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Aller au sommaire du numéro

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LONERGAN ON THE DIVINE MISSIONS

John CARMODY

WITH the recent publication of *Method in Theology*,[1] Bernard Lonergan (b. 1904) has emerged from Roman Catholic folklore into the mainstream of current theology. The project on theological foundations that he has pursued so long[2] is now completed; it remains for the scholarly world to assess it. The main focus of this assessment, of course, will be *Method in Theology's* own arguments.[3] They are the most recent and fullest presentation of the "functional specialties" Lonergan believes ought to divide a modern theology. Still, these arguments are formal and prescriptive. Quite consciously, they remain in the domain of "method", which is carefully distinguished from theology itself.[4] Rightly, many theologians may wonder how these formal prescriptions will work out in the concrete. They may then find themselves interested in Lonergan's own theological *performances* — in the concrete studies where, presumably, his methodological notions found application.

These theological performances have received little attention.[5] Indeed, few people realize that Lonergan has produced four volumes, totaling approximately fourteen hundred pages, on the most central questions of Christian theology.[6] Because they are in Latin, and utilize neoscholastic categories, they remain difficult of access. Consequently, it is difficult for the modern theological world to assess their relation to *Method in Theology* and their significance for Lonergan's overall achievement. Perhaps there is a place, then, for studies in Lonergan's Latin works that will make them more available and will concretize the implications and problems of his new methodology. This present essay is conceived as such a study. It deals with a

1. New York: Herder and Herder, 1972.
2. See David TRACY, *The Achievement of Bernard Lonergan* (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970).
3. For an early review, see Avery DULLES, in *Theological Studies*, 33 (1972), 553–555.
4. Dulles has problems with this distinction. Karl Rahner wonders whether Lonergan's "method" is really theological. See "Some Critical Thoughts on 'Functional Specialties in Theology,'" in *Foundations of Theology*, ed. Philip McShane (University of Notre Dame Press, 1972), pp. 194–196.
5. Lonergan himself makes no mention of them in *Method in Theology*.
6. They are *De Constitutione Christi*[4], *De Verbo Incarnato*[3], *De Deo Trino, I*[2] and *II*[3], all from Gregorian University Press, 1964.

representative and important section of Lonergan's speculative work on the trinity — with a concrete performance that raises not a few questions about methodological implications. After setting this section on the divine missions in context, I shall summarize its teaching and then try to assess its import for *Method in Theology*.[7]

THE CONTEXT

Today, Lonergan sees theology as a cooperative venture involving eight related specializations.[8] They divide into two groups of four, each group constituting one phase or moment in a bi-partite whole. The first phase, called mediating theology, involves the specializations of research, interpretation, history, and dialectic. The second phase, called mediated theology, involves foundations, doctrines, systematics, and communications. In each phase, one specialty focuses each of Lonergan's four levels of consciousness: experience, understanding, judgment, and decision.[9]

Lonergan's theological performances, however, center on only two of the eight functional specialties.[10] He has written doctrinal (dogmatic) and systematic studies in both Christology and trinitarian theology. The dogmatic works (*De Verbo Incarnato, De Deo Trino, I: Pars Dogmatica*) aim at presenting authoritative (Roman Catholic) Church teaching. They deal with what Christian faith holds, about Jesus Christ and the trinitarian God. The systematic works (*De Constitutione Christi, De Deo Trino, II: Pars Systematica*) aim at a coherent *understanding* of Christological and trinitarian faith. They are speculative or hypothetical — one man's views of how the relevant dogmas interrelate for best sense.

Lonergan's treatment of the divine missions occurs in the sixth and last chapter of his systematic work on the trinity.[11] It is therefore the conclusion or the final topic in his ordered treatment of how trinitarian doctrine is to be understood.[12] This means that the divine missions are the part of trinitarian doctrine most known, or immediate, or familiar to us men, and least known or fundamental with regard to God himself. To understand this implication of the missions' place in Lonergan's systematics, one must grasp his notion of theology's two "ways".[13] The way of "discovery" (*via inventionis*) is the quasi-empirical path one travels in pursuing a doctrine to its foundations. Roughly, it is the historical order in which trinitarian doctrine developed: from the biblical experience of the divine persons' activities to the (medieval) theoretic understanding of intelligible emanations. In the *via inventionis* one is pursuing something experienced into its grounding explanation or "cause". Lonergan's dogmatic works basically exemplify the way of discovery.

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7. The general assumption, then, is that what a man does is as significant as what he says ought to be done.
8. See *Method in Theology*, pp. 125–145.
9. For the most concise version of Lonergan's theory of consciousness, see "Cognitional Structure", in *Collection*, ed. F. E. Crowe (New York: Herder and Herder, 1967), pp. 221–239.
10. For the fullest version of method in the Latin works, see *De Deo Trino, II*, pp. 7–64.
11. See *Ibid.*, pp. 216–260.
12. For this material as the first concern of the dogmatic theologian, see *De Deo Trino, I*, pp. 112–154.
13. See *De Deo Trino, II*, pp. 36–41.

His systematic works, however, follow the way of "teaching" (*via doctrinae*). Having discovered the final source, ordering principle, or cause of a series of truths, one pivots and "deduces" (leads back) the series from its most fundamental notions to its most concrete or experiential. In the teaching of *De Deo Trino, II: Pars Systematica*, the analogical conception of the divine processions, treated in chapter two,[14] is the most fundamental notion. If one grasps *emanatio intelligibilis*, the spiritual experiences of human understanding and love, then, in Lonergan's view, he has seized the basis or fundamental notion on which the other notions used in understanding the trinity depend. These other notions, developed in chapters three through five, are of the divine real relations, the divine persons considered in themselves, and the divine persons compared to one another. In each chapter, Lonergan patiently advances his teaching, continually pushing out from what has been clarified into new assertions and questions.

In chapter six, this process reaches its final set of assertions and questions.[15] The divine missions, first in the order of Christians' experience and preconceptual knowledge of God, are best understood after one has clarified systematically the processions, relations, and persons of the trinity. The theology of the missions deals with God's relations or actions outside of himself which are, for systematic conception, subsequent to more intrinsic considerations like processions and relations and dependent upon them. In the background of the chapter that we are studying, then, is a formidable construction of more basic portions of systematic trinitarian theology. We shall reach back to them as Lonergan's exposition of the divine missions demands.

THE DIVINE MISSIONS

Chapter six contains four assertions, eleven questions, and an epilogue. We shall allow Lonergan's own way of interrelating them to emerge, in order to preserve the flavor of his work. Generally, we shall emphasize the assertions, since they are more important than the often rather obscure questions. This section, then, will be mainly expository. After it, we can try to probe the adequacy of Lonergan's views of the missions, and the implications that this performance raises when one compares it with the prescriptions that *Method in Theology* makes for systematic theology.

The first assertion[16] concerns a fundamental principle regarding all contingent predication about God. It reads, "the things contingently and truly said about the divine persons are so constituted by the divine perfection itself that their consequent condition is an apt outside term."[17] Having laid this down, Lonergan moves immediately to clarify its terms. "Truly said" embraces things both explicitly and implicitly revealed. "Contingently" refers to things that may or may not be (non-necessary things). The "divine perfection" is the divine reality itself, identical with the

14. Chapter one is entitled "De Fine, Ordine, Modo Dicendi".

15. "Assertions" are positive teaching or theses. "Questions" are subordinate, usually disputed issues whose clarification removes impediments to grasping the assertions.

16. Since the assertions are numbered consecutively throughout the book, it is actually assertion XV.

17. P. 217.

subsistent divine relations. A "condition" is something required to constitute or effect something else, but not as its cause. "Outside" means non-divine.

The argument for this assertion has three steps. First, where infinite perfection is present as constitutive reason, any other reason is superfluous. Therefore, the divine perfection itself makes any other principle for the constitution of what is truly and contingently said of the divine persons superfluous. Second, an apt contingent term is required, because a contingent truth cannot have as its corresponding reality something necessary. Third, this outside term is not a cause, because the divine perfection is present. It is a condition, because it is necessary for the contingent truth to exist, and it is "consequent" because the divine persons are absolutely independent or "prior" with regard to all created things.

Having dealt with this general theorem of natural theology, Lonergan moves nearer to the trinitarian aspects of God's works *ad extra*. His second assertion is that "the things contingently and truly said about the divine persons according to the divine cognoscitive, voluntary, and productive operation are constituted through the common divine perfection as both 'principium quod' and 'principium quo', and therefore are attributed to the three persons distinctly and equally." [18] The intention of the assertion, then, is to focus on the truths that regard the persons insofar as they know, will, or make contingent things through the divine nature, and to lay it down that these operations are to be attributed to the persons distinctly and equally.[19]

The argument for this second assertion is close and representative of Lonergan's regular style, so I shall present it rather fully. Whatever a divine person knows, wills, or makes, he knows, wills, and makes through his own knowledge, volition, and power. But, the knowledge, volition, and power of a divine person is really the same as the divine essence itself. Further, since this essence is subsistent, it is not only the "principle which" but also the "principle by which". In addition, the divine essence is the divine perfection equally common to the three. Therefore, whatever a divine person knows, wills, or does he knows, wills, and does through the divine perfection equally common to the three, as both principle which and principle by which. And, this conclusion only differs verbally from the first portions of the assertion above (as the *probandum*).

Further, to each is truly and really attributed what is constituted through his own proper reality and perfection. But, whatever is truly said of any divine person according to the divine cognoscitive, voluntary, or productive operation is constituted through the divine perfection common to the three. Therefore, whatever is said about one divine person according to these operations equally is truly said of the others.

Consequently, whatever God the Father knows, wills, or makes the Son and Spirit know, will, and make, since the three have only one essence, knowledge, will, and power.[20] Further, what are attributed to the three persons equally are attributed to them not confusedly but distinctly. For just as Father, Son, and Spirit have the

18. P. 219.
19. See DS 3814-5.
20. See DS 1330.

same essence in a certain order, so equally they have the same knowledge, will, and power in a certain order.[21] And, this order prevents confusion.

In his first two assertions, then, Lonergan has set up his understanding of the trinitarian God's operations with regard to created things, which is the general class within which the divine missions *ad extra* fall. But before coming specifically to how the missions themselves ought to be understood, it is necessary to deal with several "questions" — several debatable points that should be nailed down.

The first question[22] is whether God the Father sent his Son to redeem the human race. Lonergan's response is that Sacred Scripture clearly teaches that he did.[23] Summarily, Scripture says five things: 1) there is a divine person "sending"; 2) another divine person is sent; 3) the divine person who is sent lives on account of the sender, teaches the sender's doctrine, wants the sender's goal, and does the sender's works; 4) the divine person is sent to human persons so that they may live, believe, know, love, do greater works; 5) by the mediation of others, this mission is extended to other human persons.

Next, Lonergan questions whether the Father and Son send the Holy Spirit. His answer, again, looks to Scripture. He finds that Scripture clearly and certainly teaches the mission of the Holy Spirit from the Father and the Son, even though it does not talk about this second mission so abundantly.[24] The third question is whether a divine person is sent by him from whom he proceeds. Its answer requires a distinction. According to New Testament doctrine and speech, the answer is yes: a divine person is sent by that person or those persons from whom he proceeds.[25] However, certain other documents speak differently than the New Testament, interpreting Isaiah 48:16 ("and now the Lord and his spirit sent me") as the Father and Spirit sending the Son.[26] Consequently, Aquinas distinguished two senses for "mission". In the first, more proper sense, the person sending is understood as the principle of the person sent. In the second sense, the person sending is understood as the principle of some effect produced *ad extra*. The New Testament speaks in the first sense; the other documents cited speak in the second sense, referring to the effect produced in Christ the man.

The fourth question about the divine missions is whether the Father and Son are said to send the Spirit by appropriation. The answer depends upon what one means by "send". If one means producing some spiritual effect in a creature, or coming to a creature (in grace), then only appropriation is intended, since these are both works *ad extra*, which are common to all three persons. However, if one means that the other divine persons really and truly send the Spirit, then one implies the real relation (of

21. Lonergan refers to Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 45, a. 6 ad 2m.

22. This is question XXII in the text.

23. For Lonergan's scriptural references, see pp. 221-2. They are mainly Johannine.

24. See pp. 222-223.

25. See pp. 223-224. *John 17:18, 20:21* are principal texts.

26. Lonergan refers to Augustine, *C. Maximinum*, II, 20; ML 42, 790; to the Council of Toleto, DS 536–538; and to Aquinas, *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 43, a. 8 for the resolution.

passive spiration) which is strictly proper only to the Spirit.[27] And, this last meaning seems to be more the teaching or usage of the New Testament than the first two.

With these questions removed, and some of the scriptural view of the divine persons exposed, Lonergan can return to the more speculative work of the assertions. His third assertion reads, "the mission of a divine person is so constituted through the divine relation of origin that it requires as its condition a consequent and apt outside term." [28] The issue here is the ontological constitution of a mission — the realities that verify the statement that a divine person is sent. In Lonergan's view, they are two: the relation of origin, which really constitutes the mission as cause, and the outside term that is conditionally demanded.

To explain his understanding of this assertion, Lonergan invokes an analogy to God's knowledge. Just as God knows contingent things through his own knowledge and not through an outside term (though this is required), so too the Son *is* all that he is (divine and human) through his own proper divine *esse* and not through a term *ad extra* (the nature from Mary, which is completely required). Similarly, the Holy Spirit is sent through that which he is and not through an outside term (created grace), though this outside term is required. In other words, Lonergan's basic source of explanation is the divine transcendence. God himself is the cause of all his operations, those necessary and those contingent, those common to the three persons and those proper to a given one.

The argument for this understanding is, first, that the mission of a divine person is not constituted without a divine relation of origin. This is clear because the Father's sending the Son means that the Father is sender, the Father is not the one sent, the Son is not the sender, the Son is sent — it means that "opposition" is predicated of these two divine persons. But opposition is rooted in the relations of origin, and therefore so is a divine mission.[29] Second, where the infinite perfection is present as cause or constitutive reason, any other is superfluous. But the real relation of origin, which is really identified with the divine essence and perfection, is present to constitute a divine mission. Therefore, any other cause or constitutive reason, besides the relation of origin, is superfluous. In other words, a divine person is constituted as, e.g., sender or sent, through the divine relation of origin.

Third, that a divine person sends or is sent is a contingent truth.[30] Therefore, it does not have the reality adequate to its truth solely through the divine perfection (though this is necessary) but demands an apt outside term. However, since the divine person, whether sending or sent, in no way depends upon a creature, the outside term, though it is a condition of the mission, is not previous or simultaneous to the divine relational constitution but consequent on it.

In his three assertions, then, Lonergan has progressively specified his view of divine contingent action. He has argued for a general view of divine contingent action, the three persons' equal share in contingent actions through the common divine

27. Lonergan does not clarify here how the "real and true" sending of the Spirit by the other persons is not an *operatio ad extra* common to the three.

28. P. 226.

29. See DS 1330.

30. "Absolutely, creation, incarnation, sanctification could not have been." P. 232.

essence, and the constitution of a divine mission through its relation of origin. Before coming to his final assertion, about the divine inhabitation, he interposes a further number of questions.

The first of these asks how the apt outside term follows on the constituted mission. To begin to answer this, Lonergan notes that by the very fact that the Father and Son and Spirit conceive and will a certain divine person to be sent there exist both that mission and its apt outside term. In both the mission of the Son and that of the Spirit, God is "ens per intellectum", so that what he knows of himself he is. In the Incarnation, however, the material outside term is a non-subsistent human nature, since the union is in the person, while in "donation" it is a subsistent human nature, since the union of grace is between persons. Further, the "secondary existence" by which the non-subsistent nature is assumed is in the genus of substance, while the sanctifying grace by which the subsistent nature is rendered pleasing to God and holy is in the genus of quality.

Finally, there are four divine real relations, really identical with the divine substance, and therefore four very special modes that found the imitation of the divine substance *ad extra*. The secondary existence of the Incarnation is a created participation of paternity, and so has a special relation to the Son; sanctifying grace is a participation of active spiration, and so has a special relation to the Holy Spirit; the habit of charity is a participation of passive spiration, and so has a special relation to the Father and Son; the light of glory is a participation of filiation, and therefore "perfectly leads the sons of adoption back to the Father." [31]

Next, Lonergan asks whether the mission of the Holy Spirit is according to notional love. Since the mission of a divine person is nothing other than his procession, followed by an apt outside term, and since the Holy Spirit proceeds as notional love, the answer is clearly yes. Then, he asks whether the divine missions are ordered among themselves. The answer is affirmative: there is an order in both the constitution of the divine missions and in their consequent terms. As regards constitution, the mission of the Spirit is ordered to the mission of the Son, because the procession of love is ordered to the procession of the Word (the Son is the "Verbum spirans amorem"). [32] As regards the order of the terms *ad extra*, Gal 4 : 4–6 shows that the mission of the Son is for the adoption of sons, so that the mission of the Spirit is ordered from adoption. In other words, overall, the mission of the Son was for the Father to be able to love us like his own proper Son, while the mission of the Spirit springs from this love.

But, what is the logic or "ratio" of a divine mission? There is no single one. The mission of the Son is from the Father, the mission of the Spirit is from the Father and Son; the mission of the Son to reconcile all men to God the Father is prior, the mission of the Spirit to reconcile all the just is consequent. Further, although each mission is to establish and confirm new personal relations between God and men, the Son works through his assumed nature (and himself sends others), while the Spirit does nothing peculiar to himself. Rather, he simply lays the foundation for cooperations, since he confirms the new personal relations through the very gift of

31. P. 235.
32. P. 238.

himself. Therefore, the word "mission" has to include and distinguish various stages of a complex economy.

Lonergan's next question regards the "fittingness" of the Son being sent visibly and the Spirit invisibly. This fittingness is clear from the context and goal of the divine missions. A mission has a twofold end: to accomplish a certain good, or to enter into and confirm new personal relations. The good that the Son was to accomplish was the work of mediation and redemption. Since this was proper to him alone, and not common to all three persons through the divine nature, it was fitting for him to assume another nature. It was also fitting that one who was to teach men and give them an example of new life should be visible to them. On the other hand, the Spirit's mission is to confirm the new relations initiated by the Son and be a pledge of eternal life. For this an invisible inhabitation of men's intimate hearts is most fitting. Summarily, then, it was equally fitting for us to be drawn to the Father and restrained from the senses by the visible Son, and to desire and hope for eternal life in the invisible Spirit.

However, there are grounds for asking whether the Son isn't also sent invisibly and the Spirit visibly. The grounds are the appropriation of the effects of grace to different divine persons. Some of these effects regard the intellect, and since the Son is the Word of God's understanding, they are assimilated to him, which results in an appropriated invisible "mission". Other effects of grace, regarding the will, are appropriated to the Spirit, God's love. But it was fitting that the invisible mission of the Spirit be manifested in certain external sensible signs, such as the likeness of a dove, breath, and tongues of fire. Therefore, because of these signs one can speak of the Spirit's visible missions.

Lonergan's last question in this series concerns charity. It asks whether the divine persons dwell within the just according to charity. The factual part of Lonergan's affirmative answer is clear from the New Testament.[33] Its doctrine, collected from many texts, is that there is a mutual indwelling which implies not only God's uncreated gift but also our acts, by which we habitually keep Christ's commandments according to love. Aquinas' interpretation of this state[34] is that through "gratia gratum faciens" God is in the just as the known is in the knower and the beloved in the lover.

This notion of presence or indwelling can be developed. First, those whom God has "foreknown and predestined to be made conformed to the image of his Son,"[35] are in God in a special way. They are specially in the divine Word, by which God the Father speaks both himself and all other things, and they are specially in the divine proceeding Love, by which Father and Son love both themselves and all other things. Second, those whom Christ the man knows and loves, and who believe and love him, live not for themselves but for Christ. Between them and Christ there is a mutual "being-in" and indwelling as known in knowers and beloved in lovers. Finally, other scriptural texts make it clear that union with Christ entails union with the Father and one's fellow men.[36] The upshot is that "the divine persons themselves and the blessed

33. See p. 249.

34. See *Sum. Theol.*, I, q. 43, a. 3.

35. Rom 8:29.

36. See pp. 254-255.

in heaven and the just on earth are in one another as known in knowers and beloved in lovers." [37] The divine persons are sent, ultimately, according to the eternal processions, that they might come to meet us and indwell according to similar processions — our knowing and loving — produced in us by grace. And, the Son and Spirit, who proceed from the Father and are sent by him, do not come without the Father, "to whom, through the Son in the Spirit, be all glory." [38]

Lonergan's final assertion, following on these questions, is that "the inhabitation of the divine persons, although it exists and is known more in acts, nonetheless is constituted through the state of grace." [39] To explain this assertion, he first notes that indwelling exists more in acts, because the *ratio* of cognition and love is verified more in act than in potency or habit. It is known more in acts, because anything is known insofar as it actually exists. However, as the scriptural words "remain", "live", "inhabit", etc., show, the inhabitation is not interrupted by the intermittent character of the acts. Actually, the *ratio* of inhabitation can be found in each of us in the measure that he lives not to himself but to Christ — in the measure that he remains in Christ, that he is "in the spirit". Nor should the fact of inhabitation be denied because it is not seen by human eyes. Introspective analysis is very difficult, there is no strict science about internal supernatural things, and judgment rests not with the subject or other men but with God.

Further, one can distinguish three aspects of divine "grace". One is that the Father loves and "donates" to the just by the Holy Spirit and on account of his Son the man. Second, there follows on this love and donation sanctifying grace, which is an absolutely supernatural entitative habit received in the essence of the soul. Third, from this habit, as though naturally, there flow forth virtues and gifts whence the inferior part of the soul is subordinated to reason and reason is subordinated to God, resulting in that internal rectitude and justice by which the just are promptly moved by God towards eternal life. Overall, then, there are three "elements" of grace: love and uncreated gift, the habit of sanctifying grace, and the orientation of the justified soul.

However, these three should not be separated, for they are tied together in a single intelligible order. Because God's love and gift are contingent, there follows sanctifying grace, as the required and apt *terminus ad extra*. Because the virtues and gifts flow from sanctifying grace like powers from the essence of the soul, when sanctifying grace is posited there follow the orientation of the justified soul and its promptness to act under the divine motion.

Moreover, a certain interpersonal, divine-human situation is constituted through the state of grace. The divine persons and the just are mutually in one another like known in knowers and beloved in lovers. In this state, we are not our own, because we are the temple of the Holy Spirit. Similarly, the Holy Spirit is not his own, since he has been given to us. The same may be said of Christians' relation to Christ.[40] The result is that those who remain in charity remain in God, and God in them — not

37. P. 255.
38. P. 256.
39. *Ibid.*
40. See p. 258.

because they have first loved God the Father, but because he first loved them and sent his Son as the propitiation for their sins.

And this life of grace should grow. He who is just, let him be justified further, that he may have life more abundantly in the Spirit, through the Son and for the glory of the Father. The glory of the Father is that, just as he himself eternally speaks the Word in truth and through the Word breathes the Spirit in holiness, so also in the fullness of truth he sent his Word made flesh in truth so that believing in the Word we might speak and understand his true words within. And through the Word in holiness he sent the Spirit of the Word, so that joined to the Spirit in love and made living members of the body of Christ we might cry out, "Abba, Father".

This concludes Lonergan's treatment of the divine missions along the *via doctrinae*. However, the final chapter of his *Pars Systematica* has an epilogue that traces summarily the whole route. It is a terse and worthy epitome in which we can see the final place and proportion that the divine missions hold in Lonergan's systematic theology of the trinity.

First, a single fundamental notion plays in the whole tract. This is the intellectual and rational order that exists in our human consciousness — the order by which volitions are directed by judgments that have been understood and such judgments are rooted in the perception of sufficient evidence. If one abstracts from the imperfection of its finitude, this order can be transferred to God and made an analogy that yields some understanding of the two divine processions and the four real relations by which the three persons are really distinguished among themselves. Then, if one adds that nothing is really in God unless God *is* it, it follows that the relations are subsistent, and that there are three divine persons conscious of themselves and of one another. Finally, since order makes a multiplicity both one and good, one may conclude from this order to the perfection proper to the divine persons. As well, he may conclude to the perfection they communicate to us, in that good of order which is the reign of God, the Body of Christ, the Church, and the economy of salvation.

THE DIVINE MISSIONS AND METHOD IN THEOLOGY

We have seen Lonergan's systematic account of the divine missions. It remains to reflect on its adequacy. Perhaps ironically, Lonergan's own *Method in Theology* is a major resource for answering the questions of what an "adequate" contemporary systematics entails. So, let us first sketch the highlights of our author's most recent prescriptions for systematic theology. After that, we can make an explicit comparison of this model with what we have seen Lonergan do with the missions. Finally, to conclude, we can see what questions this comparison of recent prescription with previous performance raises for the overall issue of a systematic understanding of the Christian God.

Method in Theology's major treatment of systematics occurs in chapter thirteen.[41] There Lonergan's first sentence sets the tone: "the seventh functional specialty, systematics, is concerned with promoting an understanding of the realities

41. See pp. 335–353.

affirmed in the previous specialty, doctrines." [42] To elaborate this sentence. Lonergan first calls upon the Aristotelian-Thomist distinction of understanding and judgment. Understanding deals with *quid sit*?, with definitions and hypotheses. Judgment deals with *an sit*?, with existence and the verifications of hypotheses. Transposed into theology, this distinction comes to undergird both the Anselmian *crede ut intelligas* and the Vatican I doctrine on the relation of faith and reason. Since belief is a judgment, Anselm's precept shows the necessity of affirming the truths of faith before one can make sense of them. Despite God's transcendence, Vatican I insists that "reason illumined by faith, when it inquires diligently, piously, soberly, can with God's help attain a highly fruitful understanding of the mysteries of faith both from the analogy of what it naturally knows and from the interconnection of the mysteries with one another and with man's last end (DS3016)." [43] Lonergan conceives the promotion of such understanding of the mysteries to be systematic theology's principal function.

Aquinas' fourth book of the *Summa Contra Gentiles* gives a classic example of the way the distinction between judgment and understanding becomes a functional distinction between doctrines and systematics. It also illustrates how doctrines are grounded in an appeal to authorities, while systematics should ground each particular conception in its more basic source of insight. Lamentably, the medieval synthesis of philosophy and theology was dissolved in subsequent centuries, weakening them both. Today, to sublate the medieval articulation of reason and faith into something viable, something capable of producing rigorous proofs and objective knowledge of God, Lonergan proposes transcendental method.[44] In a word, he says that an adequate contemporary systematics must operate in the horizon disclosed by intellectual, moral, and religious conversion.

Under the influence of religious conversion, especially, the theologian discovers that it is man's orientation to transcendent mystery that gives the name "God" its primary meaning. That is, religious conversion, which is theology's generator since Lonergan conceives theology as a reflection on religion, indicates the sovereignty of God's mystery. God never will be fully known. But, God's gift of his love (Rom 5:5) solves the problem of attaining his mysterious reality. It forces an exception to the adage, *nihil amatum nisi praecognitum*; it is the cause of man's seeking after "God" — the cause of a religious orientation to transcendent mystery. Finally, God's love is the "cause" of systematic theology: "... an orientation to transcendent mystery is basic to systematic theology. It provides the primary and fundamental meaning of the name, God. It can be the bond uniting all men despite cultural differences. It provides the origin for inquiry about God, for seeking assurance of his existence, for endeavouring to reach some understanding of the mysteries of faith. At the same time, it is quite in harmony with the conviction that no system we can construct will encompass or plumb or master the mystery by which we are held." [45]

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42. P. 335.
43. P. 336.
44. See pp. 3–26.
45. P. 341. See also DS 806, 3019.

God's love, then, gives man an orientation to transcendent mystery. It is the source of apophatic theology, a principle that can draw people out of the world and into the cloud of unknowing.[46] Still, there must be a kataphatic theology, too, for men remain in the world. Consequently, God is an object as well as a mystery — he is intended by questions and known by correct answers. But the questions of an adequate systematic theology today will stem not from the faculty psychology of the medievals but from intentionality analysis. Its basic terms and relations will not be metaphysical but psychological. For, on the basis of intentionality analysis, one can generate a critical ontology — an explanation of reality that will link its objective elements with their corresponding operations in intentional consciousness.[47]

However, this new systematics will maintain the distinction between the order of discovery and the order of teaching.[48] In the order of teaching, "the terms and relations of systematic thought express a development of understanding over and above the understanding had either from a simple inspection or from an erudite exegesis of the original doctrinal sources. So in Thomist trinitarian theory such terms as procession, relation, person have a highly technical meaning."[49] Still, Aquinas' system reflects the static conceptions of medieval thought. Today's systematic developments have to emerge within the ongoing context of modern science, scholarship, and philosophy.

These are Lonergan's major characterizations of systematics. In conclusion, he calls it "quite a homely affair, a *Glaubensverständnis*, where the truths of faith envisaged are the Church confessions."[50] When religious conversion and faith are its main emphasis and basis, systematics has a healthy and proper notion of "God", not believing that it can do him justice or exhaust his meaning. Of course, systematics is difficult, even elitist — like mathematics or philosophy. Yet it is indispensible if faith is to be understood at the level of one's times, and it is the prerequisite of communications or pastoral theology, since one must understand faith if he is to communicate it.

So much for a summary of Lonergan's recent description of systematics. Let us turn now to comparing this description with his treatment of the divine missions. Immediately, it is apparent that Lonergan has taken some of his prescriptions seriously. First, his very division of *De Deo Trino* reflects the distinction between judgment and understanding, doctrines and systematics, that he enounces in *Method in Theology*. Second, it is clear that Vatican I's "highly fruitful understanding of the mysteries" has both inspired and specified his work. The specification shows in his use of analogies from things naturally known, and in his concern to relate the mysteries with one another and with man's last end. Concretely, the first three assertions about the divine missions are built on the foundation of scholastic natural theology's view

46. See p. 342, with reference to William Johnston, *The Mysticism of the Cloud of Unknowing* (New York: Desclee, 1967).

47. See Lonergan's *Insight* (N.Y.: Philosophical Library, 1957), pp. 431–487.

48. See *Method in Theology*, p. 346.

49. *Ibid.*

50. P. 350.

that contingent predications about God involve an apt outside term, while the fourth assertion and epilogue display a remarkable effort to compare and interrelate both the missions themselves and all the capital concepts of trinitarian theology. The same concerns are also evident in many of the questions. In part, therefore, Lonergan the performer certainly concretizes what Lonergan the prescriber dictates.[51]

However, there are two characteristics of the prescribed modern systematics that it is difficult to verify in our chapter on the missions. First, neither in this chapter nor in the entire *Pars Systematica* does the orientation to transcendent mystery that is supposed to be basic strongly impress itself. In his dogmatic work, Lonergan does have a thesis on mystery,[52] and in the entire systematic work Vatican I's limit on what reason aided by faith can attain is highly influential. So Lonergan's work is not unaware of mystery or excessive in its claims for reason. However, it does not breathe a very apophatic air — it has little "mystagogy" [53] and sense for the limitlessness intended by the religious spirit. In other words, the "God" whose missions are discussed is conceived less from the heuristic openness of the human spirit than from the metaphysical system of the scholastics. All the requisite adjectives denoting the divine otherness appear in the proper places, but a syllogistic attack on the divine reality implicitly denies them. The result is a loss of personality, freedom, nearness, transcendence. Whether in himself or in his missions to men, God is not evoked as the beckoning goal of our now, the experiential holiness more intimate than we are to ourselves. This will be discussed below, when we ask about the overall notion of an "adequate" modern systematics, and I readily admit that it is vague — more an instinct or feeling than something strictly conceptual and argumentative. It is the kind of charge that one finally has to leave with the reader's own experience of *Pars Systematica* — with his own sense of what kind of God appears there.

Equally, each reader will have to puzzle out for himself the distinctions requisite for a judgment on the "modernity" of Lonergan's performed systematics. The prescription, one will recall, was for a network of terms and relations derived from intentionality analysis. That is, the systematics was to be "psychological" rather than "metaphysical". Extrinsically, the performance is a puzzle. That is, one finds a conflict if he considers, on the one hand, that *Pars Systematica* appeared considerably after *Insight* [54] while, on the other hand, Aquinas is the constant source of its terms and conceptualizations. Aquinas presumably is liable to the verdict on the "metaphysical" and static systematization of the medievals; [55] *Insight* surely falls on the side of

51. Here we note that Lonergan's *Insight* appeared in 1957, and his Latin works, in various editions, from 1956 to 1964. He was giving courses on theological method at the Gregorian University as early as 1959 (See Tracy, *op. cit.*, p. 275). It should not be thought, therefore, that Lonergan's methodological views completely followed on his performances. On the other hand, the time between the last editions of his Latin books (1964) and *Method in Theology* (1972) obviously allowed for considerable development.

52. See pp. 249–298.

53. I mean this in Karl Rahner's sense of evoking God's presence to consciousness as horizon. See Rahner's "The Concept of Mystery in Catholic Theology", *Theological Investigations*, IV (Baltimore: Helicon, 1966), pp. 36–73.

54. 1964 (for the last edition) to 1957.

55. See *Method in Theology*, p. 120.

intentionality analysis.[56] The great question, then, is why Aquinas rather than *Insight* determines Lonergan's systematic performances.[57]

If one presses this first, somewhat extrinsic impression and puzzle into the text, pursuing more intrinsically the build of *Pars Systematica*, he finds a complex situation. Data arguing for psychology and intentionality analysis include the stress of the opening methodological chapter on the acts of understanding and questioning, its comparison of the *via dogmatica* and *via systematica*, and the epistemological accent of its discussion of the object of theology. More importantly, the most basic conception of the whole tract is the analogy of the divine processions to the human intelligible emanations of understanding (and judgment) and love.[58] And, throughout the work, this stress on intentionality resurfaces, as in the explanation of what "person" means.[59] On the other hand, the regular terminology, format, and ontology is scholastic, and regularly, if not always, it is deployed "metaphysically", in precision from the subjective acts that give its terms and objects life. Apart from the basic analogy for procession, there is little sense of an intending subject, just as there is little mystery in the divine object intended.

To be more specific, let us return to Lonergan's treatment of the missions. The first three assertions clearly employ a scholastic metaphysics: *principium quod et principium quo*, subsistent relations, divine essence, nature, existence, etc. God is the pure, infinite act, who cannot be changed by any of his operations, who is the same whether he sends the Son or Spirit or not, the verification of whose contingent actions depends upon an apt outside term, which term must be only a condition, not a cause, and completely subsequent. Further, the analysis of this God's operations into cognoscitive, voluntary, and productive smacks strongly of faculty psychology — that faculty psychology that the modern systematics is supposed to eschew. In the fourth assertion, about the inhabitation of the divine persons, the treatment proceeds in terms of distinctions between potency, act, and habit, the profluence of virtues and gifts like potencies from the essence of the soul, and the presence of knowers and known, lovers and beloved, that evokes both faculty psychology and the Aristotelian axiom about knowledge as identity.

The "questions" are more varied. Some, as we noted are settled by an appeal to Scripture. On Lonergan's discussion of authorities in *Method in Theology*, however, this would appear to be more proper to dogmatics than to systematics, so one is hard put to say whether Scripture really substitutes for Thomist ontology in the *systematic* grounding of concepts and understandings. Other questions are as syllogistic and scholastic as the assertions. For instance, in discussing whether the apt outside term follows on the constituted mission, Lonergan draws eight rather clipped inferences from a fourfold distinction of "(1) constitutio active significata, (2) constitutio passive significata, (3) productio active significata, et (4) productio passive significata."[60]

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56. See especially pp. 319–347.
57. One wonders at this juncture about the circumstantial influence of teaching seminarians in a quite cautious Rome.
58. See pp. 65–114.
59. See pp. 153–160.
60. Pp. 232-233.

Overall, then, our section uses terms and handles arguments "metaphysically", in a mood of detachment from the historical, experiential subject whose intentional consciousness ought to be ontology's critical ground. If one adds to the chapters of *Pars Systematica* its three rather lengthy appendices, he will probably conclude that it is a very scholastic, metaphysical work with only a partial base in intentionality analysis. In other words, Lonergan has not done theologically, in his Latin works, what he did philosophically, in *Insight*. He has not achieved, or even attempted, a precisely modern and critical treatment of God or Jesus Christ. Where *Insight* sublated Aquinas into the problematic of a truly modern consciousness, a consciousness shaped by relativity physics, depth psychology, historical sensitivity, *die Wendung zur Subjekt* of modern philosophy, Lonergan's theology of the missions, and all of his systematic theology, remains outside it. Therefore, those whom his prescribed systematics would succor, those "willing to believe but wondering what the dogmas might possibly mean," remain waiting for modern performances in the theology of the Christian God and his Christ.[61] This is the upshot of comparing the Latin theology of the missions with *Method in Theology*.

Our final consideration is whether Lonergan's systematics, even as prescribed in *Method in Theology*, can be considered a fully successful recipe for the modern elucidation of faith. The Latin performances prompt a first *caveat*. They suggest that an immense amount of work lies between transcendental method and a concrete reformulation of systematic theology. If Lonergan himself has not produced the covariance in systematic theology that his conceptual revolution in methodology dictates, lesser talents should be temperate in their expectations of what the new method will immediately produce.[62] There will be many a slip between the doctrinal hand and the mouths of the faithful.

Second, Lonergan's conception of systematic theology remains indentured to Vatican I and it is doubtful, in many ways, whether Vatican I can power a *Glaubensverständnis* for today. Its stress on propositional truths, on the judgmental qualities that Lonergan emphasizes, needs the balance of the other factors in the whole *life* of faith: intuition, emotion, the "spiritual senses", trust, etc. This would seem a legitimate inference from Vatican II's use of "faith",[63] as well as the implication of new studies in historical theology.[64] Specifically one must question whether the Church confessions to be understood and explained don't have to be taken as more religious or numinous in their language than Lonergan allows.[65] This would mean that systematics can't lodge quite so surely in the intellectual stratum of intentional consciousness as *Method in Theology* desires. In other words, a "science"

61. See Karl Rahner's intermittent criticisms of Lonergan's *De Deo Trino* in *The Trinity*, trans. Joseph Donceel (New York: Herder and Herder, 1970), pp. 70 ff.

62. On conceptual development, see *De Deo Trino, I*, pp. 3–112. On covariance, with a basic reference to the history of the natural sciences, see Edward MacKinnon, *Truth & Expression* (N.Y.: Newman Press, 1971), especially pp. 71–184.

63. See J. DERETZ and A. NOCENT, eds., *Dictionary of the Council* (Washington: Corpus Books, 1968), pp. 68–70.

64. Note, for instance, the broader conception of what is relevant to a history of Christian faith in Jaroslav Pelikan, *Historical Theology* (New York: Corpus Instrumentorum, 1971).

65. Compare Ninian SMART, *Reasons and Faiths* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

of faith has to be tailored to its subject matter, which is more than judgments. It is love and very complex, mainly inarticulate, grappling with Mystery as well.

Lonergan's systematic performances, for once, appreciate this fact more than his prescriptions. As we noted, many of the questions in the theology of the missions, and part of the exposition in the final assertion on indwelling, are more biblical than metaphysical. Besides being a source of authority — an oblique reminder of "dogma" — these biblical materials convey an "understanding" of the divine missions that complements and perhaps often surpasses what the more usual syllogisms produce. It is not clear that Lonergan deliberately intended this complement, and he offers no explicit statement of how symbols and syllogisms ought to conspire in systematic theology. Rather, it seems that, somewhat inadvertently, he is forced back on more primordial, scriptural speech when he wants to be most authoritative, emphatic, close to the actual economy of salvation, or when he is seized by the beauty and value in God's missions to us.[66] The result is that the primary "object" to be explained is clarified with greater respect for its mystery than metaphysical, and probably even psychologically based, *systema* can generate. God is the primary object intended by Lonergan's theological questioning, and "God" is the transcendent mystery to which we are oriented by religious conversion. I think that systematic reflection on lived religion and God will generate its best understanding of faith if it develops an intentionality analysis that attends to the natural or more spontaneous language of religion, as well as the dogmatic judgments that Lonergan's Vatican I model favors.

Finally, this mention of language triggers the last series of questions I have about the new systematics of *Method in Theology*. The primary members in the series are the contemporary philosophies that might fairly be said to challenge Lonergan's transcendental Thomism as tools for ontological analysis. My basic question is whether they are so "counter-positional" as *Insight* and *Method in Theology* imply.[67] For example, ordinary language analysis has underscored the social or public character of human speech. It shows that words derive their meaning from the use to which a human community puts them. Lonergan has accepted this assertion and qualified it by pointing out the private genesis of fresh meanings — the dependence of novel and creative conceptualization on generative, preconceptual insights.[68] However, I do not find that he has worked this public character of speech into his systematic performance or theory. A crashing example is the capital word "person". While he admits that ordinary language today does not understand this word as "rational supposit", and does not employ it in a way that makes it credible that Jesus was not a human person, yet he does little to recast speech or theology so that modern usage may be given its due. And if it is true that the reality implicitly affirmed by ordinary language always retains a certain primacy over extended and technical languages, then one has not only the same theoretical problems with the new systematics that scriptural language suggested but also a challenge to relate the transcendental notion of "God" to the more immanent or bounded reality-frame that ordinary language assumes.[69]

66. For a parallel in Christology, see *De Verbo Incarnato*, pp. 579 ff.

67. See *Insight*, pp. 401–430; *Method in Theology*, pp. 235–293.

68. See *Method in Theology*, pp. 254–257.

69. See MacKinnon, *op. cit.*, especially pp. 71–128.

Another example of philosophic challenge to Lonerganian systematics is process thought. Does the new systematics entail an ontology that, like the conceptualization in the Latin performances, holds it axiomatic that God cannot change, suffer, be really related to his creatures? Every indication is that it does.[70] Of course, Lonergan provides for the conflict, and perhaps even the mutual elucidation, of rival philosophies in the functional specialty "dialectics".[71] But because his work sticks to the domain of method, never really entering the theological fray, one doesn't see this conflict or dialogue between his conception of God and, say, Whitehead's.[72] The exciting question of the *sources* of these rival conceptions is located by Lonergan's own work. Intentionality analysis (related to the original experiences in "revelation" and "doctrinal definition"? How?) is the center stage. But this intentionality analysis could well be more sympathetic to the "divinity" of change and suffering than Lonergan's ontology is. That is, the intuitions that yielded Whitehead's di-polar God deserve a sensitive and fair hearing. One really ought to search for them most carefully, since they are implicit in biblical language about God.[73] Lonergan's new systematics is therefore challenged by process philosophy to display more fully the intentionality analysis on which it rests. It is not enough to spotlight intelligible emanations and three conscious conversions. One has to show concretely how intellectual conversion to the position that the real is the verified, that whose conditions have been fulfilled, denies process in the intentional consciousness of "God", the transcendent Mystery.

Perhaps similar questions about the ontological implications (and imperfections) or the intentional sources of the new systematics could come forth from other contemporary philosophic schools. What they might be must remain conjectural here.[74] I feel obliged only to add, in conclusion, that Lonergan's whole theology makes little mention of the taxonomical categories that comparative religionists have fashioned towards understanding "religion",[75] and that I find serious questions in both the dogmatic and the speculative volumes' relative indifference to canonical historical experience of God and Jesus Christ. These are both difficult issues, which I almost apologize for raising where there is no possibility of seeing them through to some conclusion, but I believe that they will be capital for the relations of Lonerganian theology with "religious studies".[76]

Questions from the comparative study of religion include: how should the data of other religions function in Christian theology? How does "comparative" or taxono-

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70. See Lonergan's recent article, "The Origins of Christian Realism", *Theology Digest*, Vol. 20, No. 4 (Winter, 1972), especially pp. 301–305.

71. See Method in Theology, pp. 235–266.

72. On this see John CARMODY, "A Note on the God-World Relation in Whitehead's Process and Reality", *Philosophy Today*, 15 (1971), 302–312.

73. See Daniel Day WILLIAMS, *The Spirit and the Forms of Love* (New York: Harper and Row, 1968).

74. For an intriguing comparable study by an independent philosopher of neoplatonic or "symbolist" persuasion, see Eric Voegelin, "The Gospel and Culture", in D. Miller and D. Hadidian, eds., *Jesus and Man's Hope, II* (Pittsburgh: Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, 1971), pp. 59–101.

75. See especially Joachim WACH, *The Comparative Study of Religions*, ed. Joseph M. Kitagawa (New York: Columbia Paperbacks, 1961).

76. By "religious studies" I mean the non-confessional discipline of the American secular university — the American *Religionswissenschaft*.

mical "understanding" relate to the systematics generated by intentionality analysis? Can one start to answer these questions by examining the genesis of categorical notions like "the numinous", "enstasis", "savior"?[77] Questions about the need for closer dealing with canonical history than Lonergan evidences flow promptly if one compares, for instance, Lonergan's Christology with a recent work of Joachim Jeremias.[78] That work gets so much closer to the original historical reality of Jesus' message and self-conception than Lonergan's that one has to question whether Lonergan's method doesn't force him to deal with abstract formulas *about* Jesus Christ rather than the original theandric reality itself. If so, then the new systematics clearly fails the modern man, who accords history a crucial place in his estimations of "reality".[79]

These are not easy questions. However, if *Method in Theology* is to sponsor the critical theology sought in contemporary academics, and the mystagogic elucidation of faith essential to contemporary pastoral theology,[80] its precepts will have to engage with them. At the end of a groping, often fault-finding study, I mean it as no final sop when I say that *Method in Theology* appears to me without peer in contemporary theology's fund of resources for both critical and mystagogic progress. If Lonergan's Latin performances don't fulfill the hopes that his English prescriptions raise, and if the limits of a methodological horizon and 405 pages prevent him from imagining every pest's problems, yet he has designed the only overall theology and the only systematics that bores to the heart of modern religious analysis, that prods and exhausts one's every resource. Lonergan makes it possible for theology to be again, if not the queen of the sciences, at least a labor proper to giants of intelligence, industry, and, above all, really religious faith. For this even the pigmies end with cheers and blessings.

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77. See, respectively, the following representative religious studies works: Rudolf OTTO, *The Idea of the Holy*; Mircea ELIADE, *Yoga: Immortality and Freedom*; S. G. F. BRANDON, ed., *The Saviour God.*

79. *New Testament Theology, I: The Proclamation of Jesus* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1971).

79. See VAN A. HARVEY, *The Historian and the Believer* (New York: Macmillan Paperbacks, 1969).

80. See Karl RAHNER, *Strukturwandel der Kirche als Aufgabe und Chance* (Freiburg in Breisgau: Herderbücherei, 1972).