Fr. Roger J. Landry Portofino Bay Hotel, Orlando, Florida Catholic Medical Association Annual Conference September 25, 2014

"The Bifurcation of Faith and Reason: The Unleashing of Radical Secularism and Its Damage to Culture and to the Medicine"

#### Introduction

- o I'm very grateful for the invitation to come here to be with you today.
- O I've been asked to speak about secularism, its intended split between faith and reason and the consequent marginalization of faith in culture and discourse and its unintended weakening of reason and many other negative consequences.
- o It's a very full topic about which tomes could and have been written. The approach I'd like to take today would be to ponder together with you the very rich analysis that has been given to us on the topic by the recent magisterium, especially Popes St. John Paul II, Benedict XVI and Francis.
- O I'd like to frame our thoughts especially in response to Pope Francis' appeal in his programmatic apostolic exhortation "The Joy of the Gospel" last November to put everything we do in the Church into a missionary key. "I dream," he said there, "of a ...missionary impulse capable of transforming everything, so that the Church's customs, ways of doing things, times and schedules, language and structures, can be suitably channeled for the evangelization of today's world." Pope Francis is asking for a missionary metamorphosis of everything we do in the Church, including, I think, the way we have annual conventions of Catholic medical personnel and the way we approach the large and pressing problem of secularism. Looking at the question of the separation of faith and reason from the perspective of what's needed for the new evangelization can change the mood with which we could look at a heavy topic because it helps us not just to diagnose but to prescribe a needed remedy.
- o I'd like to break down our examination into two parts.
  - First, I'd like to examine in general what secularism and how it is connected to the arrogant distortion of science called scientism and to the various evils associated with what Pope Francis says is the worst evil that can come upon us, spiritual worldliness. I would also in this first section try to describe the relationship that faith and reason should have and how the new evangelization requires courageous faith and bold reason working together.
  - Second, I'd like to examine the many practical consequences that flow once the bond between faith and reason is severed because of secularism in order to give us not only a greater practical knowledge of the damage caused but also greater motivation to try to heal our culture whose life is endangered by this cancer.

## • What is secularism?

- O Pope Benedict has defined secularism as a practical atheism, a living etsi Deus non daretur, as if God were not a given.
- O This living as if God did not exist began as an Enlightenment project to try to understand and ground essential moral norms that were common to particular religious confessions and even to those who had no belief in God. They were originally seeking absolutes that would be valid in the hypothetical situation that God didn't exist as an essential pillar for the foundation of society which they believed couldn't sustain freedom except on the basis of such commonly shared moral principles, something President John Adams himself wrote about extensively at the founding of our Republic.
- O But what started out with good intentions led to unintended consequences. Rather than providing security to those social foundations, it has begun to undermine them.
  - Pope Benedict diagnosed this problem in our country in an address to visiting US bishops in January 2012, saying that the multiple threats that we're experiencing to religious freedom in our country flow from "powerful new cultural currents that are not only directly opposed to

core moral teachings of the Judeo-Christian tradition, <u>but increasingly hostile to Christianity as such....</u> [namely] an extreme <u>individualism</u>, <u>seek[ing] to promote notions of freedom detached from moral truth.</u> ... <u>a radical secularism</u> that finds increasing expression in the political and cultural spheres."

- o He gave a much greater description in a March 2008 address to the Pontifical Council for Culture.
  - Secularization, which presents itself in cultures by imposing a world and humanity without reference to Transcendence, is invading every aspect of daily life and developing a mentality in which God is effectively absent, wholly or partially, from human life and awareness. This secularization is not only an external threat to believers, but has been manifest for some time in the heart of the Church herself. ... [We] live in the world and are often marked, if not conditioned, by the cultural imagery that impresses contradictory and impelling models regarding the practical denial of God: there is no longer any need for God, to think of him or to return to him. ... The "death of God" proclaimed by many intellectuals in recent decades is giving way to a barren cult of the individual. In this cultural context there is a risk of drifting into spiritual atrophy and emptiness of heart, sometimes characterized by surrogate forms of religious affiliation and vague spiritualism.
- He added that this is becoming a way of life exacerbated by the globalized deification of and slavery to technology.
  - More recently, through new information technologies, globalization has often also resulted in disseminating in all cultures many of the materialistic and individualistic elements of the West. The formula "Etsi Deus non daretur" is increasingly becoming a way of living that originates in a sort of "arrogance" of reason a reality nonetheless created and loved by God that deems itself self-sufficient and closes itself to contemplation and the quest for a superior Truth. The light of reason, exalted but in fact impoverished by the Enlightenment, has radically replaced the light of faith, the light of God.
- He added in a Wednesday audience catechesis in November 2012 that this practical atheism is destructive because it leads to overall coldness to God and to faith in general.
  - A particularly dangerous phenomenon for faith has arisen in our times: indeed a form of atheism exists which we define, precisely, as "practical", in which the truths of faith or religious rites are not denied but are merely deemed irrelevant to daily life, detached from life, pointless. So it is that people often believe in God in a superficial manner, and live "as though God did not exist" (etsi Deus non daretur). In the end, however, this way of life proves even more destructive because it leads to indifference to faith and to the question of God.
- The danger is greater because many of those who believe themselves to be believers, are often
  infected by it without realizing it. The *Instrumentum Laboris* (58) for the 2012 Synod on the New
  Evangelization described this process
  - Although anti-Christian, anti-religious and anti-clerical references are sometimes heard today, secularism, in recent times, has not taken the form of a direct, outright denial of God, religion or Christianity. Instead, the secularizing movement has taken a more subtle tone in cultural forms which invade people's everyday lives and foster a mentality in which God is completely or partially left out of life and human consciousness.
  - In this way, secularism has entered the Christian life and ecclesial communities and has become not simply an external threat for believers but something to be faced each day in life in the various manifestations of the so-called culture of relativism.
  - Furthermore, this tendency is having <u>serious anthropological implications</u> that put in question basic human experiences, for example, the relation between man and woman as well as the meaning of reproduction and death itself.
  - Traces of a secularized way of looking at life can be seen in the daily lives of many Christians, who are oftentimes influenced, if not completely conditioned, by the culture of images with its models and opposing forces. Temptations to superficiality and self-centredness, arising from a predominating hedonistic and consumer-oriented mentality, are

- not easily overcome. The "death of God" announced decades ago by so many intellectuals has given way to an unproductive cult of the individual.
- A real possibility exists that the fundamental elements of explaining the faith might be lost, which will then lead to not only spiritual atrophism and emptiness of heart, but also, on the other extreme, substitute forms of religious affiliation and a **vague sense of the spiritual**.
- O Secularism is closely related to what Pope Francis has been calling spiritual worldliness.
  - Seven days before he was elected Pope, in his conclave- and history-changing intervention during the General Congregation of Cardinals, Cardinal Bergoglio had described that the greatest reform the Church needed was against the spiritual worldliness that flows when the spirit of the world, a spirit in which God is practically absent, invades the Church. He said, ""When the Church is self-referent without realizing it," Cardinal Bergoglio state, "she believes she has her own light. She ceases to be the *mysterium lunae* [the mystery of the moon reflecting the light of the sun (God)] and gives way to that very great evil which is spiritual worldliness (which according to [the great 20<sup>th</sup> century theologian Cardinal Henri] De Lubac, is the worst evil that can come upon the Church). The self-referent Church lives to give glory only to one another." The fundamental corruption is spiritual worldliness, "living within herself, of herself and for herself."
  - In his exhortation, "The Joy of the Gospel," Pope Francis said that the type of spiritual worldliness flowing from constructing day-to-day life as if God were not a given is "infinitely more disastrous than any other worldliness that is simply moral." He said it's fueled in two different ways.
    - The first is by modern gnostic tendencies, which lead to "a purely subjective faith whose only interest is a certain experience or a <u>set of ideas and bits of information</u> which are meant to console and enlighten, but which ultimately keep one imprisoned in his or her own thoughts and feelings."
    - The second is what he calls "self-absorbed promethean neopelagianism." It's funny that he used that expression in the same document in which he encouraged everyone in the Church to speak in clear and simple language of a mother tongue! What does he mean by this expression?
      - o Self-absorbed = egocentric
      - O Promethean = We begin to think that God's gifts no longer have a relationship to God, but are ours, just like Prometheus began to think he was the owner, rather than the steward, of the fire given to him by Zeus.
      - Neopelagianism = Most achievement is ours, not a result of cooperation with God's grace. The neopelagians always left some room for God's grace. Modern secularists are pelagians who think that God really isn't involved.
    - Pope Benedict talked about the same problem of self-absorbed promethean neopelagianism in his Nov 12, 2012 catechesis on secularism, saying, "Were God to lose his centrality man would lose his rightful place, he would no longer fit into creation, into relations with others. What ancient wisdom evokes with the myth of Prometheus has not faded: man thinks he himself can become a "god", master of life and death."
    - In a famous speech given the day before John Paul II died and 18 days before he was elected as his successor, he elaborated on the same insight, especially with regard to the new technologies: "Less visible, but no less disquieting, are the possibilities of self-manipulation that man has acquired. He has plumbed the depths of being, has deciphered the components of the human being, and is now capable, so to speak, of constructing man himself, who thus no longer comes into the world as a gift of the Creator, but as a product of our action, a product that, therefore, can also be selected according to the exigencies established by ourselves. Thus, the splendor of being an image of God no

longer shines over man, which is what confers on him his dignity and inviolability, and he is left only to the power of his own human capacities.

- O We can see how this secularist worldliness can lead to scientism.
  - St. John Paul II described this connection in his 1998 encyclical Fides et Ratio:
    - FR 88: [One] threat to be reckoned with is scientism. This is the philosophical notion that refuses to admit the validity of forms of knowledge other than those of the positive sciences; and it relegates religious, theological, ethical and aesthetic knowledge to the realm of mere fantasy. In the past, the same idea emerged in positivism and neo-positivism, which considered metaphysical statements to be meaningless. Critical epistemology has discredited such a claim, but now we see it revived in the new guise of scientism, which dismisses values as mere products of the emotions and rejects the notion of being in order to clear the way for pure and simple facticity. Science would thus be poised to dominate all aspects of human life through technological progress. The undeniable triumphs of scientific research and contemporary technology have helped to propagate a scientistic outlook, which now seems boundless, given its inroads into different cultures and the radical changes it has brought. Regrettably, it must be noted, scientism consigns all that has to do with the question of the meaning of life to the realm of the irrational or imaginary. ... Since it leaves no space for the critique offered by ethical judgment, the scientistic mentality has succeeded in leading many to think that if something is technically possible it is therefore morally admissible.
  - To avoid the corruption of the technological imperative, that if we can do something there's nothing stopping us, Cardinal Ratzinger in 2005 said that moral development must outpace technological.
    - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005) The growth of our possibilities has not been matched by a comparable development of our moral energy. Moral strength has not grown together with the development of science; rather, it has diminished, because the technical mentality relegates morality to the subjective realm, while we have need, precisely, of a public morality, a morality that is able to respond to the threats that weigh down on the existence of us all. The real and gravest danger in these times lies, precisely, in this imbalance between technical possibilities and moral energy. The security we need as a precondition of our freedom and our dignity cannot come, in the last analysis, from technical systems of control, but can, specifically, spring only from man's moral strength: Whenever the latter is lacking or is insufficient, the power man has will be transformed increasingly into a power of destruction.
- The need for a new evangelization to counter secularism and to put faith and reason back together.
  - o This is an effort of great stakes, John Paul II told us in Crossing the Threshold of Hope, because secularism is anti-evangelization and secularists have been more successful lately in spreading their worldview than Christians have ours.
    - "CTH: "Against the spirit of the world, the Church takes up anew each day a struggle that is none other than the struggle for the world's soul. If in fact, on the one hand, the Gospel and evangelization are present in this world, on the other, there is also present a powerful anti-evangelization which is well organized and has the means to vigorously oppose the Gospel and evangelization. The struggle for the soul of the contemporary world is at its height where the spirit of this world seems strongest. In this sense the encyclical Redemptoris Missio speaks of modern Areopagi. Today these Areopagi are the worlds of science, culture, and media; these are the worlds of writers and artists, the worlds where the intellectual elite are formed."
  - o In Fides et Ratio, John Paul II called us all to evangelize culture, particularly science:
    - FR 103: A philosophy which responds to the challenge of theology's demands and evolves in harmony with faith is part of that "evangelization of culture" which Paul VI proposed as

one of the fundamental goals of evangelization. (125) I have unstintingly recalled the pressing need for a new evangelization; and I appeal now to philosophers to explore more comprehensively the dimensions of the true, the good and the beautiful to which the word of God gives access. This task becomes all the more urgent if we consider the challenges which the new millennium seems to entail, and which affect in a particular way regions and cultures which have a long-standing Christian tradition. This attention to philosophy too should be seen as a fundamental and original contribution in service of the new evangelization.

- o The first evangelization was one that took place in union between faith and reason
  - LF 32: The encounter of the Gospel message with the philosophical culture of the ancient world proved a decisive step in the evangelization of all peoples, and stimulated a fruitful interaction between faith and reason which has continued down the centuries to our own times
  - FR 36: If pagans were to understand them, the first Christians could not refer only to "Moses and the prophets" when they spoke. They had to point as well to natural knowledge of God and to the voice of conscience in every human being
- o Faith and reason are supposed to be complementary wings to discover God, ourselves and others.
  - FR: Faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth; and God has placed in the human heart a desire to know the truth—in a word, to know himself—so that, by knowing and loving God, men and women may also come to the fullness of truth about themselves"
  - FR 16: Reason and faith cannot be separated without diminishing the capacity of men and women to know themselves, the world and God in an appropriate way
- We find this link between faith and reason both in reading the book of nature as well as reading Sacred Scripture.
  - o FR 19: From the greatness and beauty of created things comes a corresponding perception of their Creator" (*Wis* 13:5). **This is to recognize as a first stage of divine Revelation the marvellous "book of nature," which, when read with the proper tools of human reason, can lead to knowledge of the Creator.** If human beings with their intelligence fail to recognize God as Creator of all, it is not because they lack the means to do so, but because their free will and their sinfulness place an impediment in the way."
  - o FR 22: St. Paul declares a profound truth: through all that is created the "eyes of the mind" can come to know God. Through the medium of creatures, God stirs in reason an intuition of his "power" and his "divinity" (cf. Rom 1:20). This is to concede to human reason a capacity that seems almost to surpass its natural limitations. Not only is it not restricted to sensory knowledge, from the moment that it can reflect critically upon the data of the senses, but, by discoursing on the data provided by the senses, reason can reach the cause which lies at the origin of all perceptible reality. ... According to the Apostle, it was part of the original plan of the creation that reason should without difficulty reach beyond the sensory data to the origin of all things: the Creator. But because of the disobedience by which man and woman chose to set themselves in full and absolute autonomy in relation to the One who had created them, this ready access to God the Creator diminished.
  - o FR 22: The blindness of pride deceived our first parents into thinking themselves sovereign and autonomous, and into thinking that they could ignore the knowledge that comes from God. All men and women were caught up in this primal disobedience, which so wounded reason that from then on its path to full truth would be strewn with obstacles. From that time onwards the human capacity to know the truth was impaired by an aversion to the One who is the source and origin of truth. ... The eyes of the mind were no longer able to see clearly: reason became more and more a prisoner to itself.
  - o FR 28: The natural limitation of reason and the inconstancy of the heart often obscure and distort a person's search. Truth can also drown in a welter of other concerns. People can even run from the truth as soon as they glimpse it because they are afraid of its demands.

- o The first Vatican Council affirmed the need for robust faith and reason united against the opposed challenges of fideism and rationalism.
- o The affirmation of both was made strongly in Vatican I and II.
  - FR 8: the rationalist critique of the time attacked faith and denied the possibility of any knowledge that was not the fruit of reason's natural capacities. This obliged the Council to reaffirm emphatically that there exists a knowledge that is peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason, which nevertheless by its nature can discover the Creator.

## It affirmed:

- FR 9: the truth attained by philosophy and the truth of Revelation are neither identical nor mutually exclusive: "There exists a twofold order of knowledge, distinct not only as regards their source, but also as regards their object.
- FR 10: faith is of an order other than philosophical knowledge which depends upon sense perception and experience and which advances by the light of the intellect alone.
- FR 14: reason has its own specific field in which it can enquire and understand, restricted only by its finiteness before the infinite mystery of God.
- FR 15: the truth made known to us by Revelation is neither the product nor the consummation of an argument devised by human reason. It appears instead as something gratuitous, which itself stirs thought and seeks acceptance as an expression of love

### It censured:

- FR 52. The censures were delivered even-handedly: on the one hand, *fideism* (59) and *radical traditionalism*,(60) for their distrust of reason's natural capacities, and, on the other, *rationalism* (61) and *ontologism* (62) because they attributed to natural reason a knowledge which only the light of faith could confer.
- FR 52: Against all forms of **rationalism**, then, there was a need to affirm the distinction between the mysteries of faith and the findings of philosophy, and the transcendence and precedence of the mysteries of faith over the findings of philosophy. ...
- FR 52: Against the temptations of **fideism**, however, it was necessary to stress the unity of truth and thus the positive contribution which rational knowledge can and must make to faith's knowledge."
- o The stages in the breakdown between faith and reason
  - FR 45: Saint Albert the Great and Saint Thomas were the **first to recognize the autonomy** which philosophy and the sciences needed if they were to perform well in their respective fields of research. From the late Medieval period onwards, however, the legitimate distinction between the two forms of learning became more and more a fateful separation. As a result of the exaggerated rationalism of certain thinkers, positions grew more radical and there emerged eventually a philosophy which was separate from and absolutely independent of the contents of faith.
  - Benedict in Regensburg:
    - Dehellenization first emerges in connection with the **postulates of the Reformation in the sixteenth century.** Looking at the tradition of scholastic theology, the Reformers thought they were confronted with a faith system totally conditioned by philosophy, that is to say an articulation of the faith based on an alien system of thought. As a result, faith no longer appeared as a living historical Word but as one element of an overarching philosophical system. The principle of *sola scriptura*, on the other hand, sought faith in its pure, primordial form, as originally found in the biblical Word. **Metaphysics** appeared as a premise derived from another source, from which faith had to be liberated in order to become once more fully itself. When Kant stated that he needed to set thinking aside in order to make

- room for faith, he carried this programme forward with a radicalism that the Reformers could never have foreseen. He thus anchored faith exclusively in practical reason, denying it access to reality as a whole.
- The liberal theology of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries ushered in a second stage in the process of dehellenization, with Adolf von Harnack as its outstanding representative. ... It took as its point of departure Pascal's distinction between the God of the philosophers and the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob... Harnack's central idea was to return simply to the man Jesus and to his simple message. underneath the accretions of theology and indeed of hellenization: this simple message was seen as the culmination of the religious development of humanity. Jesus was said to have put an end to worship in favour of morality. In the end he was presented as the father of a humanitarian moral message. Fundamentally, Harnack's goal was to bring Christianity back into harmony with modern reason, liberating it, that is to say, from seemingly philosophical and theological elements, such as faith in Christ's divinity and the triune God. In this sense, historical-critical exegesis of the New Testament, as he saw it, restored to theology its place within the university: theology, for Harnack, is something essentially historical and therefore strictly scientific. What it is able to say critically about Jesus is, so to speak, an expression of practical reason and consequently it can take its rightful place within the university. Behind this thinking lies the modern self-limitation of reason, classically expressed in Kant's "Critiques", but in the meantime further radicalized by the impact of the natural sciences. This modern concept of reason is based, to put it briefly, on a synthesis between Platonism (Cartesianism) and empiricism, a synthesis confirmed by the success of technology. On the one hand it presupposes the mathematical structure of matter, its intrinsic rationality, which makes it possible to understand how matter works and use it efficiently: this basic premise is, so to speak, the Platonic element in the modern understanding of nature. On the other hand, there is nature's capacity to be exploited for our purposes, and here only the possibility of verification or falsification through experimentation can yield decisive certainty.
- The latter are said to have the right to return to the simple message of the New Testament prior to that **inculturation, in order to inculturate** it anew in their own particular milieux. This thesis is not simply false, but it is coarse and lacking in precision. The New Testament was written in Greek and bears the imprint of the Greek spirit, which had already come to maturity as the Old Testament developed. True, there are elements in the evolution of the early Church which do not have to be integrated into all cultures. Nonetheless, the fundamental decisions made about the relationship between faith and the use of human reason are part of the faith itself; they are developments consonant with the nature of faith itself.
- All of this leads to the need for a new apologetics with the secular world, especially with all those influenced by scientistic premises.
  - B16 at the College des Bernardins: The classic formulation of the Christian faith's intrinsic need to make itself communicable to others, is a phrase from the First Letter of Peter, which in medieval theology was regarded as the biblical basis for the work of theologians: "Always have your answer ready for people who ask you the reason (the logos) for the hope that you all have" (3:15). (The Logos, the reason for hope must become apo-logía; it must become a response).
  - This is a new challenge for us today.
    - o B16 (Nov 12, 2012 audience): In the past, in the West, in a society deemed Christian, faith was the context in which people acted; the reference and adherence to God were part of daily life for the majority. Rather, it was the person who did not believe who had to justify his or her own

# incredulity. In our world the situation has changed and, increasingly, it is believers who must be able to account for their faith.

- To be able to do this, we need to understand more profoundly the rationality of our faith:
  - O B16 in Regensburg: In the beginning was the λόγος". This is the very word used by the emperor: God acts, σὺν λόγω, with logos. Logos means both reason and word a reason which is creative and capable of self-communication, precisely as reason. John thus spoke the final word on the biblical concept of God, and in this word all the often toilsome and tortuous threads of biblical faith find their culmination and synthesis. In the beginning was the logos, and the logos is God, says the Evangelist. The encounter between the Biblical message and Greek thought did not happen by chance. The vision of Saint Paul, who saw the roads to Asia barred and in a dream saw a Macedonian man plead with him: "Come over to Macedonia and help us!" (cf. Acts 16:6-10) this vision can be interpreted as a "distillation" of the intrinsic necessity of a rapprochement between Biblical faith and Greek inquiry.
  - The novelty of Christian proclamation does not consist in a thought, but in a deed: God has revealed himself. Yet this is no blind deed, but one which is itself Logos the presence of eternal reason in our flesh. Verbum caro factum est (In 1:14): just so, amid what is made (factum) there is now Logos, Logos is among us. Creation (factum) is rational. Naturally, the humility of reason is always needed, in order to accept it: man's humility, which responds to God's humility.
- We need new approaches, like what we see Fr. Spitzer doing.
  - o EG 132: Proclaiming the Gospel message to different cultures also involves proclaiming it to professional, scientific and academic circles. This means an encounter between faith, reason and the sciences with a view to developing new approaches and arguments on the issue of credibility, a creative apologetics which would encourage greater openness to the Gospel on the part of all. When certain categories of reason and the sciences are taken up into the proclamation of the message, these categories then become tools of evangelization; water is changed into wine. Whatever is taken up is not just redeemed, but becomes an instrument of the Spirit for enlightening and renewing the world.
  - o EG 242: Dialogue between science and faith also belongs to the work of evangelization at the service of peace. Whereas positivism and scientism "refuse to admit the validity of forms of knowledge other than those of the positive sciences" the Church proposes another path, which calls for a synthesis between the responsible use of methods proper to the empirical sciences and other areas of knowledge such as philosophy, theology, as well as faith itself, which elevates us to the mystery transcending nature and human intelligence.
- We need to dialogue not just with individuals but with the culture
  - O Pope Francis: EG 133: It is not enough that evangelizers be concerned to reach each person, or that the Gospel be proclaimed to the cultures as a whole. A theology and not simply a pastoral theology which is in dialogue with other sciences and human experiences is most important for our discernment on how best to bring the Gospel message to different cultural contexts and groups.
- To do this, we need to enter into the conversation of our interlocutors and approach them from within.

- Pope Francis about Emmaus in Brazil to the bishops from the world, which presents the paradigm for the New Evangelization:
  - Brazil, July 27, 2103: Let us read once again, in this light, the story of Emmaus (cf. Lk 24:13-15). The two disciples have left Jerusalem. They are leaving behind the "nakedness" of God. They are scandalized by the failure of the Messiah in whom they had hoped and who now appeared utterly vanquished, humiliated, even after the third day (vv. 17-21). Here we have to face the difficult mystery of those people who leave the Church, who, under the illusion of alternative ideas, now think that the Church – their Jerusalem – can no longer offer them anything meaningful and important. So they set off on the road alone, with their disappointment. Perhaps the Church appeared too weak, perhaps too distant from their needs, perhaps too poor to respond to their concerns, perhaps too cold, perhaps too caught up with itself, perhaps a prisoner of its own rigid formulas, perhaps the world seems to have made the Church a relic of the past, unfit for new questions; perhaps the Church could speak to people in their infancy but not to those come of age. It is a fact that nowadays there are many people like the two disciples of Emmaus; not only those looking for answers in the new religious groups that are sprouting up, but also those who already seem godless, both in theory and in practice.
  - Faced with this situation, what are we to do? We need a Church unafraid of going forth into their night. We need a Church capable of meeting them on their way. We need a Church capable of entering into their conversation. We need a Church able to dialogue with those disciples who, having left Jerusalem behind, are wandering aimlessly, alone, with their own disappointment, disillusioned by a Christianity now considered barren, fruitless soil, incapable of generating meaning....
  - Since there is no one to accompany them or to show them with his or her own life the true way, many have sought shortcuts, because the standards set by Mother Church seem to be asking too much. There are also those who recognize the ideal of man and of life as proposed by the Church, but they do not have the audacity to embrace it. They think that this ideal is too lofty for them, that it is beyond their abilities, and that the goal the Church sets is unattainable.

    Nonetheless they cannot live without having at least something, even a poor imitation of what seems too grand and distant. With disappointed hearts, they then go off in search of something that will lead them even further astray, or which brings them to a partial belonging that, ultimately, does not fulfill their lives.
  - From this point of view, we need a Church capable of walking at people's side, of doing more than simply listening to them; a Church which accompanies them on their journey; a Church able to make sense of the "night" contained in the flight of so many of our brothers and sisters from Jerusalem; a Church which realizes that the reasons why people leave also contain reasons why they can eventually return. But we need to know how to interpret, with courage, the larger picture. Jesus warmed the hearts of the disciples of Emmaus.
  - I would like all of us to ask ourselves today: are we still a Church capable of warming hearts? A Church capable of leading people

- back to Jerusalem? Of bringing them home? Jerusalem is where our roots are: Scripture, catechesis, sacraments, community, friendship with the Lord, Mary and the apostles... Are we still able to speak of these roots in a way that will revive a sense of wonder at their beauty?
- Let us recover the calm to be able to walk at the same pace as our pilgrims, keeping alongside them, remaining close to them, enabling them to speak of the disappointments present in their hearts and to let us address them. They want to forget Jerusalem, where they have their roots, but eventually they will experience thirst. We need a Church capable of accompanying them on the road back to Jerusalem! ... We need a Church that kindles hearts and warms them. We need a Church capable of restoring citizenship to her many children who are journeying, as it were, in an exodus.
- Can we still warm the hearts of people by entering into their conversation with the light of faith?
- John Paul II gives a couple of examples of this type of apologetics in Fides et Ratio.
  - He does it first on the types of questions people have:
    - FR 29. It is unthinkable that a search so deeply rooted in human nature would be completely vain and useless. The capacity to search for truth and to pose questions itself implies the rudiments of a response
    - Only the sense that they can arrive at an answer leads them to take the first step. This is what normally happens in scientific research. When scientists, following their intuition, set out in search of the logical and verifiable explanation of a phenomenon, they are confident from the first that they will find an answer, and they do not give up in the face of setbacks. They do not judge their original intuition useless simply because they have not reached their goal; rightly enough they will say that they have not yet found a satisfactory answer. The same must be equally true of the search for truth when it comes to the ultimate questions. The thirst for truth is so rooted in the human heart that to be obliged to ignore it would cast our existence into jeopardy. Everyday life shows well enough how each one of us is preoccupied by the pressure of a few fundamental questions and how in the soul of each of us there is at least an outline of the answers.
  - The fact that we all live by faith in ordinary life.
    - o FR 32. In believing, we entrust ourselves to the knowledge acquired by other people. This suggests an important tension. On the one hand, the knowledge acquired through belief can seem an imperfect form of knowledge, to be perfected gradually through personal accumulation of evidence; on the other hand, belief is often humanly richer than mere evidence, because it involves an interpersonal relationship and brings into play not only a person's capacity to know but also the deeper capacity to entrust oneself to others, to enter into a relationship with them which is intimate and enduring.
    - It should be stressed that the truths sought in this interpersonal relationship are not primarily empirical or philosophical. Rather, what is sought is *the truth of the person*—what the person is and what the person reveals from deep within. Human perfection, then, consists not simply in acquiring an abstract knowledge of the truth, but in a dynamic relationship of faithful self-giving with others. It is in this faithful self-giving that a person finds a fullness of certainty and security. At the same time, however, knowledge through belief, grounded as it is on trust between persons, is linked to truth: in the act of believing, men and women entrust themselves to the truth which the other declares to them.

- o FR. 33: It is the nature of the human being to seek the truth. This search looks not only to the attainment of truths which are partial, empirical or scientific; nor is it only in individual acts of decision-making that people seek the true good. Their search looks towards an ulterior truth that would explain the meaning of life. And it is therefore a search that can reach its end only in reaching the absolute. Thanks to the inherent capacities of thought, man is able to encounter and recognize a truth of this kind. Such a truth—vital and necessary as it is for life—is attained not only by way of reason but also through trusting acquiescence to other persons who can guarantee the authenticity and certainty of the truth itself. There is no doubt that the capacity to entrust oneself and one's life to another person and the decision to do so are among the most significant and expressive human acts.
- The secularist distrust of both faith and reason leads to many serious consequences. We can break these effects down into three different categories of effects:
  - o Those at the level of knowledge
  - o Those at the level of ethics and morality
  - o Those at the level of culture and society
- Consequences of the split between secularism-induced faith and reason at the level of knowledge (10)
  - o (1) Without strong faith and strong reason, we are stripped of the wonder, which hinders all inquiry toward the truth.
    - FR 4: [The] <u>fundamental elements of knowledge spring from the wonder awakened in them</u> by the contemplation of creation: <u>human beings are astonished to discover themselves as</u> part of the world, in a relationship with others like them, all sharing a common destiny
    - LF 5: Anthropology, logic, the natural sciences, history, linguistics and so forth—the whole universe of knowledge has been involved in one way or another. Yet the positive results achieved must not obscure the fact that reason, in its one-sided concern to investigate human subjectivity, seems to have forgotten that men and women are always called to direct their steps towards a truth that transcends them. Sundered from that truth, individuals are at the mercy of caprice, and their state as person ends up being judged by pragmatic criteria based essentially upon experimental data, in the mistaken belief that technology must dominate all. It has happened therefore that reason, rather than voicing the human orientation towards truth, has wilted under the weight of so much knowledge and little by little has lost the capacity to lift its gaze to the heights, not daring to rise to the truth of being. Abandoning the investigation of being, modern philosophical research has concentrated instead upon human knowing. Rather than make use of the human capacity to know the truth, modern philosophy has preferred to accentuate the ways in which this capacity is limited and conditioned
    - FR 106. I cannot fail to address a word to *scientists*, whose research offers an ever greater knowledge of the universe as a whole and of the incredibly rich array of its component parts, animate and inanimate, with their complex atomic and molecular structures. So far has science come, especially in this century, that its achievements never cease to amaze us. In expressing my admiration and in offering encouragement to these brave pioneers of scientific research, to whom humanity owes so much of its current development, <u>I would urge them to continue their efforts without ever abandoning the *sapiential* horizon within which scientific and technological achievements are wedded to the philosophical and ethical values which are the distinctive and indelible mark of the human person.</u>
  - 2) Without faith, the meaning of reason changes as it is reduced to instrumental reason and make it exclusively pragmatic

- LF 5: Anthropology, logic, the natural sciences, history, linguistics and so forth—the whole universe of knowledge has been involved in one way or another. Yet the positive results achieved must not obscure the fact that reason, in its one-sided concern to investigate human subjectivity, seems to have forgotten that men and women are always called to direct their steps towards a truth that transcends them. Sundered from that truth, individuals are at the mercy of caprice, and their state as person ends up being judged by pragmatic criteria based essentially upon experimental data, in the mistaken belief that technology must dominate all. It has happened therefore that reason, rather than voicing the human orientation towards truth, has wilted under the weight of so much knowledge and little by little has lost the capacity to lift its gaze to the heights, not daring to rise to the truth of being. Abandoning the investigation of being, modern philosophical research has concentrated instead upon human knowing. Rather than make use of the human capacity to know the truth, modern philosophy has preferred to accentuate the ways in which this capacity is limited and conditioned.
- FR 47. It should also be borne in mind that the role of philosophy itself has changed in modern culture. From universal wisdom and learning, it has been gradually reduced to one of the many fields of human knowing; indeed in some ways it has been consigned to a wholly marginal role. Other forms of rationality have acquired an ever higher profile, making philosophical learning appear all the more peripheral. These forms of rationality are directed not towards the contemplation of truth and the search for the ultimate goal and meaning of life; but instead, as "instrumental reason", they are directed—actually or potentially—towards the promotion of utilitarian ends, towards enjoyment or power.
- FR 89. No less dangerous is *pragmatism*, an attitude of mind which, in making its choices, precludes theoretical considerations or judements based on ethical principles. The practical consequences of this mode of thinking are significant. In particular there is growing support for a concept of democracy which is not grounded upon any reference to unchanging values: whether or not a line of action is admissible is decided by the vote of a parliamentary majority. (105) The consequences of this are clear: in practice, the great moral decisions of humanity are subordinated to decisions taken one after another by institutional agencies. Moreover, anthropology itself is severely compromised by a one-dimensional vision of the human being, a vision which excludes the great ethical dilemmas and the existential analyses of the meaning of suffering and sacrifice, of life and death.
- o (3) Without relying on faith, there's often a loss of metaphysics
  - FR 46: In the field of scientific research, a positivistic mentality took hold that not only abandoned the Christian vision of the world, but more especially rejected every appeal to a metaphysical or moral vision. It follows that certain scientists, lacking any ethical point of reference, are in danger of putting at the center of their concerns something other than the human person and the entirety of the person's life
  - College des Bernardins: *Quaerere Deum* is a philosophical attitude, looking beyond the penultimate and setting out in search of the ultimate and true
  - FR 5: Hence we see among the men and women of our time, and not just in some philosophers, attitudes of widespread distrust of the human being's great capacity for knowledge. With a false modesty, people rest content with partial and provisional truths, no longer seeking to ask radical questions about the meaning and ultimate foundation of human, personal and social existence.
- o (4) Without faith science and technology are weakened and can become idols
  - LF 34: Nor is the <u>light of faith</u>, joined to the truth of love, extraneous to the material world, for love is always lived out in body and spirit; the light of faith is an incarnate light radiating from the luminous life of Jesus. It <u>also illumines the material world</u>, trusts its inherent order and knows that it calls us to an ever widening path of harmony and understanding. The gaze of science thus benefits from faith: faith encourages the scientist to remain constantly open to reality in all its inexhaustible richness. Faith awakens the critical sense by preventing

- research from being satisfied with its own formulae and helps it to realize that nature is always greater. By stimulating wonder before the profound mystery of creation, faith broadens the horizons of reason to shed greater light on the world which discloses itself to scientific investigation
- In a digitalized and globalized world, science can easily be considered a new religion, to which we turn with questions concerning truth and meaning, even though we know that the responses provided are only partial and not totally satisfying. New forms of "gnosis" are emerging where technology itself becomes a kind of philosophy in which knowledge and meaning are derived from an unreal structuring of life. These new cults, increasing each day, ultimately end up by turning religious practice into a clinical form of seeking prosperity and instant gratification.
- o (5) Without reason, faith is vulnerable
  - FR 38. St. Clement: For Clement, Greek philosophy is not meant in the first place to bolster and complete Christian truth. Its task is rather the defense of the faith: "The teaching of the Savior is perfect in itself and has no need of support, because it is the strength and the wisdom of God. Greek philosophy, with its contribution, does not strengthen truth; but, in rendering the attack of sophistry impotent and in disarming those who betray truth and wage war upon it, Greek philosophy is rightly called the hedge and the protective wall around the vineyard"
- o (6) With the connection between faith and reason, there will inevitably be a crisis of truth
  - LF 25: Today more than ever, we need to be reminded of this bond between faith and truth, given the crisis of truth in our age. In contemporary culture, we often tend to consider the only real truth to be that of technology: truth is what we succeed in building and measuring by our scientific know-how, truth is what works and what makes life easier and more comfortable. Nowadays this appears as the only truth that is certain, the only truth that can be shared, the only truth that can serve as a basis for discussion or for common undertakings. Yet at the other end of the scale we are willing to allow for subjective truths of the individual, which consist in fidelity to his or her deepest convictions, yet these are truths valid only for that individual and not capable of being proposed to others in an effort to serve the common good. But Truth itself, the truth which would comprehensively explain our life as individuals and in society, is regarded with suspicion.
- o (7) Without reason strengthened by faith what we are left with is relativism
  - LF 25. In the end, what we are left with is relativism, in which the question of universal truth and ultimately this means the question of God is no longer relevant.
  - FR 5: [The loss of the transcendent because of the loss of faith] has given rise to different forms of agnosticism and relativism which have led philosophical research to lose its way in the shifting sands of widespread scepticism. Recent times have seen the rise to prominence of various doctrines that tend to devalue even the truths which had been judged certain. A legitimate plurality of positions has yielded to an undifferentiated pluralism, based upon the assumption that all positions are equally valid, which is one of today's most widespread symptoms of the lack of confidence in truth
- o (8) Without truth, faith or "spiritually" becomes a "lofty sentiment"
  - LF 24: Faith without truth does not save, it does not provide a sure footing. It remains a beautiful story, the projection of our deep yearning for happiness, something capable of satisfying us to the extent that we are willing to deceive ourselves. Either that, or it is reduced to a lofty sentiment which brings consolation and cheer, yet remains prey to the vagaries of our spirit and the changing seasons, incapable of sustaining a steady journey through life

- FR 48: Deprived of reason, faith has stressed feeling and experience, and so run the risk of no longer being a universal proposition. It is an illusion to think that faith, tied to weak reasoning, might be more penetrating; on the contrary, faith then runs the grave risk of withering into myth or superstition. By the same token, reason which is unrelated to an adult faith is not prompted to turn its gaze to the newness and radicality of being
- Emotivism today. Same-sex marriage debate. Abortion. In-vitro. Embryonic Stem Cells and Parkinson's.
- o (9) Without truth we are left with amnesia. We forget who we are.
  - LF 25. In this regard, though, we can speak of a massive amnesia in our contemporary world. The question of truth is really a question of memory, deep memory, for it deals with something prior to ourselves and can succeed in uniting us in a way that transcends our petty and limited individual consciousness. It is a question about the origin of all that is, in whose light we can glimpse the goal and thus the meaning of our common path.
- o (10) Without truths of faith, we also lose meaning of life and are vulnerable to nihilism
  - FR 46. As a result of the crisis of rationalism, what has appeared finally is *nihilism*. As a philosophy of nothingness, it has a certain attraction for people of our time. Its adherents claim that the search is an end in itself, without any hope or possibility of ever attaining the goal of truth. In the nihilist interpretation, life is no more than an occasion for sensations and experiences in which the ephemeral has pride of place. Nihilism is at the root of the widespread mentality which claims that a definitive commitment should no longer be made, because everything is fleeting and provisional
    - They're never going to find themselves without the unselfish gift of themselves to others (GS 24).
  - FR 81: One of the most significant aspects of our current situation, it should be noted, is the "crisis of meaning". Perspectives on life and the world, often of a scientific temper, have so proliferated that we face an increasing fragmentation of knowledge. This makes the search for meaning difficult and often fruitless. Indeed, still more dramatically, in this maelstrom of data and facts in which we live and which seem to comprise the very fabric of life, many people wonder whether it still makes sense to ask about meaning. The array of theories that vie to give an answer, and the different ways of viewing and of interpreting the world and human life, serve only to aggravate this radical doubt, which can easily lead to scepticism, indifference or to various forms of nihilism. In consequence, the human spirit is often invaded by a kind of ambiguous thinking which leads it to an ever deepening introversion, locked within the confines of its own immanence without reference of any kind to the transcendent. A philosophy which no longer asks the question of the meaning of life would be in grave danger of reducing reason to merely accessory functions, with no real passion for the search for truth.
  - FR 90: Quite apart from the fact that it conflicts with the demands and the content of the word of God, *nihilism* is a denial of the humanity and of the very identity of the human being. It should never be forgotten that the neglect of being inevitably leads to losing touch with objective truth and therefore with the very ground of human dignity. This in turn makes it possible to erase from the countenance of man and woman the marks of their likeness to God, and thus to lead them little by little either to a destructive will to power or to a solitude without hope. Once the truth is denied to human beings, it is pure illusion to try to set them free. Truth and freedom either go together hand in hand or together they perish in misery.
  - FR 91. The currents of thought which claim to be postmodern merit appropriate attention. According to some of them, the time of certainties is irrevocably past, and the human being must now learn to live in a horizon of total absence of meaning, where everything is provisional and ephemeral. In their destructive critique of every certitude, several authors have failed to make crucial distinctions and have called into question the certitudes of faith.

This nihilism has been justified in a sense by the terrible experience of evil that has marked our age. Such a dramatic experience has ensured the collapse of rationalist optimism, which viewed history as the triumphant progress of reason, the source of all happiness and freedom; and now, at the end of this century, one of our greatest threats is the temptation to despair. Even so, it remains true that a certain positivist cast of mind continues to nurture the illusion that, thanks to scientific and technical progress, man and woman may live as a demiurge, single-handedly and completely taking charge of their destiny

- FR 80: From the Bible there emerges a vision of man as imago Dei. This vision offers indications regarding man's life, his freedom and the immortality of the human spirit. Since the created world is not self-sufficient, every illusion of autonomy which would deny the essential dependence on God of every creature—the human being included—leads to dramatic situations which subvert the rational search for the harmony and the meaning of human life.
- Consequences of the split between secularism-induced faith and reason at the level of ethics and morality (10)
  - o (1) The separation of faith and reason denies any prerogatives of conscience
    - FR 98: Faced with contemporary challenges in the social, economic, political and scientific fields, the ethical conscience of people is disoriented. In the Encyclical Letter *Veritatis Splendor*, I wrote that many of the problems of the contemporary world stem from a crisis of truth. I noted that "once the idea of a universal truth about the good, knowable by human reason, is lost, **inevitably the notion of conscience also changes. Conscience** is no longer considered in its prime reality as an act of a person's intelligence, the function of which is to apply the universal knowledge of the good in a specific situation and thus to express a judgment about the right conduct to be chosen here and now. Instead, there is a tendency to grant to the individual conscience the prerogative of independently determining the criteria of good and evil and then acting accordingly. Such an outlook is quite congenial to an **individualist ethic**, wherein each individual is faced with his own truth different from the truth of others".
    - If everyone needs to live as if God doesn't exist, then no one can claim to be hearing and following God's voice in the inner sanctuary of conscience
    - That's why for secularists no one can be granted exceptions to being forced to comply with the secularist push for the concocted rights to abortion-on-demand (HHS Mandate) and husbandless or wifeless marriages.
  - o (2) Without faith we lose the foundations for morality
    - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): It is true that a new moralism exists today whose key words are justice, peace and conservation of creation — words that call for essential moral values of which we are in real need. But this moralism remains vague and thus slides, almost inevitably, into the political-party sphere. It is above all a dictum addressed to others, and too little a personal duty of our daily life. In fact, what does justice mean? Who defines it? What serves towards peace? Over the last decades we have amply seen in our streets and squares how pacifism can deviate toward a destructive anarchism and terrorism. The political moralism of the 70s, the roots of which are anything but dead, was a moralism that succeeded in attracting even young people full of ideals. But it was a moralism with a mistaken direction, in as much as it was deprived of serene rationality and because, in the last analysis, it placed the political utopia above the dignity of the individual man, showing itself even capable of arriving at contempt for man in the name of great objectives. Political moralism, as we have lived it and are still living it, does not open the way to regeneration, and even more, also blocks it. The same is true, consequently, also for a Christianity and a theology that reduces the heart of Jesus' message, the "kingdom of God," to the "values of the kingdom," identifying these values with the great key words of political moralism, and proclaiming them, at the same time, as a synthesis of the religions. Nonetheless, God is neglected in this way
    - It becomes simply utilitarianism

- Ratzinger (April 1, 2005) This purely functional rationality, so to speak, has implied a disorder of the moral conscience altogether new for cultures existing up to now, as it deems rational only that which can be proved with experiments.
  ... In a world based on calculation, it is the calculation of consequences that determines what must or must not be considered moral. And thus the category of the good, as was clearly pointed out by Kant, disappears. Nothing is good or bad in itself, everything depends on the consequences that an action allows one to foresee
- o (3) Without faith, there is the gradual disorientation and destruction of the foundations of our freedom.
  - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005) These philosophies are characterized by the fact that they are positivist and, therefore, anti-metaphysical, so much so that, in the end, God cannot have any place in them. They are based on the self-limitation of rational positivism, which can be applied in the technical realm, but which when it is generalized, entails instead a mutilation of man. It succeeds in having man no longer admit any moral claim beyond his calculations and, as we saw, the concept of freedom, which at first glance would seem to extend in an unlimited manner, in the end leads to the self-destruction of freedom. ... It consciously severs its own historical roots depriving itself of the regenerating forces from which it sprang, from that fundamental memory of humanity, so to speak, without which reason loses its orientation
  - College des Bernardins: Word creates tension and freedom. This tension presents itself anew as a challenge for our own generation as we face two poles: on the one hand, **subjective** arbitrariness, and on the other, fundamentalist fanaticism. It would be a disaster if today's European culture could only conceive freedom as absence of obligation, which would inevitably play into the hands of fanaticism and arbitrariness. Absence of obligation and arbitrariness do not signify freedom, but its destruction.
- o (4) Without truth, we open the door to voluntarism
  - There arose with Duns Scotus a voluntarism that, in its later developments, <u>led to the claim that we can only know God's voluntas ordinate</u>. This gives rise to positions that clearly approach those of Ibn Hazm and might even <u>lead to the image of a capricious God</u>, who is not even bound to truth and goodness. God's transcendence and otherness are so exalted that our reason, our sense of the true and good, are no longer an authentic mirror of God
  - Voluntarism will lead to problems with totalitarianism and fanaticism, as we'll see later.
- o (5) Without faith and reason, there will inevitably be confusion and chaos about rights
  - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): This Enlightenment culture is essentially defined by the rights of freedom; it stems from freedom as a fundamental value that measures everything: the freedom of religious choice, which includes the religious neutrality of the state; freedom to express one's own opinion, as long as it does not cast doubt specifically on this canon; the democratic ordering of the state, that is, parliamentary control on state organisms; the free formation of parties; the independence of the judiciary; and, finally, the safeguarding of the rights of man and the prohibition of discriminations. Here the canon is still in the process of formation, given that there are also rights of man that are in opposition, as for example, in the case of the conflict between a woman's desire for freedom and the right of the unborn to live. The concept of discrimination is ever more extended, and so the prohibition of discrimination can be increasingly transformed into a limitation of the freedom of opinion and religious liberty. Very soon it will not be possible to state that homosexuality, as the Catholic Church teaches, is an objective disorder in the structuring of human existence. And the fact that the Church is convinced of not having the right to confer priestly ordination on women is considered by some up to now as something irreconcilable with the spirit of the European Constitution. ... A confused ideology of freedom leads to dogmatism, which is showing itself increasingly hostile to freedom.
  - (6) Without faith, there is no brake to the technological imperative

- Ratzinger (April 1, 2005) There no longer exists a knowing how to do separated from a being able to do, because it would be against freedom, which is the absolute supreme value. But man knows how to do many things, and knows increasingly how to do more things; and if this knowing how to do does not find its measure in a moral norm, it becomes, as we can already see, a power of destruction. Man knows how to clone men, and so he does it. Man knows how to use men as a store of organs for other men, and so he does it; he does it because this seems to be an exigency of his freedom. Man knows how to construct atomic bombs and so he makes them, being, in line of principle, also disposed to use them. In the end, terrorism is also based on this modality of man's self-authorization, and not on the teachings of the Koran. The radical detachment of the Enlightenment philosophy from its roots becomes, in the last analysis, contempt for man. Man, deep down, has no freedom, we are told by the spokesmen of the natural sciences, in total contradiction with the starting point of the whole question. Man must not think that he is something more than all other living beings and, therefore, should also be treated like them, we are told by even the most advanced spokesmen of a philosophy clearly separated from the roots of humanity's historical memory. A tree without roots dries up
- o (7) Without faith people remain immature
  - FR 25: Within visible creation, man is the only creature who not only is capable of knowing but who knows that he knows, and is therefore interested in the real truth of what he perceives. People cannot be genuinely indifferent to the question of whether what they know is true or not. If they discover that it is false, they reject it; but if they can establish its truth, they feel themselves rewarded. It is this that Saint Augustine teaches when he writes: "I have met many who wanted to deceive, but none who wanted to be deceived." It is rightly claimed that persons have reached adulthood when they can distinguish independently between truth and falsehood, making up their own minds about the objective reality of things. This is what has driven so many enquiries, especially in the scientific field, which in recent centuries have produced important results, leading to genuine progress for all humanity
- o (8) Without truth, people will always remain unsatisfied
  - FR 27. The answer we give will determine whether or not we think it possible to attain universal and absolute truth; and this is a decisive moment of the search. Every truth—if it really is truth—presents itself as universal, even if it is not the whole truth. If something is true, then it must be true for all people and at all times. Beyond this universality, however, people seek an absolute which might give to all their searching a meaning and an answer—something ultimate, which might serve as the ground of all things. In other words, they seek a final explanation, a supreme value, which refers to nothing beyond itself and which puts an end to all questioning. Hypotheses may fascinate, but they do not satisfy. Whether we admit it or not, there comes for everyone the moment when personal existence must be anchored to a truth recognized as final, a truth which confers a certitude no longer open to doubt
- o (9) Without faith, truth often fails to become operative in love
  - LF 34: The light of love proper to faith can illumine the questions of our own time about truth. Truth nowadays is often reduced to the subjective authenticity of the individual, valid only for the life of the individual. A common truth intimidates us, for we identify it with the intransigent demands of totalitarian systems. But if truth is a truth of love, if it is a truth disclosed in personal encounter with the Other and with others, then it can be set free from its enclosure in individuals and become part of the common good. As a truth of love, it is not one that can be imposed by force; it is not a truth that stifles the individual. Since it is born of love, it can penetrate to the heart, to the personal core of each man and woman. Clearly, then, faith is not intransigent, but grows in respectful coexistence with others. One who believes may not be presumptuous; on the contrary, truth leads to humility, since believers know that, rather than ourselves possessing truth, it is truth which

embraces and possesses us. <u>Far from making us inflexible</u>, the security of faith sets us on a journey; it enables witness and dialogue with all.

- We see this love demonstrated in wisdom and power of God in the Cross.
  - (FR 23) in the Letters of Saint Paul, one thing emerges with great clarity: the opposition between "the wisdom of this world" and the wisdom of God revealed in Jesus Christ
  - The true key-point, which challenges every philosophy, is Jesus Christ's death on the Cross.
  - Human wisdom refuses to see in its own weakness the possibility of its strength
  - To reveal the mystery of his saving plan God has chosen precisely that which reason considers "foolishness" and a "scandal".
  - What a challenge this is to our reason, and how great the gain for reason if it yields to this wisdom! Of itself, philosophy is able to recognize the human being's ceaselessly self-transcendent orientation towards the truth; and, with the assistance of faith, it is capable of accepting the "foolishness" of the Cross as the authentic critique of those who delude themselves that they possess the truth, when in fact they run it aground on the shoals of a system of their own devising. The preaching of Christ crucified and risen is the reef upon which the link between faith and philosophy can break up, but it is also the reef beyond which the two can set forth upon the boundless ocean of truth.
- o (10) Without faith, we cannot understand and approach aright the problem of suffering, which is so common to human life.
  - FR 26: "It is not necessary to turn to the philosophers of the absurd or to the provocative questioning found in the Book of Job in order to have doubts about life's meaning. The daily experience of suffering—in one's own life and in the lives of others—and the array of facts which seem inexplicable to reason are enough to ensure that a question as dramatic as the question of meaning cannot be evaded... Moreover, the first absolutely certain truth of our life, beyond the fact that we exist, is the inevitability of our death. Given this unsettling fact, the search for a full answer is inescapable.
  - Suffering is meant to unleash love in the human person (SD 29).
- Consequences of the split between secularism-induced faith and reason at the level of culture and society (7)
  - o (1) The separation of faith from rational sphere moves religion to the private sphere
    - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): the rejection of the reference to God, is not the expression of a tolerance that desires to protect the non-theistic religions and the dignity of atheists and agnostics, but rather the expression of a conscience that would like to see God cancelled definitively from the public life of humanity, and relegated to the subjective realm of residual cultures of the past. Relativism, which is the starting point of all this, thus becomes a dogmatism which believes itself to be in possession of the definitive scope of reason, and with the right to regard all the rest only as a stage of humanity, in the end surmounted, and that can be appropriately relativized.
    - Reduces freedom of religious to freedom of worship
      - Pope Benedict, Jan 2012: "Of particular concern are certain attempts being made to limit that most cherished of American freedoms, the freedom of religion. Many of you have pointed out that concerted efforts have been made to deny the right of conscientious objection on the part of Catholic individuals and institutions with regard to cooperation in intrinsically evil practices. Others have spoken to me of a worrying tendency to reduce religious freedom to mere freedom of worship without guarantees of respect for freedom of conscience.
    - The secularists seek to suppress not only expressions of faith but actually living out the faith in the light of conscience
  - o (2) Without truth, there will be suspicion

- FR 33: It must not be forgotten that reason too needs to be sustained in all its searching by trusting dialogue and sincere friendship. A climate of suspicion and distrust, which can beset speculative research, ignores the teaching of the ancient philosophers who proposed friendship as one of the most appropriate contexts for sound philosophical enquiry.
- o (3) Without the truths of faith, we lose the foundation for communal life and dialogue
  - FR 92: To believe it possible to know a universally valid truth is in no way to encourage intolerance; on the contrary, it is the essential condition for sincere and authentic dialogue between persons. On this basis alone is it possible to overcome divisions and to journey together towards full truth.
  - FR 6: It is undeniable that this time of rapid and complex change <u>can leave especially the</u> younger generation, to whom the future belongs and on whom it depends, with a sense that they have no valid points of reference. The need for a foundation for personal and <u>communal life</u> becomes all the more pressing at a time when we are faced with the patent inadequacy of perspectives in which the ephemeral is affirmed as a value and <u>the possibility of discovering the real meaning of life is cast into doubt</u>. This is why many people stumble through life to the very edge of the abyss without knowing where they are going.
  - Without faith and reason, society breaks down:
    - Westminster: If the moral principles underpinning the democratic process are themselves determined by nothing more solid than social consensus, then the fragility of the process becomes all too evident herein lies the real challenge for democracy
    - Westminster: the role of religion in political debate is not so much to supply these norms, as if they could not be known by non-believers – still less to propose concrete political solutions, which would lie altogether outside the competence of religion – but rather to help purify and shed light upon the application of reason to the discovery of objective moral principles. This "corrective" role of religion vis-à-vis reason is **not always welcomed**, though, partly because distorted forms of religion, such as sectarianism and fundamentalism, can be seen to create serious social problems themselves. And in their turn, these distortions of religion arise when insufficient attention is given to the purifying and structuring role of reason within religion. It is a two-way process. Without the corrective supplied by religion, though, reason too can fall prey to distortions, as when it is manipulated by ideology, or applied in a partial way that fails to take full account of the dignity of the human person. Such misuse of reason, after all, was what gave rise to the slave trade in the first place and to many other social evils, not least the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century. This is why I would suggest that the world of reason and the world of faith – the world of secular rationality and the world of religious belief – need one another and should not be afraid to enter into a profound and ongoing dialogue, for the good of our civilization.
- o (4) Without union between faith and truth there will be fear
  - FR 47, citing Redemptor Hominis: In my first Encyclical Letter I stressed the danger of absolutizing such an approach when I wrote: "The man of today seems ever to be under threat from what he produces, that is to say from the result of the work of his hands and, even more so, of the work of his intellect and the tendencies of his will. All too soon, and often in an unforeseeable way, what this manifold activity of man yields is not only subject to 'alienation', in the sense that it is simply taken away from the person who produces it, but rather it turns against man himself, at least in part, through the indirect consequences of its effects returning on himself. It is or can be directed against him. This seems to make up the main chapter of the drama of present-day human existence in its broadest and universal dimension. Man therefore lives increasingly in fear. He is afraid of what he produces—not all of it, of course, or even most of it, but part of it and precisely that part that contains a

special share of his genius and initiative—can radically turn against himself. In the wake of these cultural shifts, some philosophers have abandoned the search for truth in itself and made their sole aim the attainment of a subjective certainty or a pragmatic sense of utility. This in turn has obscured the true dignity of reason, which is no longer equipped to know the truth and to seek the absolute.

- o (5) Without truth, we open the door to totalitarianism and fanaticism
  - B16 (Nov 12, 2012) [Through secularism] <a href="https://human.com
  - LF 25. It would be logical, from this point of view, to attempt to sever the bond between religion and truth, because it seems to lie at the root of fanaticism, which proves oppressive for anyone who does not share the same beliefs.
  - Regensburg:
    - Manuel II Paleologus and an educated Persian, said brusquely, Mohammed brought "only evil and inhuman, such as his command to spread the sword by the faith he preached."
    - Spreading the faith through violence is something unreasonable. Violence is incompatible with the nature of God and the nature of the soul.
    - "God", he says, "is not pleased by blood and not acting reasonably (σῦν λόγω) is contrary to God's nature
    - The decisive statement in this argument against violent conversion is this: not to act in accordance with reason is contrary to God's nature.
- o (6) Without faith, we lose the good of the Enlightenment project
  - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): the Enlightenment is of Christian origin and it is no accident that it was born precisely and exclusively in the realm of the Christian faith, whenever Christianity, against its nature and unfortunately, had become tradition and religion of the state. ... It was and is the merit of the Enlightenment to have again proposed these original values of Christianity and of having given back to reason its own voice.
  - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): Christianity must always remember that it is the religion of the "Logos." It is faith in the "Creator Spiritus," in the Creator Spirit, from which proceeds everything that exists. Today, this should be precisely its philosophical strength, in so far as the problem is whether the world comes from the irrational. ... The Christian faith [has], from the purely philosophical point of view, really good cards to play, despite the fact that many today consider only the first thesis as the only modern and rational one par excellence. However, a reason that springs from the irrational, and that is, in the final analysis, itself irrational, does not constitute a solution for our problems. Only creative reason, which in the crucified God is manifested as love, can really show us the way. In the so necessary dialogue between secularists and Catholics, we Christians must be very careful to remain faithful to this fundamental line: to live a faith that comes from the "Logos," from creative reason, and that, because of this, is also open to all that is truly rational.
- (7) Without faith and reason, we lose our western culture

College des Bernardins: Quaerere Deum – to seek God and to let oneself be found by him, that is today no less necessary than in former times. A purely positivistic culture which tried to drive the question concerning God into the subjective realm, as being unscientific, would be the capitulation of reason, the renunciation of its highest possibilities, and hence a disaster for humanity, with very grave consequences. What gave Europe's culture [and we could also say our own in the US, which derives from European culture] its foundation – the search for God and the readiness to listen to him – remains today the basis of any genuine culture.

### Conclusion

- o I'd like to finish with two provocative thoughts from Cardinal Ratzinger from his speech given at Subiaco right before assuming the papacy.
- O He recognized that there is a suspicion of both faith and reason that continues to plague the human person and that's going to be hardened, superficial and thorny soil for implanting the seeds of faith and reason so that they might bear fruit. But he took a page out of the book of one of the greatest apologists in the history of the Church, Blaise Pascal, to propose what I'd like to call "Ratzinger's Wager." He said (April 1, 2005): "In my capacity as believer, I would like to make a proposal to the secularists. ... The attempt, carried to the extreme, to manage human affairs disdaining God completely leads us increasingly to the edge of the abyss, to man's ever greater isolation from reality. We must reverse the axiom of the Enlightenment and say: Even one who does not succeed in finding the way of accepting God, should, nevertheless, seek to live and to direct his life veluti si Deus daretur, as if God existed. This is the advice Pascal gave to his friends who did not believe. In this way, no one is limited in his freedom, but all our affairs find the support and criterion of which they are in urgent need.
- O There's no real loss that will come from treating creation as ordered flowing from a Creator, from taking some starting points from theological conclusions, from starting with giving the benefit of the doubt rather than with doubt.
- o He also articulated there a special call to those who already believe, particularly his fellow Christians:
  - Ratzinger (April 1, 2005): What we are in need at this moment in history are men who, through an enlightened and lived faith, render God credible in this world. The negative testimony of Christians who speak about God and live against him, has darkened God's image and opened the door to disbelief. We need men who have their gaze directed to God, to understand true humanity. We need men whose intellects are enlightened by the light of God, and whose hearts God opens, so that their intellects can speak to the intellects of others, and so that their hearts are able to open up to the hearts of others. Only through men who have been touched by God, can God come near to men.
  - We're all being called in our profession to be those enlightened men and women, doctors, nurses, priests, religious and faithful who can make God credible through our enlightened and lived faith.