

Responding to “Transgenderism” Part I

The Rt. Rev. Paul C. Hewett

THE THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

In April 2011 Mother Teresa, now St. Teresa of Calcutta, gave the commencement address at Harvard University. Half the audience was electrified and spellbound by what she said. The other half were outraged and furious. The first half were uplifted in hearing the truth; the other half were followers of the great lie. The subject of Mother Teresa’s address was a surprise to everyone: chastity, based on the teaching of the universal Church in Scripture and Tradition. In human sexuality, chastity is what matters, whether a person is married or single. Our bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Cor. 6:19) and God made us, male and female, for union as one flesh in Christ. The man sacramentally represents Christ, and the woman sacramentally represents the Church. More than anything else on earth, the union of man and woman in holy Matrimony, with the children they have, sacramentally represents the innermost life of the most holy Trinity, a life which is supremely fruitful, whose heartbeat is love. God intends the union of man and woman in marriage to represent the union of the two natures in His incarnate Son, divine and human, united in one Person. Everything the heavenly Father made is meant to be summed up and placed under the headship of His Son. This is the great truth of the new creation. Everything was created through the Son, and everything is to be re-created through Him in the Holy Spirit.

The great lie is that we can redefine human nature apart from Christ, the divine Logos, the Father’s blueprint for the cosmos, and for each person. Ideologies are part of the great lie. The word “ideology” means the logos of fallen man’s ideas. Man without Christ comes up with ideas that do not fit the created order, the only reality there is. They do not work. They are lies, based on an intellectual swindle. They involve death on a massive scale. And that’s what we have today with the false narratives about gender and transgenderism and homosexuality: lies spread on a massive scale by a majority of the elites in societies that are involved in fashionable self-loathing and a culture of death.

Pope John Paul II’s Wednesday catechetical lectures were put together as a book, *The Theology of the Body*, perhaps his greatest gift to the universal Church, so profound that it will take fifty years to unpack it all. The human body, male and female, proclaims the Gospel, the nuptial love between Christ and the Church (Eph. 5:21-33), through which salvation is proclaimed to all the earth. The masculine and the feminine are each sacramental. Everything

about a man’s and a woman’s body is sacramental. The man, the priest, offers to God the sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving for his wife and family. Through the man God then bestows love and communion on the spouse. She receives that love and multiplies it and bears fruit for a new cell in the Body of Christ.

A man’s forfeiture of his God-given role is a cowardly refusal to accept masculine responsibility. A woman’s refusal leads to the bareness, the emptiness and sterility that now constitutes the demographic nihilism of most of so many of today’s societies. One sign of the demonic is life-going-in-the-wrong-direction, unravelling downwards, down the drain, into emptiness and meaninglessness and ever-less-being. When men and women deny who God made them to be (and God did not intend that we should have a choice), they are de-sacramentalizing the world — denying that what God made has sacramental significance. A sacramental vision of the universe is what frees man to return creation (including the masculine and the feminine) “to the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit” (I Chron. 29:14). This is the Biblical worldview.

Any worldview that fails to base itself on what is real and true and natural will consume itself, like a serpent devouring its own body until it is munching on its own head. “Unnatural” sexuality is based on a colossal lie: that I can make up my own reality or that God made a mistake when He made me the way He did. Rod Dreher recently wrote a book called *Live Not By Lies* in which he warns us about how societies based on lies become totalitarian. What is unnatural and illusory can only be sustained by endless regulations severely enforced, with no dissent, no different points of view. Everyone must mouth the same slogans or be eliminated.

Satan is now playing his last hand on the world stage. He works frantically to cast aside the sacramental vision of life which saturates the entire Bible. He works to promote the great lie that Jesus is not God-in-the-flesh, or that there is life apart from Him. We are headed for some difficult times. We are in them now. But we do not cringe or press the panic button. We remember and trust that as the difficulties increase, so does God’s anointing upon us. As the going gets harder, the anointing gets stronger. So “Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong. Let all your things be done with charity” (2 Cor. I 6:13-14).