

JOY AND HOPE

By JOSEPH P. WHELAN

IT IS SOME thirteen years since the promulgation of *Gaudium et Spes*, Vatican II's 'Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World'. And this reader of *The Way* has been requested briefly to reflect now on the 'theological turn-around' that led to or has since resulted from this document. It may be helpful for an understanding of the atmosphere of these reflections and of their angle of approach to notice here that the request was not framed as an invitation to celebrate. Rather it looked to a reflection on causes of apostolic difficulty since the Council, and on this forementioned theological turn-around, a shift characterized as 'earth-bound', 'humanistic', representing a movement from 'heaven to earth'.¹

Importantly too, and with a view very much towards a future of great apostolic opportunity and tasks, the request also comes in the context of current repeated calls from multiple sources, to all committed Christians, that they promote justice and peace on earth, and that they do this precisely *in the service of faith*. Contention as to the meaning, the rightness and even the justice of these calls has not been small. Nor have the practical obstacles been few for those seeking to respond in depth.

Of course the prevalent mood, at least in the perception of this reader of the 'signs of the times', has shifted enormously from thirteen years ago to the present. At its birth, *Gaudium et Spes* was famous for its friendly affirmation of the earthly, the technological and the political, and for being a document journalistically and even theologically characterized as 'humanistic'. Today, in a world scarcely more hungry but surely more aware of its multiple hungers, in a world of illiteracy and of OPEC, of liberation theology and of rising political and economic oppression, *Gaudium et Spes* has perhaps largely become, in the wake not so much of new facts as of a new

¹ The reader should assume, I think, that this framing of the request represents editorial suggestion as to a possibly useful starting point for reflection, and that it does not convey any judgment about the issues at hand.

sensibility, just one more, and far from the first or the last or the strongest, of the many papal and other cries for justice in the world.

Nevertheless, as the history of councils and of theology, as well as the history of concrete christian service and piety will almost certainly show, *Gaudium et Spes*, as an act of the roman catholic community, is something of far more religious and social consequence than whatever the strength and quality, or even the concrete results, of its own specific summons to social justice may be. It is a constitution of an ecumenical council (just about the most solemn form an ecclesial utterance can take) which offers to both Church and world not a complete, surely, but nonetheless a very fundamental description of man in the world from the Church's point of view. That is, from within the concrete, inductive context of a considerably sensitive description of contemporary human achievements, problems, opportunities and tasks, the christian community in Council here proposes to the world, and to itself, an anthropology derived from the Gospel as authoritatively read and traditioned in the Church.

Such a document, especially one as good as *Gaudium et Spes*, will both catch and formulate, as part of ongoing doctrinal development, both recent theological reflection and the practical behaviour of the worshipping, serving Church. But it will also, and with more far-reaching consequences in the very act of such authoritative formulation, release enormous energies, both for further reflection and for new, very practical behaviour. Much of this released energy will go to giving flesh and application — programmes, pastoral implementation, perhaps even symbolic form — to what the Council formulated. But at this particular juncture of our history, more, perhaps much more of the released energy will go (and in fact has gone) to exploring theoretically and experimentally those aspects of the Council's achievements which the very act of formulation reveals to be *unfinished* (as the Jesus of history always is), inadequate and, therefore, opportunity, of whatever urgency, for a *new* round of further development, greater breadth, new questions, more analysis and, hopefully, richer synthesis — and action.

Furthermore, this latter use of the energies released by the document — a use aimed at moving on rather more than at consolidating and implementing — is peculiarly likely in an ecclesial community such as the roman catholic Church, which had not expressed itself collegially in almost a hundred years, and which only recently has shown even the beginnings of any accepting understanding of the essentially *historical* character of man, of the Church, and of God in

the world.² *Gaudium et Spes*, and Vatican II as a whole, while failing almost entirely formally to articulate this historicity, just as certainly massively established it, however unevenly and problematically, in the theology as well as the pastoral practice and spirituality of the roman catholic Church. There have already been some excellent results (and as a community we have grieved the Holy Spirit, I should think, for our lack of celebration over many gifts). But there have been significant dislocations. And more, much more, of the latter still awaits us, and much more is needed, messy or not, if the 'new man' (men and women), and the new community of 'human solidarity', of the document's very realistically contextualized dreams are to be attempted at all, as the *historical* projects the Council asserts them to be. That the document has been part of the much larger occasion and environment attending these dislocations seems certain. But that *Gaudium et Spes*, in any careful reading of the clear statement of its text,³ is immanentist, or naïvely optimistic, or in any way reductionist of the full Catholic experience of God in Christ across the centuries — to name some common charges — seems very, very wide of the mark.

Paul VI in Council, on the immediate occasion of the promulgation of *Gaudium et Spes*, gave the document its first commentary. Even so early on, he found cause to defend it against complaints that 'it was too tolerant of the external world, transient realities, cultural fashions, passing problems, and the outlook of others'. And he characterized its meaning as a whole: 'Does it not aim to teach a simple lesson that you must learn to love man if you would love God?'⁴ Indeed. And then some. For it is precisely the christian anthropology of *Gaudium et Spes*, it is precisely its description of the neighbour, of who this man is who is to love and be loved — this description of historical man in Christ — which at once constitutes the document's perhaps central achievement, and also summarily accounts for the general charge of uncritical openness.

² This instinct to move *on* has been, in the main, healthy, I think, except for its significant capacity at times to diminish the community's heart for moving *out* in apostolic service. I believe that the Church, like persons, can tolerate the use of only a very small part of its energies upon itself, including its own reform. Our few real prophets have seemed so extroverted, compassionate, unself-regarding.

³ E.g., in *The Church Today, Commentaries on the Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World* (Westminster, Md. and New York, 1968), pp 1-40, by de Riedmatten; and in *Commentary on the Documents of Vatican II*, vol V (New York, 1969), *passim*.

⁴ Quoted by de Riedmatten, *op. cit.*, pp 39-40.

Before setting down as forthrightly as possible — and perhaps more by way of a brief suggestive list than in any attempt to be systematic or exhaustive — some of the major theological perspectives of *Gaudium et Spes*, it may help to offer two reflections. The first concerns doctrinal development. And the second, very related to the first and indeed deriving directly from it, touches on this reader's conviction of the importance of orthodoxy as an essential condition, at least over the long term, for a healthy orthopraxis.⁵

As for doctrinal development, there is undoubtedly some of it in *Gaudium et Spes*. And at least when such development is understood in a broad but still very important sense, perhaps more than a little of it should be thought *a priori* likely at a moment so creative for the People of God, a moment so laden with Spirit as was this large and solemn greeting of the world by the Church, this word to all men and women everywhere by a perhaps newly reverent Church, itself on pilgrimage with them and among them. In such a situation, multiple instances of fresh, life-giving pressure, new perspectives on home truths, would be expected — and in fact occurred. Here, however, on this point of doctrinal development, I believe it is more useful to point out the extent to which the achievement of *Gaudium et Spes* may lie in two more fundamental acts: recovery and synthesis.

First, it *recovered* in a creative and very purposeful way, and thereby gave new *operative* significance to, much that was already clear, often even explicitly so, in Catholic tradition. Second, it gathered, *put together*, sometimes even synthesized and rendered organic — and therefore alive and powerful — many already well-acknowledged but somewhat separated aspects of the one christian mystery. And it did so sometimes in a way that placed intense creative pressure — as when fissionable material reaches critical mass — simply forcing accountability for the *immediately* self-evident, *pastoral* consequences of doctrine that was familiar enough but is now newly formulated in an organic, life-giving way: a way, therefore, capable not only of interesting the mind, but of actually changing hearts; capable therefore of conversion and of the re-shaping of personal and even communal sensibility; and therefore capable of effecting action.

⁵ On reflection, this conviction does not seem simply convertible. For while the role of action in coming to truth and its articulation is both large and indispensable, as the pertinent traditional formula *lex orandi lex credendi* makes clear, yet many of the great reforms have been rooted in a retrieval of already articulated Scripture and creed. As for idolatry: it seems to this writer as much a problem for action as for thought, and as alien to genuine orthodoxy as to genuine orthopraxis.

The second preliminary reflection referred to above concerns the point which we have just come to: action. And specifically: the relation of orthodoxy to orthopraxis. At its best, the recovery and re-location of doctrine which we have been describing constitutes a deeper and fuller movement into orthodoxy — a fuller coming to self in the Other, through the always partially intuited, partially symbolized, even partially clearly articulated centre of the ecclesial community's historically cumulative life of faith and hope and love. Of course this is never, by any means, entirely the case. But when and to the extent it is, then individual and community contemplation and conversion — and therefore action — can be incalculably the richer for it, since authentic contemplation — adoration — is the perennial ignition point for that obedience which all authentic apostolic action, or orthopraxis, is.⁶

Gaudium et Spes, especially thirteen years later, suggests to this reader a valuable warning and invitation to the christian community that, with respect to its own action — and for the sake of that action — it continually looks to, and invests in, a great fulness and integrity of doctrine: that it notice, and at least have a very carefully informed opinion about, the great power of doctrine to cripple and impoverish, to distort and misdirect the community's love; and conversely, its almost seismic capacity, especially over the long haul, to promote a healthier, more energetic, more integral adoration of God, together with that corresponding, absolute obedience to him which lies in being servants, and then friends, of one another.⁷ Of course, the motor-power for conversion and for action is not idea, but idea as *imagined*, as transforming not of mind, but of sensibility. However, it is only the most shallow and unexamined view of doctrine which conceives it as idea, merely. For even in its most 'scholastic', analysed moments, it retains links with its own centre as event and story and, finally, as person. Its always potentially fuller expression (orthodoxy) is always potential (nothing automatic) for extroversion, for that more interior looking *out*, that contemplative asking about the world which can make doctrine pastorally revolutionary as praxis. At any rate, I should guess that the rest of this century is likely to prove

⁶ Granting the weight of the previous footnote's central point, the importance of the polar truth must be re-emphasized — and it is a truth fully adumbrated in *Gaudium et Spes*: that it lies in *action*, especially the orthopraxis parabolized in Mt 25, to find God and to contemplate him, and to make, from *within* the action, those reflections on God and man in the world which become useful theology and, even, orthodoxy.

⁷ Cf Jn 15, 15.

happily insufficient completely to deal with the tidal force released, and hopefully yet to come, both from that recovery of doctrine and that more fully organic formulation of doctrine in *Gaudium et Spes*.

The following few statements are now offered, often with little or no comment, as instances from *Gaudium et Spes* of significant religious statements intended to affect the presence of Christians and of the christian community and the shape of christian action in the world.

1. The God of creation and the God of redemption are one God. Further, as all creation was and is in the Word, and as all redemption was and is either in, or in view of, the Word who is incarnate, the profound unity of all creating, redeeming action in the one God is greatly deepened, and itself becomes historical, by its further unity in Christ. Still further — and therefore — there are not two histories. There is one history, human history, and salvation history is a part of, a partner within, this one history. Further again, there is one human community. For the Church, as the community of the followers of Christ, on pilgrimage to the Father as led by the Spirit, is 'truly and intimately linked with mankind and its history',⁸ and thereby one with all men and women everywhere in the common historical project of human becoming: 'The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these too are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ'.⁹

A profound *unity*, therefore, or friendship — one God, one Christ, one community, one history, is proclaimed in Council. Within that unity, and vigorously building and serving rather than shattering it, there will be many differentiations and distinctions to be made. The refusal to do this work of differentiation serves neither the reality nor the language of justice, nor of love — a union which even in God has real distinction as a condition of relationship.

2. As image of God, each individual is to play his or her role in the human dominion over the world in holiness and justice. And this subjection of things to man is a condition of the glory of God on this earth.¹⁰ And yet, while each individual, as God's image, remains of absolute value and dignity, the human *as* human must be seen as social. Nor is this something 'added on to man'.¹¹ Rather, the human — and the personal — comes to be, is, and is understood, only in and through relationship. And this primary fact and vocation

⁸ *Gaudium et Spes*, 1.

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ We have here a clear citation of Gen 1, 28.

¹¹ *Gaudium et Spes*, 25.

of human sociality constitutes a second, and trinitarian, understanding of man, and of the human community as image of God.

3. The doctrine of creation establishes the autonomy and the interiority of the secular in its own sphere and, within the redemptive economy obtaining, it secures the ambivalence and paradox of the term 'world'; since, despite sin and the ongoing need for redemption, the world, not only as originally but also as *continually* created in the Word and as *still* ingredient of his Spirit, remains substantively good. The Church, therefore, learns from the world and is enriched by it. The Church also contributes, collaborating with the larger human community in the historical tasks of the family, culture, social and economic justice, and the building of peace. Thus religion, as expressed in the doctrine of creation, does not erode or divert, but rather mobilizes and energizes human capacities. Religion positively affirms man, as his increasing knowledge and skills establish him as creator of himself and of his culture. Indeed such an experience purifies the Church and matures the faith of the believing community. This rejection of *naïve* supernaturalism is paralleled by a repudiation of deism, whereby the Council discovers God *within* history: not simply setting it in motion, but dialogically present and active within the very heart of what he is doing: creating, healing and redeeming the freedom of individual men and women, and of the human community, to build a future together in love.¹² The doctrines of creation and incarnation, and of the resurrection, together stimulate a judgment of permanent significance and value with reference to the historical projects of human freedom under grace.

4. Among eschatological images, therefore, the biblical appeals to transformation and to a new heaven and earth will receive stress. As for eschatology itself, the Council rejects firmly any purely futurist emphasis, where the Kingdom of God lies wholly beyond history in what would be equivalently a new creation. And it rejects just as firmly the extreme of a wholly realized emphasis, where the Kingdom is substantively already and/or prospectively present through the projects of human freedom. Seizing rather on the historical Jesus

¹² The language of the divine immanence/transcendence continues to be as accurate and useful as formerly. The language of vertical/horizontal, as an image of immanence/transcendence, also can be very accurate. Its religious usefulness and appeal seems questionable. The category of the divine as personal, and as person, is unquestioned in *Gaudium et Spes*. And the very notion of love as differentiated unity, central to all catholic theology and spirituality, establishes distinction, that is, sovereign, free transcendence, as the condition of possibility for the most intimate of presences, the *divine* immanence.

declared Lord and Christ as the new creation, the new man who, in himself, but also and especially in his members, is an ingredient of history and founder of a fragile, sinful, but also indefectibly holy community, the Council enunciates an inaugurated eschatology, where the human tasks of history, while not the Kingdom (which remains God's act alone), are of eternal importance as materials for transformation by the Father. Man still dies and is gathered to his Father in the passover of Christ. But while man lives, the world is not just a place for him to wait. It is something immensely valuable — even christic — for man to do.

5. Though not stated by the Council in so many words, perhaps the underlying doctrinal assertion is the *historical* character of man and his world, the historical character of ongoing creation and redemption, and the interior, permanent (however mysterious) role of history — of man's freedom and the products of that freedom — in both Kingdom and salvation seen as the twofold, single term of the one history of creation and redemption. Clearly, the more religious christian man seeks to be, the more secular, the more worldly he shall have to become. For history is the presently appointed time, and the world is the appointed place, for man's adoration and obedience, his putting on of Christ. The Church smelled this out in Council, expressed it splendidly, roughly, incompletely in *Gaudium et Spes* (among other documents both before and since), and is now hopefully moving through intense orthopraxis to a future moment of even fuller, deeper orthodoxy — for the sake of still further praxis.

Hopefully. But there have been disappointments. And as indicated, *Gaudium et Spes* has not been lacking in charges made against it. Barring those very clear and useful, comprehending disagreements which stem from faith commitments about God and man and world which, however substantively christian, are not catholic, it seems to this reader that the document is unfairly charged. It was no part of its intentionality to be even a broadly inclusive, however cursory, credal statement. Its necessary context, what it does not itself say but what requires saying for its fruitful understanding, is allowed for, in the first place, by many other documents of the Council — very notably, *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church. Of more difficulty, but of more importance too, is to situate the document, not only by criticism but by critical discernment, within the long history of recorded meditation, contemplation, law and even just plain rhetoric and polemic — a history which codifies the centuries-long encounter of this sinful, Spirit-laden People with its

Lord. At its best, this is to read the social history of the saints. Only this *in situ* reading honours and judges *Gaudium et Spes* realistically as well as profoundly for what it is: just *one* in a long series of passports, just *one* identity paper of the ecclesial community. And while it is a fine one, which says her recognizably, I believe, even as it summons her and upbraids her, it is an identity card that does not, however we might wish it otherwise (even just for the sake of the simplicity of our theologies), render all previous cards superfluous. No. The Church is far too mysterious, and far too sinful, far too holy, to be that clear. True to the prodigality of images her Lover uses of her — bride, harlot, body, and so on, her journey and adventure into God's future is far more cumulative than dialectical.

Furthermore, and more prosaically, for a document whose primary urgent purpose, surely, was to speak with the human community as such — beyond the explicit followers of Christ — as well as to speak to and invite those explicit followers to a new, *affirming, participating* experience of the world and its upcoming history — a participation in worldly history proposed as interior to its (the christian community's) fundamental call to adoration and obedience: well, for a document with that much on its plate, this reader finds its correctives, its balance, its cautions, its 'on the other hands', its simple courtesy and consideration, a matter for some astonishment. For within its affirmation of man and of human community, and within its invitation to view the world and its history as a field for significant love and service and as a time and place for the seeking and finding of God himself, *Gaudium et Spes* pervasively and at length explores the negativities, ambiguities, problems, necessary conditions, and so on, that are the context for all its own 'joys and hopes, griefs and anxieties'. Among the more prominent themes of this order: sin, and the profound, resulting ambiguity about man and his world, and even the infection of all human activity because of sin; the consequent, and permanent, paschal, that is, *cross-and-resurrection* character of all human becoming; the trinitarian origin, pattern and destiny of the Church's historical, worldly journey — thereby establishing, in the Father, the continuously transcendent and religious ground and finality of all authentically human and christian secularity; a clearly enunciated eschatology and description of Christ's final coming which repudiates any identification of earthly progress with the Kingdom of God; and a proclamation of the Eucharist as pledge and as nourishment which constitutes a catechesis well calculated, if interiorized within a Catholic understanding of this sacrament, to

leave the christian community in the world permanently provisional and pilgrim and therefore permanently, for history, a community of *faith* — ever seeking in the service of faith and the promotion of justice 'this Jesus',¹³ who is, even now, as Lord and Christ, the source, resource and destiny of all human, worldly enterprise.

Why, then, the charges against *Gaudium et Spes* (beyond those deriving from a different confession of faith, a different belief about what God has done and is doing, is seeking to do, in man and, through man, in the world)? More broadly, why the widespread (not systematic but notable) disarray within the Catholic community over the thirteen years since the document's promulgation? The question is not asked here in order to answer it. The answer — the answers — would take us far into history and deep into the sociology and psychology of religion, culture and institutions. The question is posed simply to allow for the following observation, an observation of some currency which, for this reader of *Gaudium et Spes*, is consonant with a very sober, critical, un-naïve, and yet enormously hopeful reading of the signs of our times.

It is a cliché of religious history that in the early decades and centuries of its life, the christian community found in martyrdom, or the prospect of it, a symbol and actual event sufficiently radical to meet the cry of its great heroes and heroines: 'Take and receive, Lord, all my liberty, my memory, my understanding, my entire will', and so answer the lover's need 'to do great things for God' — to use the words of Ignatius Loyola's absolute desire and offering. It is often argued that, in the fourth century, as the end of widespread persecution caused martyrdom by blood to disappear or at least to become very rare, monasticism or, more generally, the life of religious vows, replaced martyrdom as the vehicle for total self-surrender and 'offerings of greater moment' — to use Ignatius's words again. To get to the point: it is arguable that today, in a moment that may prove to have been another watershed in christian spiritual history, *Gaudium et Spes* gathers up, roughly adumbrates, even gives potentially revolutionary impetus to, a very different, or at least very

¹³ Acts 2, 23 and 36. Jesus: here is the question. And the answer to it will affect everything. 'Who do you say that I am?' Contemplation and action, and putting them together fairly well: we have all struggled with this before, and we will again. And we should, for it is worth the work. But it is not the thing itself. Who is Jesus today? Where is he? These are the great questions pondered and adumbrated in *Gaudium et Spes* and the great social encyclicals. A very personal, but fundamentally societal Jesus, the Jesus of Mt 25, is emerging for our richer, more accurate contemplation and action, our fuller adoration and obedience.

expanded view of what great human holiness in the world might look like. And it is this: radical christian self-surrender and engagement not only may but must make the world and history, not simply a reality gladly sacrificed (martyrdom), or escaped (early and some later monasticism), or even loved as a field for service (active apostolic religious life and devout lay life), but *in itself and for itself an object of choice*, because known and chosen now as valuable, as internally related to the larger biography of Jesus, and therefore a part of the accumulating reality and life of the cosmic Christ whom the eternal Father will love for ever. So, however ambiguous and paradoxical (because of sin) they be, it is announced that the common tasks of family life and the sophisticated tasks of culture and the massive tasks of justice and of peace participate in what, however transformed, shall be of absolute and everlasting worth. And therefore the personal, the interpersonal, and the communal — that is, the societal, and the political too — and therefore the promotion of justice and the making of peace — may now engage, and lay claim to, the fullest human dedication — and consecration.¹⁴

These reflections on *Gaudium et Spes* have represented an alternate choice for this reader — a decision to by-pass a meditation, perhaps even a contemplation (if that were given) on the first word of the document's *incipit*: Joy. Such a meditation on joy, if the word be defined very closely, would be a meditation on one of the great words for God, on the joy of God, on God as joy — on the very Godness of God: his joy — and all this as an ingredient of *history*, as the most divine of the fruits of the Holy Spirit among us, and as the motor power for all human life and love that has fidelity — which is another of the great words for God.¹⁵ Such a meditation, especially

¹⁴ When the potential of worldly life for full holiness opens up so radically and suddenly, small wonder that so many priests and religious moved from a state-of-life choice which, while it remains remarkably apposite for a full response to the Gospel, had seemed under another theology, the *only* ideal for a life of full generosity. Small wonder too, in the relative youth of this new perspective, that our theology and our articulated spirituality should be both so alive and so inadequate. Above all, given all, small wonder that the main pastoral task — action for justice and peace as part of evangelization — is finding only a slow, dark way. Out of such humiliation may come many things, including fatigue, bitter anger, a hatred for those who lead, a turning from God and the Church. But out of such humiliation may also come — humility. And it is this, the poorness in spirit of the *Magnificat* and of the beatitudes, which alone is of use to God's saving action in history.

¹⁵ Fidelity. This is, in close conjunction with joy, perhaps a central point for any spirituality of justice that is to develop: understanding spirituality here not as something for a day, or even years, but as something that can stay the course: a way of life.

since it would have been undertaken at a very religious, not directly ethical, and at a quite unspecific (but not unconcrete) level, might have seemed, aesthetically viewed, too 'lyrical' or, apostolically viewed, too 'spiritual'. Yet it might be worth the argument (only you don't prove such things) whether it would not have been, in the long run, perhaps even the short run, a very 'useful' choice, highly strategic for the detailed work, the daily-ness, that lies ahead for the christian community's pursuit of peace and justice in the world.

For a while, at least, many things, including fear, or narcissism, can probably get a man or woman out of bed in the morning as fast as joy can — or should (the delicious extra few minutes being often of God). But the intentionality of the day — the days and the years — will be different indeed. Joy is not hoped for, or it is not joy. Joy has no desire in it. It is not looked for, because it is here. It is the bird in my hand. It is the God not sending, but sent,¹⁶ the God not promised, but here — as Spirit within me and Jesus for the having in acts of servant love. Hidden or not, companion of either laughter or tears, of blazing light or of — just simply nothing, it is as tough as God — as it fully needs to be today, in this particular time of his journey through the world. It lies, mute, at the heart of the Crucifixion, as much its condition as it is of the Resurrection. Its contemplative requirements are no luxury for the works of justice, whether to see us through the day or, contemptuous of self-pity, and of self-condemnation too, to celebrate the night.¹⁷ The joy of God, that gift which *is*, is God, is Holy Spirit: mutual love and loving, of Father and of Son, tender delight abroad in the world, ever at crest and new: this, I believe to be a profoundly *practical* apostolic fact, well worth a meditation. But so much for the road not taken.¹⁸

¹⁶ This becomes almost a proper name for both Son and Spirit in the last several chapters of St John's gospel.

¹⁷ Prayer: prayer concretely rooted in the Gethsemanes of persons and whole peoples all about us, is of course what is mainly intended here. But I suppose I am also defending theology a little, as well as all other scholarship. Not too much. But when grounded in contemplation and done for the sake of action, it may be something greatly honourable, one of the works of justice and of love.

¹⁸ Not taken mainly, I suppose, because this road so soon, for the *mind*, becomes a path, and then, the trackless woods of God — the hidden life of Father and of Son. Hidden, and sacred, and largely wordless, it is not, however, private or unavailable, as the saints well know.