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# The Uniqueness of Persons in the Life and Thought of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II, with Emphasis on His Indebtedness to Max Scheler

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## Chapter 3

# **The Uniqueness of Persons in the Life and Thought of Karol Wojtyła/Pope John Paul II, with Emphasis on His Indebtedness to Max Scheler**

*Peter J. Colosi*

In a way, his [Pope John Paul II's] undisputed contribution to Christian thought can be understood as a profound meditation on the person. He enriched and expanded the concept in his encyclicals and other writings. These texts represent a patrimony to be received, collected and assimilated with care.<sup>1</sup>

- Pope Benedict XVI

## **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the writings of Karol Wojtyła, both before and after he became Pope John Paul II, one finds expressions of gratitude and indebtedness to the philosopher Max Scheler. It is also well known that in his *Habilitationsschrift*,<sup>2</sup> Wojtyła concluded that Max Scheler's ethical system cannot cohere with Christian ethics. This state of affairs gives rise to the question: which of the ideas of Scheler did Wojtyła embrace and which did he reject? And also, what was Wojtyła's overall attitude towards and assessment of Scheler?

A look through all the works of Wojtyła reveals numerous expressions of gratitude to Scheler for philosophical insights which Wojtyła embraced and built upon, among them this explanation of his sources for *The Acting Person*,

Granted the author's acquaintance with traditional Aristotelian thought, it is however the work of Max Scheler that has been a major influence upon his reflection. In my overall conception of the person envisaged through the mechanisms of his operative systems and their variations, as presented here, may indeed be seen the Schelerian foundation studied in my previous work.<sup>3</sup>

I have listed many further examples in the appendix to this paper. It must, however, also be clearly stated that there are ideas in Scheler which Wojtyła rejected as false, for example, Scheler's thesis that moral obligation dissolves when a person reaches the heights of love.<sup>4</sup>

In general, after looking through the texts where Wojtyła mentions Scheler or has clearly absorbed and/or developed his thought, it becomes

clear that his overall attitude is one of respect for a master from whom he learned much. And this fact is not contradicted by noting that he also rejected forcefully certain errors he perceived in Scheler's thought. A thorough cataloguing of the Schelerian theses embraced by Wojtyła would be a helpful addition to scholarship on both authors. I have indicated some directions in which that work could proceed in my appendix, and some readers may wish to look there first.

My main goal here, however, will be to focus on one single theme in Scheler that Wojtyła embraced. That theme is the uniqueness of persons. I will begin by first pointing to a distinction between two dimensions of the being of persons which are the sources of their worth: their rational nature and their uniqueness. Then I will cite some texts of Wojtyła in which it becomes clear that he embraced the idea of the uniqueness of persons. My idea is not that Wojtyła wrote an explicit philosophical development of Scheler's individual value essence. Rather, I mean to show that Scheler's development of individual persons and love between persons so impressed itself on Wojtyła that it is expressed in striking ways in many of his writings and also when he describes his encounters with people.<sup>5</sup>

I base this conclusion on two premises. The first is the idea that personal uniqueness is a real dimension of personal being and a deep source of the dignity of persons, and thus a dimension of which a man whose life was spent meeting and serving people would have been keenly aware. Though often neglected in philosophy, two authors have developed this dimension in philosophically original ways: Max Scheler and John F. Crosby. One of my goals will be to express this aspect of persons. I will then point out that Wojtyła reveals a profound awareness of personal uniqueness in his pastoral and theological writings and in some metaphysical assertions in his philosophical texts, even if it was not a primary theme. My second premise is that if one author deeply absorbs another, this influence is lasting and can be detected in many ways. In Scheler's thought the uniqueness of persons is a primary theme (though, as I shall show, he uses different terminology for "uniqueness"), and Wojtyła did deeply absorb Scheler's thought. George Weigel has provided insightful and thorough historical evidence of the lasting influence of Scheler on Wojtyła.<sup>6</sup> After discussing these premises, I will proceed to confront a Thomistic-based objection that was raised when I presented this paper. To conclude I will present an application to foundational ethical questions in the sphere of current debates in health care and bio-ethics. This last section will entail a consideration of the role of the affective sphere in gaining ethical knowledge, and suggest a Schelerian/Wojtylian contribution to this field of contemporary ethical debate.

## **RATIONAL NATURE AS A SOURCE OF THE WORTH OF PERSONS**

Much of Western philosophy elevates human beings above all other entities that inhabit the earth. This lofty worth is presented as the foundation

of moral laws that forbid the violation of human beings, such as using them in various ways as if they were mere means to some end. Western philosophy has maintained that the metaphysical basis for this superior worth which grounds those laws is the rational nature of human beings: any being possessing a rational nature is deemed to be worthy of absolute respect. The exact nature of the rationality possessed by humans differs somewhat among the philosophers who have defended it, but perhaps a few key features could be identified. A rational nature includes the ability to transcend oneself in such a way as to relate meaningfully to the whole world; we perform these acts of self-transcendence through our intellect, will, and affections. Thus, of the beings on earth, only fellow humans can follow a lecture, make judgments about it and ask questions after it. Only humans participate in the moral life by bringing into being actions and states of soul that can be called morally good or evil,<sup>7</sup> and only human beings can be moved and then respond with the deepest of emotions to, for example, beautiful works of art and nature. Animals cannot engage in discussion, they cannot be said to be morally virtuous or vicious and they do not have an aesthetic perception of the beauty of a sunset. Any being with these capabilities reveals itself to possess a rational nature, and is thus deemed to hold a higher rank than beings which lack these capabilities.<sup>8</sup>

Another dimension of this account of the worth of persons that runs through the Western tradition is based on the Aristotelian distinctions of substance/accident and potency/act. Based on these distinctions is the view that a human being in a state of dreamless sleep retains in actual being its immaterial soul, along with its intellectual, volitional and affective faculties, while retaining consciousness in potency only. Not only does this line of thought maintain that humans in dreamless sleep still have their souls, but so do other living humans in various states of diminished/non-consciousness.<sup>9</sup>

I think that Western philosophy is correct in its assertion that such a rational nature raises the worth of a being to a level that grounds exceptionless moral norms to respect that being,<sup>10</sup> and that Western philosophy has produced an accurate philosophical account of many features of that rational nature.

### **WOJTYŁA'S INDEBTEDNESS TO SCHELER'S PERSONALISM ABOVE ALL OTHER FORMS OF PERSONALISM**

In the texts in the appendix, and in ones that will follow shortly, when Wojtyła speaks of his indebtedness to personalism, he either mentions only Scheler by name, or gives a list of names and always puts Scheler's first. One might then be led to think that Wojtyła was drawn to some philosophical insights in Scheler which were not present in the other personalists. Indeed, there is more than one such idea, and the individuality of persons (what I am calling their "uniqueness") is certainly a significant one. John Crosby has recently shown that none of the personalists who write about individuality mean by it what Scheler meant:

Scheler does not posit the antithesis of "person" and

“individual” that is found in many personalist authors, such as Maritain, Mounier, and (even if he is not usually reckoned to the personalists) Hans Urs von Balthasar. Maritain lets “individual” express the material extensive aspect of man, with the result that “person” expresses the spiritual aspect of man.<sup>11</sup> Mounier lets “individual” express a meaning more distinctly moral, namely the grasping, acquisitive, self-assertive side of man, with the result that “person” expresses the generous self-giving side of man.<sup>12</sup> Von Balthasar lets “individual” express man as an instance of human nature, with the result that “person” expresses man as incommunicable, unrepeatable.<sup>13</sup> But in each case “individual” forms some kind of antithesis to “person” and it expresses something lower in human beings, something in contrast to what is highest and best in them, which receives the designation “person.” Now, as usual as this antithesis is among personalist authors, Scheler knows nothing of it: individuality for him is nothing but an aspect of personhood. When he entitles a section of his *Formalismus* “Person und Individuum,” he means to suggest no least antithesis; on the contrary, “*Individuum*” expresses for him the very heart of “Person.”<sup>14</sup>

Three questions arise from this reading. What exactly does it mean to assert that *individuum* is the very heart of person? Exactly how does one express the meaning of this view as distinct from all other personalists? Can it be seen from his writings that Wojtyła picked up on and embraced exactly this Schelerian understanding of personal individuality?

## THE UNIQUENESS OF PERSONS<sup>15</sup>

I devote my very rare free moments to a work that is close to my heart and devoted to the metaphysical sense and mystery of the person. It seems to me that the debate today is being played on that level. The evil of our times consists in the first place in a kind of degradation, indeed a pulverization, of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person. This evil is even much more of the metaphysical order than of the moral order. To this disintegration, planned at times by atheistic ideologies, we must oppose, rather than sterile polemics, a kind of “recapitulation” of the inviolable mystery of the person. I firmly believe that the truths attacked compel with more urgency the recognition of those who are often the involuntary victims of it...<sup>16</sup>

This text of Wojtyła reveals his absorption of the idea of individual

persons from Scheler, and I will draw on it throughout the discussion which follows.

I would like to begin to answer the questions posed at the end of the last section by presenting a simple two-part definition of philosophy. The first part of philosophy consists in getting a good look at reality, a clear perception of some dimension of reality. Once that is achieved, the second part of philosophy consists in formulating assertions that accurately express that dimension of reality which one has clearly seen. This is what philosophers are supposed to do.

Following this schema, our first approach to the uniqueness of persons will be to notice, as Scheler does, that while this quality *can* be seen clearly, it is impossible to perform the second part of philosophy on it. That is to say, while one can see and know the uniqueness of another person, there are no words that can be spoken which would capture or express that uniqueness.<sup>17</sup> Since I have just asserted that no words can express the uniqueness which is the main topic of my paper, you may be wondering how I will be able to continue; I am writing words, yet I just said that words cannot express that about which I intend to write.

I will begin, then, by pointing out exactly what this uniqueness is not. I can express using words that outline what the uniqueness is *not*, and then, by negating the definition thus outlined, lead the reader to see what uniqueness actually *is*. The uniqueness of persons is often designated by referring to it as their “incommunicability.” For the purposes of this paper the terms “uniqueness” and “incommunicability” may be considered interchangeable. Notice that ‘*in*-communicable’ is itself a word that points to something by negating its opposite.<sup>18</sup> It functions in the same way that im-mortal does. For whatever reason, we have taken to pointing to “that intensity of life which is so strong that it can never be extinguished” by using a term that literally means “not-dead,” or “not able to be dead.” Incommunicability points to a certain profound dimension of being, uniqueness, with a word that simply means “not-common.” And indeed, Scheler’s definition of the individual value essence of a person is expressly set by him against the notion of a universal essence which is common in the sense that it can be instantiated in more than one exemplar:

it is necessary to give a more precise definition of what we understand by *individual-personal value essence*....  
*Essence*, as we mentioned earlier, has nothing to do with *universality*...there are essences that are given only in one particular individual. And for this very reason it makes good sense to speak of an individual essence and also the individual value-essence of a person.<sup>19</sup>

It must be noted that the word “incommunicable” looks as though it could mean “unable to be communicated,” however, the incommunicable in persons is that in them which actually makes possible the deepest and most

meaningful forms of communication.<sup>20</sup> For this reason, the choice of the term “incommunicable” could be seen as an unfortunate choice, since it leads so easily to such confusion. Therefore, I would like to give three possible meanings of the term and assert that two of the meanings of “incommunicable” are helpful in bringing us to an awareness of the uniqueness of persons, while the third leads to error:

*Meaning 1:* The incommunicable is that within a person which is *not common*, in the sense that other persons could not have this within their being also. I have a will and an intellect, and so do you, therefore those features are common. But you are unique in your person, and unrepeatable, in a way that no one else can ever be you. This meaning of incommunicable is helpful in understanding personal uniqueness because it gets at the idea of “not-common.”

*Meaning 2:* The incommunicable in persons cannot be expressed in words and sentences. While someone who loves you *is* able to grasp, know and love you in your very uniqueness, they could never utter a sentence which would capture or express that uniqueness. This meaning of incommunicable is also helpful in understanding personal uniqueness, because it gets at a narrow sense of “not able to be communicated,” namely, with words.

*Meaning 3:* The incommunicable is that which is unable to be known by anyone else or communicated to anyone else. This meaning leads straight to error. The mere fact that no words can express the uniqueness of a person whom you love in no way implies that you do not know and love their very uniqueness – it only means that that which you know and love in them is ineffable or unutterable. It would be absurd to conclude that just because words cannot be found to express something you know, that you therefore do not know it. This meaning leads to error because it takes the full and broadest meaning of “communication” and negates its possibility at all in interpersonal relating with respect to personal uniqueness.<sup>21</sup>

As I have already suggested, love is the epistemological vehicle through which we know the uniqueness of others. In the realist phenomenology of Scheler and others, it was thematized that depending on the object known, a different faculty was needed. Thus, for colors, one needed the faculty of sight; for sounds, hearing; for mathematical principles, the intellect; and for values, Scheler would say, feelings.<sup>22</sup> This means that Scheler holds the view that love has a cognitive dimension. Normally one conceives of love as a fullness of feeling welling up in the soul of a lover which is then expressed outwardly as a *response* to the beloved. While this is a correct characterization, love seems also to have a *receptive* dimension, in which knowledge comes to a person and deepens because of love. One normally thinks of the intellect as the faculty whose primary function it is to cognize reality.<sup>23</sup> Not only the intellect,

however, but also the heart, or the feelings, have a cognitive dimension.<sup>24</sup> And it is only through loving another person that his or her uniqueness is known or encountered by us. Joshua Miller describes this particular form of affective cognition in the following way:

In the first place, coming to know the unique person is at the same time a gaining of insight into her *individual value essence*. This essence comes to us as a distinct feeling in the heart; the person impresses herself on our heart in a way that no one else does. It also often comes to us in our imagination; we literally picture the person, especially her face, as a kind of incarnation of this *individual value essence*.<sup>25</sup>

### THE DIFFICULTY OF GRASPING PERSONAL UNIQUENESS AS A SOURCE OF A PERSON'S WORTH

In an insightful essay<sup>26</sup> offered shortly after the death of John Paul II, George Weigel cites the line in the letter to de Lubac about the pulverization of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person, and lists the horrors of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, many of which Wojtyła himself experienced or witnessed, as the grim realization of this pulverization. Yet, in the next paragraph Weigel misses the point of the line he quoted by passing right over the notion of “fundamental uniqueness”:

Wojtyła's counter-proposal was...built on the conviction that God had made the human creature in His image and likeness, with intelligence and freewill, a creature capable of knowing the good and freely choosing it. That, John Paul insisted in a vast number of variations on one great theme, was the true measure of man – the human capacity, in cooperation with God's grace, for heroic virtue.

I would first of all whole-heartedly agree that all of these features raise the worth of human persons to the level which grounds absolute respect. But none of the items named by Weigel seem to capture Wojtyła's meaning with the term “fundamental uniqueness.” It is as if Weigel thinks that Wojtyła intends “unique” to refer to our entire species as unique over all other species of created things, because everyone in our unique species can do these acts, while animals, plants and rocks cannot. But Wojtyła referred to the fundamental uniqueness of *each* person, i.e., from *every other* person *within* our species. And the features as such listed by Weigel are not the person, nor exactly that which we love in another. When a loved one dies, we do not mourn that an intellect or a free will is gone, which all other people have too, but that this unrepeatable person is gone. Crosby expresses it thus:



The loss of any person would not be a negligible loss on the grounds that so many persons remain, but would be an almost infinitely great loss, as if the only person in existence had been lost.<sup>27</sup>

This is why people who have lost a loved one are in a sense inconsolable for the rest of their lives. Of course we miss the intellect, will and laugh of this very person, and the reason for that is because these common features (intellect, will, risibility) of persons “appear in their full individuality...on the basis of being rooted in the person. We can say that it is this person who in a certain sense communicates full individuality to the qualities.”<sup>28</sup> A laugh is unique because it is “informed” by the unique person who is laughing. And Scheler says that

[t]he love which has moral value is not that which pays loving regard to a person for having such and such qualities, pursuing such and such activities, or for possessing talents, beauty, or virtue; it is that love which incorporates these qualities, activities and gifts into its object, because they belong to that *individual person*.<sup>29</sup>

Wojtyła, it seems to me, has in mind this dimension of persons in his letter to Henri de Lubac, not the common features of our human personal nature.<sup>30</sup>

## UNDERSTANDING PERSONAL UNIQUENESS BY EXAMINING A THOMISTIC-BASED OBJECTION<sup>31</sup>

After this paper was presented, two conference participants expressed an objection which I understood in the following way. They approved of the discussion of the uniqueness of persons, even in the way I presented it, but they insisted that I refer to that dimension of personal being as the *esse* of persons, and that I not refer to it as the essence of a person (Scheler, as already noted, calls it the “individual value essence”). They seemed to maintain the view that essence is always common and that existence is the sole source of uniqueness and individuality.

Introducing a collection of texts of St. Thomas on metaphysics, W. Norris Clark, S.J. encapsulates what I take to be the core Thomistic metaphysical assertion concerning *esse* represented in their objection:

“A being,” (used without qualification) means for him *that which is*, in the real order. The *that which* signifies what a thing is, its essence or nature, responding to the question, “*What* is it?” The *is* signifies the act of existing, or active presence, which posits the *what* in the real order...responding to the question, “*Is* it?”, or “Does it *exist*?”...This inner act

of existence – which St. Thomas calls the *esse* or “to-be” of a being, that which makes a being precisely to be a *be-ing* – is not a *what*, an essence or nature, making a being to be *this kind* of being. It is, rather, an *active presence* which posits the entire essence, with all its properties, in the real order of actual existence, making it actually to be what it is.<sup>32</sup>

I do not disagree with this account of *esse*, and if one considers the case of multiple objects of the same type that seem identical in every way, then I would agree with the assertion that the *esse* of such beings also fully accounts for the uniqueness of those beings. Consider multiple schoolroom desk chairs, for example, all lined up next to each other in rows. They share everything in common besides their own instantiation; that is, all the chairs are stamped with the same general essence of chairness (simply put, each is stamped with the blueprint for that model of chair), but each chair actualizes that essence separately. Each chair has its own unique existence (*esse*). In this case it is true to say that the source of uniqueness is the *esse* of each chair which is making it be this real chair and not any of the other chairs.<sup>33</sup> And while the essence or “plan/blueprint” for the chairs which is really present in each of them is “unique” in the sense that it is *in* that one there as concretely instantiated and *in* this other one here,<sup>34</sup> ultimately we would not rightly insist on unique essences in the full sense, since they all look identical.<sup>35</sup>

But notice that the bearer of the “worth”<sup>36</sup> of a chair is not its uniqueness, but rather that about it which makes it the *same* as all the other chairs, namely its essence. Of course I mean the really existing essence of the chair which has “an *active presence* which posits the entire essence,” as Fr. Clark put it. However, the focal point of our interest is primarily those essential features of the real chair, and this can be shown by asking what we do with a broken chair? Toss it in the garbage and take one that works, despite its uniqueness as being *this* chair and no other. Why? Because the focal point of the “worth” of the chair is not what is unique about that chair, but rather what is common, its chairness.

Consider another question about a schoolroom chair.<sup>37</sup> If I want to sit and can see only one chair in the room, then that chair has a great deal of importance for me. If, however, upon entering the room I see 700 such chairs, then suddenly the particular one diminishes greatly from the point of view of “worth.” Beings whose “worth” comes primarily from their common traits are relativized in that worth when placed next to many more exemplars of the same type. While having *esse* is necessary if a person wants actually to sit in a chair, that is as far as it goes, and any existing chair will have the same “worth” in fulfilling that function.

But consider a person, and it is best to consider one whom you love dearly. If you place that person next to 700 or seven million other people, their worth does not drop to an insignificant level, like a chair next to 700 other chairs. It does not drop at all. Now someone may object in the following way, “ah, but the reason it does not drop is because you asked me to think of

a person I love, and their worth doesn't seem to drop *to me* because I love them." I would agree in one sense and strongly disagree in another. If it is meant that your love for that person is the complete source of their worth such that if you did not love them, then they would be worthless, then I would strongly disagree.<sup>38</sup> If, on the other hand, it is only meant that since you love this person you have a better insight into their worth than people who do not love them, but that their worth is inside them regardless of your love, then I would agree.

Your love makes you see that their worth is not relativized by numerous instantiations of human nature put next to them. The reason for this is that the focal point of another person's worth, unlike the chairs, *is* their uniqueness. Love is inspired by catching a glimpse of the uniqueness of another person, and once so inspired, in turn allows for a deeper and clearer vision of that person's uniqueness, which in turn inspires more love, and so on. But your love for them is not the foundational metaphysical cause of their uniqueness, it just gives you a clear vision of their uniqueness. Once you see it, then you also see that it is not diminished in its worth and preciousness when that person is standing next to seven million other people. Chairs, on the other hand, *are* so diminished. The deepest source of the "worth" of a chair is precisely what it has exactly in common with all the other chairs, while the deepest source of *worth* in a person is precisely what he or she does not have in common with anyone else. For this reason all statements such as "what is so important about uniqueness, every stone is unique?" utterly miss the mark.<sup>39</sup> The difference between unique persons and unique stones is so radical that I would almost hesitate to use the term "analogy" to describe the similarity.<sup>40</sup>

Another way to get the same idea across is to ask why it is that you love this person. The answer is not a common trait. You do not love a person because they have the faculty of intellect, or will, or because they have five senses. After making a new friend or falling in love, no one exclaims: "Guess what?! I met another functioning intellect today! I met another being with a free will!" Rather, one says, "I met a new person today!" Of course, a person expresses himself or herself to you through an intellect and a free will, but the person is not reducible to those faculties,<sup>41</sup> nor to those faculties actualized through *esse*. There is something utterly unique about each person, which is indeed expressed through traits that are common to all persons and intimately united with those traits, but which is not accounted for by listing those traits. This dimension of the person is individual in its very content, and therefore cannot be duplicated in another person. It is in the strictest sense *unique*. It is this unrepeatable, utterly unique, essential content of a person that Crosby refers to with the term "incommunicable," and Scheler refers to as the *individual value essence*. Pope John Paul II was also clearly referring to this uniqueness when he made the following statement wherein he credited his awareness of uniqueness to his study of personalism (and we know that the personalist he studied above all others is Max Scheler):

It is difficult to formulate a systematic theory on how to relate to people, yet I was greatly helped in this by the study of personalism during the years I devoted to philosophy. Every human being is an individual person and therefore I cannot program *a priori* a certain type of relationship that could be applied to everyone, but I must, so to speak, learn it anew in every case...It is very important for a bishop to have a rapport with his people and to know how to relate to them well. In my own case, significantly, I never felt that I was meeting an excessive number of people. Nonetheless, I was always concerned to safeguard the personal quality of each relationship. Every person is a chapter to himself. I always acted with this conviction, but I realize that it is something you can't learn. It is simply there, because it comes from within.<sup>42</sup>

The Pope did not say here that we need to focus on the rational nature of each person we meet, nor did he say we ought to look with awe to their act of being which gives that nature reality - of course, we should do these things too - but that is not the import of this quote. Notice that he even utilizes the Schelerian language of "individual person." And the last line reminds one of the ineffable uniqueness of each person: why couldn't you "learn about" a will, or a will actualized through *esse*? The point is, you *can* learn about those, and even form a systematic theory about them, which has been done. But he says here that you cannot do that with persons.

We see that Scheler's phrase "individual person" (noted in the text of Scheler quoted above<sup>43</sup>) was taken over here by John Paul. In both texts there is the idea that love is not properly directed at what is common, but at what is unique, which is the individual person. This idea is exactly that which makes Scheler so very different from all other personalists: *individuum*, as Crosby rightly pointed out, is the very heart of personhood, and John Paul II uses language which reveals his absorption of this Schelerian insight here. The quote above indicates that this was the guiding focus in his meetings with people.<sup>44</sup>

There are more texts which confirm this very same Schelerian influence on Wojtyła's approach to persons. Consider the following quote, especially its last two sentences:

...after my priestly ordination I was sent to Rome to complete my studies...These studies resulted in my doctorate on Saint John of the Cross and then the dissertation on Max Scheler which qualified me for University teaching: specifically I wrote on the contribution which Scheler's phenomenological type of ethical system can make to the development of moral theology. This research benefited me greatly. My previous Aristotelian-Thomistic formation was enriched by the

phenomenological method, and this made it possible for me to undertake a number of creative studies. I am thinking above all of my book *The Acting Person*. In this way I took part in the contemporary movement of philosophical personalism, and my studies were able to bear fruit in my pastoral work. I have often noticed how many of the ideas developed in these studies have helped me in my meetings with individuals and with great numbers of the faithful during my apostolic visits. My formation within the cultural horizon of personalism also gave me a deeper awareness of how each individual is a unique person. I think that this awareness is very important for every priest.<sup>45</sup>

And consider this striking text as well:

If we celebrate so solemnly the birth of Jesus, we do it so as to bear witness to the fact that each person is someone, unique and unrepeatable. If humanity's statistics and arrangement, its political, economic and social systems as well as its simple possibilities, do not come about to assure man that he can be born, exist and work as a unique and unrepeatable individual, then bid 'farewell' to all assurances. For Christ and because of Him, the individual is always unique and unrepeatable; someone eternally conceived and eternally chosen; someone called and given a special name.<sup>46</sup>

John Paul II speaks here of a unique and unrepeatable someone eternally conceived, chosen, called and named. He does not speak of a human nature given inner actuality and nothing more. He speaks of a unique individual given inner actuality.<sup>47</sup>

## **THE UNIQUENESS OF PERSONS AS INTRINSIC – THEOLOGICAL TEXTS OF JOHN PAUL II**

Considering together the Pope's Christmas reflections on the unique individuality of each person and his earlier letter to de Lubac stating that the evil of the pulverization of the fundamental uniqueness of each person is much more of the metaphysical than of the moral order, a call emerges to understand and to "recapitulate" the metaphysical status of this uniqueness. Let us, then, without discounting its mystery, attempt to probe it more deeply.

An all-powerful God could make all the skin cells and body cells of two people to be identical, and could make all of their experiences the same. Even if God did that, Scheler would still say that these two people are in the core of their being *different* one from the other. He would say this because external factors are not the primary reason for the differences between, or

the uniqueness of, persons (although they do participate in our uniqueness in various ways). Scheler comments:

Supposing we could get rid of all physical differences between human beings (including their essential here-and-nowness), and could further eliminate all qualitative differences in regard to their private objects of consciousness (including the formal aspect of these objects – in short the whole of *what* they think, will, feel, etc.), the individual diversity of their central personalities would still remain, despite the fact that the *idea* of personality would be the same in each of them.<sup>48</sup>

I would like to proceed by considering some theological texts of Pope John Paul II in which one detects the Schelerian understanding of the uniqueness of persons. It will be helpful first to consider the following formulation of personal uniqueness by Crosby, which expresses both that it is intrinsic to persons and that it is a really existing, one-time *essential* structure:

...it does not suffice to point to the unrepeatability of the genetic make up of a human being, that is, of those traits of race, temperament, intelligence, etc., which depend on the genetic make-up of an individual. These traits are indeed woven together in a given individual in a way that is not repeated by other individuals, but this is only a relative unrepeatability. There is after all no absurdity in exactly these traits being repeated in exactly these interconnections in a second and third individual – indeed this repeating is exactly what happens in the case of identical twins.<sup>49</sup> But there is an absurdity in there being two copies of one and the same person. The incommunicability that we found above in a certain existential form, and into which we now inquire in asking about a possible essential form of it, lies at a deeper level in a human being. It lies in the depths of personal being; it is not a relative but an absolute incommunicability... Each person has an essential something that only he or she can have, or rather can be, an essential something that would forever be lost to the world, leaving a kind of irreparable metaphysical hole in it, if the person embodying it would go out of existence altogether.<sup>50</sup>

In theological terms, Crosby would seem to be implying here that in creating a new person, God is thinking of, and bringing into being, a specific someone, and not merely giving inner actuality to the form of human nature. Referring again to the Thomistic-based objection analyzed earlier, if someone

held the view that the moment of coming into being of a new human person could be fully accounted for by saying that inner actuality was given to the form of human nature, then one would be committed to the position that the *source* of the uniqueness we encounter in people was *entirely* extrinsic to that person. This would mean that as experiences started happening to this new human, those experiences would begin to shape that person's personality, and since it is statistically practically impossible that the exact same experiences happen to two people, we end up with the uniqueness we encounter in others. Such a view would deny that at the moment of the creation of a new human person God also put the person's uniqueness there, making it intrinsic to that person. But Scheler, as was demonstrated, does not agree with the idea that the exclusive source of the uniqueness of persons is extrinsic to them. He thinks there is a divinely determined uniqueness within each of us, as Joshua Miller has shown.<sup>51</sup> In fact, Miller's analysis reveals that there are two sources of the uniqueness of persons for Scheler. While it is the divinely determined one that can be perceived in the texts of John Paul II that I will provide and analyze in a moment, I would like to give Miller's summary of both sources.

A key part of Scheler's personalism is the idea that each person has an *individual value essence*, which he sometimes calls an *ideal essence* or *ideal value image* that permeates the person's being. This *individual value essence* is determined by God and indicates an abiding ontological structure of personal uniqueness. A second dimension of personal uniqueness...emerges from the person's nature as self-determining. Because the person is spiritual, like God, he is spontaneous, creative, and above all free so that each of his acts is something new and distinct in the world. I will not argue that a person can change his essence or operate outside its parameters, but I do mean to say that uniqueness is, in part, something indeterminate and fluid. The person, who is essentially unique, is also free and therefore can authentically actualize his *individual value essence* in a number of ways. In doing so he does not simply concretize what Scheler calls an *ideal value image* that God has of him. Rather, he co-creates this image; he self-determinatively fills in the lines that have been established for him.<sup>52</sup>

In *The Gospel of Life*, paragraphs 44 and 68, John Paul II lists numerous lyrical scripture passages which point to God's love for babies in the womb. He then asks a profound rhetorical question: "How can anyone think that even a single moment of this marvelous process of the unfolding of life could be separated from the wise and loving work of the Creator, and left prey to human caprice?"<sup>53</sup> But wouldn't it be the case that if the uniqueness of persons was constituted exclusively by events that happen to us, many of which are quite random, then this would be precisely that caprice which a



loving Creator would not choose as the ultimate source of our unique person? And he adds:

Human life is sacred and inviolable at every moment of existence, including the initial phase which precedes birth. All human beings, from their mothers' womb, belong to God who searches them and knows them, who forms them and knits them together with his own hands, who gazes on them when they are tiny shapeless embryos and already sees in them the adults of tomorrow whose days are numbered... There too, when they are still in their mothers' womb – as many passages of the Bible bear witness – they are the personal objects of God's loving and fatherly providence.<sup>54</sup>

Do these texts not engender an image of a specific someone who, from the beginning, is present with an inner actuality not only of their human nature, but also of their very uniqueness in some way, and already loved by God as that person, as opposed to an instantiated human nature that will only later become unique due to external influences?

As was seen above, Scheler expressly rejected the notion that external factors such as the unique space that I occupy, time and experiences that happen to me, or acts that I perform could exhaustively account for my uniqueness. He argues instead, as Crosby has shown, for a radically intrinsic principle of uniqueness, finding a “particular strength of individuality in human persons, which he explains by saying that each person has an essence all his own, that is, an essence that could not be possibly repeated in a second person.”<sup>55</sup>

Crosby cites an interesting quote, where Richard Stith says, “Even if God were to promise me that he would immediately substitute an identical person...for my wife if I would let him take her away, I would refuse. I do not want someone *like* her, I want *her*.”<sup>56</sup> Crosby uses this quote to criticize a remark that Stith makes a few pages later. He says that Stith is forced into referring to the dimension of his wife that he wants as her *existence only* because he has not yet conceived that some essences are not universal, such as the unique, ineffable, essential something of his wife that will never be again in any other person. I would like to extend the use of the Stith quote and ask: would not God, who also loves each of us, also have that same intensity of love expressed by Stith for his wife toward each of us from the first moment of our existence? It would be opposed to the principles of divine love and beauty for God not to be able to say from the very beginning to each one of us that we are not just repeatable instantiations of human rational nature; what kind of love would that be? This idea is contained within the core of the quotes from *The Gospel of Life* that I have given, and it was developed by Scheler in an unexpected way with unexpected clarity. Perhaps it impressed itself on the mind and heart of Wojtyła in the years he dedicated to poring over Scheler's work.



It seems that Scheler's position could not countenance the view that in God's creation of a human person God only took some amount of raw *esse* and gave it human nature.<sup>57</sup> For Scheler maintains, as Miller has shown, that there are two sources of our uniqueness, and one of them is divinely determined. And so, according to this account it would follow that God brings into being a human nature and also an individual person by giving the unity of these two an inner actuality, or *esse*. And while human nature can be instantiated more than once in billions of human persons, your unique "youness," i.e., that which your mother sees and loves in you, is not able to be instantiated like that, since it only comes once.

Crosby provides one further helpful distinction for us here: the distinction between the existential incommunicability and the essential incommunicability of persons.<sup>58</sup> He suggests the possibility that the dignity of persons belongs more to existential incommunicability, while the personal loveliness, on the other hand, belongs more to essential (but, of course, really existing) incommunicability.<sup>59</sup>

There is the dignity of each person in virtue of which we owe respect to persons; but then there is the goodness or loveliness of a person which, once seen and experienced, awakens something like friendship, or perhaps a spousal love, for that person. This loveliness is perhaps even more deeply rooted in the incommunicable selfhood of each person than the dignity of the person, because *every person* has this dignity, whereas the loveliness of a person is possessed only by that person and by no other. I am capable of recognizing the dignity of every person whom I meet and of showing him or her respect, but I am capable of recognizing the unique personal loveliness of only a very few persons and I am capable of loving only these few. There is, strange to say, a certain communicability that remains in the dignity of the person, even though it is grounded precisely in the incommunicable selfhood of each person.<sup>60</sup>

The interesting idea contained in this text is that there is a distinction between the *fact* of incommunicability and the *very content* of some specific person's uniqueness.<sup>61</sup> Every person is unique, thus uniqueness is a common trait, yet the very inner, essential and unrepeatable content of a person's uniqueness is not found in any other. It is that very inner uniqueness of a specific person for which there are no words; it is that which once glimpsed inspires love and is then seen even more clearly because of the love. Yet this unique, unrepeatable loveliness of someone whom you love cannot be asserted in words, no matter how clearly your love lets you see it.<sup>62</sup>

## CONCLUSION: AN APPLICATION TO HEALTH-CARE AND BIO-ETHICS

It may be possible here to make a modest step in responding to the call of Karol Wojtyła to recapitulate the metaphysical sense and mystery of the fundamental uniqueness of each human person as the only response to the “disintegration planned at times by atheistic ideologies.” Crosby claims that when we awaken to the uniqueness of a person whom we love and thereby become aware of the mysterious concreteness of human persons, our value consciousness becomes immeasurably enlarged.<sup>63</sup>

One famous atheist who, as shown above, currently plans out the pulverization of the fundamental uniqueness of each person is Professor Peter Singer of Princeton University. In a recent article<sup>64</sup> I discussed the reasons for Singer’s decision to hire a team of home health care professionals for his mother who at the time was suffering from severe dementia.<sup>65</sup> According to the theories that Singer has long espoused, Singer ought to have either let his mother die or have killed her. I pointed out that it was precisely when Singer got into the position of dealing with the suffering of a person whom he loved dearly that he reversed in his actions what he has insisted on for decades in his books. Many critics of Singer demanded an explanation for his behavior. Ultimately, he claimed that he committed a *morally wrong* act by caring for his mother.<sup>66</sup> But this answer, I pointed out, does not express the motive for his action, it only provides an excuse: moral weakness – if he had been stronger he would, it seems, have killed her. But there must have been a positive reason/motive for his actions. I suggested that he did not kill his mother because he loved her and that his love made him see the reasons within her being for which she should not have been killed. I found in Singer’s own words the basis of my assertion, when he said to Michael Specter (who pressed him on the point), “I think this has made me see how the issues of someone with these kinds of problems are really very difficult.... Perhaps it is more difficult than I thought before, because it is different when it’s your mother.”<sup>67</sup> In other words, the difference when it is your mother is that you love her, and this expands your awareness of the worth of the person exponentially because in love you become aware of precisely the ineffable, unrepeatable preciousness of that person. In uttering these words Singer revealed that he had exactly this awareness in the case of his mother, and that this is the reason he behaved so differently in that case: his value knowledge expanded to large proportions in the case of his mother through his love of her. While it caused Singer to behave towards his own mother in a way that John Paul II would approve of, and while it perplexed him enough to make this admission to Michael Specter, it did not cause him to undergo a great awakening to the incommunicable selfhood and mysterious concreteness of every person.<sup>68</sup>

Jonathan Sanford concludes his important study of Scheler’s idea of cognition through feelings with the following point:

Scheler’s sensitivity to the emotional sphere of the human

being leads him to explore facets of our contact with the world that philosophers have but rarely considered. One reason that philosophers have shied away from discussing the emotional sphere, and our intuitive experience of the world, is that intuitive evidence cannot be demonstratively verified...Some things are simply given...the inability to prove evidence gleaned through intuition is no reason to reject that evidence. If in fact reflection on our experience of reality suggests that affective insights do occur, then we ought to theorize about the nature of such insights...and examine their content.<sup>69</sup>

Singer perceived this in the case of his mother and acted in a manner that follows from such awareness in her case, but he could not extend that awareness to other persons whom he does not love. Peter Berkowitz, upon hearing about Singer's behavior towards his mother, wrote an excellent piece whose title aptly gets this point across: "Other People's Mothers."<sup>70</sup>

There is a raging debate in contemporary ethics which centers around the conflict between the intuition that killing innocents is wrong and the inability to demonstrably justify that intuition.<sup>71</sup> Many utilitarians are conflicted within themselves because of this paradox. For example, J.J.C. Smart, after drawing the conclusion that it is ethically right to kill an innocent person when that action results in the avoidance of large scale suffering, asserted, "Even in my most utilitarian moods I am not *happy* about this consequence of utilitarianism."<sup>72</sup> Smart attempts but ultimately fails to find a satisfactory solution to his dilemma,<sup>73</sup> because he rejects evidence that is obtained through intuition simply because it is so obtained. Another way to put this would be to say that he decides to hold the view that he does not know any dimension of reality that cannot be expressed in formulaic assertions, even if he knows that he knows such a dimension of reality (which I think his unhappiness proves).

Scheler and Wojtyła have an answer to this problem. Scheler describes the position manifested by thinkers like Smart as a philosophical prejudice.

Until recent times philosophy was inclined to a prejudice that has its historical origin in antiquity. This prejudice consists in upholding the division between "reason" and "sensibility," which is completely inadequate in terms of the structure of the spiritual. This division demands that we assign everything that is not rational – that is not order, law, and the like – to sensibility. Thus our *whole emotional life* – and, for most modern philosophers, our conative life as well, even love and hate – must be assigned to "sensibility." According to this division, *everything*, in the mind which is alogical, e.g., intuition, feeling, striving, loving, hating, is dependent on man's *psychophysical organization*.<sup>74</sup>

Samuel Scheffler represents this way of thinking exactly as Scheler diagnosed it. We can see this in Scheffler's thought experiment concerning what he calls the "Infallible Optimizer."

Suppose that there was a machine, the Infallible Optimizer, which never made mistakes in its judgments about which of the actions available to an agent at a time would actually minimize total deaths overall. Suppose further that people were causally incapable of killing unless the Infallible Optimizer certified that a killing was necessary in order to minimize total deaths.<sup>75</sup>

After expressing this thought experiment, Scheffler considers how those who hold to absolute moral norms might feel if this situation were real, and concludes:

Defenders of agent-centered restrictions will presumably feel a residual intuition that, even in circumstances such as these, it would be wrong to kill a person in order to minimize deaths.<sup>76</sup>

The phrase "residual intuition" in this text reveals the bizarreness of what I will call the "hyper-rationalism" diagnosed by Scheler. Whether or not Scheffler is a defender of agent-centered restrictions, let us ask him this: if the Infallible Optimizer, which by definition cannot be mistaken, told him that of the actions available to him to torture one of his own loved ones would actually minimize total deaths overall, would his feeling concerning the possible wrongness of this act be, as he claims it would, nothing more than a mere "residual intuition"? Scheffler is the one who asked us to enter this thought experiment, so I am in *his* thought experiment now; does it obtain as he said it would? How would he reply? He might answer with a remark he makes a little later,

...it is only too easy to think of a psychological explanation for the commitment to agent-centered restrictions, an explanation that would provide a motivation of a kind for the restrictions, but not a motivation that would make them seem especially well-founded morally.<sup>77</sup>

In this response, a "psychological explanation" is put forward as an irrational one; but let us ask Scheffler why he would want to reduce his love for his own loved one to psychological nonsense. Perhaps it is because he adheres to the philosophical prejudice mentioned by Scheler that "*everything*...in the mind which is allogical, e.g., intuition, feeling, striving, loving, hating, is dependent on man's *psychophysical* organization." Why not grant that love is a genuine source of knowledge, especially if you know that it is? Why not

grant that it is only in a philosophy book that one can deny this knowledge, but not in real life? Why not ask whether it is philosophical prejudice that explains why one would be committed in a philosophy book to a position that one finds ridiculous in real life? Why not grant that love is not psychological nonsense, but rather the source of our knowledge of the unique, unrepeatable inner being of the people we know and love?<sup>78</sup>

Scheffler is convinced that "[i]n the case of agent-centered restrictions...we have only surface intuitions; no underlying general rationale has as yet been identified."<sup>79</sup> The reason why no "general" rationale has been identified is because persons are not general, they are individual, and their individuality is ineffable. Scheffler ponders further and says that even if no such general rationale exists, "many people would doubtless feel that the intuitions to which the restrictions respond are nevertheless so central that they cannot in the end be rejected, problematic though they may be."<sup>80</sup> While his awareness of the centrality of these intuitions goes in the right direction, I still find this series of thoughts stunning. Only a hyper-rationalist would apply the term "problematic" to one of the deepest dimensions of love. Again, if the Infallible Optimizer discovered that hundreds of people would be saved if Scheffler tortured one of his own loved ones, does he mean to assert that he would find it merely "problematic" and this problem, namely, his "psychological" love for his loved one, would most likely leave him some "residual moral intuitions?"

Ultimately Scheffler concludes that no underlying reasons have as yet been found for agent-centered restrictions,<sup>81</sup> and he expresses his worry that "unless it is possible to identify an underlying rationale for the restrictions, I do think that those who accept them have serious cause for concern."<sup>82</sup> I agree that those who accept absolute moral norms have serious cause for concern, but not about the norms themselves; allow me to explain. Towards the end of his well-known essay defending utilitarianism, J.J.C. Smart makes the following unexpected remark:

One must not think of the utilitarian as the sort of person who you would not trust further than you could kick him. As a matter of untutored sociological observation...the sort of people who might do you down are rarely utilitarians.<sup>83</sup>

He makes this remark in the context of expressing his unhappiness that the utilitarian "must admit...that he might find himself in circumstances where he ought to be unjust."<sup>84</sup> And in the next sentence, revealing again that he would rather act in accord with his intuitions, he says, "Let us hope that this is a logical possibility not a factual one."

I submit that Scheffler has misdiagnosed the worry of those who hold to absolute moral norms. They have to worry not about the norms, but about the very hyper-rationalist outlook held by Scheffler and others. Singer thinks the debate is over, and once quipped that it is high time to realize that there is a good deal to be inferred from the inability to defend these intuitions.<sup>85</sup>

Why has Peter Singer risen to fame? There are many reasons, but surely one of them is that, unlike Smart, he has no qualms about taking this logic of utilitarianism into reality; of the many examples, one could think perhaps of his endorsement of infanticide.

For those utilitarians or hyper-rationalists who have concerns about the moral conclusions of their more bold like-minded colleagues, Scheler and Wojtyła have a suggestion. Scheler, I think, would ask them to ponder his assertion that “A spirit limited to perception and thinking would be absolutely *blind* to values, no matter how much it might have the faculty of ‘inner perception.’”<sup>86</sup> And Wojtyła would then encourage them to find a way to bring across “the metaphysical sense and mystery of the person.”<sup>87</sup> This task is challenging and he grants that it is “difficult to formulate a systematic theory on how to relate to people,”<sup>88</sup> since “[e]very human being is an individual person and therefore I cannot program *a priori* a certain type of relationship that could be applied to everyone.”<sup>89</sup> But he also says, “I was greatly helped in this by the study of personalism during the years I devoted to philosophy.”<sup>90</sup> We know that he primarily studied Scheler during those years, and we see here that he chose the Schelerian formulation “individual person,” and so we may perceive a call, perhaps, to turn to Scheler for help to go beyond “sterile polemics” to a “recapitulation of the inviolable mystery of the person.”<sup>91,92</sup>

## APPENDIX

Below you will find a series of quotes by Wojtyła in which he expresses his indebtedness to Max Scheler. Above each quote, in italics, I have tried to formulate the exact senses in which each quote represents an indebtedness to Scheler. Some of the examples show this through unique ways of citing Scheler (e.g., naming a section of a book specifically according to Scheler’s book title, and citing Scheler’s name first in lists of philosophers to whom he is indebted). The other examples reveal a wide range of Schelerian philosophical content from which Wojtyła drew: self-donation, *ressentiment*, shame, suffering, the genius of woman, moral becoming, and a connection to the meaning of family.

This appendix represents only the tip of the iceberg. The depth with which Wojtyła absorbed Scheler could be revealed by a thorough cataloguing of the actual citations of Scheler by Wojtyła, a language analysis to show that he speaks on very many occasions exactly as Scheler spoke (see the ‘genius of woman’ entry below), and, of course, a deepening of awareness of the philosophical content in Scheler which informs Wojtyła’s work.

### 1. Prominence Given to Scheler

*Theme:*

- a. *Wojtyła often either names Scheler alone or in a list of philosophers places Scheler’s name first when he cites his contemporary sources. Here is another example of the prominence he gives to Scheler’s*

*name, above all the other contemporary thinkers he mentions, as important for his understanding of anthropology, moral philosophy, and redemption.*

The whole argument developed thus far concerning the theory of good and evil belongs to moral philosophy. I devoted some years of work to these problems at the Catholic University of Lublin. I put together my ideas on the subject firstly in the book *Love and Responsibility*, then in *The Acting Person*, and finally in the Wednesday catecheses which were published under the title *Original Unity of Man and Woman*. On the basis of further reading and research undertaken during the ethics seminar at Lublin, I came to see how important these problems were for a number of contemporary thinkers: Max Scheler and other phenomenologists, Jean-Paul Sartre, Emmanuel Levinas and Paul Ricoeur, and also Vladimir Soloviev, not to mention Fyodor Dostoyevsky. Through these analyses of anthropological reality, various manifestations emerge of man's desire for Redemption, and confirmation is given of the need for a Redeemer if man is to attain salvation.<sup>93</sup>

## 2. The Concept of Self-Donation

*Theme:*

- a. *Wojtyła commentators say that Gaudium et Spes 24,3 is the core text out of which he developed his idea of self-donation; in the text below John Paul II credits Max Scheler with holding a view similar to his own that self-gift is the antidote to a type of self-centered freedom.*

Here we truly have an adequate interpretation of the commandment of love. Above all, *the principle that a person has a value by the simple fact that he is a person* finds very clear expression: man, it is said, “is the only creature on earth that God has wanted for his own sake.” At the same time the Council emphasizes that the most important thing about love is the sincere gift of self. In this sense *the person is realized through love*.

Therefore, these two aspects – the affirmation of the person as a person and the sincere gift of self – not only do not exclude each other, they mutually confirm and complete each other. *Man affirms himself most completely by giving of himself*. This is the fulfillment of the commandment of love. This is also the full truth about man, a truth that Christ taught us by His life, and that the tradition of Christian morality, no less than the tradition of saints and of the many heroes



of love of neighbor, took up and lived out in the course of history.

If we deprive *human freedom* of this possibility, if man does not commit himself to becoming a gift for others, then this freedom can become dangerous. It will become freedom to do what I myself consider as a good, what brings me profit or pleasure, even a sublimated pleasure. *If we cannot accept the prospect of giving ourselves as a gift, then the danger of a selfish freedom will always be present.* Kant fought against this danger, and along the same line so did Max Scheler and so many after him who shared his ethics of values. But a complete expression of all this is already found in the Gospel. For this very reason, *we can find in the Gospel a consistent declaration of all human rights*, even those that for various reasons can make us feel uneasy.<sup>94</sup>

### 3. *Ressentiment* as a Development Beyond *Acedia*

*Theme:*

- a. *Here, as a way to cite his indebtedness to Scheler, Wojtyła chooses the title for a subheading in Love and Responsibility because of Scheler's work.*
- b. *Wojtyła also credits Scheler with the achievement of diagnosing an ailment of modern man with which Saint Thomas Aquinas was not familiar; Scheler's resentment represents, according to Wojtyła, a philosophical development beyond St. Thomas' notion of acedia.*

The title of this paragraph is borrowed from Max Scheler, who published a study called *The Rehabilitation of Virtue...* Scheler saw a need for the rehabilitation of virtue because he discerned in modern man a characteristic spiritual attitude which is inimical to sincere respect for it. He has called this attitude 'resentment.' Resentment arises from an erroneous and distorted sense of values. It is a lack of objectivity in judgment and evaluation, and it has its origin in weakness of will. The fact is that attaining or realizing a higher value demands a greater effort of will. So in order to spare ourselves the effort, to excuse our failure to obtain this value, we minimize its significance, deny it the respect which it deserves, even see it as in some way evil, although objectivity requires us to recognize that it is good. Resentment possesses as you see the distinctive characteristics of the cardinal sin called sloth. St. Thomas defines sloth (*acedia*) as "a sadness arising from the fact that the good is difficult." This sadness, far from denying the good, indirectly helps to keep respect for it alive in the soul. Resentment, however,



does not stop at this: it not only distorts the features of the good but devalues that which rightly deserves respect, so that man need not struggle to raise himself to the level of the true good, but can “light-heartedly” recognize as good only what suits him, what is convenient and comfortable for him. Resentment is a feature of the subjective mentality: pleasure takes the place of superior values.<sup>95</sup>

#### 4. The Concept of Shame

*Theme:*

*a. I wrote my philosophy master's thesis on the concept of shame in the thought of Scheler/Hildebrand/ Wojtyła,<sup>96</sup> and there I showed numerous ways that Wojtyła was impressed by and indebted to Scheler's essay on shame.<sup>97</sup> Wojtyła opens the chapter in Love and Responsibility titled, “The Metaphysics of Shame” citing his sources, and Scheler's name appears first:*

The phenomenon of shame, and of sexual shame in particular, has attracted the attention of the phenomenologists (M. Scheler, F. Sawicki). It is a theme which opens up a broad field of observation and which lends itself to analysis in depth.<sup>98</sup>

#### 5. The Meaning of Suffering as Unleashing Love

*Theme:*

- a. In this letter, John Paul II uses the Schelerian idea that suffering exists in order to unleash love. He does not cite Scheler, but the language and ideas of the text reveal that he draws on him.<sup>99</sup>*
- b. I have shown the similarity between Pope John Paul II and Scheler on the idea of the interior unleashing of love as the reason for suffering in, Peter J. Colosi, “John Paul II and Christian Personalism vs. Peter Singer and Utilitarianism: Two Radically Opposed Conceptions of the Nature and Meaning of Suffering.” 3rd Global Conference: Making Sense of: Health, Illness and Disease July 5 - July 9, 2004 St Catherine's College, Oxford University. The full paper can be found at: <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/mso/hid/hid3/Colosi%20paper.pdf>*

“Suffering is...present in order to *unleash love*.”<sup>100</sup>

#### 6. The Genius of Woman

*Theme:*

- a. The core idea in John Paul II's development of the genius of woman is*

*present in Scheler. Notice by comparing the texts below, that John Paul II speaks with the same language as Scheler.*

*Scheler:* ...women...possess powers of intuition, which being based on the maternal instinct with its specialized aptitudes for identification, are found only rudimentarily in man...This capacity first develops, no doubt, in a woman's own experience of maternity, but it is not confined to her own child, or to children generally, for it extends, when fully developed, to all the world.<sup>101</sup>

*John Paul II:* "Motherhood involves a special communion with the mystery of life, as it develops in the woman's womb. The mother is filled with wonder at this mystery of life, and "understands" with unique intuition what is happening inside her. In the light of the "beginning", the mother accepts and loves as a person the child she is carrying in her womb. This unique contact with the new human being developing within her gives rise to an attitude towards human beings - not only towards her own child, but every human being - which profoundly marks the woman's personality. It is commonly thought that *women* are more capable than men of paying attention *to another person*, and that motherhood develops this predisposition even more. The man - even with all his sharing in parenthood - always remains "outside" the process of pregnancy and the baby's birth; in many ways he has to *learn* his own "fatherhood" *from the mother*."<sup>102</sup>

## 7. On the Relation Between Acting and Becoming

*Theme:*

*a. The relation between personal acting and becoming a certain kind of person is a prominent theme of The Acting Person. Below are two quotes, one from Scheler the other from Wojtyła, which give evidence of the "Schelerian foundation" of The Acting Person.*

*Scheler:* There is no act whose execution does not change the content of the person's *being*, and no act-value that does not increase or decrease, enhance or diminish, or positively or negatively determine the value of the person. In every moral individual act of positive value the ability for acts of the kind increase; in other words, there is an increase in what we designated as the *virtue* of the person.... Thus mediated, every moral act effects changes in the being and value of the person himself.<sup>103</sup>

*Wojtyła:* It is in man's actions, his conscious acting,

that make of him *what* and *who* he actually is. This form of the human becoming thus presupposes the efficacy or causation proper to man...It is man's actions, the way he consciously acts, that make of him a good or a bad man – good or bad in the moral sense. To be “morally good” means to be good as a man. To be “morally bad” means to be bad as a man. Whether a man, because of his actions, becomes morally better or morally worse depends on the nature and modalities of actions. The qualitative moments and virtualities of actions, inasmuch as they refer to the moral norm and ultimately to the dictates of the conscience, are imprinted upon man by his performing the actions.

The becoming of man in his moral aspect that is strictly connected with the person is *the* decisive factor in determining the concrete realistic character of goodness and badness, of the moral values themselves as concretized in human acting...Man not only concretizes them in action and experiences them but because of them he himself, as a being, actually becomes good or bad. Moral conduct partakes of the reality of human actions as expressing a specific type and line of becoming of the man-subject, the type of becoming that is most intrinsically related to his nature, that is, his humanness, and to the fact of his being a person.<sup>104</sup>

## 8. Family

In one of the preparatory regional conferences (Geneva, Switzerland) leading up to The Doha International Conference for the Family,<sup>105</sup> I presented a paper in which I explored some of the Papal pronouncements of John Paul II on the family in an attempt to show their connections to the uniqueness of individual persons and love. For example, I said that John Paul's statement that, “The “sovereignty” of the family is essential for the good of society,”<sup>106</sup> can be explained in this way: “The family is the deepest source of achieving that grand goal of “a better world” because of its intimate inner side where the depth and preciousness of the family members are revealed to each other. That inspires a depth of love scarcely possible outside of this setting, which at the same time is able to serve as a rich inner resource in going out to help those outside of the inner family circle.”<sup>107</sup> And this interpretation is perhaps confirmed by the Pope when he says, “If the family is so important for the civilization of love, it is because of the particular *closeness and intensity of the bonds* which come to be between persons and generations within the family.”<sup>108</sup>

## NOTES

1 Pope Benedict XVI in his November 21, 2005 address to the

Pontifical Academies of Sciences and Social Sciences in the Casina Pio in the Vatican Gardens. *L'Osservatore Romano*, Weekly Edition in English, November 30, 2005, 3, and Zenit.org ZE05112122.

2 Karol Wojtyła, *Ueber die Moeglichkeit eine christliche Ethik in Anlehnung an Max Scheler zu schaffen*, ed. Juliusz Stroynowski, *Primat des Geistes: Philosophische Schriften* (Stuttgart-Degerloch: Seewald, 1953 [1980]). Wojtyła wrote this work in Polish, but I am unaware of any English translation.

3 Karol Wojtyła, *The Acting Person* (Dordrecht: D. Reidel Publishing Co., 1979a), viii. Occasionally a line from Wojtyła's *habilitation* which reads, "a theologian cannot be a phenomenologist," (Wojtyła, 1980, 196) is interpreted to represent a sort of wholesale rejection by Wojtyła of the phenomenological/personalist project that he studied. The problem with drawing that conclusion from this line is that Wojtyła contradicts it time and again in practically every book he published after his dissertation. I provide many examples throughout this paper and in the appendix. Consider here this one, in which he expresses an equal debt to the two schools of philosophical thought he studied, "The author of the present study owes everything to the systems of metaphysics, of anthropology, and of Aristotelian-Thomistic ethics on the one hand, and to phenomenology, above all in Scheler's interpretation...on the other." From the second preface to *The Acting Person*, xiv.

4 For a thorough presentation of Wojtyła's unremitting rejection of this Schelerian thesis see, John F. Crosby, "Person and Obligation: Critical Reflections on the Anti-Authoritarian Strain in Scheler's Personalism," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, Vol. 79.1, 2005, 110-113. Furthermore, I am fully aware that many negative assessments of Scheler occur in Wojtyła's *Habilitation* thesis, yet beginning with *The Acting Person*, there is a clear shift away from that assessment. Thus it would not be wrong to speak of a developing appreciation for Scheler in the work of Wojtyła.

5 Hence the title of this paper: "The Uniqueness of Persons in the Life and Thought of Karol Wojtyła /Pope John Paul II".

6 See George Weigel, *Witness to Hope, The Biography of Pope John Paul II* (New York: Harper Collins, 1999), 124-39. Weigel presents a concise retelling of the interesting way in which Wojtyła came to study Scheler, the reasons for which he translated Scheler's *Formalism* into Polish, and numerous anecdotal stories gleaned from personal interviews with Wojtyła's brightest students, fellow colleagues, and, of course, with the man himself. I take these pages as clear confirmation of the assertion that Wojtyła saw in Scheler a master from whom he learned much and whose influence on his thought was deep and lasting.

7 Scheler, held this view too: "[o]nly persons can (originally) be morally good or evil; everything else can be good or evil only *by reference to persons*, no matter how indirect this 'reference' [*Hinsehen*] may be." Max Scheler, *Formalism in Ethics and Non-Formal Ethics of Values*, translated by Manfred S. Frings and Roger L. Funk (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973a), 85.

8 Consider Peter Jackson's recent remake of the movie *King Kong*, in which Kong was moved deeply by a beautiful sunset on two occasions. I have no knowledge concerning whether elements of the animal rights movement had a role in the creation of those scenes, but whoever made those scenes reveals a clear acceptance of this basic premise of Western philosophy, namely, that having rational capabilities is a source of superior worth; by giving King Kong a dimension of that rational nature (feeling the beauty of a sunset) they mean to imply that he is equally worthy of respect as any human being.

9 See Josef Seifert, *What is Life?* (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 1997), Chapters 3 and 4 for a concise presentation of this view, including a contrast to the "actualism" which rules the day in many euthanasia debates, whereby it is asserted that humans with diminished consciousness no longer possess within them any quality that makes a moral claim on others not to kill them.

10 This view reached perhaps its most concise formulation in Immanuel Kant: "But suppose there were something the *existence of which in itself* has an absolute worth, something which as *an end in itself* could be a ground of determinate laws...Now I say that the human being and in general every rational being *exists* as an end in itself, *not merely as a means* to be used by this or that will...Beings the existence of which rests not on our will but on nature, if they are beings without reason, still have only a relative worth, as means...whereas rational beings are called *persons* because their nature already marks them out as and [*sic*] end in itself, that is, as something that may not be used merely as a means, and hence so far limits all choice (and is an object of respect)...If, then, there is to be a supreme practical principle...The ground of this principle is: *rational nature exists as an end in itself.*" Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, translated and edited by Mary J. Gregor, in *Immanuel Kant, Practical Philosophy* (Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press, 1996), 78-80.

11 Crosby cites: Jacques Maritain, *The Person and the Common Good* (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1947), ch. 3.

12 Crosby cites: Emmanuel Mounier, *Personalism* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 2001), 17-19.

13 Crosby cites: Hans Urs von Bathasar, "On the Concept of Person," *Communio* 13, (Spring, 1986), 18.

14 John F. Crosby, *Personalist Papers* (Washington, D.C.: The Catholic University of America Press, 2004), 184.

15 In this section I will give a sketch of the uniqueness of persons termed by Scheler their "individual value essence" and their "individual personhood." Much of the work of drawing this idea out of Scheler's work and expressing it further has already been accomplished by others, and as I proceed I will draw on this body of secondary literature. John F. Crosby has both expressed Scheler's meaning as well as developed it further in his (2004), chapter 7, titled, "Max Scheler on Personal Individuality." Recently a volume of the *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* dedicated to Max Scheler appeared, edited by John Crosby. The entire volume (79.1, Winter 2005) is to be recommended, but of particular importance for the theme of this paper

is Joshua Miller, "Scheler on the Twofold Source of Personal Uniqueness," 163-81, and Jonathan J. Sanford, "Scheler vs. Scheler: The Case for a Better Ontology of the Person," 145- 61. Also helpful for gaining an understanding of Scheler's overall conception of persons is John R. White, "Max Scheler's Tripartite Anthropology," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, 2001, Vol. 75: 255-66. Very important for the concept of the uniqueness of persons, which he calls their "incommunicability," is John F. Crosby, *The Selfhood of the Human Person* (Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 1996), chapter 2, titled, "Incommunicability," Finally, I would also refer readers to my article, "The Intrinsic Worth of Persons: Revisiting Peter Singer and his Critics," *Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies*, 2003, Vol. XV (1/2): 3-22.

16 A section of a personal letter from Wojtyła to Henri de Lubac, cited in de Lubac, Henri, *At the Service of the Church. Henri de Lubac Reflects on the Circumstances that Occasioned His Writings*, translated by Anne Elizabeth Englund (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 171-72.

17 See Max Scheler, *The Nature of Sympathy*, translated by Peter Heath. Hamden, (Connecticut: The Shoe String Press, 1973b), 122. There Scheler discusses how in coming to know another person we begin with a certain hypothesis, and "as such knowledge increases, so the content of this hypothesis becomes ever more *individual*, ever harder to put into words (*individuum est ineffabile*)."

18 See Crosby, 1996, 41-42.

19 Scheler, 1973a, 489.

20 See Crosby, 1996, 41 and 54-58.

21 Crosby has insightfully shown the many senses in which the deepest forms of interpersonal "communication" are grounded in persons relating to the uniqueness in each other. He has also shown that if such knowledge and love were not possible, then no true interpersonal relating would be possible. See Crosby, 1996, 54-58.

22 See Jonathan J. Sanford, "Affective Insight: Scheler on Feeling and Values," *Proceedings of the American Catholic Philosophical Association*, (Vol. 76, 2002), 167-72.

23 This is not to deny that we can, of course, also *respond* with the intellect to that which we have previously cognized through it, for example by believing or doubting what has been cognized.

24 In his work *Ethics* (Chicago: Franciscan Herald Press, 1953), chapter 17 (titled: "Value Response"), Dietrich von Hildebrand has with great concision summarized the concept of intentionality in phenomenology. He succeeds in this chapter in delineating and distinguishing clearly when persons, with the various faculties of the soul, perform acts of cognition and when, with those same faculties, they perform responses to that which they have cognized.

25 Miller, 167.

26 George Weigel, "Mourning and Remembrance," *Wall Street*



*Journal*, April 4, 2005. Weigel's article has also been reprinted online at the Catholic Educator's Resource Center at [www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org).

27 Crosby, 1996, 72.

28 Crosby, 2004, 151.

29 Scheler, (1973b), 166.

30 Weigel rightly represents common features of human persons that John Paul held up as the source of our worth, but again in a way that overlooks the aspect of uniqueness, when he says, "John Paul II has insisted for a quarter-century that human rights are the moral core of the 'universal common good' ...all thinking about society, even international society, must begin with an adequate philosophical anthropology of the person, which recognizes in the human quest for transcendent truth and love *the* defining characteristic of our humanity." [italics original] George Weigel, "Moral Leadership and World Politics in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Thomas Merton Lecture, Columbia University, Oct. 30, 2003.

31 In my response to this objection I rely on many of the insights in Crosby, 1996, chapter 2. A different Thomistic-based critique of the idea of personal uniqueness can be found in Stephen L. Brock, "Is Uniqueness at the Root of Personal Dignity? John Crosby and Thomas Aquinas," in *The Thomist* 69 (2005), 173-201. I have debated Brock on this very question, but it would go outside the bounds of this paper to deal with his article here.

32 W. Norris Clark, S.J., from his Introduction to: James F. Anderson, *An Introduction to the Metaphysics of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: Regnery Publishing, Inc., 1997), xv.

33 According to Aristotle's principle of identity which states that "each thing is itself and not another."

34 See Crosby, 1996, 44-45. In his book *Sein und Wesen*, (Heidelberg: Universitaetsverlag C. Winter, 1996), Josef Seifert has sharply distinguished many senses of essence and existence, including the one I just mentioned between the general plan and the real concrete essence present in one of its instantiations, to which I am indebted for enabling me to make this point. An earlier English version of Seifert's work is his "Essence and Existence." *Aletheia*, 1977/78, Vol. 1.1 and 1.2. (Crosby also credits Seifert for clarifying these points to him. See Crosby, 1996, 43, n. 3).

35 It should be noted that an incidental scratch or imperfection on one chair would not justify a metaphysical claim to any profound essential uniqueness.

36 I put the word "worth" in parentheses because "worth" seems too lofty a title for the value of a chair.

37 For the following insight I am relying on Crosby, 1996, 50 ff.

38 That would also lead to the odd state of affairs of you having to say to the people whom you love: "I just want you to know how lucky you are right now because I am here, otherwise, you'd be worthless!"

39 Unfortunately for my purposes, Wojtyła makes just such a remark at Karol Wojtyła, *Love and Responsibility* (New York: Farrer, Strauss, Giroux, 1981), 24. It goes without saying that I disagree with his assertion there, but

I also think that it is flatly contradicted by other pastoral and theological texts of his that I analyze in this paper.

40 See Scheler, 1973b, 123, where he explains his idea that, “The spiritual substances inherent in persons or their acts are thus the *only* substances having a truly individual essence...”

41 See Seifert, 1997, 101.

42 John Paul II, *Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way* (New York: Warner Books, 2004), 65-66.

43 Scheler, 1973b, 166: “The love which has moral value is not that which pays loving regard to a person for having such and such qualities, pursuing such and such activities, or for possessing talents, beauty, or virtue; it is that love which incorporates these qualities, activities and gifts into its object, because they belong to that *individual person*.”

44 I had a personal experience of his absorption of this insight. I was able to attend close to twenty Wednesday audiences and quite a few Holy Week Masses in Rome with Pope John Paul II, always with thousands of other people. I never had the opportunity to speak with him or to shake his hand. However, once I was leaning over a railing looking away from him as he was recessing at the end of Mass in St. Peter’s Basilica. Hundreds of people were present, but I was right on the aisle. I turned around, and to my surprise, he had been staring at the back of my head waiting for me to turn around. He looked at me, into my eyes and kept looking. It was quite moving, and the quotes I have given are true to his life - in that look I felt like he was saying, “who are *you*? I want to meet *you*.” I felt my uniqueness in that moment, me, being approached in love, just as it says in that quote; I felt in that look that he felt that he was encountering something utterly unique when he was meeting me – that he never met before and never would meet again (unless he met me again, which he did not).

It was a beautiful experience, and if I may indulge in one further reflection on it, I would say that what strikes me as philosophically highly interesting here is a similarity between John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa. We feel loved in our uniqueness more in the family than anywhere else, and being loved like that by parents is the source of many good things. And we are enabled, within the setting of the family, to love our siblings in this way too; next comes our relatives and dearest friends. But what a challenge it is to attempt to approach *everyone* like that. I believe, and I think my very brief encounter with the man (and its very brevity reinforces the point), that Pope John II wrote the text I quoted above out of his constant effort to never forget this truth as he continually met people. How exhausting it would be for me to be continually in the mode of remembering that each person I meet is unique and unrepeatable and that this is the most important dimension of this person and the one I need to be aware of in order to respect them in the way they truly deserve. It seems to me that John Paul II and Blessed Mother Teresa spent their lives trying to do exactly this. And there is plenty of evidence that Wojtyła learned this dimension of personal uniqueness from Max Scheler.



45 Pope John Paul II, *Gift and Mystery* (New York: Image Books, 1999), 93-94.

46 John Paul II, First Christmas radio message: AAS 71 (1979b), 66.

47 Of course, that individual is also given in that moment a human nature, but this is not the significance of the quote.

48 Scheler, 1973b, 34.

49 As Josef Seifert once observed in a conversation, this truism is not strictly accurate; if one looks closely at the faces of identical twins one sees that they are, in fact, not identical. Nonetheless, Crosby's point about the non-absurdity of the duplication of such traits remains intact, despite its statistical improbability.

50 Crosby, 1996, 64-65.

51 Miller, 163-81.

52 Miller, 2005, 164.

53 Pope John Paul II, *The Gospel of Life* (New York: Random House, 1995), para. 44.

54 Wojtyła, 1995, para., 61.

55 Crosby, 2004, 149.

56 See Crosby, 2004, 150, n. 15.

57 Although it seems to me from Scheler's notion of the divinely determined dimension of the individual value essence that this is a correct assertion, some other texts of Scheler are open to debate about whether or not he rejects the personhood of the embryo. The strongest of the texts in favor of the view that Scheler does reject the personhood of embryos are at 1973a, 476-78. Others can be found at 1973a, 313-15. However, it seems to me that on pages 313-15 and 476 Scheler is not making a point about the ontological status of the embryo as a non-person, but rather on the inability of us to *perceive* signs of its personhood. (I wonder if he would have been as moved as Tony Blair was by the new three-dimensional, color video clips of early fetuses 'walking', crying and smiling in the womb?) Manfred Frings does not, it seems to me, take the time to distinguish clearly these two questions (i.e., whether it is our inability to perceive signs of personhood or actual ontological non-personhood that is the reason for the killing/murder distinction discussed by Scheler), and Frings concludes too quickly in the ontological direction. See Manfred S. Frings, *The Mind of Max Scheler*, (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1997), 48-49. And while John Paul II in *The Gospel of Life*, para. 60 is arguing for the personhood of the embryo, he nonetheless begins by granting a certain empirical difficulty when he says, "Even if the presence of a spiritual soul cannot be ascertained by empirical data, the results themselves of scientific research on the human embryo provide a valuable indication for discerning by the use of reason a personal presence at the moment of the first appearance of a human life: how could a human individual not be a human person?" I grant that what Scheler says on 1973a, 478 sounds like a clear ontological statement taking full personhood away from younger children, "Only a child who has 'come of age' is a person in the full sense... The basic phenomenon of coming

of age consists in the ability to experience insight into the difference between *one's own* and *someone else's* acts, willing, feeling, thinking...". However, I also think that further work along the lines of the textual analysis of Sanford, 2005, and further study about the exact sense in which the individual value essence is *determined by* the Divine Being could lead to a contradiction of Scheler against Scheler on this point. Whatever the final verdict is on Scheler's position concerning the personhood of minimally or non-conscious humans – which is by no means decided as of yet – Philip Blosser has rightly stated that all of the thinkers after Scheler who belong to his school are clear that the being of persons is not reducible to their conscious awakens, "Yet while defending the irreducible subjectivity of persons, Crosby, Josef Seifert, and others like them in the realistic phenomenological tradition of Dietrich von Hildebrand, Karol Wojtyła and Edith Stein, insist no less on distinguishing 'being' from 'subjectivity.' While recognizing that personal being actualizes itself in subjectivity, they deny it *exhausts* itself in subjectivity. Thus, they typically maintain that a metaphysics of substance is capable of a personalist, phenomenological articulation." Philip Blosser, "Scheler's Concept of the Person Against Its Kantian Background." In *Max Scheler's Acting Persons, New Perspective*, edited by Stephen Schneck (Amsterdam: Rodopi, 2002), 59. For examples of this see, Seifert, 1997, chapters 3 and 4, and Crosby, 2004, chapter 6, titled, "Person and Consciousness."

58 Crosby, 1996, 59-65.

59 Crosby, 1996, 68.

60 Crosby, 1996, 67.

61 See also Crosby, 2004, 19-20 (points 2 and 3) for his response to objections which tend to conflate the mere fact of being unique with the very inner uniqueness of a specific person.

62 Crosby continues: "The principle of incommunicability asserts itself more strongly, so to say, in the unrepeatable loveliness of a person. This is why we lack any general terms to express the loveliness of a particular person; we keenly experience here the ineffability, the unutterability of the incommunicable. But our language and concepts do not fail us in the same way when it comes to the dignity of the person; after all 'the dignity of the person' is a general term. It is as if I recognize a human being *as person* as when I am mindful of his dignity and show him respect and abstain from all coercion and using, but recognize a human being *as this particular person* when I know him or her as friend or spouse." 1996, 67.

63 Crosby, 1996, 66.

64 Peter J. Colosi, "What's Love Got to Do with It: The Ethical Contradictions of Peter Singer." (February 25, 2005), [www.godspy.com](http://www.godspy.com), and reprinted at [www.catholiceducation.org](http://www.catholiceducation.org).

65 This situation was described in a profile piece on Singer by Michael Specter entitled, "The Dangerous Philosopher," on September 6, 1999 in *The New Yorker*, 46-55.

66 Here are his words, in full: "Suppose, however, that it were crystal clear that the money could do more good elsewhere. Then I would be doing

wrong in spending it on my mother, just as I do wrong when I spend, on myself or my family, money that could do more good if donated to an organization that helps people in much greater need than we are. I freely admit to not doing all that I should; but I could do it, and the fact that I do not do it does not vitiate the claim that it is what I should do.” Peter Singer, “Outsiders: our obligations to those beyond our borders,” in *The Ethics of Assistance*, ed. Deen Chatterjee (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004) 29. One must also add that this text is sophistical. Selecting concepts such as “spending money on my mother,” “spending money on myself,” and “doing more good,” while leaving out any reference to killing his mother serves as a rhetorical device to direct the reader into focusing on the choice between giving money and not giving money to the poor – when in fact it is a question of killing someone in order to thereby give money to the poor. His critics want to know why he did not do that, and sophistically evaded that question.

67 Specter, 55.

68 See Crosby, 2004, 23-24 for an expression of how this extension of awareness is rightly applied to the moral life. See also Crosby, 1996, 66.

69 Sanford, 2002, 176.

70 Peter Berkowitz, *The New Republic* Jan. 10, 2000.

71 I have outlined this view as it appears in several authors and developed a response in Colosi, 2003, 11 ff.

72 J.J.C. Smart, “An Outline of a System of Morality,” In *Utilitarianism: For and Against*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1973), 71.

73 See Colosi, 2003, 11-12.

74 Scheler, 1973a, 253-54.

75 Samuel Scheffler, *The Rejection of Consequentialism* (Oxford, UK: Clarendon Press, 2000), 111.

76 Scheffler, 111.

77 Scheffler, 112-13.

78 To those who would accuse me of doing nothing more than appealing to emotions, I would answer that rather than appealing to emotions, I am simply exploring an objective aspect of persons in the way we encounter them. This dimension of personal being, when grasped accurately, tends to cause a deep movement in one’s affections. But my writing about it, strictly speaking, is not the cause of the emotions, except insofar as I am causing the reader to think about a loved one. It is the unique inner being and preciousness of that loved one that is the real cause of those feelings. If one demands a rational proof for those feelings, and insists that nothing I have said will be accepted until that proof is produced, then I can only answer that I cannot help you, except to say the following. Please ponder the face of someone you love, and realize that you are in touch with a real and ultimate reality for which no words are adequate, but which you know that you know through love. You have no reason to doubt this knowledge, and least of all because no philosopher can construct a proof for you.

79 Scheffler, 112.

80 Scheffler, 112.

81 "...I hope these readers will also agree that there are reasons to be worried about agent-centered restrictions, and feel challenged to identify that rationale for the restrictions which has so far eluded our grasp." Scheffler, 114.

82 Scheffler, 112.

83 Smart, 71.

84 Smart, 71. Despite Smart's assertion on this page that he is not contradicting his utilitarianism, the very concept of injustice, exactly as he employs it, flies in the face of the non-cognitivism underlying his utilitarianism.

85 Richard J. Arneson attempted such a defense and admitted defeat in "What, if Anything, Renders all Humans Morally Equal?" In *Singer and His Critics*. Ed. Dale Jamieson (Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers, 1999), 123. Singer, in his response to Arneson in the same book on page 296, said that it is now high time to realize that "there is a good deal to be inferred from the failure of all this philosophical activity to find a sound defence of speciesism." (By speciesism can be understood in this context the intuition that just since another person belongs to our species we feel an intuition not to kill that person.)

86 Scheler, 1973a, 68.

87 Cited in de Lubac, 172.

88 John Paul II, 2004, 65.

89 *Ibid.*

90 *Ibid.*

91 Cited in de Lubac, 172.

92 I am grateful to Angele Solis, Joshua Miller, and Maria Fedoryka for their comments on an earlier version of this paper.

93 Pope John Paul II, *Memory and Identity* (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 2005), 42.

94 Pope John Paul II, *Crossing the Threshold of Hope* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Inc., 1994a), 202-203.

95 Wojtyła, (1981), 143 - 144.

96 Peter J. Colosi, *A Philosophical Analysis of Sexual Shame*, unpublished master's thesis, (Bendern, Liechtenstein: The International Academy of Philosophy, 1993).

97 Max Scheler, "Shame and Feelings of Modesty," translated by Manfred S. Frings, in *Person and Self-Value: Three Essays* (Boston: Martinus Nijhoff Publishers, 1987), 1-85.

98 Wojtyła, 1981, 174.

99 Scheler develops this idea in chapters 3 and 4 of *Ressentiment*, translated by Lewis B. Coser and William W. Holdheim (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 1998); see also Max Scheler, "The Meaning of Suffering," translated by Harold J. Bershady, in *Max Scheler, On Feeling, Knowing, and Valuing, Selected Writings* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1992), 91 and 111.

100 Pope John Paul II, *On the Christian Meaning of Human Suffering, Salvifici Doloris* (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1984), para. 24.

101 Scheler, 1973b, 32.

102 Pope John Paul II, *Mulieris Dignitatem*, (Boston: Pauline Books and Media, 1988), para. 18. It seems to me that the quote above from *Rise, Let Us Be On Our Way*, 65-66 reveals that John Paul II conceives of himself in all of his relations with others in exactly this way that he claims is the fruit of the genius of *women*, but he is a *man*. And, I think, we would have to admit that in John Paul II we have one of the most striking examples of this ability - namely, to love the individual and to express this to the whole world - in the history of mankind. Thus, it would be interesting to investigate whether it could be shown that John Paul II is *not* saying that it is a female trait to focus on the individual, but that it is a personal trait required equally of men and women, but women are more in tune with this ability because of maternity. On that view men could learn from women, but it would not imply that love and awareness of each individual is a "female trait" in an ontological sense.

103 Scheler, 1973a, 537.

104 Wojtyła, 1979a, 98-99.

105 This conference was convened by the State of Qatar to commemorate the tenth anniversary of the UN's International Year of the Family.

106 Pope John Paul II, *Letter to Families* (Boston: Pauline Books & Media, 1994b), para. 17.

107 Peter J. Colosi, "Mother Teresa, John Paul II and Christian Personalism vs. Peter Singer and Utilitarianism: Two Radically Opposed Conceptions of the Nature and Meaning of Family." In *The Family in the New Millennium: World Voices Supporting the "Natural" Clan*, Vol. 3., ch. 4. Edited by S.A. Loveless and T.B. Holman. (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishing, 2007), 49-65.

108 Pope John Paul II, 1994b, para. 13.

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