

THE MEDIATION OF CHRIST IN PRAYER

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[*Method*, Vol. 2, No. 1, March 1984]

My topic is the mediation of Christ in prayer.¹ But, before turning directly to this issue, it will be necessary to introduce a number of basic terms and analogies. We shall consider (1) the general notion of mediation, (2) mutual mediation, (3) self-mediation under the three headings of self-mediation by physical parts, or displacement upwards, self-mediation by consciousness, or displacement inwards, and (c) self-mediation by self-consciousness, or deliberate transposition of center. We shall turn finally to a consideration of the mediation of Christ in prayer as a kind of mutual self-mediation.

1. *Mediation in General*

The notion of mediation was used by Aristotle within the field of logic. He distinguished first principles that are immediate and conclusions that are mediated by a middle term between the subject and the predicate. In the *Posterior Analytics* he states that syllogism proves an attribute of a subject through a middle term.² A first principle admits no middle term because it cannot be proved. Things that are proved, are proved insofar as a middle term is inserted between the subject and the attribute. So, for example: All men are mortal. Why? Because what is composite, what is put together, can come apart. All men are composite, consisting of parts. Consequently, they can come apart, and their coming apart in a bad way is dying. The middle term 'compositeness' explains why the predicate 'mortal' is found in the subject 'man'. The middle term mediates between subject and attribute. Again, in the middle term the attribute is non-mediated, immediate, *amessos*. Where there is a concluded attribute predicated of the subject, the attribute is mediated in the subject.

In Hegel, the notion of an idealist philosophy immediately extends mediation to everything. Roughly: Concepts are related immediately or mediately; everything reduces to concepts; therefore, everything is related immediately or mediately. Everything aspires to the level of the Begriffe; consequently, the relations between concepts are found in an imperfect form on an inferior level in everything else, as processes towards the concept. In Hegel the notion of mediation takes on a universal role.³

We shall use the word 'mediation' in a universal way, as did Hegel; but we shall do so without presuppositions of an idealism. Our assumption shall be that the usage of the words 'immediate', 'mediate' and 'mediated' in Aristotle can be generalized. For example, in Aristotelian logic the first principles are necessary, evident, and true. In them necessity, evidence, and truth are immediate. While necessity, evidence, and truth are found in the conclusions, still it is a mediated necessity, a mediated evidence, a mediated truth. If we generalize the Aristotelian notion of the immediate and the mediated, then any factor, quality, property, feature, aspect, that has a source, origin, ground, basis, and consequences, effects, derivatives, a field of influence, radiation, expansion, an expression, manifestation, revelation, outcome,

may be said to be immediate in the source, origin, ground, basis, and mediated in its consequences, effects, derivatives, outcome, in its field of influence, radiation, expansion, in its expression, manifestation, revelation.

Under the influence of this generalization the notion of mediation becomes an extremely vague notion, even more general than the notion of causality. But its significance arises not in that vagueness, which remains merely material, but in the patterning that the notion of mediation itself can accept. The significance lies in the distinctions we shall draw between mediation in general, mutual mediation, self-mediation in its three forms, and mutual self-mediation. Again, when we use the word 'mediation' we are not settling anything specific, or even anything determinately generic. We are using a very general expression that distinguishes between a source, an origin, a ground, a basis, and whatever results from it. The interest in settling specifics will be addressed when we proceed to the further notions of mutual mediation, self-mediation, and mutual self-mediation. To give these terms some meaning, then, we shall proceed to examples.

The examples we shall offer to illustrate mediation in general will be of four types: mechanical, organic, psychic, and logical.

A Mechanical Example

In a watch, movement is immediate in the mainspring. Provided the watch is wound, the mainspring keeps things moving. The movement of the other parts is mediated by the mainspring, and their movement brings to light the function of the mainspring which is to move itself and the other parts. But, besides movement, there is control. It is not enough for a watch to be going; it also has to keep time. For it to keep time there is need of control is immediate in of a control, and this function the balance wheel and mediated in the subsequent series, the wheels and levers that are controlled by the balance wheel. The balance wheel is the source of control for itself with some approximation to a simple harmonic motion with a constant period, and that constancy is transmitted from the balance wheel through the gate and escapement to the other parts of the watch.

An Organic Example

The supply of fresh oxygen is immediate in the respiratory system but mediated in the rest of the body. The flow of blood is immediate in the heart; the central pump is the reason for the circulation of the blood. But the flow is mediated in the arteries and veins, for the source of the flow is elsewhere. Nutrition is immediate in the digestive system, mediated in the rest of the body. Locomotion is immediate in the muscles and mediated in the rest of the body. Control is immediate in the nervous system, mediated in the rest of the body.

A Psychic Example

What is immediate in intelligence (or will, or senses, or imagination, or memory, or affectivity, or aggressivity) is mediated throughout the rest of consciousness and in bodily manifestations. Anger, one may say, is immediate in what moderns call aggressivity (the medieval irascibile). But anger is not only in aggressivity (considered as an organic part with the psychic correspondent) but is mediated in the eyes, look, voice, jutting jaw, raised arm, forward step, violent images, one-track thinking, vigor of will of the angry man. It is immediate in aggressivity, but it is mediated in the rest of consciousness and in bodily manifestations.

A Logical Example

Finally, to revert to Aristotle, truth, evidence, and necessity are immediate in first principles. They are there not because of something else but because of the nature of first principles themselves. But truth, evidence, and necessity are mediated in all conclusions.

We have defined and illustrated the general notion of mediation. Again, the interest of the term 'mediation' does not lie in its generality but in further complications. Accordingly, we move on to the notion of mutual mediation, the notion of the functional whole.

2. Mutual Mediation: The Functional Whole

A functional whole is constituted by mutually mediating parts. Again we shall illustrate on different levels.

A Mechanical Example

A watch is both a material and a functional whole. As a material whole, it is the case and what is in the case. As a functional whole, it is what the watch does, keeping time. To keep time, the watch must be moving, and it must be moving at a constant rate. The function of movement is immediate in the mainspring and mediated in the rest of the works. The function of control, of steady movement, of constant rate, is immediate in the balance wheel and mediated in the rest of the works. The two functions mediate each other. The balance wheel controls itself and the mainspring. The mainspring moves itself and the balance wheel. This is a case of mutual mediation. The functional whole is so constructed that there are different centers of immediacy and the mediations of different immediate centers overlap. So it is that a watch doesn't merely move or merely keep time but it does both. It has a constant movement and, consequently, that is keeping time. By a mutual mediation a principle of movement and a principle of control are combined, and we have a functional whole that closes in on itself. Two immediate functions mediate each other.

An Organic Example

An organism is a material whole, the skin and what is inside it. It is a functional whole, a case of mutual mediation. And it is alive. For the moment we are concerned only with the functional whole. Accordingly, insofar as we consider an organism not *qua* alive but as a functional whole we find it to be an example of mutual mediation. The respiratory system supplies fresh oxygen not merely to the lungs but to the whole body. The digestive system supplies nutrition not merely to the digestive tract but to the whole body. The nervous system supplies control not merely to the nervous system but to the whole body. The muscles supply locomotion not merely to the muscles but to the whole body. The result is something that has fresh oxygen, is fed, is under control, and is moving, because there is a number of immediate centers and from each center there flows over the whole the consequences of that center. The whole organism (the sum of its parts, organs) has fresh oxygen from the respiratory system, nutrition from the digestive and vascular systems, local motion from the muscles, control from the nervous system. Each function of the organism is immediate in some organ or set of organs and mediated in the rest of the organs. If the immediate functions are A, B, C, D, E, . . . and the mediated functions are respectively a, b, c, d, e, . . ., then mutual mediation implies that A is abcde . . ., B is abcde . . ., C is abcde . . ., D is abcde . . ., and E is abcde . . .

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A Psychic Example

We have said that anger is immediate in one's aggressivity but mediated in one's voice, look, eyes, jaw, raised arm, step forward, rancorous memories, violent images, one-track thinking, vigor of will. But the mediation is mutual, because what one sees, feels, remembers, imagines, thinks, wills, feeds one's anger. The anger grows and one tends towards an explosion. There is a mutual mediation or a feedback from the results of the anger to its causes.

A Logical Example

In Aristotelian logic there is one immediate and everything else is mediated. Necessity, evidence, truth are immediate in first principles and mediated in conclusions. But in empirical science there are two immediates. Empirical science is empirical through its attention to data; it is science through inquiry, insights, hypotheses, deductions from hypotheses, processes of verification, and so on. The scientific element is immediate in intellectual effort and work, in the inquiries, insights, hypotheses, and deductions. The empirical element is immediate in data. There are two principles of immediacy, and the result is a compound as in the watch, a compound of functions, a mutual mediation. The scientific, systematic element is immediate in the hypothesis, mediated in empirical science. The empirical element is immediate in data, mediated in empirical science.

We have illustrated mediation in general and mutual mediation. We shall turn now to the notion of self-mediation.

3. Self-Mediation: Living

We may think of self-mediation as a whole that has consequences that change the whole. Both machines and organisms are functional wholes; but machines are made while organisms grow. The growth of an organism is a self-mediation. The organism originates itself by giving rise to physical parts within itself. Such growth is a process of division, from one cell to 2_n cells. The process of division is governed by a finality, as is illustrated by Van Driesch's experiments on sea urchins. Van Driesch placed single cells between two plates of glass such that the division could not occur in accord with the structure of the sea urchin. He discovered that if the sea urchin was allowed to grow to the sixteen or thirty-two cell stage, when the plates were removed it would correct the previous distortion and become a normal sea urchin. However, if the sea urchin was kept between the two plates for a longer time, it would never recover. These experiments were designed to show that there is no geometric pattern governing the way cells divide, that there is a certain finality within the organism itself.

At any stage of its growth the organism is alive at that stage and preparing later stages. As alive at that stage, it is a set of functional parts in a functional whole. There are different centers of immediacy, with the centers giving the whole all the properties of each of the centers. But as moving from one stage to another it will exhibit transitional developments, useful for a time but later disappearing. It is extremely useful for the infant, for example, to be able to feed at the breast, but it is just a transitional development. On the other hand, moving from one stage to another the organism will exhibit anticipatory developments that have no great utility at the given stage but are extremely useful or essential later on. For example, the size of the child's brain is out of proportion to the rest of its body, but the brain does not increase in bulk the way the rest of the body does. In other words, there is something more than mutual mediation to the organism. There is the structuring which regards both functioning at the moment *and* future functioning.

The comparison of successive stages of the organism's growth reveals not only increase in size but a process of specialization or differentiation. What earlier is performed in rudimentary, global fashion by single parts, later is performed in a specialized, highly efficient fashion by different parts. This process of specialization and differentiation is not just a matter of greater complexity, as in a Rube Goldberg cartoon, but should involve mounting efficiency and mounting fragility. The process of specialization involves the creation and exploitation of entirely new possibilities. This displacement upwards is not merely the multiplication of cells from the single-cell stage to a later stage of 2_n cells. Not only the initial cell but also the 2_n cells are merely a substratum that may be renewed every seven years. The organism lives, it has a reality that is superior to the whole business of cells and their differentiation and specialization. This living is quite different in kind from the living of the single cells or the multitude of single cells. It is the living of the whole organism. A higher set of functions emerges on the renewable substratum and develops and sustains itself, as it were, on a higher level. In this self-mediation of the first kind -- the development of the organism -- there is a displacement upwards, a displacement from the one or 2_n cells to the life of the organism, which is something different from the life of the cells. The *telos* is the self-developing and self-sustaining functional whole that develops through the development and functions through the functioning of its parts.

From the particular living thing one may shift to the larger whole of the concrete universal. One can apply the notion of mediation not only to the single organism but also to the species. The species may be said to mediate itself by the individuals. What lives, does not live alone; and what grows also dies. But the species mediates itself by reproduction. Within the genus, lower species mediate the emergence and the sustenance of higher species. Trees do not grow in desert sand but in soil; herbivorous animals presuppose vegetative life; and carnivorous animals presuppose herbivorous animals.

4. *Self-Mediation: Consciousness*

We have been applying the notion of mediation to the self-mediation, the whole that becomes something different through its consequences, its outcome, its results. That emerging difference consists in a displacement upwards. But there is another type of self-mediation which is a displacement inwards, the displacement from the living of the tree to the living of the animal. This displacement inwards is consciousness. The organism mediates itself by developing physical parts and functioning by the functioning of the parts. The animal mediates itself not only organically but also intentionally. We shall attempt to indicate what is meant by the intentional by considering the intentional element and then the intentional summation.

The Intentional Element

The intentional element consists of three parts or aspects: the act of intending; the intended object; the intending subject. The act of intending is any act or simultaneous set of acts that occur within consciousness. It is apprehensive in hearing, smelling, moving, seeing, touching, tasting. It is integrated over time by memory and anticipative imagination. It is dynamic by affectivity or aggressivity. The intended object is made present to the subject by the act of intending, and the subject is constituted as present to itself by the same act. The word 'presence' has been used twice, but in two different senses. One can say that the table is present in the room, and that you are present to me. But for you to be present to me, I have to be present to myself. This presence of the subject to himself is not the result of some act of introspection or reflection. The subject has to be present to himself for there to be anything within

consciousness upon which one could reflect or into which one could introspect. If being conscious were simply a matter of being looked at, then one would not be conscious when one wasn't looking at oneself and one would still be unconscious when one was, because what one would look at would be something unconscious; the looking does not change its object. Consciousness is a presence of the subject to himself that is distinct from, but concomitant with, the presence of objects to the subject. This self-presence differs from the presence of an object; it is prior to any reflexive, introspective operation; it is constitutive of the subject as subject. This is the intentional element. However, more familiar to us are the intentional summations.

The Intentional Summations

Intentional acts are summated into living, the accumulation of experience, the acquisition of skills, habits, ways of doing things. Objects are summated into situations, and the summation of situations is the environment, the world, the horizon. Subjects are summated into the intersubjectivity of community, into 'we', into the family, the swarm, the flock, the herd, the group. We apprehend together the common situation, act together in the common situation, communicate about the common situation, live a common life and share a common destiny. The summation of intentional acts, then, is threefold: (1) the summation of the acts themselves, which is one's living; (2) the summation of objects into situations, into a world; and (3) the summation of subjects into a 'we' who live together and perform all the operations of life not singly, like so many isolated monads, but as a 'we'.

The animal is an organism, but it is also conscious. Just as the self-mediation that constitutes the growth of the organism involves a displacement upwards, so the intentional order involves a displacement inwards to the subject of consciousness. Moreover, the intentional order involves an extension outwards. The tree can respond only to things that act upon it; but the animal can respond to anything it apprehends. Finally, the displacement inwards gives rise to the 'we', the intersubjective community.

5. Self-Mediation: Self-Consciousness

A third form of self-mediation is self-consciousness. Though the animal mediates itself by intentionality, still in the animal intentionality does not become autonomous. The animal lives by instinct and the instincts translate into consciousness the needs and functions of the animal. The animal does not plan, think out new plans, and jettison old plans of animal living. Its mode of living is something that is settled, as we say, by instinct, by its nature. But human development is the mediation of autonomy. The child wants to do things for himself; the boy wants to decide for himself; the adolescent wants to find out for himself. Bringing up a child, educating a boy or girl, an adolescent, a young man or woman, is a matter of gradually enlarging the field in which a person does things for himself, decides for himself, finds out for himself. This process reaches its climax, its critical and decisive phase, when one finds out for oneself what one can make of oneself, when one decides for oneself what one is to be, when one lives in fidelity to one's self-discovery and decision. It is the existential moment that the drifter never confronts. The drifter thinks as everybody thinks, says what everybody says, does what everybody does, and so do they. The mass of unauthentic humanity lacks the courage to take the risk of thinking things out for themselves. It lacks the resoluteness that decides and the fidelity that stands by its decisions. The development that reaches its goal in the existential decision and in fidelity to that decision is the emergence of the autonomous subject.

There are, from the very nature of the case, two periods in human life. In the first, one is concerned entirely with objects, with coming to do things for oneself, to decide for oneself, to find out for oneself.

This process of dealing with objects makes one what one is. Habits are developed, and one becomes a kind of man or woman by one's actions. But there is that reflective moment in which one discovers that one is not merely dealing with objects but also making oneself. There arises the question of finding out for oneself what one is to make of oneself, of deciding for oneself what one is to be, and of living in fidelity to one's decisions. By such existential commitment one disposes of oneself. The disposing is not absolute within human life. My firmest resolutions today or on New Year's Eve do not predetermine my choices during the subsequent days, weeks, months, or even minutes. My choices afterwards all remain free choices, just as if I had not made the resolutions. One has to remain faithful to one's resolutions. Again, this disposing of oneself occurs within community and particularly within the three fundamental communities in the mutual self-commitment of marriage, in the overarching commitment to the state, in the eschatological commitment to the Church, the Body of Christ, the New Law which is the grace of the Holy Spirit. By existential commitment one disposes of oneself, and one does so in love, in loyalty, in faith.

Human community is materially an aggregate of human beings, but formally it is an intentional reality. This intentional reality is not merely a matter of knowing but of deciding, of commitment. It is what people mean it to be. Democracy in England and democracy in the United States are not 'democracy' in exactly the same sense, because the English tradition and the American tradition are not the same. There are as many kinds of wholes as there are effective ideas of the community that are lived. To change the received idea of the community is to change the reality itself. To change not merely the effective meaning but the normative meaning is to change the possible attainment of community. The community ought to be what one ought to mean, and it is what is meant *de facto* by the family, the state, the Church.

Just as we extended the notion of mediation in the case of organisms to the perpetuation of the species, so we can say that the community mediates itself by its history. The community is constituted by its common sense, its common meaning, its common commitment. That common apprehension of what the community is and what being a member of the community implies, may be full, vague, sketchy, satisfactory, or unsatisfactory. Living that idea gives rise to situations. If the situations that arise are unsatisfactory or deplorable, either the common sense of community is corrected or it is not, and there arises the course of history of that idea of the community. The community reveals itself to itself by its living, by its meeting its problems, by its revisions of its common sense, its common meaning, its common commitment, and by the way things work out in development and breakdown, by its growth and disintegration. By their fruits you shall know them. The history that is written about is the mediation, the revelation, of the common sense of the community; the history that is written is the fully reflective product of that self-manifestation. The two are continuous. The community reveals what it is in its living; reflection on the living itself, on its problems, its successes and its failures, reveals the quality of the common sense that constitutes the community. A written history, a history that attempts to think things out, is the fullest stage in the reflection, the manifestation, of what the community is.

As a community mediates itself by its history, so the individual mediates himself (manifests himself objectively to others and to himself) by his living. In one's living one brings to light one's possibilities and one realizes them in one's self-commitment. One discovers the inadequacies of one's self-discovery and the reservations that cripple one's self-commitment. One is true to oneself, or falls short of one's ideals, and recovers oneself in one's repentance and fresh beginnings. The person is autonomous; he is what he has made of himself. But, because his present resolutions cannot predetermine his future decisions, he is

always, until death, a piece of unfinished business. Consequently, his living is the manifestation, the mediation, of his existential decisions.

The autonomy of the individual is not the whole story. From the community he has his existence, his concrete possibilities, the constraints that hem him in, the opportunities he can seize and make the most of, the psychological, social, historical achievements and aberrations that constitute his situation. Destiny is perhaps the working out of individual autonomy within community, and so the summation of destinies in a community is the history of the community.

We have conceived of history as the mediation of the community, the manifestation of the constitutive common sense of the community. We have conceived of ruling one's life as the mediation of the existential decision by which the individual constitutes himself as autonomous, and perhaps we can conceive of individual destiny as the working out of autonomy under the conditions of human community. We are brought, then, to our final complication of the notion of mediation.

6. Mutual Self-Mediation

We have considered simple mediation, mutual mediation, and self-mediation. Simple mediation is an extremely general and tenuous notion. It is mediation from the immediate to the mediated. The immediate is any principle, origin, source, ground, basis; the mediated is any effect, consequence, result, outcome, any sphere of influence, radiation, expansion. We employed this general notion to form notions of mutual mediation and self-mediation. Mutual mediation constitutes the functional whole: there are at least two principles and each mediates the other or others. Self-mediation means that a whole has consequences that transform the whole itself, and we distinguished three levels: the displacement upwards of organic growth; the displacement inwards of animal consciousness; the deliberate shift of center of existential commitment. But we remarked of existential decision that it occurs in community, in love, in loyalty, in faith. Just as there is a self-mediation towards autonomy, so there is a mutual self-mediation and its occasion is the encounter in all its forms (meeting, regular meeting, living together). One's self-discovery and self-commitment is one's own secret. It is not a natural property that can be predicated of all the individuals in a class. It is an idea conceived, gestated, born within one. It is known by others when one chooses to reveal it, and revealing it is an act of confidence, of intimacy, of letting down one's defenses, of entrusting oneself to another. In the process from extroversion, from being poured out on objects, to existential self-commitment, to fidelity, to destiny, we are not Leibnizian monads with neither doors nor windows; we are open to the influence of others and others are open to influence by us.

Mutual self-mediation occurs in a variety of contexts and to a greater or less extent. Meeting, falling in love, getting married is a mutual self-mediation in which, it has been said, the father becomes the head and the mother the heart of the family. There is a mutual self-mediation in the education of the infant, the child, the adolescent, the young man or woman. There is a mutual self-mediation in the relationships of mother and child, father and son, brothers and sisters. There is a mutual self-mediation between equals, between brothers and sisters, between husband and wife, and between superiors and inferiors, parents and children, teachers and pupils, professors and students. There are matrices of personal relations in the neighborhood, in industry and commerce, in the professions, in local, national, and international politics. The exploration of the field of mutual self-mediation is perhaps the work of the novelist. But Hegel, in his study of the master and the slave, has given us an instance of the reversal of roles, and Gaston Fessard has

provided a similar dialectic of Jew and Greek.⁴ Mutual self-mediation proves the inexhaustible theme of dramatists and novelists. It is an imponderable in education that will not show up in charts and statistics. It lies in the immediate interpersonal situation that vanishes when communication becomes indirect through books, television programs, and teaching by mail.

We have considered a long series of applications of the notion of mediation, and we have done so without dependence upon Hegelian logic with its idealist presuppositions. Our treatment rests simply upon a generalization of the notion of mediation found in Aristotle. For Aristotle, the only field in which the immediate and the mediated are distinguished, is that of necessity, evidence, and truth. By considering any factor, property, aspect to be immediate in one location and mediated in other locations, I have attempted to show how the notion of mediation can be developed into a pattern of structures. Our consideration of mediation has yielded a number of terms and analogies. We generalized Aristotle's mediation of truth, evidence, and necessity to any kind of consequence, result, manifestation. We went on to consider mutual mediation on the levels of mechanics, the organism, consciousness, and mind. We conceived three levels of self-mediation, of the whole having consequences that transform the whole. We had occasion to speak of growth, consciousness, autonomy, of displacement upwards, displacement inwards, and the consequent deliberate shift of center. We made mention of evolution, encounter, community, history, and destiny, and we have considered mutual self-mediation.

I have spoken of such different instances of mediation that I may have produced mere bewilderment. The bewilderment arises perhaps because mediation is an even less determinate notion than causality. Hence, to say that A mediates B may mean any of a vast variety of things, and to know any of them is entirely a matter of studying them. The word 'mediation' does not teach us anything whatever about mechanics, biology, sensitive consciousness, rational autonomy. Still, mediation is not without significance. From simple mediation one passes to mutual mediation, an understanding of automatic devices, of organic functions, of functions within consciousness, of the difference between Aristotelian syllogistic and the method of empirical science. From mutual mediation one passes to three types of self-mediation, of the self-transforming whole. Finally, mutual mediation and self-mediation combine in mutual self-mediation. Let us turn now to an application of the notion of mediation to the mediation of Christ in prayer.

8. The Mediation of Christ in Prayer

Mediation is an open notion, an open pattern of concepts, and it can be applied in an extremely large number of ways. We must select a particular aspect of mediation in order to apply it to prayer. Our question does not regard all the ways in which mediation can be applied to Christ; it regards one particular way in which mediation is relevant to prayer. I shall proceed by first indicating the obvious way in which we spontaneously perform, in which we think of the mediation of Christ objectively. Then I shall consider what I think is significant in prayer, namely, its subjective application.

Spontaneously we think of Christ objectively, in terms of Galatians 4:4-6: ". . . But when the term was completed, God sent his own Son, born of a woman, born under the law, to purchase freedom for the subjects of the law, in order that we might attain the status of sons. To prove that you are sons, God has sent into our hearts the Spirit of his Son, crying 'Abba! Father!'"⁵ Christ appears to us in terms of the love of Christ: "Greater love than this no man hath, that he should lay down his life for his friends." Again, Christ appears in terms of the precept of Christ: "A new command I give unto you: Love one another as I

have loved you.” The example of Christ in his life, in his suffering, in his death, is set before us through all our religious teaching. The work of Christ, his redemption, his sacrifice, his church that carries on his work, are all before us. Christ mediates between us and the Father, and the Holy Spirit mediates between us and Christ: “For there is one God, and also one mediator between God and men, Christ Jesus . . .” [1 Timothy 2: 5]; ‘And no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord!’ except under the influence of the Holy Spirit” [1 Corinthians 12:3]. This is an account of Christ as mediator in the objective field.

But there is another approach to Christ as mediator. Each of us is to himself something immediate. It is what is meant by *Existenz*, oneself as one is, as capable of a decision that disposes of oneself, and yet as incapable of an absolute disposition. It is all that is to be known by analysis in *Insight*,⁶ yet not as so known but as lived, as the *vécu* not the *thématique*, as the *actus exercitus* not the *actus signatus*. It is oneself as a prior given to oneself, all the data on one's spontaneity, one's deliberate decisions, one's living, one's loving. It is not one's thinking about all that but each of us in his or her immediacy to himself or herself. In that immediacy there are supernatural realities, realities that do not pertain to our nature, that result from the communication to us of Christ's life. In the first part of the gospel of John ‘life’ is a recurrent theme which appears first in the prologue and culminates perhaps in chapter 10. “All that came to be was alive with his life, and that life was the light of men” [John 1:3-4]; “I have come that men may have life, and may have it in all its fullness” [John 10:10-11]. We are temples of the Holy Spirit; we are not our own. St. Paul expresses this in vigorous, almost vulgar passage: “Shall I then take from Christ his bodily parts and make them over to a harlot?” [1 Corinthians 6:14-19] We are not our own; we do not belong to ourselves; we are members of Christ. There is an identification of the Christians and Christ. “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?” [Acts 26:14] Paul did not persecute Jesus. He persecuted the Christians. We are adoptive children of God the Father. This is the reality that we are, the higher part of our reality.

This supernatural reality is something in us that is immediate and it becomes mediated in the life of prayer. It is not immediate in the sense in which our bodies and our souls are immediate to us. Our bodies and souls are ours by nature. Being temples of the Holy Spirit, members of Christ, adoptive children of God the Father, is something that is ours essentially by a gift. Still, concretely, it is part of our reality and in that sense it proceeds, through the mediation of prayer, from being a sort of vegetative living to a conscious living. It is a merely vegetative living if one is in the state of grace, if one keeps out of sin, if one does good deeds, for one does all this only by the grace of God. But, as occurring only by the grace of God, it just occurs, and we do not stop to think. It is a life within us that is promised us by Christ, that fructifies in us, but our ideas about it can be as vague and inconsequential as Topsy's ideas about how she came into the world. On the other hand, this life of grace within us can become an habitual, conscious living. One may not think about it all the time, but one easily reverts to it. Just as when one is in love, one is distracted from everything except the beloved, so one can be distracted, as it were, from worldliness in an easy and spontaneous manner. This is not a matter of study or analysis of oneself. It is a living, a developing, a growing in which one element is added gradually to another until a new whole emerges. This transformation is the mediation of what is immediate in us.

De facto we are temples of the Spirit, members of Christ, adoptive children of the Father, but in a vegetative sort of way. Growth in prayer is the movement of the life of grace into our conscious, spontaneous, deliberate living. Just as we are immediate to ourselves by consciousness without any self-knowledge; just as we can move to fuller knowledge of ourselves through consciousness by philosophic

study and self-appropriation; so too what we are by the grace of God, by the gift of God, can have its objectification within us. The immediate can be mediated by our acts and so gradually reveal to us in ever fuller fashion, in a more conscious and pressing fashion, the fundamental fact about us which is the great gift and grace that Jesus Christ brought to us. This mediation is potentially universal, and the precept is "Pray always". In loving our neighbor we are loving Christ. In making ourselves good Christians and better Christians we are loving Christ. In this process there is complete universality, a possibility of the complete growth of every aspect of the person, for it can regard every act, thought, word, deed, and omission.

Growth in prayer is not only the mediation of the subject by his acts. As always, the acts have an object, and in that object the focal point is Christ. But it is not Christ as apprehended by the Apostles, by Paul and John, by the church, by Christ himself, by the Spirit. It is our own apprehension of him. We put on, as it were, our own view of him. We put on Christ in our own ways, in accord with our own capacities and individuality, in response to our own needs and failings. While one's view has its foundation in the tradition and revelation, it arises from what is immediate in the subject and develops in response to the capacities, the needs, and the growth of the subject. There is, then, a mediation of what is immediate in us through the grace of God by our acts. But, insofar as the object of those acts is Christ (for everything turns back to Christ in one way or another), it is not merely a self-mediation in which we develop but a self-mediation through another. One becomes oneself not merely by experiences, insights, judgments, by choices and decisions, by conversion, not just freely and deliberately, not just deeply and strongly, but as one who is carried along. One becomes oneself not in isolation but in reference to Christ. The Father predestined us to be conformed to the image of his Son, through the merits of Christ, through the grace of Christ, through the example of Christ. Consequently, growth in prayer is not merely a personal development but a personal development in relation to another person.

This personal development in relation to another person is a mutual self-mediation. It is not merely a self-mediation through another. However, it is not the mutual self-mediation of equals, as between husband and wife, brother and sister; nor is it a matter of simultaneous mutual influence. Nonetheless, it is a very real mutual self-mediation. Christ himself, as man, developed and acquired human perfection. The perfection that Christ acquired could have been quite different from the human perfection that, as a matter of fact, he did acquire. If he sought the perfection that was suitable to him as a Divine Person, we would not expect it to be the perfection of one who lives a life of poverty and suffering, who dies in abandonment, unjustly and cruelly. Christ decided to perfect himself in the manner he did because of us. When we think of the Way of the Cross, we think primarily of the Cross of Christ. But the Way of the Cross is primarily the way in which fallen nature acquires its perfection: death and resurrection. Resurrection is attained through death because death are the wages of sin. It was because he was redeeming a fallen humanity that Christ chose to perfect himself, to become the perfect man, by his own autonomous choices. It was because of us, thinking of us, thinking of what we needed to attain our own self-mediation. Just as it is by adverting to the precepts -- for example, the love of Christ -- that we attain our own self-mediation with reference to him in the life of prayer, so also the life of Christ himself was a self-mediation with reference to others, and the others are we and all men. The mediation of Christ in the life of prayer is, I should say, a mutual self-mediation.

One may think of the human lot in terms of abstract principles: overcoming evil by good; transforming evil into good; the general theme of death and resurrection. But instead of an abstract principle we have mutual self-mediation. We choose that way because we choose the Cross of Christ. "If any man will come after me, let him take up his cross daily and follow me." Primarily, the Cross belongs to all humanity. Christ chose it because of us, and we choose it because of him. To carry this point further is, in a sense, a matter only of private meditation and private living. The life of prayer is on the level of what is lived, and any talk about it is a thematizing of it. The notions we have developed of self-mediation and mutual self-mediation can be applied to our own subjectivity, to what is immediate within us. Initially and fundamentally, they are applied in a very obscure fashion in terms of objects, temples of the Spirit, members of Christ, adoptive children of the Father. Still, they have their subjective manifestation, their revelation in us that they are within us. They are the immediate in an ontological immediacy. Their ontological immediacy is promoted to an intentional immediacy through the life of prayer. Christ is mediator in the life of prayer insofar as that life itself is a transition from the immediacy of spontaneity through the objectification of ourselves in acts. The acts of living and the acts within praying are referred to Christ. By that process we perfect ourselves, by a self-mediation that is related to another person. But there is a similar process in the becoming of Christ as man. He became himself with reference to us. In both cases, the fundamental theorem, as it were, is the transformation of evil into good, the absorption of the evil of the world by putting up with it, by not perpetuating it as rigid justice would demand. That putting up with it acts, as it were, as a blotter, transforms the situation, and creates a situation in which good flourishes.

NOTES

¹ "The Mediation of Christ in Prayer" is a lecture given by Lonergan at the Thomas More Institute in Montreal on Sept. 24, 1963 [#269 in the O'Callaghan-Tekippe Bibliography of April 30, 1983]. It seems that the only existing record is the tape-recording. However, § 1-7 of the present edition follow closely, with only occasional and minor elaborations, Lonergan's own notes on mediation prepared for "Knowledge and Learning," a two-week Institute in the Graduate School of Gonzaga University, Spokane, Washington, July 15-26, 1963 [#260 in the O' Callaghan-Tekippe Bibliography J. Accordingly, in § 1-7 I have integrated the two sources for the sake of organization and clarity. § 8, where Lonergan applies his notion of mediation to prayer, is drawn entirely from the existing tape-recording [TC 369 in The Lonergan Centre, Toronto]. --Ed.

² *Posterior Analytics* II, 4.

³ On Hegel's use of the notion of mediation and its fundamental character in Hegelian philosophy, see Henri Niel, *De la Mediation dans la Philosophie de Hegel* [Paris: Aubier, 1945].

⁴ See Hegel's *Phänomenologie* and Gaston Fessard's *De l'actualite historigue* [Paris: Desclée de Brouwer, 1960], Vol. I.

⁵ All scriptural quotations which were somewhat abbreviated by Lonergan in the lecture have been augmented and are from *The New English Bible*. -- Ed.

⁶ *Insight: A Study of Human Understanding* [London: Longmans, Green, 1957].