Theology and Philosophy of Education

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in the theology of education
and philosophy of education

Content

Editorial

Theology of Education and Philosophy of Education in Dialogue

Zuzana Svobodová

Dear readers,

We are introducing the journal *Theology and Philosophy of Education*, a journal for theology of education and philosophy of education. The reason for establishing this journal is to create a common platform for theologians, philosophers, and educators, but also for all helping professionals, who ask about the aim of human life, self-education and education, ethics, humanity, and how people from different cultures, nations, languages, who are living today more and more together could also together search or seek ways of life, ways of truth.

For the abbreviation of the journal-title, we chose TAPE. Of course, it is because **T**heology **A**nd **P**hilosophy of **E**ducation should be connected here. However, one can also hear about "taping" today. In this way, to tape means also to heal, help, harmonize, or regenerate, relieve, reconcile, and remedy. We want to connect different approaches to the education of man. In the old Greek sense, "to harmonize" means connecting and combining opposites even though they remain distinct or diverse. In Greek mythology, Harmony (Harmonia) was the daughter of the god of war, Ares, and the goddess of love, Aphrodite. It means the two opposite dynamics were connected, and then Harmonia was born. In TAPE, we value differences, variety, and diversity. On the website of this journal, you can read articles which authors have written in diverse scientific fields. It is not apparent that philosophers, medical doctors, businesspeople, and theologists can meet in one professional journal. In TAPE, we want to build bridges between too many separated scientifical approaches and communicate together, not only to seek a better future for humans but also to pursue wisdom. It means our aim is not only to pursue, conduct, and practise together with professionals from various backgrounds but also, to see, listen to, and accept in theory (theoria) together with talented or gifted in different respects, ways, or aspects.

By establishing TAPE, we desire to learn from each other and co-create an educative environment where diversity means an opportunity and not a mistake that should be corrected. However, in TAPE, we also want to ask about the truth *behind* all our differences, not only *subsequently* that have scientific variety.

To start publishing a journal also means connecting writers and readers. In TAPE, we have an international editorial board to unite and combine approaches, cultures, manners, and styles for living, not just writing and reading, together, not only next to each other. By writing about the

meaning of education or the sense of life, one is interconnected not only with one's own situation and position but also with the others and can ask the questions: Who will be the readers? How do they live in similar or in very different situations? What will they say? Which questions will they see as the most vivid from their positions? And most importantly, will they understand what we can see and what we are trying to show?

TAPE wants to recognize theology of education as seeking the sense of faith, which is connected with self-education and education – or it is not theology. In his *Theology of Agape*, Josef Zvěřina, the Czech theologist of the 20th century, stated that *theologia* must broaden itself in *theophilia* (*Teologie agapé* I, 5). Likewise, philosophy of education is a way of life linked with self-education and education – or it is not philosophy.

In this first TAPE issue, we offer an interview with Professor Karel Skalický, the chief editor of an exile journal during the communist totalitarian era. In the first reviewed article, Filip Hlavinka seeks opportunities and boundaries of religious and spiritual speech and a significant role of poetry in education. Bert Meeuwsen presents Meaning-Oriented Reflection or MORe3.1.2 as a challenge not only for educators and teachers. Tereza Pinkasová described in her article how moral development could be supported in courses for medical students. František Štěch, knowing that *nobody can drink alone from the well of life*, provides an inspirational vision of dialogue between two theological disciplines if they find not only teaching but also learning aspects of themselves. By reflecting on theology of education, Stuart Nicolson identifies and briefly explores the theme of growing closer to God as well as how Christians can learn to communicate the faith as found in the Vatican II document on education.

Welcome to the TAPE environment; I wish your reading could be healing, inspirational, and gratifying, as well as bracing, restful, and recreative.

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Interview with Professor Karel Skalický about Czech Exile Journal *Studie*

Karel Skalický (interviewee)
František Štěch (interviewer)

František Štěch (onwards FŠ): Dear Mr. Professor, first, let me thank you, that you agreed to give this interview for the brand-new journal Theology and Philosophy of Education (TAPE). TAPE is arising from a desire to provide shared space for theologians and philosophers (not exclusively) who search for meaning, source, and aim of education (including self-education). You alone stood at the beginning of the exile journal *Studie*. That's why the first question relates to your motivations of that time. Why have you started to publish the *Studie* journal?

Karel Skalický (onwards KS): The *Studie* journal started to be published by Karel Vrána in cooperation with František Planner. And they did it because some contributions they received exceeded the possibilities of the *Nový život* (*New Life*) journal, especially in terms of their extent.

Nový život was a magazine which was founded in times when the first immigration wave came, primarily to England, where the *Catholic action* came into existence. Its intellectual part named itself *Křesťanská akademie* (Christian Academy) and started to publish *Nový život*, which had its own dimension of course. But they kept receiving contributions which they were unable to place in their journal. And so, Karel Vrána together with František Planner founded *Studie*. As a matter of fact, Karel Vrána was the one in charge. And František Planner, who served as secretary of the Christian academy at that time was helping him. All that started in 1958. Since then, *Studie* was published occasionally, depending on contributions received from editors of *Nový život*. But when Cardinal Beran came (to Rome) in 1965, the idea to have an independent, regular journal came up. Thereafter, one fine day of 1966, Karel Vrána came to me and asked whether I would not mind taking over his editorial office of *Studie* journal. Of course, I said yes, and that's how it all started.

FŠ: All right, it means that the primary motivation to found *Studie* was simply the need to find a place for texts which were too extensive for being published in *Nový život*. After we have learned, who were people around you, those who helped to give birth to *Studie*, I would like to ask, who were the addressees of *Studie*?

KS: Well, I do not have a clear idea about those readers. It is because on the one hand, *Studie* was distributed to Paris to Pavel Tigrid, and on the other hand to Vienna, from where the journal was distributed further. So, in the first years, I did not have any feedback from my readers. It was like when a shipwreck survivor puts the message simply into the bottle and throws it into

the sea with the hope that some ship will find the bottle and eventually takes care about rescuing the castaway. It was like this during the first years. But progressively some reactions begin to arrive. If I should now reply to the question of who had been my first co-workers, I need to mention Benedictines from Norcia. At that time a good group was formed there. The main figures were Vojtěch Engelhart, with roots in Nepomucenum, Cyril Stavěl and Abbot Maurus Verzich. They printed *Studie* to have an extra activity besides developing the business they did for a living. But as time went on, Vojtěch Hrubý took over this task, when he became secretary of Velehrad. And he was a Salesian. The Salesians prepared a few full brothers named Pro. And those brothers, three of them if I remember well, founded a printing company. And thus, Father Hrubý redirected the printing of *Studie* to the printing office Pro. We stayed with them practically until the end of the journal's existence.

FŠ: When you took over the editorial job for Studie journal, what was the most difficult job for you?

KS: It is hard to say. The most difficult thing was perhaps to keep the journal alive. Of course, the first thing I saw clearly was that I need to have authors. And if I don't have authors, who are worth something, I won't be able to do anything. And so, the first thing I took to heart was searching for authors. That later became almost my professional deformation. Whomever I met I asked if he or she would not mind contributing to *Studie*. But this initial effort – to find contributors – if it was the hardest thing, I don't know, I was not thinking about it like that. In short, if I was supposed to break through with that journal, I needed to procure contributions, and these contributions I needed to get from someone, and so I had to get in touch with authors. Of course, the first generation of authors were theologians, church historians, in general, and all those who dealt with religious issues. Such a purely academic, theological-philosophical focus lasted until 1968. Before I got to Czechoslovakia. Until that time we did not have any practical exchange with Czechoslovakia. We had just authors who were in exile. I can mention Erazim Kohák at this place. He is a typical example of how I searched for contributors in exile.

FŠ: Actually, we can say that your readers as well as authors came from the context of exile.

KS: And here, I would be more specific: from the Czech exile.

FŠ: Czech? Not Czechoslovakian?

KS: The Czech and Slovak exiles did not cooperate on wider bases. There was no Czechoslovakian exile in practice. But the cooperation of concrete Czechs and Slovaks on topics of their mutual interest existed of course, but it was rather on personal bases. There were a few Slovak contributors published in *Studie*. Some anonymously, some by name, for example, Jozef Tomko, who later became a Cardinal.

FŠ: Ok, so Czech exile. And didn't it cross your mind at that time to publish your journal bilingually?

KS: No, it didn't. Even though my everyday life was trilingual at that time. I worked in Italian for Lateran University, in Czech for the Christian Academy and in Spanish for the Marist

Brothers. It really did not come to my mind to do *Studie* bilingually, because in Czech I did them already with my left hand or made them by makeshift means so to speak.

FŠ: I asked about it because today, we have a situation that in Czechia the journal in English is being published, so I wondered if it is a novum or if you already thought about it at that time. Well, what helped you to overcome difficulties? You have been editor in chief, but I suppose you cooperated with other editors.

KS: Yes, I had some co-workers. The first one was the poet Ivan Jelínek. He helped me till the year 1968. But then we grew apart from each other and Antonín Kratochvíl took over his job. But those were colleagues for literature. Later, Antonín Kratochvíl stepped down from his job and Jaroslav Pecháček came. He was a valuable colleague, although he had more interest in politics than literature. These were my non-theological colleagues, those three, one by one.

FŠ: So, the whole *Studie* was always a two-man show?

KS: No. As critiques were rising and opposition towards *Studie* was growing, the stable, editorial collegium was formed to prevent the objection that Skalický is a hegemon, hates collaboration, and promotes only himself and his own topics. Such an editorial board discussed each issue and was formed under heavy pressure to *Studie* in 1980. For the editorial board, I chose personalities who had been approved and no objections were made against them. For the executive editorial board, it was Josef Koláček, Josef Benáček and Václav Steiner. Those three and I created *Studie* since then. Besides that, the broader editorial consisting of sympathizers (like Karel Říha, Karel Vrána, Jaroslav Škarvada, Tomáš Špidlík, etc.) was established.

FŠ: And what about the worst obstacles that occurred?

KS: They were based on denunciations. That I am a philo-marxist, that I cooperate with ex-communists, that I am open to liberation theology, that I am a progressivist, dictatorial, and that I am not able to cooperate with anyone, etc.

FŠ: Ok, the critique was connected more or less with slander. And what about joy? What was the most joyful on your editorial work?

KS: The most joyful moments were those when a letter or message came that this or that person liked our content. Or that our content helped someone. In short, it was each positive feedback. It gave us knowledge that our effort is maybe not useless.

FŠ: Let's move now towards the newly emerging TAPE journal. TAPE wants to perceive philosophy of education as philosophy, which is either (self)educational or is not philosophy at all. Similarly, theology of education expresses such questioning about the meaning of faith, which is either touching upon self-education and education, or it does not make any sense. The editors of TAPE consciously connect with a wish of Josef Zvěřina, which he expressed in his Theology of Agape (*Teologie agapé*), which is pursuing change in which *theology* must broaden itself in *theophilia* (TA I, 5). Theologia and Theophilia must grow together "con-

cresco", as Radim Palouš reminds us. Do you think that an academic journal focusing on theology and philosophy of education in this way, may serve contemporary people?

KS: Of course. I even think that it can serve people only when theology becomes theophilia. Theophilia is not only a word about God but love for God instead. Only there it is important, where something comes out not from cold reason alone, but from reason, which glows or burns by love (*filia*), that much as that reason itself becomes love. That of course sparks reactions, that cold reason alone cannot produce.

FŠ: When the journal is just about to be born, what would you recommend to its editors?

KS: Search for authors.

FŠ: What would you wish for the first TAPE readers?

KS: Deep interest.

FŠ: Thank you.

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Spiritual and Religious Speech as a Poem Inspired by Heidegger's Fouring

Filip Hlavinka

Abstract

The article is based on Heidegger's understanding of the world as the so-called fourings, in which one relates to counterparts who are not entirely graspable to him, yet provide a person with a significant orientation. Such an orientation relates to the spiritual aspects of life. It is not possible to speak about them in the same way as everyday things in ordinary or professional scientific language, because by their very nature they do not allow for grasping in the form of definitions. Instead, poetry is presented as a possible testimony of spiritual aspects, the subtle. It does not seek to give a definitive description and explanation, but rather to capture the substance and, above all, to invite humans on the path to what it says. Poetry is presented as an important part of education and erudition, where in the spiritual direction the scientifically conceived language will not suffice.

Keywords

Heidegger, fouring, spiritual life, poetry, upbringing of man to wholeness.

Opening

This reflection essay attempts to raise a question. This question is not about a poem, poetry or a literary mode as a spiritual or religious testimony. It asks the other way around, whether spiritual or religious speech is not always a poem by nature when it strives for a deep testimony.

How one understands oneself and the world in the context of Heidegger's fouring

Heidegger draws from Hölderlin's verses when he tries to capture human existence, and agrees that "poetically man dwells" (Heidegger 1971). This dwelling, as Heidegger explains, does not mean to have a shelter. It actually means something essential, namely "the basic character of human existence" (Heidegger 1971, 213). For Heidegger, poetry is a way of this dwelling, providing peace for man, human interplay with Sky and Divinities. He says, among other things, that man belongs to the "fouring" of the Earth, Sky, Divinities and Mortals, who are so as to be to each other. They are determined by their relationship with each other and to each other. They form oneness. "But the fouring does not come about in such a way that it encompasses the four and only afterward is added to them as that compass. Nor does the fouring exhaust itself in this, that the four, once they are there, stand side by side singly. The fouring, the unity of the four, presences as the appropriating mirror-play of the betrothed, each to the other in simple oneness. The fouring presences as the worlding of world" (Heidegger 1971, 178).

A person belongs with the world as a Mortal. Mortality relates to the clinging to life and postponing of death. Mortality is not death, it is a possibility of death. "As long as man is mortal, his death is not around" (Benyovszky 2012, 37). He is Mortal on Earth, under the Sky and in front of the Divine. Earth

in this context is not just the planet. It is more of a foundation which we dwell on, which we rise from. Sky represents a measure. For setting measure does not belong to man. Man is, for example, unable to decide what will become a truth. One can identify it, yet not determine it. In this sense, measure is transcendent to man. One can recognize it, but not manipulate it. One can subject himself to it. But he cannot subject it to himself without deforming its expression. Sky represents a measure – it is not subject to our arbitrariness and manipulation. It is a counterpart to the Earth we are on. The counterpart of Mortals are the Divinities – the unreachable which we relate to. They are the unattainable, yet manifest themselves as a source of hope for the meaningfulness of ourselves. In a fouring, everything is a part of a whole, it is together and towards itself, it constitutes unity. Sky surpasses the Earth and refers to the Divinities. Mortals are entrusted and devoted to the Earth, open towards the Sky and Divinities. Poetry is a participation in a fouring, in relation to the world (cf., Benyovszky 2012). Thus, poetry is a way of being, of man belonging with the fouring.

A poem as an attempt to capture the unspeakable
Man in the world relates not only to the things he has at his disposal or to the people with whom he can communicate, but also to what goes beyond him, which is not available to him at all – to what is not reachable like things are. It is not graspable for physical manipulation, nor for manipulation by the force of language. In the end, we only have our ordinary language to express the extraordinary, the intangible. When we talk about what is extraordinary, uncommon, sacred, incomprehensible, all we have to do is use common and mundane words. We do not know other words. Therefore, we have to use ordinary words in an extraordinary, poetic way.

The "poetic dwelling" can be understood in such a way, that what is deep (deepest) within man or within the world can only be spoken about in a poetic manner. In this case, poetry is not the rhyming of words, but rather the rhyming of understanding and the profound truth. It is about finding something deep and substantial that is difficult to grasp in words – more precisely, what defies an exact expression in definitions. Poetry springs from submitting to the transcendent claim of something great, to which it speaks and to which it refers. "But man is capable of poetry at any time only to the degree to which his being is appropriate to that which itself has a liking for man and therefore needs his presence" (Heidegger 1971, 226). In this sense, the poem is just a partial testimony about the whole, but at the same time it captures something important. It is not banal. It impacts the whole it testifies about. In this way, it is possible to testify about what defies a clear, always valid definition. In this manner, it is possible to testify, for example, about human life, which is dynamic and constantly changing. A poem does not simplify what it talks about by claiming to say everything. It does not simplify things as models

and diagrams do. Instead, it strives to convey the essential. And it does so as long as it stays real and authentic.

This poetry is the touching of the substantial and profound. It resembles the astonishment from which philosophy is born. Perhaps it resembles Wittgenstein's silence from what cannot be completely said. It is argued that philosophy and contemplative silence can be a kind of poem, a gripping of something deep. (Even silence can be a strong testimony.) It is a way of human relationship to what is deep and the deepest. The world (as a fouring) is so deep it cannot be expressed in full in a human speech. It cannot be defined – that is, to say everything about it, to determine the beginning and the end. Every honest testimony will always be partial. At the same time, it can be a reference to the whole, a celebration of depth, a poem.

Sokol points out that human life, simply put, takes place in three layers that interact with each other. At the top is the layer of normal daily operation, characterized by the utilization of available options without much thought. It is using things in accordance with the manual, without having to know how those things function inside. The layer of a creative approach is a deeper one. One goes under the surface of normal use, to understand how things work. A creative approach seeks the new and even risks at times. It does not stick to mere use and consumption. It is actually the source for the shallower layer of normal operation. The spiritual layer is the deepest one. It represents deep sources of human endeavour and heading, the deepest of motivations. It is the source of the previous layer. It touches the reason for life and human existence. Sokol calls these layers civilization, culture and religion. But in addition to culture, we could also talk about science and technology, which go beyond the superficial approach of using things and are undoubtedly creative. Aside from religion, we could also talk about spiritual life, because the deepest human grounding does not have to be discovered and manifested only in ways that can be called religious. Substantial philosophy and sometimes also art can also be considered spiritual paths.

To keep things simple, let's stick to calling the deepest layer a religion. It includes, among other things, questions about the meaning of human existence as well as questions as to whether human existence can lean on or capture something that transcends man and is therefore not subject to him, thanks to which it can become a measure or direction for man, as Heidegger recognizes in the Divine fouring. These questions aim deep under the layer of regular operation. They refer to transcendence. They invite from the layer of regular to the depth of the extraordinary, sacred. This brings along certain difficulties in terms of expression and communication. To express the extraordinary, we can only use ordinary language. This is why the expression of spiritual depth often uses the language of analogies and symbols, which can describe plenty, but it is not possible to perceive them in their literal meaning as unambiguous definitions. In this context, a poem can be understood, not as a mere rhyme, but as a symbolic speech that captures something deep.

If we call a testimony a poem, it is not to belittle it. It is the other way around. A poem represents a piece of art, an authentic testimony. It is a result of creation, in which deep themes are captured. It is also important whether a poem is good, whether the experience of depth resonates within it, rather than being just a superficial rhyme. When compared to scientific work, a poem

is not more or less. It is an entirely different speech. It is valuable when it is substantial and profound. Therefore, delivering a poem is not a banality. It is the manifestation of searching, the manifestation of the attempt to find. It is the staying on the path, Not resting in the definite destination. It appears that in spiritual context one can be a pilgrim for all his life. It is poems that can accompany him on his journey and describe it to him in many ways. (This does not mean he is not accompanied by certain prose in matters of everyday life.)

Religious testimony as a poem

We can even take a look at religion in the narrower sense of the word, that is, at a specific path by which the general need for spiritual grounding or search can be fulfilled. In the European cultural context, it will be mainly Christianity. Some sacred texts of Christianity and Judaism have a distinct literary form of a poem or song. But this is not all. In the context of the aforementioned, we can say that any testimony of a deep spiritual experience, about a relationship to a transcendent counterpart, can be a poem. Since it is a testimony of what is not definitively graspable, this is what is not definable in a way that is clearly defined (of a transcendent nature). This is also shown in the context of the aforementioned Christianity, as is evident in Christian authors:

> Whatever we say about God can only be a symbol that obscures more than it reveals and loses any good meaning if we take it 'literally'. Then we forget about the nobility of the God's mystery, and our words and images cease to be humble references to silence and become mischievously blasphemous idols and obstacles instead of bridges (Halík, Jandourek 1997, 276).

> When we begin to speak about God as who 'is', we can only speak in parables, metaphors, and paradoxes. God is certainly not a thing in any conceivable sense, God is nothing imaginable or conceivable, he is not alive in the zoological sense, he is not conventionally depictable or imaginable, and in no way is he a so-called supernatural being (Vácha 2014, 42).

> We can call the transcendent fullness of existence a God, but there is one condition. No testimony should be given a definite, sole and always valid meaning. In other words, unfortunately, nothing we say about God is unambiguous. Admittedly, we are coming to relativization here, which may hurt many. People who search plainly for reassurance may be disappointed by it. (…) However, they do not realize that they have failed to place their assurance in God himself. Instead, they have put their full trust in something as weak as human words. Words do not have iconic function for them. They are not transparent. They do not lead the mind above them and behind them, as do the icons that refer from themselves to the mystery shown. For them words become an idol. They overshadow God and stand in his place. The Bible, dogmas, summits, catechisms or denominations are their idols (Štampach 2000, 49).

Therefore, if a religious testimony is to be true, it must present a reference above and beyond itself, in depth. This is also how we understand poem in our context.

Understanding spiritual or religious speeches as poems certainly does not mean admitting any sort of interpretation. Certainly, there is a certain risk of intentional or unintentional confusion of context, as well as a risk of misunderstanding. But it is necessary to take this risk, because only with it, will it be possible to lead a speech which will be a testimony of the unspeakable. If we are to think that we have found a definition in the scientific sense, it is very likely that our speech will lead to the materialization of something that is not a thing. Once we are aware of the poetic conception of our speech, we can refer to and testify to what is not a thing and resists to be grasped. A poem may represent a bridge being built with the risk that it will not lead the intended goal or that it will be difficult to cross. Yet at the same time it is being built in the hope that it will be perceived and used as a bridge. Then it can become an important step in finding paths to the spiritual layer of life.

In education, scientific speech is not sufficient, it needs poem too

We can understand education as the care of a human being as a whole, and at the same time as the care of the world as a whole. Such education faces, among other things, the question of inspiration for the spiritual layer of life and the world. It will balance between the manipulative indoctrination on one hand and the inability to express something strong and convincing on the other. This dichotomy can be exceeded by understanding the potential of poetic speech as an authentic and in this sense the true reference to the unspeakable or indefinable.

Educational inspiration for the spiritual life cannot then be conceived as a field of education powered by the knowledge of the relevant exact science. In an exact, scientific way we can only investigate religious, philosophical or literary texts in the formal manner, and not the message of this text, which is radically personal. The task of education here is above all openness to questions and the offer of poetic testimonies. The offer means the possibility to freely reject, but also the possibility to freely accept, critically examine, or transform. Here, education is an invitation. It is not a presentation of ready-made truths for an approval. The key value is openness, both on the part of the educated and on the part of the educators. Openness is the opposite of "thickheadedness", blindness, indoctrination. It means that education will not offer final solutions and definite answers. But it will offer much more. An invitation for a journey. A poem and poetry may help with it. This is because a poem is always somewhat open. It does not claim to be definite. Yet it refers to the depth. It opens the way.

Conclusion

Poetically, man dwells. Namely, that on Earth under the Sky it relates to the Divine and recognizes himself as Mortal. He thus recognizes the world in its wholeness. Aside from tangible things, he also reaches to the intangible, which belongs to the integrity of the world. Then it is about the spiritual aspects of the world and life (not necessarily religious).

Today's man often strives for a scientifically and technically accurate expression of what he does. He wants to define. However, this is not possible when it comes to the spiritual aspects, when it comes to what we can aim for as a vanishing point beyond the horizon, but we cannot subjugate it in any way. As in the Heidegger's fouring, Mortals relate to the Divinities and

somehow measure themselves against it, but they are unable to replace the Divinities themselves. Thus, accurate, defining, exact speech cannot capture and exhaust everything that can be said about the spiritual depth of the world. Poetry may assist here as an expressive speech. Yet it is not about speaking in verses, above all it is about knowing that speaking of spiritual depth is always only a reference and not a definition, that it is always symbolic and analogous and not exact, and that it is never completely exhaustive nor exhausted.

For upbringing and education, it is therefore important not to build solely and above all on the scientific description of things (which certainly has meaning and great results on the Ontic level). If education is to be a cultivation of humanity and care for the world as a whole, i.e., with a spiritual depth, it also needs to cultivate the poetic language.

Education can and should open paths from the superficial layer of life deeper to the spiritual layers. At the same time, education can be poetry, i.e., an invitation to the journey to the depth, to the journey of the Mortals across the Earth under the Sky for the Divine. Understanding a poem as a testimony which does not intend to be a definition and yet captures something substantial can thus lead to openness to the spiritual aspects of life. Thus, a poem can be a kind of analogy to prayer (without being conditioned by religion). At last, even silence, if understood as an authentic expression, can be such a poem, for instance, when one rests in amazement at the depths of the world, as the Heidegger's fouring reminds us.

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One Triangle and More – MORe3.1.2 Meaning-Oriented Reflection 3.1.2

Bert Meeuwsen

Abstract

The educational technique of 'meaning-oriented reflection' originally highlights two angles 'thinking' and 'feeling', prior to 'wanting' and 'doing'. This article emphasises that due to differences among world-philosophies, an additional third angle on 'being inspired' by a higher power is applicable. Bringing these three angles into 'being aware' precedes 'wanting' and 'doing'. Based on interviews and higher educational interventions, the revised 'meaning-oriented reflection' appears to be a useful educational technique. However, the question remains: How to implement MORe3.1.2 among educators and other professionals who may only reflect rationally?

Reflection as a tool in learning. Do we reflect rational or irrational too?

The Enlightenment, mainly due to colonialism, has had influence on education within differing world-philosophies (Wiesner-Hanks 2018). During the past decades, discussions regarding educational epistemologies have come up in the world of international education. (Moncrieffe 2022). Within education too much attention was put on logical thinking alone, whereas attention to feeling, as well as spirituality were neglected (Wa Thiong'o 1986). Stressing too much on rationality alone has been addressed by Horkheimer and Adorno (1969) in their dialectics on the Enlightenment. As a result, linking 'thinking' with 'feeling' and 'being inspired' appears to be key to the 'relation of theory to practice in education' (Dewey 1904).

In this article, an applied practical reflection tool, based on an existing reflection tool, is introduced. The modified tool can be useful among educators, however, by other professionals too. The introduction of the revised tool provides an answer to the question raised: 'Reflection as a tool in learning. Do we reflect rationally or irrationally too?'.

'Meaning-Oriented Reflection' or MORe – 'The Lift'

In 2017, Korthagen published an article in which he addressed, among other subjects, the applied practical concept of 'meaning-oriented reflection'. By means of this form of reflection, he connects the task verbs 'think' and 'feel' with an activity that has taken place. The two verbs are followed by two more: 'want' and 'do'. By looking first at the past and then at the intended future, he creates a continuous learning-loop. It is interesting to note that during the reflection, one can switch back and forth between the four verbs. During the reflection, the reflector may

feel that insufficient information is available. One then can consider going forwards or backwards within a series of terms: 'think' ('thought'), 'feel' ('felt'), 'want' ('wanted') and 'do' ('did'). In a way, one applies a going-up or down, etc., of the terms,

until all information needed is regarded as present. That is why this form of reflection is called 'The Elevator', or 'The Lift'. Ultimately, this methodology results in a more adequate meaning-oriented reflection.

Practical frame as an introduction, based on author's experience
'The Lift' is a practical method, I learned during my Master of Education. Originating from both business and defence sectors, I used to analyse, after performing an activity, mainly in a rational manner only. For example, by using Deming's 'Plan-Do-Check-Act' (PDCA) or 'Plan-Do-Study-Act-cycle' (PDSA) as developed by Deming (2022) or the 'Observation-Orientation-Decision-Action Loop' ('OODA loop') originally by Boyd (2022). However, to me this seemed insufficient, as I felt there was more. Inquiring with a colleague in the health care sector, I learned that 'thinking' in combination with 'feeling' is a common way of working for them. When I was active within The Netherlands Ministry of Defence, I once asked a senior-officer colleague, after a military training exercise (2009): 'What do you feel about what we did?' His sneering reaction: 'Feeling? That is not for soldiers.' This surprised me, as 'something is missing here'.
Since 2016, I have been active as senior lecturer in organisational studies, within international higher education, mainly in the field of international business administration. At my Wittenborg University of Applied Sciences, the Netherlands, Germany and Austria, over 1,200 students from some 100 countries study (Wittenborg... 2022, 2). Students and staff represent a diversity of world-philosophies and corresponding thoughts. While growing up, all of them were confronted in their own way with influences on how to deal with what they did and want to do. It appears that not all of them use the same reflection model.

'Think'/'thought', 'feel'/'felt', 'want'/'wanted', 'do'/'did' – in educational practice
My observations about different forms of reflection within the business community, defence education and the health care sector had already made me use 'think', 'feel', 'want' and 'do', as well as the applicable past tenses. In my executive coaching practice, I have used 'The Lift of Korthagen' since 2013. The intensive contact with several thousand international students, and colleagues, stimulated me to reflect further. It is the idea that there should be a third reflective step, and possibly even an intermediate one. These steps precede 'wanting' and 'doing'. In doing so, the practical method of 'The Lift' had to be maintained. Why? In order to remain creatively and iteratively reflective. Something about 'useful' and 'efficient', as well as 'effective' kept haunting my mind. All in all, it had to make sense. Results had to be achieved. Study, consultation, reflection, thinking, feeling and 'using the lift' gradually taught me 'something' extra.

The extra step(s)

What, which and especially: How? While reading for my Leiden University PhD-programme it appeared that 11th to 13th-century Christian theologians and philosophers seemed to include a third consideration in 'thinking' and 'feeling'. This was expressed by Meister Eckhardt in his articulation of the 'ledic Gemüete' (Visser 2018, 17-29). Whereby 'Gemüete' can be described as 'the totality of the spiritual powers or faculties of the soul' (Visser 2018, 19). In this it is separate from 'feeling' and 'emotion' (Visser 2018, 19). The 'ledic' refers to emptiness, like an emptied mind, being stripped of soul powers. This means an exit from oneself, whereby a change of mind occurs (Visser 2018, 20-21). Within this change of mind, there is an openness to inspiration, through inspiration from a higher power. With Meister Eckhardt this is God. This insight is comparable to the ideas of Thomas Aquinas, 'who affirmed the principle of the "theologically founded worldliness"', as stated by Pieper (1958, 186). This is touched upon by Bernard of Clairvaux, as expressed by Aerden (2020, 125): 'affective experience and intellectual reflection together form an interpretative process from which you learn and through which you progress on the spiritual path'. Bernardus emphasised personal spiritual experience: 'It is only through the experience that you come to know the love of Jesus' (Bernardus, in Aerden 2020, 124). As an observation to me, 'Being inspired by a higher power', as part of reflection, became inspiration for the third form within the meaning-oriented reflection model.

Check and double-check within theory and practice
During critical friend scientific conversations in the last quarter of 2021, with five scientists (two theologians, one ethicist, one healthcare professional and one higher education expert), they showed both theoretical and practical recognition. One of the theologians described the verb 'to inspire' as 'to sense', like to 'become aware'. In the same period, I taught a module to undergraduate students. With them, I discussed this 'triangle' leading to 'wanting' and 'doing'. Intriguingly, students with a European background dropped out after 'thinking' and 'feeling'. Even the idea of 'feeling' was difficult to some of them. While, to students originating from the Asia/Pacific and Middle Africa 'feeling' and 'inspiration by a higher power' appeared to be common. These three task verbs were part of their usual way of reflecting, connected to 'wanting' and 'doing'.

An intermediate step appears needed
Nevertheless, there appeared to be an intermediate step, prior to 'wanting' and 'doing'. Bringing together 'thinking', 'feeling' and 'being inspired' led to these three, culminating in 'sensing' or 'being aware'. Thus, they were 'lifting back and forth' along the reflective 'The Lift', on what they 'wanted' and 'did'. That resulted in the 'being aware'. From this 'being aware' one appeared ready to proceed to the future oriented 'wanting', and then the intended 'doing'. The word 'being aware', proposed by the theologian, appeared applicable.
For the final steps and reflective completeness, one has to move on to execution, to action. From Deming's PDSA-cycle, this corresponds to the 'A' of 'Act' or 'Action'. In here educational reflection finds its business counterpart by means of the modified 'Korthagen's The Lift' as 'Meaning-Oriented Reflection 3.1.2' (MORe3.1.2). The '3.1.2', stands for: '3' for:

'thinking', 'feeling' and 'being inspired'; '1': 'being aware' ('sensing') and '2' for: 'wanting' and 'doing'. MORe3.1.2 can be used for reflection towards what has been done in the past, as well as towards what in the future one intends to do.

Additional check of theory in practice

Throughout the Master module 'High Performance Leadership', in November-December 2021, a PhD exploratory study was conducted by me. During this module, the modified reflection model – MORe3.1.2 – was explained to graduate students. They were asked to reflect based on this model. For seven graduate students present, originating from South Asia, the Middle-East, and Mid-Africa, this form of reflection proved as common as for the aforementioned undergraduate students. Without discussion, they accepted the intervention related to 'thinking', 'feeling' and 'being inspired', and reflected based on the steps within MORe3.1.2.

Conclusion

The extent to which the intervention MORe3.1.2 is effective and leads to higher quality reflections based on actively connecting three interrelated sensors: 1. Thinking, 2. Feeling, and 3. Divine inspiration. Justification is based on 12th century thoughts by Meister Eckhart, Thomas Aquinas, and Bernard of Clairvaux. Additionally, actual literature emphasising other epistemologies, other than the Enlightenment alone, addresses the intervention based on latest educational insights on 'decolonising knowledge'. The intervention adds steps to existing Eurocentric reflective cycles solely based on professional rational thinking. The intervention does justice to the importance of the human factors of emotion and spirituality within an organisation. The human being not only thinks and feels, but is inspired too. From this perception, the MORe3.1.2 meaning-oriented reflection can support decision-making as part of the learning and/or management cycle. MORe3.1.2 does justice to the power of world philosophies working together towards 'creating a better world'.

Questions

The article started with the question: Reflection as a tool in learning. Do we reflect rational or irrational too? This question appears to have received an answer, as well as a practical meaning-oriented reflection tool. A new question is introduced: How to implement MORe3.1.2, especially among professionals, whether educators or other professionals, who may have difficulties connecting emotion and spirituality to their professional reflection?

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Supporting Moral Development in Medical Students through an Elective Course Focused on Moral Self-reflection

Tereza Pinkasová

Abstract

Due to the high level of stress experienced during study, the moral development of medical students may be being stunted, and in some cases even regressing, compared to other students of the same age. At the Third Faculty of Medicine, we have responded by creating an elective course that offers a safe space for moral self-reflection. The results show that this course can effectively support the moral development in students.

Introduction

The requirement for physicians to demonstrate high levels of morality is inextricably linked to their profession. The public rightly expects a humane, educated, and understanding physician who does not abuse their position and who respects patient's integral personal value and dignity when deciding on treatment. In terms of the theories of moral development, the physician should achieve the highest levels of moral development. However, studies of moral development in medical students show that, due to the stress experienced during the study of medicine, moral development can stagnate or even regress (McDonald et al. 2021, 1; Branch 2000, 503; Hren, M. Marušić, and A. Marušić 2011, 1).

Among the possibilities to support the moral development of medics are, for example, critical reflection in small groups, role modeling, and feedback on the wards (Branch 2000, 505). Nonetheless, the procedure of supporting moral development in medical students is not described in any great detail.

Therefore, at the Third Faculty of Medicine, we looked for specific ways how to support the moral development in medical students. For this purpose, we have set up a pilot elective course called Ethics and Personality of the Physician. The aim of the course is to inspire medics through moral self-reflection to ethical conduct in medical practice. In this way, the course connects psychology and ethics. The development of the course continues, and hopefully more similar courses will be added, but we take this as a first step in how to contribute to students' moral development in a structured manner.

This article presents the pitfalls of the moral development of medical students, which led us to establish an elective course. Furthermore, the structure of the elective course Ethics and Personality of the Physician and the potential of course seminars for the discussion of moral dilemmas experienced by medics are practically described. The article cannot cover the overall moral development of medical

students or moral education at the faculty of medicine; it only offers an insight into how the moral development of medical students can be supported by moral self-reflection.

Medical study and moral development

The moral development of medical students is most often assessed in scientific studies according to the stages of Lawrence Kohlberg (McDonald et al. 2021, 2; Branch 2000, 504). Kohlberg's theory divides moral development into three basic levels – preconventional, conventional, and postconventional. At the preconventional level of moral development, mostly in children, an individual's actions are determined by the consequences. The first stage of the preconventional level is focused on punishment or reward, and the second stage of this level is focused on the satisfaction of personal needs. At the conventional level of moral development, behavior is influenced by the approval of society; later, behavior is influenced by social rules and laws. At the postconventional level, the perception of morality goes beyond the perspective of society and is interested in the well-being of each individual. In the first stage of the postconventional level, emphasis is placed on individual rights. In the second stage, which is the highest level of Kohlberg's theory of moral development, the individual is able to apply universal ethical principles, taking into account the perspective of each individual affected by the moral decision. According to Kohlberg, not everyone is able to reach this stage (Kohlberg 1983, 172).

New students enter the medical faculty at the conventional stage of moral development (Branch 2000, 504). They are highly motivated to help others and act according to general notions of physicians as bearers of moral values (Hafferty 2002, 385; Blue et al. 2009, 928). Moreover, they show the highest signs of prosocial behavior (Hafferty 2002, 385; Blue et al. 2009, 928; Maoyi 2014, 131). They care about others, have a high capacity for empathy, and are motivated to help.

During their six-year medical studies, as with other tertiary students, the moral potential of medical students should be developing rapidly (Branch 2000, 504), so that, on entering clinical practice, young physicians are already at the postconventional level of moral development, which is desirable for moral decision-making at this stage. However, the curriculum during the six-year study of medicine tends to undermine this outlook.

The first half of the studies is preclinical (theoretical), when students come into contact with patients only to a very limited extent. They must first acquire extensive and detailed knowledge of the human body, and become acquainted with it in the context of the theory and practice of scientific disciplines. This theoretical study is very time-consuming. At the same time, there is pressure on students to be infallible during exams, because any mistake of the future physician can have fatal consequences. For most medical students, the beginning of their medical studies is demanding and stressful, and many experience anxiety from the high demands on performance (Radcliffe, and Lester 2003, 32; Guthrie et al. 1995, 337; Hayes et al. 2004, 1154). Studying often means isolation from other people, concentration solely on learning, and the experience of stress. As a result, at the end of the first year, there is already a noticeable decline in interest in helping and interacting with other people (Maoyi 2014, 132).

Studies record a further significant decrease in prosocial behavior and increase in anxiety during the transition from preclinical teaching to clinical teaching (practical) (Maoyi 2014, 60; Radcliffe, and Lester 2003, 32; Moss, and McManus 1992, 17),[1] when students take up the role of the physician. For the first time, they report on visits, use their theoretical knowledge in making diagnoses, and practice applying their skills in the real-life operation of hospitals. There are high demands on communication skills and overall performance.

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[1] In most Czech medical schools between the third and fourth year of study.

The stress experienced by students in clinical years tends to eliminate their ability to perceive the needs of patients, students' empathy decreases (Hojat et al. 2004, 934), and patients can very easily become mere objects upon which medical students perform individual tasks. This is the period at which moral development is most vulnerable, during which it may stagnate or even regress (Branch 2000, 504; Hren, M. Marušić, and A. Marušić 2011, 1). The main factors negatively affecting the moral development of medical students include a lack of support to deal with ethical dilemmas, witnessing unethical behavior and inequities in patient care and services, and the experience of helplessness from the students (McDonald et al. 2021, 2; Hren, M. Marušić, and A. Marušić 2011, 7). In clinical practice, students may also be exposed to situations where they are forced to act unethically. The inability to act in accordance with one's own moral principles causes moral distress, which can be a factor in disrupting moral development (McDonald et al. 2021, 2).

Additionally, as part of their adaptation to stress, medical students imitate the coping strategies of already serving physicians. However, these strategies are not necessarily conductive to good medical practice. Many medics acquire sarcasm, cynicism, and other forms of depersonalization (Rezler 1974, 1024; Wolf et al. 1989, 19).

Supporting moral development in medical students – experience from the Third Faculty of Medicine, Charles University

At the Department of Medical Ethics and Humanities, Charles University, Third Faculty of Medicine, we looked for ways to support the moral development in medical students, especially in the critical transition from preclinical to clinical trials. The current curriculum did not offer a space in which it would be possible to address issues of moral development, so we established an elective course called Ethics and Personality of the Physician for this purpose. The objectives of the course are to open a safe space for students to self-reflect on their morality in the context of the study of medicine and to inspire students for ethical conduct in medical practice.

The course Ethics and Personality of the Physician is divided into seven thematic units: 1) the ethics of medical practice, 2) the motivation of the physician, 3) the needs of the physician, 4) knowledge of oneself, 5) self-care, 6) boundaries in patient interaction, and 7) inspiration for ethical practice. The total allocation is 30 teaching units implemented in 15 sessions within the span of one semester. The breadth of individual topics offers the opportunity to concentrate seminars directly on the specific interests of individual students. Every unit contains stimuli for self-reflection and offers a subsequent discussion in which moral development, its advancement and the possibilities of ethical behavior in clinical practice are considered.

The introductory seminar is devoted to the ethical conduct of physicians. The issue of cheating during studies, which is readily imaginable and a somewhat alluring subject to students, is discussed. They are able to enumerate a wide range of ways to cheat during their studies. This is followed by a discussion of who has already cheated, how, and to what extent this is compatible with the image of an honest future physician. Many students seek excuses for their actions, arguing that insufficient time to cover the curriculum is a mitigating factor, and blaming the failure of the authorities to supervise them (not vigilant enough, no ban on cell phones). According to Kohlberg's stages of moral development, we could classify most students at the conventional stage or – as some of the downright childish excuses for cheating suggest – even at the preconventional stage. However, the discussion of this topic itself gives students the opportunity to reconsider their attitude. Students are introduced to theories of moral development (Kohlberg, Gilligan, and Piaget), which offer a good starting point for the possibility of self-reflection and subsequent work on students' own moral reasoning.

Other seminars are devoted to the motivation of the medic and the physician. Students in the third and fourth year have already experienced a certain loss of illusion about medicine, and often feel demotivated to continue their studies. Using a questionnaire, they can assess their current motivation directly in class and then discuss it with classmates. The most common reasons for the decrease in motivation are the lack of time needed to cover the curriculum and the concomitant lack of free time. Students often envy their peers studying other disciplines, who are able to allocate their time to study in a healthier manner. This contrast also leads to the phenomenon of medics viewing themselves as an elite group, and demarcating themselves from others. In discussions we then examine the motivation behind studying medicine and pursuing the profession as such, and look at ethical conduct within their studies and the profession. We discuss universal ethical principles in the context of the postconventional stage of Kohlberg's theory of morality, and we map out how not to perceive physicians as superior to patients and society. In connection with the loss of motivation, we also devote seminars to examining the medic's and physician's own needs. This contrasts with the content of other subjects in medicine, where the needs of the patient are constantly discussed. Medical students sometimes overly focus on patient needs, which can lead to early burnout. Therefore, we try to foster self-care and build healthy relationships with ourselves and each other.

The following seminars on self-knowledge also generate rich discussion. Among other items, we offer students the opportunity to test themselves using personality tests (Myers–Briggs test), some simplified projective tests, and tests focused on suitable prerequisites for individual medical specializations. For some students, this is their first opportunity during their studies to get a better idea of who they really are, what their vulnerabilities, strengths and weaknesses are. In discussion, we focus on how these traits affect their (un)ethical conduct and moral decision-making during practice.

Seminars on the psychological limits of relationships with patients are usually surprising to students. They find that their boundaries are either too permeable, bordering on self-sacrifice for patients, or too rigidly set, which is often influenced by the behavior of doctors they see during internships. Students do not regard the cynicism and sarcastic expressions they encounter in clinics negatively; on the contrary, they perceive such behavior as a suitable way of coping with stress at work. Sensitively conducted discussions can help students see the unsuitability of such strategies and provide an impulse to seek a different approach.

The final seminars are focused on the search for inspiration for ethical practice. Finding inspiring characters and seeing how the social, professional, and moral dimensions of their lives overlap has proven to be motivating for students. Such people include Albert Schweitzer, Maria Montessori, and Viktor Emanuel Frankl.

Course outcomes – impetus to support moral development

The Ethics and Personality of the Physician course is evaluated electronically at the end of the semester. The evaluation application created by the Third Faculty of Medicine allows the course to be rated on a point scale from 0 stars (worst rating) to 7 stars (best). Additionally, the student has the opportunity to provide written assessment. The Ethics and Personality of the Physician course achieved an average rating of 6.78 in the years 2017–2021, which ranks it among the best-rated courses at the Third Faculty of Medicine.

In their written assessments of the course, students positively evaluate learning about topics that are not offered by the regular curriculum, and which force them to think not only directly during the seminar but often also long after it. They appreciate that these seminars give them the opportunity to make time for themselves and provide them with stimuli for personal moral development.

From the teachers' point of view, we are seeing a shift in the course graduates' thinking about ethical medical practice. We are managing to dispel the black-and-white perception of reality and the tendencies to relativize morality. Students are given the opportunity to recognize their own perception of morality and gain insight into their actions in medical practice. Many graduates of the course started volunteering or took part in medical missions in third world countries on the basis of the obtained suggestions.

We take establishing this course as the first step towards the search for a philosophy of moral education at the Third Faculty of Medicine. We hope this course can offer inspiration on how to supplement the modern curriculum of medical faculties so that graduates are prepared for practice not only in scientific terms, but also in moral and human ones as well. We would like to encourage colleagues from medical schools to think about ways to how to support students' moral development.

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From the Well of Life Nobody Can Drink Alone

Fundamental Theology and Youth Ministry in Conversation[2]

František Štěch

Abstract

This article attempts to sketch possibilities for encounter between fundamental theology and youth ministry understood as practical theology. It argues that both specific disciplines may enter into mutually fruitful dialogue when they will open their respective disciplinal identities in terms of seeing their own theological task in a more holistic way. Endeavouring a holistic theology makes theology a more organic, welcoming, and hospitable place. This could become an argument for including the theological voices of young people into serious consideration as well.

Keywords: Christianity; Theology; Fundamental Theology; Youth Ministry; Practical Theology; Holistic Theology

Introduction

In his seminal work *Rethinking Fundamental Theology*, the Australian theologian, Gerald O'Collins, succinctly asserts: "We need theologies that know how to sit studying the past, that know how to walk the streets with the poor, and that know how to kneel in adoration of the Saviour who is come (O'Collins 2011, 331)." With this, he calls for a fundamental plurality of theological attitudes and styles in complex theological life of the Church. What I perceive as necessary in contemporary Christianity is an open dialogue of theologies focused on rational reflection, practical action and spirituality including silent contemplation. If we strive for an understandable and existentially relevant theology, we must assign ourselves with the task to pursue their convergence. This article wants to suggest a concrete step in the process of getting different styles and ways theology is done closer together. I would like to propose the encounter of fundamental theology with youth ministry. The first one is certainly closer to the world of academic theology and the second represents specific environment generating theological reflections in the context of a particular age-related group. Where are the possible grounds for their eventual encounter? Where can they meet and listen to each other's stories? I believe a meeting of fundamental theology and theological reflection within the realm of youth ministry has a strong potential to be fruitful for both disciplines involved as well as for theology as such

at least in two ways: (1) it can contribute towards appreciating theology as a spiritual journey and academic reflection, and (2) it has the potential to strengthen the relevance of theology for contemporary society and make it again a voice that matters.

I. Fundamental Theology

Today, fundamental theology is understood as a continuous endeavour to search for signs of the God's presence in the world. It does not want to simply replace former classical apologetics. Rather, it aims to bring its traditional notions into new light; the light of the Gospel reflected in post-modern times. However different, contextualized and still re-actualized throughout history, fundamental theology is still dealing with the reflection of the grounds for Christian faith. This is sometimes with more emphasis on an external apologetics, giving an account of the hope of Christians in Christ (1 Pt 3:15), and sometimes more internal, reminding believers of what they believe and why. Thus, fundamental theology today shall create a new theological background for apologetics advising it not merely to mentor or oppose, but to dialogue and discuss that it may become what John Milbank calls, "a mode of apologetics prepared to question the world's assumptions down to their very roots (Milbank 2012, xx)." Avery Dulles speaks of such apologetics as about one of the functions of fundamental theology (Dulles 2005, 327). Even though it is clear that fundamental theology and apologetics overlap to great extent, they still remain distinct from each other in terms of their topics, target groups, as well as style. As for instance, while apologetics may deal with a selected topic, fundamental theology has a complex agenda which makes it a proper theological discipline. Fundamental theology has also a wider range of audience than apologetics which usually has a more clearly defined target group. And last, but not least, while apologetics usually takes the form of polemics, fundamental theology usually adopts less polemic and a more explanatory style (Cf. O'Collins 2011, 4–5).

However, fundamental theology today undergoes transformation, and as such it may seem to some as if this discipline is today "threatened with non-existence (O'Collins 2011, vii)." This may have been true for the last couple of decades, but, recently, in the unfolding third millennium, fundamental theology is receiving a new swing as a "discipline (…) to be relaunched (O'Collins 2011, vii)." A book by Hans Peter Geiser, entitled *The Community of the Weak* (Geiser 2013), may serve as one of the outstandingly creative examples matching the goal of relaunching fundamental theology in the third millennium as required by Gerald O'Collins. Geiser proposes fundamental theology based on shared subjective experience instead of objective explanations which are typical for apologetics. Fundamental theology in general is more linked to personal experience and engagement. But such a distinction would require a broader discussion which goes far beyond focus of this article. However, reading Geiser's book encouraged me to investigate what would happen when fundamental theology meets youth ministry; what would happen when academic theology embraces the everyday theology of ordinary believers (of specific age); what would happen when young people are recognized as sources of inspiration for fundamental theology; and how fundamental theology should be exercised and communicated which can inspire young people and resource youth ministry (and practical theology) in return?

II. Youth Ministry

Claiming youth ministry to be a form of practical theology depends to a great extent on whether theologians, ministers, or any of those concerned with youth and youth ministry are willing to consider themselves practical theologians and youth ministry as practical theology and not just as an "enriched" kind of social science, pedagogy, or psychology (Dean 2010, 115) as it was understood in the past and found its own disciplinary identity as a form of practical theology. One of the apostles of such a development, Kenda Creasy Dean, identifies four characteristic points of youth ministry understood as practical theology:

(1) First, youth ministry matters to the Church. It has both pastoral and theological significance and is, thus, truly a theological discipline focused on practices and actions.

(2) Second, youth ministry has an intrinsic inter-disciplinary nature.

(3) Third, it is an orientation of action that makes possible a specific way of knowing – a practical knowledge which emphasizes Christianity as a distinctive way of life – analogically to Pierre Hadot's philosophy as a way of life (cf. Hadot 1995), instead of a set of doctrines. Youth ministry tends to maintain the great Christian tradition of mystagogy based on reflective experiences with the revealing God.

(4) Fourth, youth ministry as practical theology opts for human singularity and uniqueness. Each human story is relevant and correlates with the unique story of Jesus Christ (Dean 2010, 115–117).

There is no doubt youth is a theological question and youth ministry is a theological task (discovered or discoverable thanks to countless efforts of practical theology). While remaining anchored in practical theology (as a matter of maintaining its own disciplinary identity), youth ministry could flourish and be substantially enriched if engaged in dialogue with other theological disciplines. At this point, two central questions may be formulated. How to relate fundamental theology with youth ministry perceived as practical theology? Where could be the meeting point of these two, very different, yet, through being theological, closely related disciplines?

One of the possible answers to these questions I would like to offer is that both disciplines considered may set out in a new direction – closer towards each other – when they will open their respective disciplinal identities in terms of seeing their own (theological) task in a more holistic way. What do I mean?

Fundamental theology and youth ministry are both theological disciplines and that's why I suggest focusing on "the theological" in pursuing the task of adopting a holistic paradigm of practising theology as proposed, for instance, by Terry Veling (Veling 2005, 4). As with regards to youth ministry, it is going through the process of its own theological turn (Root and Dean 2011). As such, it recognizes itself as fundamentally theological. It is trying to listen to the authentic voices of young people and to their theologies. Youth ministry creates an environment that encourages and empowers young people to theologize. At the same time, it exercises a proper theological self-reflection in dialogue with other theological disciplines and contributes a significant deal to the establishment of youth theology (so-called) as a specific contextual theology, bringing young minds and souls to the fore, dwelling amidst the youth cultures and

sub-cultures burgeoning in the contemporary world. In this way contemporary youth ministry represents a specific environment in which theology is not only accepted and transferred into practice, but is, further, lived – "taught and written, danced, and sung, sculpted, and painted, even dreamed, and cried (Sedmak 2002, 11)." As such it becomes very close to the discipline of fundamental theology which currently seeks its own new directions as well, to re-actualize its own theological commitment, interdisciplinarity, and concern for faith seeking understanding face to face with the "overwhelming power of the contemporary experience of world and existence and of the challenges which accompany this experience (Fries 1996, 5)." Pondering about a mutual relationship of fundamental theology and youth ministry as practical theology has brought me to the conclusion that seeking theology as one common discourse (despite a vast plurality of voices) becomes fundamental to any kind of contemporary theological enterprise. However, it is a matter of choice (fundamental option), while maintaining a quest for reasonable, understandable, and existentially relevant theoretical frameworks for Christian faith. As such, it is not merely a matter of speculative, academic reasoning, but also a matter of lived experience asking for reflection and interpretation – pursuing the holistic vision of theology and the task of doing and thinking theology together.

III. Towards theological creativity and improvisation

The American processual and Lutheran theologian Ann Pederson wrote a very interesting book entitled *God, Creation, and All That Jazz* (Pederson 2001). In this book, she emphasizes creativity and improvisation in the process of doing theology to the extent that she does in a jazz jam-session. This metaphor was used and celebrated by Hans-Georg Geiser. He proposes a new fundamental theology written in a "new key" (Geiser 2013, 437), considering all possible conversation partners from the realm of science, but also ordinary people and their experiences. New fundamental theology, according to Geiser, understands theology as fundamentally "autobiographical" (Geiser 2013, 438) and must be both surprised and surprising or else it is not "jazzy" enough (Geiser 2013, 441). And the same may be true for the realm of youth ministry. Trying to surprise and being opened to be surprised might be a new key for understanding youth ministry as theological task open to the Church wide (and even beyond) practice of doing theology together.

That, however, requires both, our own performances as well as moments of our own passivity and reception of others' performances, when listening to what others perform, when we must pause to reflect on what we have been performing while exposed to the tunes (ideas, actions, etc.) that are strange and different from our own. Attentive listening (and, indeed, attentiveness, in general) to others inspires us and pushes our own performance on to a higher level. It enables us to perform together. Does this not sound like a method? A method of an "open mike", a generous and welcoming space, where we may do music, sport, study, fun, meditation, grieving, suffering and theology together? The French fundamental theologian, Marcel Neusch, puts it this way:

> Theology only assumes its task fully if it is able to show that the Christian fact has a
> universal significance, and that this universality is justified by the common destiny of

humankind. To give up its task would mean to enclose oneself in a sentiment and to take its share in making the Christian experience incommunicable. However, the claim of the Christian experience is to open up a space of meaning and life accessible to all (Neusch 2004, 327; qtd. according to Geiser, 2013, 231).

It means opening up boundaries. They should not be closed, devoid of any "iron curtain", "Berlin wall" or "Trump wall", closed borders with guards or "experts" selecting who is or is not allowed to cross the borderline. The frontiers between youth ministry and fundamental theology (as between all other theological disciplines) must be open and free, like those in the Schengen area. Yet they are not without natural barriers. There are moors with swamps, dark woods, and even wild animals between their actual territories. There are several dangers which need to be avoided, surpassed, and bridged so that people can travel safely to and fro and visit each other. We should constantly search for roads and paths to keep the connection open and passable from both sides. It will help all those who are out there on these roads to keep their theology alive, relational, spiritual (prayerful), biblical, committed, action-oriented, and public. In order to achieve this goal, I believe, theology, in general, must adopt a new, holistic mind. It is high time to start understanding theology as a whole, again. David Regan offers an argument for such a shift:

> Much of the lack of interest in "religion", as a subject, whether in secondary school or university, is bound up with the fragmentation of the content of the teaching. The division of the intellectual "content of faith" into so many truths to be learned and believed, or so many rules to be kept, soon dries up the innate curiosity or good will students may bring to the subject. The powerful and unified centre provided by focusing on the one Mystery of Christ overcomes much of this atomization. When this centre is not a truth to be learned, but a burning core to be experienced, the whole exercise changes character (Regan 1994, 146).

From Regan's perspective, we need to think theology holistically (i.e., as a whole) in order to try to overcome the divisions between particular doctrines. They were separated and fragmented in the past for good reason: to find some sort of a system in the complex teachings of Christianity. But while we arguably lost a sense for theology, as a whole, over the centuries of detailed clarifications, the system prevailed. Now, we often have only such a system and, by consequence, have to dig deep if we want to find the meaning of theology, again. While a rationalist way of understanding theology as a systematic, purely academic endeavour was strong *in analysis*, a holistic approach to theology might yet become even stronger *in synthesis* while resonating with syncritic (not syncretic) method suggested by Comenius (cf. Woldring 2016).

Endeavouring a holistic theology makes theology a more organic, welcoming, and hospitable place. This could become an argument for including the theological voices of young people into serious consideration as is being recently proposed by youth theology (Štěch 2019, 171). Moreover, professional theologians and youth ministers as well as religious educators and church representatives may perhaps also find that it is not enough to take young people's (or

children's) theologies seriously. A better way is perhaps to welcome them to do theology together. Refusing to welcome them, as such, is already a failure to take them seriously, in the first place. This requires a large capacity for humility that many academics, ministers, education council presidents or church officials are not often trained to have and too often lack. If we take academics as an example, they are usually trained for, and forced to, excel by the institutional standards of publishing a lot of "good science". But, as far as I am concerned, far too few academics really take care or *attend to* the vocation of humility (and fallibility). There's a well-known rule in today's academia, worldwide: publish or perish! Perhaps this is true. But perhaps it is preferable for academic theologians to perish than publish; to perish from universities (at least for a while) and get in touch, reacquaint, or re-attune themselves with real life (Geiser 2013, 228). Especially, when engaged in theology and youth ministry or religious education, we must know "yesterday's message in yesterday's language, is not an adequate answer to the problems the young face today (Regan 1994, 147)." Doing theology together in the contexts of encounters with contemporary young people requires us not to be shy or scared to tell them our stories and, also, to be ready to listen to theirs. These must be received not in a paternalistic way or from a presumption of already 'knowing it all.' We must be prepared, ready and willing to be surprised by them. Only then, "new things, new themes, new tunes, and new chords can be tried out, experimented with, improvised, and newly arranged (Geiser 2013, 430)." And maybe right then, we may experience youth ministry and fundamental theology improvising, and playing jazz together. Acceptance of the other in the authentic otherness is a key. Everyone has something to offer. It does not matter if young, adult, or old, we can always learn something from each other. Together, we may try to discover and create (an always) new harmony.

Conclusion – Doing theology together

Doing theology together is by no means an easy task. It involves entering relationships with others who do not necessarily view everything exactly as we do. In fact, it demands that we relate precisely with such people. It involves entering communities which are not always comfortable for our own individuality. But, at the same time, it is necessary when we want to understand better our humanity. From the well of life nobody can drink alone. It is an irony of our time that we emphasize individuality yet long for relationships and search for community. Doing theology together is an option (perhaps *the* "preferential option") for a theological method starting from ordinary, everyday, human experience and, from there, be creating generous spaces where anyone can join the process of doing theology from any background and perspective. This method has been suggested as suitable also to the specific needs of youth ministry. Bert Roebben's concept of "playground for transcendence" (Roebben 1997, 332-347) could serve as an example. Doing theology together is an inclusive method in the welcoming sense of the inclusiveness. Here, inclusivity does not mean simply that we comprehend everything and everyone automatically (as the term is sometimes interpreted). Instead, it becomes a principal, welcoming inclusiveness, emphasizing, and granting everyone freedom to join and leave. Doing theology together is messy and colourful. To put it simply, doing theology together is about life because theology, as such, is about life (Cf. Sedmak 2002, 1), it comes from life, and it returns to it.

"The neighbouring community, life experiences, stories and memories, newspaper articles and local histories, city spots, world events and art galleries, movie theatres and concert halls, peace demonstrations and community projects (Geiser 2013, 225)," are to be part of our theologies. As such, theologies simply cannot be done individually, but in the presence of and in community with others. That is true not only in the case of individuals grouping into communities of doing theology together, but also in the various cases of whole (theological) disciplines. It is suggested in this text that youth ministry (seen as a kind of doing practical theology), may do theology together with fundamental theology that is too often considered purely theoretical or only an academic theological performance (but it does not have to be necessarily the case). To put it simply, from the well of life, nobody can drink alone.

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Theology of Education in the Second Vatican Council's *Gravissimum Educationis*

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Abstract

Theology of education regards the growth in the journey with God and being with God and others. *Gravissimum Educationis* (GE) calls for moral learning in education, and specifically Christian education so Christians grow in God, become more Christ-like (theosis) and an active participant in society, thus bringing Christianity to the world. The document also encourages different theological means of communicating the faith to educate Christians and reach out to others. This paper identifies both of these themes in GE, focusing on the early sections of the document.

Introduction

This paper will consider theology of education as the relationship between God and man, where they come together in leading man to become more like God, as a means of readying him for eternity and being in full communion with his Creator. One source for developing the understanding of this relationship and how it forms education is the Second Vatican Council, particularly the first few sections of the document *Gravissimum Educationis* (GE). While this is clearly of its time (1965) with some themes, it looks forward in ways that continue to be apt and even increasingly urgent today. This paper in particular identifies two important themes in the early sections of the document yet have been somewhat overlooked in the decades following the Council, namely theosis (cf. Mt 5:48) and the communication of the faith, which are perceptible as following Christ's two-fold commandment (Mt 22:37-38).

Theology and Education

If philosophy of education considers the 'why' of education (see Hábl 2021, 60) then the theology of education is the 'who', not in an anthropocentric sense but in the relationship between God and his creation, specifically man. Considering that God is love and thus seeks the best for the other then the growth and development of the person regarding goodness,

beauty, truth, and unity, through education (educare, educere[3]) is the means of teaching and drawing man out of the darkness he is born into – not really a blank slate but with plenty of potential for growth in so many ways – and to orient his life towards the transcendentals, becoming more like God (theosis, divinisation) who is the ultimate goodness, beauty, truth, and unity.

Thus, theology of education regards how God and man cooperate in different ways to ready man to be with God in eternity. This teleological purpose in education has, of course, the long-term view. Within that range of what is between 'now and at the hour of our death', there is a deeply complex and very multi-faceted process taking place, one which we are only somewhat aware of, whether we consider anyone's own personal awareness or as a theoretician, or a practitioner, or all three. For beyond our human understanding is not only God's ways of nurturing us, with or without particular grace (his ability to bring good out of bad and to draw the greatest sinner to him), but also his purpose both regarding each person and the 'bigger picture'.

There is nothing for God to learn in our education, only for us persons, but there is everything for him to go through with us, as he walks with us on our journeys of development – to him or away from him. What is that journey, why should we take it with him, should it be taken with others also, and why should education be grounded in God, thus placing theology of education as the cornerstone in spite of the majority of directions of travel in education for centuries now? By looking through the lens of theology of education, we can find some answers in the first few sections of GE, which are considered briefly in this paper.

Defining Education Theologically

The Introduction of GE was especially important because of its time and context: it was an acknowledgement of the progress (good or bad) in society in certain areas and the need for the Church to have a voice. The maturation of modernism was in full flow, where rights and opportunities were increasing, at the cost of crumbling traditions including families and communities in order to enable industrialised societies. GE's Introduction opens by referring to 'the social progress of this age' and how the Council 'has considered with care how extremely important education is in the life of man', while pointing out that education's 'influence ever grows' regarding the 'social progress'. Thus, education is important in not only the development of individuals but also society as a whole: if you control education, you control the direction of society to at least a significant extent. In this sense, education is the means of supplying future workers/participants for the progress and purpose of society.

However, subsequently, after recognising the growth and spread of education 'everywhere', GE recognises that despite 'Mighty attempts […] to obtain education for all', a great many remain without 'even rudimentary training' (GE Introduction). Then follows the first element of theology of education: 'so many others lack a suitable education in which truth and love are developed together' (GE Introduction). This emphasises that the education of persons needs to

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[3] Both roots of 'education' are intended generally here. For more, see, for example, in the *Online Etymology Dictionary* under 'educate'.

be much more than simple training of basic skills, whether functioning as a simple tool or machine or calculating complex accountancy. Thus, the Council document calls early on for truth and love to be embedded in education.

Recognising the Church's task of proclaiming salvation and restoring all things in Christ, the Council states that 'the Church must be concerned with the whole of man's life, even the secular part of it insofar as it has a bearing on his heavenly calling' (GE Introduction) and references here Pope John XXIII and other Council documents. While this regards the need for the Church to be more 'in the world', regarding education it encourages the recognition that education should not merely be a means to a worldly end but that there is the sacred and the secular need to develop each person in an integrated way, ideally effectively being 'in the world but not of the world'. The following sentence states a theological-educational foundation for Catholics: 'Therefore [the Church] has a role in the progress and development of education' (GE Introduction). As the document is speaking both to Catholics on behalf of the Church, declaring its fundamental importance in the development of the faithful, as well as a declaration to society as a whole, this is also the Council stating its role as a significant authority and contributor to wider society through education, amongst other things. Thus, GE establishes the Church's role in education, at least theologically.

GE 1 then defines the right to education for all persons as 'inalienable' through having the 'dignity of a human being', thus education is defined as integral to the human being: every person has the right to be led out of a lack of development, low understanding, and from ignorance to a better place by others. Developing GE's Introduction, the context of this is 'in harmony with their fraternal association with other peoples in the fostering of true unity and peace on earth' (GE 1). Then it is clarified that the Church values both visions for education: true education aims at the formation of the human person in the pursuit of his ultimate end and of the good of the societies of which, as man, he is a member, and in whose obligations, as an adult, he will share. Thus, man is not merely his own growth/education/theosis project but one who participates appropriately in society.

The first section then expands on the societal role of the well-educated person. Educated through the inclusion of modern developments in teaching, the aim is for the young to 'develop harmoniously their physical, moral and intellectual endowments so that they may gradually acquire a mature sense of responsibility in striving endlessly to form their own lives properly and in pursuing true freedom as they surmount the vicissitudes of life with courage and constancy' (GE 1). For theology of education, this means particularly moral and intellectual development leading to living responsibly, with freedom, and approaching life's challenges appropriately. GE explains that this includes relationships with others, from appropriate sexual education to learning how to participate in the community, in groups and organisations, and in dialogue with others while being 'willing to do their best to promote the common good' (GE 1). This meeting of moral theology and practical theology has since been expanded on significantly by the Church in, for example, the *Compendium of Social Catholic Doctrine*, being an area of particular importance for the laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem* (AA) 31).

GE 1 also recognises that the young have 'a right to be motivated to appraise moral values with a right conscience, to embrace them with a personal adherence, together with a deeper

knowledge and love of God' (GE 1). The Church therefore considers it imperative that the young are led to an understanding of the importance and goodness of having good moral understanding and the desire to apply it. Development of this is connected to the development of a relationship with God through growing in knowledge and love. Responsibility for this development – a 'sacred right' – in the young is first given to all in authority in society and in particular in charge of education and then also to 'the sons of the Church' (GE 1).

Therefore, education is not only for utilitarian means or the selfish pursuit of one's growth but the development of the person participating in society, as a member of society, growing in God's ways of morality.

'Christian Education'

The above is the section title of GE 2. This brief section is the most theological, immediately defining the right of a Christian – through baptism – to a Christian education. A specifically Christian education is then described, being more than the general education the Church calls for all to receive.

It is the most serious obligation of the 'pastors of souls' that all receive a Christian education, which is:

> that the baptized, while they are gradually introduced the knowledge of the mystery of salvation, become ever more aware of the gift of Faith they have received, and that they learn in addition how to worship God the Father in spirit and truth (cf. John 4:23) especially in liturgical action, and be conformed in their personal lives according to the new man created in justice and holiness of truth (Eph. 4:22-24); also that they develop into perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ (cf. Eph. 4:13) and strive for the growth of the Mystical Body; moreover, that aware of their calling, they learn not only how to bear witness to the hope that is in them (cf. Peter 3:15[4]) but also how to help in the Christian formation of the world that takes place when natural powers viewed in the full consideration of man redeemed by Christ contribute to the good of the whole society. (GE 2)

Each statement here is rich in theological depth and deserves extensive exploration beyond the scope of this paper, which merely offers a brief overview while identifying the themes of theosis and communication of the faith. Each quote below is from GE 2 unless stated.

First, the educational process is shown in theological understanding: more 'knowledge of the mystery of salvation' is connected with increasingly being 'aware of the gift of Faith' given to the faithful. Thus, a relationship with God and our readiness for eternal life with him is developing in the person, leading to the growing desire to be with him and like him.

Second, connected to this, the Christian learns an important part of this relationship: how to worship God 'in spirit and truth', which is Christ's prophecy to the Samaritan woman regarding post-Temple worship. The Church emphasises that the worship learned is to be 'especially in

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[4] The online document on the Vatican website erroneously records this reference; it should be 1 Peter 3:15.

liturgical action', which is written of in the Council's *Sacrosanctum Concilium* (see, for example, 48, 115).

Third, Christian education is a conversion process (see Eph 4:22-24), where the person discards the old and takes on the new; the participation of the faithful with knowledge by realising it in their lives is the journey to God, to be more like him. Two theological elements are emphasised – justice and holiness of truth – which are not characteristic ideas in the then modern (nearly postmodern) world. The process of becoming more like God 'in but not of the world' is clear.

Fourth, the aim that the faithful 'develop into perfect manhood, to the mature measure of the fullness of Christ' clearly describes theosis, with a teleological lens that points Christian development in the direction of becoming as Christ-like as possible. The Eph 4 reference speaks to both the individual as well as the Christian community.

Fifth, this community – 'the Mystical Body' – is what the Christian must learn to 'strive for'. For God is love, which is the opposite of aloneness, and the teleological task given to the faithful is of participating in the building of the Kingdom of God, being the purpose and meaning of the focus and hard work of the Christian life.

Sixth, the Christian needs to develop awareness and learning in order to represent God to others. On the surface, the reference to Peter's Epistle, which calls us to be prepared to explain our hope in Christ in a Christian manner, is unclear: to 'bear witness' here is from *apologia* – to explain, defend. However, while the term 'apologetics' is not used explicitly in the Council documents, its use is called for also in *Lumen Gentium* 10, *Dei Verbum* 8, *Christus Dominus* 13, and especially *Dignitatis Humanae* 14 (cf. Siniscalchi 2016, 18–19; Nicolson 2018, 415). The Council's focus is significantly pastoral and it calls the faithful – 'the apostolate of the laity' (AA 1) – to 'bear witness' to Christ when dealing with those in the Church, other Christians, and non-Christians of good will (AA 27). The formation, that is, education, to participate in this role is described in AA 28-31, reflecting the first part of the Peter's call: 'be prepared'. This return to a purer meaning of apologetics, thus moving away from a more formal and authoritative style, is described in AA 31:

> Since in our times, different forms of materialism are spread far and wide even among Catholic [sic], the laity should not only learn doctrine more diligently, especially those main points which are the subjects of controversy, but should also exhibit the witness of an evangelical life in contrast to all forms of materialism.

Thus, GE 2 amongst other council documents calls for what may be regarded as a *ressourcement* of apologetics: be prepared through education in the faith and communicate this to others in a Christian manner (1Pt 3:15-16), which is to bear witness to one's faith.

Seventh, the Christian is called also to assist in 'the Christian formation of the world' which occurs when in our humanity we understand ourselves and our relationship with God, cooperating with God's grace which benefits all of society. Thus, man with God builds, creates, the world in the best possible way, imbuing it with all that God wills, which recalls that God created this world for man (cf. Gen 1:28) and it is our task to cooperate with God in it.

Therefore, GE calls on the person to develop through education to become an active Christian who grows in his relationship with God while reaching out to others in this world, and whose teleological direction of personal growth sees him as a medium of God's action in this world while becoming more ready for the eternal Kingdom. And as the commandment to love God is being fulfilled, the second, to love one's neighbour is being accomplished in reaching out to others. For through Christian education – preparation – one bears witness to one's faith and God's presence grows in the affairs of mankind and mankind becomes more formed in Christian ways. What is clear, though, is that man is called through and by his education to participate in this world, bringing Godliness to the world. For as the apostles were sent out, so too is the Christian usually called to be a Christian presence in this world's activity and dealings, as the light and salt of the world (Mt 5:13-16).

It is with regard to this that Christian education in any form should be assessed: the growth of the person, becoming more Christ-like to participate in this world and be ready for the next.

Sources of Education

Regarding who provides this education is mainly explored in GE 3; further GE sections focus more on implementation, which is beyond our scope here. Parents are especially called to grow in their faith and understanding and educate their children in this. The document states that they 'must create a family atmosphere animated by love and respect for God and man, in which the well-rounded personal and social education of children is fostered' (GE 3). The family is fundamental for Christian growth, being 'the first school of the social virtues that every society needs' (GE 3). Thus, the cycle continues, parents bringing up the next generation of Christians, many of whom will become parents, who in turn should 'recognize the inestimable importance a truly Christian family has for the life and progress of God's own people' (GE 3).

Wider society is called to ensure these rights of parents and families, intervening appropriately if necessary, and where possible providing schooling in line with parents' requirements. The Church 'has the responsibility of announcing the way of salvation to all men, of communicating the life of Christ to those who believe, and, in her unfailing solicitude, of assisting men to be able to come to the fullness of this life' (GE 3). Later sections of GE look into different types of schools and the role of academics, etc. Of particular interest here, Catholic schools should be open to non-Catholics, being a type of mission reaching out to others, even as evangelisation through action and example (GE 9).

The Council document considers catechesis – handing on the faith – as integral to educating the faithful: it 'enlightens and strengthens the faith, nourishes life according to the spirit of Christ, leads to intelligent and active participation in the liturgical mystery and gives motivation for apostolic activity' (GE 4). With a strong and knowledgeable foundation, the Christian develops in understanding the faith, becoming an effective participant in both Church and society. While older styles of teaching 'the Catechism' did not suit all learners, it still provided some grounding for the faithful. Educational developments since the 1960s can easily be integrated into catechesis without it losing its particular place within education.

Three particular educational elements of communicating Christian ideas – evangelisation, apologetics, and catechesis (Levada 2010; Nicolson 2018, 418–9) – are included in GE, albeit

not always explicitly. Evangelisation, which begins with bearing witness (*Ad Gentes* (AG) 11) including educating (AG 12), is meant here in the sense of AG 13, where a person is called to learn of God's love, salvation, awareness of sin, etc., thus to conversion. Catechesis is the teaching of the faith to a Christian, which leads to further growth, including but not only in a school (AG 17). Apologetics can include elements of both of these – answering doubts or misunderstandings in possible converts and committed believers – and also respond to anything from questions to accusations from anyone (Stackhouse 2006, 118). All three of these play some role at times in one's Christian education and also in participating in the Christian life, such as explaining attendance at church rather than going shopping or supporting a friend weighed down with life. Indeed, with examples such as a Pew Research Center survey showing less than 30% of U.S. Catholics believe the Church's teaching on the Eucharist and around half don't know what the teaching is (Smith 2019), all three elements are important, including the re-evangelisation of those poorly catechised.

GE ends with appreciation shown to 'priests, Religious men and women, and the laity who by their evangelical self-dedication are devoted to the noble work of education' (GE Conclusion). All have different but important roles in education, 'imbuing their students with the spirit of Christ, to strive to excel in pedagogy and the pursuit of knowledge' (GE Conclusion). Christians should 'not merely advance the internal renewal of the Church but preserve and enhance its beneficent influence upon today's world, especially the intellectual world' (GE Conclusion). Therefore, GE calls for educators – parents, clergy, teachers – to provide education that continues the Church's role of bringing up Christians who will reach out to others, grow in their effective Christian participation in the world, and be a part of the 'Christian formation of the world' (GE 2).

Conclusion

Theology of education can be regarded as the relationship between God and man, where the latter grows in becoming more like the former, thus preparing for the eternal Kingdom. Therefore, the Church calls in GE for education for everyone that both develops the person as effective in society economically but also socially, including morals, thus also somewhat the transcendentals. However, Christian education must be more: developing the Christian both as a member of society who can help form the world and as one becoming more Christ-like and ready for heaven (theosis). To spread and develop the Christian message, GE encourages the use of three Christian educational ways of communicating the faith that have been underused since the Council – evangelisation, apologetics, catechesis – and each can contribute significantly to Christian education, thus theology of education. In this way, through education, we can participate in Christ's two-fold commandment being fulfilled.

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