

WHY FAITH NEEDS PROCESS PHILOSOPHY

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I. The Global Crisis

When I chose this topic for the opening CPS seminar for this semester, I was very much aware of the global crisis that is the context of all that we do. I am convinced that process thought has great potential to help respond to this crisis. I planned to let the particularities of the crisis remain in the background while I spoke of the ways in which process thought could help faith, and especially Christian faith, respond helpfully to that crisis.

I will spend most of the time allotted to me in that way. However, when I realized that by chance the day on which I would be speaking would be the sixth anniversary of such a fateful one, I felt I could not ignore the 9/11 part of the particularity of the crisis. What occurred six years ago was a turning point in U.S. history. Believing the official account that the disaster was the work of fanatical Muslims, many of us hoped it would lead to rethinking an international policy that evoked such hatred from its victims. We were keenly disappointed when the official spin was that it was our virtues that evoked this hatred; so that we could consider our enemies as simply an axis of evil deserving of no human consideration.

A year and a half later, my colleague, David Griffin, began investigating what really happened on 9/11. No one who knows Griffin can question his thoroughness and rigor of argument. He found that the event was an even greater turning point than most of us had imagined, indeed, much greater than even now most Americans are prepared to recognize. Much of his scholarly energy has been focused on displaying the obvious falsity of each of the successive forms of the official story and providing reasons for believing that 9/11 was yet another false flag operation

False flag operations, that is, blaming on one's enemy acts that one has secretly committed oneself, have long played a role in international relations, and especially in justifying military aggression. In the twentieth century, the Japanese used this tactic against China, the Germans, against Poland, we Americans, against North Vietnam, and so forth. But 9/11 was not *just* another false flag operation. It was on a scale never before seen. And its victims were, for the first time, primarily civilian citizens of the nation, some of whose leaders were responsible for the attack. It shows that among our leaders there are those who, for the sake of implementing programs and policies to which they are deeply committed, are prepared to act in truly horrendous ways.

We might still say, let bye-gones be bye-gones – that we need to deal with the *present* situation and not with recriminations about the past. But for two reasons this does not suffice. First, not only have our national and international policies since 9/11 been misdirected by a deceitful story, but also it seems that future policies, whether those of a Republican or a Democratic administration, are likely to continue in this vein.

Second, there is grave danger that there will be another false-flag operation before the end of this administration, this time geared to justifying the attack on Iran to which our vice-president has expressed such strong commitment. I will not speculate on the political consequences of such an event shortly before the next election or the global consequences of a greatly expanded war in the Middle East. I can only say that I live in dread of these prospects. If the American people could be made aware that the announcement that Iran has committed some truly terrible aggression does not necessarily mean that this has actually happened, even if all the newspapers and television stations faithfully follow the administration's line, the danger would be greatly reduced.

You can tell from these brief comments that I would find it easy to spend my time on current events. However, I will not do that. I will turn, instead, to an equally controversial topic, which I consider even more important. In affirming the thesis involved in my title, I am probably in an even smaller minority than when I call 9/11 a false flag operation. But minorities are not always wrong.

As I enter the last stage of my life, I look with great pain at the changes that have taken place in my lifetime. It is not that I have a romantic view of the 1930s in which I grew up. Quite the contrary. Living in Japan I witnessed the rise to dominance there of the militaristic imperialists. When in Georgia, I was part of a white society in which the Ku Klux Klan was still active. In Spain Franco overthrew democracy. Hitler and Mussolini came to power in Germany and Italy. There was a terrible depression and then an even more terrible war.

If I romanticize any period of my life, it is the decades following World War II. Much happened then that for some time encouraged me to think that the world had turned a new leaf. Nevertheless, as I view the global situation today, I see it as *more* threatening than that of my youth. The *increase* of threat stems not from greater viciousness of national leadership but from the earth's inability to endure more of our exploitation and from the far more destructive weapons now at our disposal. Also, economic globalization has made the situation of human society everywhere more precarious. My disappointment, my near despair, is that the human corruption that expressed itself in the terrible thirties is no less manifest in this new century. It is particularly painful to me that my own nation, from which I once hoped so much, far from leading the world into a just peace and ecological sustainability, has become the greatest obstacle to realizing such a future.

II The Religious Crisis

There is another change that has occurred in my lifetime. When I was a child there was, of course, much that was wrong with all the religious traditions including Christianity. Nevertheless, I still dare to judge that basically they were salugenic, that is, they contributed to the health of human individuals and communities more than to their sickness. Today I judge that on a national and global basis, the predominant social reality

of religion, and I focus on Christianity, is pathogenic, contributing more to the illness of the world than to its health.

This does not mean that the widespread abandonment of traditional religious communities in favor of secular culture benefits the world. Quite the contrary. The world needs a salvation that only religious traditions can mediate. The greatest threats come from the secular substitutes for religious traditions: ethnocentrism, nationalism, militarism, imperialism, and economism. But when religious communities themselves sell out to these idols, they become part of the problem rather than the solution. The world needs healthy and health-giving expressions of faith.

It is in this context that I thrust aside my academic cautiousness and propose that faith *needs* process philosophy. Much of my life I have satisfied myself with more modest claims, such as that progressive or prophetic faith can be better articulated with the use of process philosophy. I believe that to be true, and if I persuade you of that, I will be pleased. However, the fact that I did not qualify the title in this way says something not only about my sense of urgency, but also about my real convictions, and it will be well to confess what these are. I think that the kind of faith I prize is in real trouble today. I think the effort of so many to sustain it without making any philosophical commitments has contributed to the decay. I think that the philosophies to which appeal has often been made usually make matters worse.

I further think that the problem of which I speak is not limited to progressive or prophetic Protestants. It is shared by many other Protestants in various ways. It is also shared by many Catholics and Jews and also by some spiritually minded social activists who do not identify with any traditional institution. Indeed, I believe it is shared by Muslims and even by those whose religious lives have been shaped by the traditions of India and China. So my belief is that there is a widespread problem to which there are not a lot of possible solutions. Process philosophy offers a solution. My real conviction is that at least for us, now, in the current cultural and intellectual situation of the West, it is *the* solution.

Although I believe that process philosophy can help other traditions, my focus in the remainder of this lecture will be on the theistic traditions and especially on Christianity. With respect to Christianity, I will make an even stronger claim. I have spoken of the present situation of faith, but I do not think that Christian faith got along well without process philosophy in the past either. Its unavailability in the early church led to creedal formulations that have caused unnecessary problems for believers throughout Christian history. The domination of thought by other philosophies led to theological formulations that were profoundly alien to the Bible. Key biblical insights have been lost, and translations and explanations of the text have been distorted. So I really do think that, all along, faith, at least in its Christian form, *needed* process philosophy in order to express itself well.

III. Faith without Philosophy

To argue this broad claim would require first an argument that, in general, faith needs philosophy. I will make no effort to develop such an argument comprehensively in this talk but simply comment on one example of the effort to express Christian faith without dependence on any philosophy, that of Karl Barth. He understood himself to be renewing the Reformers' emphasis on scripture alone, but he was more rigorous than they in excluding philosophical support. He was the most important Protestant theologian in the twentieth century. His work constitutes a reasonable test of the possibility of articulating Christian faith without dependence on any philosophy. It had an enormous impact on the mainline Protestant churches. Nevertheless, the style of theology he advocated proved unsustainable. The actual effects of his influence in succeeding generations have been quite contrary to his intention.

Barth offered a theology intended to show that faith in God depends *only* on revelation. In no way did he intend to reduce the sense of God's reality and activity prior to and independent of human reception or belief. However, for the most part, those who now carry on his project have given up the idea that Christians can speak of a God who has reality objectively and in relation to all things. "God" has become, among many who follow Barth in his rejection of the use of philosophy, part of the symbol system that shapes the church and the believer's understanding of reality.

In my judgment, Barth would agree with me that this is not the God of Christian faith. Believers do not put their ultimate trust in symbols as such. Their trust is put in what such symbols symbolize. In the language of many of those influenced by Barth, statements about what is real independently of human experience and thought are "metaphysical," and these theologians hold that metaphysics is clearly disallowed by Barth as by contemporary philosophy in general. Barth's objection to metaphysics, however, was not to making affirmations about God's eternal and foundational reality, but to relying on human reason in doing so. He taught that we know the reality and nature of God only as God reveals Godself to us in Jesus Christ. But through that revelation we *do* know a God whose reality does not depend on our knowing. This fundamental feature of Barth's thought has proved unsustainable. It has failed to convince his admirers and successors.

Many of Barth's most influential followers have drawn the conclusion that "God" must be understood as lacking objective reality in Godself. I draw the quite different conclusion that faith needs to renew the enterprise of metaphysics, that is, reflection on the nature of what is real. The many contemporary philosophies that discourage us from doing that are not what faith needs. Faith needs a philosophy that does not exclude metaphysical reflection and whose reflection leaves open the possibility of affirming the reality of God.

IV. Faith with Traditional Philosophy

We owe the rejection of the enterprise of metaphysics especially to David Hume and Immanuel Kant. Prior to their work, theologians made use of Plato, Aristotle, Plotinus, and, in the early modern period, Descartes and Newton. My case for the need for *process* philosophy depends, obviously, not only on arguing that the effort to develop a theology that makes no philosophical assumptions fails but also that the philosophies that were chiefly employed in the past are, at best, inadequate and, in fact, often distorting.

On this second part of my argument, too, I can deal here only with one example. By far the most influential theological tradition that is systematically philosophical is Thomism. The most powerful contribution of Thomas Aquinas is his insight into Being Itself as the Act of Being. In my opinion any adequate metaphysics today must include this basic insight in some form. Thomas identified Being Itself as the Supreme Being, and this identification enabled him, and most of his followers over a period of centuries, to identify Being Itself also with God. However, his more rigorous followers in the twentieth century, including Martin Heidegger and Paul Tillich, recognized that Being Itself cannot be *a* being, even the Supreme Being. This forces the question: Can Being Itself be identified as God? Heidegger said No. Tillich said Yes, although he recognized this is not “the God of the Bible,” but the God “beyond” the God of the Bible.

If Tillich meant by this merely that today we cannot think of God in just the way the biblical authors thought millennia ago, his distinction of his view of God from that of the biblical authors would be of little importance. No formulation of a doctrine of God today can correspond exactly with the understanding of any biblical writer. But Tillich meant much more than that. He recognized, with Heidegger, that the difference between Being Itself and the biblical God is fundamental.

Biblical writers understand themselves to refer to One who is like human beings and other creatures in being an individual agent, in short, an entity or a being. The differences between the God of Israel and any creature are vast, but they are the differences between the divine, everlasting, cosmic being and those ephemeral beings that have been created. Being Itself, in contrast, is not *a being* at all. It is the being of every being, whether divine or creaturely. That is why what it points to is “beyond” the biblical God. It is not that to which we pray, that which we can trust, or that to which worship is properly directed. Tillich’s rhetoric sometimes blurs these differences somewhat, as Heidegger’s does not. But Tillich’s acknowledgment of the fundamental difference between what he calls “God” and his understanding of the biblical God implicitly, at least, gives support to my assertion that this use of philosophy is in severe tension with biblical faith.

It is my belief that faith is properly directed to the biblical God rather than to Being Itself. Accordingly I do not see this derivate of the Thomistic tradition as meeting the need I have identified. Obviously, the Thomistic tradition takes other forms, and what I have said is not a basis for indicating the failure of all of these to meet the needs of

faith. In many of these the traditional blurring of the distinction between Being and the Supreme Being continues. But once the distinction has been clearly drawn, I do not see this blurring as a promising strategy.

V. The Crisis of Faith in God

That belief in God is in crisis needs little argument today. I will summarize just one way of noting it. In the Medieval Period and even as late as the eighteenth century the more highly one was educated the more surely one believed in the reality of God. In the latter part of this period, education was likely to make students more deistic in their thinking. That is, they were confident that the sort of order displayed in the world required a creator and orderer. They were also confident that God cared about human behavior and favored virtue over vice. Many were disinclined to think that God interfered in the course of events.

Other Christians were dissatisfied with this form of faith. They believed that God has interacted with creatures during the course of history, at least in that part of history recorded in the Bible, and they believed that the Bible, like nature, revealed God. For these “supernaturalists,” *real* faith was already in crisis because many thoughtful people denied the occurrence of miracles and rejected the authority of scripture.

Today, however, the crisis of faith in God goes deeper. The more highly one is educated, the less likely it is that one will believe that there is God. When we consider the nature of higher education, this is not surprising. It was once primarily a matter of liberal arts, a tradition developed in the Medieval period when universities were closely tied to the church and theology was the queen of the sciences. Today in all academic disciplines, it is unthinkable to suggest that God has influenced any event in nature or history. The only courses in universities in which such a topic is even discussed are some courses in philosophy of religion. God is discussed in theology, but theology is excluded from most universities. Accordingly, one is socialized to think that everything can be fully explained without any reference to God. The more advanced the study, the more emphatic the exclusion of God. This applies even to graduate courses in Bible and church history.

The Bible speaks of a God who is related to nature and history as well as to personal lives. Given our socialization into understanding nature and history as self-enclosed, all that is left is personal life. But that is also subject to explanation without reference to God. Theologians retreated to religious experience as a place where they could introduce some role for God in the world. But today even that form of religious experience that is experienced as experience of God is also discussed with no reference to God’s agency or reality.

VI. The Modern World View

This systematic exclusion of God from any role in the world is not an independent feature of the dominant worldview but integral to its basic metaphysics. If reality is to be

re-described in a way supportive of faith, this worldview as a whole must be directly challenged. The greatest obstacle to making this challenge effective is the denial by those who operate with the modern worldview that they have any metaphysics at all.

The university is so committed to the exclusion of metaphysics from its purview that it is extremely difficult to raise questions there about basic assumptions. Fortunately, this is less true in the culture outside the university. There challenges are common. They come from persons influenced by ecological concerns, from feminists, from those influenced by Eastern forms of thought, by those interested in parapsychology, and by those who reflect on the implications of recent developments in physics. These many challenges prepare the ground for a systematic assault. Most of these broader assaults are forms of process thought. The most fully developed is that of Alfred North Whitehead and his followers, of whom I count myself one. Nevertheless, the marginalization of all this in the university greatly reduces its role in the wider society.

The alternative proposed over against the dominant modern world view does not necessarily include God. Many of the critics of the dominant world view identify “God” with ways of thinking that they strongly, and often wisely, oppose. Nevertheless, many of the most developed forms of the alternative to the dominant world view, are open to some way of thinking of God. Consider Charles Sanders Peirce, William James, Henri Bergson, Lloyd Morgan, Samuel Alexander, Teilhard de Chardin, and Henry Nelson Wieman, as well as Alfred North Whitehead and Charles Hartshorne. Here I find it striking that the positions that are most fully developed in relation to contemporary science are also the ones in which the critique of the modern world view is most rigorously carried through and in which God’s role in the world is most fully considered. I refer, of course, especially to Whitehead.

Let us examine *how* the modern worldview excludes God so thoroughly. It does so axiomatically, and it rarely examines the axioms in question, some of which do not stand up well on examination. It asserts, to begin with, that nature is a closed system. That is, every event in nature is to be understood exhaustively in terms of other events in nature. This axiom is part of the Cartesian system. It proclaims that what happens in the world as objectively given to us cannot be influenced by subjective experience.

This is, of course, entirely contrary to our universal experience of influencing the behavior of our bodies. Descartes himself was willing to make an exception here, but in academic circles the axiom has trumped the universal experience that our objective actions are affected by our subjective intentions. It remains the foundational dogma of the regnant understanding of science. The rule of this axiom means that the task of the academic discipline of physiological psychology is not open-minded study of the relation of what happens in the brain to subjective experience. Instead its task is to explain the subjective in terms of the objective. The task of evolutionary biology is not to examine open-mindedly the relation of animal behavior and evolutionary change, but to explain that animal behavior that is not genetically determined cannot influence evolutionary development.

The axiom that excluded any role for subjective experience obviously excludes any role for God. If every “natural” event, which by definition must be free from any influence of subjectivity, is exhaustively explicable by other such events, then God *cannot* be introduced into the explanation. For God to affect the course of natural events could only be an invasion of the natural sphere that would violate its laws. Any explanation in such terms would undercut the whole scientific enterprise.

Prior to Darwin, the exclusion of God from historical events was not so settled. Human subjectivity entered into historical events. Such subjectivity might be influenced by God. However, since Darwin it has been assumed that human beings are fully part of nature. The rules governing nature in general finally apply to historical events as well. Human activity and even human thought must be fully explicable by objective, that is, physical factors. Since subjective experience has no causal role, obviously any influence God might be supposed to exercise on it cannot have any causal role. This is as true of religious experience as of anything else. The exclusion of God from any role in history follows inescapably from the primary axiom of the self-enclosed character of nature.

VII. How Process Philosophy Changes This

William James identified the world as pictured by modern thought as a “block universe.” The most widespread image has been that of the clock. This world view is properly described as materialistic, viewing complex wholes even living ones, as composed exhaustively of parts that are little bits of matter. “Matter” is nature conceived as lacking any capacity to act or be inwardly affected by anything that happens. Bits of matter, “atoms,” change in relative location, but otherwise they are changeless. This world-view is usually presented as deterministic, in that it typically assumes that events are to be explained entirely in terms of antecedent events. It is often reductionistic, since it is strongly inclined to suppose that events at the macro level are ultimately explicable by events at the micro level. It is this materialistic, deterministic, and reductionistic picture of the world that all forms of process thought reject.

Whitehead called his form of process thought a “philosophy of organism.” Organisms are not lumps of matter but centers of activity. They are affected by their environment and in turn affect it. They are something for themselves as well as for others, that is, they are subjects as well as objects. Whereas what is thought of as a lump of matter is related to other lumps of matter only externally, that is, in ways that do not affect what it is, organisms are largely constituted by their relations. Organisms participate in constituting one another in their subjective aspect.

A human being is an organism that can be analyzed into many organisms, which in turn can be organized into many organisms. Cells are organisms of crucial importance to the larger organisms. One of the organisms of which we are composed is human experience. A moment of human experience provides the most accessible organism for our examination. It proves to be an integration of the influence of past personal experience with that of events in the brain and, largely through them, of events in the rest

of the body and the wider world. The integration is a creative act that involves also novel elements.

Process thinkers generally understand human experience to be part of the natural world. But for them this means that human experience must be taken seriously when reflecting on the character of the natural world. Instead of assuming that human experience is nothing but the irrelevant by-product of the motion of material atoms, one hypothesizes that in a very simplified form, cellular, and even quantum, events have a basic similarity to human experiences. In Whitehead's view they, too, are integrations of all the influences of the world upon them. This means that they, too, are subjects being affected by the world and agents, constituting themselves out of what they receive.

I have pointed out that the modern worldview has closed the world to any divine action. In its inception, its authors assumed that a world that is like a clock points directly to a clock maker. The question was only whether the maker intervened from time to time to adjust the settings. Such intervention would be a matter of pushing and pulling atoms into different locations. Increasingly science rejected the notion that the natural world required, or even allowed the possibility of, such supernatural changes.

The influence of God on human beings has not been thought of primarily in this way. People feel called or drawn by God to act in particular ways, and mainstream theologians have emphasized that the way God works on the human heart and mind is persuasive. Believers often feel strengthened by God in responding to the divine persuasion. They sometimes feel judged, but also forgiven and blessed. Sometimes they feel guided. They may believe that their bodily condition is also affected by God, but usually this is mediated by the faith God inspires in them or others. In other words, God is understood to act *in* them as subjects, not *on* them as objects.

In the dominant world view the inclusion of human beings in nature meant that all these ideas about God acting in the hearts and minds of believers became irrelevant. Human experience no longer played any role in the world. In the process worldview, on the contrary, the inclusion of human beings in nature opens the door to thinking of God as influencing all things in ways that are basically similar to God's influence in human experience. It is obvious that this world view opens the door to experiencing the creation in a much more biblical way than the materialist, determinist, and reductionist view that it seeks to replace.

At this point I have sketched my basic thesis. Theistic faith cannot fare well in an intellectual and cultural context in which the possibility that God makes a difference in what happens in the world is axiomatically excluded. Faith needs a context that is open to the possibility that God plays a role in human life and, indeed, in the whole of history and nature. There are many movements of thought today that challenge the reductionistic world view. When they are systematically developed they usually become some form of process philosophy. Many forms of process philosophy generate the openness that faith needs.

VIII. A Pitch for the Whiteheadian Version

Although the “new cosmology” has considerable popularity in the culture, it has yet to make any significant inroad in the university. No academic discipline even studies it. Much less has any academic discipline been reformulated in its terms.

We could, of course, say, so much the worse for the university. The university may be the most conservative institution in Western society. Well into the modern period the universities taught the Greek and Roman classics and excluded the natural sciences. In the eighteenth century, the science of botany was more likely to be advanced by English vicars than by university professors. Indeed, the sciences were often celebrated more by theologians, who saw them as telling us about how God orders the world, than elsewhere in the university. Latin and Greek played a much larger role in these universities than did modern languages.

Nevertheless, as the importance of the sciences became more and more apparent, eventually the universities changed. Academic “disciplines” replaced liberal arts. Laboratories and research institutes became central to the university, and classical modes of thought gave way to the scientific worldview. This led to an exponential increase in the rate of scientific advance. As the dominance of economic thinking replaced that of the church, the sciences in their plurality survived the change by demonstrating their ability to improve technology and contribute to health. However, the close connection between the scientific vision and spirit with the philosophy that undergirded it was lost.

None of this is helpful to faith. But it does indicate that even the university can change. A change in worldview that develops outside it can eventually replace its current one. But since the ethos of the university is established in its academic disciplines, that can happen only as the new worldview demonstrates its usefulness, discipline by discipline.

Today, the most promising field for change is physics. Especially in quantum theory, physicists in general recognize that the dominant worldview does not work. There is openness to other models. When process models are sought, Whitehead’s is the one most likely to be considered, partly because it is the most fully developed and partly because of its apparent relevance to the present state of discussion.

The widespread acceptance of a basically Whiteheadian quantum theory any time soon is not likely, but it *is* possible. Such acceptance *could* lead to openness to Whiteheadian influence in other branches of physics as well. It could lead to a more Whiteheadian biology and evolutionary theory, and to a more Whiteheadian approach to human psychology including physiological psychology. Elements of these approaches already exist and have a tiny foothold in the university, but they are still largely ignored. Changes of this sort *could* affect philosophy of science, and, indeed, some leaders in this field in Europe have already turned to Whitehead. Perhaps changes in philosophy of science could spill over into other branches of philosophy.

The changes I am suggesting would be enormous, and enormous changes usually take place very slowly if at all. I do not expect to see any such shift in my lifetime, but the situation is more promising now than ever before. I am happy to have lived long enough to see even the possibility of such changes.

I do not envision that such changes would lead to talk of God among physicists or biologists or psychologists. Nevertheless, the climate of the university on this topic as well might change. It is important to recognize that God's exclusion from the university followed from the impossibility of God making any difference in the world. This was based on axiomatic assumptions rather than formulation of explanations that deal adequately with what was once attributed to God. Indeed, in lieu of developing and defending a fully atheist cosmology, philosophical cosmology as such has been excluded from all disciplines. This leaves the basic axioms unexamined.

There has always been the question of the basic order of the world. Scientists assume that everything acts according to "laws." Because the word "law" presupposes One who establishes the laws, philosophers of science now prefer to speak of "law-like behavior." This, however, does not explain why behavior is lawlike. Some of it can be explained as the habits of nature, hence avoiding any suggestion of the establishment of a prior order. But it can hardly be doubted that this universe is ordered prior to the emergence of habits among the various species. Whitehead developed a balanced picture between the habits and the laws that precede and make possible the acquisition of habits by natural species. Today the latter are often called "constants," and there is renewed wonder at how they came to be. The preferred answer is "by chance," but, given their remarkable character, few are entirely comfortable with that answer.

There has always been the marvel of novelty and freedom. In order to maintain the block universe view, the university has had to exclude them along with God. But even those most socialized by the academic disciplines that exclude them are not really able to deny their reality in their own lives.

Whitehead offers a way of understanding not only lawlike behavior but also novelty and freedom. However, his explanation involves God. A university that found Whitehead's conceptuality helpful in reconstructing its disciplines might be more open to discussion of ultimate questions. Talk of God might not be completely forbidden.

All of this imagining of what might happen in the future, like Whitehead's whole philosophy, is thoroughly speculative or hypothetical. It is emphatically not intended as a prediction of what *will* happen. Perhaps the kind of changes for which I hope are in fact impossible. In that case, it is not worth pursuing efforts in that direction. However, the Center for Process Studies was organized on the hypothesis that we should not give up without first trying. My hope is that our work may eventually contribute to bringing into being a cultural and intellectual situation in which a salugenic faith can flourish. It is my hope that once again it would be possible to call, even in our educational institutions, for lives organized around the service of God through the service of creatures. If that

happened we might overcome the dominance of addictions to ethnocentrism, nationalism, militarism, imperialism, and economism that now threaten the livability of the planet.