

An Idea of a University

2019 Academic Address – Knowledge as the purpose of a university in a Second Spring

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Greetings to the whole university

This year, through the means of technology, I am addressing the nearly 1000 students and 125 faculty members of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake. While the address is taking place on the campus with a studio audience from Mundelein Seminary, the other schools and University Institutes are also present with us. My reflections tonight, then, are aimed at all of you who are in formation for official public ministry, whether as priests, deacons, lay ecclesial ministers, catechetical and lay leaders. They are also aimed at those in our post-graduate programs in liturgy and dogmatic theology, who are preparing to be teachers and scholars.

In one sense, we are separate audiences. But in another, we are a single assembly. Father Kartje has called on us to understand our purpose as preparation for parish ministry. The parish is the location where Christ shapes his members into servants of one another and witnesses to the world. Christ accomplishes this through those among the baptized faithful whom he calls to serve the church as ministers. To begin with, I want to offer an image of parish ministry which allows for both a distinction of charisms and a common purpose. If we can conceive the two at once, we can understand the uniqueness of this institution as a university singularly ordered

toward the formation of parish priests and those who are co-responsible with them for ministry. Pope Benedict XVI described the relationship this way. The Holy Father noted that “[T]here is still a tendency to identify the Church unilaterally with the hierarchy.”¹

At the same time, it is necessary to improve pastoral structures in such a way that the co-responsibility of all the members of the People of God in their entirety is gradually promoted, with respect for vocations and for the respective roles of the consecrated and of lay people. This demands a change in mindset, particularly concerning lay people. They must no longer be viewed as 'collaborators' of the clergy but truly recognized as 'co-responsible', for the Church's being and action, thereby fostering the consolidation of a mature and committed laity. This common awareness of being Church of all the baptized in no way diminishes the responsibility of parish priests.²

One example of such distinction and common purpose could be seen right here in this room just a few weeks ago. The year began differently for the new men at Mundelein Seminary. For the first time, their orientation included presentations by the directors of the University Institutes. This was an effort by Fr. Brian Welter to spotlight the scope of what exists on this campus. For those of you who did not hear the

¹ Benedict XVI, “Address to the Pastoral Convention of the Diocese of Rome in the Theme ‘Church Membership and Pastoral Co-Responsibility,’” (Rome: May 26, 2009). http://w2.vatican.va/content/benedict-xvi/en/speeches/2009/may/documents/hf_ben-xvi_spe_20090526_convegno-diocesi-rm.html Accessed September 3, 2019. My thanks to Dr. Patricia Pintado for identifying this quote from Pope Benedict XVI for me.

² Ibid.

orientation talks this year, we learned that the enrollment of USML last year was almost 1,000 students. Of these, 200 were seminarians and deacons of Mundelein Seminary. An additional 100 were priests, religious and laity in the various graduate and post graduate degree programs administered by the Pontifical Faculty of Theology, the Liturgical Institute and the Institute for Pastoral Leadership. There were also 700 students enrolled in our professional certificate programs in the Institute for Diaconal Studies, the Institute for Pastoral Leadership and the largest, the Instituto de Liderazgo Pastoral. Instituto just received an award from the Archdiocese of Chicago for their work in the Hispanic community forming catechetical leaders. Numbers tell more of the story. In addition to the 35 dioceses served by Mundelein Seminary, the other schools and institutes serve an additional 18 dioceses. Again, last year Instituto stood out serving four different dioceses for lay leadership and diaconate formation. This is the picture of the University of Saint Mary of the Lake. We are many parts, but we are united in a single mission.

Unity does not contradict particularity. As an ecclesialogist, this is one of the master insights of Catholic Christianity. In a long running friendly but spirited dispute between Professor Karl Barth and Hans Urs von Balthasar, Barth pressed for the Protestant notion of the “solus” (*sola scriptura, sola gratia, etc.*). Barth felt that he needed to protect God’s sovereignty. Balthasar pressed back with what he came to call the “Catholic ‘and.’” Balthasar wrote:

It is as if God would defile himself were he to enter into . . . union with the “other” – which in any case came from him. Karl Barth cannot abide the

“Catholic ‘and’”: [Barth writes] “Wherever it puts forth shoots, it comes from a single root. Anyone who says ‘faith and works,’ ‘nature and grace,’ ‘reason and revelation,’ if he is consistent must go on to say ‘Scripture and tradition.’ It is only an indication, one indication, of the fact that the majesty of God in his dealings with men has already been relativized.” Balthasar goes on to ask, “Should not one rather say that this ‘and’ is the expression of the creature’s acknowledgment of God’s sovereignty to be himself even outside himself? – an acknowledgement that he, the Creator who grants freedom, is also free to be the Redeemer, “through whom, with whom, and in whom” we can praise the Father in the Holy Spirit? From time to time the Catholic may indeed need a warning, lest he become lukewarm or presumptuous; but he has enough saints in the Church to inspire him with a genuine sense of God’s divinity.³

In a manner similar to Balthasar, Professor Helen Alvare, who served as the 2019 Meyer Lecturer, made an important point in the panel discussion after her address. She noted that “knowledge requires distinction.” If you can’t make distinctions, you can’t really know something. This is another reason why the “Catholic ‘and’,” to use Balthasar’s term, is vital.

“The ministerial priesthood . . . of bishops and [presbyters], and the common priesthood of all the faithful participate ‘each in its own proper way, in the one

³ Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Office of Peter and the Structure of the Church*, trans. Andree Emery (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1986), 303.

priesthood of Christ.”⁴ While being “ordered to one another, “they differ essentially.⁵ At the same time, “ordination to the diaconate or priesthood does not,” to quote Cardinal Cupich, “annihilate our baptism.”⁶ Cardinal Cupich was quoting Archbishop Franjo Šeper, who later served as Prefect for the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith. Cardinal Seper’s point was “that priests are to live by the demands of the Gospel just like everyone else. There are no exemptions when it comes to the call to holiness.”⁷ Seper made this point at Vatican II during the debates on the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests. Cardinal Cupich used the quotation in a keynote address last summer about the problem of clericalism – which was the topic of my academic address last year. As Father Brendan Lupton would tell us, no less an authority than Saint Augustine supports the Cardinals’ claims. Augustin famously wrote: “For you I am a bishop, with you I am a Christian.”

Professor Alvarez’s point can be applied to our assembly tonight. To understand the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, you have to make the distinctions among our various programs, because each is ordered to forming a person for a particular ecclesial identity and particular ministerial service. At the same time, the distinctions reveal the essence of the whole. That essence of the whole, when applied to this University, lies in

⁴ See *Lumen Gentium*, no. 10, par. 1-2.

⁵ CCC 1547.

⁶ Blase Cardinal Cupich, “Ordination does not annihilate our baptism” Address to the Association of U.S. Catholic Priests (June 26, 2019), Saint Louis, MO. <https://www.uscatholicpriests.org/cupich-address> Accessed October 3, 2019.

⁷ Ibid.

the relationship of knowledge to the various vocations that gather us here tonight. This will be the focus of my reflections tonight.

Picking up on Hans Urs von Balthasar's comment on the role of the saints in stabilizing our lives as Christians, I want to offer a prayer for our gathering tonight which I think is especially appropriate. Those of you studying Fundamental Theology with Father Emery de Gaal will recognize it. It was written by Blessed John Henry Newman, who in just a few days will be canonized by Pope Francis as one of the newest saints of the Catholic Church.

[Prayer of Blessed John Henry Newman](#)

Dear Lord, help me to spread your fragrance wherever I go.

Flood my soul with your spirit and life.

Penetrate and possess my whole being so utterly

that all my life may only be a radiance of yours.

Shine through me, and be so in me that every soul I come in contact with

may feel your presence in my soul.

Let them look up and see no longer me, but only you, O Lord!

Stay with me and then I will begin to shine as you do;

so to shine as to be a light to others.

The light, O Lord, will be all from you; none of it will be mine.

it will be you shining on others through me.

Let me thus praise you in the way which you love best,
by shining on those around me.

Let me preach you without preaching,
not by words but by example, by the catching force,
the sympathetic influence of what I do,
the evident fullness of the love my heart bears to you. Amen.⁸

Why Newman is important at this moment in history

We hear a great deal of talk today about how we are living in a post-Christian era. There is some truth to this claim, but it does not signal the end. Christians living in England in the late 1800's made the same claim, but then something remarkable happened. There was a Catholic revival, led in part by a bookish man who, later this month, will be canonized as a saint. That story offers us both hope and assurance. There are serious challenges ahead for the Church in the 21st century, but they are neither new nor unprecedented. Recognizing this, the past and her saints can preach a message of hope to us, and can become our teacher.

Newman was born in the middle of the Industrial Revolution. The Industrial Revolution began in England and ran from about 1760-1840. Newman was born in 1801, so this social upheaval was the background for his life. The Industrial Revolution

⁸ My thanks to Fr. Emery de Gaal for sharing this text with me.

spread to other countries, including the United States of America after 1840.⁹ It might be good to recall that this University was founded in 1844. And Dr. Pintado's students of philosophy will know that 1844 is also the year of Friedrich Nietzsche's birth.

For now, as I set the scene for why Newman is important for us today, I want to compare his time during the Industrial Revolution to our time in the Information Revolution. Both were times of "disruptive technology." Both disruptions brought about economic uncertainty. The Great Recession of 2008 is our example and the effects are still being felt by your generation. Both produced great movements of people in the same direction, from rural areas to the cities. And with these movements came kinds of social isolation not previously experienced.

When I taught at Kellogg School of Management in the joint program USML runs with them on Advanced Pastoral Leadership, I was able with the help of some of their professors to explore some social science data on generational cohorts. I became aware of the work of Robert Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard University and the author of an article which first appeared in the *Journal of Democracy* in 1995. The title was "Bowling Alone: America's Declining Social Capital."¹⁰ Putnam would later expand his findings into a book by the same name. As Frank Magill noted in his summary of the book "for most of the 20th century Americans¹¹ had been increasingly

⁹ See <https://www.britannica.com/event/Industrial-Revolution>

¹⁰ Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2001).

¹¹ "Bowling Alone - Summary" *Literary Masterpieces*, (Volume 24) Ed. Frank Northen Magill. eNotes.com, Inc. 2001 <https://www.enotes.com/topics/bowling-alone> Accessed October 3, 2019

involved in social life” but in the 1960’s and 70’s that trend reversed itself in disturbing ways.” In that article, Putnam notes:

Religious affiliation is by far the most common associational membership among Americans. Indeed, by many measures America continues to be (even more than in Tocqueville's time) an astonishingly "churched" society. For example, the United States has more houses of worship per capita than any other nation on Earth. Yet religious sentiment in America seems to be becoming somewhat less tied to institutions and more self-defined.¹²

As we look at these social trends, however, it is important as theological students to recognize the interplay between ideas and social trends. As Charles Hobbs has noted, “a goal is an idea directed towards a desired result.”¹³ And some of those ideas, from philosophers like Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Schleiermacher, and G. W. F. Hegel were reshaping religion. From Schleiermacher in particular, a new definition of religion is proposed, “where” as Gary Dorrien has noted, “the proper subject of theology is religious consciousness.”¹⁴ This would come to be called the liberal tradition of theology by its proponents. Dorrien writes:

The liberal tradition of theology that flowed out of the Enlightenment established the methods and laid the enduring conceptual foundation of modern critical theological scholarship by appealing to the authority of critical rationality and

¹² Robert D. Putnam, “Bowling Alone: America’s Declining Social Capital” in *Journal of Democracy* (1995) <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/DETOC/assoc/bowling.html> Accessed October 3, 2019.

¹³ See Charles R. Hobbs, *Time Power* (New York: Harper and Row, 1987).

¹⁴ Gary Dorrien, *The Making of American Liberal Theology: Imagining Progressive Religion 1805-1900* (Louisville: Westminster/John Knox Press, 2001), xvi.

religious experience. Theological liberalism derives historically from eighteenth-century Continental rationalism, but during its nineteenth century and early twentieth-century heyday it was also fueled by romanticist, pietist, critical and absolute idealist, social ethical, and historical critical influences. As a pathbreaking intellectual tradition, it was decidedly Teutonic.¹⁵

Father Belauskas, Doctor Pintado, Father Kricek, and Father Heinrich will expose the philosophy students to these intellectual trends in more detail, but my point is simply that the challenges of the present day came from somewhere. They are not accidental. John Henry Newman was keenly aware of what was happening in his day. So much so that Newman wrote that “the consuming battle of his life was fought against liberalism, by which he meant the anti-dogmatic principle.”¹⁶

What can we learn from Cardinal Newman

Even with this context, John Henry Newman is an unlikely model for the ministerial student of today, and yet, some aspects of his personal biography will resonate. The unlikely part is that he was an Oxford don, a man of letters (meaning Latin and Greek) who entered the world through the delivery of lectures and the writing of books. But he was also an intellectual convert to Catholicism, a thoughtful disciple who recognized the bankruptcy of the liberal religion around him and the inability of evangelical religion to provide an adequate apologetic to his age. And it was on the basis of the

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Ibid., xix.

intellectual consistency of Catholicism that Newman and others launched a revival of the faith in England. Ian Ker describes how, in a famous sermon titled “The Second Spring” Newman laid out the challenge.

[In an age that worshipped progress –] “the past is out of date; the past is dead – a miracle had apparently occurred: “The past has returned, the dead live.” The Catholics in England had survived, but, like the early persecuted Christians, ‘in corners, and alleys, and cellars, and the housetops, or in the recesses of the country; cut off from the populous world around them, and dimly seen, as if through a mist or in the twilight, as ghosts flitting to and fro, by the high Protestants, the lords of the earth.’ The sermon celebrates their revival to life with an exuberant, even (to modern ears) embarrassing triumphalism – but Newman warns, prophetically, though from experience, that this spring of the Church may ‘turn out to be an English spring, an uncertain, anxious time of hope and fear, joy and suffering,--of bright promise and budding hopes, yet withal, of keen blasts, and cold showers, and sudden storms.’¹⁷

Retreat or Second Spring

I might argue that we find ourselves at a similar moment. It has been a bad few years for the Catholic Church in the United States of America. Yet, at the same time, we are seeing signs of spring, signs of renewal. As a native Chicagoan, nothing is less stable than the weather. Just as nothing is more stable than the enduring failure of our

¹⁷ Ian Ker, *John Henry Newman: A Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1988), 381-2.

professional sports teams. Still, learning to live with disappointment on the field can translate into a good life skill. Chicago sports fans know that hope may be an eschatological virtue, but that does not mean it's not real. What might we look for as indicators of a Second Spring for Catholicism here in America?

Characteristics of ministry in a Second Spring

Those of you who were here last year will remember Dr. Elizabeth Sung, the Paluch Professor of Theology. Dr. Sung is a systematic theologian in the Reformed Tradition who was with us for two years to help us engage the 500th anniversary of the Reformation with both depth and nuance. What you may not know is that for eight years Dr. Sung and I team taught the NCTI Fall Seminar, Global Theologies. In the course of the years, we would always have dinner together before the class sessions. Since she is a theological anthropologist, I always enjoyed picking her brain about what I consider to be the biggest theological issue that remains between the Catholic Church and the ecclesial communities of the Reformation. Even though I'm an ecclesologist, our biggest point of disagreement is not the papacy (important though that is) but the nature of the human person. Specifically, our two traditions struggle over how bad the effects of the Fall were, and what human capacity is left after it. In this regard, Catholics and Evangelicals are still very far apart.

I am convinced that the credibility of Christianity in the 21st century rises or falls on having a convincing answer to the issues of theological anthropology. Without it, none of our moral doctrine makes any sense. More than that, without it, the one

doctrine which makes us Christians and not some other Middle Eastern monotheists, like Jews or Muslims, is the belief that the Divine Logos became incarnate of the Virgin Mary, being made man. This central doctrine of our faith makes no sense unless human kind needed a savior.

Pope Paul VI, in his first encyclical letter, expressed the confidence he had that the Catholic Church carried the answers the world needed for its problems. As we look at the political policy mess here and abroad, I can confidently say that Catholic Social doctrine has a vision that could guide the world. The twin pillars of the dignity of the human person and the solidarity of the human community along with the great principle of subsidiarity provide an intellectual foundation for most of the great problems we face. But Catholic Social Doctrine is “our best kept secret.”¹⁸

Looking at the present moment from the vantage point of John Henry Newman throws light on our task. As an Anglican, Newman was always looking for a middle way between Protestantism and Catholicism. He eventually realized that this was not possible for the Anglican Church after realizing the truth of Catholicism from its continuity with the ancient Church. But, in a strange way, his work as a Catholic theologian fulfilled this original insight, for the Catholic Church is the middle way between fundamentalism, which denies reason, and liberalism, which denies revelation. Because of this, she was positioned to move through the great divide over religion in 19th century society.

¹⁸ See Peter Henroit, Edward DeBerri, and Michael Schultheis, *Catholic Social Teaching: Our Best Kept Secret* (Orbis Books; Maryknoll, NY; 1988.)

Newman understood that as the Catholic Church in England entered its “second spring” that it needed to attend to its credibility, both within itself and to the wider society. Catholics needed to project to the world that our religion was reasonable and effective. Its reasonableness would be established by clarity of doctrine and its effectiveness by the holiness of its members. That same pattern describes how the American Catholic Second Spring might proceed as we move on from scandals and bankruptcies. I’m going to talk now about the place of a university in a Second Spring, specifically on how USML needs to address the apologetic of reasonableness. Then I will go on to the issue of effectiveness.

[The place of a university in a Second Spring](#)

I have already described to you Hans Urs von Balthasar’s notion of the “Catholic ‘and.’” This idea can be traced back to John Henry Newman in a rather direct manner, and beyond him to Saint Thomas Aquinas. Whereas Balthasar was describing how we must not allow polarities to fragment our theology, Newman went deeper and asserted the unity of knowledge.

One of my most prized possessions in my personal library is the copy of *The Idea of a University*, Newman’s set of essays as he contemplated the founding of the Catholic University of Ireland. What makes this book a prized possession is that it previously belonged to the late Jesuit Father Edward Oakes, our colleague here for many years, who literally wrote the book on Hans Urs von Balthasar. Father Oakes, like me, marked up his books with underlining and annotation, so with this volume I have not only Newman’s genius, but Oakes reactions to it.

On page xv, in Martin Svaglic's "Introduction," Oakes double underlined this sentence: "For Newman the single, almost visual image" that governs the Idea of a University is that all knowledge forms one whole or circle from which the various branches of learning abstract this or that segment."¹⁹ Svaglic goes on to say, and Oakes when on to underline, "What Newman sought was a union of intellectual curiosity and achievement with the humility and charity of the truly religious man – a humanism, that is, the Judeo-Christian tradition."²⁰

The apologetic task which is necessary to sustain a Second Spring in American Catholicism requires this Christian humanism. Louis Markos, one of America's great scholars of C. S. Lewis has noted that "the task of the apologist is a deeply humanistic one; it seeks not to abandon the physical, the human, and the ordinary for some abstract world of ideas but to redeem the physical, the human, and the ordinary so that they might be glorified."²¹

Markos goes on to note how apologists from the earliest days of the Church depended on "carefully crafted philosophical and theological defenses of Christian orthodoxy."²² He tracks the development of apologetics in three phases. The first phase was in the early church, when Irenaeus, Athanasius and Augustine "clarified Christian doctrine over and against the claims of heretical sects."²³ The apologists of the

¹⁹ Martin J. Svaglic, "Introduction" in John Henry Newman, *The Idea of a University in Nine Discourses Delivered to the Catholics of Dublin in Occasional Lectures and Essays Addressed to Members of the Catholic University*, 3rd. ed. (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1986), xv.

²⁰ *Ibid.*, xxii.

²¹ Louis Markos, *Apologetics for the 21st Century* (Wheaton, IL: Crossway, 2010), 19.

²² *Ibid.*, 21.

²³ *Ibid.*

Middle Ages “sought to unify all thought under the glorious reign of the queen of the sciences, theology; for them, beauty, goodness, and truth were all one and the theology of the Catholic Church was the glue that held them together in timeless harmony.”

Markos then notes how after the Reformation, in the modern period, apologetics sought “to present a forceful, systematic doctrine that would appeal to people who increasingly judged truth not by authority and tradition but by their own consciences.”²⁴

Contemporary apologetics, however, faces a different task. Though influenced by all three of the previous forms, contemporary apologetics is, Markos says, “in great part a reaction to the secular Enlightenment’s attempt to separate faith from reason, and to refound everything, from philosophy to theology to ethics, on rational principles.”²⁵

This is why Newman’s approach to knowledge is the perfect antidote to the troubles of our times.

The priest, whether baptismal or ministerial, has a duty toward knowledge. Knowledge should be sought for its own sake, not for utility. Knowledge is sought for its own sake because it is a participation in the Divine Logos – whose name we know to be Jesus. Knowing anything is a path to knowing everything, because each part is instructive of the whole. Each distinction shares something of the essence of the whole, and can bring about integration with the whole – which is to know the one true God and Jesus Christ whom he sent. (John 17:3)

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Ibid.

Because the truth is a person—knowledge is personal. This is why Newman’s Christian humanism is so needed among ministers today. The effectiveness of any apologetics in the contemporary period will depend on the attractive power of “gentleness” in the disciple of Christ.

The place of the university in the apologetic of effectiveness.

The final matter we need to consider in this reflection is how we present the Catholic Church as an effective means of spirituality in the 21st century. I mentioned earlier that I think to do this, we need to straighten out our theological anthropology. There are two dominant notions about theological anthropology in these United States today. Both have Protestant Christian origins. Neither corresponds to Catholic doctrine. I want to share with you a quotation from Carmelite Bishop Philip Boyce, from an article he recently published on our soon to be saint. Bishop Boyce asks what Newman said about his own sanctity. Now, the point of this quotation is for us to hear a thoroughly Catholic way of speaking, which would be rejected by both of the dominant notions abroad in the land. Boyce writes:

From Newman we have no such assertion of personal sanctity but, as in the case of most persons, an avowal of the contrary when he heard through a correspondent that he had been called a saint: “I have nothing of a Saint about me as everyone knows, and it is a severe (and salutary) mortification to be

thought next door to one. I may have a high view of many things, but it is the consequence of education and of a peculiar cast of intellect – but this is very different from being what I admire. I have no tendency to be a saint – it is a sad thing to say. Saints are not literary men, they do not love the classics, they do not write Tales. I may be well enough in my way, but it is not the ‘high line’. People ought to feel this, most people do. But those who are at a distance ... [impose] notions about one. It is enough for me to [shine] the saints’ shoes – if St Philip uses [shoe polish], in heaven”²⁶.

When I said this is a very Catholic way of speaking, I am referring to what we might call the gradation of sanctity described by Newman. The saint is an exemplar.

Newman is content to make it to heaven and there to serve those holier than himself.

This notion of grades of sanctity only makes sense in a Catholic (or Orthodox)

theological anthropology. The Evangelical anthropology holds that humans are so

totally fallen, that there cannot be any gradation, only a judicial decree of justification,

for all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. (Romans 3:23) Interestingly, the

²⁶ Philip Boyce, O.C.D., “John Henry Newman: The Birth and Pursuit of the Ideal of Holiness” (Rome: International Center of Newman’s Friends, 2019), <http://www.newmanfriendsinternational.org/en/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/Newman-Newsletter-2019-2-Philip-Boyce-on-Holiness.pdf> Accessed September 28, 2019. Quotations of Newman within the article taken from *The Letters and Diaries of John Henry Newman*. Edited at the Birmingham Oratory. XXXII Vols. London 1961-2008, Vol. XIII, p. 419. I edited some of Newman’s expressions to make them understandable to the American idiom. “Impose” in the original was “fee-faw-fum” which is an idiomatic expression meaning “something designed to impose on the timid or the ignorant.” See <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/fee-faw-fum> Accessed September 28, 2019.

other dominant Protestant doctrine in our culture comes from the Unitarian/Universalist tradition, which denies original sin and has a tremendously high view of human capacity.²⁷ In various ways, these two ideas make Christianity irrelevant to a 21st century audience. Either God is a thug, or he is largely unnecessary.

Newman's way of speaking offers both challenge and hope, because, once again, the Catholic "and" keeps two separate notions in dynamic tension, and thereby provides a resolution to the problem.

Newman's resolution of the problem can be seen in what he calls his first conversion. This was an intellectual conversion which had spiritual outcomes. Boyce writes:

This conversion experience had of course its intellectual and doctrinal aspect - "a great change of thought" - implying the acceptance of the tenets of revealed religion. However, it brought about religious and moral effects too: Newman's

²⁷ To illustrate the tumult in which priests, deacons and lay ecclesial ministers find themselves in the contemporary period, this question of human capacity and its role in salvation is as active a disputed question as it was during the Reformation. My current co-professor in the course Global Theologies, Dr. Harold Netland, a philosopher of religion at Trinity Evangelical Divinity School confront this issue every time we are in the classroom together. We recently commented to each other that while no one is fussing very much about the schemes of eschatology in dispensational theology as they were 30 years ago, issues of eschatology remain an area of active debate. In the Catholic Church over the last ten years there have been debates over the positions taken by Hans Urs von Balthasar and Pope Benedict XVI about the possibility that hell is lightly populated versus other Catholic professors, whom I shall not name, who assert that hell is more densely populated than Gaza City. At the same time, as I am writing this lecture I learned of an David Bentley Hart's latest book, *That All Shall Be Saved: Heaven, Hell, and Universal Salvation* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2019), which, as the title makes clear, argues from the other extreme.

spiritual life was transformed, his outlook changed. He now had “that vision of the Unseen which is the Christian’s life”²⁸

That vision became the ideal he pursued in his intellectual and spiritual life. That vision was the Catholic “and” which solved the problems of theological anthropology. It is interesting that the two thinkers who were most influential in his intellectual conversion were an Evangelical and a Unitarian. The first was “the Rev. Walter Mayers, a convinced Evangelical.”²⁹ The second was the Rev. Thomas Scott, a Unitarian minister.

The Rev. Mr. Mayers guided Newman through the writings of William Romaine, a strict Calvinist, popular in the Evangelical wing of the Anglican Church. Boyce notes, however,

... Newman was never an Evangelical at heart, much less a strict Calvinist. His conversion did not pass through the conventional stages (conviction of one’s personal sinfulness; fear of damnation; hearing of Christ’s redemptive work; apprehension of Christ’s merits; sense of ecstatic joy and the assurance of salvation) and he never accepted the Calvinistic doctrine of predestination to eternal death.³⁰

Boyce goes on to tell us that it would be Thomas Scott who would help Newman make the critical move intellectually. The author of *The Force of Truth*, Scott was himself

²⁸ Boyce, Op. cit.

²⁹ Ibid.

³⁰ Ibid.

searching and his study led him out of Unitarianism and into belief in the doctrine of the Holy Trinity.³¹ Again, I will quote Boyce who writes:

Scott insisted throughout his works on the importance of conscience as a moral guide and the need for a practical faith expressing itself in good works. This point made him unacceptable to Calvinists who branded him as an Arminian. He also insisted on the danger of intellectual pride and mere reasoning destroying the vigour of faith.³²

Boyce points out that Newman's first conversion was a result of Scott's practical faith, which while intellectually reasonable was not pure theory. I would argue that this is the ideal we need to pursue in evangelizing the 21st century. The university has a great deal to offer, provided it never divorces practical faith from intellectually reasonable theory. Here is another both/and situation, which I will illustrate with a single example.

Last year, the University of Saint Mary of the Lake held a science seminar. Father Kartje introduced the day as a way to address the claim that religion and science are not compatible. After a lecture by an evolutionary biologist, we broke into small discussion groups, led by Mundelein seminarians. An apologist must show that Catholicism is effective in facing such a challenge. We may not persuade others all in one session, but they need to leave with the awareness that we are thoughtful about the challenge of faith and science and that we hold our positions for reasons – not just blind

³¹ See Thomas Scott, *The Force of Truth*, Revised Ed. (Carlisle, PA: Banner of Truth Publishing, 1984).

³² *Ibid.*

faith. And, here is the “Catholic ‘and’” move, we are guided in our use of reason by our faith. Faith is a reasonable partner in inquiry. In this way, the university is an indispensable element of forming Catholic apologists for the 21st century.

In summary, then, I spoke tonight of knowledge as the purpose of a university. I talked about how we can be a single academic community with a common purpose, while at the same time allowing for a distinction of charisms. I described how the essence of the whole is present in the parts and lead us naturally to integration, if we view the parts through the essence of the whole. By the way, this is literally what the word “catholic” means in its original Greek – according to the whole. I suggested that the upcoming canonization of John Henry Newman offers a great deal to us because, as in his day, we are on the brink of a Second Spring for Catholicism in these United States. As for him, so for us, we need to enter this Second Spring with an apologetic of the reasonableness of Christianity for the contemporary moment.

This apologetic theme will be continued in four other major lectures this year by our Paluch and Meyer Lecturers. Dr. Joshua Farris will deliver two Paluch Lectures on philosophical theology and scholarly apologetics. And Dr. John Chryssavgis will use his two Meyer Lectures explore how creation theology shows the church to be a credible contributor to issues surrounding the environment.

[Concluding prayer from Saint John Chrysostom](#)

In conclusion, then, let me restate that at the University of Saint Mary of the Lake, as the theological school of the Archdiocese of Chicago, we begin and end with the proposition that knowledge is participation in the truth and that truth is a person. I am

told that some of my colleagues have occasionally placed bets on how long it will take me to mention the word “Orthodox” with a capital “o” or quote an Eastern Christian theologian. I’m sure they saw this coming when I mentioned John Chryssavgis’ good Greek name. To conclude, then, I want to close with a prayer from the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom.

Each Sunday, that prayer is recited before approximately 300,000,000 Christians who worship according to the Byzantine rite. The prayer precedes the reading of the Holy Gospel by the deacon. Whereas in the Western liturgy with which most of us are familiar, the prayers are fairly simple, sober and to the point. In the East, as the seminarians will experience in two days when we celebrate Community Mass according to the Syro-Malabar rite, the prayers both speak to God, and reveal God’s mystery to us. The Prayer Before the Gospel in the Byzantine rite is a theological reflection on knowledge, and thus, the perfect way to end this annual academic address.

Shine in our hearts, O Master who lovest mankind, with the pure light of thy divine knowledge. Open the eyes of our mind to the understanding of thy gospel teachings. Implant also in us the fear of thy blessed commandments, that trampling down all carnal desires, we may enter upon a spiritual manner of living, both thinking and doing such things as are well-pleasing unto thee. For thou art the illumination of our souls and bodies, O Christ our God, and unto thee do we send up glory; together with thy Father who is from everlasting, and thine all holy, good, and life-creating Spirit, now and ever and unto ages of ages.

Amen.

Through the prayers of our holy fathers, + O Christ our God, have mercy on us and
save. us.