policies of some of the first Protestants, such as the Calvinists of Geneva; but in so far as in his working life as carpenter or schoolmaster the layman shows that his faith produces a more human as well as a more conscientious carpenter or schoolmaster, he is not only participating in a common culture with those whose vocation it is to live at more self-conscious and pioneering levels of intensity—the St Joans and the President Kennedys—he is also helping to form that common culture, as did the humblest Methodists in the nineteenth century, whose efforts to be worthy of their obligations produced the institutions by which the silent social revolution was achieved in this country.

A positive definition of the layman as obeying a vocation to live within the culture of the élite shows to each layman how to find his role in that common vocation: he must seek for the growing points in his profession and try to live there as a Christian. By doing so he shows the clergy what is the contribution to the Church that only the layman can provide—or that something which is not in the pastors but only in the pastors and faithful in conspiratio. It is born at the meeting of the ecclesia and the world. It is the conscience of the Church.

# Who is my Brother?

### T. L. WESTOW

The Council of Trent condemned heresies, as Councils have done since the beginning until Vatican II. It arrested such corruption as had been denounced by the Christian people. It laid down businesslike rules for the re-organization of a rather lax ecclesiastical society, it set up seminaries and effective visitations, and it provided the material for a full-bodied Canon Law which for four hundred years prevented any further epidemic of scandals, thereby restoring the good name of the Church in the eyes of secular society. But as a social document it failed, and failed egregiously. The period which followed on the Council of Trent is known historically as the Counter-Reformation. The name is significant. It was a Council which had been pressed into action by movements

that were far ahead of it. It suffered, even during its actual sessions, from political pressures from which it never could shake itself free. It suffered from having been provoked into existence by present dangers rather than by future needs. In this atmosphere the more enlightened theologians like the brothers De Soto and cardinals like Contarini did not have much of a chance. It was a Council that, necessarily yet regrettably, went 'counter' instead of 'ahead'.

When I say that as a social document the Council failed, I mean that it did not understand the movement that went on under its very eyes. In this it was no different from its opponents who had no more grasp of the underlying major causes of this upheaval than the Fathers of the Council. Four hundred years away from it we have the advantage of seeing the whole period in perspective. We are not plagued by the pressure of immediate dangers. Neither the 'war by land and by sea', the 'hatred and dissensions among ourselves' which dominate the contents of the Convocation Bull of Paul III of 1542, nor the 'perturbations and scandals' which open Julius III's Bull for the resumption of the Council in 1548 beset John XXIII when he launched Vatican II. We can only hope that the final document of today's Council will make more exhilarating reading than the somewhat pathetic final speech of Pius IV at the closing session of 1563 with its list of abuses cut out and vices constrained by tighter organization.

Historical factors, therefore, severely hampered the depth and the scope of the Council of Trent. It decreed on malpractices concerned with the eucharist, on justification and sin, on ecclesiastical punishments, on batricaded the decrees with a solid Anathema sit. Few, if any, of the Fathers inquired into the deeper causes of all those eruptions, and none And such a major cause which in history always underlies a major upheaval. of prohibited books with which during the Council of Trent Paul IV succeeded in catching out the devil in one of his too reckless moods, history escaped him, and so did the ordinary human being who makes

Before one looks at man's history, one should have a look at man. It is stand. One can look at man philosophically but it runs the risk of exposes one to the risk of not being able to distinguish the significant

from the insignificant. One can try both lines simultaneously and personal haps achieve a more balanced assessment.

Compare any prayer of the early Church—St Paul, the Didache, of an early liturgical document—with any prayer of the late Latin Middle Ages, such as one can find in Dom Wilmart's Auteurs Spirituels et Textes Dévots du Moyen Age Latin. Or again, compare the literary remains of Ignatius of Antioch with those of Ignatius of Loyola, or Justin on the eucharist with the little treatise of William of Ockham. Simply studying these documents side by side shows up a difference in mentality, in approach, in attitude, which is easy to discern. Certain aspects of Christ, of the Church, of the Christian way of life have simply fallen into oblivion and others have risen to the surface. This is enough to set one questioning, searching, looking for lines, for times of transition, for explanations.

Out of such a study grows a perspective. This perspective will show that the early Church was always conceived as a world-wide Church, as a creation before time (Hermas) as the soul of this world (Diognetus); it is a Church which is living in the glorified Christ (the Kyrios); it is a Church which expresses its life most fully in the communal celebration of the eucharist; it is a Church which seeks its perfection in the community, and of which the members attain 'unto Christ' precisely as members of his community.

Then comes the peace of the Church with the Edict of Milan in 313. It was a peace for which the Christian community was not prepared. The tight and somewhat tense existence which the community led under a more or less constant threat of persecution had obviously stressed the community sense, as it always does. The martyr, therefore, was the Christian who represented the community in Christ and before the world. Peace forced the Christians to look for another way of achieving this perfection. They fled from the world, they turned into themselves, they began to understand the difficulties and gradual progress of the 'inner life' as one can see it in Cassian, for instance. They discovered the individual side of man in the light of the faith. But this new discovery needed time, and time was against a peaceful development. Roman civilization was overrun by invaders who, in multiple hordes and for five long centuries arrested normal progress and created vast problems that could hardly be solved before they settled down.

It is surprising and one of the marvels of history that during the two centuries before the final collapse of the Roman Empire Christianity benefited by some extremely useful heresies. These heresies, from Arius

Onwards, forced the Church to examine her belief in Christ. Who was Christ? What was meant by his being both God and man? And, no doubt with the help of Greek-trained minds, they penetrated as far as they could into the mystery of two natures and one person. This led to a much deeper understanding of man. It laid the foundation for a philosophic understanding of what the person is and what nature is. This repercussion of the christological controversies on man's understanding of himself is not often brought out, and yet it is basic to any analysis of the human reality.

If we go on now with the historical process of Western Christianity we find that the invaders have settled down in a rather primitive feudal form of society over which still hovers the symbol of the united community, a sort of hankering after the 'one world' of Roman civilization. Christopher Dawson has rightly drawn attention to this fact, which drove Charlemagne to Rome in 800 to be crowned Roman Emperor, and which drove Otto the Great and his descendants in the same direction. The Roman Empire only died out with the Habsburgs.

During this period, from about 1000 till 1600, the normal growing process which had been arrested by the 'dark ages' picked up where it had been left in the fourth and fifth centuries: with the discovery of the individual. Unfortunately, although the idea of the 'one world', the unity of mankind, was still vaguely alive, it meant little to the ordinary villein or lord. The struggle for survival was too hard, too crude, too immediate. Latin drifted out, theology was reduced to (sometimes rather wild) over-simplifications to establish some contact with a vastly illiterate society. Even the monastic communities themselves were badly in need of reform, and Cluny set the pace. It was followed by Citeaux and St Bernard. This saint, who made such an extraordinary and rather significant—impression on his age was an individualist. He it was who really picked up the early threads of the discovery made by the early monks of the desert and gave it its first form. Human nature is a pattern, a constitution, shared among all human beings, and therefore communal. But it cannot take shape unless in an individual human being. There is, therefore, an individual aspect to our human nature as soon as it becomes a definite human being. Bernard exploited this indicates individual aspect. He lived in his feelings, his great awareness of his body, his own experience of Christ. The word 'I' occurs frequently in his hynns and devotional effusions. It is not really astonishing that his Scriptural explanations are so very subjective, or that he so completely failed to see the horror of the crusade movement which he supported

with heart and soul, or that he so naïvely and sometimes so mercilessly dealt with others.

From then on religious life concentrates on individual experience. The little world within with its feelings, its imaginings, its sentimentalities and its deep thoughts becomes the focus of religious reality. It flowers in a Gertrude, a Mechtild, an Aelred, a Richard Rolle, a Hadewych, and hundreds of others. The language itself of the meditations and the prayers becomes 'mellifluous' and flowing over with 'heat and song'. And gradually the individual soul weans itself from the community. It even reduces Christ to this contracting stature. The suffering Christ obscures the risen Christ, the sweet swaddling clothes of the human birth replace the shroud that proved the glory. This mentality pervaded the whole Western world and was finally systematized by the Brethren of the Common Life. The real Reformation had already taken place: the community, the Christus Totus of St Augustine, the great unity and brotherhood of mankind lay already rent apart. It is astonishing how little attention has been paid to these Brethren of the Common Life and their gospel, the Imitation of Christ of Thomas à Kempis. Luther, Calvin, Erasmus, Colet, Ignatius, all had been moulded by the movement of these Brethren. It was only a question of time now when and how the thousands of cracks in the concept of Christ and his Church would widen into catastrophic rents and bring down the great community. The 'brother' was no longer an essential part of spiritual reality. In spite of St John, man thought he could perfectly well love God whom he does not see when he had cast out his brother whom he did see. The individual was enriched, the community was lost.

The religious breakdown of the community is known, even though the causes are often put in a wrong perspective. Once the individual is satisfied that he is only concerned with his own salvation, it is obvious that he will resent the congregation, that he will read his private Bible with his private Holy Ghost, that the sacraments are rather unnecessary, that the eucharist becomes a purely spiritual experience in 'faith', that the last thing he wants is interference by a 'minister'.

Politically the individual cannot defend himself. This fact, coupled with the rise of the merchant classes and a money economy, inspired what has been rightly called the 'nation-state'. Just as from the religious

<sup>1</sup>This whole analysis is treated somewhat roughly here. Those who care to read a more extensive account with references given, might wish to read the two first chapters of my *The Variety of Catholic Attitudes*, Burns and Oates Compass Books, published this month.

point of view there was a centrifugal movement leading to constant breakaways of communities of highly selected 'saints', so did this movement cause the breakdown of the Roman Empire of Charles V. The Renaissance Prince, whether ecclesiastical or secular, was the ideal individual, above the law, and a law to himself alone, as Machiavelli described him. It led to that divorce of conscience and politics which made Paul III open the Council of Trent and bestow the duchy of Parma On his son, Pier Luigi, in the same year, 1545. It made, later, Richelieu and his assistant, Père Joseph, say their breviary in private and support a Protestant war in Germany in public. It made pious Puritan merchants of Virginia thank God for their profits and their slaves, and ask him to remind them to send for missionaries for those poor slaves. There is nothing ideal in this new-fangled Nationalism: there has been no war since the Reformation which was not historically fought for vested interests. It has become a disease and with it goes the military training of which the basic philosophy is that my brother is my enemy, at least Potentially. The glory of the soldier can never be, and never will be, the glory of Christ. It should be obvious enough that this concept of the Machiavellian individual which dominated society also affected our concept of authority. There have been absolute kings and princes long before the Reformation, but only since the Reformation did it become a fully-fledged theory, put into practice. Hobbes followed Machiavelli in this as a matter of course, and even tried to give it a Christian twist. This absolutization of human authority is un-Christian, whether in Church or State. The Christian concept is one of service, of respect for the community and for the persons who incarnate this community.

Nor can we soothe ourselves by pretending that all this 'only seems like that'. The movement of individualism was philosophically worked out as long ago as William of Ockham, and the monumental balance of St Thomas could not prevent Ockham from becoming the dominant influence in shaping the Western mind. He believed that only the individual was real, and meant just that, as is obvious from the controversies he provoked. After him came Gabriel Biel, who was the spirit that presided over Luther's formation. By then, the community disappeared from the Elysian fields of philosophical discussion. Ever since that time the confusion of person and individual permeated every philosophical school. What psychology there was never took into proper account that the human person is not an angel, complete in himself, but shares his nature with all other human persons. And so, when in a revolt against the vast abstract and rather imaginary worlds

of Kant, Hegel, Fichte and Schelling, Kierkegaard inaugurated that movement which now goes by the name of existentialism, we were still existential individuals. As far as I can see, only Martin Buber, that Jewish philosopher whose background probably made him less easily the victim of philosophical fashions, gave a thorough-going analysis of that basic flaw in Kierkegaard's philosophy from which our brother was again absent. In this perspective it is not astonishing that J.-P. Sartre proclaims that 'hell is other people'. It is exhilarating that philosophy is coming down to earth, but surely, the community of mankind is an existential fact:

The result of all this is that we have lost our brother, and that the human community has become so distant that it has none of that emotional appeal, which we so crave for in our individualistic way of life that we identify feeling with being human, and defend all our false, sentimental, artificial and insincere emotionalism on the basis that this alone is 'human'. If it looks as if individualism has caused such deeprooted evil, one should reflect that, whilst it is true that we have an individual and valuable aspect to our constitution as human beings, it is obviously too easy to slip from individualism to self-centredness and from this to plain selfishness. This lies at the root of such fantastic statements, which one can glean every day from fellow-Catholics, as 'Howan you be against the bomb? Have you no patriotic sense at all?' It has even perverted much of our so-called 'charities'.

We simply have to look again, and conscientiously, at the question, Who is my brother? Is he some incomprehensible creature who fortuitously co-exists with us and therefore becomes an occasion of sin or virtue? What is man?

Human nature is a constitutional pattern, a blue-print. There is only one blue-print, one pattern. Everything made according to that pattern, answers the same purpose, and works out the pattern on the same principles. On a lower level, such a pattern allows fabrication of an indeterminate number of objects on the conveyor-belt, such as cars. One can spray them with different paints, re-arrange the details for variety, but a Ford is a Ford, and a Rolls-Royce is a Rolls-Royce for all that. The human being is nothing so mechanical as a car, but the fact remains that there is no such thing as several human natures. There is here an ontological unity which not even God himself could interfere with without destroying it. This unity presides over every human being that comes into existence. Hence the biological continuity of the human race, the facts of heredity and psychological cohesion. Hence the unity

of mankind's history. Hence the importance of the geneaological tables, however imperfect, which in the gospel lead to the birth of Christ.

This ontological unity of human nature is empty unless it becomes incarnate in existence, in historical existence. This existence bestows on a human being the reality of a fact, nothing else. I exist simply means I am real, I am a fact. Existence does not add any quality, nor purpose, it is sheer factuality; like a baby, it merely establishes a problem but contributes nothing to solve it, as every parent ought to realize before it happens.

So now we have a human nature, i.e., a purpose with a specific pattern, and existence, i.e., it becomes a fact. But if it is left there it would still remain futile, a mere dissolvent, unless there is a third element to contain this fact, to give it a point of cohesion, to give it a contour, a shape with a centre. In other words, to work out the purpose of human nature in existence we need a decisive element, to see, to judge, to act. If nature plus existence makes an action we must have an agent to do this action. There can be no action without an actor; the wheel cannot turn without an axle. This is therefore a distinctive element and the philosphical name for this element is personality. The human person therefore is basically the responsible initiator, guide and accomplisher who has to work out in concrete existence the purpose of human nature.

Now here the confusion begins. Human nature is radically one, so that all the elements that contribute to the working out of the human purpose are all sharing in the one purpose, are all sharing in the responsibility for this purpose. This means that the oneness of human nature can only be fulfilled by the human community as a whole. The human person is therefore necessarily a member of the great human community before (ontologically speaking) he is an individual. It means that the elements which determine his individuality are therefore subject to the communal purpose which the human person exists to fulfil.

What are these elements that constitute the individual element in the human person? The pattern of human nature implies a body, an organic, physical unit, which is given life, is 'animated', by a spiritual force, which is most obviously experienced in the mind. This gives rise to a rich complexity of forces and combinations of forces over which the basic responsibility of the person presides. It also gives rise to quite definite limitations. We are limited by the material restrictions of a body, by biological and psychological processes, by consequent moods and feelings, by imagination, by the limited observation of the senses, by bodily needs, such as eating, drinking and sleeping, and earning one's bread.

All these limitations are strictly individual and therefore incommunicable. Nobody can eat for somebody else, nobody can share the inarticulate character of a specific mood.

Now, in so far as this individuality is an essential aspect of the way in which we incarnate our share in human nature, it is the tool with which our personality has to work. It is therefore vitally important and demands constant attention. But as soon as our personality allows its responsibility to concentrate exclusively or excessively on the tool, it may easily forget that this individuality only constitutes the congenital tool. The person may easily be tempted to go further and identify himself with the pleasures, satisfactions and needs of the tool. When he does that, he will blunt the sense of his essentially communal purpose. He will put the tool above the purpose of the tool. He will gradually come to think that the person equals the individual, and when that happens the person's responsibility is vitiated at the root, and when that happens over a period in history and infects society, the human community will indeed incarnate Hobbes's dictum homo homini lupus—men live like wolves. It is because of this innate risk that the human person may so easily put the individual above the community that all religions—and it is religion which is above all the safeguard of God's creative purpose—stress asceticism, which, if properly understood, is not so much a question of subduing the body to the spirit as a question of maintaining the individual in the communal purpose. It is for the same reason that individualism as a social and historical phenomenon is equally harmful to Church and State, and that the individualism which led to the disintegration of the Church is the same as that which led to the disintegration of society. This is the basic reason why Catholics are profoundly wrong and even perverse if they deliberately separate the ecumenical movement from the political ecumenical movement which finds its first hesitant expression in the Charter of the United Nations.

The human person, then, is the 'I' which is responsible for the communal realization by the whole community as one of the God-given communal purposes of mankind. He does that by using a well-developed, mature complex of forces which constitute his individuality. With his eye on the particular time and place of the community's evolution he measures the possibilities of his contribution, generously, aiming high. He then translates this into Christian terms, and that is the expression of God's will for him, and that is his 'vocation'.

There is in this field a particular difficulty which leads many astray with the best of intentions. Many look for the expression of the com-

munity in small circles, societies or other organizations. But there is only one community because there is only one human nature, just as for the same reason there is only one Church, which embodies human kind redeemed in Christ. There are no small groupings of human nature. The only thing possible is the grouping of various persons in order to overcome the too narrow individual limitations of each person and the better to work for the one overriding community of mankind. It is therefore a misunderstanding to ask, 'How can we turn our parish into a community?' or our local branch of some society, or our religious organization. These smaller groupings are nowhere on the same level as the great community of mankind. They are really extensions of the individual for the common good of all. If they become absolutized they simply reproduce individualism on the group level, which is what happens so very frequently, and will probably go on happening for some time because our whole mentality in the West is soaked in an individualism some five hundred years old. Hence arise a multitude of closed societies, of narrow-minded in-groups with their inevitable false loyalties, personal intrigues, lack of elasticity and with their paralysing mutual competition. The only justification of such groupings is the better and more efficient combination of forces with which the free human person can work for the good of the whole community. The basic rule of any group should be that it is only of value to the extent that it serves the unity of mankind, and this unity of mankind should remain its first preoccupation, just as it is for the single person. This is the meaning of outward-looking'. And this applies perforce not merely to small lay organizations, but to monasteries and convents, to political parties, to trading groups and missionary congregations, to national and religion. ious organizations, on every level. There are not many Churches, if the Church is what it ought to be, and there are no absolutely sovereign States, if the 'State' is what it ought to be.

This is worth remembering, not only because of wars, rebellions, class distinctions or race-discriminations, but also because these small groups with their arrogant assumptions can only too often damage the freedom of the person and the scope of personal responsibility. For there is no responsibility without freedom. The community of mankind his conscience carries the load of the whole community. He is answeribility, which means 'caring for', and therefore loving, the person must have the freedom which through the grace of God he shares with Christ.

There is a great danger that over-organization does not only stifle the necessary development of individual forces, but the necessary expansion of the human person as well. The whole concept of authority ought therefore to be re-assessed in the light of this communal perspective.

Another danger is that we use words which are really inaccurate. Collective means gathered together, means simply heaping individuals together as is unfortunately so often the case under ideological systems like Nazism or Communism. Social frequently refers to society not seen as a community, as is the case when we talk about social studies or sociology. The community stands above that, as a unity, and as a unity borne by responsible and free persons, and its adjective is communal.

Now, all this has been said on the natural level. Yet it is embodied in all the essential doctrines of Christianity. The promise of Genesis was to the whole of mankind. The election of the Jewish people was wholly in service of the universal redemption, and if Judaism rejected the promise in the end, it is because some powerful sections had forgotten that the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob was the God of the Gentes, of all the peoples of the earth. When Christ assumed human nature, he assumed the universal purpose of mankind, and nowhere does the gospel allow us to confuse God's care for each person to be travestied into an individualistic conception of salvation. We are not saved as individuals, but as communal persons. We are redeemed as a community, as a 'city', a polis, and our sanctification is with and through our brother. Our brother is an integral part of our human constitution and we are responsible for his personal salvation, i.e., for his freedom, for his understanding, for his 'spiritual and temporal welfare', so that he, too, can share in the fulfilment of our purpose in Christ. This means respect for one's brother, humility towards one's brother, rejoicing in the good of one's brother, suffering with the pains of one's brother, and finally laying down one's life for one's brother. There is nothing higher and nobler. And this laying down one's life has nothing to do with nationalism and killing one's brother in the process. The final judgement—how, in Heaven's name, is it possible that this is practically never preached about?—is based on what we have given to our brother, even if we were not conscious of doing it for God. To give to one's brother becomes therefore the standard of our faith, of our membership of Christ.

If the liturgical movement is so vitally important, it is not because of archeological ceremonies and poetry, but because we must restore the right communal orientation of our whole spiritual life. When we are baptized it is the community that receives us; when we are confirmed,

it is the community that invites us to be adult Christians; when we celebrate the eucharist, we anticipate the final enthronement of the whole community in the relationship of the Trinity through Christ our Lord; when we confess, we confess to the Church, to the community joined with God; when we die, we take our place in the new Jerusalem, the City of the Lamb. Priesthood and marriage are in the service of the community, and have no other meaning.

All this lies embedded in the gospels, in the early Church documents, in the prayers of the liturgy. What havoc has individualism created. With this sense of the communal overriding purpose for each and all of us, we can no longer accept absolute nationalism, nor can it be indifferent to us whether millions are leading a sub-human existence, or what kind of Government we have, or whether any form of violence is still an argument, however dressed up in resplendent uniforms or backed by destructive machinery; or whether science will be allowed to blunder away in any fashion and hide its results from the public under the cloak of a non-existent security, or whether anybody is entitled to accumulate wealth and sham privilege at the expense of others. These matters are matters which must be integrated in our prayer and in our liturgy and in our sermons, for they all constitute the leiton ergon, the task of the people of God.

The great fear now is that the present Council may still fail as Trent failed. Whilst many conciliar theologians have made extremely valuable contributions to a new orientation in our Christian existence, there is still too much in this work which shows insufficient awareness of the radical communal concept on which human reality is based by God, the creator and redeemer. The collegiality of the bishops will be worthless unless the bishops stand in this communal line. The reform of the liturgy will dwindle into a mass of fads unless the Christian people are told what the liturgy is about, and what they are doing and how far it is reaching. The mass-media and communication scheme is worthless unless thinkers are given a free hand to think out the vast implications by which an individualistic society can be transformed into a living community of mankind, based on the responsible freedom of the human person.

We should thank God for living in a time like this, when tasks begin to take on a meaning which they had lost or never were allowed to have. It is a time of high hope and of high responsibility, and we must pray constantly and unselfishly that this major problem in which the Council plays such a decisive part will be handled in the most delicate and the most generous submission to the inspiration of the Spirit of Christ. It is

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a time of deliverance because in this vast perspective it is so much easier to see one's individual problems in the right perspective. Loneliness, that widespread and typically individualistic disease, should no longer exist. One can only hope that Catholics at least will re-install the 'brother' where he belongs.

## Signs and Wonders

### MARTIN REDFERN

"If Christ rose from the dead, His religion and His doctrine are divine; but Christ rose again from the dead, therefore His religion and His doctrine are divine." The first of these propositions is true; because, if Christ rose from the dead, it must have been by His own power, or by the power of God; if by His own power, by that very fact He would prove Himself God; if by the power of God, this would prove beyond doubt His divine mission . . . The second proposition, namely, but Christ rose again, only asserts one of the most certain historical facts This miracle is the object of the attacks of all the incredulous, for this once admitted, no one could deny the divine mission and the Divinity of Jesus Christ. The Apostles, according to these, were either impostors or men labouring under hallucinations; but one or other of these hypotheses would be as extraordinary a miracle as could be conceived. Thus a not untypical extract from a not untypical manual of theology pub lished in 1892 (the date is important: though preceding the revival in scriptural study and theology, it follows and tries to accommodate the Constitutio de Fide of the first Vatican Council). Thus, neatly packaged in propositions and challengingly labelled 'Credibility and truth of the Christian religion, knockdown demonstration of', an instant brew marketed as both stimulant to the unbeliever and sedative to the Christian.

But of course no unbeliever was ever taken in by this or any similar argument. The miracle is not that the 'incredulous', confronted with the Christian gospel transmuted into these apologetics, have still con-

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup>The Creed Explained; by A. Devine.