of which may stand in the absence of others.»⁹²

3. *Faith and Reason*

Since time immemorial, Catholicism has upheld God to be knowable by both faith and reason. On acknowledging all that we get to know about God by way of testimony, faith is comes into play while the rational exercise that starts off from inference from qualities of the created universe too furnishes us with knowledge about God. There has been need to observe the right equi-

librium of these two paths to the knowledge of God for they, as it were, live in a world of constant tension. In this part we shall briefly trace the highpoints of the relationship of these two over the history of the Church and see how Avery Dulles conceived of this relationship and how he tried to present it in his works.

I. Dulles' Early Writings on Faith and Reason

In June 1995, Avery Dulles, a senior and already prestigious theologian, together with his peers who were dissatisfied with the growing trend of CTSA to antagonize the Hierarchy organised a Pre-Convention Seminar of the Catholic Theological Society of America. Fr. Dulles chose to talk about some hallmarks of a theology which lays claim on being Catholic. In the first place he put «Reason within faith»:

An operative criterion of Catholic theology since patristic times has been the supposition that faith and intelligence are friends. Theology is possible because reason is by its very nature ordered to truth and because Revelation is a manifestation of the truth of God (cfr. CDF, «Instruction on the Ecclesial Vocation of the Theologian», 24th May 1990). Catholics stand by the teaching of the First Vatican Council that «there can be no real disagreement between faith and reason, since the same God who reveals the mysteries and infuses faith has also endowed the human mind with the light of reason» (Vatican I, Constitution *Dei Filius*, ch. 4 (DS, 3017)). Confident of the harmony between faith and reason, Catholic theology avoids the pitfalls of fideism and rationalism, both of which constitute recurrent temptations for theology. Vatican I gave Catholic theology its great charter of legitimacy by declaring that human reason, while enlightened by faith, can achieve some understanding, and at that a most profitable one, of the revealed mysteries (Vatican I, Constitution *Dei Filius*, ch. 4 (DS, 3016)). The Council spoke in this connection of the analogous knowledge of the divine.⁹³

The legacy that Avery Dulles passes over to the younger generation of theologians is a conviction he had been nursing for a long time. Similar sentiments are behind what he writes in 1980: «The problem of faith and reason is not merely a pastime for theologians. It is a matter of pressing importance for the culture in which we live»⁹⁴. The words in question are the opening statements he makes in a festschrift to Karl Rahner under the patronage of the Jesuits-run Marquette University in which Dulles argues that measures must

be sought to see to it that faith imbues public life as a whole for critical reason threatens to usurp the place of spiritual values.

In *The Survival of Dogma*, Dulles studies Blessed John Henry Newman's struggles to establish the right relationship between faith and reason which like a pendulum, moved from one extreme to the other before settling for «a stance of faith without diminishing his respect for reason»⁹⁵. Blessed Newman's anguish to resolve the question is well documented in his *Oxford University Sermons*, a collection of writings which Dulles commended as «perhaps the most useful analysis of the relationship between faith and reason for our time»⁹⁶. It is of little surprise therefore that in his very first systematic approximation of the question of faith and reason Avery Dulles singles out Newman as his guide.⁹⁷ «Faith, Reason and the Logic of Discovery»⁹⁸ the third of the twelve essays collected in *The Survival of Dogma*, is an exploratory article that presents the state of the question maintaining that: «the question whether faith is reasonable has a good claim to being one of the perennial issues of Christian theology.»⁹⁹

In the *The Craft of Theology* the 1992 collection of essays which Avery Dulles only hesitantly did not call *Models of Theology*, he advocates for the «hermeneutic of continuity» under the term of post-critical theology. The once privileged neutrality is dismissed as a farce altogether. Post-critical theology «begins with a presupposition or prejudice in favour of faith... For the post critical theologian the affirmations of faith cannot be rightly probed except from within the horizon of faith... The contents of faith are known not by merely detached observation but by indwelling or participation, somewhat as we know our own body with its powers and weaknesses.»¹⁰⁰

Scientific propaganda with the help of sensationalist media has made the Galileo case a banner of the incompatibility between science and faith. John Paul II openly dealt with the case on various occasions and with amazing honesty. Taking cue from the Holy Father's remarks in 1983 at the publication of Galileo's «Dialogues Concerning Two New Sciences», Dulles wrote the essay «Theology and the Physical Sciences.» The general line of argument of the Jesuit theologian is that «reason can assist faith by enabling it to construct apologetic arguments and theological systems. Faith assists reason by extending reason's sphere into the realm of supernatural mysteries and by delivering reason from errors, thanks to the surer light of Revelation.»¹⁰¹

Dulles assigns a lot of importance to the relationship between theology and philosophy which is a corollary of the faith-reason relationship. Accord-

ing to Dulles, «it is impossible to carry out the project of systematic theology without explicitly embracing certain philosophical options»¹⁰². Greek philosophy has always enjoyed pride of place in Christianity since the experiments of the Fathers with stoicism, Platonism and the consolidation of an Aristotle-based philosophy by St. Thomas in the high mediaeval. Although Thomism came off badly in the struggles with the systems that the marked modern era, under the patronage of the Holy See it surfaced again such that by the time of Vatican II it was the dominant philosophical system. Vatican II gave a vote of confidence to pluralism of theological methods. But if a single system is thought to have carried the day, it is without doubt phenomenology stemming from Edmund Husserl. Converts to Catholicism, Max Scheler, Dietrich von Hildebrand and Edith Stein who were Husserl's disciples popularised phenomenology in Catholic circles. At the Council theological experts like Bernhard Häring, Karol Wojtyła, Edward Schillebeeckx among others were at home with the phenomenological method. Well as Dulles seems to apportion equal support to any philosophy as suited for theology, on seeing the confusion that resulted from hodgepodge procedures in theology he felt a longing for the solidity of scholasticism. Dulles feels that «for the sake of progress the Church needs a relatively stable philosophical tradition.»¹⁰³

II. Faith and Reason On the Occasion of *Fides et ratio*

On the 14th of September 1998, Pope John Paul II issued his 13th Encyclical letter, *Fides et ratio*. The document deals primarily with the relationship between faith and reason. It aims at overcoming existing rift by a return to metaphysics in philosophy and renewed emphasis on the role of reason in the search for truth. The Pope points out that faith and reason are not only compatible, but essential together. Aidan Nichols, the English Dominican theologian notes that «the debate between faith and reason whose issue, where official Catholicism is concerned, may be found as the twentieth century drew to its close in the encyclical letter *Fides et ratio* (1998) of John Paul II.»¹⁰⁴

Avery Dulles immediately understood the transcendence of the papal encyclical such that he took up the question of faith and reason with unprecedented vigour. He dedicated his spring 1999 McGinley lecture to the encyclical letter given that he was convinced that in *Fides et ratio*, John Paul II summoned philosophy to resume its original quest for eternal truth and wisdom. In 2003, Dulles contributed to *The Two Wings of Catholic Thought* an essay delving on

the historical context of *Fides et ratio* volume.¹⁰⁵ Writing in *America*, the Jesuit weekly publication shortly after the issuing of *Fides et ratio*, Avery Dulles gives an insightful review of the encyclical titled «'Faith and Reason'. A Note on the New Encyclical.»¹⁰⁶ Another writing worth mentioning is «Reason, Philosophy, and the Grounding of Faith. A Reflection on *Fides et ratio*» which appeared in the December issue of the *International Philosophical Quarterly* of Fordham University.¹⁰⁷ Other articles he penned down in a bid to popularise *Fides et ratio* are: «Faith, Reason and Wisdom»¹⁰⁸ and «Fides et Ratio and the New Evangelization.»¹⁰⁹ What follows are some key ideas that can be seen in the exposition that Avery Dulles makes of the encyclical.

Writing for *America*, Avery Dulles observes that in *Fides et ratio*, «John Paul II reaffirms the traditional teaching «in Vatican I and Leo XIII's teaching on «the relative autonomy of philosophy, the distinction between faith and reason, and their mutual complementarity.»¹¹⁰ Yet the encyclical cannot be accused of being a mere repetition of earlier ideas; Dulles sees new accents especially in an Augustinian approach.¹¹¹ In this review, which reflects Dulles' first views on reading the encyclical, he thinks that «the new encyclical presents a ringing call to philosophers and theologians alike. It challenges philosophers to restore the sapiential character of their own discipline and recover the full range of reason.»¹¹²

The second half of the nineteenth century witnessed widespread rationalism and its trademark arrogance. Some Catholic thinkers adopted a fideistic stance to counter their haughty adversaries. In 1870, dedicated a chapter of its constitution on faith to the question of how faith and reason are related. Rationalism was condemned and the solution of fideists was rejected. In his encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, Leo XIII applauded St. Thomas' masterful resolution of the problem before recommending him as an example to all. Modernism, an off-shoot of rationalism was on the receiving end of Pius X's wrath but his measures were eased by Vatican II. Other than acknowledging St. Thomas' commendable efforts to demonstrate the harmony that characterised the relationship between faith and reason¹¹³, «Vatican II gave no sustained attention to our theme; it was remarkably silent about the role of reason in preparing for the assent of faith»¹¹⁴.

In the article «Faith and Reason. From Vatican I to John Paul II» it seems to us that Dulles' central thesis is that in his 1998 encyclical *Fides et ratio*, John Paul II advances a teaching on faith and reason in keeping with the teaching of Vatican II. Like Vatican II which avoids any break with the tradi-

tional teaching of the Church, *Fides et ratio* draws from earlier Magisterium on the theme, especially Vatican I's *Dei Filius*. From an attentive reading of the encyclical, Dulles is able to note that «the present pope does not, of course, contradict Vatican I. In fact, he quotes or refers to its Constitution on Catholic Faith in favourable terms at least ten times at various points spanning the entire encyclical.»¹¹⁵

Yet this faithful adherence to the tradition before him does not impede John Paul II from addressing «the problem in a striking new way.»¹¹⁶ If conciliar pronouncements before Vatican II, were often characterised by «anathemas», *Fides et ratio* is written in a more amicable climate and so John Paul II can tend a hand out to philosophy to arise and set out in search of wisdom. «John Paul II... adopts the posture of a physician helping a patient on the road to recovery.»¹¹⁷ Such a position is reminiscent of *Gaudium et Spes* whose very opening words reaffirm the Church's sharing «the joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age.»¹¹⁸

The build up to Vatican II had seen a proliferation of writings by personalist philosophers. Profiting from the new tools, John Paul II puts across a personalist doctrine of faith. Dulles notes that «whereas Vatican I had described faith in terms of a faculty psychology as a submission of intellect and will, John Paul II prefers to describe it as a decision engaging the whole person. Knowledge through belief, he asserts, develops in a context of personal trust. The witness of the martyrs inspires confidence and requires no lengthy arguments in order to convince.»¹¹⁹ The others sources from which John Paul benefits are the Twentieth century emphasis of return to Holy Scripture and Church Fathers which Vatican I lacked since it relied primarily on medieval sources.

Well as John Paul II cites Vatican I, agreeing that «faith is superior to reason» (DF, 53), Dulles admires the Holy Father's ability to overcome the clear-cut and antagonistic distinctions between faith and reason and theology and philosophy with circular images like the one taken from the preamble of the encyclical: «faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth.»

In the 2003 article which we have analysed, Dulles seems of the view that John Paul II brings up to date Vatican I's teaching on the relationship between faith and reason cashing in on the recent developments in the world of Catholic theology.

Rino Fisichella, the newly appointed president of the recently formed Pontifical Council for the Promotion of the New Evangelisation and a re-

nowned Fundamental theologian warns that «a hurried reading of this Encyclical (*Fides et ratio*) is definitely not advisable. Valuable insights, wise comments and profound analyses would inevitably be missed»¹²⁰. Avery Dulles would surely concur with him in this given that in his 7th April 1999 McGinley lecture he brings to light another of the multi-faceted aspects of the encyclical.¹²¹ The aspect in question is that of the possibility of a Christian philosophy.

The debate was at its bitterest in the inter-wars period largely in the French-speaking world. What had started as a debate between Roman Catholics and secular Rationalists ended up revealing wide rifts even among the Catholic.

La Sorbonne philosopher Emile Bréher scoffed at the idea while Etienne Gilson strongly upheld it to the extent of devoting two chapters of a book he published on his 1931-2 Gifford Lectures on the topic¹²². Neo-Scholastic thinkers especially of the Louvain School such as Fernand Van Steenberghen rejected the term «Christian philosophy» as either the product of, or liable to produce, misunderstandings. Henri de Lubac and Maurice Blondel cast their weight behind Gilson although qualifying the extent of their support.

«With his customary courage, he dares to challenge current trends in both philosophy and theology and in so doing raises the question of Christian philosophy in a new form. From the very beginning of the encyclical John Paul II reminds his readers that philosophy, in its etymological sense, means the love of wisdom. Philosophy, therefore, is a human search for truth about ultimate questions; it is a journey awakened by wonder springing from contemplation of creation.»¹²³ In *Fides et ratio* John Paul II weighs in on the old question of whether there exist a Christian philosophy. Anyone who would expect a facile answer along the lines of yes or no, or to point out the victors and the vanquished would be disappointed. The Pope gives a rather nuanced answer which Dulles, who was well cognizant of the intricacies, appreciates:

In terms of the debates of the 1930s, John Paul II's positions differ from those of all the principal contestants. To the basic question whether there is such a thing as Christian philosophy he answers, against Bréhier and Van Steenberghen, that there is. Against Blondel, he holds that such philosophy is Christian in its substance and content, not simply in its orientation. Against Gilson, he holds that there can be a valid philosophy that is not influenced by Revelation, and that the Christian philosopher need not be a theologian. And finally, against Maritain he contends that Christian philosophy can be prac-

ticed in a variety of styles, and is not necessarily Thomistic. On the whole, the Pope's positions coincide most closely with those of de Lubac, who sought to mediate between Blondel and Gilson.¹²⁴

The fact that John Paul II shows that all the parties to the quarrel have some elements of truth to their side may explain why the Pope pushes for pluralism. He applauds St. Thomas' masterful way of explaining the relationship between faith and reason while leaving it clear that the Catholic Church has no official philosopher but her children enjoy complete liberty at the hour of employing a given philosophy in their theologising.

4. *Critical Evaluation of Dulles' thought on Models, Faith and Reason*

The seven models of faith are the classification in which Avery Dulles places the various ideas on faith. They help to make intelligible a situation which is quite complex. Avery Dulles claims that he sees «no reason why faith, without loss of its identity, could not have all these dimensions. Where one or another of these characteristics is lacking, faith must be judged to be mutilated or imperfect.»¹²⁵ From the above, it turns out that Dulles does not explicitly state where his understanding of faith should be placed. Developing his ecclesiology, the models he advanced were just a starting point and in his theology of Revelation, the five models gave way to «symbolic mediation.» After presenting the «models of faith», Dulles, as it were, leaves the debate hanging and turns to other aspects of faith.

In 1983, Avery Dulles published *Models of Revelation* which has gone down as his most probing and original work. After analysing the existing conceptions of Revelation, Dulles employs symbol as a dialectical tool «to enrich and correct the existing models and to achieve a fruitful cross-fertilization.»¹²⁶ The end product is the view of Revelation as symbolic mediation. With the help of symbolic mediation, Dulles presents broad lines of a symbolic Christology, symbolic theology of religions, symbolic ecclesiology, and symbolic eschatology, to mention but a few. In fact, other theologians have based themselves on the concept of Revelation that Dulles advances for further theological reflections.¹²⁷

From symbolic realism too a theology of faith, «symbolic faith» can be sketched. Dulles observes that:

The symbolic approach seeks to escape both subjectivism and objectivism. Unlike subjectivism it holds that faith does not create its own object but defers

to a Revelation that comes from God through meaningful symbols. Faith, as the subjective attitude, and Revelation, as the affirmed content, coexist and constitute each other by their mutual union.¹²⁸

From the above it seemed that developments in Avery Dulles' theology of faith were headed in this direction. With the trend that many believed that Dulles had set, John Connolly writes that: «Today many contemporary theologians and philosophers describe the language of faith as symbolic language. In his book *Models of Revelation*, Avery Dulles points out that the idea of Revelation as symbolic disclosure has achieved wide popularity in the twentieth century. According to this view, God's personal manifestation in Jesus Christ is always mediated in and through symbols.»¹²⁹

Building on Dulles' understanding of symbol, Justin J. Kelly S.J, the Detroit Mercy professor of systematic theology, wrote in the Festschrift dedicated to Avery Dulles that:

Not only Revelation, therefore, but faith too has a symbolic structure. It realizes itself in and through external signs, signs mysteriously both distinct from and one with itself. The Christian believer of today who prays the creed, or gazes upon the image of Jesus in the crib or on the cross, finds his or her own faith there given external or symbolic form. In such forms faith both knows itself and is led beyond itself. One knows God in contemplating the signs of God's redemptive presence in human life and knows one's deepest self at the same time. Faith enters, then, into both the original constitution or revelatory symbols and their later reception and communication.¹³⁰

The absence of any mention of «symbolic faith» whose germs were contained in the concept of symbolic realism propounded in *Models of Revelation* is a real surprise to any reader of *The Assurance of Things Hoped For* Dulles' mature work-and perhaps last word on the theology of faith.

In *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, Dulles starts with a quick run through of the various positions of theologians on faith. The enterprise on which the American theologian is reminiscent of Roger Aubert to whom belongs the merit of having produced a comprehensive history of the theology of faith¹³¹. Dulles is aware of Aubert's great project but since a translation of it is lacking and unlikely to be carried out given that it would call for including the developments since Vatican II. Furthermore, Dulles feels that Aubert's treatment of the question is selective; developments in Protestant theology are wholly overlooked.

In treating the history of the theology of faith, it is without doubt that Dulles does a decent job. Reviewing *The Assurance of Things Hoped For*, George S. Worgul, Jr. owns up that «the asset of the historical section lies in its comprehensiveness. It is clearly the best and most complete historical overview of the theology of faith in Christian thought presently available in English.»¹³² Yet executing such a task in a little over 160 pages meant that some important aspects are treated in a telegraphic manner. For instance, Dulles treats the theology of faith of Vatican I in 3 pages well as Aubert in his *Le problème de l'acte de foi* dedicated it 200 of the work's 800 pages.

At the turn of the twentieth century, philosophy had resigned its prestige of yesteryears which John Paul II tried to rouse in his landmark encyclical *Fides et ratio*. Dulles too had always been convinced that philosophy ought to give more in the domain of faith. No wonder it would seem to Dulles that Newnan, his hero, «would heartily approve of the defense of philosophical reason in John Paul II's encyclical, *Faith and Reason*, which declares: 'It is faith which stirs reason to move beyond all isolation and willingly run risks so that it may attain whatever is beautiful, good, and true. Faith thus becomes the convinced and convincing advocate of reason' (§56).»¹³³ In a way, Dulles embraced *Fides et ratio* as a confirmation of what he had been teaching over the years on the nature of the relationship between faith and reason.

Dulles received the pluralism in approaching the sacred discipline of theology which Vatican II ushered in with both hands. He therefore experimented with the now famous models in nearly every aspect of theology he handled. In *Fides et ratio*, John Paul II pays his respect to the genius of St. Thomas but to the joy of the Jesuit theologian reiterates that the Church has no theology of its own.¹³⁴ But it is also good to point out that with the passing of time; much as Dulles remained ill at ease with the «excessive uniformity» propounded by advocates of Scholasticism he was later to decry what at times appears to be an almost anarchic pluralism.

Magisterial documents are normally characterised by sobriety even when dealing with issues of utmost importance or of a polemical nature. Given his capacity to read between lines, Avery Dulles can dare to drive home some points with great force. From what John Paul II says of the relationship between faith and reason Avery Dulles draws consequences for how theology ought to be related to philosophy. For Dulles, «Faith and reason, as described by John Paul II, are united like the two natures of Christ, which coexisted without confusion or alteration in a single person»¹³⁵.

Much as Avery Dulles claims that there is nothing original in his theology of faith¹³⁶, reading it presented in a systematic way as is the case in *The Assurance of Things Hoped For* is a real joy. The American theologian puts to the disposition of his readers his great erudition and encyclopedic knowledge on theology. If he had done it before in ecclesiology, apologetics and Revelation, he does it albeit in a more discrete way, in the theology of faith.

B. THEOLOGIAN OF CONVERSION

Conversion is one of those perennial themes that cut across all epochs of Christianity. Yet this does not mean in any way that all conversions are alike. Dulles is part of the advance party of intellectual converts who since the 1930s and the 1940s of the last century have joined the Catholic Church in the United States and England. Dulles left a detailed account of his conversion and this highly rational process, in his case, has left a mark not only in his personality but also in his career as a theologian.

Here, ample space is dedicated to Dulles' proposal of a Fundamental theology based on conversion; finally we shall review the place of experience in Dulles' entire theology of conversion.

1. *Conversion Re-visited*

The thrust of the argument in this part is that the conversion process that Avery Dulles underwent had repercussions in both his life, as is obvious, and his thought as well. Regarding his thought, such influence showed through first and foremost in Avery Dulles' ideas on conversion. Avery Dulles churned out some thought provoking writings most important of which are: «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion»¹³⁷ in which he argues for a wider understanding of what conversion is and how such a conception of conversion affects Fundamental theology; the article on «Conversion» in the *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*¹³⁸ provides a panoramic view of the topic; Recent reflections on conversion, among which Dulles' falls, have advocated for the taking into consideration of experience in the entire process of conversion.

Gregorian University professors, René Latourelle and Rino Fisichella directed a grand enterprise of publishing a dictionary of Fundamental theology,

*Dizionario di Teologia Fondamentale*¹³⁹ in its Italian original. This was only similar to the landmark four-volume *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique*¹⁴⁰ which had unfortunately passed out of date. Latourelle and Fisichella assembled an *omnium-gatherum* team of about 100 contributors to write nearly 250 articles that would reflect the change from apologetics to Fundamental theology. The change was mainly marked by a shift from confrontation to dialogue in relation to other religions and the world. Avery Dulles wrote the article on conversion which is of interest to us here.¹⁴¹

After making a succinct study of conversion from Sacred Scripture to the various epochs of Church history, Avery Dulles shows how the topic is handed in Vatican II documents and how contemporary theologians have sought on one hand to explain the Council's teaching and on the other hand to build on to its developments.

Regarding the teaching of Vatican II on conversion, Dulles does not go to *Dei verbum* dogmatic constitution on Revelation. He is rather interested in the declaration *Ad gentes* for which «conversion begins with being 'snatched away from sin and led into the mystery of the love of God, who calls people to enter into a personal relationship with Him in Christ'.»¹⁴² He crowns it all by citing another Vatican II statement from the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, a document felt to be a typically American contribution to the Council: «Conversion must be morally and physically free; unworthy tactics of proselytization are to be avoided. The convert's motives should be scrutinized, and if necessary, purified (AG 13; cfr. DH 11).»¹⁴³

Given the ecumenical sensitiveness that characterized the Second Vatican Council, in the Council's literature, the term «conversion» is limited to winning faithful for the Church from the ranks of those who have never received Baptism as opposed to those who had received Baptism in communities not in full communion with Rome.¹⁴⁴

As we have seen above, conversion has always accompanied the Christian faith. But systematic reflexion on conversion has not been equally wide spread. The understanding of conversion in the classical tradition represented by St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas took it as «a process by which an individual turns to God and becomes more closely united to him.»¹⁴⁵ This process is a free response to God's self-gift in Christ and the Holy Spirit. Conversion normally occurs in a gradual way, but sometimes manifests itself in intense peak experiences and in a radical shift of one's mental and emotional horizons.

From the modern trends Avery Dulles identifies conversion as theistic, Christian and ecclesial. Theistic conversion refers to reverting to God as transcendental reality. Christian conversion as understood by Dulles means embracing Jesus Christ as the supreme manifestation of God. Finally, ecclesial conversion is a turn to the Church as a community of faith in which one lives his or her personal commitment. Dulles is quick to warn against any separation among these types of conversion given that in practice it is impossible to show any clear-cut boundaries.

On considering the various proposals that were advanced after the Council to explain the phenomenon of conversion Avery Dulles was greatly impressed by that advanced by Lonergan.¹⁴⁶ A fellow Jesuit, Bernard Lonergan (1904-1984) was a specialist in philosophy, theology as well as economics. His theology is characterised by a Thomism that toes the same line as that of Joseph Maréchal and Karl Rahner. Given that it self consciously adapted itself to Kantian thought it has come to be known as Transcendental Thomism. Lonergan's preoccupation with method related aspects of theology made him concentrate on the need of conversion as a way of renewing theology. At the level of the individual, a process of conversion guarantees authenticity. In his reflection on conversion, Lonergan distinguishes three types of conversion, namely: intellectual, moral and religious conversion.

First Lonergan puts across intellectual conversion which he conceives as «the type of consciousness that deliberates, makes judgments of value, decides, acts responsibly and freely.»¹⁴⁷ Lonergan presents intellectual conversion as a process of liberation and discovery by which one becomes aware of his or her own conscious operations and processing. One who undergoes an intellectual conversion therefore becomes aware that she is not like looking and that the real human world we live in is constituted by acts of meaning. Lonergan felt that it was central if one were to assess her own thought processes and make sense of them.

In advancing moral conversion in the second place, Lonergan is keen to point out that the knowledge attained in intellectual conversion is directed towards values as opposed to mere satisfaction. He thus affirms that «moral conversion consists in opting for the truly good, even for value against satisfaction when value and satisfaction conflict.»¹⁴⁸

In religious conversion, Lonergan underlines the need to surpass the moral aspect to arrive at a more transcendent conversion. It is, however, the most profound aspect of conversion as it is directed to the ultimate concern. For the

Canadian Jesuit, religious conversion is other-worldly falling in love. «It is total and permanent self-surrender without conditions, qualifications, resolutions.»¹⁴⁹

Any attempt to clarify what the term conversion means is sure to a real dogfight. Avery Dulles notes that «In contemporary usage the term ‘conversion’ applies especially to sudden and unexpected advances often involving a passage from alienation to reconciliation.»¹⁵⁰ But Dulles is aware of how important it is to steer clear of such controversy to restore the term to its Christian understanding that reads in conversion a relation to God in a radically new way grateful to Him for his saving action through Christ. Such an understanding hinders any separation between the conversion process and the transmission of the Gospel.

2. *Conversion as the Essence of Fundamental Theology*

Fundamental theology being a new discipline, the debate as to what it really is still occupies theologians and it may take some time before it is amicably put to rest.¹⁵¹ But the traditional understanding sees Fundamental theology as «intended to express that the apologetic task can be and should be integrated into a comprehensive theological reflection: in the believing reason’s self-examination of its foundations and presuppositions.»¹⁵² Avery Dulles finds such a conception of Fundamental theology unsatisfactory. He propounds the definition of Fundamental theology as «a reflection on the structures of religious conversion and, more specifically, those of conversion to Christianity.»¹⁵³ Here we shall examine closely the Jesuit theologian’s proposal.

The way Dulles understands conversion is in line with how his Jesuit confrere, Bernard Lonergan, defines it underlining the radical nature and the total transformation which conversion brings about.¹⁵⁴ Much as conversion is a wholesome process, for purposes of study, Dulles distinguishes between faith as seen from the viewpoint of the convert and that of the believing community. But with such a way of proceeding, the American theologian is conscious that the two are concurrent and mutually dependent. In summing it all up, Dulles argues strongly for a study of faith as influenced by the community of faith and not merely an individual decision.

In a World reeling with effects of Fundamentalism, it is important to explain how conversion-the process which leads to the making of an act of faith-is reasonable and not a mere blind leap. Dulles examines some options which have been put forward to furnish such an explanation.

Some theologians, including Lonergan extend the boundaries of conversion beyond Christianity arguing that even among the unevangelized, one finds a Fundamental act of faith which is a result of an interior gift of grace. But this position does not convincingly show the radical nature of the Christian message, that is to say, we can now relate to God in a new way, thanking and trusting him because of what he has actually done for us in the incarnate life, death, and resurrection of his Son. Dulles faults these theologians for limiting faith to being merely a transcendental experience of God, taking place in the inwardness of the human spirit, of minimizing «the historical element in the Christian religion and to overlook the crucial role of mediation through the living community of faith.» Dulles instead argues «that to come to Christian faith from any other stance... is a radically new discovery requiring that kind of heuristic process here described as conversion.»¹⁵⁵

Dulles thinks that neither does the traditional school of Fundamental theology, in wishing to account for conversion by way of demonstrative reasoning which relies on historically accessible facts put across a solid case. This approach's main drawback lies in adopting a positivism that oversimplifies the process of explaining the veracity of prophecies and miracles.

Conversion, therefore, cannot be grounded in a commonly accessible transcendental faith nor in rationally demonstrated historical events yet it is not a blind and irrational leap into the dark. Following Michael Polanyi, Dulles affirms that the vital context of conversion is of faith.¹⁵⁶ He asserts that «every intellectual stance, including all religions and all secular ideologies, rests upon a multitude of unspecifiable and unverifiable assumptions, and in that sense may be called a *faith*.»¹⁵⁷ And well as one may employ various criteria, pragmatic or not so pragmatic, at the hour of choosing a religious faith what carries the day is a religion's «ability, or apparent ability, to satisfy those hungers of the human spirit which cannot be satisfied apart from faith.» The Jesuit scholar further claims that:

The concrete experience of these hungers will vary from person to person and from culture to culture; but there seems to be a generic human drive to be known, valued, and loved; to be drawn into communion with others; to be delivered from death and from the threat of final absurdity. A faith which offers even a provisional glimpse of ultimate meaning and abiding value will normally have great power to attract believers.¹⁵⁸

One can only profess the Christian faith thanks to the mediation of the Church's ministry by way of testimony. As the Pauline dictum has it, *fides ex auditu* (Rom. 10:17). At the heart of Christian testimony is the conveying of the good news by word, be it written or spoken. Avery Dulles is quick to point out that there is more to St. Paul's maxim than meets the eye. This is because words only convey information yet information in itself does not convert anyone given that it lies at the level of previously existing thought category well as conversion brings about a real radical transformation. The same can be said of words employed in discursive argumentation. Convincing someone with logical argumentation is one thing and disposing the person in question to accept new categories of thought is quite another. Testimony only appeals to the extent of lifting one from his or her hitherto limited horizons because it is an expression of personal conviction. Genuine conversions are normally wrought out from deep knowledge of a prospective convert of people who despite their weaknesses strive to live the demands of the Christian faith to the fullest.¹⁵⁹

To accentuate further the centrality of conversion, Dulles draws from the category of symbol which pervades all his theology. On this occasion he takes symbol to be «a sign which embodies a message and manifests the presence of the reality it signifies.»¹⁶⁰ A symbol understood in this way goes beyond a mere sign by calling upon people to make their own that which the symbol points to. In so doing symbols draw one to discover hitherto unsuspected new horizons thus shifting the limits of his or her world. In this way, Dulles credits symbols for bringing about the kind of transformation which conversion calls for.¹⁶¹ Recourse to symbol permits Dulles to show that the gospel message must not only be spoken or written but symbolically enfolded in actual life. Dulles, that old warhorse of apologetics even credits the successful incarnation of the gospel in the Church's actual practice as far better than any well elaborated programme of apologetics. Such insistence is because Dulles is convinced that:

For the Christian believer the translation of the gospel into practice is not something extra, over and above the process of conversion. It is part and parcel of the conversion itself. Conversion is not a mere change of ideas or objectives. More fundamentally, it is a transformation of the person who is converted. The believer becomes a different being. The convert acquires a new identity, a new self, and for this reason it is customary for Christian converts, in baptism, to take a new name—a Christian name, signifying this new identity.¹⁶²

Dulles conceives of conversion as complete only after the individual has been incorporated into the community of faith. The new identity is one that each Christian shares with others. Our new convert sees and hears no longer with his own eyes and ears alone, but with those of the Church to which he now belongs. She thinks its thoughts and it thinks in her. The resulting intimate relationship between the believer and the Church in which he or she indwells is for Dulles akin to the knowledge we have of our bodies and all their weaknesses.

In this article in which Dulles advances his proposal on the nature of Fundamental theology he sternly warns against those approaches to Fundamental theology which in craving to win acceptance, attempt to make Christian faith plausible to persons who have no experience of the gospel. He is well aware that the Christian message is «a stumbling block to Jews and foolishness to Gentiles» (1 Cor 1:18-31) features that ought not to be surrendered. Forfeiting these aspects of Christianity runs the risk of obscuring the very horizons of the faith making conversions nothing but a sham.

3. *The Conversion Experience*

The perennial problem of faith and reason which was subject to our discussion earlier lies behind the question as to how one comes to believe. There are two basic postures which are held antagonistically: the first one talks of rational conviction as prior to any decision to believe and the second one insists on faith as an act of loving trust with nothing to do with reason. It should be borne in mind that the first group risks falling into rationalism while fideism lurks in the shadows of the latter. A group that is gaining ground is that of authors who, while still affirming the importance of reason in the act of faith, are more inclined to maintain that an exceptional experience of God best explains how conversion takes place and adhering to faith.

In his studies of faith, Dulles came to increasingly give more space to experience while dealing with how one comes to embrace and keep the faith:

Informal or tacit reasoning plays a greater role than formal reasoning in the approach to faith. This conclusion may be reinforced from the very nature of religious conversion. Formal reasoning always works within the framework of the already known; it cannot validate a radically new perspective implying a fresh set of principles. Yet this is precisely what is required for religious con-

version. Faith, then, is initially achieved by a mysterious process of discovery in which the human mind, impelled by grace, lights upon a truth beyond all that it could logically derive from the data of common experience.¹⁶³

Dulles draws an analogy between religious discovery and scientific discovery. The «Eureka» of the scientist is akin to the joyous exclamation of saints which is on the lips of converts. Augustine could not restrain himself from uttering those famous words: «Late have I loved you, O beauty ever ancient and ever new! Late have I loved you!»¹⁶⁴ Perhaps not with the same intensity, but converts still utter similar words or at least they are characterized by these very same sentiments.

These ideas, taken from *The Assurance of the Things Hoped For* (1995), his mature book with his complete theology of faith, are an echo of what Dulles had already hinted at in earlier publications like the widely acclaimed *The Survival of Dogma* (1971), «Revelation and Discovery» an article contributed to a festschrift to Karl Rahner and the March 1990 Laurence McGinley Lecture entitled: «Faith and Experience. Strangers? Rivals? Partner?» In advancing these views on experience, Dulles is indebted mainly to Michael Polanyi¹⁶⁵ and Blessed John Henry Newman.¹⁶⁶

In what follows we seek to look at Avery Dulles' handling of experience. Such an exploration of the topic will furnish us with answers as to how the Jesuit theologian relates it to conversion and once one has converted how experience continues to function. But before embarking on such a journey we would like to shed some light on experience as employed in this context.

Experience is a weasel word par excellence. Michael J. Oakeshott opens his landmark book on the subject lamenting: «'Experience,' of all the words in the philosophic vocabulary, is the most difficult to manage; and it must be the ambition of every writer reckless enough to use the word to escape the ambiguities it contains.»¹⁶⁷ For a word which originally meant a process of testing or trial, empiricists came to see it as pointing to cogent evidence given by concrete facts. Matters are complicated by the fact that over the long history of philosophical thought, each epoch has advanced a way of conceiving experience. Tentatively, Dulles opts to take experience «to signify whatever is perceived in an encounter between a conscious subject and an immediately given object.»¹⁶⁸

The point of departure for any intent at making a worthy contribution to the nature of the relationship between faith and experience is explaining the nature of the experience of God. For starters, Revelation states it clearly

that direct contact with the divine is out of the question: «You cannot see My face, for man may not see Me and live» (*Exodus* 33:20). Dulles observes that much as direct knowledge of God is out of the question, not all is lost for «we perceive ourselves, no doubt, as reaching out in knowledge and love beyond all finite realities toward the unconditioned Absolute. In some extended sense of the word we may be said to perceive the infinite as the ultimate term toward which the human spirit is oriented.»¹⁶⁹ In such a scheme reason and experience contribute to one's coming to faith and even after realising this objective the two continue enriching one another in a mutual way. Drawing from Jean Mouroux, Dulles points out that faith being a personal act is under one aspect an experience. As a form of religious experience it is an act by which one becomes aware of oneself in the presence of God.¹⁷⁰

The experience of faith permeates the believer's entire life, it «is lived out progressively through temptations and struggles that reveal its character as an unmerited gift, and through consolations that point forward to the final fulfilment.»¹⁷¹ In Dulles' understanding, faith enables the believer to experience God «not in the crude empirical sense, as though God were an object alongside of others, but in the sense that the perspective of faith allows one to perceive created things as mediations of God's self-communication.»¹⁷² Well as some modern authors put forward «depth-experiences» as a possible explanation as to why Christians persevere.¹⁷³ Dulles is of the view that indeed «God can give consoling experiences of grace, but he can also allow the soul to proceed, without privileged experiences, by the common light of Revelation as mediated through the Church. Often... believers live out their faith-commitment in a quiet manner, if not in a state of aridity.»¹⁷⁴

Dulles acknowledges that the relationship between faith and experience is rather complicated. It fits into categories that at first sight are irreconcilable; the two stand out as strangers, rivals and partners at the same time. The American thinker states: «It might seem that they are *strangers* because they do not meet. Experience deals with inner-worldly realities, but faith deals with God as he freely turns toward us in love. Faith has to do with a realm to which experience gives no access—the inner nature of God, his saving plans and the ultimate end for which we are destined after we die.»¹⁷⁵ Much as this observation of tension between faith and ordinary experience holds true, it is generally among Protestant circles where it tends to be highlighted. A Catholic conception of the relationship between faith and experience tends to reconcile the two. As Dulles explains, «experience raises the questions that make faith

meaningful, and impels us to reach out toward the God whom faith proclaims. Outer experience puts us in contact with the signs that make faith credible, and enable us to put our faith into practice in the world. Without experience, faith would be impossible, and even if it were possible it would be sterile.»¹⁷⁶ Dulles maintains that experience too gains from the relationship with faith. Faith enriches the believer's human experience enabling her to see the world with new eyes. For the believer, the good things of life are perceived as God's gifts and suffering itself finds meaning. It is on this count that Avery Dulles asserts that «no one who has been caught up in the love of God as displayed in Jesus Christ should be content to say that faith is a mere stranger or rival of experience. Faith and experience are friends, and at times they are so closely conjoined that it is hard to draw the line between them. Faith itself becomes experience in the believer's encounter with the world.»¹⁷⁷

Dulles laments the little appreciation of the experiential dimension of faith among most Catholics. But in Catholic circles experience fell under suspicion due to the conception that it had taken in liberal Protestantism and Modernism. Liberal Protestants and Modernist had considered experience from a subjective point of view and thus reducing it to mere sentimentalism. It is widely held that one of the landmark achievements of 20th Century Catholic theology is the recovery of experience as integral part of theology. A number of authors have underlined that the three bases of religion are authority, tradition and experience. To the French personalist Jean Mouroux should be credited for having freed experience from the clutches of radical subjectivism. Others thinkers whose work can be said to be in the same line are: Blessed John Henry Newman, Emmanuel Mounier, Henri Bouillard, Gabriel Marcel and Martin Buber. The Second Vatican Council (1962-1965), especially in its pastoral constitution *Gaudium et spes* picked out the best insights of these authors considering experience in terms of the commitment and integral response of the person, with all his or her spiritual, psychological and emotional potentialities, to the call of Christ.

C. FAITH AND SALVATION

The term salvation is employed to refer to the preservation or deliverance from harm, ruin, or loss which human beings find themselves confronted with. A rather generic term, it encompasses among other things deliverance

from ailments, realizing spiritual goals, national liberation, and attaining social justice. With all these features in mind, «salvation may be understood as the state of full and definite realization of all the aspirations of the human heart in the different aspects of a person's existence.»¹⁷⁸ In Christianity, salvation embraces all these features before taking on a distinguishing aspect, which is communion with God. The communion in question is arrived at through the acceptance and reception of divine gifts which orients the human being's entire existence opening them up to Love. Redemption, forgiveness, justification and sanctification are individual aspects of salvation.

One of the vexing questions is the interpretation of the axiom with Patristic pedigree, *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The skirmishes regarding a radical presentation of the doctrine in the middle of the last century were orchestrated by people known to Avery Dulles and so we shall reserve some space for that question. Dulles re-visited the question on several occasions; his stand shall be put across below.

The gravity of salvation-related problems is highlighted by the fact that the painful schism of the Church in the West stems from a dispute regarding the way salvation is accessed. The novel interpretation that Martin Luther gave to the justification of the sinner by God was unacceptable to the Church. In a bid to mend bridges with the Protestants the question of Justification has taken centre stage. Avery Dulles' engagement in ecumenism has seen him handle the question and make interesting contributions. We shall present the basic ideas of the debate and look at the American theologian's in put in the discussion.

Interest in non-Christian religions reached fever-pitch levels after the Second Vatican Council. The development of a treatise for the theology of religions with its own method and structure is in the offing. Inspired by the desire to enter into dialogue with the world religions, some theologians have tended to compromise the perennial teachings of the Church. In order to remind them of the basic principles that ought to guide any Catholic theologian engaged in dialogue with those religions, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith issued the declaration *Dominus Iesus* in 2000. The Declaration has had reverberating effects in virtually all sectors. Avery Dulles was party to the debate that opened and that still goes on. We shall look at what he had to say and what influence it has had over the years.

The aftermath of the Council has seen a proliferation of theologies which have clearly undermined the Church's evangelization drive. In order to arrest the adverse effects of these theologies and other hindrances to the spreading

of the Good News of Christ, the Roman Pontiffs have put evangelization as a priority. Avery Dulles came to appreciate the efforts of the Vicars of Christ and for over 30 years, a number of his conferences and writings have revolved around the theme. Anyone looking for something original in these writings of the Jesuit theologian would be thoroughly disappointed. But as we shall see, the way Dulles conveys the message has some refreshing aspect.

But this teaching set out in the writings and action of the Apostles had been put forward plainly by our Lord. St. Mark winds up his Gospel narration with the command that Jesus gives to his disciples: «Go into the whole world and proclaim the gospel to every creature. Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved; whoever does not believe will be condemned» (Mark 16:15-16).

Among the various scenes which the fourth Gospel puts across to underline the importance of faith for salvation, we have one prompted by the half-heated reaction of Jesus' listeners towards the end of his life. Our Lord makes it clear that refusal to believe him is downright rejection of the Father which will bring with it condemnation on the last day, while believing in him dispels any shadow of darkness (cfr. Jn 12:44-50). St. John concludes his Gospel affirming that he has undertaken such an enterprise so that his audience «may (come to) believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through this belief you may have life in his name.» (Jn 20:31).

1. *Salvation and Explicit Faith in Christ*¹⁷⁹

I. The teaching of Theologians and Magisterium

Much as Sacred Scripture is clear with regard to the necessity of faith for salvation, the question as to whether someone not explicitly professing the Christian faith can possibly be saved was left to theological speculation.

In general terms there was wide consensus from the beginning that for one to be saved, he or she must explicitly have faith in Christ. In the 3rd century, apologetics gave way to theology of a more systematic study. It was at this juncture that the need for explicit faith in Christ so as to be saved was taught as doctrine. This took the form of the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. Dulles shades a bit of light to the origins of this teaching: «The axiom 'Outside the Church no salvation' was originally used against Christian heretics and schismatics, but after the establishment of Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, the axiom was directed against Jews and pagans.»¹⁸⁰

Some Church Fathers like St. Gregory of Nyssa and St. John Chrysostom thought that with Christianity as the official religion of the Roman Empire, no one could allege not having heard the Gospel as an excuse against explicitly professing faith in Christ. The position of these Eastern Fathers was adopted in the West by St. Ambrose, St. Augustine and St. Fulgentius of Ruspe. The latter gave the axiom a rigorous interpretation.

St. Thomas Aquinas' position is by and large representative of the medieval epoch. In the *Summa Theologiae* he makes it clear that «after the time of grace revealed, both leaders and simple people are bound to have explicit faith in the mysteries of Christ, especially with regard to those points that are commonly celebrated and publicly taught in the Church, such as the articles of the creed concerning the Incarnation, discussed above.»¹⁸¹

The reason the *Angelic Doctor* emphasizes the need for explicit faith in Christ is because at his time the widely held opinion was that all humanity had been evangelized. Yet in his commentary on the *Sentences* and in his *De Veritate* he allows for an excuse, the hypothetical case of a boy raised in the wild among beasts. In such a case where learning, the central articles of faith is out of question, but the interested party strives to observe the principles of the moral law, «God would either reveal to him by internal inspiration the things that it was necessary to believe, or would direct a preacher of the faith to him, as he sent Peter to Cornelius, *Acts 10*.»¹⁸² Dulles observes that this teaching is missing in later and more mature teaching of St. Thomas, «in the *Summa theologiae*, whether for the sake of brevity or as a result of further reflection, he makes no mention of special providences on behalf of inculpable unbelievers.»¹⁸³

In the Magisterium, literal interpreters of the axiom «Outside the Church no salvation» normally cite the Council of Florence's *Decree for the Jacobites* (1442) in which it is asserted that: «The Holy Roman Church firmly believes, professes, and preaches that none of those who exist outside of the Catholic Church –not only pagans but also Jews or heretics and schismatics– can become sharers of eternal life; rather, they will go into the eternal fire 'that was prepared for the devil and his angels'(Mt 25:41) unless, before the end of their lives, they are joined to that same Church.»¹⁸⁴ Other magisterial documents with a similar tone are *Firmiter credendum* of The Fourth Lateran Council¹⁸⁵ and Boniface VIII's bull *Unam Sanctam*¹⁸⁶.

But since the pontificate of Pius IX, there has been a tendency to put forward this doctrine in a nuanced way. In a passage of his 1863 encyclical *Quanto*

conficiamur moerore, Pius IX warns against the radicalism that was present in some circles on various occasions.¹⁸⁷ By the time of Vatican II the question is thought to be history and so it is treated just in passing. *Lumen gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, after asserting that Christ is the one and only way of salvation, adds that faith and baptism are requisite, and that membership in the Church is also indispensable, at least for those who know that God has made the Church necessary.¹⁸⁸

II. *Extra ecclesiam nulla salus* and the Events at Boston

A few doctrinal errors have had as much echo in public life as the literal interpretation which Leonard Feeney, S.J., and his followers gave to *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* at St. Benedict's Centre in Boston in the late 1940s. *Time*, the famous American weekly magazine, gave the case wide coverage and the demise of the Jesuit priest was reported as well. Avery Dulles had to deal with different questions rising from either uninformed parties who thought he was linked to these ideas due to his past connection with the Centre or the need to tackle this thorny issue in ecclesiology. Dulles lamented that well as debates on the meaning and value of the adage «Outside the Church no salvation» are related to a classical theme in theology they were not that exciting to him.¹⁸⁹ We agree with Avery Dulles that no study of this question can be complete without any space dedicated to the theology of St. Benedict's Centre.¹⁹⁰ It is with this in mind that we dedicate some ample space to the events that occurred at the Centre in question.

The usually serene intellectual environment at Boston was disturbed by vehement claims that the Church should condemn anything that did not literally adhere to the ancient adage *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. Voices emanating from St. Benedict's Centre accused Richard J. Cushing the archbishop of Boston for siding with the heretics. Meanwhile Bishop Cushing sought recourse to Rome with regard to Feeney's doctrine. Rome's reply came in form of the declaration of 8th August 1949 which rejected the radical overtones of Feeney's interpretation of the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*. The Holy Office in fact stressed that «this dogma must be understood in that sense in which the Church herself understands it. For, it was not to private judgments that Our Savior gave for explanation those things that are contained in the deposit of faith, but to the teaching authority of the Church.»¹⁹¹

With the growing uproar, in August 1948, Feeney's Jesuit superiors asked Feeney to leave St. Benedict's for a teaching post at the Holy Cross

College.¹⁹² Faced with a choice between St. Benedict's – which now stood out for pressing for a literal interpretation of *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* – and the Society of Jesus, Feeney cast his lot with the Centre.

As we observed earlier, Dulles left St. Benedict's Centre for the Jesuits' novitiate before the group's radical doctrine had crystallized, and there is no evidence of Dulles' regular contact with the group after he had left. It therefore goes without saying that any effort to link the Jesuit theologian with Feeneyism is rather farfetched. But since the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* reappears from time to time in contemporary theology; let us examine how Avery Dulles dealt with it throughout his career.

Although Avery Dulles can lay claim to being an all-round theologian, he is perhaps most remembered as an ecumenical giant. In an April 1968 Stillman Lecture¹⁹³ delivered at Harvard Divinity School, Dulles agrees that the maxim that «doctrine divides but service unites» to some extent holds true. He offers as a solution out of this impasse, the re-conceptualization of dogmas. He argues that this has in fact been going on in the Church as illustrated by the axiom *extra ecclesiam nulla salus*.

Dulles observes that there is abundant patristic literature and Church Council resolutions supporting the doctrine behind this adage and there have been times in the history of the Church where the literal interpretation has carried the day.¹⁹⁴ Dulles agrees with his fellow American theologian Gregory Baum who on reading the Vatican II documents thinks that the writings «make it quite clear that this sentence is no longer taught *eodem sensu eademque sententia*. According to the repeated teaching of Vatican Council II there is plentiful salvation outside the Church.»¹⁹⁵ In fact in many circles the adage is quietly being relegated to the back seat. In handling the dogma, Avery Dulles thinks that a mere facelift by way of changing words does not suffice. He feels that «the formula must be changed because in the mental and social structures of the contemporary world there is no longer any room for an exclusivist concept of the Church.»¹⁹⁶ Not being a man of excesses, Dulles grants that *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* is «based on a valid insight into the ecclesial character of all Christian salvation; it called attention to the inseparability of the grace of God from the Church of Christ.» Yet he contends that «the modern conception of the relationship between the Church, as a visible community of believers, and the saving grace of God must be more nuanced than the axiom «Outside the Church no salvation» would suggest.»¹⁹⁷ The reason behind Dulles' pushing for this change in the way *extra ecclesiam nulla*

salus is approached is the conviction that the modern believer ought not to be pushed into the thinking moulds of ancient or medieval Christians. If such an error were not avoided the traditional statements of the faith may turn out meaningless and irrelevant.

Louis Capéran comprehensively dealt with the question of the salvation of non-Christians in his 1934 landmark book *Le problème du salut des infidèles*.¹⁹⁸ But the absence of an English translation and the number of interesting developments in this field both in the run-up to and after Vatican II prompted the New England Jesuit Francis A. Sullivan to dedicate just over 200 pages to the topic.¹⁹⁹ In the review Avery Dulles makes of the book, one may identify some ideas of the mind of Jesuit theologian on the topic at this time.²⁰⁰ At the start of the review, Dulles observes that the axiom «there is no salvation outside the Church» which had once been proudly pronounced by Catholics is now a source of embarrassment.²⁰¹ Sullivan dedicates a chapter to studying the way Vatican II treated the question of salvation outside the Church. In Sullivan's understanding of the Council, in the case of non-Catholic Christians, «'No salvation outside the Church' is no longer a problem for Catholic theology.»²⁰² Dulles adds that this ought not to be confused with the assertion that after Vatican II, one may talk of salvation of non-Catholic Christians without reference to the Catholic Church. Dulles observes that the whole discourse of salvation outside the Church as presented by Vatican II is full of vague and seemingly optimistic affirmations like «non-Catholic Christians can be saved without reference to the Church.» The conclusion Avery Dulles draws from Sullivan's succinct analysis is that *extra ecclesiam nulla salus* «is an imperfect way in which Christians have expressed their belief that the Church plays a necessary role in God's salvific plan. While belief itself is a dogmatic truth, not subject to change, the formulations have been historically conditioned and require revision.»²⁰³ As we have seen above²⁰⁴, writing as early as 1968, Avery Dulles had reached the same conclusion and so Sullivan echoes the position Dulles had held for some time.

2. *Faith and Justification*

For the *Angelic Doctor*, «Faith is the habit of mind by which eternal life is begun in us, making the intellect assent to things that do not appear.»²⁰⁵ Following such a position, one understands the present life as key in preparation

for our final destiny which is somehow possessed here on earth in an *inchoative* way. With this premise in mind, it can be asserted that the relationship of faith to justification and salvation is not arbitrary.²⁰⁶

I. The Protestants and the Doctrine of Justification

During the last days of 1545, the Augustinian monk Martin Luther had an illumination of sorts in his cell. This occurrence has earned the name of «experience of the tower.» This took place while Luther meditated on the following lines from the first letter to the *Romans* (Rm 1, 16-17): «For I am not ashamed of the gospel. It is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes: for Jew first, and then Greek. For in it is revealed the righteousness of God from faith to faith; as it is written, ‘The one who is righteous by faith will live.’» From this complex Pauline text, Luther developed an entire system of thought in which a hitherto unimportant doctrine, that of justification by faith, came to occupy centre stage. There are few questions on which Catholics and Protestants have differed than this one. Naturally, the ecumenical dialogue always took this as the parting point in order to be able to get anywhere.

In the over 2000 year history of the Catholic Church, there is hardly a council whose impact has lasted as much as Trent’s. Dulles notes that:

The theology of justification in Roman Catholic teaching has undergone no dramatic changes since the Council of Trent, which gave the classic response to the problems raised by the Reformation. The general thrust of Trent was to reduce justification to an element or aspect of grace. Catholic theologians have felt more at home with the theology of grace, viewed in its transforming impact on the recipient (rather than simply as God’s graciousness), and have generally given only passing attention to justification as God’s forensic deed on behalf of sinners. Justification is rarely discussed at length except in polemics against, or dialogue with, Protestants.²⁰⁷

All in all, if the question of Justification is of interest to Catholics the reason is not its centrality in Catholic doctrine, it just one more aspect of grace, but rather the urgency to heal the wound which Christianity has now dragged on for the more than 500 years of the Protestant Schism.

II. Bridging the Catholic-Protestant Rift

In its Decree on Justification, Trent was the first council to dedicate such time and attention to a single theme. Much as the Council Fathers also

sought to heal of the divide between Rome and the Lutherans, lamentably the respective positions ended up being so starkly differentiated that it consummated the separation.

The antagonistic attitude that has for long characterised the relationship between Catholics and Protestants is slowly by slowly becoming a thing of the past. Adolf von Harnack even finds something positive in Trent. He writes that: «The Decree on justification, although a product of art, is in many respects remarkably well constructed; indeed, it may be doubted whether the Reformation would have developed itself if this Decree had been issued at the Lateran Council at the beginning of the century, and had really passed into the flesh and blood of the Church.»²⁰⁸

But in an increasingly secularised world, both sides see these differences as petty in comparison to the price to pay by remaining divided.²⁰⁹ Over the past few decades there have various initiatives to establish common ground between Catholics and Protestants. The meetings between the two have brought forth documents setting out matters on which both agree. So far the 1999 Joint Declaration between a Vatican-sponsored team and the Lutheran World Federation has been the most significant. Avery Dulles participated in a number of symposia dedicated to study the Declaration and some writings of his on the same are worth considering here.

Before setting upon this enterprise, we would like to consider a private initiative between some Catholic thinkers –including Avery Dulles– and their Evangelical counterparts which culminated into the 1997 document «The Gift of Salvation.»

- *The Gift of Salvation*

Concerned about a world in full flight from God, Fr. Richard John Neuhaus²¹⁰ and Charles Colson sought ways of cooperating to contain the radical secularization that threatens American society. Fr. Neuhaus successfully sold the project to Avery Dulles, George Weigel and other Catholic public figures. Colson too garnered the support from a wide spectrum of conservative Protestants.

Starting work in September 1992, on 29th March 1994 they issued their first statement, «Evangelical and Catholics Together: The Christian Mission for the Third Millennium» (hereafter ECT)²¹¹, which each signatory signed in his or her private capacity.

Although the document is concerned with putting forward points in which the two Christian communities will be cooperating, it briefly says something on justification:

We affirm together that we are justified by grace through faith because of Christ. Living faith is active in love that is nothing less than the love of Christ, for we together say with Paul: 'I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me; and the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me' (Galatians 2).²¹²

Although the document was by and large simply urging joint action among Evangelicals and Catholics in public life, its reception was mixed. Many conservative Evangelicals raised a hue and cry about the move.²¹³ Besieged by attacks from all sides, various Evangelical signatories of ECT sought to clarify their position.²¹⁴

To save the project, Colson rallied his Protestant counterparts.²¹⁵ He convinced them to undertake a new project that would produce a more nuanced statement. A larger group of eighteen Evangelicals and fifteen Roman Catholics engaged in discussions that resulted in «The Gift of Salvation» which came to light on 7th October 1997.²¹⁶ But this document did not suffice to end the opposition from Evangelical circles. The fears raised before, that ECT had evaded the real issues, were addressed. The document talks of having gained unity although acknowledges that there remain important issues that call for further and urgent exploration. Among these they listed:

the meaning of baptismal regeneration, the Eucharist, and sacramental grace; the historic uses of the language of justification as it relates to imputed and transformative righteousness; the normative status of justification in relation to all Christian doctrine; the assertion that while justification is by faith alone, the faith that receives salvation is never alone; diverse understandings of merit, reward, purgatory, and indulgences; Marian devotion and the assistance of the saints in the life of salvation; and the possibility of salvation for those who have not been evangelized.²¹⁷

In Catholic circles, ECT and later «The Gift of Salvation», were well received. In the editorial of his quarterly *Touchstone*, the Antiochian Orthodox priest Patrick Henry Reardon wrote that the storm in the teacup triggered by ECT were «entirely Protestant rumblings. Not a whisper of complaint was

heard in Roman Catholic quarters.»²¹⁸ This is in part owed to the fact that even if it was a fully private initiative, it had the blessing of Rome. Edward Idris Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, actively participated in the discussions and encouraged the group throughout the entire process.²¹⁹

Among the signatories of «The Gift of Salvation», Avery Dulles was one of most renowned theologians. An indefatigable promoter of ecumenist causes, «The Gift of Salvation» occupied a special place. He observes that «The Gift of Salvation» was «a declaration that in some ways paralleled the Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration on Justification of 1999.»²²⁰

In his analysis of «The Gift of Salvation», the London Bible College professor Anthony Lane observes that:

There is an element of asymmetry in The Gift of Salvation in that this document was drawn up primarily to meet the needs of one party – i.e. to meet the criticisms of ECT and its signatories from within the Evangelical constituency. Thus there is nothing in §§7-13, after the first sentence, to indicate that this is not simply an Evangelical statement of faith. Words are used either in the Evangelical sense (...) or in a way that allows them to be taken in that sense (...).²²¹

Given that «The Gift of Salvation» was drawn up to satisfy embittered Evangelicals who considered ECT as a betrayal, it is a compromise document and so it may appear to concede far too much to the Evangelicals. But Avery Dulles, one of the document's drafters points out, «We were careful to follow Trent, the teaching of the Second Vatican Council... we are not far-out Catholic theologians.»²²²

- *The Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999)*

After Vatican II, closer cooperation between Catholics and Lutherans has been manifested in the joint issue of documents dealing with a variety of themes. Having already issued important documents on justification²²³, the Holy See and the Lutheran World Federation appointed representatives to explore the possibility of issuing a joint declaration on justification. This culminated into the *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification (1999)* (hereafter JD).²²⁴

The work of the representatives came to fruition in 1995 and a draft of the proposed joint statement was submitted to the respective churches to

make observations. There was bitter acrimony especially in Germany where a sizeable group of theology professors rejected the declaration. Among the draft declaration's most vocal opponents were renowned theologians Gerhard Ebeling and Eberhard Jüngel.²²⁵ These professors were dissatisfied with the way central issues such as *sola fide* were dealt with. Faith as assurance of salvation, the sinful nature of the justified, the importance of good works, the relation between law and gospel, the doctrine of justification as *criterion*. But come the moment of truth, when the draft was subjected to a vote by the respective Lutheran synods, it was passed almost unanimously.²²⁶ The Lutheran World Federation added an annex to the declaration which satisfied the most vocal adversaries.

The theologians were still not happy, however, and in 1999 over 250 professors of theology signed a new protest document against the JD. But it is noteworthy that Jüngel had been won over to the declaration by the addition of the Annex. In the light of the responses received from member churches round the world the Lutheran World Federation, in June 1998, published its official Response to the declaration. Nearly all remaining sceptics embraced the JD with enthusiasm.

But the reception in Rome too had its share of drama although in a more subdued way. When Edward Idriss Cardinal Cassidy, President of the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity presented the draft of the document, it was found wanting. In June 1998, Rome's response to the JD²²⁷ came as a thunderbolt to the Lutheran world: There was no way Rome would accept a document that was unclear regarding issues like *simul iustus et peccator*, the status of the doctrine as a criterion, cooperation with grace and penance. The new developments had not been contemplated and with the Lutherans having overwhelmingly supported the document, Rome's refusal was humiliating and embarrassing. It took the genius of Cardinal Ratzinger to save the situation.²²⁸ The then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith opted for the issuing of an *Annex to the Joint Declaration*.

On overcoming this final hurdle, all was set for the formal signing of the JD. This took place on Sunday 31st October 1999, on the symbolic date of the Reformation in Augsburg, Germany, an almost sacred place for Protestants. The JD is a landmark document because it was formally accepted not just by its architects but by the Roman Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation at the highest level.

A review by the Institute of Ecumenical Research is key in appreciating how Lutherans regard the document, at least in official circles:

As a short consensus text, the JD cannot surpass (the earlier) more detailed discussions either in quantity or analytical quality. In its size, the JD is a dwarf standing on the shoulders of these larger processes. In its significance, however, the JD is by no means a dwarf. Its special character is that it seeks to take a qualitatively new step from the dialogue texts were only the products of church appointed commissions, the JD is an invitation to a common and binding affirmation by the churches themselves.²²⁹

With the signing of the JD there was naturally cause to celebrate. For Avery Dulles, the two Churches were as it were, calling for a truce given that they have shared convictions about justification. Yet the dean of American theologians was always cautious for he feared that:

The much vaunted Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration on Justification by Faith, signed in 1999, exaggerated the agreements. After stating quite correctly that the Lutheran and Catholic dialogues of previous decades had come to a basic consensus on the doctrine of justification by grace through faith, the Joint Declaration goes on to assert, more dubiously, that the remaining disagreements could now be written off as «differences of language, theological elaboration, and emphasis», and therefore as not warranting condemnation from either side. It even described these differences as «acceptable.»²³⁰

Rather than being a result of hasty judgment, the above observations are based on a thoughtful reading and brilliant analysis that the American theologian presented of JD as soon as it was issued and in the subsequent years.²³¹

The fourth part of JD is by far the most important given that it deliberately addresses the contentious issues dedicating a sub-section to each of seven parts. Avery Dulles ably paraphrases the seven points raised in seven questions:

- 1) Do the justified cooperate in the preparation for, and reception of, justification?
- 2) Is justification a divine decree of forgiveness or interior renewal?
- 3) Is justification received by faith alone or by faith together with hope and charity, which bring one into communion with God?
- 4) Does concupiscence, that is to say, our innate tendency to be self-indulgent, make us sinners, even when we do not give in to it?

5) Is God's law given only in order to accuse sinners of their failures, bringing them to repentance, or also to provide them with a rule of life that they can and must observe?

6) Does faith include an assurance that one will in fact attain final salvation?

7) Are the heavenly rewards for which we hope things that we also merit, or are they to be understood exclusively as undeserved gifts from God?²³²

For each of these points, the JD sets out where the consensus lies on the question, presenting the Lutheran position and finally the Catholic perspective. The positions held by each of the parties do not bind the other but it is held that in affirming what each party believes the other tolerates such a position without any need to revert to the sixteenth century condemnations. Of course this is laudable but Dulles finds it problematic given that close scrutiny finds it wanting and goes as far as hinting that perhaps the grounds for the Tridentine anathemas may still be in place.²³³

Notwithstanding its highly critical official response to the declaration, Rome was insistent on her willingness to sign the JD. Although this may illogical, it has become characteristic of Roman Catholics to be more generous and understanding with their ecumenical partners. Dulles approvingly quotes Jean Guittou who observed that «Protestantism, with its concern for purity, is historically oriented to detect and denounce alloys and compromises, but Catholicism, striving for plenitude, is more prepared to acknowledge the immanence of the transcendent in time and history. 'It is afraid of disturbing the indwelling presence of the good by detaching it too soon from the less good and even the evil, which are bound up with it.'»²³⁴

But such accommodating postures are a result of a whole new understanding of ecumenism in the Catholic Church. Dulles explains that since *Unitatis Redintegratio*, Vatican II's Decree on ecumenism, the Catholic Church regards the different Churches and Ecclesial Communities positively. In *Ut Unum Sint* no. 38, Blessed John Paul II urges those involved in ecumenical dialogues to desist from considering reality seen from different points of view as contradictory.

As it has been observed, Avery Dulles does not shy away from the obvious defects of the JD. He is quite optimistic that «Lutherans can teach Catholics that we must be in some sense passive in submitting to God's word, that we must always acknowledge ourselves as sinners, that God's law never ceases to accuse us, that we must throw ourselves on God's mercy, and that we de-

pend on the perfect righteousness of Christ, without being able to make it completely our own.» He adds that «it is necessary to establish that Lutheran proclamation and Catholic speculation are both legitimate derivatives of the same gospel, and therefore compatible. Performative language cannot be unrelated to informative; the law of prayer must harmonize with the law of belief.»²³⁵ It is for this reason that Avery Dulles feels that it is incumbent upon theologians to work out how and to what extent given Lutheran positions can be reconciled with official Catholic teaching.

3. *Relativism in the Theology of Religions and the Declaration Dominus Iesus*

The responsibility to preside over the Mass *Pro Eligendo Romano Pontifice* fell unto Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger the then dean of the College of Cardinals. The homily he delivered had an instantaneous impact with widespread reverberations. Perhaps the most commented words were the following:

Today, having a clear faith based on the Creed of the Church is often labelled as fundamentalism. Whereas relativism, that is, letting oneself be ‘tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine’, seems the only attitude that can cope with modern times. We are building a dictatorship of relativism that does not recognize anything as definitive and whose ultimate goal consists solely of one’s own ego and desires.²³⁶

I. The Basic Currents in the Theology of Religions

Although these powerful words hit many as novel, they characterised the message that the then Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith had been repeating in different forums. In May 1996, addressing around 80 bishops who were then presiding over the Doctrinal Commissions of the Bishops’ Conferences from mainly developing countries Latin America who were gathered at Guadalajara, Mexico he cited relativism as the major challenge of faith today:

Relativism has thus become the central problem for the faith at the present time. No doubt it is not presented only with its aspects of resignation before the immensity of the truth. It is also presented as a position defined positively by the concepts of tolerance and knowledge through dialogue and freedom, concepts which would be limited if the existence of one valid truth for all were affirmed.²³⁷

In his long experience, Avery Dulles wholly endorses the observations of the German Cardinal. In fact his analysis of the faith today levels with that of Cardinal Ratzinger. In an interview he aptly observes that:

The greatest challenge today is the combination of Kantian agnosticism and religious relativism that pervades the atmosphere in which we live. Religion tends to be regarded as a purely subjective preference, a mere matter of taste or custom, incapable of making objective truth-claims. Whereas Christians used to be challenged by rival faiths, today the challenge comes principally the trivialization of faith itself.²³⁸

Avery Dulles was at loggerheads with the relativist currents that swept through American theology in the 1990s. Against the common attitude that claimed that «everything was up for grabs, and that every doctrine could be challenged», Avery Dulles has this to say: «The mentality I was rejecting (when I was) at Harvard (in the 1940s) was very much the mentality of the 1990s – relativism, skepticism, agnosticism.»²³⁹ In fact Avery Dulles' rejection of relativism was not limited to his Harvard years and the 1990s, shortly after writing *Models of the Church* (1974) he appended his signature to the Hartford Appeal.²⁴⁰

At the invitation of his friend Richard John Neuhaus, he signed the «Hartford Appeal for Theological Affirmation» with other theologians from different Christian denominations denouncing a brand of relativism that neglected a sense of transcendence in the churches and in theology.²⁴¹ Perhaps this moment marked a turning point. Dulles who was counted in the theological fold of the «progressives» began edging towards a position of a fierce opponent of relativistic currents in Catholic theology and by the late 1990s he would even question whether some members of the Catholic Theological Society of America (CTSA) would characterise their positions as Catholic.

As the theology of religions seeks to answer the question of whether other religions have any value, the answer has classically come in form of the following positions: exclusivism, inclusivism, and pluralism.²⁴² Exclusivists in general hold that only the Christian faith saves people and other religions do not lead to salvation.²⁴³ In opposition to exclusivism, inclusivism maintains that all religions, albeit without knowing it, tend towards Christianity; it is from Christianity that they derive their saving value.²⁴⁴ Increasingly, a number of theologians have moved on from inclusivism to pluralism. This radical leap of pluralism has as central argument the premise that «God's universal

will to save all human souls finds expression in a variety of ways in the diverse religions of the world.»²⁴⁵

Pluralism has a lot in common with inclusivism than perhaps its proponents suspect. Cardinal Ratzinger succinctly comments on the last two positions observing that:

Pluralism makes a clear break with the belief that salvation comes from Christ alone and that his Church belongs to Christ. People in the pluralist position are of the opinion that the plurality of religions is God's will and that all of them are paths to salvation, or at least can be so, while an especially important, but by no means exclusive, position can be assigned to Christ in particular. There are here, as with the so-called inclusivists position, many variations, so that here and there the two positions seem almost to merge into one another.²⁴⁶

If the task of theology as understood classically is to try and make the faith intelligible (*fides quaerens intellectum*), the pluralists theories have been a far cry at the hour of making the contribution in question. Pluralism has garnered a lot of support due to the false notion that firm adherence to the unicity of Christ's role as mediator will necessarily spark a confrontation between Christianity and the other religions.

II. The Proposals of Avery Dulles and Jacques Dupuis in the Theology of Religions

In a quite surprising turn of events, the number of theologians willing to affirm the unicity of Jesus Christ as the universal mediator of salvation is dwindling. Avery Dulles is one of those authors who were always willing to put up a spirited fight for this central tenet of ecumenism and any interreligious dialogue worth the name. The trendy approach that shuns presenting the figure of Christ in an unequivocal way has of late sprouted in Christianity's encounter with Asian religions. A representative figure of ideas that may perhaps obscure Christ's position in Christianity is Jacques Dupuis. Since supporters of Dupuis' position have «praised» Dulles as having pioneered the ideas from which the Belgian Jesuit drew his consequences we have felt the issue worth looking at, albeit briefly. Dulles stated his case in a constructive way on the occasion of an article in a book in homage of Dupuis. This should provide us with Dulles' ideas on the topic.

- *Avery Dulles*

Avery Dulles hardly considered the theology of religions in a systematic way yet the theme always emerged from time to time as he dealt with topics related to Revelation, faith and salvation. As we noted in the first chapter which we dedicated to studying the person and work of Dulles, from the late 60s to more or less the mid-80s, he carried out several experiments in theological method most memorable of which is the models method.

In *Models of Revelation*, Dulles examines the case the different models make for religious dialogue. The conscious model which has among others, Knitter²⁴⁷ as its proponent, is considered quite positively. Summing up the praises for this model, Dulles says:

We cannot accurately predict what we may learn from the dialogue that seems to be getting underway. There is no reason, however, to think that it will diminish the revelatory importance of Jesus Christ. It may well be that in the light of other revelatory symbols, the universal and abiding significance of Christ will be more strikingly manifested. Even though it already is the supreme and definitive self disclosure of God, the Christ-symbol cannot be adequately appreciated for our time except in the context of many other symbols, including those of the extra-biblical religions. If disruptive change is avoided, the present encounter of the religions may well lead to an enrichment of the Christian symbolism and thus of the theology of revelation.²⁴⁸

In the above statement, Avery Dulles' optimism regarding the pluralist theories of religion being advanced is evident yet he clearly marks out the major points that should not be lost sight of: Christ «is the supreme and definitive self disclosure of God.»

The 2001 annual fall McGinley lecture on the place of «Christ among the religions»²⁴⁹ delivered in the wake of the 11th September 2001 terrorist attack on America, Dulles handles the question of how religions have related among themselves until now. Although the aim of the lecture is to propose how peaceful coexistence can be reached, on the way he makes a recap of the various positions in the theology of religions which may help us take a glimpse at the mature Dulles' position, albeit in only a brief way. For Dulles, coercion, convergence, pluralism and tolerance are the four possible models in which religions can relate to each other. This is of course a nuanced elaboration of the typology of exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism which in forms the bulk of literature on theology of religions today.

Coercion has contact points with exclusivism given that truth is limited to a single faith and adherents to it go as far as forcing others to renounce their beliefs for that which is being fronted as the true one. Over the centuries, almost all religions have adopted the stance of coercion but Christianity soon learnt that by its very nature the faith has no room for coercion but it must be embraced freely.

What for most authors is simply the pluralist approach is for Dulles a more complicated world which he prefers to divide further into pluralist as such and convergence on the other hand. The basic tenet for the latter is that «the religious impulse is essentially the same in all peoples... the religions agree in essentials and that their differences are superficial.»²⁵⁰ Those who hold the convergence position argue that at the bottom of all religions is theocentrism and the supposed differences are culturally relative and so merely anecdotal. But Dulles begs to differ pointing out that «theocentrism is not a satisfactory platform for dialogue with the many religions that are polytheistic, pantheistic or atheistic. Even faiths that are clearly theistic, such as Judaism, Islam and Christianity, are unwilling to surrender their convictions regarding the way to God, whether it be the law of Moses, the Koran or Jesus Christ.»²⁵¹ With Knitter in mind, Dulles talks of authors who have set aside theocentrism in favour of a «soteriocentric» model. Dulles identifies the central argument of these scholars as follows: «All religions (...) agree that the purpose of religion is to give salvation or liberation, which they understand in different ways, perhaps because of the variety of cultures. By dialogue about liberation, it is presumed, they could overcome their mutual divisions.»²⁵² To make such a claim, the advocates of the convergence model part from the assumption that all said and done, all religions are human constructions, attempts at explaining the transcendent mystery in which man is immersed. Dulles thinks this theory a failure in the search for peace: «Christians hold that central doctrines of their own faith, such as the Trinity and the Incarnation, belong to revelation and cannot be sacrificed for the sake of achieving some putative reconciliation.»²⁵³ Instead of bettering theocentrism, adopting soteriocentrism as a point of conversion also miserably fails since religions are not of the same mind regarding the way to salvation.

At the heart of the pluralist model of religious encounter is the point that each religion can rightly lay claims to certain aspects of the divine and if pooled together there will be benefits for all. Relativists are at home with this model but well as Christians grant that there are elements of truth and

goodness in other religions they can not surrender at any cost the fact that the revelation they have received in Christ is the good news to be handed to all peoples. Dulles corrects the pluralist model by pointing out that «dialogue can increase the mutual respect of the different religions, but experience gives no ground for supposing that it leads to the conclusion that all religions are equally good and true. On points where they contradict one another, at least one of them must be wrong.»²⁵⁴

The last model Dulles considers is that of toleration. All in all, this is a kind of indifference that calls upon all religions to be and let others be in order to arrive at peace in society.

- *Jacques Dupuis*

A substantial amount of literature on the theology of religions in recent years has been triggered by Jacques Dupuis (1923-2004).²⁵⁵ The now perhaps characteristic way of categorizing theories on the theology of religions into exclusivism, inclusivism and pluralism has some exceptions. Among these exceptions one can put Jacques Dupuis, the veteran Jesuit professor who attempted at a reconciliation of the three groups.²⁵⁶ But his attempts have not convinced all since for pluralists he is one more «inclusivist». In fact, Dupuis' hodgepodge style attracted the attention of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Cardinal Ratzinger explained that this was so because although Dupuis claims loyalty to the uniqueness of Jesus Christ, an ordinary reader gets the impression that the Belgian author takes a pluralistic posture.²⁵⁷

In 1959 the Belgian Jesuit relocated to India where he taught theology until 1984 when he moved over to the Gregorian University in Rome. Although Indian bishops often consulted him on various issues, Dupuis remained largely unknown until some sections of the press glorified him for being under investigation by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith for writing *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*. At the end of a two year scrutiny of Dupuis' work, a notification²⁵⁸ was issued which was:

not meant as a judgment on the author's subjective thought, but rather as a statement of the Church's teaching on certain aspects of the above-mentioned doctrinal truths, and as a refutation of erroneous or harmful opinions, which, prescindendo from the author's intentions, could be derived from reading the ambiguous statements and insufficient explanations found in certain sections of the text.²⁵⁹

The ambiguities in question as pinpointed in the notification relate to the following central truths of the Catholic faith: the sole and universal salvific mediation of Jesus Christ, the unicity and completeness of revelation of Jesus Christ, the universal salvific action of the Holy Spirit, the orientation of all human beings to the Church, the value and salvific function of the religious traditions.

Dupuis himself and some of his fervent supporters draw parallels between the Belgian's theological positions and those espoused by Avery Dulles. In a contentious point, Dupuis considers the Prologue to the Gospel of St John: 'He was in the world that had come into being through him, and the world did not recognize him. He came to his own and his own people did not accept him.' The Belgian Jesuit prefers to split it in time so that the Logos was already active in the world and more so acting salvifically even before the Incarnation. In the CDF notification this passage is considered for its ambiguity and a clarification presented right away:

It is therefore contrary to the Catholic faith not only to posit a separation between the Word and Jesus, or between the Word's salvific activity and that of Jesus, but also to maintain that there is a salvific activity of the Word as such in his divinity, independent of the humanity of the Incarnate Word.²⁶⁰

The inspiration that Dupuis appeals to at the hour of making these proposals is Avery Dulles' theology of the Logos.²⁶¹ In fact Dupuis' fellow Jesuit and unwavering supporter Gerald O'Connor, cites a passage from *Models of Revelation*, where Dulles reviews the case of the consciousness model and its contribution to the theology of religions:

(On the other hand,) It need not be denied that the eternal logos could manifest itself to other peoples through other religious symbols. (Raimundo Panikkar, who proposes a «universal Christology», stands) in continuity with a long Christian tradition of Logos-theology that goes back as far as Justin Martyr. (On Christian grounds,) it may be held that the divine person who appears in Jesus is not exhausted by that historical appearance. The symbols and myths of other religions may point to the one who Christians recognize as the Christ.²⁶²

With this O'Connor concludes that: «In fact, Dulles anticipated the conclusion Dupuis wished to draw from the universal activity of the Logos.»²⁶³ But a closer look reveals that he is reading Dulles out of context and more so, only partially. Put in their perspective, these words are a concession to the

total rejection which Avery Dulles advances against the way these authors approach the relationship of Christianity and the other religions:

Could a Christian affirm that the same divine Lord whom Christians worship in Jesus is worshiped, under other symbols, by the devotees of the Lord Krishna and of the Lord Buddha? Fidelity to the Christian confession, it would seem, excludes the idea that there is any Lord except Jesus (cfr. 1 Cor 8:6). In company with Lucien Richard, I would reject an extreme «archetype Christology» that would see the Jesus-story as «the historicization of an archetype which is already found at work everywhere.»²⁶⁴

Shortly after the passage that O'Connor cites, Dulles concludes that: «For Christians antecedently to surrender their traditional claim (that Christ is universally and definitively normative) might be injurious to the dialogue, since it might prevent them from making what is potentially their most important contribution.»²⁶⁵

The contact points between Avery Dulles and Jacques Dupuis also extend beyond intellectual life. Dupuis is an old acquaintance of Dulles' the two having coincided in their student days at the Gregorian University. Dulles therefore could not turn down the invitation to contribute to a festschrift for the occasion of Dupuis' 80th birthday.²⁶⁶ The article, based on a lecture given before is one of the few instances in which Dulles deals with the question of theology of religions in a direct way and so it helps us to catch a glimpse of the big picture of the American theologian's complete thought on the question.

Avery Dulles' article was a slight modification of a lecture he had given on the 30th of September 1999 at the University of St. Thomas in Houston, Texas. From the article one immediately realizes that in the theology of religions, just like other spheres of the sacred discipline, Avery Dulles parts from and is guided through out by the Magisterium, most especially the Vatican II conciliar documents.

In its Constitutions, the Council states in different ways the truth of the uniqueness of Christianity and Christ as the source of salvation for the whole world. Avery Dulles highlights GS 45 which teaches that God's Word was made flesh, «so that as perfect man he might save all men and sum up all things in himself. The Lord is the goal of human history, the focal point of the longings of history and civilization, the centre of the human race, the joy of every heart, and the answer to all its longings.» Dulles reminds his listeners that DV 2 insists on Jesus Christ as sole when it says of Christ as

the «Mediator and at the same time the fullness of all revelation.» To show that Vatican II is in line with the teaching of all modern popes since Pius IX on the issue of the necessity of the Church, Dulles draws attention to LG 14 which in turn nourishes AG 7. These texts point to Christ as having taught this expressly:

In explicit terms he himself affirmed the necessity of faith and baptism (cfr. Mk 16:16; Jn 3:5) and thereby affirmed also the necessity of the Church, for through baptism as through a door men enter the Church. Whoever, therefore, knowing that the Catholic Church was made necessary by God through Jesus Christ, would refuse to enter her or to remain in her could not be saved.²⁶⁷

Having set the broad lines for a theology of religions in the Constitutions, the Vatican Council dedicates a declaration *Nostra aetate* (NA) to the relation of the Church to Non-Christian religions a decree *Ad Gentes* (AG) to the mission activity of the Church. NA 2 observes that religions everywhere «strive variously to answer the restless searching of the human heart, proposing ‘ways’ that consist of teachings, rules of life, and sacred ceremonies.» It is in this respect that Non-Christian religions «often reflect a ray of that divine Truth which enlightens all men.» NA 2 reminds all that «the Catholic Church rejects nothing that is true and holy in these religions.»

In AG 11 and AG 15 Vatican II introduces the idea of other religions as «seeds of the Word» which in addition to owing their presence to the divine Logos also depend on the Logos. The Logos ensures that the religions are «watered by divine dew» (AG 22). LG 16 and AG 9 contain the often repeated phrase of patristic pedigree by which other religions are seen as «preparation of the gospel.» Dulles warns against a common misinterpretation whereby «some have imagined that this term (preparation of the gospel) implies that the non-Christian religions are related to Christianity in the same way that ancient Judaism was, and that their Scriptures must therefore be inspired. But the Council evidently means that God providentially prepares people of other nations not for bringing forth the Savior, as Israel did, but only for the reception of the gospel. In saying that the Church regards whatever goodness and truth is found among non-Christians as a preparation of the gospel, the Council neither affirms nor denies that the goods in question are supernatural.»²⁶⁸

With the passing of the years, Avery Dulles sadly notes that the above texts have been given a different reading all together:

According to a rather widespread impression, Vatican II effected something like a Copernican revolution, displacing the Catholic Church from the centre and turning all the religions into planets revolving about some vaguely defined divine centre. It is sometimes supposed that Vatican II rejected the traditional doctrine of necessity of the Church for salvation, that it affirmed the presence of grace and revelation in other religions, and that it acknowledged other religions as ways of salvation, thereby undercutting the importance of missionary endeavour.²⁶⁹

Rejecting the view of those who interpret Vatican II with the hermeneutics of discontinuity²⁷⁰, Dulles thinks that «the Council documents are cautious and yet open to new developments that are consistent with Catholic tradition. They firmly uphold the creeds and dogmas of the Church and are solicitous to maintain the rationale for missionary evangelization.»²⁷¹

III. The Reception of the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* (2000)

On the 5th of September 2000, the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) then headed by Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger issued the declaration *Dominus Iesus* (DI).²⁷² Among other reasons, the CDF was prompted to issue this document due to the fears of the Fathers at the Synod for Asia²⁷³ who were dismayed by the all-pervading relativism in contemporary culture that showed forth most especially in the form of religious syncretism. With Blessed John Paul II's blessing, the CDF drew a document that would state in unequivocal terms the Church's faith in Jesus Christ. Another decisive factor for the drafting of the document was the Jubilee Year of 2000 which the Holy Father thought to be a good occasion to restate Catholic teaching on Jesus' role as the world's one and only Saviour.

Media coverage of the document was largely hostile²⁷⁴ and the issues raised therein are still being picked over from the diatribe after a period of 10 years. On the 6th of September 2006, The *Los Angeles Times* ran the following headline: «Vatican Declares Catholicism Sole Path to Salvation»; on the same day the headline in the Washington Post was: «Vatican Claims Church Monopoly on Salvation.» In this torrent of hostile reports on the document

there were some exceptions. For instance, *The Wanderer*, a publication now in its second century and known for unswerving loyalty to Rome, was quick to support the Declaration.²⁷⁵ Surprise of surprises, the widely read influential Evangelical Christian periodical *Christianity Today* ran an editorial which classified DI «as a step forward, not backward, for Christian unity.»²⁷⁶

The mood in the press contaminated a good number of the Catholic Church's ecumenical partners and only after calm reflection have they come to appreciate the statement. And neither were matters helped by the fact that many a Catholic theologian did not offer any support for the document.²⁷⁷

Serene reflection on DI which has been arrived at after some years of close reading of the document, has brought consensus even among the document's most rabid opponents that the difference with earlier Magisterium on the questions it dealt with is in tone rather than in content. But the document which Hans Küng dismissed as «a combination of medieval backwardness and Vatican megalomania»²⁷⁸ was found palatable by Avery Dulles even in its phrasing. The grand old man of American theology reasons that:

Since the council, the popes and the synods of bishops have been laudably conscious of their responsibility to guard the deposit that has been entrusted to them (1 Tm 1:14). They have found the council documents very helpful for that purpose, when those documents are read for their substance rather than their style. At times the Roman authorities have found it necessary to speak more plainly and less diplomatically for the sake of truth and fidelity. *Dominus Iesus* did precisely that in its treatment of the uniqueness of Christ and of the Catholic Church. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith seems to have learned from hard experience that when you couch unpopular teachings in «polite» language, people easily conclude that you didn't really mean what you said.²⁷⁹

From the onset, the CDF makes it clear that in issuing DI to present once again the broad lines of Catholic doctrine on «the unicity and salvific universality of the mystery of Jesus Christ and the Church.» Without any claim at exhausting such a deep theme, basing itself on previous Magisterial documents, the Declaration is nevertheless an attempt at pointing out some Fundamental questions that remain open to further development, and refuting specific positions that are erroneous or ambiguous.» (DI, 3)

DI was the chosen path to remind theologians engaged in the new discipline of theology of religions of the need to abide by the rules that have always

governed theological speculation in the Catholic tradition. Some currents that were making inroads in Catholic thought were compromising the faith. They manifested themselves in

the metaphysical emptying of the historical incarnation of the Eternal Logos, reduced to a mere appearing of God in history; the eclecticism of those who, in theological research, uncritically absorb ideas from a variety of philosophical and theological contexts without regard for consistency, systematic connection, or compatibility with Christian truth; finally, the tendency to read and to interpret Sacred Scripture outside the Tradition and Magisterium of the Church (DI, 4).

An unequivocal statement from the Holy See was called for at this moment with confusion being spread in Catholic circles regarding how the Church ought to relate to Non-Christian religions. The agitators presented claims of Catholicism's privileged state as out of step with the postconciliar developments in theology. This on the other hand undermined many sacrificed souls who dedicated their lives to responding to Christ's command to preach to all nations.

IV. The Contribution of the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* (2000)

In order to appreciate this landmark document, one ought to look at DI closely. It is obvious that every single word is well measured. The congregation responsible for the document chose to use expository language in the Declaration which was directed to marking off the boundaries in all discussion that involved the unicity and salvific universality of the mystery of Jesus Christ and the Church.

Having defined its goal, the CDF document goes on to address the definitive character of God's Revelation in the first part. Since in saying this the authors of the Declaration are not putting across any new doctrine, they quote substantially from Sacred Scripture, Vatican Council II's Constitutions *Dei verbum* and *Lumen gentium*, the Decree *Ad gentes* and the Declaration *Nostra aetate* from the same Council; John Paul II's encyclical letters, *Redemptoris missio* and *Fides et ratio* and finally the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. When reason finally got the best of the flaring tempers, DI was opposed not so much for what it said but rather how it was said.²⁸⁰

The second part of DI turns to the trendy view among theologians of religions, especially in Asia, who regard the other religions as richly endowed

with the Holy Spirit in the same way Christianity has the Word of God to show. To address this question, DI points to John Paul's encyclical *Redemptoris missio* (no. 12) in which the issue was put to rest with the argument that no one can enter into communion with God except through Christ and the Spirit together.

After reminding theologians that Christ is the only Mediator (1 Tim 2:4-6), part three hints at the right direction in which genuine developments in the theology of religions are to be made, that is, applying the notion of 'participated mediation' already stated in *Redemptoris missio*. In some way that is up to the theologians to explain, non-Christian religions could have elements that participate in the grace of Christ. It is here that the cornerstone of any genuine theology of religions can be found.

Since the document would have remained incomplete without mentioning something on the situation of Christian Churches, part four dedicates some space to them as well; but as it were, it is in passing. Dealing with these matters of an ecclesiological and ecumenical nature would guarantee that something is said about how Christ lives in history in a concrete way. Handling this question leads to *Lumen gentium*, no. 8.²⁸¹

Avery Dulles understood *Lumen gentium* to be affirming that on one hand «Catholicism alone has all the divinely instituted means of grace and, on the other, that elements of authentic Christianity are present in other churches and communions.»²⁸² Since clarity pervades the entire document, the DI here states that communities without a valid episcopate and Eucharist are not churches 'in the proper sense.' Although there was nothing new in this, there was widespread outcry over to the «insult» that was extended to the Protestant communities in question.

In part five, *Dominus Iesus* addresses the common trends in theology of religions that are expressed in theological jargon as *Christocentrism*, *ecclesio-centrism* and *regnocentrism*. Of these *regnocentrism* is what comes out as rather problematic. Some theologians argue that Christ belongs exclusively to Christians and so seek a basis that will embrace humanity as a whole. They find this in *regnocentrism*, that is, the centrality of the Kingdom. «Kingdom», is conceived simply to mean a world governed by peace, justice, and the conservation of creation. They conceive this to be the very goal of history and the end which all religions must seek while anything beyond this is superfluous. A theology based on these premises is able to harness Christ's message while refraining from evangelizing other religions. In fact, at its consummation God

disappears from the horizon.²⁸³ Following *Redemptoris missio*, DI 19 insists that the only acceptable *regnocentrism* is that which safeguards «the unicity of the relationship which Christ and the Church have with the kingdom of God.»

The sixth and last part of the document gets to the climax of DI, that is, the necessity of missionary activity. Although the document grants that in non-Christian religions one can find workings of grace and the presence of elements coming from God, they are nevertheless pitiable since their situation is «gravely deficient» objectively speaking. Despite of all the controversy that the document stirred, its drafters seem to be satisfied with the results as Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger tells an interviewer:

Just recently, for example, on my way home I met two men in their prime who came up to me and said: «We're missionaries in Africa. How long we've waited for those words! We're constantly meeting difficulties, and missionaries are becoming fewer and fewer.» I was deeply touched by the gratitude of these two people, who are in the front lines of preaching the Gospel. And this is only one of the many reactions of this kind.²⁸⁴

Contrary to what some affirm, DI is not oblivious to the importance of the work of theologians in the field of the theology of religions. The CDF hopes that the Declaration may serve as a blueprint in any genuine attempt at understanding better God's salvific plan and the ways in which it is accomplished.

If by and large Avery Dulles is positive in his analysis of DI, he feels that the seventh paragraph lacks the clarity exhibited throughout the entire document. At this juncture, the Declaration affirms rather emphatically that «the distinction between *theological faith* and *belief* in the other religions, must be *firmly held*.»

The relationship between faith and belief is still a moot point among theologians. Some authors, especially in the English-speaking world, put the two in air-tight compartments, a way of proceeding which Avery Dulles thinks detrimental to belief. The authors in question go as far as arguing that it is not difficult to imagine a scenario in which beliefs change well as faith is left intact. Dulles begs to differ from this current among theologians given that he is convinced that «beliefs, secondary though they may be, are not expendable... To «believe» in someone is to have a personal relation of trust, normally based on affection, but that relation implies an acceptance of what the person avers. It would be a mistake, therefore, to try to separate faith from belief, as

though faith were divine and belief purely human.»²⁸⁵ With the above forceful argument which Dulles makes against separating belief from faith, it is little wonder that six years later, when *Dominus Iesus* seems to edge closer to ratifying the distinction Avery Dulles shows his disagreement. The fact that the document treats the issue in passing and does not –as is the case elsewhere– back the claim with arguments from the magisterium does not go down well with Dulles.

As a theologian well conversant with the currents of theological thought of his day, Avery Dulles provides us with a succinct analysis of what DI was about:

All in all, *Dominus Iesus* is a valuable and necessary reminder that Catholic theologians must not dissimulate the teaching of their church. Some object that the exigencies of dialogue require them to be more irenic, but Vatican II's warning against false conciliatory attitudes still stands. The true concept of dialogue is at stake. John Paul II and Cardinal Ratzinger rightly insist that in authentic dialogue, whether interreligious or ecumenical, the positions of all the participating communities must be presented with integrity and frankness. The aim of the dialogue is not to achieve doctrinal compromise but agreement in the fullness of divine truth.²⁸⁶

From the above, it is easy to appreciate that Avery Dulles immediately understood the reasoning of Rome in issuing DI. And since he identified himself with the document it was little wonder that he continued the debate of the issues raised therein in his writings and lectures.

Notes

1. A. DULLES, *The Survival of Dogma. Faith, Authority and Dogma in a Changing World*, Crossroad, New York 1971 (There have been editions of this book in 1982 and 1987 but they are just reprints of the 1971 edition).
2. Cfr. B. McGUIRE, «The Making of a Cardinal. In person. Avery Dulles», *National Catholic Register*, 25th February-3rd March 2001.
3. A. DULLES, *The Assurance of Things Hoped for*, Oxford University Press, New York 1994. Henceforth Assurance followed by the page number.
4. Assurance, 4.
5. A. DULLES, «Models of faith», in M. KESSLER (hrsg.) *Fides quaerens intellectum. Beiträge zur Fundamentaltheologie*, Francke Verlag, Tübingen 1992, pp. 405-413.
6. ID., «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», *Thomist*, 45 (1981) 175-193
7. ID., *The Craft of Theology. From Symbol to System*, Crossroad, New York 1992; expanded edition, 1995.
8. ID., «Theology of faith. A Catholic Perspective», «Theology of faith. A Catholic Perspective», in J. M. Lee (ed.), *Handbook of Faith*, Religious Education Press, Birmingham (Alabama) 1990, pp. 142-163.
9. ID., «Faith», in A. HASTINGS (ed.), *The Oxford Companion to Christian Thought*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2000, pp.230-232.
10. We may mention just the following: «Faith and experience. Strangers? Rivals? Partners?» *The Priest*, 46 (1990) 19-22; «From Images to Truth. Newman on Revelation and faith», *Theological Studies*, 51 (1990) 252-267; «The cognitive basis of faith», *Philosophy and Theology*, 10 (1998) 19-31; «Faith and reason. A note on the new encyclical», *America* 179 (1998) 7-8; «Reason, philosophy and the grounding of faith. A reflection on Fides et ratio», *International Philosophy Quarterly*, 40 (2000) 479-490.
11. The term *philosophia perennis* was coined by Agostino Steuco (1496-1549) a Vatican Librarian and Canon Regular of the Lateran. In 1540 he wrote *De perenni philosophia*, a book in which he argued that all religions are manifestations of a perennial philosophy that is one and eternal. Leibniz later took up the term.
12. LEO XIII, Encyclical *Aeterni Patris*, 4th August, 1879, ASS 12 (1879) 97-115.
13. W. KASPER, *Theology and Church*, SCM Press, London 1989, p. 1.
14. E. GILSON, *Letter to Henri de Lubac*, Ignatius, San Francisco 1988, p.24.
15. A. MACINTYRE, *Three Rival Versions of Moral Enquiry. Encyclopaedia, Genealogy, and Tradition*. Being, University of Notre Dame Press, Notre Dame, Indiana 1990, p. 70.
16. Some Neo-Thomists referred to the *Ressourcement* theologians perjoratively as marketeers of a *nouvelle théologie*.
17. T.G. GUARINO, *Foundations of Systematic Theology*, T&T Clark, New York, 2005, p. 288.

18. This kind of dissatisfaction was widespread. With regard to the rigid neo-scholastic Thomism in his seminary, Joseph Ratzinger has this to say: «I had difficulties in penetrating the thought of Thomas Aquinas, whose crystal-clear logic seemed to me to be too closed in on itself, too impersonal and ready-made»: J. RATZINGER, *Milestones. Memoirs 1927-1977*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 1998, p.44. But Dulles was always grateful to the scholastic tradition in which he was schooled: «I do not at all regret having been schooled in this scholastic method. It gave me a good exposure to the Catholic tradition and to the history of the theological controversy. In addition it taught me something about how to mount a theological argument»: A. DULLES, *The Craft of Theology. From Symbol to System*, Crossroad, New York 1992, p.42.
19. J. MORALES, «Los Modelos en Teología», in J. MORALES et. al., *Cristo y el Dios de los cristianos. Hacia una comprensión actual de la teología*. Simposios Internacionales de Teología, n. 18, Pamplona 1998, p. 125.
20. R. P. SCHARLEMANN, «Theological Models and their Construction», *Journal of Religion*, 53 (1973) 65-82.
21. D. TRACY, *Blessed Rage for Order. The New Pluralism in Theology*, New York 1975.
22. P. SCHINELLER, «Christ and the Church. A Spectrum of Views», *Theological Studies*, 37 (1976) 545-66.
23. T. F. O'MEARA, «Philosophical Models in Ecclesiology», *Theological Studies*, 39 (1978) 3-21.
24. J. MORALES, «Los Modelos en Teología», op.cit, p. 126.
25. A. DULLES, *Models of the Church*, Doubleday Image Books, Garden City, New York 1987, p. 27.
26. ID., *Models of Revelation*, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, N.Y. 1983; New edition with 1992 Preface, Orbis, Maryknoll, N.Y. 1992, p.30. Hereafter simply Models of Revelation followed by the page number.
27. In the 1996 postscript to A. DULLES, *A Testimonial to Grace and Reflections on a Theological Journey*, Sheed and Ward, Kansas City 1996 (Henceforth *Testimonial* followed by the page number) Dulles acknowledges that «The most commercially successful of my books from this period was *Models of the Church*, published in 1974»: *Testimonial*, 117. Eight years before the new edition of *Testimonial*, while talking about Dulles' works, Peter Steinfelds would say: «One of them, *Models of the Church*, is a minor theological best-seller – and a good example of the Dulles technique»: P. STEINFELDS, «Fordham's New Theologian. A Flair for Diplomacy», *New York Times*, 2nd October 1988.
28. *Testimonial*, 117.
29. Models of Revelation, 25-6.
30. *Ibid.*, 30
31. Assurance, 17.
32. Cfr. 1 Tim 6:20 and 2 Tim 1:14.
33. Irenaeus and Tertullian blame their Gnostic opponents of ignoring the apostolic «rule of faith».
34. J. LOCKE, *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, IV.18.2.
35. DF, chap. 3 (DS 2145).
36. G. GRISEZ, *The Way of the Lord Jesus*, vol. 1, *Christian Moral Principles*, Christian Herald, Chicago 1983, pp.493-4.
37. W. MARSHNER, *Reasons for Hope*, Christendom College Press, Front Royal, Virginia 1982, pp. 157 and 172.
38. Assurance, 172.
39. *Fides qua creditur* is the faith by which one believes; the personal faith which apprehends.
40. *Fides quae creditur* points to that which is believed; the content of «the faith.»
41. Pierre Rousselot was born at Nantes in 1879. At the age of 16 he entered the Society of Jesus at Canterbury since the anti-clerical laws of the time had banned the Jesuits in France. Before

his thirtieth birthday, Rousselot defended two philosophical theses at the Sorbonne-without taking out any time from the ordinary cycle of Jesuit training. These were *L'Intellectualisme de saint Thomas*, which drew attention to the continuing vitality, in Thomas' synthesis, of Christian Platonism, and *Le Problème de l'amour au moyen âge*, a study which proved a fertile source of themes for later students of mediaeval philosophy and theology. He became discontented with the standard Neo-Thomism in which he was instructed and so sought to «return to the sources». Appointed professor at the *Institut Catholique*, in his first course de fide he gave lectures that were developed into a lengthy two part essay *Les Yeux de la foi* («The Eyes of Faith») published in the Strasbourg *Recherches de science religieuse* in 1910. This essay was an attempt to rescue the act of faith from the pit into which an over-rationalistic apologetics had cast it. With the outbreak of the Great War, Rousselot became a military chaplain, and it was in that capacity that he died, in April 1915, on the battlefield of Eparges.

42. Assurance, 173.
43. Cfr. K. RAHNER, «Thoughts of the Possibility of Belief Today», *Theological Investigations*, vol. 5, Helicon, Baltimore 1966, p.7.
44. ID., «Faith Between Rationality and Emotion», *Theological Investigations*, vol. 16, Seabury/Crossroad, New York 1979, p.67.
45. Assurance, 173.
46. *Ibid.*, 173-4.
47. K. RAHNER, *Theological Investigations* Vol 14, Darton, Longman & Todd, London 1976, p. 283.
48. H. U. V. BALTHASAR, *Cordula oder der Ernstfall*, Baser, Johannes, 1966; English translation: *The Moment of Christian Witness*, trans. Richard Beckley, Glen Rock, Newman 1969, pp.60-68.
49. Y. CONGAR, «Non-Christian Religions and Christianity», in M. DHAVAMONY (ed.), *Evangelisation, Dialogue and Development: Selected Papers of the International Theological Conference, Nagpur (India) 1971*, Documenta Missionalia, 5, Gregorian University Press, Rome 1972, p. 134.
50. Reflecting on Joseph Ratzinger's theological path, Dulles interestingly observes that: «Still finding his own path, he was in the first years of the council unduly dependent on Karl Rahner as a mentor. Only gradually did he come to see that he and Rahner lived, theologically speaking, on different planets»: A. DULLES, *Church and society, op. cit.*, p. 480.
51. Cfr. J. RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance. Christian Belief and World Religions*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2004, pp. 15-18.
52. J. L. LORDA, *La Gracia de Dios*, Palabra, Madrid 2004, p. 274.
53. *Ibidem*.
54. Cfr. Assurance, 172. Here Dulles cites: M. LUTHER, «A Brief Explanation of the Ten Commandments, the Creed, and the Lord's Prayer» (1520), WA 7:215; Works of Martin Luther, vol.2, Muhlenberg, Philadelphia 1943, p. 368.
55. Augsburg Confession, art. 20, no. 26; in *The Book of Concord*, ed. and trans. Theodore G. Tappert, Fortress, Philadelphia 1959, p. 45.
56. J. CALVIN, *Institutes of the Christian Religion*, Book III, chap. 2, no. 7; J. MCNEIL (ed.), *Library of Christian Classics* 20, Westminster, Philadelphia 1960, p. 551.
57. Cfr. RITSCHL, *Justification and Reconciliation*, Reference Book Publishers, Clifton, New Jersey 1966, 3:103.
58. Cfr. W. HERRMANN, *The Communion of the Christian with God*, Fortress, Philadelphia 1971, pp. 223, 241.
59. W. PANNENBERG, «Response to the Discussion», in J. ROBINSON and J.B. COBB, JR. (eds.), *Theology as History*, Harper Row, New York 1967, p. 273.
60. J. MOLTSMANN, *Theology of Hope*, SCM, London 1967, p. 44.
61. E. SCHILBEEKX, *Interim Report on the Books «Jesus» and «Christ»*, Crossroad, New York 1981, p. 50.

62. ID., *Christ. The Experience of Jesus as Lord*, Seabury/Crossroad, New York 1980, p. 78.
63. Assurance, 176.
64. Cfr. K. BARTH, *Church Dogmatics, IV/1*, T. and T. Clark, Edinburgh 1935, p. 758.
65. R. BULTMANN, *Theology of the New Testament*, 2 vols., Scribner, New York 1961, 1:316.
66. D. BONHOEFFER, *The Cost of Discipleship*, Macmillan Paperbacks, New York 1963, pp.68-69.
67. *Ibid.*, p. 59.
68. Assurance, 177.
69. Johann Baptist Metz, was born on August 5, 1928, in the small town of Auerbach in Bavaria. He was a student of Karl Rahner, who exercised a life-long influence on him. A diocesan priest, Metz was dedicated to an intellectual career, he was the Ordinary Professor of Fundamental Theology at Westphalian Wilhelms University in the northern German town of Muenster. The term 'political theology' does not refer to the common understanding of politics but rather politics as is understood in the broader sense of the word polis, the society as a whole. As a theologian, Metz understands his mission as to continually examine the Scriptures and his surroundings in order to put the Church on a constant path of renewal. For Metz the major tasks of a theologian are: to decode dogmas into practical, understandable material; to use methods of inquiry that highlight the political aspects of religion in their lives. «Political Theology is a theology of the polis, a theology which examines social structures, cultural movements, and economic philosophies in the penetrating light of the gospel. While this may have implications in the narrower political sense, its overall vision is broader and more profound»: cfr. N. ORMEROD, *Introducing Contemporary Theologies. The What and the Who of Theology Today*, E.J. Dwyer, Newton (Australia), 1990, p. 117.
70. Well as it is simply another word for practice, Marxists took praxis to be an aspect of theory-and-practice, in which neither theory nor practice are intelligible in isolation from the other. But where «practice» is understood in isolation from theory, then a process is required to mediate between theory and practice, and drawing on the Greek *πραξις* praxis is taken as the process of «putting theory into practice», of mediating from theory to practice.
71. Cfr. J. L. ILLANES y J. I. SARANYANA, *Historia de la teología*, 3ª ed., Biblioteca de Autores Cristianos, Madrid 2002, p. 395.
72. *Ibidem*.
73. The Peruvian Dominican priest Gustavo Gutiérrez Merino, was born in Lima on 8th June 1928-). Gutiérrez is of Native American heritage, being of mixed Quechua descent, and he is probably the most influential Peruvian scholar of all time. He is the standard bearer of the liberation theology movement. He studied medicine and literature in Peru before moving to Leuven where he studied psychology and philosophy (Leuven). Gutiérrez is a holder of a doctorate from the *Institut Pastoral d'Etudes Religieuses* (IPER), Université Catholique de Lyon. Over his years as a theology student, he had for teachers Henri de Lubac, Yves Congar and Marie-Dominique Chenu. Gutiérrez enjoyed friendship with theologians like Edward Schillebeeckx, Karl Rahner, Hans Küng and Johann Baptist Metz. He was a member of the board of directors of the international journal, *Concilium*. His most influential book is, *Teología de la liberación. Perspectivas*, CEP, Lima 1971 which is viewed as the constitutive letter of the movement.
74. Cfr. J. L. ILLANES y J. I. SARANYANA, *Historia de la teología*, op. cit., p. 396.
75. G. GUTIÉRREZ, *The Power of the Poor in History*, Orbis, Maryknoll, New York 1983, p. 20.
76. J.L. SEGUNDO, *The Liberation of Theology*, Orbis, Maryknoll, New York 1976, p. 181.
77. Assurance, 179.
78. J. BARRIO, «Personalismo», in *Gran Enciclopedia Rialp*, vol. 18, Rialp, Madrid 1991, p. 370.
79. Assurance, 179.
80. Maurice Blondel was born on 2nd November 1861 in Dijon in a prestigious family of lawyers and passed away on the 4th of June 1949 at Aix-en-Provence. In 1881, he enrolled in the Ecole Normale Supérieure of Paris to study philosophy. In 1893, at the Sorbonne, he

defended his thesis *L'Action* (Action), a critical essay of life and of a science of the practice. Blondel felt the pinch of the divisions between the Academic world and Catholicism in France. Like many in his generation, he was profoundly affected by the tensions in French life, particularly those between the French academic establishment and Catholicism. At the Sorbonne, it was felt that Blondel was taking on a religious problem and his thesis was accepted on condition that it was to have no footnotes. In Catholic circles, neo-thomists theologians had a bone to pick with Blondel on grounds that he had rationalised theology and *L'Action Française* labelled him a Modernist. Blondel's later works, *The Letter on Apologetics* (1896) and *History and Dogma* (1903) sought to address these problems.

81. M. BLONDEL, «Foi», in *Vocabulaire technique et critique de la philosophie*, 10th ed., Presses universitaires de France, Paris 1968, p. 360.
82. C. IZQUIERDO, *De la razón a la fe. La aportación de M. Blondel a la teología*, Eunsa, Pamplona 1999, p. 215.
83. The French Catholic priest Jean Mouroux (Dijon, France, 1901-1973) is well known for his personalist perspective of doing theology which influenced many philosophers in the second half of the 20th century especially in the spheres of faith and Christian experience. A diocesan priest, he exercised his theological activities hand in hand with pastoral duties which mainly consisted of work in the seminary of Dijon of which he was rector from 1947 to 1956. Although he made contact with the leading figures (Henri de Lubac who was at Fourvière at the time and Yves Marie Congar who was teaching at Le Saulchoir) in theology in his time his fragile health impeded him from travelling a lot. Paul VI named him *peritus* at the Second Vatican Council but due to an acute heart condition he only went once to the Eternal City. His works exhibited a charming style and the following are perhaps the best remembered ones: *Sens chrétien de l'homme* (Paris 1945), *Je crois en Toi. Structure personnelle de la foi* (Paris, 1949), *L'expérience chrétienne. Introduction à une théologie* (Paris 1952), *Le mystère du temps. Approche théologique* (Paris 1962). To avoid that a thinker of such importance to contemporary theology slips into oblivion, his friends and the authorities of the seminary of Dijon established a collection of his works, correspondence, lectures and writings about him under the name of *Fonds Jean Mouroux* in Bibliothèque Diocésaine «Gustave Bardy» of Dijon.
84. G. BOURDEAU, *Entretiens avec Jean Mouroux*, Evêché de Dijon, Dijon 1985, p. 20.
85. J. MOUROUX, *I Believe. The Personal Structure of Faith*, Geoffrey Chapman, London 1959, p. 37.
86. J. ALONSO, *Fe y experiencia Cristiana. La teología de Jean Mouroux*, Eunsa, Pamplona 2002, p. 290.
87. Cfr. J. MOUROUX, *I Believe. The Personal Structure of Faith, op. cit.*, p. 41.
88. H. DE LUBAC, *The Christian Faith*, Ignatius, San Francisco 1986, p. 145-6.
89. Tillich was born on August 20, 1886, in Brandenburg, Germany and died in Chicago in 1965. Along with Karl Barth, Rudolf Bultmann and Reinhold Niebuhr, Tillich is one of the most influential Protestant theologians of the 20th century. He studied at the University of Berlin before moving on to the University of Tübingen and finally the University of Halle, in this last university he studied under Martin Kähler. After the war Tillich taught theology at several German universities: Berlin, Marburg, Dresden, Leipzig and Frankfurt. On Hitler's ascent to power, Tillich fled Germany for the United States. He taught at the Union Theological Seminary in New York, Harvard Divinity School and the Chicago School of Divinity. Tillich's best-known work, his master-piece without doubt, is his three-volume *Systematic Theology* (1951, 1957, and 1963), which was based on his Gifford Lectures. His work clearly has an apologetic approach. He was convinced that the Christian faith had to be interpreted and could only be interpreted by reason. On his way to the top, Tillich got ideas from many authors. Among these we can point out: St. Thomas, Schelling, Hegel, Schleiermacher, Troeltsch, Barth, Heidegger and Jung.

90. P. TILLICH, *Dynamics of Faith*, Harper & Brothers, New York 1957, p. 8.
91. Assurance, 180.
92. *Ibidem*.
93. A. DULLES, «Criteria of Catholic theology», *Communio International Catholic Review*, 22 (1995) 305.
94. A. DULLES, «Revelation and Discovery», «Revelation and Discovery», in W. J. KELLY (ed.), *Theology and Discovery. Essays in Honor of Karl Rahner, S.J.*, Marquette University Press, Milwaukee 1980, 1-29., p. 1.
95. A. DULLES, *John Henry Newman*, Continuum, London 2002, p. 34.
96. A. DULLES, *The Survival of Dogma*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
97. Cfr. A. DULLES, «Faith, Reason and the Logic of Discovery», in *The Survival of Dogma*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-59.
98. A. DULLES, «Faith, Reason and the Logic of Discovery», in *The Survival of Dogma*, *op. cit.*, pp. 44-59.
99. *Ibid.*, p. 44.
100. A. DULLES, *The Craft of Theology*, *op. cit.*, pp. 7 and 8.
101. ID., «Theology and the Physical Sciences», in *The Craft of Theology*, *op. cit.*, p. 135.
102. ID., «Theology and Philosophy», in *The Craft of Theology*, *op. cit.*, p. 145.
103. ID., «Vatican II and Scholasticism», *Commonweal* (May 1990) 9.
104. A. NICHOLS, *From Hermes to Benedict XVI. Faith and Reason in Modern Catholic Thought*, Gracewing, Leominster (United Kingdom) 2009, p. ix.
105. A. DULLES, «Faith and Reason. From Vatican I to John Paul II» in D. R. FOSTER, J. W. KOTERSKI (eds.), *The Two Wings of Catholic Thought. Essays on Fides et Ratio*, Catholic University of America, Washington 2003, pp. 193-208.
106. ID., «Faith and Reason? A Note on the New Encyclical», *America*, 179 (1998) 7-8.
107. ID., «Reason, Philosophy, and the Grounding of Faith. A reflection on *Fides et Ratio*» in *International Philosophical Quarterly*, 40 (2000) 479-490.
108. ID., «Faith, Reason and Wisdom», *The Living Pulpit* 9 (2000) 14.
109. ID., «*Fides et Ratio* and the New Evangelization», *Theologie und Glaube*, 90 (2000) 412-6.
110. ID., «Faith and Reason? A Note on the New Encyclical», *op. cit.*, p. 7.
111. *Ibidem*.
112. *Ibid.*, p.8.
113. Cfr. VATICAN II, Declaration *Gravissimum educationis* on Christian Education, no. 10.
114. A. DULLES, «Faith and Reason. From Vatican I to John Paul II», *op. cit.*, p. 194.
115. *Ibid.*, p. 195.
116. *Ibidem*.
117. *Ibid.*, p. 197.
118. GS, 1.
119. A. DULLES, «Faith and Reason. From Vatican I to John Paul II», *op. cit.*, p. 198.
120. R. FISICHELLA, «Reason Finds in Revelation the Possibility of Being Truly Itself», *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition in English, 13 January 1999, p. 10.
121. Dulles gave the lecture at Fordham University and it has thereafter been published as: A. DULLES, «Can Philosophy Be Christian?» in *First Things*, 102 (2000) 24-29 and A. DULLES, «Can Philosophy Be Christian? The New State of the Question», in ID., *Church and Society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 291-305.
122. E. GILSON, *The Spirit of Mediaeval Philosophy (Gifford Lectures 1931-1932)*, trans. A.H.C. DOWNES, Sheed & Ward, London 1950.
123. A. DULLES, *Church and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 292.
124. *Ibid.*, pp. 301-2.
125. Assurance, 181.
126. Models of Revelation, 128.

127. A number of articles in the Festschrift in homage to Avery Dulles pursue this line. Cfr. L. J. O'DONOVAN, T. H. SANKS, *Faithful Witness. Foundations of Theology for Today's Church*, Crossroad, New York 1989.
128. Models of Revelation, 280.
129. J.R. CONNOLLY, «Christian Faith. A Contemporary View», in C. CHAPPLE and T. P. RAUSCH (eds.) *The College Student's Introduction to Theology*, Liturgical Press, Collegeville 1993, p. 98.
130. J. J. KELLY, «The Symbolic Structure of Revelation and Faith», in L. J. O'DONOVAN, T. H. SANKS, *Faithful Witness, op. cit.*, p. 71.
131. Roger Aubert (1914-2009), a priest of the diocese of Malinas was born in Ixelles (Bruxells). He studied history, philosophy and theology at Louvain. Although he is above all a historian of great renown, he has had a lot of influence on the theology of faith. The Scholastic theology in the seminary disappointed him for being rationalistic in nature. Aubert thought that faith as conceived by St. Paul was more than a simple adherence of the intellect to dogmas; it was a gift of the whole person to God. He wrote his doctoral thesis on the question of faith and the debates that were generated by Vatican I's dogmatic constitution Dei Filius. The thesis was published in 1945 and it was an instant hit: R. AUBERT, *Le problème de l'acte de foi: données traditionnelles et résultats des controverses récentes*, E. Warny, Louvain 1945.
132. G.S. WORGUL, «Review of The Assurance of Things Hoped For. A Theology of Christian Faith», *Theological Studies*, 56 (1995) 791.
133. A. DULLES, *John Henry Newman, op. cit.*, p. 45.
134. Cfr. JOHN PAUL II, *Fides et ratio*, 76.
135. A. DULLES, «Can Philosophy be Christian?», *op. cit.*
136. Dulles makes this confidence in an interview with Brian McGuire. Cfr. B. MCGUIRE, «The Making of a Cardinal. In person. Avery Dulles», *op. cit.*
137. A. DULLES, «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», *Thomist*, 45 (1981) 175-193.
138. R. LATOURELLE and R. FISICHELLA (eds.), *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, Crossroad, New York 1994.
139. R. LATOURELLE and R. FISICHELLA (eds.), *Dizionario di Teologia Fondamentale*, Cittadella Editrice Assisi 1990. The English translation arrived four years later; R. LATOURELLE and R. FISICHELLA (eds.), *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology*, Crossroad, New York 1994.
140. D'ALES, *Dictionnaire apologétique de la foi catholique*, Paris, 1911ff.
141. A. DULLES, «Conversion» in R. LATOURELLE and R. FISICHELLA (eds.), *Dictionary of Fundamental Theology, op. cit.*, pp. 191-193.
142. *Ibid.*, The quotation is taken from AG, 13.
143. A. DULLES, «Conversion», *op. cit.*, p. 191.
144. UR, 4.
145. A. DULLES, «Conversion», *op. cit.*, p. 191.
146. In his groundbreaking essay «Fundamental theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», Dulles bases his presuppositions on ideas on conversion propounded by Lonergan.
147. B. LONERGAN, *Method in Theology*, Herder and Herder, New York 1972, p. 107.
148. *Ibid.*, p. 240.
149. *Ibidem*.
150. A. DULLES, «Conversion», *op. cit.*, p. 192.
151. Some interesting literature on the identity of Fundamental theology include: R. LATOURELLE and G. O'COLLINS (ed.), *Problems and Perspectives of Fundamental Theology*, Paulist Press, New York 1982; H. FRIES, *Fundamental theology*, CUA Press, Washington 1985; C. IZQUIERDO, *Teología Fundamental* (3ª), EUNSA, Pamplona 2009; R. FISICHELLA, *Introducción a la Teología Fundamental*, Verbo Divino, Estella 1993; F. OCÁRIZ and A. BLANCO, *Teología Fundamental* (2ª), Palabra, Madrid 2008.

152. H. FRIES, *Fundamental Theology*, CUA, Washington D.C. 1985, p. 4.
153. A. DULLES, «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», *op. cit.*, 176.
154. B. LONERGAN, «Theology in its New Context», in W. RYAN and B. TYRELL (eds.), *A Second Collection*, Westminster, Philadelphia 1974, p. 66.
155. A. DULLES, «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», *op. cit.*, 181.
156. The philosopher of science contends that no intelligence can operate outside a fiduciary framework. Cfr. M. POLANYI, *Personal Knowledge. Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, University of Chicago Press, Chicago 2000 p.266 ff.
157. A. DULLES, «Fundamental Theology and the Dynamics of Conversion», *op. cit.*, 183.
158. *Ibid.*, 185.
159. *Ibid.*, 186-8.
160. Cfr. *ibid.*, 189.
161. Cfr. *ibid.*, 189-190.
162. *Ibid.*, 190.
163. Assurance, 214.
164. AUGUSTINE, *Confessions*, Book X, chap. 6, trans. Garry Wills, Penguin Books, New York, 2006.
165. Dulles drew from Polanyi's distinction between tacit and explicit knowledge to explain some aspects of experience and discovery. Dulles sees some parallelism between highly personal process of religious conversion and analogies in scientific discovery as presented by Polanyi. Michael Polanyi had advanced these ideas in his work *Personal Knowledge* (Harper Torchbooks, New York 1964).
166. In *Grammar of Assent*, his 1870 classic (cfr. J. H. NEWMAN, *An Essay in Aid of a Grammar of Assent*, ed. I.T. KER, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1985), Blessed Newman coined the term «illative sense» which he contrasted with inference. For Newman, discovery is a result of this mysterious power that goes by the notion «illative sense».
167. M. OAKESHOTT, *Experience and its modes*, Cambridge University Press, Cambridge 1995, p.9.
168. A. DULLES, *Church and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 43.
169. *Ibid.*, p.45.
170. Cfr. J. MOURoux, *The Christian Experience*, *op. cit.*, p. 15.
171. Assurance, 219.
172. *Ibidem*.
173. Cfr. G. BAUM, *Faith and Doctrine*, *op. cit.*, p. 60.
174. Assurance, 220.
175. A. DULLES, *Church and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 48.
176. *Ibid.*, p. 49.
177. A. DULLES, *Church and Society*, *op. cit.*, p. 49.
178. G. IAMMARONE, «Salvación», in L. PACOMIO (ed.), *Diccionario Teológico Enciclopédico*, Verbo Divino, Estella (Spain) 1993, p. 878.
179. Avery Dulles handles this question briefly in *Assurance* pp. 258ff. But for specialized bibliography on this question the following works may be interesting: L. CAPÉran, *Le problème du salut des infidels, Essai historique*, rev. ed., Grand Séminaire, Toulouse 1934 and F. A. SULLIVAN, *Salvation Outside the Church?* Paulist, New York 1992. A number of authors, including Avery Dulles, agree that Capéran's work is still indispensable for anyone doing historical research on the theological problem of salvation outside the Church. In fact, Sullivan's study was inspired by the fact that Capéran's book was never translated into English.
180. Assurance, 261.
181. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, STh., 2-2.2.7c
182. ID., *De veritate*, 14.11 ad 1; cfr. ID., *In III Sent.* Dist. 25, qu. 2, a. 7, sol. 1 ad 1
183. Assurance, 259.
184. DS 1351.

NOTES

185. DS 802.
186. DS 870.
187. ID., Allocution «Singulari quadam» (DB 1647).
188. Cfr. LG 14.
189. A. DULLES, «Review of J. THEISEN, The Ultimate Church and the Promise of Salvation», in *The Journal of Religion*, 57 (1977) 425.
190. *Ibidem*.
191. «Letter of the Holy Office to the Archbishop of Boston, August 8, 1949», in DS 3866.
192. The Holy Cross College, located in Worcester, Massachusetts, was founded by the Jesuits in 1843 at the time it was the only Catholic college in New England.
193. The lecture was later published as: A. DULLES, «Dogma as an Ecumenical Problem», *Theological Studies*, 29 (1968) 397-416.
194. *Ibid.*, p. 407.
195. G. BAUM, «The Magisterium in a Changing Church», *Concilium*, 21 (1967) 69.
196. A. DULLES, «Dogma as an Ecumenical Problem», *op. cit.*, p. 407.
197. *Ibidem*.
198. L. CAPÉLAN, *Le problème du salut des infidèles, Essai historique*, rev. ed., Grand Séminaire, Toulouse 1934.
199. F. A. SULLIVAN, *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*, Paulist Press, New York 1992.
200. A. DULLES, «Review of F. A. SULLIVAN, *Salvation Outside the Church? Tracing the History of the Catholic Response*», *Theology Today*, 50 (April 1993) 133-6.
201. In an earlier review, Avery Dulles writes: «... the nonserviceability of the adage, «Outside the Church no salvation», is not new. (...) Since Vatican II, which sedulously avoided the axiom, it has virtually ceased to be defended» (cfr. A. DULLES, «Review of J. THEISEN, The Ultimate Church and the Promise of Salvation», *The Journal of Religion*, 57 (1977) 425-6, at 425.
202. F. A. SULLIVAN, *Salvation Outside the Church?*, *op. cit.*, p. 149.
203. *Ibid.*, p. 136.
204. Cfr. A. DULLES, «Dogma as an Ecumenical Problem», *op. cit.*, p. 407.
205. ST. THOMAS AQUINAS, STh., 2a-2ae, q.4, art. 1c.
206. Cfr. A. DULLES, «Faith and Revelation», *op. cit.*, p. 114.
207. A. DULLES, «Justification in Contemporary Catholic Theology», in H.G. ANDERSON, T.A. MURPHY and J.A. BURGESS (eds.), *Justification by Faith. Lutherans and Catholics in Dialogue*, n° 7, *op. cit.*, p. 256.
208. A. HARNACK, *History of Dogma*, vol. 7, Russell & Russell, New York 1958, p.57.
209. It is with this in mind that Anthony N.S. Lane writes that «conservative Christians in both camps are increasingly inclined to see one another as allies over a range of theological, ethical, social and political issues.» See: A.N.S. LANE, *Justification by Faith in Catholic-Protestant Dialogue. An Evangelical Assessment*, T&T Clark, London and New York 2002, p.7.
210. Richard John Neuhaus (1936-2009) was born in Pembroke, Ontario, Canada to American parents. Neuhaus graduated from Concordia Theological Seminary in St. Louis Missouri before being ordained a minister by his own father. In the turbulent 1960s, Richard Neuhaus took on the role of a liberal Lutheran leader of the civil rights and anti-war struggles. He later moved away from the left, founding The Institute on Religion in Public Life and editing its now famous monthly journal, *First Things*. Sponsored by long-time friend Avery Dulles, Richard Neuhaus was received into the Catholic Church by the Archbishop of New York John Cardinal O'Connor on the feast of the Nativity of Mary, September 8, 1990. About a year later he was ordained a Catholic priest by the same Cardinal. A prolific writer, in his later years he argued for a greater presence of religion in the public domain. Although he was considered a conservative, *Time magazine* included him in its list of the 25 most influential evangelicals in America in 2005. Neuhaus teamed up with Charles Colson to overcome

- traditional differences among Protestants and Catholics. On his passing away, *First Things*, the Magazine he founded and edited for a long time, dedicated an issue to his memory, cfr. «Richard John Neuhaus *In Memoriam*», *First Things* 192 (April 2009).
211. The statement appeared as: «Evangelical and Catholics Together. The Christian Mission for the Third Millennium», *First Things* 43 (May 1994) 15-22.
 212. *Ibid.*, p. 16.
 213. Best-selling Fundamentalist author Dave Hunt felt that «the document overturns the Reformation and does incalculable damage to the cause of Christ.» He then theatrically adds, «the document represents the most devastating blow against the gospel in the last 1,000 years.» Cfr. D. HUNT, «The Gospel Betrayed», *Voice* (July/Aug. 1994) 21-24.
 214. Among such defences we here mention those of Anglican scholar J.I. Packer (J.I. PACKER «Why I Signed It», *Christianity Today* 38 (12th December 1994) 34-7) and Richard D. Land, the executive director of the Southern Baptist Christian Life Commission (R. D. LAND, «Perspective. Evangelicals and Catholics?» *Light* (May/June 1994).)
 215. At a distance of fifteen years, Colson would recall the ordeal he went through at the publication of ECT: «There was a backlash in the evangelical ranks like nothing I had seen before. Some donors to Prison and Fellowship withdrew their support. Some of my best friends in the evangelical movement, respected theologians, chastised me for holding anything in common with Rome. It was the evangelical equivalent of an Inquisition.» C. COLSON, «My Brother in Christ», *First Things* 192 (April 2009) 26.
 216. It was published in Richard John Neuhaus' magazine. Cfr.: *First Things* 79 (January 1998) 20-23.
 217. «The Gift of Salvation», *First Things* 79 (January 1998) 21.
 218. P. H. REARDON, «Editorial: Evangelicals & Catholics Together?» *Touchstone* 7 (Fall 1994) 6.
 219. Charles Colson, one of the leading promoters of ECT, recalls that at the end of their discussions, «Cardinal Cassidy said that even though ours was an informal group, not having official Church recognition, 'The Gift of Salvation' was so thoughtfully written that he would use it as a teaching paper in Rome.» Cfr. C. COLSON, «My Brother in Christ», *First Things* 192 (April 2009) 26-7.
 220. A. DULLES, *Evangelization for the Third Millennium*, *op. cit.*, p. 47.
 221. A.N.S. LANE, *Justification by Faith in Catholic-Protestant Dialogue*, *op. cit.*, p. 118.
 222. A. MOORE, «Theology. Does The Gift of Salvation Sell Out the Reformation?» *Christianity Today*, 42 (27 April 1998) 21.
 223. *Justification by faith* (1984), a fruit of discussions by a committee appointed by both the Roman Catholics Bishops' Committee for Ecumenical and Interreligious Affairs in the United States and the Lutheran World Federation; *Justification of the sinner* (1986) published as a chapter in a joint-volume by a group of Catholic and Evangelical theologians presided over by renowned theologians Karl Lehmann and Wolfhart Pannenberg seeking to examine the reversal of condemnations issued by both sides during the Reformation; and *Church and Justification* (1993) which was the work of the Lutheran World Federation and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity examining the relationship between ecclesiology and justification.
 224. *Joint Declaration on the Doctrine of Justification*. http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_31101999_cath-luth-joint-declaration_en.html.
 225. Daphne Hampson dedicates some good space to the controversy. Cfr. D. HAMPSON, *Christian Contradictions. The Structures of Lutheran & Catholic Thought*, Cambridge University Press, Port Chester, New York 2001, pp. 212-222.
 226. Of the 124 member churches to whom the Lutheran World Federation sent the draft, it received eighty-nine responses. Eighty of these were positive, five negative and four non-committal.

227. The Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith and the Pontifical Council for Promoting Christian Unity, «Response of the Catholic Church to the Joint Declaration of the Catholic Church and the Lutheran World Federation on the Doctrine of Justification», June 1998: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/pontifical_councils/chrstuni/documents/rc_pc_chrstuni_doc_01081998_off-answer-catholic_en.html. Accessed on 11th April 2012.
228. At a time when the difficulties seemed insurmountable, Cardinal Ratzinger appealed to the long-standing friendship he shared with Bishop Johannes Hanselmann, former president of the World Lutheran Federation. When the Lutheran minister passed away on 2nd October 1999, Cardinal Ratzinger intimated that on 3rd November 1998 Johannes Hanselmann was able to convene an ad hoc working group made up of the two of them plus Catholic theologian Heinz Schuette and Lutheran theologian Joachim Track: «We had a very important meeting in my brother's house, in Germany, as it seemed that the consensus on the Doctrine of Justification had failed. In this way, in the course of a debate that lasted a whole day, we found the formulas that have clarified the points that still present difficulties. With the formula elaborated in those days, both by the Lutheran Federation as well as the Catholic magisterium, they have been able to acknowledge that a consensus has been reached on some Fundamental points of the Doctrine of Justification. It is not a global agreement, but with this formula it is possible to proceed to the signing of a document of consensus in the basic contents.» Cited in «Lutheran Hailed Cardinal Ratzinger as Expert on Luther», *Zenit*, 5th May 2005, <http://www.zenit.org/article-12931?l=English>. Accessed on 4th June 2012.
229. Institute for Ecumenical Research, *Commentary*, 25.
230. A. DULLES, «Saving ecumenism from itself», *First Things* 178 (December 2007) 25.
231. Cfr. A. DULLES, «Two Languages of Salvation. The Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration», *First Things*, 98 (December 1999) 25-30; A. DULLES, «Justification. The Joint Declaration» *Josephinum*, 9 (Winter/Spring 2002) 108-119; A. DULLES, «Saving ecumenism from itself», *First Things*, 178 (December) 2007; A. DULLES, «Justification and the Unity of the Church», W. STUMME, *The Gospel of Justification in Christ. Where Does the Church Stand Today?* W.B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, Grand Rapids, Michigan 2006, pp. 125-140.
232. A. DULLES, «Two Languages of Salvation. The Lutheran-Catholic Joint Declaration», *First Things*, 98 (December 1999) 27.
233. *Ibid.*, p. 28.
234. A. DULLES, *The Catholicity of the Church*, Clarendon, Oxford University Press, New York 1985, p. 8 cites J. GUITTON, *The Church and the Gospel*, Regnery, Chicago 1961, p. 225.
235. A. DULLES, «Two Languages of Salvation», *op. cit.*, p. 30.
236. J. CARDINAL RATZINGER, *Homily to the Consistory to Elect the Pope*, Vatican City, 15th April 2005 (*L'Osservatore Romano*). Also available at www.vatican.va/gpII/documents/homily-pro-eligendo-pontifice_20050418_it.html. Accessed on 3rd June 2012.
237. ID., «Relativism. The Central Problem for Faith Today», *Origins*, 26 (31st October 1996) 309-17.
238. C.E. OLSON, «The History and Purpose of Apologetics. An Interview with Avery Cardinal Dulles, S.J.», *Ignatius Insight*, July 2005. Available at: [http://www.ignatiusinsight.com/features2005/carddulles_intervw_july05.asp] [accessed on 26th May 2012].
239. Quoted in *A Model Theologian*, 516.
240. P. L. BERGER and R. J. NEUHAUS (eds.), *Against the World for the World. The Hartford Appeal and the Future of American Religion*, Seabury, New York 1976.
241. As a show of conviction in the project masterminded by Neuhaus, Dulles contributed an essay to the book on the Hartford appeal. Cfr. A. DULLES, «Unmasking Secret Infidelities. Hartford and the Future of Ecumenism» in P. L. BERGER and R. J. NEUHAUS (eds.), *Against the World for the World*, *op. cit.*, pp. 57-58.
242. Referring to these positions, Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger says that they «are in fact seen as being the only real possibilities.» See J. CARDINAL RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance. Christian Belief and World Religions*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2004, p.49.

243. In the 20th century, it is perhaps Karl Barth more than any other theologian who has provided vocal support for exclusivism. Feeney's supporters at St. Benedict's Centre also fall under this category.
244. Rahner, with his argument that Christianity is present in all religions, stands out as the foremost advocate of inclusivism.
245. Originally touted by John Hick, the US-based English theologian, pluralism has been embraced by Catholic authors like Paul Knitter and Raimundo Panikkar.
246. J. CARDINAL RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance*, *op. cit.*, p. 5.
247. Dulles writes the following about Knitter's position on religions: «Paul Knitter, has in several recent articles challenged the view that Christianity commits its adherents to the finality and superiority of God's revelation in Christ. Such a tenet, he holds, is unjustifiable in terms of a modern approach to Scripture and a revisionist method in theology. It is also disastrous for interreligious dialogue. Following a consistent consciousness theology, he argues that revelation and salvation occur when the individual is «sucked into» a world constituted by myth and symbol»: *Models of Revelation*, 189.
248. *Models of Revelation*, 192.
249. A. DULLES, «Christ among the religions», in ID., *Church and society*, *op. cit.*, pp. 360-372
250. *Ibid.*, p. 363.
251. A. DULLES, «Christ among the religions», in ID., *Church and society*, *op. cit.*, p. 363.
252. *Ibidem*.
253. *Ibid.*, p. 364.
254. *Ibid.*, p. 365.
255. A biographical sketch of Jacques Dupuis is provided by his close friend and unwavering supporter Gerald O'Collins. Cfr.: G. O'COLLINS, «Jacques Dupuis. His Person and Work», in D. KENDALL and G. O'COLLINS, *In Many and Diverse Ways. In Honor of Jacques Dupuis*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 2003, pp. 18-29.
256. This shows through mainly in his work: J. DUPUIS, *Vers une théologie chrétienne du pluralisme religieux*, cerf, Paris 1997 (English trans., *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 1997).
257. Cfr. J. CARDINAL RATZINGER, *Truth and Tolerance. Christian Beliefs and World Religions*, Ignatius Press, San Francisco 2004, pp. 52-3.
258. CONGREGATION FOR THE DOCTRINE OF THE FAITH, «Notification on the book *Toward a Christian Theology of Religious Pluralism*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 1997, by Father J. DUPUIS, S.J., Vatican, 24th January 2001, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20010124_dupuis_en.html; Accessed on 1st June 2012. Hereafter *Notification*.
259. *Ibidem*.
260. *Notification*.
261. Avery Dulles deals with the Logos in several parts in *Models of Revelation*, albeit in passing. The useful pages are: 158, 168-9, 187-8, 237 and 295.
262. *Models of Revelation*, 190. In citing this text, Gerald O'Collins omits what we have included in brackets. Cfr. G. O'COLLINS, «Jacques Dupuis's Contributions to Interreligious Dialogue», *Theological Studies*, 64 (2003) 388-97, at 394.
263. G. O'COLLINS, «Jacques Dupuis's Contributions to Interreligious Dialogue», *op. cit.*, 394.
264. *Models of Revelation*, 190. (Lucien Richard's quote is from: L. RICHARD, *What Are They Saying About Christ and World Religions?* Paulist, Ramsey, N.J. 1981, p. 67).
265. *Models of Revelation*, 190.
266. A. DULLES, «World Religions and the New Millennium. A Catholic Perspective», in D. KENDALL and G. O'COLLINS (eds.), *In Many and Diverse Ways. In Honor of Jacques Dupuis*, Orbis Books, Maryknoll, N.Y. 2003, pp. 3-13.
267. LG 14; cfr. AG 7.

268. A. DULLES, «World Religions and the New Millennium. A Catholic Perspective», *op. cit.*, pp. 6-7.
269. *Ibid.*, 4.
270. In his Inaugural Christmas address to the Roman Curia, Pope Benedict XVI describes the position that advocate for a hermeneutic of discontinuity and rapture in the following way: «The hermeneutic of discontinuity risks ending in a split between the pre-conciliar Church and the post-conciliar Church. It asserts that the texts of the Council as such do not yet express the true spirit of the Council. It claims that they are the result of compromises in which, to reach unanimity, it was found necessary to keep and reconfirm many old things that are now pointless. However, the true spirit of the Council is not to be found in these compromises but instead in the impulses toward the new that are contained in the texts.» BENEDICT XVI, «Address of His Holiness Benedict XVI to the Roman Curia Offering them his Christmas Greetings» Thursday, 22nd December 2005. From: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/benedict_xvi/speeches/2005/december/documents/hf_ben_xvi_spe_20051222_roman-curia_en.html. Accessed on 2nd June 2012.
271. A. DULLES, «World Religions and the New Millennium. A Catholic Perspective», *op. cit.*, 5.
272. The full text of *Dominus Iesus* may be accessed at http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_20000806_dominus_iesus_en.html.
273. In his Apostolic Letter *Tertio millennio adveniente*, n. 38 (10 November 1994), Blessed John Paul II expressed his wish to convoke a Special Assembly of the Synod of Bishops for Asia. The Synod took place in the Eternal City from the 19th of April to the 14th of May 1998. The theme that the 191 Synod fathers dealt with in their deliberations was «Jesus Christ the Savior and His Mission of Love and Service in Asia: ‘... That They May Have Life, and Have it Abundantly’ (John 10:10).»
274. Diego Contreras made a scientific study in which he analysed 150 texts published in 68 newspapers and magazines from 15 countries. Cfr. D. CONTRERAS, «Coverage of Complex Theoretical Content. The Case of *Dominus Iesus*», *Westminster Papers in Communication and Culture*, 4 (2007) 26-46.
275. Cfr.: F. MORRIS, «The Church of Christ Is One Church: The Catholic Church», *The Wanderer*, 21st September 2000, p. 4.
276. «Honest Ecumenism», *Christianity Today*, 44 (23rd October 2000) 28-29.
277. Weighing in on the controversy kindled by DI, Sandro Magister, the Vatican analyst of the Italian weekly magazine *L'Espresso* does not hesitate to affirm that «as soon as it was published, it was met with a deluge of criticism, both from within and from outside the Church, second only to the reception that the highly controversial encyclical *Humanae vitae* received in 1968.» See: Sandro Magister, «John Paul II and the Other Religions: From Assisi to *Dominus Iesus*», a paper delivered in Tokyo, 18th June 2003 and published in *L'Espresso* on 16th July 2003. Cfr. <http://chiesa.espresso.repubblica.it/articolo/19632?eng=y>. Accessed 17th February 2011.
278. Hans Küng, the dissident Swiss theologian made these comments to an Italian news agency and later reiterated them in his 2004 biography. Cfr. H. KÜNG, *My struggle for freedom. Memoirs*, Continuum, London 2004, p. 146.
279. A. DULLES, «Vatican II. Substantive Teaching», *America*, 31st March 2003.
280. Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger, the architect of DI said this through the torrent of criticism that was directed against this document. «Rather than being blamed for failing to emphasize content rather than form, the Declaration *Dominus Iesus* is often accused of a somewhat tactless approach that irritates the spokesmen of other religions and denominations. Cardinal Sterzinsky of Berlin said that in theological formation it is necessary not to forget in sermons the ‘when, where and how’. In Roman documents, however, it seems that this has been forgotten. And Bishop Lehmann of Mainz said that he would have liked ‘a text written in the style of the great conciliar texts’...» Cfr. J. RATZINGER, «Answers to Main Objections Against

- Dominus Iesus*», translation of the Italian adaptation that *L'Osservatore Romano* made of the 22 September 2000 interview of Joseph Cardinal Ratzinger in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*. See <http://www.ewtn.com/library/theology/obdomihs.htm>. Accessed 17th May 2012.
281. The relevant text of LG 8 which would later be developed to expound the Council's teaching on ecumenism in the Decree *Unitatis redintegratio* has this to say: «This is the one Church of Christ which in the Creed is professed as one, holy, catholic and apostolic, which our Saviour, after His Resurrection, commissioned Peter to shepherd, and him and the other apostles to extend and direct with authority, which He erected for all ages as «the pillar and mainstay of the truth». This Church constituted and organized in the world as a society, subsists in the Catholic Church, which is governed by the successor of Peter and by the Bishops in communion with him, although many elements of sanctification and of truth are found outside of its visible structure. These elements, as gifts belonging to the Church of Christ, are forces impelling toward catholic unity.»
282. A. DULLES, «*Dominus Iesus*, A Catholic Response», *Pro Ecclesia*, 10 (2001) 6. Some years back, Avery Dulles had interpreted LG 8 and as in this case, he understood 'subsistit in' as 'inclusive' rather than 'exclusive'. See: A. DULLES, «The Church, the Churches, and the Catholic Church», *Theological Studies*, 33 (1972) 199-234. Another interesting and full treatment of the phrase, 'subsistit in' is given by Francis Sullivan. See: F. SULLIVAN, «The Significance of the Vatican II Declaration that the Church of Christ 'Subsists in' the Roman Catholic Church», in R. LATOURELLE (ed.), *Vatican II. Assessment and Perspectives*, vol. 2, Paulist Press, Mahwah, New Jersey, 199, pp. 272-287.
283. Cfr. BENEDICT XVI (J. RATZINGER), *Jesus of Nazareth. From the Baptism in the Jordan to the Transfiguration*, trans. Adrian J. Walker, Doubleday, New York 2007 pp. 53-55.
284. J. RATZINGER, «Answers to Main Objections Against *Dominus Iesus*», *op. cit.*
285. Assurance, 195.
286. J. RATZINGER, «Answers to Main Objections Against *Dominus Iesus*», *op. cit.*

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