The Priest as Artist

Richard Barrett

Theology and Imagination

It is 1429 and in the Chateau of Vaucouleurs, Joan of Arc is being interrogated by the menacing Robert de Baudricourt. Joan claims to hear heavenly voices telling her to raise the siege at Orleans:

> *de Baudricourt:* How do you mean? voices?
> *Joan:* I hear voices telling me what to do. They come from God.
> *de Baudricourt:* They come from your imagination.
> *Joan:* Of course, that is how the messages of God come to us.[1]

Joan claims to say something not only about herself but about the way God communicates to human beings in general. If this is true then it has a lot to say about the role of the imagination in discoursing about God. But, you will object, is this not the role of theology?

It seems a truism to say it, but professional theologians are not the only kinds of people who discourse about God; there are others who theologise in an indirect way—but sometimes just as effectively. Among these must be counted authors from the literary world who, either implicitly or explicitly, through the medium of the novel, short story or poem, mediate aspects of the religious sensibility in human experience. In their work we can discern signs of *anonymous theology*.[2] Random examples may include C. S. Lewis's *Chronicles of Narnia*, Tolkien's *Lord of the Rings*, Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, Evelyn Waugh's *Brideshead Revisited*, Graham Greene's *The Heart of the Matter*, Brian Moore's *The Colour of Blood*, Morris West's *The Devil's Advocate*, Rachel Cusk's *Saving Agnes*. In these works as in many others one can detect a sifting through the debris of human experience and a concern to view it through the prism of an implicit faith in God. Whether we are dealing with the problem of evil (Spark's *The Only Problem* with its ponderous excursion into the dilemma of Job, or Albert Schwarz-Bart's haunting tale of suffering and destiny in *The Last of the Just*), or with that peculiar feature of contemporary society, hopelessness (Waugh's surgical *A Handful of Dust* or Heinrich Böll's redemptive *And Never Said a Word*) we can discover in contemporary literature not only sources for an interface between faith

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and culture but also unconventional points of departure for theological reflection.

When we insert this insight into the specifically Christian hermeneutic of Lonergan's *Inner Word-Outer Word* schema, we see that it has particular relevance for the theologian and pastor. For we are, through the medium of such literature, brought into the meeting place of the inner word of human religious expectation and the outer word of divine revelation. When the outer word of proclamation touches the inner word of our longing for communion, fulfilment and redemption, the effect can be startling. Paul's proclamation in Athens, Peter's confirmation of the faith of Cornelius, are these not indications of the same hermeneutic? But Lonergan's insight could suggest that we are in possession of all the answers, and that it is merely a question of waiting for the rest of humanity to come round. It would be fairer to say that the principle demonstrates what Thomas Aquinas might have called "the union of the knower and the known"—in these empirical times, and in the light of Nineteenth Century formalism in Catholic theology—the recovery of the subjective dimension of the experience of conversion. On this note, John Paul II's discourse to the Bishops toward the end of the 1990 Synod on Priestly Formation, is particularly instructive. He observed what he felt to be an overly-intellectual approach to formation and reminded the Bishops that Vatican II stood for simplicity. Getting acquainted with the subjective dimension of religious experience means not only faith, but also having a grasp of the questions our contemporaries pose. Not just the questions but their sources. Our contemporaries may have only a passing acquaintance with scripture, less of an acquaintance with a Rahner or a Balthasar, but much more with a Julian Barnes, a Brian Moore, or a James Joyce.

"Anonymous theology," remained an abiding interest for one of my professors, Kevin Condon, and revealed itself in the imaginative use of literary sources when interpreting scripture, such as Eliot's *Cocktail Party* as an aid to an exegesis of Isaiah 66.[3] In much the same way this article is an exercise in bringing the imagination to bear on a theological datum, the vocation to priestly ministry. The following reflections are offered with particular interest in the relationship between the sacerdotal and the artistic vocations, and—peppered with thoughts penned by luminaries from the literary world—provide not so much a systematic essay as a series of impressions on their points of imitation and their points of departure.

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Christ as Artist

Plato tells us that "Beauty is the splendour of the True" an expression which is rendered from the Greek *kalokagathia*, a composite of the two terms *kalon* (the beautiful) and *agathon* (the good), the two tending to one end and arising out of one source, God. The principle is not lost on artists: Dostoevsky describing the origin of beauty in terms of the Third Person of the Trinity; "The Holy Spirit is the perception of the Beautiful" a truth admirably depicted by Rublev's ikon of the Trinity.[4] Athanasius reminds us that the Incarnation has taken human beauty into the divine economy, "the Word of God, having restored the contaminated image to its original dignity, united it to Divine Beauty."[5] We are indebted to Nicaea II's rebuke to iconoclasm for an early magisterial treatment of beauty and form in Christian iconography.[6] More recently, Evdokimov's masterful *La beauté. Le sens de la beauté et l'icône* (in the Italian translation *Teologia de la Bellezza*)[7], reflects upon the relationship of the beautiful, the true and the good in a systematic treatment of the implications of the Incarnation for Christian iconography. Ouspensky too in his valuable discussion of tradition as the "unspoken teaching of Christ" provides another angle on the Christian doctrine of beauty.[8] Aquinas' aesthetic doctrine which describes the qualities of the beautiful as consisting essentially of *caritas, integritas,* and *consonantia* suggests a background in Platonic and Pythagorean thought.[9] Finally von Balthasar in the latin tradition has provided us with a schema of Truth as harmony, in a Christian extension of the Pythagorean insight, and helped latin theology to take on board the implications of salvation history played out on the stage of the good, the true and the beautiful, through that very particular concept of the *theodramatik*.[10]

The Incarnation has rendered the Infinite palatable for the artist, if one may be excused a pun, and Oscar Wilde, taking up the theme, sees Christ through the optic of imagination: Christ's greatest gift was his capacity to render the mundane beautiful, such that the utterances of a centurion or a dying thief achieved a lapidary quality which today make them fitting matter for the liturgical text of the Eucharist. Christ's place, argues Wilde, is with the poets for his conception of Mankind awoke in men and women that experience of wonder to which Romance and art naturally tend:

> ... his entire life also is the most wonderful of poems. For "pity and terror" there is nothing in the entire cycle of Greek tragedy to touch it. The absolute purity of the protagonist raises the entire scheme to a height of romantic art from which the sufferings of Thebes and Pelops'

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line are by their very horror excluded, and shows how wrong Aristotle was when he said in his treatise on drama that it would be impossible to bear the spectacle of one blameless in pain.[11]

Neither in Aeschylus nor Dante, "those stern masters of tenderness"[12] nor even in Shakespeare, "the most purely human of all the great artists"[13], nor in the whole of Celtic mythology, "where the loveliness of the world is shown through a mist of tears"[14] is there anything that for sheer simplicity of pathos wedded with sublimity of tragic effect, approaches let alone equals the last act of Christ's passion. It is no wonder that the Eucharist is both at the centre of that society which he established, and at the centre of much artistic expression, as in Da Vinci's *Cena Domini*, with its sublime depiction of the mild Christ untouched by the mixed bag of loyalty and betrayal represented in the apostolic troupe. The poetry of the Passion is not lost on Wilde who exclaims:

> When one contemplates all this from the point of view of art alone one cannot but be grateful that the supreme office of the Church should be the playing of the tragedy without the shedding of blood: the mystical presentation, by means of dialogue and costume and gesture even, of the Passion of her Lord; and it is always a source of pleasure and awe to me to remember that the ultimate survival of the Greek chorus, lost elsewhere to art, is to be found in the servitor answering the priest at Mass.[15]

The figure that fills the Gospels then towers over every other figure of ancient literature in this respect; his pathos was almost natural, even casual, stoical without being a Stoic, convivial without being an Epicurean, neither straining to conceal his tears on the sight of Jerusalem, nor restraining his anger when faced with the merchants of Capital in the house of prayer.[16]

The Priest as Artist

We are perhaps used to thinking of the priest as a "builder of bridges" a *pontifex*, but in the church of the artists (*La chiesa degli artisti*) in the Piazza del Populo of Rome, a fine modern portrait of Christ at Emmaus depicts the Risen One at table with the two disciples, represented as artists, one a dancer the other an actor, as the bread is broken over a simple table covered in newspaper. The image provides us with a point of departure for our discussion of the disciple and priest as artifex. What do we mean by such an allusion? I am not suggesting that the priest need be a painter, writer, or poet, rather that

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his ministry involves many transformations; a passage from matter to form, from mere potential to actuality, from disorder to order, from the broken to the healed, from the fragmented to the whole.

The disciple of Christ, called to serve him in ministerial priesthood, represents a sacramental view of the universe, and therefore has much to offer the victim of Twentieth Century empiricism. Whether he sees this in terms of an intrinsic dimension of his priestcraft or as an added dimension, a result of his own musings, is perhaps unimportant. If not philosopher, poet, or artist, in the formal sense, he is inspired and inspiring a symbolist view of the universe. The priest is that most privileged of human beings; the bearer of forms that can knit together the broken condition of many lives. He does not bear these forms as his own but is an instrument having himself been made whole by their author. In a sense the priest is the living embodiment of another shape of meaning (in liturgical terms the *sinngestalt*), that is given to him, passed on, transmitted, to be given, passed on and transmitted. For the priest, as for few artists, life and art are made one; he is a transmitter of an over-arching unity, and thus a transmuter, to use Joyce's expression, "of the daily bread of experience into the body of everlasting life." The stuff of his art is life and he distills a science from the interaction of his soul with those of others; in that secret forum, mercy is dispensed which is efficacious. This is not just a message, nor a formula, but the touch of another form of life, and the priest is apprenticed, à la Vianney, Cappello, or Sullivan, to its first practitioner, Christ. The expression *cura animarum* is much more than merely a canonical adage; it savours of care and cure, and it is attuned to both pastoral love and inner healing; the stuff of which the charism of the secular priest is made.

Yet the priest, paradoxically, is both engaged and disengaged from life: an inhabiter of margins, a dweller of the verges of the mass of experience, at least in the minds of many of those he meets; yet perhaps because of that very dislocation is able to see the whole, to cast an eye over the wandering tracks of individual trajectories and point out some signposts to the lost. A bedouin, wandering himself, he is used to discerning signs in the topography of the lives of those who either frequently or momentarily find themselves before him, seeking direction. I fancy that the worker-priest movement of post-war France perhaps resisted a necessary tension in the life of the priest, assuming that the night shift at the Renault plant could yield a clearer pastoral optic upon the lives of others than the perspicacity of Bernanos' pastor of souls. T. S. Eliot in *Four Quartets* remarks of many that "we had the experience but missed the meaning." Experience does not

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necessarily confer insight nor yield up its meaning by virtue of it being experienced; in the post-empirical context of modern expression, the business of the priest—this essay argues—is with the meaning.

Kenneth Clark, in his work *Civilisation* suggests that the genius of Catholicism rests in "its ability to synthesise the feelings of ordinary people." Now this function, theologically defended by the idea of the *sensus fidelium*, is not something obtained without effort. The priest as a harbringer of good news needs to weigh up and interpret the experiences of others when he brings that news; for it cannot be received as good, until the receiver is acquainted with his or her need. We are in fact dealing with a bi-lateral feature of this divine exchange: the priest is giver and receiver, heard and hearing, reconciled and reconciling, summing up in his own soul the aspirations of the other. In this sense he both represents the community to Christ and Christ to the community. Such engagement is not won by simply being immersed in the daily round of life, but paradoxically by a certain disengagement: for the disciple imitates his Master in "drawing away from the crowd" and "seeking a lonely place" in order to repristinate this capacity. Prayer and attachment to God is the first ministry of the priest.[17]

The experience of disengaging-to-engage is articulated in the "foxes have holes" sayings of Christ and is one which the early evangelists seem to have made a constitutive part of their ministry. This is not without poetic moment nor is it unrelated to the oft-proposed dilemma of Art and Life. The experience—of a certain physical dislocation yielding psychological engagement—is perhaps the secret of the life of the troubadour of Assisi, whose Canticle to Brother Sun remains something of a manifesto for a comparison of the two vocations. From the point of view of formation therefore, seminary existence is designed for the same end: to be formed with that peculiar optic which informs priestly ministry one requires a literal and figurative effort of abstraction from the more arduous *onera* of existence. One is thus returned to the arena of experience but with an hermeneutic that—implicitly at least—will discern harmonies in the heavens of human experience. All of this naturally assumes an individual's capacity to understand both the finality and media of the process. Thus understood, the disengagement of which I speak may be looked upon as a *sine qua non* of priestly formation, and insofar as the divining of experience is an ongoing feature of priestly ministry it actually yields not so much the jaundiced view of the village maverick but the understanding of the village pastor.

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The Artist as Priest

It is also worth commenting on the reversal of the sacerdotal and artistic vocations one finds in the early Joyce. Joyce's rejection of his Catholic conditioning at the hands of family and priests, is not the rejection of the average postchristian artist.[18] Despite his brother's description of *A Portrait* as "a lying autobiography and a raking satire in which the Catholic Church comes in for a bad quarter of an hour" the novel actually reveals Joyce's respect both for the dogmatic content of that religion[19] and for its sacerdotal conventions which would later supply him with a hermeneutic on an artistic vocation. Joyce describes himself as a "priest of the eternal imagination" and the title probably sits better with Joyce than it does with Freud as a "priest of love." For Joyce:

> Catholic ceremony, the inheritance of five thousand years of priestcraft, Pagan, Jewish, and Christian, appeals to the sensual. Catholic dogma seduces the mind, Catholic myth the heart; all by skilful design, the cunning of millenia. Joyce served as altar boy and wrote a hymn to the Virgin. It dawned on his mentors that they had the makings of a priest. They had indeed but he was to choose his own religion. It would not be theirs, and there would be no pope, no bishops, few prophets and no priest but himself.[20]

Joyce carried away with him more than just the church silver in the decor of Catholic liturgical imagery; he also made off with the efficacy of its symbolic universe, with which to furnish his new solipsist religion. In fact Richard Ellmann describes it as an evolution from a religion to a system of metaphors:

> Christianity had subtly evolved in his mind from a religion into a system of metaphors, which as metaphors could claim his fierce allegiance.[21]

The use to which he puts this system is seen very clearly in his adoption of the scholastic treatment of the sacraments, centred upon the Eucharist as the summit of sacramental perfections. At the heart of this system the priesthood operates as its principal agent of confection. But Joyce adapted as much as adopted it, developing the notion of "epiphany"[22] and filling his mundane universe with "sudden spiritual manifestations." The hermeneutic for all of this—according to the Dedalus of *A Portrait*—is actually derived from analogies with the eucharistic action. Wedded to this optic was St. Thomas' notion of the beautiful *pulchra sunt quae visa placent* ("Those things are beautiful the apprehension of which pleases").[23] The poet, like the priest, in a moment

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of grace converts the mundane stuff of everyday experience into the everlasting body of artistic form. He, like the celebrant, is the intense centre of the life of his age to which he stands in a prism of relations than which few can be more vital. He alone is capable of absorbing in himself the life that surrounds him and, much in the manner of the Pythagorean harmony of the spheres, of flinging it out again amid planetary music. This is the bridge which Joyce throws across to other prophets of the paradoxical and the absurd, Bruno, Nietzsche and Ibsen, each of whom influenced him. In a formula: the poet gives finality and meaning to his world.[24] As Stephen Dedalus proclaims:

> When the poetic imagination is signalled from the heavens ... it is time for the critics to verify their calculations in accordance with it. It is time for them to acknowledge that here the imagination has contemplated intensely the truth of the being of the visible world and that beauty, the splendour of truth, has been born.[25]

The child is born, as it were, for the poet is the mediator of the visible world just as the priest (in Joyce's system) is a mediator of the invisible. Therefore it is not surprising that commentators have spoken of Joyce's *hubris facienda id quod fecit Deus*, creating a symbolic universe *ex nihilo* as it were, only it is an angel of imagination that utters *fiat lux* and not the Creator. Umberto Eco concludes that

> if you take away the transcendent God from the symbolical world of Middle Ages, you have the world of Joyce.[26]

In Joyce one has a re-working of the sacerdotal iconography of Catholicism. This effort reflects a mentality that effectively eviscerates its dogmatic substance and moral rules yet conserves "the exterior forms of a rational edifice and retains its instinctive fascination for rites and liturgical figurations."[27] Joyce's redeployment of the psychological props of his old faith is yet matched by an ingenious use of the rational edifice supplied by scholasticism. Yet despite being "steeled in the school of old Aquinas" Joyce's preferred medium—Dedalus—has more in common with a betraying disciple than a scholastic. "*Et tu cum Iesu Galileo eras*" remarks his friend in the conversion scene that is a parody of that from Augustine's *Confessions*, but not the tears of Peter for Dedalus, rather the silver pieces of "silence, exile, cunning"—i.e.of denial, detachment, and distance. If there is an optic which affords us a glimpse of the soul of the artist in Joyce it is that provided by the Iscariot, supping at the very feast of communion, commitment and charity, even taking the very bread from the Master's hand, while all the

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time plotting his downfall. Dedalus' deed is done at night; and the delight of his soul's fall is enhanced by the fact that it is sealed with a kiss.

He speaks, especially in the portrait, of the transmutation of the daily bread of experience into the body of everlasting art. Texts of the Mass are parodied and teased into the centrepiece of *Ulysses* in an effort to provide a ritual canvas for the seduction of his characters. Likewise in *Finnegans Wake* one has a series of Joycean puns on the texts of the Tridentine Rite:

> enterrelbo add all taller Danis (336.02)... Per omnibus secular seekalarum (81.08)... meac Coolp (344.31)... meas minimas culpads! (483.35)... Crystal elation! Kyrielle elation (528.09)... Sussumcordials (453.26)... Grassy ass ago (252.13)... Eat a missal lest (456.18)... Bennydick hotfoots omnipudent stayers! (469.23)

Joyce was not an atheist[28] in the conventional modern post-christian sense of the term, nor can the charge of Chesterton against so many moderns be levelled "having never known the light, but only the shadow of Christianity";[29] rather he was an antitheist whose rebellion is all the more powerful because he had supped at the table of the rejected God. Hence the frequent allusions to the *non serviam* of the rebel angel[30],and to his standing "self-doomed, unafraid, unfellowed, friendless and alone" (in his early manifesto *The Holy Office*).[31] Likewise Joyce's preferred image of hunter and deer[32] with all its allusions to pursuit and pride, is really a simile for the "heretic friar, profaner of the cloister," the itinerant preacher of an anti-cult, a columbanus stepping over the body of mother Church, Ireland and family. Much after the manner of the Irish missionary, he chooses flight (an image which pervades *A Portrait* and gives Stephen his Icarian identity), flying what he regards as the nets of relationship, reciprocity and return. Exile is his chosen mode of life and as a wandering troubadour of the Muse, he can forge anew "the uncreated consciousness of his race", in a paradoxical way utilizing the traditional *verbis gestisque* of Irish Christianity.

Joyce, then rejecting one vocation, adopts another, while remaining "supersaturated with the religion" in which he says he disbelieves.[33] Through the lips of Stephen Dedalus we hear the young Joyce leave behind him the conventional priesthood and become "a priest of the eternal imagination", transmuting the daily bread of experience into the radiant body of everlasting life and making his own the Icarian maxim *per ardua ad astra*. Paradoxically, the adopted vocation is bound up with the traditional topography of Catholic religious experience. In the *Portrait* we see this play on the call and the fall, in the first chapter

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Stephen is summoned by the flesh and then by the Church, the second chapter ending with a kiss, the third with the reception of the Host, and so the soul enraptured by the body in the second and the spirit in the third, in the fourth achieves a kind of nefarious union of art and life, seeing the fall into sin as an essential part of of the discovery of self.[34] The conclusion therefore is what differs: not so much a state of grace but a state of sin, recomposed from its classical lines to deliver the artist into life; the womb being the organ of the *Oxen of the Sun* episode in *Ulysses*, Stephen the embryo. The rejection of mother images and reconciliation with those of his father is symbolised in the return of Stephen to his Father's house, a world of "disorder, decay and decomposition."[35] Joyce in fact achieved artistic expression by recording the process by which the Artist is born in a life.[36] Invoking Augustine's expression *securus iudicat orbis terrarum* (untroubled, the world judges) to Art,[37] the artist is portrayed as foregoing his own soul and standing as a mediator in awful truth before the veiled face of his divinised self, much in the manner of the priest who stands *in persona Christi* and mediates the presence of the hidden Deity.[38]

Needless to say, the Christian commentator would probably wish here to offer Rosemary Haughton's criticism of such a vision: namely that once risen the self can become such a bright orb in the soul that it eclipses all other lights. It is difficult to escape the conclusion that Joyce's sacerdotal decor merely disguises rather than divinises his solipsism.

The Franciscan Vision

All this may sound a cruel parody of Joyce, but as we have shown this reversal of the classical lines of Christian symbolism, actually helps us to define—albeit by contrast—those values of Christianity which appeal to the true nature of the artistic and sacerdotal vocations. In Joycean terms the classical elements of priesthood can be applied to the birth of the Artist, but not without considerable re-working and a recomposition of the contours of priestly identity, here for the purpose of serving the god of self-realisation. More importantly, his choice of Nietzsche and Ibsen as patrons betrays the violence at the heart of his system. In Christian terms the same process of growth can be converted to illuminate the awakening of the priestly vocation not as light-maker but as light-giver. The fundamental insight, that of the priest as distiller of a meaning which waits to be discovered, is a Franciscan one. We are children in a paternal universe, and it is for us but to yield to the wisdom of the lilies of the field and the birds of the air to discover our paternity. This view supplies the antidote to the violence of the Nietzschean

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vision, and provides the wings of serenity that is associated with the coming of the Good News and the dawn of Christian soteriology.

The child's question to Michelangelo, one day sculpturing a block of marble; "How did you know there was a lion in the stone" is a perfect example of the changed consciousness which the Franciscan vision of the universe brings. The world is not an innately absurd entity to be bashed into a manageable and much reduced shape; rather it is the creation of the ultimate source of all intelligibility. It is an epiphany, yielding its more profound meaning in the mundane. The divine selection of bread and wine as the foodstuff of eternal life, and the washing of the disciples feet on the same occasion, show that the ordinary is the marketplace where the divine currency is to be found. There too one builds up a treasure, not from the jaded coinage of mammon but from the *richesse* of charity. For if the true and the good are made one in a Divine Person, one is served by the other, such that a sifting of the mundane elements of life and discerning there a finality, a pattern, a shape of meaning, the disciple of Christ accomplishes his task and brings back with him interest on his Master's initial investment.

The ministerial priesthood emerging from this backdrop then is the work of an artist; distilling meaning from the riot of disjointed lives say in spiritual direction, transmuting those very symbols of the ordinary, bread and wine, into the body of everlasting life, say in the eucharist, making whole what was broken say in Reconciliation, or of harmonising the shape of the meaning (*sinngestalt*) of lived experience and the outward form (*formgestalt*) of Christian tradition applying them to the daily meditation upon the texts of scripture.

As pastor, as confessor, as teacher, as counsellor and above all as celebrant therefore the priest dispenses an art; an imaginative art originally imparted by a most excellent practitioner, alone worthy to be both subject and object of that art, the Incarnate Word of God, depicted and depicting the face of divine mercy, its image now irrevocably impressed upon the fabric of human experience as was once impressed upon a cloth along the *via crucis*. Perhaps a more poetic rendition of thus truth is captured by R.S. Thomas in his poem 'Loyalties'[39]:

The prince walks upon the carpet
Our hearts have unrolled
To him; a worn carpet
I fear. We are a poor
People; we should have saved up
For this; these rents, these blood stains
This erosion of the edges
Of it, do him no honour.

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We have wrapped a language about him that does him little justice, but the fabric of human experience remains the chosen canvas on which Christ as Artist prefers to leave the brush-strokes of his Design.

1 G. B. SHAW, *St. Joan* (London: Longmans Green, 1966), 66-7.
2 J.-Y. LACOSTE, "Théologie anonyme et christologie pseudonyme. C. S. Lewis, les Chroniques de Narnia," in *Nouvelle Revue Théologique* 112 (1990): 381-3.
3 I recall a remark of Kevin Condon: "Gentlemen, there are three things you need to be a good scripture scholar: respect for the text, the ability to detect the obvious, and most of all, imagination." There was perhaps much more in this than his students realised: Cfr. M. COLERIDGE, "The Necessary Angel: Imagination and the Bible, " in *Pacifica* 1 (1988): 171—188.
4 P. EVDOKIMOV, *Teologia della Bellezza* (Roma: Edizione Paoline, 1971): 13.
5 From the *Kontakion* of the feast of Triumph of Orthodoxy. Cfr. EVDOKIMOV, *op.cit.* preface.
6 A. NICHOLLS, "The *horos* in Nicaea II: A theological re-appropriation," in *Analectica Historia* XX, 1;2, 1988, I, 71-181.
7 *op.cit.*, 172.
8 OUSPENSKY-LOSSKY, *The Meaning of Icons* (London:1979): Introduction.
9 "Ad pulchritudinem tria requiruuntur. Primo quidem integritas, sive perfectio: quae enim diminuta sunt, hoc ipso turpia sunt. Et debita proportio sive consonantia. Et iterum claritas, unde quae habent colorem nitidum, pulchra esse dicuntur." (Cf. THOMAS AQUINAS, S. T. Ia, q. 39, a. 8). Also UMBERTO ECO, *Il problema estetico in Tommaso d'Aquino* (Milano: Bompiani, 1956, rpt. 1970). For a comparison of the aesthetic theory of Aquinas and Joyce see ECO, *The Middle Ages of James Joyce* (London: Hutchinson, 1989): 14-22.
10 H. von BALTHASAR, *Truth as Harmony* (San Francisco: Ignatius, 1989): 1-20.
11 O. WILDE, *Selected Essays and Poems* (London: Butler & Tanner, 1954): 167.
12 *Ibid.*
13 *Ibid.*
14 *Ibid.*
15 *Ibid.*
16 G. K. CHESTERTON, *Orthodoxy* (London: Bodley Head, 1909): 296.
17 See the new promise of the 1990 Ordination Rite for Presbyters, which imposes a ministry of intercession on the priest.
18 I must mention the work of a British writer, P. PARRINDER, whose *James Joyce* (Cambridge: C.U.P., 1984) seems to misinterpret Joyce's rejection of the Catholic Church, effectively rendering Joyce as merely any other post-christian modernist (note the literary sense of the latter term).
19 Gebler Davies comments: "The works of James Joyce are a fine introduction, for those who do not know it, to the Roman Catholic religion. He is very sound on matters of doctrine, having taken the trouble to master many of the more esoteric dogma. His hellfire sermon would do very well as a textbook for novice priests, containing, as it does, no instance of heresy" (cfr. S. GEBLER DAVIES, *James Joyce—A Portrait of the Artist* [London: Granada, 1975, repr. 1982]: 41.
20 ID.,*op.cit.*34
21 R. ELLMANN, *James Joyce*; 66.
22 By an epiphany is meant a sudden spiritual manifestation, whether in the vulgarity of speech or of a gesture or in a memorable phase of the mind itself (*Stephen Hero*: 211). The notion was taken from Walter Pater's "Conclusion" to his *Studies in the History of the Renaissance* which begins—significantly—with a quotation from Heraclitus. For Pater the epiphanisation of reality is something which is elusive and endured only for moments, producing what moderns refer to as "peak experiences" but in Joyce it is a stable and objective given. This he bases upon his system

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borrowed from Thomas Aquinas. (cfr. U. ECO, *op.cit.* 23-25).

23 Joyce's translation. cfr. S. GEBLER-DAVIES, *op.cit.* 57.

24 *Stephen Hero*, 80.

25 *Ibid.*

26 U. ECO, The Middle Ages of James Joyce (London: Hutchinson Radius, 1989): back cover.

27 *Ibid.* 4.

28 p. PARRINDER suggests Joyce is an atheist (cfr. *James Joyce* [Cambridge: C.U.P.]: 3). A closer reading of his work seems to suggest that we are not dealing with mere disbelief in God, but with his rejection.

29 G.K. CHESTERTON's well known reference to the self-consciously modern rejection of Christianity which borrows the furniture of greater minds to deck out the considerably smaller universe of subjectivism. Cf. *Orthodoxy* , "The Suicide of Thought."

30 "Are you not weary of ardent ways,
Lure of the fallen seraphim?
Tell no more of enchanted days"

J. JOYCE, *A Portrait,* 197.

And again:
"But Mammon places under ban
The uses of Leviathan
And that high spirit ever wars
On Mammon's countless servitors"

Leviathan here refers to the author. Cf. J. JOYCE, "The Holy Office" in *Pomes Penyeach* (London: Faber & Faber, 1988): 37.

31 "So distantly I turn to view
The shamblings of that motley crew,
Those souls that hate the strength that mine has
Steeled in the school of old Aquinas.
Where they have crouched and crawled and prayed
I stand the self-doomed, unafraid,
Unfellowed, friendless and alone,
indifferent as the herring-bone,
Firm as the mountain ridges where
I flash my antlers in the air"

J. JOYCE, *Pomes Penyeach* (London: Faber & Faber, 1988): 38.

32 "With symbolist reticence, hunter and deer are not named but their attendant metaphors are heavy with the Artist's manifest hubris" Cf. R. ELLMAN, *James Joyce* (Oxford: O.U.P., 1983): 145

33 J. JOYCE, *A Portrait,* 216.

34 R. ELLMAN, *op.cit.*: 298.

35 This image is very strong in both *A Portrait and Ulysses,* in the former ending with the prayer to the "old father, old artificer" as he leaves the quayside, in the latter Stephen emerging into Burke's pub, the author not so much reconciled to his father as to himself, now his own monarchial principle of self-generation. (Cfr. *A Portrait* 228; *Ulysses* 373-374).

36 R. ELLMAN, *op.cit.* 145.

37 AUGUSTINE, *Contra Epistolam Parmeniani* III, 24, which in *Finnegan's Wake* is rendered "Securest jubilends albas Temoram." Cfr J. JOYCE, *Finnegans Wake*, 593.

38 AQUINAS' hymn *Adoro de devote, latens Deitas.*

39 R.S.THOMAS, *Collected Poems* (London, Phoenix 1995), 198.

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