While it is true that the rich care for the poor, the opposite is no less true. This is a remarkable fact confirmed by the entire Christian tradition. Lives can actually be turned around by the realization that the poor have much to teach us about the Gospel and its demands. By their silent witness, they make us confront the precariousness of our existence. The elderly, for example, by their physical frailty, remind us of our own fragility, even as we attempt to conceal it behind our apparent prosperity and outward appearance. The poor, too, remind us how baseless is the attitude of aggressive arrogance with which we frequently confront life's difficulties. They remind us how uncertain and empty our seemingly safe and secure lives may be. Here again, Saint Gregory the Great has much to tell us: "Let no one consider himself secure, saying, 'I do not steal from others, but simply enjoy what is rightfully mine.' The rich man was not punished because he took what belonged to others, but because, while possessing such great riches, he had become impoverished within. This was indeed the reason for his condemnation to hell: in his prosperity, he preserved no sense of justice; the wealth he had received made him proud and caused him to lose all sense of compassion." (Pope Leo XIV, *Dilexit ti, Est,* 120)

The **"Bartolomé De Las Casas Essay Series"** is dedicated to the Spanish bishop and writer who was the first champion of the rights of indigenous people in the Americas. The North American Educational Initiatives Foundation commissioned the renowned Aristotle authority Professor Michael Pakaluk, presently teaching at The Catholic University

of America, to write a series of essays on the subject of human dignity, friendship, leadership, and solidarity with frequent reference to natural law, our classical heritage, and Catholic social doctrine.

Michael Pakaluk received his Ph.D. in philosophy at Harvard University, where he studied philosophical logic with W. V. Quine, Burton Dreben, and Warren Goldfarb, philosophy of science with Hilary Putnam, and political philosophy with John Rawls. Rawls directed his dissertation, "Aristotle's Theory of Friendship," and Sarah Broadie (then at Yale University) also served on the thesis committee.

The essay series is available for free distribution. The foundation asks that the essays and any quotations be properly attributed to our sponsorship.

For further reading:

- Lewis, C.S., *The Four Loves,* (New York: Harcourt, Brace) 1960.
- Pakaluk, Michael, *Other Selves: Philosophers on Friendship,* (Indianapolis: Hackett) 1991.
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TABLE OF CONTENTS

First Essay: The Closing of the American Heart?

Second Essay: How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend

Third Essay: The Demands of Friendship

Fourth Essay: A Friend as 'Other Self'

Fifth Essay: The Natural Friendship of Husband and Wife

Sixth Essay: Friendship between Parents and Children

Seventh Essay: The Family as the Training Ground of Citizenship

Eighth Essay: The Family as the Wellspring of a Healthy Society

Ninth Essay: Friendship as the Basis of Volunteerism

Tenth Essay: Leadership and Human Rights

Eleventh Essay: Leadership and the Virtues

Twelfth Essay: 'Globalization' and a Call for University Student Leaders to Promote Human Dignity and Solidarity

First Essay: The Closing of the American Heart?

By Michael Pakaluk

Something lost

To study the classics of Greek and Roman civilization is a bit like a mature man reflecting on his hopes and dreams as a young man. There was so much potential: Has he fulfilled it? There was so much he had wanted to do, perhaps, but did not: Where did he go wrong? Western cultures are derived from those of Greek and Rome. So how do we stand in comparison with them? Look at the ferment, the inquisitiveness, the childlike creativity and speculation of a Sophocles, a Plato, or a Euclid. Have we used this inheritance well?

There can be no doubt that in most domains we have indeed done well. LaGrange, Gauss, and Goedel are worthy successors of Euclid; Shakespeare excels Sophocles; Michelangelo aimed to surpass Pheidias, and he did. In matters of philosophy, however, things are not so clear, and also in simple reflection on ordinary social life. Consider something so ordinary as old age. Old age is its own time, with its own meaning and

challenges. Recognizing this, the ancients wrote essays on the subject, and it became a distinct genre: a discourse *de Senectute*. If you were wise, you had something to say about how to live well in old age. Yet, although we have our self-help and health books, we do not see 'old age' as an interesting moral entity. Old age is for retiring; traveling around the country, perhaps; and awaiting death in an 'assisted living environment'. We do not think that old age presents us with a specific task, or that it is meant to elicit a distinctive contribution.

Something similar is true of friendship, also a part of ordinary life. If you scan the history of thought, and look for discussions of friendship, you will see something rather remarkable. All of the great philosophers in ancient Greece and Rome wrote on friendship. Plato devotes a couple of dialogues to it and is constantly intrigued by how Socrates practiced it. Nearly one-fifth of Aristotle's great treatise on the moral life, the *Nicomachean Ethics*, is devoted to friendship. Cicero, the Roman orator and popularizer of Greek philosophy, wrote a famous treatise "On Friendship". Plutarch, the most famous moralist of antiquity, wrote several essays on the subject, including the very practical, "How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend". And the trend continues throughout the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and early Modern period, largely in creative imitation of the ancient exemplars.

Yet in the 18th century, or thereabouts, the long tradition of practical writing on friendship begins to dwindle, and by the 20th century it has vanished. Immanuel Kant gave

a lecture on the subject in a derivative work of his, and Emerson writes on friendship along with other topics in his Essays, but besides this, no important philosopher after 1700 has written on the subject. (Friendship is not alone: no important modern philosopher discusses marriage or the family. But that is another matter.) All the great treatises on ethics in modern times—Hume's second *Enquiry*; Mill's *Utilitarianism*; Kant's second *Critique*—ignore friendship altogether. Even the anti-moralists, such a Nietzsche, have nothing to say about it. And this trend in writing is reflected similarly in teaching: until very recently, it was unknown for friendship to be discussed in a university classroom.

Now in some cases, when we look back to the ancients and see that they did or thought something that we ignore, we do not think we are the losers for all that. Slavery was a constant in the ancient world; we've abolished it. The ancients were preoccupied with 'Fate'; we've largely escaped the fate of dwelling upon that. But with friendship it's different. We sense that we are the ones who are at fault. We lack something human, which the ancients more easily appreciated, and which somehow came to them effortlessly and naturally. To take up that image of a mature man looking back on his youth: we look back upon the spontaneous generosity of character described in the ancient discussions and wonder why our nature, in comparison, seems so crabbed and confined. It's as though, in this topic at least, we've become embittered, and smaller in moral stature than the ancients.

Something gained

But what explains this change? Why is it that a topic so important to an Aristotle or a Plato, is as nothing to the modern mind? Socrates used to ask his companions, “How many friends do you have?” and he would chide them when they could give no definite answer. “You mean you can tell me how many oxen, or goats, or horses you have, but you can’t tell me how many friends you’ve got--when friends are so much more valuable?” Socrates was of course lampooning the very human tendency we have, to put great concentration into secondary things, and to avoid thinking about truly important things. But what was then a flaw in particular individuals has become a vice of an entire culture. As a result, although an Athenian in 400 BC gave no thought to who his friends were; an American of today, although he’s perhaps studied quasars and quarks and DNA, hasn’t the slightest clue, even, of what a friend is.

Perhaps we neglect friendship, in part, because we neglect what the ancients thought friendship was important for. They thought friendship was essential for happiness, yet we deny that there is such a thing as happiness. —“What do you mean? How do we deny happiness? Isn’t contemporary society based on the very idea of the ‘pursuit of happiness’”? —But I insist that we deny it. Here is my argument: You cannot think that something exists if it is not objective; we do not regard happiness as objective; therefore, we do not regard it as real. And certainly we don’t regard it as objective. There is no fact of

the matter, we think, as to what will make us happy. We do not think that someone can coherently say, “I am convinced I’m happy”, yet be wrong about that. We identify happiness with subjective satisfaction. But if that is all that happiness is, who’s to say that friends are necessary for it? In fact, no other person *could* be an essential part of my subjective satisfaction. He might be an instrument for it, or an occasion for my gratification, but not a real element of my well-being.

Moreover, the ancients thought that friendship was necessary to acquire virtue, but we deny that virtue exists. We deny that it exists, because we deny that a human being has a nature or purpose. For virtues are simply what a thing needs in order to do well what it is meant to achieve by its nature. A knife is supposed to cut: that’s the kind of thing it is, its ‘nature’. What must a knife be like, then, in order to cut well? It needs to have a good blade, which holds an edge, and a sturdy handle. Then these are the ‘virtues’ of a knife (and we say that a knife cuts ‘in virtue’ of these things). Deny however that a knife has any purpose or point, and you can no longer say what features would make a knife good or bad. But we effectively deny that human life has any set purpose. We are therefore precluded from thinking that some human traits are virtues and others are not. And since we do not recognize the reality of virtues, we cannot think, as the ancients did, that friends are, so to speak, the naturally appointed means by which human beings are meant to acquire and to grow in virtue.

We neglect friendship, too, because we've lost our sense of the 'middle' of society, so to speak. A healthy society is one with a rich network of associations and institutions; with cross-connections among families, clans, and groups; with neighborhoods and districts. This is what social scientists refer to as 'civil society'; it is where we accumulate 'cultural capital', as economists say. But the tendency in our culture is to split society into 'individuals' who are set up against 'the state' and 'the business world' and 'the media culture'. The 'mediating institutions' that are meant to buffer the individual from the state, and that infuse civic life with softening affections derived from the family and friendships, are weak and withering. This 'loss of the middle', too, is reflected in our patterns of thought. Our social philosophies tend to promote either 'the autonomy of the self' (individualism) or a sense of obligation towards the total well-being of society (collectivism), but they have little to say about the human realm in between.

What is the remedy for all this? Here, in a small way, the study of classical writings on friendship can be of real assistance. It gives us a fresh way of looking at the world; it helps us to escape the false alternatives presented to us by our culture. Aristotle, for instance, says that in a true friendship the very *existence* of a friend is valued for its own sake; what we love and wish for is simply that *he or she exist*. Ponder that thought, develop all its implications, and try to put it into action—and there you have a remedy against subjective conceptions of happiness. Again, he writes that friendship consists essentially in reciprocity, and that friendship involves extending relationships of *reciprocity*, by recognizing that we are related to those previously foreign to us, in ways analogous to our

relationship to family members and associates. It is a natural tendency of friendship, he explains, to look for ways of treating others equal to us *as if* they are brothers or sisters, those under out authority *as if* they were sons or daughters. Again, dwell on this idea, appreciate its good sense and wisdom, recognize the reality of reciprocity in one's own life—and there you have a formula for developing bonds of solidarity across society.

I have often thought that there should be an eighth 'capital sin', after pride, envy, lust, and so on: the failure we all suffer from, *of taking things for granted*. An old man looking back over his life might well conclude that most of the time he's taken his wife and children and buddies for granted; and we, looking back to the ancients and what they wrote on friendship, might conclude that we've similarly taken friendship for granted. To read the classics on this subject is to be startled; to realize that something needs to be recovered. And on that recovery may hinge the recovery of much else that is human and good.

Second Essay: How to Tell a Flatterer from a Friend

By Michael Pakaluk

Our task, as was said in the first essay, is to rediscover for today the practice of friendship. We recognize that there is something lacking in us, in so far as we hardly think about or appreciate this important, and very human, phenomenon of friendship. So, we look to the ancients as our guide, not because they are ancient, but because, in contrast, they valued friendship above almost everything else, and they wrote about it with subtlety and wisdom. We want to know how they defined friendship, how they distinguished true friendship from false, and how they thought friendships are formed and preserved. Aristotle will be our chief guide here, because his famous discussion of friendship, in his *Nicomachean Ethics*, represents the very best which the ancients have to offer on the subject. However, before we begin to discuss friendship, there is an important preliminary to be taken care of: we need to distinguish friendship from flattery.

Every human endeavor involves distinguishing the true from the false; similarly, we cannot have a sound notion of friendship, unless we have a good concept of false

friendship, or flattery. In every area and discipline, a person who has real expertise is able to distinguish the real from the merely apparent. The jeweler has to be able to distinguish diamonds from glass. A banker must be able to spot counterfeit bills and put them aside. If a doctor cannot distinguish real cases of a disease from only superficially apparent ones, he'll be useless. And we can't be true friends, or acquire true friends, unless we can detect a flatterer.

A friend in the true sense is someone who knows what is really good for his friend, and in a practical way helps his friend to acquire those things. A flatterer, in contrast, either does not know, or pretends not to know, what is good for someone else; his concern, rather, is merely that his friend be *satisfied* and *content*. The aim of a flatterer, above all, is simply to 'get along' with you, so that he can get whatever benefits he thinks will come from associating with you. He realizes that he can stay on good terms by making you feel good, and, to this end, he will say whatever he needs to say.

We do not claim that a flatterer must himself be aware that he is a flatterer. Most people are not aware of their own faults, and being a flatterer is a fault. A flatter need not be manipulative and calculating; he need not consciously deliberate about how to achieve his intended effect. Rather, we might expect that, typically, flattery is simply an habitual way of acting for him. It is something he does as a matter of course.

How, then, should we contrast a friend and a flatterer? Above all, a friend is concerned that you *are* good, a flatterer, that you *feel* good. A friend tells you the truth about yourself, even if this is painful, whereas flatterer distorts the truth, to make it match what you want to hear. A friend takes objective goodness to be the standard, and he opposes you when you stray from it; a flatterer takes your wishes to be the standard, and he'll change what he takes to be good, to match them. A friend wants to agree with you, because your opinion is right; a flatterer wants to agree with you, because whatever your opinion is, is right. A friend thinks it good if you castigate yourself for some failure or sin; a flatterer will never let you admit that you've done something wrong--unless you persist in thinking so, and then finally he'll agree that you've done wrong, but only because you feel bad about it, not because he thinks it so.

Generally, a friend is devoted to the truth first, and he lets his friendships thrive or fail relative to this. He is easy to like, precisely because he does not take 'being liked' to be the first thing. He follows Emerson's maxim that the question definitive of a friendship is, "Do you see the same truth?" In contrast, a flatterer deals in appearances and mere opinions. For him, truth is irrelevant, or perhaps even a stumbling block. The question that is defining for him is "What do you *want* me to think is true?"

The ancients despised flatterers for three reasons. A flatterer is first of all inherently *deceptive*: he seems to be good for you, but in fact he is not. For that very reason, he is,

secondly, *dangerous*: he occupies a place that ought, really, to be filled by someone who truly cares for you. He's always the wrong man in the wrong place at the wrong time. A flatterer lulls you into a false sense of confidence and causes you to let your guard down. Thirdly, a flatterer is servile and parasitic, a purely *derivative* character. He has no 'core principles' of his own; rather he merely responds to the wants and desires of others. He makes himself into a kind of servant of the illusions and conceits of the people he aims to please.

Call these, then, the "three D's" of a flatterer: *deceptive*, *dangerous*, and *derivative*.

Now someone today who was confronted with this distinction between a friend and a flatterer might reasonably raise an objection. "This notion of a flatterer," he might say, in response, "has no real application today. Yes, there are some odd characters who fit the description, but generally most people try to be genuine with others. To be sure, there is such a thing as 'flattery'—and everyone engages in it from time to time--but it's relatively rare, and it's easy to spot. On the other hand, there are not very many people who build their whole identity, their entire character, around the practice of *flattering* others. Maybe young adults need to be careful of fawning and flattering friends, but not mature adults."

There is some truth to this objection. It is true that there are relatively few personality types who can obviously be set aside and avoided as flatterers. But flattery takes deceptive forms and is perhaps more common than the objection allows. We can distinguish in fact four modern types of flatterer: the Chameleon; the Tolerator; the Validator; and the Surface Skater.

The Chameleon, just like the lizard by that name, changes his appearance to match his environment. Among liberals, he is a liberal; with conservatives, he voices conservative opinions. If he happens to be a religious fellow, he will not let this show among non-believers. Many times in a single day he can change radically the things he says, and he is not disturbed by the appearance of contradiction. He is very hard to get to know, and almost impossible to befriend, because one can hardly determine what he really thinks. Out of a kind of weakness, or lack of self-assurance, his first impulse is always to agree. If, therefore, you challenge him as to whether a particular statement really reflects his own view, he'll come to doubt it himself, and agree with you that maybe it does not.

Yet the Chameleon is deceptive, because in fact he has very strong opinions, which, surging inside him, can acquire at times an irrational force, because he never brings them out and tests them in debates with others. The Chameleon is therefore a passive-aggressive character, superficially agreeable, but deep-down hostile to many of those who think they are on good terms with him. His hidden hostility makes him prone to betray or

undercut precisely those he has just agreed with: in fact, he finds himself resenting others for their opinions, because he cannot help agreeing with them, against his own judgment. The ancient thinkers would have counted such a character as a flatterer, and clearly he satisfies the three D's: his true opinions remain *deceptively* hidden; but these lurk *dangerously* below the surface; and his views are simply derived from his surroundings.

The Tolerator makes tolerance his highest principle; his one goal is to tolerate everyone—except, of course, the intolerant. But "the intolerant" end up being those who believe that some things are objectively right, and others are objectively wrong. People like that will of course "intolerantly" reject and dismiss what they regard as wrong. So, although, the Tolerator thinks of himself as universally agreeable, in practice he divides up the world into two camps, and he can get along with members of only the one camp—people who, like himself, won't insist on objective goods and bads. Yet these are just those persons who are incapable of being true friends (since they can neither know nor seek your real good). So the Tolerator, curiously, is caught in a practical contradiction: he aims to be friendly only towards those who are incapable of being real friends with others.

The Tolerator takes a principle originally meant to be observed in limited political contexts—tolerance among people who make different claims about revealed religion—and aims to erect it into a general rule for human relationships. He does so, because he wants to be on good terms with everyone (and he wonders why some people are so obtuse

as not to do the same). But to aim to be on good terms with everyone--automatically, without anyone undergoing fundamental change, and without anyone's views or commitments being set apart as wrong--is itself a posture of flattery. His vain hope is to please all of the people, all of the time. The Tolerator is consequently *deceptive*, because he cannot sustain the impartiality, he says that he says that he adopts; he is *dangerous*, because his intolerance towards people with real principles lacks principled limits; and he is *derivative*, too, because in the end he stands for nothing. We may sum up the Tolerator by saying that he aims, impossibly, to flatter all other flatterers like himself.

The Validator is yet a third species of modern flatterer. Whereas the Tolerator takes a political principle and tries to make it universal, the Validator takes a private way of acting and makes it the mode of all relationships. He is, above all, affirming, like a mother who affirms and consoles the hurt feelings of her child. He thinks he does good for others precisely by affirming whatever they say. His friendliness is like the warm, gushy embrace of a mom—no questions asked, no accusations, no judgments. For him, the Worst Offense is to be 'judgmental' towards another, which means: thinking badly of something they have said, or done. Naturally, many times people will say or do things that the Validator, in advance, would have disagreed with. In that case, he will either change what he thinks, like the Chameleon, or he will embrace relativism, much like the Tolerator. "I validate what you say. It is true for you, as the opposite view is true for someone me." The Validator, then, clearly has all of the marks of the flatterer.

But perhaps the most common flatterer of our time is the Surface Skater. Even in the ancient world, it was recognized that some of the most effective flatterers worked by subtly *changing the subject*. Was an unpleasant thought going to occur to his 'friend'? Then turn his mind to something positive. Was he perhaps going to dwell on some disparaging thing that an enemy had said the other day? Then start talking to him about his good traits, and the various good things that people had said recently.

The Surface Skater of today is very much like that. He studiously avoids every important, or 'heavy' subject, since these can bring along with them disagreement, or self-recrimination, or judgments. He especially wishes to avoid any suggestion that anyone he talks with has ever done anything wrong. Hence his big contribution to friendship, as he conceives it, is always to change the conversation to something light: to shopping instead of justice; movies instead of morality; car maintenance instead of soul maintenance; sports teams instead of family issues. If every one leaves a family gathering with full bellies, having talked only about the most fatuous trivialities, he figures that the very best in human association has been achieved. He can have lunch or coffee with you every day for ten years, and he'll never want to go deeper.

The Surface Skater is a classic flatterer, because he is concerned that people feel good, not that they are good. His *deceptiveness* is like that of a life filled with distractions;

his *dangerousness* consists in keeping people from serious self-reflection; his *derivativeness* comes from his being essentially a creature of the media. The media, in fact, could hardly exert any bad influence on society, if there were no Surface Skaters, whose function it was to bring the media incessantly into private conversations.

So, we see, then, that, far from being uncommon, the flatterer represents, perhaps, the standard mode of associating in modern society. Alas, we are generally content with the semblance of friendship, rather than friendship itself. If, then, we aim to revive the practice of friendship, the first thing we must do is to recognize that we live enmeshed in a web of flattery. The first step in coming to acquire knowledge, Socrates once said, is to know that you do not know. The first step in acquiring friends, it would seem, is to recognize that, perhaps, you have no friends. And we can recognize this, once we learn how to tell a flatterer from a friend.

Third Essay: The Demands of Friendship

By Michael Pakaluk

Where to start?

We have been reflecting on friendship as classically understood, in contrast with which relationships in contemporary society seem impoverished. We noted that classical philosophers, such as Plato and Aristotle, regarded friendship as much more important and precious than we typically do. This had something to do, we observed, with their better appreciation (as shown in their account of the *virtues*) that there is such a thing as human *goodness*. And we furthermore looked at ways in which modern attitudes of relativism push us towards insincerity and untruthfulness—with the result that, in our dealings with others, we perhaps inadvertently become more like the 'flatterer', so much despised by the ancients, than a true friend.

Recall that our goal is a practical one: our aim is not merely to think correct thoughts, but rather to live life better, by first coming to appreciate friendship as did the ancients, and then putting this into practice, in a manner appropriate to our conditions. We want to acquire true friends and to be true friends.

So far we have said that, in order to be a true friend, one must *avoid being a flatterer*. But to say this is to have taken only the smallest of steps in the direction of friendship, since friendship is demanding. It has been said, as if to set down a benchmark, "Greater love than this no one has, than to lay down his life for his friend." Take this remark to represent the true ideal of friendship. To seek the ways of friendship, then, is in reality to wish to become the sort of person who would gladly, in the requisite circumstances, make such a sacrifice. And, obviously, there is a good bit of ground between avoiding flattery and sacrificing one's life.

Misleading Maxims

There are two sorts of persons, G.K. Chesterton once remarked: those who divide humanity into two sorts, and those who do not. The modern mind, in thinking about human relationships at least, likes to dichotomize. But we shall see that this tendency is only minimally useful as regards friendship.

For instance, it is often said that we should treat another not *as a mere means*, but *as an end*; or that we should love others *unconditionally*, not *setting down conditions*; or that we should be *altruistic*, rather then *egoistic*.

But what does it mean, to treat another person 'as a mere means'? Here is a suggestion: we treat other people as mere means, when, by deceit or force, we get them to do something that they would not otherwise have done—since then we 'manipulate' or 'control' them. We might say that to treat anything as 'a mere means' is to deal with it other than according to its proper nature. If, for instance, I use a fine piano to play fine music, then, even though a piano is an instrument, I do not use it as 'a mere means', since I am using it well for the purpose for which it is made. And in doing so I am taking care of it and respecting it. But suppose I buy a fine piano merely because I want to impress guests who come into my house (since I am not a musician and do not really care about music)—then I am using even that piano as 'a mere means'.

Yet just as a piano has a proper nature and function, so does a human being. A human being is an intelligent agent, who causes things to happen in the world by *understanding* them and freely willing to bring about what he regards as good. So then: if I deceive someone, then I cause him to act without understanding; and if I force him to do something, then I cause him to act without *freely willing* so. In both cases, I 'use' him to

bring about results that I desire, while not respecting his nature. To this extent I might be said to care more for those results than for his proper nature, and, accordingly, I can be said to treat him as 'a mere means.'

So this maxim, 'treat others as ends, not as mere means', is of only limited usefulness in our quest for friendship, since all that it serves to accomplish, is to exclude deceit and force in our dealings with others. (Note, by the way, that if someone is an aggressor, or is set upon carrying out criminal ends, then force, such as that employed by the law, is justifiable in dealing with him, and even deceit—for insofar as he becomes an aggressor, he has himself done violence to and receded from his proper nature.)

Consider next the maxim that we should love others 'unconditionally'. This too is hardly useful, because in fact it is unrealistic and unsustainable. All true love seeks the good of the other person and seeks to be reciprocated, and to this extent it is conditional, at least in its exercise, if not in its intention. For instance, suppose a mother wishes to help her son who is struggling with a drinking problem. She loves him 'unconditionally', it is true, in the sense that she will never hate him. Yet, if she really loves him, then all of the concrete expressions of that love will certainly be conditional, since otherwise she harms him. So, for instance, if she were to keep giving him money, even when, she knew, he would use that money to buy drinks, she would serve as an 'enabler' and hurt him. So her expressions of love must be conditional on those expressions actually contributing to her

son's true good. Again, if she were to let him continue to stay in her house, even when he showed no regard for others and disturbed the peace of the household, then she would shows imprudence and selfishness, rather than love. The reason is that love reasonably looks for a fair response. If her son fails minimally to correspond to her efforts to help him, by playing his part and acting well, insofar as he is able, then the arrangement cannot stand.

Or consider the notion that we should be 'altruistic' towards others rather than 'egoistic'—on the grounds that true love is 'disinterested'. This suggestion is misguided, because it relies upon a false dichotomy. All true love perfects the lover and thus contributes to, or manifests, his own goodness, precisely through his contributing to the good of his friend. Furthermore, true love is never 'disinterested' or 'impartial': rather, it yearns for reciprocity, and for the equality which results from reciprocation. Suppose, for instance, that over an extended period I continue to confer benefits and gifts upon another person, yet he never responds in kind; he never attempts to deal with me as I have dealt with him. Then *de facto* I set myself up as a superior. Inevitably, I make myself into his 'benefactor' rather than his friend. As a result of this 'disinterested' care he may in fact become dependent upon me in some respects—which might even please me, since I might take it to reflect upon my own superior competence, resources, and affection. We all know that one-sided charity is typically obnoxious and destructive.

What should we conclude, then? *That all of the maxims which, in modern life are used to discern and guide relationships, are unsatisfactory.* They are either of minimal importance or false, if interpreted strictly. Yes, of course, we should avoid treating others 'as means'. But, after that, what next? To say that we should always show them 'unconditional' love is in most respects false; and to say that we should be 'altruistic' and 'disinterested' in our love for them is a recipe for the destruction, not the fostering, of friendship. But it is hardly be surprising that a culture which fails to practice friendship well, should propose to itself maxims which are not tenable for friendship.

The Measure of Friendship

What measure should we use, then, for our friendships?

Aristotle had a notion of what he called 'perfect' or 'complete' friendship, and he held, furthermore, that in perfect friendship each friend aims to become related to the other person, as he is to himself. The result is that it becomes proper to say that one's friend is 'another self.' We shall look more carefully at the notion of 'another self' in the fourth and final essay in this series; for now, let us look briefly at this notion of 'perfect' friendship, and how it serves as an ideal of friendship.

According to the modern maxims we considered, relationships are either good (loving another as an end, unconditionally, and disinterestedly) or bad (treating another as a means, setting down conditions, and looking to one's own advantage). Aristotle, rather, distinguishes three basic sorts of relationship, none of which is inherently bad. Each is good in its kind, but these three basic sorts have a ranking. There are, we might say, grades or degrees of friendship, and badness in human relationships typically consists in our being satisfied with a lower grade of friendship, when we ought to have sought a higher grade.

Aristotle explained the differences in degree of friendship in this way. He pointed out that there are three fundamental grounds on which we can find anything attractive and worth our attention: we may find something pleasant, or useful to us, or we may find it good in its own right. He pointed out that we may similarly find persons attractive for each of these three reasons, and thus we can form friendships on the basis of each.

So, for instance, I might wish to associate with someone because I find him entertaining; or because we share relatively superficial interests, such as a love of sports; or because sharing his company helps me to relax, or to take my mind off of my problems. These are all legitimate reasons, of course, for my wanting to associate with someone. It is not wrong to have drinks with a buddy simply to relax. Yet such a relationship is, clearly, a lower grade of friendship.

Again, suppose I know someone who is a jack-of-all-trades and usually call him up only when something is broken in my house. Or I form a close relationship with someone insofar as I start a business with him. Or suppose I 'network' for business purposes, or I am careful to show respect to someone (and that respect is truly due to him) because I think he will someday become influential, and I expect that he will be in a position to advance my career. –In cases such as these, I form relationships with others because, in one form or another, they are useful to me. Once more, such relationships are legitimate: there is nothing wrong in people profiting from one another. Yet, again, such relationships are certainly not the highest grade.

But now imagine this third case: You notice that someone has genuinely good traits. His good features are appealing to you and perhaps even fascinate you. Maybe you recognize that he is a better man than you are in those respects, and you wish you could become like him. As you associate with him, your regard shows itself in helping him out, to be sure, but primarily it shows itself in conversation, and in your merely spending time with him, enjoying his company.

This sort of friendship, where each recognizes and admires the other's good traits, would be a 'perfect' friendship, Aristotle said, and the highest grade of friendship. Here is his argument why: we can know that a friendship of that sort is the highest grade, because it in a sense encompasses, and surpasses while encompassing, the other kinds of

friendship. The reason is that friends who love and admire each other because of their character, will also find each other's company enjoyable, amusing, and relaxing: decent people are personable and thoughtful, with a good sense of humor. Again, friends who are so on the basis of good character will prove useful and beneficial to each other. Why? Because people with good character quite naturally tend to help those around them, and especially their friends. Thus, a friendship based on character contains within it what people seek in the other sorts of friendships and represents the high point of friendship. Perfect friendship is the ideal of friendship, because it shows us what a friendship can be.

Here we have an explanation for the uneasy conscience we sometimes have in dealing with people. A son calls his father from college only when he needs money: his conscience is uneasy, because he is in practice living only a useful friendship with his father, yet he knows that he ought to be cultivating a 'perfect' friendship. A husband and wife hardly have time to talk or simply to enjoy each other's company: even though their household is flourishing and the children seem to be doing well, still, they recognize that something is wrong, since they ought to have a perfect friendship, but their relationship has devolved into a useful friendship (which perhaps at intervals takes on the character of a friendship for pleasure). Again, a man meets his buddies from school for drinks and a movie once a month; this has been going on for years; but he's never succeeded in talking about anything important, even though one friend, he knew, was having an affair, and the other's children all have serious problems: he knows his relationship with his buddies

should by this point have become a 'real' or 'deep' friendship, rather than remaining one that is centered solely on relaxation and amusements.

There is a simple explanation for why we keep from developing 'perfect' friendships: such relationships place greater demands on what we give. To contribute help or money to a friend, or to join him for drinks and good times, is to give him something of one's own, but not so far to give him yourself. You may make some sacrifices, but there are 'no strings attached'. Of course it's relative easy to give of one's money, but it's relatively hard to give of one's time—sincerely so, enthusiastically, and as the other person needs it.

In friendships based on usefulness or pleasantness, each friend continues to regard his own good as a kind of measure for what he counts as good in the friendship. It is because the other person fits into what I antecedently like or need, that I pay him any attention. Hence, when my likes or needs change, then my association with him comes to an end immediately—for I always regarded him as good only because he fit into my life, not because his life was the sort that I wanted to fit in with.

But in 'perfect' friendships, these things work in the opposite way. Each friend, from the start and without restriction, gives himself to his friend, and, as a result of this, he gives also things that are of himself, such as his goods or things he finds pleasant. Moreover,

each friend tends to count things as good because they are, first of all, good for his friend. His friend's good, not his own, becomes his standard for action within the friendship. Hence he becomes willing even to change his likes and his plans, if necessary, to conform to those of his friend. Ruth's saying from the Bible, "Your people will be my people, your God will be my God" is the outlook of perfect friendship.

The task of growing in perfect friendship, then, requires good judgment, to recognize when such a relationship is required or even possible; generosity; detachment from self; and, fundamentally, the ability to perceive, and to take delight in, someone's goodness, just for its own sake.

But then how are these traits acquired? For surely that is where we need to start, if we are to develop true friendships. I am convinced: they are acquired principally within the life of a family and that, indeed, the family may be characterized as the natural community for equipping persons to form perfect friendships.

But I simply leave this consideration to you, since its defense would require a series of essays all its own.

Fourth Essay: A Friend as 'Other Self'

By Michael Pakaluk

Other Selves in Public

Aristotle said that, in a true friendship, each friend regards and loves the other as his 'other self'. Christ taught that each of us is to love his neighbor as himself. The two ideas converge, if we suppose that we are to treat everyone as a friend.

This Aristotle denied: we should aim to befriend, he said, only those we can reasonably love; but since love is reasonably directed only at goodness, and few people are good, we can reasonably love and befriend only a few persons. In fact, he said, it would be wrong to try to love everyone. If we love those who are not good, Aristotle warned, then we risk becoming corrupted, since people become similar to what they love. Anyone who loves a bad person, and therefore associates with him, is liable to become bad himself.

Aristotle's reasoning seems entirely correct, and there are only two ways to escape it. The first way, more difficult, is to say that there is some respect in which all human beings are good, even if their characters are bad, and that this respect serves as a foundation for universal love. Christianity achieves this through teaching that everyone is a child of God, either naturally, through creation, or supernaturally, through baptism.

The reason this is a difficult view to hold is that it imposes a *standard* on our affections. If the basis for our love for any other person considered at random, is that he or she is a child of God, then our affection has to be governed by that end: we can reasonably wish that person to have only those things that contribute to his relationship with God, and we should oppose those things opposed to that relationship. This requires that we make judgments about behavior, which many people are loathe to do, and which in any case can be unpopular. What is our judgment on, say, sleeping around outside of marriage, or abortion, or pornography, or satisfying one's whims, or creating unnecessary needs, or being complacent about one's own ignorance? If such things hinder another person's relationship with God, then, on this picture, we will have to oppose them.

The logic is irresistible: if our love for others, generally, is rooted in their relationship to God, then, by that very love itself, we will need to form a judgment about what is in their *true* interest. And then we need to be prepared not to consent to they want, and in some cases even to resist it, when what they want is against their true interest.

The easy way to love others universally, in contrast, is to abandon the requirement of forming judgments, by holding, in effect, that there is no objective difference between good and bad character. In modern society, this denial of objective goodness and badness takes two forms.

The first is relativism, which we have several times mentioned already. Relativism is the view that each thing is as it seems to the person involved. If abortion (say) seems like the right thing to you, then—for all I know—it is the right thing. No one else can be in a position to gainsay your opinion. (What is called 'the right to privacy' in modern discussions frequently ends up being no more than the finding that relativism is to be adopted as regards a domain. 'Abortion falls under the right to privacy' means, simply, 'What seems correct to the woman involved is correct; there is no gainsaying her opinion.') Obviously, if what seems correct is correct, and since people generally choose what seems correct to them, then all people are good. Relativism is the easy way to love others universally, because it automatically confers infallible goodness on everyone.

Another easy way to love others universally, by denying an objective difference between goodness and badness, is to let others decide for you which things are wrong, through their anger. It is to refrain from judgment, by deferring judgment. No one decides for himself, but others decide, yet not on evident principle. We say such things as that,

'Your liberty should be limited only by the liberty of others,' or 'The law should constrain only harm done to others', or 'Your right to move your hand stops at the point of my nose.' These maxims presuppose that the only standard for judging an action wrong is someone else's taking offense. We do not ourselves look at the action directly, and judge it to be wrong, but we take on the viewpoint of the person offended, and hold it to be wrong, because it offended.

This viewpoint makes everyone good by presumption. The 'love' for them that is based on this view takes the form of using reason instrumentally, to satisfy their wants and inclinations maximally, to the extent that others do not take offense. This is the viewpoint of modern liberalism, which springs from 19th century utilitarianism.

The great flaw in this approach, however, is that it cannot distinguish between justified and unjustified offense. One person is offended by a cross displayed in public; another by an abortion clinic in his neighborhood. One parent is offended by prayers in school; another is offended by lack of prayers in public school. Homosexual troop leaders for the Boy Scouts cause disgust in some persons; but the banning of homosexual troop leaders seems equally disgusting to others. In truth, there is no real resolution of these differences, apart from some genuine conception of objective human good.

"Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself". But no one, in his own case, takes what seems good to him, actually to be good. And no one, in his own case, regulates his actions solely by the negative condition of not causing offense to others around him. (Suppose that those around him are bad, and take offense at good things. And the people who happen to be around us change.) But then neither can universal love be based on relativism or the Harm to Others Principle. Love for others generally must take the form of extending the same criteria to them, that a good person naturally applies to himself.

Other Selves in Private

That love takes the form of extending to others the relationship that a good person has to himself, leads Aristotle to draw a remarkable conclusion in Aristotle about the nature of intimate friendships. What is the highest form that love can take? Most people, I think, would say that love, at its height, takes the form of giving. Mother Teresa, for instance, gave food and shelter to poor person in Calcutta. Parents give nourishment and an education to their children. In the extreme, a friend may even give up his life for his friend.

But Aristotle points out, sensibly, that giving is not something that characterizes a good person's relationship to himself. It's not possible, in fact, for a person to give himself

anything: you already have what you think you might give. —Well, there is a sense in which a person gives something to himself, when, through foresight and prudence, he plans for something in the future. A retirement savings plan, then, is in a sense a gift from a man, in his youth, to himself, in his old age. But such actions are gifts only in a metaphorical sense, and hence giving, although necessary and important, is ultimately an imperfect expression of love.

But then, how do we most properly love others? Aristotle argues that we do so when we simply spend time with them, and enjoy their company. This is the highest expression of love. *Being with* is greater than *giving*, just as *being* is greater than *having*.

Here is his argument. Aristotle claims that a person is in some sense identifiable with his activity of living. But the activity of living consists in some kind of perception, either sensing or thinking. So, in a sense, a person consists of his sensing and his thinking.

But now consider that both sensing and thinking have a reflexive component. That is, to see a chair is, at the same time, to *perceive* that you see a chair. To think about that chair is, at the same time, to be *aware* or to *perceive* that you are thinking about that chair. All sensation and thought is complex, because it has a reflexive character. Hence, in every sensation and thought, a person adopts a relation to himself. When he thinks, he is related

to himself as perceiving that he thinks. When I see a flower, I am related to myself as perceiving that I see a flower.

Can this relation, then, be extended to others, so that they share in it, and become related to us as we are to ourselves? Yes, Aristotle says, it can be so extended, when we share in their sensing and thinking. The sharing is more perfect in the case of thinking. You tell me something that you are thinking about, and I become aware that you are thinking about it, just as you are aware of it. I becoming so aware, I become related to you, as you are to yourself. But then *you* become aware that *I* am aware of what you are thinking about (this kind of mutual awareness is essential to friendship), and thus you also become related to me, as I am to myself. As a result of this mutual awareness, you and I become, so to speak, mirror images of each other. Each of us thinks something, and is aware of what he is thinking, and this relation is extended to, and reflected in, the other.

Aristotle's conclusion, then, is that, in this kind of sharing of thought and sensing (which he calls 'living life together', compare the Spanish word, *convivencia*) two persons most fully share in the life that each has on his own. If love is an extension of self-regard to others, then this is the fullest form of love. At the same time, Aristotle points out, the relation of giving is unsatisfactory, for two reasons. First, it implies an inequality: the person who gives, insofar as he gives, adopts a position of superiority over the person who receives. Second, giving cannot be shared simultaneously: when the one person is giving,

the other person must be receiving. They can take turns, perhaps, but they cannot both be doing the same thing at the same time.

Yet it is not so with sharing in thought and sensing. This phenomenon is entirely equal and simultaneous as between friends. In fact, Aristotle holds, giving is meant to give way to spending time together. Suppose that two persons who, initially, are unequal in their possessions, become friends. By impulses natural to friendship, their possessions would overtime become more equalized, or at least managed jointly for the good of both. But the point of this sort of equalization, and sharing in possessions, is not merely that the friends be equal. This result might, indeed, be enough to gratify the envious; but in fact the real point of their equality in possessions is that, if they are thus equal, they can better enjoy each others' company and spend time together.

Aristotle's argument is very sound. The main points are found in *Nicomachean Ethics* book 9, chapter 9, and I encourage all readers of this essay to examine the passage directly. The conclusion which he draws, of the priority of *being with* to *giving*, applies to all human affairs. It applies to relations between peoples and nations (by analogy), as much as to intimate relations between friends. Stepping back, we may say that Aristotle's argument, in essence, is that human life is inherently ordered to sociability, because of the reflexive character of sensing and thought. ("True personality consists in an orientation to communion", as Jacques Maritain once commented.) What all of us want, in virtue of our

common humanity, is to live life side-by-side with others. We do not want to enjoy our existence, alone and separately, but we want to enjoy life through enjoying the existence of others as well, and through having them enjoy the fact that we exist also. This is the end of human life, and a necessary feature of human happiness. It is therefore the proper goal to which assistance and giving should be directed.

A vision of human solidarity, then, should govern our dealings with others, both in public and in private—which seems a fitting enough conclusion to this series of essays.

Fifth Essay: The Natural Friendship of Husband and Wife

By Michael Pakaluk

Here begins a series of four essays on the nature of friendship within the family, and how that same friendship should extend outward from the family, permeating all of society and constituting that attitude, or virtue, known as 'solidarity'. Since we regard the family as the necessary seedbed of solidarity, we might say that this friendliness *outside* the family is, however, not without the family.

Theory: Marriage is a Natural Friendship

The family is said to be the 'basic cell' or 'building block' of society. What this means is that human beings neither come into existence as individuals on their own (but rather from a man and a woman—who are then responsible for the upbringing of that child, because they caused its existence— and *ipso facto* they constitute a rudimentary 'family') nor typically do they carry out the various activities of ordinary life as individuals.

That the family plays this role is not something human beings have conspired together to plan or to will; it happens, rather, because of the internal logic of love between a man and a woman, and the fact that that love tends to be fruitful. Thus the family is 'by nature' and prior, even, to political society: there had to have been families before the founding of states and governments; and government is properly speaking over families rather than individuals. The family, that is to say, is the natural 'basic cell' of society; it is by the intention of nature that this is so.

To take a trip by airplane and gaze at the communities below is to see vividly a confirmation of this truth. What one sees from the air are, for the most part, clusters of *houses*. One does not see caves, or hermit holes, or phone-booth type dwellings where 'individuals' live but rather houses and homesteads. Take the house to be the physical representation of the family: material civilization divides up into households, then, just as human sociability divides up most basically into families, and each house stands for a man and woman who fell in love and founded a distinct unit of human society.

Thus: society depends upon families, as being constituted out of these basic units; and families depend upon the love between a husband and a wife. We wish to examine this love, then, to see what it must be like, if it is to play the role it needs to have in the fabric of society.

Note that this approach is the opposite of that usually taken in modern society. People typically begin by considering what they think contributes to their 'individual welfare' and 'interests,' and then they wonder whether and to what extent marriage or family life can be of service to them. But whatever notion of 'individual welfare' they start with in this way must be false. What contributes to the welfare of something depends upon what that sort of thing is like. If a human being is the sort of thing which, objectively and by nature, is meant to play a certain kind of role in society composed of others, then there is nothing which is 'his welfare' distinguishable from his playing that sort of role. If a cell in the body could think, it could draw no conclusions about its 'welfare' except by studying the role it was meant to play as composing a certain sort of tissue, within an organ, which plays a specific role in contributing to the health of the body. Similarly, if human beings are naturally sociable, then the welfare of each individual essentially includes his contributing to the good of those societies of which he is naturally a part.

We assume that the basis of a thing must be as strong as the elements of that thing. The basis of a family is the love between husband and wife. But the family is constituted by ties of blood. Hence, the love between husband and wife must be at least as strong as ties of blood. But ties of blood are unconditional and indissoluble. They are unconditional, because love for someone of 'the same blood' continues, or should continue, even if the other acts poorly. (The love should continue, even if some sorts of actions must stop, or

circumstances must change: it can, for instance, be consistent with *love* for an alcoholic relative, that we ask him to leave our household.) They are indissoluble because once you are related to someone by blood, you remain so always: this is not something that can ever change. We conclude, then, that the love between husband and wife must be unconditional and indissoluble.

This is a conclusion that we reach simply by considering the nature of the case: what sort of character that love must have, if it is to play the role allotted to it by nature. A family, constituted by ties of blood, must be founded upon a relationship at least as strong as ties of blood, if society is to have integrity. Think of physical atoms: the 'strong forces' which hold together the nucleus of an atom are, and must be, stronger than the electrical forces of the atom, or else atoms would split apart and dissolve, and material substances would have no permanence or solidity. Or consider again the view of human society we get from an airplane, and think of what a mess our towns and villages would be if houses, those physical representatives of the family, were prone to break apart, because the walls of the house were no more strongly bound to each other than they were to things outside the house.

The basis of a thing must not only be *as strong* as the elements of that thing, it must also have a character which *harmonizes* with that of those elements. Now it is a feature of ties of blood that they, so to speak, 'radiate outwards': we have the most affection for

those that are closest to us in blood, and corresponding weaker affection, the more remote a relative. We may note this phenomenon simply to stress *weakening*, viz. that affection between (say) cousins is weaker on average than that between brothers. Or we may equally note this phenomenon in order to underline the *extending outwards* of the affection, viz. the very same principle that leads brothers to have affection for each other, similarly leads us to have affection even for (say) our second-cousins once removed. Ties of blood are remarkable, then, for leading us to have affection (unconditional and indissoluble, in its own way) for persons far removed from the immediate arena of our interests, concerns, and action.

But, then, if that's the sort of thing a family is, and the relationship between husband and wife is the basis of it and therefore of a piece with it, then the relationship between husband and wife, in its nature and interior logic, must similarly be expansive and look beyond itself. Perhaps you have seen photographs of family reunions, which portray several generations of a single family, gathered together at once: white-haired great-grand parents surrounded by their children, children's children, and even children of their grandchildren. That sort of photograph, we maintain, captures something that is true of any instance of married love—even those relationships which do not, as it happens, lead to a manifold descendents. The old maxim of the neo-Platonists, *bonum diffusivum sui* ("goodness is diffusive of itself") applies to married love above all human loves.

The love between husband and wife, considered as a naturally occurring relationship—a 'natural institution'—is therefore unconditional, indissoluble, and outward reaching. These characteristics belong to marriage as a natural friendship and are not peculiar to any specifically religious conception of marriage. Moreover, they are 'objective' and 'set in advance' for us. We do not have freedom to disregard them, and we do not have complete freedom in altering them. To get married is publicly to recognize and accept the objective nature of the relationship. It is to say: "We wish, by this act of the will, to place our relationship within that class of naturally occurring man-woman friendships—unconditional, indissoluble, and fruitful. In so doing we aim to be faithful to its nature, which has not been designed or constructed by us."

(To say that such a relationship *naturally* has these characteristics is not to say that has them necessarily or inevitably, but only that we can succeed in acting as if it didn't only for the short term and through violence, and that our doing so will not lead to general benefits in the long run. Consider, as an analogy, right-handedness. That someone is right-handed is the result of a natural process, not chosen or decided upon. Nonetheless, it is not necessary that a right-handed person grow up to be, in fact, solely right-handed: he could be trained to be left-handed as well. (Importantly, we'd never succeed in making him left-handed *instead*.) But it would be unworkable generally to train right-handed people to be left-handed, because this would require the constant application of force, and, on account of the inefficiency at least, it would not work out for the best.

The virtues of a thing are relative to the function of a thing: a virtue is a trait which enables a thing of a certain kind to do its specific work well. For instance, the function of a knife is to cut; thus, the virtues of a knife are the traits that a knife should have in order to cut well. These include holding a sharp edge; rigidity; and safety. If the function of the natural friendship between husband and wife is to provide a basis for the family which is unconditional, indissoluble, and outward reaching, then the virtues of a husband or wife—how they should act and live—will be implied by the traits that each should have in order to carry out their role in this relationship well.

Practice: Courtship is Revelatory of Marriage

What makes the natural friendship of marriage work well is exhibited in courtship. What produces also conserves: if courtship brings about the relationship, then it similarly preserves and strengthens it. And it is common for nature to provide at first vigorous motives for an endeavor, which then are withdrawn, and must be replaced with calmer but more stable and persistent motives: initial enthusiasm must be replaced by perseverance, if a man is to succeed; youthful energy must yield to habits of hard luck; in science, the natural curiosity of a child must develop into the methodical habits of a scientist. In general the rule is that we are 'carried away' and supported at first by motives that have

more the character of emotion. They please us because they are genuine; we take them to be tantamount to divine guidance, because they are nearly irresistible. We think we are living at a higher pitch, and more fully, when we are simply yielding to that sort of current of life. But such natural motives work only to provide an exemplar and foretaste, which deliberateness and a precious commitment of the will must later, through hard work and difficulties, strive to win. Thus it is that courtship holds up to a couple at the start of their relationship an image to which they must continually strive to conform. But what is distinctive about courtship? What does one find there and nowhere else? What is strikingly and effortlessly depicted there?

We cannot ask these questions without reminding ourselves that few couples today in fact enjoy a period or courtship. Now this is troubling for two reasons. The first is that with the decline of courtship, one finds also the decline of any element of deliberateness and will in the origin of a relationship. We did not mean to suggest just now that initial motives are pure emotions. They are not: at the beginning of endeavors, we often find ourselves *carried along* by emotions, and emotions make it *easy* for us to do what we recognize is best. But nonetheless our action is not solely emotional, nor lacking in deliberateness.

Yet this is important when later we look to that initial period as to a kind of model of what our action should be like. If that initial period itself contains an element or has a

framework of deliberateness, then our later efforts, necessarily more deliberate, may more easily imitate it—whereas to the extent if that initial period is almost solely a display of emotionalism, then it contains little that we may later safely imitate. Courtship gives a deliberate cast to the emotion of falling in love, so that it is something that can, in fact, be imitated by our deliberate efforts, later on, of remaining in love. If in courtship the emotion elicits the deliberate behavior, in marriage the deliberate behavior is meant to elicit the emotion. Couples who fail to court therefore deprive themselves of a suitable image of what their marriage should later be.

The second is that courtship is simply a way of acting that calls attention to the essential act of a marriage. In a marriage, each person gives himself to the other. (To say that marriage is unconditional, is to say that the gift of each is free and not conditional upon the gift of the other, in some *quid pro quo* fashion. To say that it is indissoluble, is to say that the gift is given entirely, without the possibility of retraction. To say that it is outward reaching, is to say that the gift is inherently procreative, in intention or possibility, if not in fact.) Courtship therefore involves a demonstration by each of some sort of self-possession—through composure, delicacy, modesty, and self-control—since no one who fails to possess himself can truly give himself. Furthermore, it involves repeated gestures which signify that one recognizes the character of the gift of the other: that the gift is free (hence the importance of 'proposals' in courtship); that it is valuable (hence the importance of expressed admiration); and that, if it is to be given, it is given without restrictions or qualifications (hence the necessity of protestations of unworthiness and

lack of desert). Thus, couples who fail to court fail in fact to prepare themselves correctly and worthily for the 'exchange of gifts' which is their marriage—which leads directly and easily to the great 'sin' against marriage, namely, taking the other person for granted.

What, then, is distinctive about courtship? Precisely those sorts of action that exhibit a kind of ease or facility in this giving and receiving of the other as a gift. (Of course, in proper courtship the gift is given and received only in anticipation, since the relationship is not consummated. What serves as a sign in the manner of *anticipation* in courtship works as a sign in the manner of *testimony* in a marriage.) These include the following:

1. *Spending time together, speaking sincerely*. A human being is most fully his heart, and it is through sincere conversation that we share what is in our heart with another. In courtship this is spontaneous and irresistible: a couple deeply in love may need in fact to battle to stop spending time together, or risk getting run down from lack of sleep. In marriage, husband and wife must, rather, work at having sincere conversations. To do this, they must be careful to set aside time together each day, when they may talk. They should try not to talk solely of practical matters (schedules, finances, difficulties) which have little to do with what is in the heart (and in this regard they will be helped if each has a vigorous intellectual or interior life, nourished by reading, thoughtfulness, and prayer). They must especially aim to avoid recriminations or accusations throughout the day, which will cause the other

to put up protective walls, which hinder thoughts from going out as much as from coming in.

2. *Complaisance in the will of the other*. If sincere conversation has to do with the heart, then complaisance has to do with the will. It is remarkable how the likes and dislikes of each partner in a courtship are derived from those of the other. The formula in courtship is: "That you like it is reason enough for me to like it." Again, in courtship this is a spontaneous and inevitable reaction: we almost instinctually, as a way of being closer to the other, take on outlooks, habits, and preferences of a person we deeply love. But in a marriage, once again, effort is required—which, however, very quickly becomes effortless. There are various reasons why the attitude of complaisance becomes difficult in a marriage. Because of the difficulties of domestic life, especially when raising children, husband and wife may each, naturally enough, look upon the other as a source of consolation. But it is a short step from this to expecting that one's own preferences be gratified over those of one's spouse—the antithesis of complaisance. Or, again, it is common for the husband, because he is charged with the ultimate authority in deciding how to apply moral principles in the household, to overshoot his authority, and look to get his way also, illicitly so, in matters that where no moral principle applies, and the exercise of any distinctively husbandly authority is not at stake. For the wife, a more common problem, perhaps, is that she wrongly places greater stress on self-sacrifice on behalf of her children, than on going along with her husband's fancies; or she is so

weary after serving her children, that the self-sacrifice required in dealing with her husband seems almost impossible to her.

3. *Delicacy and refinement, in allowing scope for the other's freedom*. As we said, in courtship both man and woman are deeply respectful of the freedom of the other. Courtship is perhaps the most equal human relationship, even though the man pursues and the woman pursues, because each sees the other as entirely free to gift or to decline to give himself as a gift. But over time, not because of marriage so much as on account of an inherent tendency to disorder in male-female relationships (recall the 'curse' of Genesis: "You desire will be for your husband; but he will lord it over you"), this delicacy and refinement come under attack. The husband must work against tendencies to dominate his wife, adopting a position of uniform superiority (quite different from his legitimate authority to lead); whereas the wife must avoid a kind of self-subjection to her husband, which she views as her 'fate' or 'sentence'.

To say this much is to describe in outline the nature and chief marks of the natural friendship between husband and wife. Yet there are two other matters of great importance that, by the nature of the case, will arise after courtship and are consequent to courtship: First, how should husband and wife deal with the faults they discover in each other (which frequently will have been hidden, or well-compensated for, during courtship), or with the

injuries they inflict on each other? Second, in what precise way does this friendship between them, and its complementarity, serve as a model for their children, so that it is correct to say that a good relationship between husband and wife is also the best gift that parents can give to their children?

We shall take up both of these questions in the second essay of this series and then move on from there to friendship between parents and children; and finally, the extension of friendship from the family to the greater society in which it is embedded.

Sixth Essay: Friendship between Parents and Children

By Michael Pakaluk

The Meaning of Human Procreation

There is an ancient idea, which stretches back at least to Plato and Aristotle, but which presumably has its roots in religious systems before them, that the reason why living things procreate—not simply human beings but also any animal—is to participate in immortality. No animal can live forever: it has a span of a few dozen years, at most, and then it expires. But it is the nature of anything that is alive, to wish to continue to be alive. Life of itself accepts no limits; it recognizes and exults in its own goodness, and furthermore it sees no reason, inherent in the thing, why that goodness should ever come to an end. Life overflows; it is optimistic of its nature; life is youthful. Each living thing, then, to the extent that it is aware of it, regards death as something arbitrary or absurd. Most fundamentally death *should not be*.

So how does an animal solve this problem that is set for it by its very existence—the problem, namely, that it wishes to be alive without limit, but its existence is necessarily finite? According to the ancient philosophers, it does so by procreation. What each animal cannot achieve individually, it may hope to achieve corporately, with the help of other members of its species. Although no animal, as a single thing, can live forever, the stream of animals of any species can indeed continue to live without limit.

Thus, on this view, procreation admits of a deep interpretation. To procreate is not to copulate, merely, in obedience to an animal urge. It is, rather, to consent to an activity which, by its most fundamental intention, aims at something quite beyond the scope or deliberate purpose of any individual animal. To have offspring is to enter into a larger story, in which one plays one's necessary part in imitating the Divine Being, in the admittedly limited way that one is able to do so.

On this same ancient view, procreation is a 'type' which represents, and displays in an especially clear way, what is distinctive about all human activity. As Diotima asserts in Plato's *Symposium*, all human activities are various forms of procreation, because all activity involves a kind of making, or the imposition of an effect on the world, which expresses what we are or what we think. Whenever we do or make something, we procreate, insofar as we replicate our purposes and personality. This is clearest in the case of authors, or other creative artists, who, as Plato points out, love their books and works of

art with much the same fondness and intensity as parents show for their children. But even the most humble worker is in the business of replicating himself, insofar as he replicates his own peculiar understanding of his craft and his conception of what is good within that craft.

Observe that on this view of procreation, it is mistaken to set 'having children' in opposition to 'doing one's work', as we are wont to do. Both work and family life, in a fundamental sense, have the same goal. Yet family life, admittedly, can be more successful at it. Why? Because in family life it is possible to 'impose an effect on the world' which is hardly a partial expression of oneself. If children are raised and educated correctly, by intelligent and good parents, then the children are themselves complete expressions of the life of the parents. Human procreation is not the mere replication of biological life. It aims to be procreation with respect to the soul, mind and heart, as well as the body. It is complete love for a new person, which springs from complete love of a complementary person. Thus, it is through having children and raising them well that (on this ancient view) we may best participate in the Divine.

This ancient, pagan view is transformed within the Judeo-Christian tradition, which holds that human beings are children of God because made in his image, and that our children are not mere animals but have an orientation, individually, to immortality. "Let us make man in our image: in the image of God he created him; male and female he created

them"—therefore human beings in their procreative capacity mirror God. "Be fruitful and multiply"—therefore it is by having children ourselves, and teaching and training them in righteousness, that we especially come to resemble "the Father who is in heaven." As for our offspring, each lives forever, because each has an immortal soul. Only through procreation do we bring about an effect that is eternal. "I've never met any mere mortals", C.S. Lewis once quipped; and similarly, on this way of looking at the world, no parent brings forth a merely mortal child. To have a child is not, as some think, a commitment to care for, and take responsibility for, another human being for some 18 years; rather, it is a never-ending relationship.

For our purposes, it is not relevant whether we adopt the ancient Greek view, the Judeo-Christian view, or some synthesis of the two. What is important is to see that human procreation looks for and demands some kind of philosophical interpretation. Inevitably we give it such an interpretation. To attempt to deny this and to say "we are just like the animals" is already to impose an interpretation, since surely the animals do not need to insist that they are just like themselves. (In fact our mythology of procreation comes from the Courts, with their conceits of 'autonomy' and 'freedom to choose', according to which procreation is no more than the expression of the will of the autonomous agent.) In Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, the character Levin experiences the birth of his first child soon after he had witnessed his brother's death, and he brings the two experiences together. He sees, correctly, that birth as well as death is a mystery that requires some kind of account.

If we are to live human distinctively human lives, we must have some story to tell about what we are doing when we have children.

An account of the meaning of procreation is essential to this question of friendship with our children, since we cannot aim to develop friendships with them, if we have no understanding of why they have come forth from us in the first place. If they are merely consequences of animal instinct, then we might as well abort them, abandon them, or leave them to be raised as their peers or television culture directs them. And why should we have any relationship with them? Why expect to have a friendship, for instance, with an accidental by-product of some compulsive animal force? Yet if we have an account that tells us that, in a sense, a child is meant to be 'another self', then a basis for friendship follows immediately, since a friend is another self.

The Gift of Self in Procreation

We can get at these issues by pressing the question of whether it isn't repugnant to suggest that procreation is a kind of self-propagation: Doesn't such a view reduce procreation to an essentially selfish activity? Isn't it obviously wrong, in fact, for parents to try to make their children turn out exactly like themselves? If a parent insists that his child become just like himself, then he apparently makes the worth of the child depend upon the

child's relationship to him. And what could be vainer, and intensely self-centered, than for a parent to aim to produce little replicas of himself?

The objection is based on a confusion. There are two ways in which persons can become like each other, or assimilated to each other. Let us call these 'assimilation by restriction' and 'assimilation by gift.' The former is typically bad, whereas the latter is good if pursued in the right way. In assimilation by restriction, one person takes himself to be a kind of measure of or standard for the other, and the other is expected to conform to this standard. For instance, a gang leader makes everyone in the gang dress like him and adopt his mannerisms. He takes himself to be the standard, and everyone else is restricted in being like him. The gang leader does nothing to effect the assimilation; the burden is placed on the others.

In assimilation by gift, on the other hand, one person gives of himself to another, and as an inevitable consequence, the other comes to resemble him. For instance, a good teacher imparts knowledge of his subject through self-sacrifice, so that his pupil comes to think and act about the subject in the same way as his teacher. This happens very clearly with music and sports instructors. The intention of the instructor is to impart to the student the good of mastery in some domain, which characterizes the teacher. In assimilation by gift, the teacher is not a standard except accidentally, because the subject matter, musical endeavor, or sport provides the standard. The teacher is to be imitated only insofar as he

meets those standards. Moreover, the burden falls upon the teacher: he corrects, directs, and imparts.

In assimilation by restriction, there is a fact of the matter as to how the followers would have been, had they not been forced to conform to the leader: the gang members, for instance, would have dressed in some other, identifiable way, if they were not constrained to dress like the gang leader. But in assimilation by gift, there is no fact of the matter as to how someone would have been, because the gift itself constitutes the personality and character of the person receiving it. Did the father of Tiger Woods restrict his son by teaching him golf from an early age? No, because there was no fact of the matter of what Tiger Woods would otherwise have been. Similarly, children receive at the very start a gift of their parents' biological constitution: they look a certain way, and have certain dispositions, because they are biological offspring of certain parents. But this is a gift rather than a restriction, because they would not have existed except on these terms.

Procreation—that is, biological reproduction, and then also mental and ethical procreation (also known as 'education'), which is continuous with biological reproduction—when properly carried out, is an example of assimilation by gift, and therefore not objectionable.

One might distinguish the two sorts of assimilation in this way as well. Assimilation by restriction terminates with resemblance to the leader; it is essentially barren. The whole point of the imitation of the gang leader is to be like him, and nothing else is meant to follow. The gang is a tight circle from which nothing escapes. In contrast, assimilation by gift naturally leads to the recipient himself making a gift. Good students become teachers in turn: the circle of knowledge and expertise expands and encompasses more and more persons.

Hence it is correct to say that the goal of procreation is to raise children to the point where they can raise children themselves. “May you see your children’s children” is not without reason the standard form of blessing for earthly prosperity. Complete maturity in any living thing is reached only when it becomes capable of reproducing another member of its kind. Complete reproduction, then, the raising of another to maturity, is the raising of that child to the point of being a father or mother himself.

Paternity or maternity are essential to maturity. No man can be mature if he is not in some sense a father; no woman has lived a complete life if she is not in some sense a mother. These need not be biological relationships, and, indeed, the most human form of paternity is ethical and spiritual rather than biological. “Call no man on earth ‘father’”—because true paternity is not of the earth.

And now we have the goal of childrearing before us, which is, furthermore, the only sound basis for a friendship between parent and child. The parent must raise the child always keeping in mind the endpoint of his efforts. All sound education begins with the end. In all of his dealings with his child, therefore, he must consider: “Is this the course of action that will best contribute to my son (or daughter) becoming an admirable father (or mother)?” And only after considering this should he act accordingly. The point of child-raising is not to produce consumers, or people adept at satisfying their desires, or effective workers merely. The point of child-raising is to raise up ‘other selves’ who are similarly good fathers and mothers. A pointless circle, you say? No, it’s the very meaning of life: generation succeeding generation and bound by the gift of life. To give one’s life for another, so that he in turn can give his life—that is true human happiness. And this happiness is the core of the friendship between parent and child.

All friendship involves reciprocity and note how the child reciprocates his parents for their love: not so much by giving back to them (that gift cannot strictly be repaid, and thus he honors his parents and will provide for them, as much as he can, in their old age) but rather by giving to his own children in turn. Each time a young father makes a sacrifice for his child, he thanks his parents for the similar sacrifices they made for him.

Raising a Child to Be One's Friend

These reflections lead to the question of how precisely children should be raised so that we can be their friends. We understand now something of the nature of that friendship, but how is it effectively fostered and maintained? We said that parents should raise their children with the proper end in mind: confident adulthood. Nearly everything follows from this good intention. But a few practical suggestions may perhaps be useful.

First, parents should take care to observe the line between childhood and young adulthood. Very young children are more like 'parts' of the parents than separately existing individuals. They naturally and easily go along with whatever their parents decide, and some parents, fathers in particular, think that a family can always be in this way an effortless and simple extension of their own outlook. They are then caught by surprise when they find their young adult children rebelling against this kind of confinement. The remedy is simple: keep in mind, as we said, the goal of child-raising. It is not to preserve a childlike contentment forever, a harmonious scene where all children dote lovingly on the parents. Rather, it is to raise confident and mature adults. And thus as children enter their teenage years, parents must be sure to deal with them as persons who very quickly will be leaving the home and starting their own families.

Second, because the friendship a father has with his son will differ from that he has with his daughter, and likewise the friendship a mother has with her daughter will differ from that she has with her son, the parents must take care that their own friendship is good and is seen to be good by their children. The husband's relationship to the wife provides the pattern through which his children see themselves. His boy thinks of himself as similarly related to women, and the girl thinks of herself as the sort of person who deserves a similar attention. Father therefore befriends his son through direct imitation and his daughter through a relationship similar to courtship. But what is crucial is that the husband-wife relationship be sound—and likely the couple will need to give special and regular attention to their own relationship, through marriage retreats or something similar.

Third, by the logic of 'assimilation by gift', a parent should generally place upon the child only those limits that are required by an objective standard. Just as a teacher requires no further imitation than that set by the standards of his discipline, so a parent should require, as a matter of obligation, obedience only in matters of morality. As much harm is done children by forbidding what is licit, as allowing what is forbidden. The first impulse of a parent should be 'yes', allowing whatever need not forbidden, rather than 'no', permitting only what is entirely safe.

Fourth, parents must take care that their children associate only with peers who will not undo what they have already achieved. Of vital importance here is simply the element

of trust. A child must trust that his parents, in making demands upon him, have his own good at heart. But the world is filled with the spirit of suspicion, hostility, and mistrust. For many children, that something is required by a parent is ipso facto reason to avoid doing it. This would be 'enslavement' to the will of another; or, they misconstrue obedience as childishness—whereas in fact all true maturity presupposes the ability to live under proper authority. Parents must therefore take all pains to see that their children associate only with children who are similarly being raised well. The best way to do this, of course, is for themselves to befriend parents who are admirable. If the parents spend time with one another, then the children will do so naturally on their own. The attractive and sweet force of friendship will then confirm their children in virtue.

Fifth, and finally, parents must appeal to the minds of their children: they can hardly become friends of their children, if they cannot together share their thoughts. If you will, parents must try, over the years, to shift their relationship to their children to an intellectual basis. They can do this in early years by freely spending time reading to their children; in later years by spending time instructing children systematically in subjects that they know (yes, the ancient practice, whereby a father passes on his 'craft' or 'trade' to his children, should in some way be preserved today!); and throughout their childhood, by fostering good conversation, especially over meals. The family dinner is perhaps the best vehicle for friendship between parents and children. Have a common dinner every day, if possible, which everyone is expected to be present at, unless there are serious conflicting obligations. The father, as the one who is appointed by nature to have the principal care for

the education of the children, should be careful to raise topics of interest for the family to discuss. He should teach, by example primarily, but also by explicit direction, if necessary, habits of civility, politeness, and articulate expression, which are the very matter of the intellectual friendship he and his wife wish to foster with all of his children. In sharing a table, the family expresses its biological unity, and in sharing good conversation, it grows together as a society of life and love, whether there is genuine freedom and a real regard for the other, for its own sake.

Seventh Essay: The Family as the Training Ground of Citizenship

By Michael Pakaluk

The Two Natural Forms of Community

It seems correct that the two, and the only two, natural forms of human association are the family and political society. If this is so, then we should expect that there is a connection between them, namely, that the family provides the best, and perhaps an indispensable, preparation for good participation in political society; and that the family in turn thrives best when it conceives of itself as orientated toward service of others. And if this is so, then, political society has a special interest, founded in its own self-interest, to preserve and promote the family, whereas the family has an interest in aiming at the good of society beyond itself. Such is the view that will be defended in this and the following essay.

Let us define terms. By an 'association' I mean the coordinated action of two or more persons, involving reciprocity, so that each can succeed in achieving, or achieve more easily, some good. That this good be achieved by all in accordance with some fair plan of coordinated action is the 'common good' of that association. For instance, a chess club is an association for the promotion of chess. Each member is fond of playing chess and wants to improve his own playing and promote the game among others. He can do that on his own, to be sure, through study and by playing against computers, but he can do so more easily and effectively by joining with others who have similar interests. Thus, the chess club organizes tournaments in which he can play, publishes magazines to which he can contribute, and so on. That opportunities to play in tournaments, procure issues of magazines, and so on, are distributed fairly among all members of the chess club, is the common good of the club.

By a 'natural association' I mean one in which explicit compact, if it exists, serves to make public and ratify some basis of association which existed previously, where this basis of association is related to universal and continuing human needs and goods. A natural association occurs across different cultures and times. Since it is not constituted but only ratified by compact, it has a character which has to be discovered and honored rather than created; it cannot be arbitrarily or indefinitely manipulated, without bad consequences—just as other natural structures, such as the human body or ecological systems, have to be respected and cannot be manipulated arbitrarily without repercussions.

The family in the first instance is in the association of man and woman to set up a household together and beget and raise offspring. Strictly, the family is a composite of three associations: that of husband and wife; that of the children toward one another; and that of husband and wife in relation to the children. The first of these alone is ratified by compact, the marriage contract, which makes explicit and public the aim inherent in true romantic love, of wanting to bind oneself unconditionally and forever to the object of one's love.

The Family

The family is clearly a natural association, as defined. We say that it is composed 'in the first instance' as described, because we must consider and define the family, as indeed we do with any other moral reality, in accordance with 'ideal type' or 'central case' analysis. The family of course suffers many difficulties and perturbations: parents die; they find that they are infertile; relatives or friends additionally live in the same household; there can be serious disagreements that rend or destroy it. But all of these cases are illuminated, and we can succeed in comprehending them, and dealing correctly with them, only if we take them to be derivative cases, related to some central and ideal form. Every moral reality has the

task of 'becoming what it is'. Similarly, the family, and what it is, or what it 'wishes to be', is given by the central case.

Note that 'central case' analysis allows for perturbations and derivative cases, without, however, allowing that anything that resembles family counts as a family. Resemblance is not the same as relation to the central case—any more than a family portrayed on a television show is a family, because it looks very much like a family. Thus, two men living together who adopt children are not a family, although in some respects they may look like one. The reason is that their living arrangement is not understandable as a declension from the ideal case of a family. In contrast, an elderly man and woman who get married and cannot have children are understandable as a declension from the ideal case: they differ from the ideal case only by the accident that their capacity to have children together is no longer effective.

Political Society

Political society is also a natural association; it arises in all places and times and is only ratified or completed but not constituted by compact. It seems that no other association is similarly 'natural': perhaps the market is so, but the market, given its

dependence on a system of money and a background of peace, is best seen as an aspect of political society.

To say that political society is natural is not to say that the form that it takes is universally the same: it can take the form or a city-state; a nation-state; or even an empire. The Federalist system of the United States is a kind of combination of such forms. In its original conception, the particular states were not unlike the Greek *polis*, whereas the Federal government was evidently a nation.

What all political societies have in common is the way in which citizens conceive of one another and their common good. The common good of political society is the complete welfare of every individual, achieved fairly. That it be achieved fairly corresponds to our notion of human rights: it should not be the case, for instance, that one person's complete welfare is advanced at the cost of someone else's, without free consent on his part and some sort of eventual reciprocation. What is taken to be the complete welfare of an individual varies across political societies. In the ancient Greek *polis*, for instance, it was thought that the legislators should have a very definite conception of what a good human being and good human life were, and that the laws should aim to promote this as much as possible, not holding back from extensive coercion and social control, if that were necessary and efficient. We in contrast place a great value on freedom, correctly so, and therefore tend to think of political society as providing, most directly, something like the

material conditions of a good life: it then becomes the free project of citizens to make good use of those conditions.

The way in which members of political society relate to one another and regard one another is as 'free and equal' (this is claimed by political philosophers as various as Aristotle and Rawls) and therefore as governed by the rule of law, and by all of those devices of the rule of law, that have been discovered and refined through actual practice. Perhaps the best way to grasp this kind of relation is by thinking of times in which it should to some degree be present but in fact is absent. We all know of cases in which a club, school, or organization fails, because its founders continue to think of it as something like an extension of their own personality or family life. The founders, we say, 'never ran the thing professionally'; they paid no attention to 'due process'; they were unable to place themselves on a level with everyone else involved in running the association. Now think of how the founders should have acted in these cases, and make a kind of extrapolation to an ideal, and that is the way in which we should relate generally to other citizens in political society. In political society, we relate to others in such a way that we acknowledge that we are distinct persons; that each of us is one among many equal citizens; and that each has a kind of responsibility and freedom in contributing to the common good of that society.

It should not be supposed that political society so described is necessarily governed in the manner of a democracy. Clearly, it need not be, and our own form of government

proves the point. The United States Constitution was intended to combine, into a single government, elements of kingship, aristocracy, and democracy. The President is analogous to a king, insofar as he is a single ruler over many; the Senate was intended to be a kind of 'natural aristocracy', with each State having an equal voice, on the grounds that each, as a State, has an equal expertise or knowledge; and the House of Representatives was meant to me more like a pure democracy, where sheer numbers count. In the actions of all three of these institutions, and in the affairs of citizens as ordered under each of these three, it is possible for citizens to relate to one another in the manner of political society, as free and equal persons under law.

The Family as a School of Political Society

Aristotle was the first political theorist to speculate on the connection between the natural association of the family and that of political society. He was impressed that there are three types of political society, depending upon their form of authority—kingship, aristocracy, and democracy—and that, as it happens, there are three basic relationships of authority in the family as well, corresponding to these. Fatherhood is like kingship; the relationship of husband and wife to each other, especially in their shared relationship to the children, is akin to an aristocracy; and the association of siblings resembles democracy. For Aristotle, this proved that the family was intended to be a kind of seedbed

of the various motives, sentiments, and affections, that were necessary to sustain any form of political society. Whatever form of constitution a person lived in, if he had been raised in a family, he would find there, in his upbringing, the materials he needed to carry out well his role in political society.

That we need motives, sentiments, and affections of the right sort, in playing our role in political society, is the doctrine of civic friendship. Aristotle was concerned particularly with how a concern for justice, laudable as that is, is yet insufficient in our dealings with others. “People who have the virtue of justice still need friendship; however, when people are friends,” Aristotle observed, “they have no need of justice besides.”

The Need for Civic Friendship

There are three important reasons why justice alone is insufficient in our dealings with others. First, a concern for justice alone cannot insure the unity of an association, which has to be underwritten by a shared love of a common good. This is evident from the way in which we deploy our notions of rights. A slave-state partisan in the United States in 1850 might have had a perfectly well-developed sense of justice and human rights, but he would have no esteem for a black man as a fellow of his and equal. His notion of justice was in order: he simply didn’t apply it to all human beings. This was a deficiency of esteem,

not of justice. (By this I do not mean to imply that he would be wholly responsible for this deficiency, that the society in which he was raised had no role to play. Clearly, this sort of defect is self-perpetuating: the structures it tolerates are the structures that foster it in turn. Clearly, too, the scope of our esteem is affected by the doctrines we accept. Someone who accepts the doctrine that all human beings are equal, regardless of race, would in accepting this have started out on the path of having the right sort of fellow-feeling for a black man as well as a white man.) Uncle Tom's Cabin was important in fueling the abolitionist movement precisely because it inspired a love which then put notions of justice into practice: that is why the South derided the novel for its 'sentimentality'.

Second, mere justice is by the nature of the case is self-centered, because its enlivening emotion is anger, which, as a response to perceived injury, is defensive. All of us become very alive to the demands of justice especially when we ourselves are injured. We regard it as a kind of obligation for a 'victim' or someone who is 'oppressed' to come forward and press his complaint. We zealously take on a cause of justice in defense of another only after we have somehow taken an attack on that other person to be an attack on ourselves. Zeal for justice is fostered by brooding on injuries. It aims to get the other fellow to see your point of view, never to get yourself to see his. It is unyielding, in fact, and takes any compromise as a kind of annihilation of self. Note that all of these traits of justice are good, if kept in their proper place; but if they grow without restriction and are fostered without any goal or point, then they become destructive and divisive. A society animated

solely by a zeal for justice, given that inevitably we harm one another when we live together, will soon enough deteriorate into blood feuds and civil war.

Third, justice on its own is unfriendly, not simply because it cannot tolerate common ground and compromise, as was said, but also because it is inflexible. As it nurses its anger and its grudges, justice all the while formulates principles and laws, which articulate its case. Its accusations and approaches take the form of a law: "You shouldn't do X." "One must never bring about Y in case of Z." Now laws and generalizations are perfectly serviceable and necessary, in identifying those harms without which people cannot associate. "You should not kill." "You should not steal." These and other generalizations are simply basic preconditions of associating with others. But such laws are of little help in associating with others constructively, once the basic conditions of association have already been met. Supposing that we are not killing each other or stealing (rudimentary conditions, both), then how do we deal with each other?

In fact, human association of the constructive sort is necessarily open-ended, because of the many, unpredictable variations in our dealings with one another. On account of this, as economists say, all contracts and rules are necessarily 'incomplete'—no matter how carefully written, a contract will not be able to take into account all contingencies. You contract to provide a service on a certain date in exchange for payment

in advance, but then your delivery vehicle is destroyed by a freak fire. What then? But all contracts are similarly open-ended.

The same point applies to laws. As Aristotle remarked, a lawgiver can formulate a law only in terms of relatively gross generalities, and the intelligent application of a law, therefore, will require that we grasp and apply the intention of the lawgiver. To this capacity Aristotle gave the name of 'equitability'. This attitude is absolutely essential for social life. We informally refer to it as 'cutting the other guy some slack' or 'walking in his shoes'. To give a plain example: when you are in a rush to get to work, the car in front of you is moving very slowly and keeps stopping momentarily without signaling. If justice alone motivates you, then you think only about the inconvenience to yourself, and the obnoxiousness of such poor driving, and in response you begin perhaps to lean on your horn or shout. But the virtue of equity would have you temper this reaction by thinking about the other fellow's point of view: you consider that he's likely lost or following directions (that's why he's slowing down at the cross streets); that you yourself have been in his situation before and understand what that's like; and that it's really a very minor nuisance that you are slowed down while he is finding the address he is looking for. If it's only justice that moves us, we become surly, angry, irritable, and self-centered—all the while justifying ourselves with the rhetoric of 'rights talk'. Justice, then, needs to be tempered and directed by a genuine affection for others, and a grasp of their good, precisely as fellow citizens. Aristotle called such affection, as we said, 'civic friendship', and he argued that we learn it in the family. Each of the aforementioned structures in the family has its own characteristic affections,

and, if we've been raised correctly, in a sound family, we can easily transfer and adapt such affections, through a kind of analogical reasoning, to our fellow citizens in our dealings with them. For instance, to treat fellow citizens well, insofar as we relate to one another under democratic structures, is to have towards them affections no unlike those that siblings have toward one another in a family. (That is why Aristotle criticized so severely the communism that Plato proposed, which implied the destruction of the family. Plato, he said, by abolishing the family, hoped to make it so that all citizens treated one another 'as brothers'. But it is quite impossible, Aristotle argued, that they could know what it was to treat one another 'as brothers', if real brotherhood has been abolished.)

Civic Friendship is Taught in the Family

This is a rudimentary way in which citizenship finds its origin in the family: the affections necessary for civic friendship, itself needed for peaceable social life, are inculcated naturally within the family. But even more can be said, because there are other attitudes and outlooks, essential to good citizenship, which likewise are fostered easily and best in a sound family. For instance, it is essential to being a good citizen that one be able to recognize the limits of government authority; that one have a lively sense of the importance of 'subsidiarity'; that one be able to draw a distinction between wants and needs; that one have a good sense of the combination, inherent in our human nature, of an innate goodness together with some kind of tendency to corruption. And in the next and

final essay, we shall look more carefully at how the family teaches us to be good citizens, through having the right outlook as regards these, and thus how any weakening of the family likewise must lead to a weakening, over the long run, of political society.

Eighth Essay: The Family as the Wellspring of a Healthy Society

By Professor Michael Pakaluk

In the last essay, we reviewed Aristotle's brilliant argument that the two natural forms of association—the family and political society—depend upon each other, as one might expect, if indeed they are by nature. Aristotle's argument is based on an understanding of the 'virtues'. Virtues may be regarded as powers or active dispositions, which enable us to act effectively for goods; those who lack the relevant virtues, simply are unable to achieve the same sorts of things as those who have them. It then becomes an important question: which powers or active dispositions must citizens in general possess, if they are to associate successfully in political society?

One such power is the virtue of justice. Regard this as a refined sense of equality (or fairness), together with feelings of anger and retribution, which follow upon the perception that you yourself, or someone you identify with, has been treated unequally (unfairly). Now imagine a society in which citizens are equipped only with justice and modulate their

dealings with one another only through this power. Such a society could hardly survive: as we saw previously, insofar as someone acts solely out of justice, he nurses anger; concentrates primarily upon himself; and becomes inflexible and harsh in his making use of the law. A society in which justice alone were the chief and animating virtue would quickly become divided and break apart, dissolving amidst strife and civil war—or, if not this, at best it would be only superficially at peace, with its citizens secretly being resentful of one another, lacking affection, and looking for occasions to get an upper hand. One might say, curiously, that although justice is the chief virtue of human associations, it is not self-sufficient as a virtue. Justice on its own implies frequent injustice.

So, some other virtue is required, to compensate for the deficiencies of justice—some virtue that involves positively seeking the good, in contrast with justice, which is a 'negative' virtue, concerned primarily with avoiding or correcting for the bad. Aristotle's claim is that association in political society needs to be animated by a sincere, stable, and general concern for others, and for the common good for which they are cooperating. We said that this attitude might be called 'civic friendship', and we saw that it took a variety of forms, depending upon the basic constitutional structure of one's political society. Now Aristotle's key point is that civic friendship, thus understood, is taught and nourished within the family. The family is its origin and model. Thus, the family provides that outlook and those virtues which political society needs in order to flourish. The natural institutions of the family and political society are thus adapted to each other. Political society provides us with a conception of persons relating to one another fairly, as free and equals, by which the

family measures and guides itself: this is the 'skeleton' of human society, if you will. The family, as the source of civic friendship, provides us with affections and an active concern for the good of all others, which then gives unity and a common purpose to political society, adding 'flesh' to the framework set down with a view to fairness and equality.

Note that, if these things are so, then just as education and upbringing within the family should be carried out with a view to the active citizenship that the members of the family will display, as members of a wider political society, so political society should take, as one of its chief aims, the fostering and safeguarding of the family as a natural institution. The natural dependence of each institution upon the other implies corresponding responsibilities and obligations.

Modern Citizenship and Freedom

Our modern conception of the role of government in political society is refined in comparison with that shared by classical writers; therefore, we require a refined, though related, understanding of the virtues of citizenship. Everything that Aristotle argued as regards civic friendship remains true, but there are other requirements and attitudes of civic friendship, which we must additionally foster. It is not that, for us, less is required of a good citizen now in comparison with then, but rather more.

The contemporary political society in which we live is aptly called a 'liberal democracy': 'liberal' because freedom (libertas) is regarded, rightly, as a fundamental good; 'democracy', because government is viewed as self-government, carried out through rulers who represent the people rather than stand apart from and over them. Now these two notions of freedom and self-government imply corresponding virtues.

Freedom in contemporary society is the result of limited government, but government is limited only because citizens limit it, and their ability and willingness to place limits upon government depends upon their having two fundamental commitments.

First, citizens must be committed to some notion of natural law or natural rights. A natural law, or a natural right, is an obligation and requirement of justice which arises simply because of human nature, and which therefore is antecedent to human decision or agreement. For instance, any human being, simply because he is human, has the natural right to life, that is to say, it is always and, in all circumstances, wrong for anyone to act so as to deprive an innocent human being, who is a non-aggressor, of his life. This is true prior to government; it remains true after any government has been established. Any government that attempted to abridge this right, either by killing innocent human beings, or by allowing their killing, would to that extent be acting without any authority. Its prescriptions and commands should simply not be obeyed, because they would be contravened by a prior

authority. But note that this limit on government depends upon citizens' recognizing natural rights and being committed to them, as something prior to government. Such a limitation does not occur automatically or magically; it is actively enforced only if citizens have a corresponding virtue. Call this virtue, "commitment to natural rights".

The second source of freedom, through limited government, is that provided through a commitment to what is known as 'subsidiarity'. Subsidiarity presupposes that society is organized hierarchically, and that political society is a kind of 'society of societies'. It is the principle that a social function should be assigned to the smallest level in this hierarchy, which is able effectively to carry it out, and that a higher-level association should interfere with the function of an association under it, only to correct abuses and never in such a way as to undermine the operation of that lower-level association. Subsidiarity is a safeguard of freedom, because it places constraints on the nature of the control exercised by government. It is an anti-totalitarian principle.

Subsidiarity recognizes that political society is for the most part 'civil society', composed of a rich network of groups, clubs, associations, and institutions (including, importantly, the natural institution of the family). Government is merely the highest authority of this rich fabric, a small portion of the whole. Subsidiarity blocks government from 'micro-managing'; and it encourages government to operate through incentives and positive guidance rather than through force and restriction. (Subsidiarity also promotes the

ideal of self-government, insofar as it is a principle which distributes authority as widely as possible throughout a society and maximizes the extent to which important decisions are made by those most nearly affected by them.)

Thus freedom, as advanced through limited government, requires that citizens have the virtues of a commitment to natural rights, and a willingness to order their relations to one another in accordance with the principle of subsidiarity. Note that we do not regard rights, principles, or rules as themselves being of ultimate importance for political society. Rather, what is decisive is whether citizens actively and habitually promote these rights and principles for their own sake, and with understanding—but this is the work of virtue.

Modern Citizenship and Self-Government

Self-government, strictly speaking, is the exercise of authority by the citizens of political society over themselves. It is government "of the people, by the people, for the people". Therefore, from the very nature of the case, it must have exactly those features that are found in proper self-mastery and be subject to the same risks and difficulties.

Now for someone to show self-mastery, it is essential that he have a good knowledge of himself and that his rationality take precedence over his irrational appetites,

whims, and impulses. Correspondingly, in self-government, it is essential that the body politic have a good knowledge of itself, and that, in its actions, its reason predominates over irrational impulses. By 'self-knowledge' we mean moral self-knowledge. Most importantly, an individual needs to recognize the mixed character of his own nature—that we are basically good, but that we have tendencies to evil, which, if left unchecked, will eventually expand and subvert our judgment. Similarly, in sound self-government, the body politic must understand that its intentions and purposes are basically good, but that it has inherent and ineliminable tendencies to evil, which consequently must be guarded against and, if necessary, checked. All self-government that is placed on a good foundation must begin with an awareness of this mixed character of human nature. In theology, this is called the 'effects of original sin' or 'fallen nature'. But political philosophy can view it simply in the way we have described: we have a basically good nature, but also deceptive tendencies to evil, and thus our actions in dealing with ourselves, especially our attempts at self-government, must be carried out with sobriety in view of these facts.

By the 'precedence of rationality over irrationality', we mean such things, of course, as living by principles and by some sort of order; but more fundamentally we mean a life in which a distinction is drawn between true needs and mere wants, and priority is given to needs. An undisciplined and spoiled child draws no such distinction. Whatever he wants, he clamors for as if he needs it. He is incapable of sacrificing things wanted for things needed. He lets his own wants lead him to deprive others of what answers to their needs. Similarly, a body politic will be like a spoiled child, and incapable of self-mastery, unless it

can distinguish needs from wants, and order its affairs accordingly by giving priority to the former.

Modern Citizenship as Originating in the Family

So then, to summarize: We have identified four traits—four virtues—which citizens must have, if they are to associate successfully in a liberal democracy, in which freedom and self-government are prized as ideals. Such citizens must have: a stable, habitual, and informed commitment to natural rights and natural law, which they prize for its own sake; a similar commitment to subsidiarity as an ideal of the ordering of society; a sober and active understanding of themselves as basically good but tending to evil; and a persistent favoring of reason over unreason, as shown especially in the distinguishing of needs from wants, and in taking the former as prior to the latter.

If, along with Aristotle, we regard the family as a natural association complementary to political society, then we should expect that these four virtues, so vital to modern political society, would find their origin and sustenance in a well-functioning family. As we said, these traits must be regarded as part of the character of citizens. It is not enough that citizens assent merely intellectually to abstract principles or a code of law; mere knowledge of history or of 'the Founders intentions' is also insufficient. What is required,

rather, is a sharing of those intentions, a similarity of outlook, and the free adoption of a way of life consistent with the same.

Yet we do see that each of these four traits is best acquired in a well-functioning family.

That there are natural rights and a natural law, prior to human convention or agreement, is learned by children, through their experience of the natural authority that their parents have over them, and especially the authority of the father. This authority is direct and speaks to the heart. It is prior to other authorities, in the sense that no other person and no government may legitimately contravene the sound directives that a father gives his children. We recognize it, too, as a true authority, in the sense that we are bound to obey our parents, even when we regard their decisions as misguided, and even when their decisions are plainly misguided (so long as such obedience would not imply that we do wrong to anyone else). Yet the authority of parents over their natural children is not conferred upon them by anyone else; it is not the result of human decision or agreement. Rather, it springs directly from the natural relationship that parents have to children as their origin and source. From the experience of this, children learn that there are obligations that we have to one another, simply in virtue of our having the same natural relationship, as all being of the same stock—our shared humanity itself as the basis for human rights. (And this relationship, too, can be traced to a common origin and based upon that. Thomas

Jefferson insisted that the phrase “all men are created equal” be included in the United States Declaration of Independence, as indicating that all of us our equal, precisely as a consequence of our having a common origin from the same God.)

We saw in an earlier essay how the natural bond between husband and wife—exclusive, complete, and permanent—is intended to be the basis for a new society, even stronger and closer than a bond of blood. It could not but be this way, if each family is meant to be a new society. But, if so, then, from the experience of this, children acquire also a lively sense of subsidiarity. For they see how nature has so disposed of things, that the family carries out best those tasks that serve the common good. And they understand that other authorities outside the family, at best have the authority to correct abuses in the family but have no real authority to reach within the family and order its affairs. Thus, the priority of the family to the state, as part of the lived experience of a child growing up in such a family, will teach him habits of thought, feeling, and reaction supportive of subsidiarity.

Finally, both of the elements of self-mastery that we have mentioned—moral self-knowledge, and the precedence of reasonability—are taught in the family, but in such a way that they can be generalized for any form of self-government. Of course, all children who are raised well are taught self-mastery. But what is distinctive about a family, is that within a family the task of self-mastery is given a social character. It is the project of the

entire family, that each child acquires self-mastery. The family as a whole view each of its members, lovingly, as basically good; but the family as a whole, similarly, regards the actions of its members as needing to be corrected and checked. The point is that this conception of what we are is publicly shared in the family, and the good of each of its members is pursued in light of it. Similarly, in a well-functioning family, the wants of its members are placed second to the needs that they have, individually and corporately—and, once again, this principle of 'needs over wants' is publicly acknowledged and becomes part of the character of the children.

No other institution can inculcate these virtues. Consider, for instance, a day care facility. The workers in such a facility have no direct authority over the children: their authority is conferred and contractual; therefore, their relationship to the children under their care could not possibly teach children the reality of natural rights and natural law. Similarly, a day care facility has no natural standing as an institution meant to carry out better something which a larger-level institution could not carry out. Indeed, it is less adept at raising children than the family, and if anything, it is easy to view a day care facility as the extension of some larger association—it is a service provided by government (or at least funded by the government), or the facility is part of a larger chain or enterprise. Again, a day care facility cannot teach the self-understanding and self-mastery required of citizens, because workers in such a facility do not regard themselves as allowed to make judgments about the moral nature of the actions and character of the children. Such workers regard themselves as aiming to 'educate' or 'manage', but not to form good character, by starting

from a basically good nature affected by tendencies to evil. (In fact, this very way of speaking is alien to the bureaucratic worldview of a day care facility.) Similarly, the distinction between needs and wants implies a 'moral judgment' which day care workers would be loath to draw.

We posit that these characteristics of a day care facility, in relation to a family, are necessary and irremediable. They arise from the very nature of the associations themselves. Because the family is a basic and natural institution, it cannot but have a moralistic character and moralistic purposes. Because a day care facility is artificial and derivative, it cannot but limit itself to 'management of desires' rather than true moral instruction. If the above line of reasoning is correct, then there is a direct link between the health of family life in a society, and that society's long-term prospects for freedom and prosperity. No matter how rich the historical inheritance or how astute the constitutional provisions of a nation, if its citizens lack the civic virtues that enable them actually to understand and to want to conform to that inheritance and those provisions, then all else will be for naught. Man does not live on abstract principles alone. He needs virtue to put principles into practice. And yet these virtues, as we have seen, are inculcated best or in fact only through families.

It is a common objection to liberal democracy that it does not directly promote those sources and wellsprings that are essential to itself. Liberal democracy requires a

people with a religious outlook, yet it cannot directly promote any religion. It requires a moral people, yet it cannot paternalistically promote virtue. Similarly, it requires sound family life, yet it cannot directly cause families to be healthy. Nonetheless, it can use all of the tools of sound liberal statecraft to promote family stability and flourishing. And, at least, it can refrain from attacking the natural institution of the family—which implies that it must, after all, adopt and embrace the correct conception of the family, and insure that the family is correctly defined and promoted in law, as the essential and natural institution that it is. Political liberalism must embrace a sound family policy or consent to its own self-undermining.

Ninth Essay: Friendship as the Basis of Volunteerism

By Professor Michael Pakaluk

Introduction

At first glance one might think that friendship and volunteerism are entirely distinct or even opposed. Friendship has to do with those close to us—family and friends—and with ordinary life; volunteerism is directed at people distant from us, and it typically is in response to unusual or extraordinary need. So, to propose that friendship is a good basis for volunteerism might seem paradoxical—as if someone were to suggest that staying at home was a good way of traveling abroad. And yet there is a close connection between the two, which is captured in the notion of 'solidarity'.

There is in fact a good way and a not so good way of expressing our concern for the welfare of others, and friendship is essentially connected to the good way. This should not be surprising, because there is hardly anything more difficult than to help others well— a thing that requires a certain humility and refinement.

I am assuming of course a good motivation. Why do we volunteer? To help others. This desire to help others usually springs from 'compassion', which we locate in the 'heart'. (Curiously, the Greeks referred to this as splanchnic, or 'the guts'. We feel it in our guts.) The essence of this response is the realization that "he is just like me". His suffering is mine. His relief is mine. This is not an abstract realization ("it would be better off if") or an impartial or disinterested affection ("we're all equal", "each person is one among many others"), but something concrete and "heartfelt". The origin of authentic volunteerism is this identification of another person with oneself. And yet this is just what friendship achieves and shows us as a model.

Friendship

We should first get clear about what friendship is. Now, when we want to think clearly about friendship, we should turn to the ancients—Greek and Roman civilization, and especially Aristotle. This is not arbitrary but can be reasonably defended. Each age and culture has its own special achievements. If you want to learn painting, you turn first to Renaissance Italy. If insight into music is your concern, then 18th century Vienna should be a focus. For theology, 13th century Europe has been the high point, not surpassed since.

And similarly for reflection on friendship, our source should be classical literature and philosophy.

The reason is that the ancients allotted a high place to friendship and consequently put much energy into thinking about it and analyzing it. They thought, for instance, that no one could be happy without good friendships; that a mark or necessary sign that you were a good person was that you had many true friends. They regarded friendship as the bond which, by permeating throughout society, unified it. To stress the value of friendship, they would say that "a friend is the greatest of your possessions", and Socrates would disarmingly ask people, "How many friends do you have?" and then chide them when you could not give an exact answer, although they could say precisely how many oxen or pigs they had—Weren't friends much more valuable? As a kind of monument to this preoccupation with and appreciation of friendship in the ancient world, we have been left with Aristotle's long treatment of the subject in his Ethics, and Cicero's essay, neither of which has been superseded by anything written since.

Yet, although such extensive and truly great material on friendship has been left to us by the ancients, a roadblock confronts a modern person who wishes to understand it. The reason is that our outlook is absorbed in the subjective, which is stifling and limiting, but friendship, as explained by the ancients, begins with an appreciation of something objective and inherently expansive.

Here is a good example of this divide that separates us from the ancients. When I ask my students what they think happiness is, by far the most common response I receive is that it is a feeling—a feeling of satisfaction, which need not even be grounded in a true judgment. I may be completely deceived or completely confused, but so long as I feel content, then I am happy.

A little reflection shows this to be an absurd view. A good feeling is an emotion, a physiological euphoria, like good digestion. But happiness is what we do everything else for. Yet how absurd to suppose that our cities, civilizations, and achievements; the struggles and victories of each person; the great effort put into childbirth, upbringing, and education—that the point of all of this is that each of us have a nice feeling inside, a feeling which might just as easily be produced by a well-designed drug. The disposition of the ancients was exactly the opposite of this. Their instinct, rather, was to hold that anything that we took as the highest object of our own striving had to be objective. Happiness was so far from being subjective for them, that they thought it likely that a person's highest good was simply the same as the highest good of the entire universe. This view comes out especially clearly in the Consolation of Philosophy of Boethius, who argues straight out that happiness is God—not our possession of God, not our contemplation of God, but simply God.

One might say, “Well, those are two different outlooks, one subjective and the other objective!” and try to leave it at that. But this makes a big difference for friendship, which, because it concerns the other person’s good, has to start from an objective appreciation of another.

Aristotle in fact marks out his three types of friendship based on the distinction between objective and subjective. We have an objective appreciation of a person or thing, when we regard it as good or not, relative to what it is supposed to be. We have a subjective appreciation, when we like it or not, because of its contribution to our own interests or enjoyment. In the latter, we are not so much liking that thing, as acting out of a liking for ourselves. For instance, we may appreciate a well-made classical guitar for what it is, whether or not we have any use for it ourselves. We can appreciate a well-prepared meal, even if we are not going to taste it. Similarly, we can appreciate the goodness of someone, or the enjoyment that he takes in life, without yet expecting that our own interests will be advanced through him, or that he will contribute to our own pleasures and enjoyment.

This objective appreciation is the origin of friendship. When we appreciate something in that way, we naturally want to promote and preserve what is good about it. That attitude is itself attractive to the other and tends to be reciprocated. When both persons recognize that each appreciates the other in this way, and they recognize that they recognize it, their relationship takes on a certain stability, and if, over time, the emotions

become engaged and the attitude that each has becomes well-grounded and habitual—that is, implicit, spontaneous, familiar—then they have a friendship in the true and strict sense.

This is to be contrasted with relationships in which each person is initially attracted to the other, not because of some objectively admirable trait that the other has, but because his own interests are advanced (a friendship 'because of utility', Aristotle calls it) or his own enjoyment is enhanced (a friendship 'for pleasure'). For instance, someone finds himself cheered up when he spends time with his acquaintance, and that's all that matters to him—he does not think much about whether his getting cheered up is based on anything objectively admirable in the other.

By the way, we should not think that typically a person will be aware that he is drawn to others for subjective reasons, or that someone who approaches relationships in this way can even conceive of taking some other approach. The subjective outlook tends to be unaware of its own subjectivity.

A Friend as "Other Self"

As a true friendship develops over time, then it is correct to say, as Aristotle claims, that the friends are “other selves”, that is, that each relates to the other in very much the same way as he relates to himself. And what is the reality of the relationship, because it is evidently good, also provides its ideal. That, as much as possible, one’s friend has the same standing as oneself, becomes the ideal of the relationship. Friends try to increase their friendship.

That friends are “other selves” was a commonplace of Greek popular thought. That friends are “a single soul” (*mia psyche*) in two bodies was proverbial. There was the story of Orestes and Pylades, each vying to take the place of the other and be executed instead of his friend. That is why “laying down one’s life” for another becomes something like the proof of true friendship, since that sacrifice is intelligible only if you take your friend’s life to have the value of your own.

A fascinating example of someone who takes this outlook very seriously are the reflections of Augustine, in book 4 of his Confessions, upon the death of a close friend from childhood. He grieves the loss of his friend, yet at the same time he is happy that he himself is alive. Augustine is concerned that there is something wrong about that. If a friend lays down his life for his friend, shouldn’t he be upset that he is still alive, whereas his friend has died? Shouldn’t he resent being still alive? But then Augustine reasons that, since friends are “other selves” and a “single soul” in two bodies, his own life just is the continuation of

his friend's life. For Augustine to be alive just is the only way in which his friend continues to be alive. (At this time, before his conversion to Christianity, Augustine had no confidence in a life after death and that his friend's soul had survived death.) So, Augustine becomes reconciled to his own joy at being alive, taking this to show not a love for himself alone, but for himself through a love for his friend.

So, the willingness to "lay down one's life" can serve as a mark of whether the other was in fact an "other self". A recent story from a news report following the tsunami shows this from the opposite side. A man was being interviewed who lost his girlfriend in the wave. They were on a beach in Thailand when the tsunami struck: he managed to grab onto a tree and survived; she was swept away in the rising waters and was seen no more. Reflecting on his own good luck in being alive, the man said, "And I used to think that I would rather die than lose my girlfriend"—a crass remark which revealed that he had never loved her.

Aristotle gives an elaborate argument that friends are "other selves", which we need not review here. Rather, I wish to point out an important consequence that Aristotle draws from this claim. This has to do with what is the most distinctive manifestation of a friendship. What is it that friends do that is characteristic of friends, rather than of people who have other sorts of relationships with one another? We said that the objective admiration that we have for another is the origin of friendship, because we naturally want to assist and preserve what we admire as good. We might therefore think that friendship finds

its full flower in, and especially takes the form of, some kind of mutual aid or benefit. Friendship is reciprocated love, and we naturally think of love as service, as “doing good”. Friendship is a kind of activism.

But Aristotle rejects this line of thought, for two reasons. The first has to do with the inequality that is implicit in any act of aid. When X aids or benefits Y, then, to that extent, X is superior, and Y is an inferior. It is not merely that Y’s weakness or deficiency is implied by X’s benefiting him. Rather, it is that X really gets the better good and the greater benefit in the deal. As Aristotle says, when you give some material good to another, that person merely gets something useful, but you however get the goodness (call it ‘nobility’, ‘admirability’, ‘worthiness’) inherent in an act of giving. The proof is that you can claim credit and legitimately look for gratitude or even, in some circumstances, honor, whereas the recipient can claim nothing of that sort.

This, as you may have noticed, is Aristotle’s way of understanding the maxim that “It is more blessed to give than to receive.” It is not frequently appreciated that that maxim has a double edge. On the one hand, the maxim urges us on to do the better but more difficult thing—to give rather than to receive. On the other hand, the maxim implies that the person who gives is the superior, because what he has done is “better”, and that in any act of giving there is an inequality. It is a curious fact that love and friendship look for reciprocation. Why is unrequited love painful? Why is a friend upset if he calls all the time, but the friend never

calls him? Aristotle wishes to explain the reciprocity in friendship as in part being an attempt to make up for the equality inherent in acts of giving. People who are friends want to be "other selves". As we saw, that is the ideal of their relationship. But a person is certainly equal to himself, "other selves" and therefore friends must be equals. However, when one friend benefits another, this equality is disturbed, so it needs to be restored—which happens through the friends' reciprocation. First best would be that the friends always remain equal; but second best, if a temporary inequality is inevitable, is that the inequality is balanced out or nullified by a comparable act of benefit in the other direction.

Here a kind of paradox arises. Friends wish to be other selves, yet the most straightforward way in which each can be related to the other as he is to himself is by benefiting the other; but benefiting undermines the equality required by the ideal of "other self". Reciprocation helps but does not fully resolve this difficulty, because when friends take turns in benefiting the other, then always one of them is superior to the other—they simply take turns in being superior.

This raises the important question, then: Is there some kind of activity, which two persons can together engage in, and in which each is related to the other as to another self, but which does not carry along with it an inequality? Yes, Aristotle say, there is: it is the activity of "living life together" (*suzên*, in Greek) or "spending time together", which he characterizes as fundamentally a sharing in perception and thought. English has no good

single word for this, but the same idea is captured in the Spanish words *conviventia* and *compania*.

C.S. Lewis, in his book The Four Loves, quotes Emerson as saying that the crucial question for friends is, "Do you see the same truth?" Lovers look into each other's eyes. Friends together look at some third thing. Aristotle is in basic agreement with this but asks us to analyze what goes on when two friends enjoy seeing or thinking about something together. His analysis depends upon the principle that perception and thinking is inherently reflexive. That is to say, it is always the case, when I perceive something, that I perceive that I perceive it, and when I think something, that I think that I think it. To perceive this blue wall over here, is at the same time to perceive that I perceive it. There is an inherent complexity, then, in our acts of consciousness.

Let us take a concrete example, to fix ideas. Suppose two friends, Pablo and Suzie, are hiking together and reach a mountaintop where they enjoy a beautiful vista. They are happy that they are seeing such a beautiful sight together. (Any account of friendship must answer the question of why, when we see something beautiful alone, we say, "If only so-and-so were here to see this with me!", as if the experience does not fully count, unless someone else shares it with us.) What is going on as they view that beautiful scene as friends? Let us analyze it from the point of view of one of the friends, Pablo. (Of course, whatever we say holds just as well of the other friend.) Pablo perceives the vista, but

because perception is reflexive, he therefore perceives that he perceives it. Suzie perceives that Pablo perceives the vista. Therefore, Suzie has the same relationship to Pablo as he does to himself. Again, Pablo perceives the vista. But he also perceives Suzie perceiving the vista. But this is to have the same relationship to Suzie as he has to himself, because when he perceives the vista, he also perceives himself perceiving the vista, because perception is reflexive.

The point may be summarized thus. The interior life of a person is inherently social, because of the reflexive nature of consciousness. When we think or perceive, we ipso facto have a relationship to ourselves, which is a kind of interior sociality. One might say: friendship and communion are inherent in the consciousness of an individual. This is modeled and exemplified by, and fulfilled in, our friendships with others—that is, in that precise activity of friends called "living life together" (*conviventia, compania*). So simply spending time with others is the best and most characteristic manifestation of friendship, because it lacks any inherent inequalities, and it corresponds to the deepest, social nature of human life.

Friendship as Applied to Volunteerism

Thus there is a true form of friendship, which starts from an objective appreciation of what is good about another; friends of this sort aim at the ideal of "other self"; and the highest activity of such friends, because it is most expressive of this ideal, and the best realization of our inner social nature, is "spending time with another" (*conviventia*, *compania*). But what does all of this have to do with volunteerism? A great deal, because of the strategic importance of this notion of "other self" in our lives. Recall that we said that we should presume good motivation in our efforts at volunteerism or in any sort of assistance we try to provide to others. We truly want to help others. But this implies two things: first, an ideal of what "helping others" amounts to— it is all for—and second, a sound and balanced source of motivation in doing so. We can go astray as regards both goal and origin, by misunderstanding the point of what we are doing, or by proceeding from faulty motives. Friendship is the necessary guide, support, and corrective as regards both of these things.

Friendship provides the goal or ideal of volunteerism. Presumably we do not regard it as enough to do some service and then depart, as if we were machines or slaves. Even if, practically speaking, we cannot and will not become friends in the strict sense with the others, still, we would like this to be the significance or meaning of our actions. Even a small gesture can have a much broader significance, if done with the right goal in mind. All of us know of love stories where young lovers must be separated, perhaps by the death of one of them, and as a final act they do or say something romantic, which is sufficient because it points to what they would have liked it to be. Similarly, we would want our

(usually small) acts of assistance to have a meaning which extends beyond them. And if we hold up friendship as the goal or point of what we are doing, then they can have this meaning.

That friendship finds its fullest expression in "spending time with another" (*conviventia*, *compania*) proves an extremely useful principle of volunteerism, because it points the way beyond mere activism. If *conviventia* is the highest form of association, then we should be dissatisfied with conferring benefits. That relationship effectively makes the volunteer superior, typically by making salient only one aspect of their relationship, and spoils equality. Something of a corrective to this can be achieved, paradoxically, if the volunteer thinks to himself in his volunteer work, "I am getting the better good out of this; in truth I am indebted to those I am helping," because then he can regard his volunteer work as already involving reciprocation.

But even better would be if he did not regard himself as 'helping' at all. The ideal of *conviventia* enables us to get beyond what might be called an exclusively 'male' approach to volunteerism. It's well known to married couples that husband and wife tend to take different approaches to discussing the ordinary problems of each day. Men tend to dislike talking about a problem except to find some way of fixing it. If the thing can't be fixed, they'd rather talk about something else. But women in contrast like to recount difficulties simply to find understanding. They want a sympathetic ear. So, the man comes home from

work and grows impatient having to listen to stories about problem he cannot do anything about, whereas his wife is upset at his impatience, because she never intended that he 'fix' anything but just show some understanding. *Conviventia* is a shared understanding, and this can similarly sometimes be the most important thing achieved in volunteer work.

Solidarity may in fact be defined just as this attitude toward others, informed by relevant knowledge, and made habitual -- woven into the fabric of our daily life and incorporated into the way we think and feel about things.

But this then raises the issue of motivation. How can we succeed in consistently approaching volunteer work in this way, with perseverance and a cheerful attitude? The problems that most volunteers face are huge and potentially depressing, requiring persistence and perseverance over the long haul, and even eventually a transformation of society and culture. But we are human beings, not disinterested angels, and we must address these problems, given the nature that we have, not simply by willing to deal with them. How can we do so without 'burn out', becoming disillusioned, or giving up in despair? And here friendship provides the source as well as the goal of volunteerism. As the old saying goes, frequently quoted by Mother Teresa, "Charity begins at home." This means not merely that there is an 'order of charity' (ordo caritatis), according to which those closest to us should have a prior place than strangers in our affections and commitments, and that we should not be like those people who love humanity but happen to hate all of the human

beings around them. Rather, the maxim also means that our good intentions can be well-grounded and safeguarded, over the long haul, when they are the extension to others of true friendships that we have proven ourselves capable of cultivating within our family and among those close to us.

We may turn in conclusion to the puzzle I raised at the beginning: What does friendship, something ordinary and familiar, have to do with volunteerism, which deals with the extraordinary and those distant from us? And here we have a case in which the extremes really do meet. A care for those closest to us, and a love for others generally, are at bottom two manifestations of the same thing. This was well captured in a remark by G.K. Chesterton, who once said that the best way of testing a person's capacity to get along with the general run of humanity, would be to pick some house at random, send him down the chimney, and see how well he can get along with the people inside. And that, Chesterton says, is exactly what happens on the day each of us is born. And thus, it is that the love of those close to us, friendship, and the love of those distant, volunteerism, is one and the same.

Tenth Essay: Leadership and Human Rights

By Professor Michael Pakaluk

I don't believe there is such a thing as leadership

No, I'm not writing an essay on nothingness. What I mean is: there is no such thing as leadership, full stop. What there is, is leadership in a domain. A student leader. A leader in one's community. Taking the lead at home. A leader on the ballfield. Leading by doing (say, the dishes). General Ulysses S. Grant, famously, was a miserable failure at everything he did, until someone gave him some authority in the battle of Vicksburg. He promptly proved himself a leader of men in the narrow domain of war--which gets counted as a paradigm of leadership. Now, if there was such a thing as leadership, surely Grant would have had it, and he would have been a leader everywhere, which he wasn't.

I also doubt too that there is such a thing, really, as a 'student leader'. What people mean, when they use that phrase, is someone who takes part in relatively transient student

politics; or starts a club; or produces the school play. A student leader, that is, is a student who is a leader, and these come in many varieties, which are always particular varieties. Nonetheless, students are young, or at least they generally are. Moreover, students are almost always citizens—even international students are citizens of their own countries. So, there is a broad sense of 'leadership', applicable to students, where the word picks out someone who leads precisely in being young, and who leads in ways relevant to being a citizen. And that is my interest here.

To lead, when one is young. What could this mean? Doesn't youth imply inexperience, but leadership requires experience? Well, surely it would mean at least this: not to follow when one is young, that is, in the way young people in particular, tend to be followers. But how do they follow? Obviously, they are concerned about fads. Yet, unless one happens to be a designer in Milan or Paris, one does not lead by wearing the latest fashionable clothing. Downloading a song onto an iPod is not an act of leadership. Pierce your nose? Ten million others have been there, done that. (It's no objection, that many adults also are likewise concerned about fads, because they are so—it is widely conceded—because society now as a whole now cultivates attitudes which once were, and should be, especially distinctive young people.) So, to lead when one is young implies, at very least, a certain kind of detachment from, or indifference to, fads, fashions, and peer pressure. This sort of indifference is not the same as leadership, but it is a condition of it.

Likewise, anyone who could rightly be charged with merely following an "–ism" would not, to that extent, be acting as a leader. Are you affected by consumerism? To that extent, you are not a leader. (It requires a good amount of imagination to contrive circumstances where someone leads by spending money.) Are you, practically speaking, a hedonist? Then pleasure is leading you about, and therefore it is not you who are leading others.

(No one is claiming, of course, that it is always right to lead, or always better to lead than to follow. By all means accept those –isms that are true, if there are any, and be a follower there.)

Again, no one can lead who is a mere follower in thought. Leadership involves an independent mind. But be wary of those traps that appear to offer independence, yet lack it, giving only extreme dependence instead. "Question Authority?" Oh, like the thousands of other people who see the bumper sticker and agree, unquestioningly? (Hardly independent thinking, that.) Avoid also the reflex reaction of a relativist, when encountering a bold assertion: 'That's your opinion!' Of course it's your opinion: if it weren't, you wouldn't say it. What the relativist means, of course, is that it's only your opinion, and no more. But, if so, then relativism, too, by the same reasoning, is only the relativist's opinion, and nothing more. One can safely ignore it, then. (Short work of that.)

A moment's thought will reveal that there can be no independent thinking without—to use an old-fashioned word—knowledge. It is knowledge, and knowledge alone—together with everything which knowledge brings in its trail, such as clarity of insight, logical acuity, and depth—which can insure independence of thought. Why should this be? Because, when all is said and done, there never is any absolute independence of one thing from another. (A lunatic: someone who thinks he is independent of anyone.). What one means by 'independence of thought', rather, is lack of dependence on the ill-considered opinions of others, because one is dependent, instead, on what really is the case, because one has knowledge. Suppose now that you have achieved indifference as regards fads; a lack of attachment to any demeaning –isms; and a good grounding in general knowledge. (No small achievement. This would require a discipline and a path 'training' which was every way as demanding as that adopted by the most successful athletes. It would necessarily involve real changes in your habits and lifestyle, and many small but significant sacrifices.) You are now in a position to lead, then, as a young person. But what do you do?

This is where human rights enter in. A young person leads, by offering what he or she in particular can offer. And what youth in particular can offer, is looking at things afresh: despising conventions; not thinking that 'because we've always done it that way' is a good answer; wondering whether, after all, it really 'has to be that way.' The Abolitionists were essentially youthful. An oldish person in 1850—old in outlook—would have looked at a slave and seen only a tragic necessity. "Nothing new under the sun. Vanity of vanities." Slavery would appear to him as a vast system of contract and agreement, an indispensable

cog in the grinding machinery of economics. You might just as well destroy the Appalachian Mountain range, he would think, as abolish slavery.

A young person would look at the very same system, that “Peculiar Institution”, as it was called, and observe, correctly, that it depended on nothing more than human agreement and decision. In 1850, it undoubtedly was true that slavery could have been entirely abolished, if people only wanted to abolish it. “You see things; and you say, ‘Why?’ But I dream things that never were, and I say, “Why not?". (No, not Robert F. Kennedy, but George Bernard Shaw, in his play, “Back to Methuselah”.)

A right, it has been said, has to do with the dignity that a human being has prior to the state and prior to any human convention, which sets limits on state power, and which (as regards a ‘social right’) provides an ideal for assistance and aid to others. One cannot glimpse a right, without looking past conventions, to something more basic. The Bill of Rights is a pointer, merely. The Supreme Court gives its own views on something glimpsed, merely. Neither of these institutions invents rights; both attempt to report on them.

The glimpsing belongs to everyone, and in a free society, in which people move corporately toward social justice, it must be that way. But a special concern for rights belongs to the young, who often have a lively sense that they have only one life to live, and

that time is short. It belongs to youth, also, to regard itself as a new generation, and potentially a new society, which can reconstitute everything, simply by wanting it to be that way.

The framework of rights is an ideal for a free and just society. To be a leader as a citizen with a youthful outlook (chronological age ultimately being irrelevant), then, is to look constantly toward what promotes the dignity of all human beings, and for one's own part to begin, without apologies or excuses, to live in that ideal society, here and now, not spurning any sacrifice that that implies.

Eleventh Essay: Leadership and the Virtues

By Professor Michael Pakaluk

‘Virtue’ is an old-fashioned word.

If we use it at all, then when we say something like, “He’s virtuous” we mean “He is a goody-goody” or “There are certain things he won’t do.” The term now connotes something negative, restricted, and weak.

It was not ever thus. The English word ‘virtue’ comes from the Latin word, *virtus*, which means power. And virtus itself comes from the word *vir*, which one might roughly translate as a manly man. For most centuries in which English was spoken, ‘virtue’, keeping its original sense, meant an attractive combination of goodness with power. Morality combined with mastery. Sound principle and attractive execution. Flawless self-determination in pursuit of an appealing ideal. You can rely on a virtuous person. He’ll help you when you are in need. He’ll vindicate the cause of the oppressed. He’ll take care of the

'bad guys'. He's not merely someone with good intentions: he does what he professes, and he carries it out reliably.

To get a sense of the ancient notion of virtue, think Aragorn or Braveheart. And according to this notion, women are virtuous, similarly, in being exceptional and strong—not by zapping alien creatures with heavy guns (Sigourney Weaver), which is physical strength, but by being strong in character. It's hard to find characters in the movies or recent literature who are like this, perhaps because displays of that sort of virtue are more difficult to capture in a drama. But Mother Teresa, working tirelessly to give comfort to the dying poor: that's true 'manliness', and that's virtue.

On this old notion, virtue helps us get things done. What restricts and restrains, making someone weak, is its opposite, vice. To see how this might be so, consider different kinds of restrictions. Some are merely external and bodily: for instance, you cannot leave your room, because you are a prisoner and locked within. As a result, there are all kinds of things you simply cannot do, such as going for a bicycle ride or visiting your friend in another city. Similarly, there are bodily restrictions that are not external: because of infantile polio, your legs are paralyzed. And, as a result, you similarly cannot go for a bicycle ride, nor can you visit your friend without special help. Bad legs and a locked door can have much the same effect.

Other restrictions are internal but not bodily, in any obvious sense. Of these, some are the result of a lack of what we call 'skill'. You cannot climb that rock wall (suppose), but your friend can, because the routes up the rock wall have a minimum difficulty of 5.12, and, although your friend is a leading technical climber, you can climb no routes higher than 5.7. Your friend has a 'skill' which you lack; therefore, he can do anything that you can do, but more.

In much the same way, a lack of knowledge implies an internal restriction. If you do not know the combination of the safe, you will almost certainly never be able to open it. A coach who has studied and therefore knows the plays of the other team will be able to design a winning game plan for the championship match. Virtue, like knowledge or skill, removes restraints. A climber might be kept from climbing a rock wall out of overpowering fear as much as lack of skill: but if he has the virtue of courage, he climbs the wall in spite of any reasonable fears. Courage is like a skill, because it involves a mastery of fear, and it is like knowledge, because it involves a realistic sense of what things are truly frightening or not. That coach we mentioned, similarly, will never spend long hours studying films of the other team, if he is constantly distracted, or hates inconvenience, or would prefer to sink into a Lazy Boy with a cold beer in his hand. Some people are capable of concentrated effort over long periods of time, despite their bodies' wanting relaxation and rest. This capability is a virtue, traditionally called 'moderation' or 'self-mastery'.

The virtues are capacities that are generally useful for success in human endeavors, which involve a strengthening and resolve of something internal: call it the 'will'. A coward flees and avoids confrontation; a courageous person continues onward, nonetheless. An immoderate person never 'applies himself' to anything; a moderate person follows through in achieving his ambitions—at least, if he fails, it will be because of something from without, which created a truly necessitating impediment.

But what explains the impression that a virtuous person is someone, merely, who will not do certain things? There are two explanations. First, the extra things that a virtuous person can do, are often either taken for granted, and not attributed to his virtue at all, or they are not valued by someone who lacks virtue. We're likely to attribute the hardworking coach's efforts solely to his ambition, or to a desire for fame or fortune, without recognizing that someone can want fame all he wants, but he will be entirely incapable of winning it, without real virtue. And, as one is sinking back in one's easy chair with a cold beer in hand, suddenly effort, hard work, and sacrifice will seem quite beside the point. Second, it is always the case that a power implies a 'specialization', and a specialization implies necessarily that some things get ruled out. An athlete who commits himself to becoming a champion power lifter thereby has to give up eating donuts for lunch. You cannot have the one without giving up the other. A man who pledges lifelong devotion to one woman, *ipso facto* rules out devotion to other women. In every case in which a virtue makes someone give up X, there is some Y, which is much better than X, and which is such that it is not possible to have or to esteem both Y and X simultaneously.

Yet if the virtues are indeed about strength and success, then we see immediately why they are important for leadership. We have said that there is no such thing as leadership, only leadership in a domain. Yet, although this is true, still there are traits that a person must have, if he or she is to be a leader in any domain at all. And these are the virtues. Someone who turns and screams "Run away!" is not leading, even if he's the first and fastest at running away. And, although it is possible to bark commands from an easy chair, this would be authoritarianism, not leadership, which always involves 'leading by doing.' Pick the nastiest job; role up your sleeves; and start doing it: now you are in a position to tell someone else to do it also and be taken seriously.

Yet the virtues are necessary not simply for being a leader, but also for grasping the goal towards which one is leading others. After all, what is the point of leadership? What is its ultimate goal? Is the goal of a military captain, who is a leader, merely victory in battle, and nothing more than that? Is the goal of a student government president, who is undeniably a leader, nothing more than some new resolution or regulation? What are we aiming at, anyway? What is it all for? To answer this question, we must see that leadership is always over persons, not things. Thus, leadership necessarily involves not merely achieving things (victory, good legislation), but also, and primarily, shaping persons. At the end of the day, a true leader wants to be able to say both 'We achieved this', and 'We

became better persons in achieving this'. But people become better, only through growing in the virtues.

The ultimate goal of all leadership, then, is the virtue of the persons one is leading. No one ever led another to a goal that he did not himself see. It follows that no one can quite be a true leader, without having a definite idea of what the virtues are. And if knowledge of the virtues is itself a kind of virtue— indeed, the chief virtue (follow the ancients and call it 'wisdom'—then here again is something that one is restricted from doing, if one lacks the proper virtue.

Twelfth Essay: 'Globalization and a Call for University Student Leaders to Promote Human Dignity and Solidarity

By Professor Michael Pakaluk

"In today's complex situation, not least because of the growth of a globalized economy, the Church's social doctrine has become a set of fundamental guidelines offering approaches that are valid even beyond the confines of the Church: in the face of ongoing development these guidelines need to be addressed in the context of dialogue with all those seriously concerned for humanity and for the world in which we live (Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus Caritas Est,* 27)."

What is Globalization?

People speak about 'globalization' as if it was a single thing, but thPeople speak about 'globalization' as if it was a single thing, but the term actually denotes at least four large-scale changes: one is economic; another political; the third involves communication,

and the fourth is cultural.

Economic globalization is the process—now about 400 years old—by which the world has increasingly become a single economic market, while boundaries that divide nations have become less and less important, from an economic point of view. Economic globalization has its roots in the age of discovery, when explorers from Europe traveled to Asia, India, and the New World, paving the way for trade and colonization. The Industrial Revolution in the 19th century contributed to the interdependence of the economies of different nations, with colonies providing raw materials for the industries of more developed countries. In the early 20th century, especially because of the invention of means of rapid transportation (good road systems, air travel), and global communication (telephone and radio), business activity at a distance was made possible and was accelerated.

In the late 20th century, economic globalization pressed on at an even faster pace: the end of the Cold War led to an opening up of new markets and an exchange between free-market and formerly communist countries; moreover, multinational corporations arose which were now capable of viewing the entire world as their labor and consumer markets. And, finally, throughout the 20th century industrial nations ratified a series of trade agreements such as GATT (General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) and NAFTA (North American Free Trade Agreement), which served as catalysts for worldwide

economic interdependence.

Political globalization is the process by which an essentially Anglo-American model of democratic, constitutional government, as based on a declaration of human rights, has similarly spread throughout the world and effectively gained the support of the entire world. This process is also about 400 years old. It has its start in English parliamentary constitutionalism and political theory in the 17th century. It finds perhaps its best expression in the framing of the American Constitution.

This system of government is seen to 'work' in the remarkable success of the American experiment: economic development and political freedom, it seems, go hand-in-hand. British Imperialism in the 19th century propagated it throughout the world, at least in idea. And then it acquired tremendous prestige because of the leading role of the United States and Britain in the great wars of the 20th century. Indeed, at the end of those wars, the United Nations affirmed constitutional democracy through its Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

With the fall of the Soviet Empire in 1989 constitutional democracy on the American model, a 'free society', seems to be the only serious alternative—so much so that it, to some observers (most notably, Francis Fukiyama), it has appeared that, at least as regards political development, the human race has reached "the end of history". Any society which

refuses to 'join the game' along with other free societies condemns itself to stagnation and even irrelevance.

Globalization in communications is a considerably younger phenomenon. We might take it to with the invention of the electromagnet by William Sturgeon in 1825. Less than twenty years later, in 1844, Samuel B. Morse sends the first message by the newly invented telegraph (which relies on the electromagnet). In 1850, a telegraph cable is laid across the English Channel, bridging Britain and the Continent. In 1866, the first such cable is laid across the Atlantic Ocean. Thus, in less than forty years after Sturgeon's fundamental invention, businessmen in New York could communicate almost simultaneously with businessmen in London.

Progress in communication continues at no less rapid a pace in the years that follow. What we call the 'Internet' is simply the latest, although perhaps most dramatic, development in the same series. About 1 billion people (one-seventh of the world's population) now make use of this network of very fast computers linked by fiber-optic cables and can therefore, in principle, communicate with one another continuously and effortlessly. Because so much business is now accomplished through computers and on computers, and because national boundaries are meaningless for the Internet, this implies that about one billion people are, in theory, in a position to do business with one another immediately.

Globalization in culture looks to be a consequence of the other types of globalization. Ease of global communication means that some forms of culture will be spread quickly, and more widely, and prove more popular than other forms. As the Anglo-American model of a free society spreads throughout the world, so do corresponding cultural forms: because of the importance of freedom in that model of society, many of these cultural forms, which are superficially 'freer', appeal to pedestrian or even lower instincts and thrive unless hindered somehow through law. Again, businesses that function well in a global environment, such as the multinationals, will naturally succeed in promoting, through their products, their vision of a good life; and because business aims at efficiency, it will impose uniformity.

Thus, globalization in culture has been a process largely of homogenization and also 'Americanization': things become more uniform, as they become more like American popular culture. In part, this is helped by natural inclinations: people like to be like one another; people like what looks promising and new. But, as a result, a homogeneous and recent culture therefore displaces local and traditional culture. The spread throughout the world of MacDonalds and Starbucks is an icon of this homogenization. Moreover, high culture gets crowded out by low culture: after all, the leading uses of the Internet are not reading library books or listening to symphonies but rather pornography, gaming, and gossip.

Is Globalization Really All That New? And is it important?

If some of the trends referred to as 'globalization' stretch back 400 years, then is there really anything new about it? Is globalization simply a product of media hype? Perhaps here as elsewhere there really is 'nothing new under the sun.'

Although the continuity of the process is an historical fact, still, globalization seems to have increased recently to such an extent that a difference in degree has amounted to a difference in kind. We mentioned the fall of the Iron Curtain, and the recent entry of China and India into world markets (about two billion persons), made possible by the Internet. One might also add the continuing, even if precarious, domination of world political dynamics by a single superpower (a real, but flawed, pax Americana). These are genuine changes of a world-historical scale, which have unified the world to an extent not previously seen.

It is a general rule that an association gets constituted when people think that they form an association, because an association is a social reality. For instance, the 'Silent Majority' became something real when people thought of themselves as part of a silent majority and identified with others as being part of the same group. In the same way, the

Internet allows people to think of themselves as part of a single world community, and then, by that fact itself, such a community is constituted a 'global village' or 'flat world' (to use the term of *The New York Times* essayist and author Thomas Friedman).

"Today, the human race is involved in a new stage of history," the Council Fathers at Vatican II wrote, in their prescient Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Modern World *Gaudium et spes* (1965), "Profound and rapid changes are spreading by degrees around the whole world. Triggered by the intelligence and creative energies of man, these changes recoil upon him, upon his decisions and desires, both individual and collective, and upon his manner of thinking and acting with respect to things and to people. Hence, we can already speak of a true cultural and social transformation, one which has repercussions on man's religious life as well" (n. 4). "The circumstances of the life of modern man have been so profoundly changed in their social and cultural aspects," the document later states, "that we can speak of a new age of human history" (n. 54).

Globalization is important because of its prospects for good and ill on a large scale. It is especially important for a Catholic who is an American, because of the central role of the United States in globalization. The United States is the leading force of globalization in all its aspects: business; politics; communications; and culture. Indeed, given their tendencies to parochialism, Americans need to pay particular attention to globalization: "Let everyone consider it his sacred obligation to esteem and observe social necessities as

belonging to the primary duties of modern man," the Council Fathers wrote, "For the more unified the world becomes, the more plainly do the offices of men extend beyond particular groups and spread by degrees to the whole world" (*Gaudium et spes,* 30).

Globalization brings to our attention in a particular way the poor of the world. When our attention is trained simply on the business, politics, and culture within the borders of the United States, then the poor in other countries can easily appear to be the 'needy' that required 'relief efforts'. But after globalization, when so much of the world participates in and benefits from a world economy, it becomes unavoidable to ask: "Why aren't these people part of the game? Why does it seem that their condition is persistent? What steps should we take to help them?"

The 'Catholic' outlook of a believer implies a concern for the world as a whole. After all, 'Catholic' means 'universal': "The Church recognizes that worthy elements are found in today's social movements, especially an evolution toward unity, a process of wholesome socialization and of association in civic and economic realms." Why? Because: "The promotion of unity belongs to the innermost nature of the Church, for she is, thanks to her relationship with Christ, a sacramental sign and an instrument of intimate union with God, and of the unity of the whole human race" (*Gaudium et spes,* 42).

So an American Catholic has a twofold reason to be concerned about globalization: as an American, because of the leading role of the United States; and, as a Catholic, because the outlook of a Catholic tends naturally to take within its scope the entire world.

Is Globalization Basically Good or Bad?

Yet should a Catholic be in favor of globalization or opposed? Globalization is, after all, controversial. Critics of globalization—those who are 'anti-globalization'—argue that globalization:

* represents a revival of cut-throat, *laissez faire* capitalism;
* is an expression of political and cultural imperialism (especially on the part of the United States);
* widens the gap worldwide between rich and poor;
* harms workers in developed nations, because jobs get exported overseas; and,
* destroys the environment.

Someone might reply that anti-globalization is pointless, on the grounds that globalization is inevitable. Compare: it would not have made much sense to have been

opposed to the Industrial Revolution; that was going to happen, whether people opposed it or favored it.

Globalization may indeed be inevitable. But even then one might wonder whether it was a process that someone should basically affirm, but wish to guide or correct in some respects (how precisely it develops), or a process that someone ought to protest against and withdraw himself from—as, for instance, the Amish have done as regards industrialization.

One may distinguish between globalization as a means or instrument (a 'technology'), and globalization as the use of those means. Globalization as a means allows trade among people, easy communication, and free political association, all of which are good. It represents just one more instance of the growth of human technology, which a Catholic should affirm, without hesitation, as itself good, because it is a participation in the creative activity of God: "Throughout the course of the centuries, men have labored to better the circumstances of their lives through a monumental amount of individual and collective effort" (*Gaudium et spes,* 34).

To believers, this point is settled: considered in itself, this human activity accords with God's will. "For man, created to God's image, received a mandate to subject to himself

the earth and all it contains, and to govern the world with justice and holiness; a mandate to relate himself and the totality of things to Him Who was to be acknowledged as the Lord and Creator of all" (*Gaudium et spes*, 34). Even cultural unity throughout the world, the Council Fathers teach (although not a homogeneity!) ought to be welcomed, as making possible a greater community among persons, and shared cultural wealth: "The increase of commerce between the various nations and human groups opens more widely to all the treasures of different civilizations and thus little by little, there develops a more universal form of human culture, which better promotes and expresses the unity of the human race to the degree that it preserves the particular aspects of the different civilizations" (n. 54).

Nonetheless, largely because of the effects of original sin, every technology risks becoming subtly altered, from being something through which we exercise stewardship and 'govern the earth', into something, rather, that dominates us. So, the use to which globalization is put presents us with a moral challenge. But, as in other cases, the possibility of abuse does not negate the reality of goods that can be acquired and shared through globalization considered as a means: Abuse does not take away use.

Two Common Mis-Conceptions about Globalization

The phenomenon of 'outsourcing' captures a common complaint about, and misunderstanding of, globalization. Outsourcing is when relatively inexpensive workers in a foreign country perform rote operation, which is part of some service or the production of some good delivered in a domestic market, other than that in which the good is primarily provided. For instance, physicians in the United States provide medical care for patients in the United States. But part of providing medical care involves keeping accurate medical records. To do this, many physicians simply dictate, into a tape recorder, on a daily basis, any necessary additions to the medical records of their patients. Skilled transcriber-typists then later transcribe these dictated notes. Since this task is relatively rote, it can be exported. And, indeed, now there are large medical transcription centers established in cities such as Bangalore, India, where transcribers receive, over the Internet, the dictated notes of physicians and work all 'night' (which is 'day' for them) to have the transcribed notes entered into the medical files for the next day.

This is an attractive arrangement for American physicians and insurers, because transcribers in India work for only a fraction of the wages of transcribers in the United States. So then: is it good that the work is outsourced in this way, because it keeps down medical costs for American patients and helps Indian workers gain affluence, or bad, because American transcribers lose their jobs to Indian workers who are paid much worse wages than American workers would have been paid?

Economists regard that sort of outsourcing as a good example of what the English political philosopher, David Ricardo, referred to as 'comparative advantage'. Comparative advantage may be understood in terms of a riddle: "A man gets a smaller slice of pie, yet he gets more pie—how does he do it?" He can do so if the pie grows in size: a thin slice of a very large pie may contain more dessert than a big slice of a very small pie. Suppose that there is a successful economy and a struggling economy, but these two economies do not interact. The successful economy is so successful that it does everything better than the struggling economy. Even so, if the two economies joined together, to form a single market, and the successful economy allowed the struggling economy to do some of the jobs which previously it had done better, at the end of the day the successful economy would be even better off than before. Both economies together are stronger than either one separate; their common market constitutes a much larger 'pie'; and the successful economy, although now it has a smaller 'slice' (some percentage of work it had previously done is done somewhere else), is wealthier, because it takes its slice from this larger pie. That is 'comparative advantage'.

Globalization allows comparative advantage, and thus it is a mistake to presume that, because some American jobs are exported, the American economy will become weaker as a result. And obviously it is a mistake, anyway, to suppose that all jobs always last in all sectors of the economy: most New Yorkers are not farmers any longer; shoes are hardly made in Massachusetts anymore; and whaling ships are no longer built on the

shores of Long Island. It is necessary that jobs get shifted or disappear as an economy develops.

A second misconception involves the relationship between globalization and changes in culture. The homogenization of culture, and the dominance of low or crass forms of culture, is not inevitable, given other phenomena of globalization. Economies could become integrated, and communication improved, among people throughout the world, without its being the case that (say) Jennifer Aniston becomes an icon everywhere of feminine beauty and demeanor. It is no more necessary that Jennifer Aniston be popular in a place that has recently become integrated into the world economy, such as Bangalore, India, than that she be popular in Boise, Idaho, which has long been integrated into the world economy. The propagation of a culture requires people who want that culture. And the sort of culture someone wants depends on her moral outlook and habits: an R-rated movie (for instance) simply won't sell to a population which, for moral reasons, avoids R movies altogether.

As we saw earlier, the Council Fathers of Vatican II admonished us: "Let everyone consider it his sacred obligation to esteem and observe social necessities as belonging to the primary duties of modern man. For the more unified the world becomes, the more plainly do the offices of men extend beyond particular groups and spread by degrees to the whole world." Yet then they continued: "But this development cannot occur unless

individual men and their associations cultivate in themselves the moral and social virtues, and promote them in society; thus, with the needed help of divine grace men who are truly new and artisans of a new humanity can be forthcoming" (Gaudium et spes, 30). It is necessary to 'cultivate the moral and social virtues', so that the good that can be accomplished through the means of globalization is not overmatched by the bad that results from how it is received and used.

Two Real Threats in Globalization

But corresponding to each of the misunderstandings we have just identified are two real threats: the abuse of workers through un-moderated market forces, and the impoverishment of human culture. Both of these require primarily 'moral' and 'spiritual' solutions.

Recent globalization presents us with an economy that is not directly under any government. As we saw, globalization as an economic phenomenon is characterized especially by the diminishing importance of national boundaries and the lifting of government intervention in trade. A market, however, is a social unity, and every social unity has a common good and should somehow be guided to a common good. Since there is no true global government (the United Nations does not have the status of a world

government), then no authority has responsibility for this common good, and thus participants in the world economy are exposed to harm without remedy, especially the poor and weak.

It is true, as followers of Adam Smith argue, that a market, which is a natural reality, is generally governed by an 'invisible hand', which tends to distribute goods and services efficiently and for the long-term benefit of all. Nonetheless, all markets require some guidance and oversight with respect to abuses. Everyone acknowledges this even with regard to the best functioning markets, such as the American equity market, which requires the cautious oversight of regulating agencies such as the Securities and Exchange Commission, and the adjustments of the Federal Reserve Bank. The same is true of the global market.

It is not clear whether a global government would be the best solution. Sometimes—perhaps in most cases—governmental intervention in a market is worse than the cure. In any case, we will not soon see a global government, so the question is moot. In the absence of such a government, then it is all the more important that leading actors in the process of globalization 'cultivate the moral and social virtues'.

Aristotle distinguished 'intellectual virtues' from 'virtues of character'. Intellectual virtues are principles and insights that we grasp and are resolved to live by. Virtues of character are habits, dispositions, and inclinations, which constitute what we value and how we are prepared to act and to choose.

What would it mean to 'cultivate the moral and social virtues', then, in a way that was relevant to globalization? This would involve, first, study, with a view to understanding and affirming the basic principles of classical philosophy, natural law and 'Catholic social teaching'. Such study would include within its scope such things as understanding what is meant by 'subsidiarity', 'solidarity', 'service' and 'common good', and being resolved to live by the principles which promote these ideals.

The relevant virtues of character would be acquired by someone's coming to live in a certain way, especially in community with others (because no one succeeds in being virtuous on his own): for instance, by acquiring shared habits of life which implied, for instance, a correct valuing of money; by adopting a relatively simple lifestyle which showed an awareness of the poverty in which most human beings actually live; by cultivating dispositions to learn about and become familiar with the mores and language of other cultures; and by the practice of genuine friendship, which is the only sound basis for effective solidarity and goodwill.

Someone who had these 'moral and social virtues' would do business in the world economy in such a way as to show, in deeds, a genuine respect for the equal dignity of the human persons with whom she associated, even if these others were in a position of weakness and could in principle be exploited by her.

A Society in Which Young Men Know Folk Songs

The second real threat presented by globalization may perhaps best be explained by an anecdote. Several years ago, a group of American college students traveled to Mexico for the summer, to learn about Mexican culture and to do modest building projects for the poor. Mexican and American student volunteers lived together in a residence hall in Mexico City, sharing meals and recreational events scheduled for the free time.

One evening everyone gathered in a common room, and the Mexican students sang various folk songs that they all knew. The Americans did not quite know what to make of this: it was clear that they had never spent an evening simply sitting together with friends and singing songs. The Mexicans at one point took a break and asked the Americans to sing for them some American folk songs. The Americans were perplexed. They huddled together: "Does anyone know any folk songs?" "What can we sing?" "What do we all know?" Eventually it was decided that the only songs that everyone knew were Christmas

songs, and so, even though it had been a sweltering day in July, the Americans treated the Mexican students to all the verses of "Rudolph the Red Nose Reindeer" (sung rather disheartedly).

Recall that the Fathers of Vatican II envisioned a suitable world culture as one in which each local area has its own culture, which it then shares reciprocally with others: "The increase of commerce between the various nations and human groups opens more widely to all the treasures of different civilizations and thus little by little, there develops a more universal form of human culture, which better promotes and expresses the unity of the human race to the degree that it preserves the particular aspects of the different civilizations" (*Gaudium et spes,* 54).

Clearly, this sort of 'universal human culture' requires that each group preserve its own culture, and to preserve a culture presupposes actually possessing one in the first place. It is universal precisely through being a widespread sharing of what is particular to each. The threat of the homogenization of culture, then, and the wiping out of rich local cultures by superficial and transient culture, is properly answered by a vigorous promotion of local culture. Each person can battle the MacDonaldization of world culture by being more devoted to his home culture.

But how do we do this? What inspires a person to love his own culture in the first place? What ways of life are such that they are friendly to the preservation of historic and indigenous and local cultures? How must a person live for culture to be important to him at all? Culture derives from cultus and has its roots in religious worship as centered around family life.

Josef Pieper in "Leisure: The Basis of Culture" (1948) points out that a contemplative, religious outlook is the seedbed and nourishment of culture, and the family is the society in which we best live that sort of leisure. One might think, then, that religious devotion and strong families are the best safeguards of culture: and indeed, experience seems to confirm this. And, similarly, genuine culture is a safeguard of religion: "...the Church recalls to the mind of all that culture is to be subordinated to the integral perfection of the human person, to the good of the community and of the whole society. Therefore, it is necessary to develop the human faculties in such a way that there results a growth of the faculty of admiration, of intuition, of contemplation, of making personal judgment, of developing a religious, moral and social sense" (*Gaudium et spes,* 59).

We said earlier that the spread of superficial and homogeneous culture is only accidentally connected with globalization. Now we can say: a superficial and homogeneous culture is what results when globalization affects a society insofar as its religious commitment is vapid, or its constituent families are breaking down. To the extent

that Western societies become post-Christian, and to the extent that people in Western societies no longer center their lives in the shared activities of leisure in the family, to that extent they will become vulnerable to forms of culture that do not adequately magnify or express human dignity. A culture of "MacDonalds" will dominate—when it does—not because of globalization, but because of a prior moral decline, which is distinct from globalization. And the correct response is not to attack globalization, but rather to build up a society consisting of households in which, so to speak, people want to sing folk songs together.

G. K. Chesterton finishes "What's Wrong with the World" (1910) by tracing a just society back to one in which the dignity of the human person, as represented by a mother's joy in her daughter's beautiful hair, is the fixed point to which everything else adapts, even a bureaucratic love of efficiency:

"Now the whole parable and purpose of these last pages, and indeed of all these pages, is this: to assert that we must instantly begin all over again and begin at the other end. I begin with a little girl's hair. That I know is a good thing at any rate. Whatever else is evil, the pride of a good mother in the beauty of her daughter is good. It is one of those adamantine tendernesses that are the touchstones of every age and race. If other things are against it, other things must go down. If landlords and laws and sciences are against it, landlords and laws and sciences must go down.

"With the red hair of one she-urchin in the gutter I will set fire to all modern civilization. Because a girl should have long hair, she should have clean hair; because she should have clean hair, she should not have an unclean home: because she should not have an unclean home, she should have a free and leisured mother; because she should have a free mother, she should not have an usurious landlord; because there should not be an usurious landlord, there should be a redistribution of property; because there should be a redistribution of property, there shall be a revolution.

"That little urchin with the gold-red hair, whom I have just watched toddling past my house, she shall not be lopped and lamed and altered; her hair shall not be cut short like a convict's; no, all the kingdoms of the earth shall be hacked about and mutilated to suit her. She is the human and sacred image; all around her the social fabric shall sway and split and fall; the pillars of society shall be shaken, and the roofs of ages come rushing down, and not one hair of her head shall be harmed".

Similarly, we shall 'set fire to all harmful globalization' not by actual lootings and burnings, but if we look for, and put into practice, those conditions of life which make it easy for a family to gather together after a home-made dinner, shut off the television, turn off the Internet, put aside business worries, and enjoy sharing simple stories and songs

about God, neighbor, and country.

What Should I Do About Globalization?

Globalization is not the sort of thing that someone is assured of dealing with appropriately by simply letting things happen as he will. Although globalization is a natural development of human technology, we have no natural affections that go along with globalization. When parents have a child, they naturally feel a strong affection for their offspring. Siblings and even cousins, if they spend time together, will develop spontaneously a natural affection for one another. But there is nothing about seeing someone's screen name on a computer monitor that will lead us to have friendly affection for him. (In fact, the importance of the appearance of anonymity in cyberspace is well known. That is why people do and say things on their computer, which they would never say or do if they took themselves to be in the company of others.)

Consequently, it is necessary that we develop the habit of dealing with others globally as persons who are equal to us in dignity and who should be treated fairly, with a view to friendship. This 'habit' is also known as the virtue of solidarity. Like any virtue, it needs to be acquired by actions that are typical of the virtue. The best way of acquiring the virtue of solidarity, is to practice it. Book learning is important for solidarity--we need to

understand what justice and the common good are, for instance--but also practice and 'training' in living a life marked by solidarity and friendship with citizens of other cultures and nations.

This is why the North American Educational Initiatives Foundation (www.naeif.org) was formed: in order to provide university students with opportunities to acquire the virtue of solidarity, by living it. Through its North American Leadership Institute model and other cross-border intercultural programs, the foundation brings together student leaders from Canada, Mexico and the United States to study the principles of citizenship, human dignity, justice, and solidarity, and to put these ideals into practice on campus and, later on, in their everyday lives and careers.

"The more unified the world becomes, the more plainly do the offices of men extend beyond particular groups and spread by degrees to the whole world" (*Gaudium et spes,* 30). If you are an ambitious and idealistic North American university leader, we invite you to consider enrolling in the North American Leadership Institute and similar programs so as to grow in your sense of leadership and responsibility that 'extends beyond particular groups'. Such activities provide an invaluable opportunity for you to acquire the virtue of solidarity, so necessary for recognizing and safeguarding the dignity of all people in this era of, at times, dehumanizing globalization.