

10. CATEGORIES/PREDICAMENTS

Here again are the ten Categories and the definitions that characterise them, in two groups.

<i>Substance</i>		
Quantity]	Be-in-self
<u>Quality</u>]	
Relation]	
When]	
Where]	Be-in-other
Action]	
Passion]	
Habitus]	
Situs]	

You will notice that I have divided the accidents into two. The first two, *quantity* and *quality*, are those of the greatest importance ; *quantity*, because it gives to the substance a body and parts, *quality*, because it qualifies and ennobles the substance, makes it *this* instance of the substance, distinguishing it from all other instances.

Parents are instruments of God's creative power. He creates, but he gives to them the power to play a part in the formation of his creature—through *quality*. Not only do parents produce a child but a child like them in its characteristics and its physical features. Some are absolutely fixed, as the sex of the child, the child's features, character traits, intellectual power ; some are variable, such as complexion, state of health and vigour, and of course, the body generally as it ages.



Here is an example of the sort of characteristics passed to a child by (or via) its parents—

Female
Anglo-Saxon/Celtic ethnic mix
Traits inherited from parents, grandparents, even great grandparents
White skinned
Red-haired
Blue eyes
Big boned
Thin
Tall
Melancholic in temperament
Musical
Athletic

The next accident, *relation*, is the accident whose whole entity is 'be-towards'. 'Father' names a relation, as does 'child'. 'Likeness' names a relation and, of course, there is likeness between father and child. 'Proximity' names a relation of nearness to something. Any reality that can be reduced to 'be-towards' suffices. I have mentioned St Thomas's comment that *relation* is the least of all reality and *it is* a reality ; it is not just a figment of one's imagination.

When and *Where* specify important realities about any material substance because it must exist in time and in place.

Action signifies the proper operation of the substance. This is easy to see with animals and men. Dog's bite, men drive their cars ; they are obviously acting. But plants perform acts too, as we may gather from the scents of flowers and of certain shrubs, from the fact that they put forth seeds and produce offspring. Minerals act too, though we may not think so. Water, for instance, acts to vivify plants and animals. It can only do as a consequence of an inherent quality given it by its Author. It evaporates and rises to form clouds which produce rain for the earth. Even something as dumb as the marble of the walls of the canyon we went swimming through in the summer, acts, as we found when on occasion we bumped into it. It was most unforgiving ! Moreover, calcium carbonate's facility to react with other minerals produces certain effects which are part of marble's *action*.

Passion, or the suffering of the effects of action from some other substance, is the next of the accidents. This is, again, obvious with animals and men, as it is with plants which can be cut down or harvested. And just as obviously any mineral can suffer effects as when water is drunk, air breathed into the lungs, as marble is modeled into stalactites and stalagmites by the action of water, and harder stones are crushed to make gravel for the roadway.

Habitus, or dress, or condition (from the Latin), comprehends all the physical additions that belong to the integrity of the corporeal substance ; so, the collar on a dog, gloves on a workman, dress in man or woman.

Situs is Latin for posture. It affects every substance but is of greater significance in the three branches of living things.

Now we have been dealing with the ten modes of being mostly from the position of the concrete individual, as for example, in Lucy, the dog. In applying our minds to this *singular* thing we have been straying into another realm, that of the mind. In the mind, we abstract from the individual its essential attributes and *we deal with them in the abstract*. For instance,

<i>In the real</i>		<i>In mind</i>
Lucy	Substance	dog-ness
body	Quantity	extension, parts
furry, black	Quality	texture, colour
belonging to Julian	Relation	be-towards
now, in February	When	in time
here, at the farm	Where	in place
chewing a bone	Action	acting
bitten by fleas	Passion	suffering
wearing a collar	Habitus	clothed
crouching	Situs	posture

Observe that what is *singular and concrete* (in the real) is measured by what is *universal and abstract* (in the mind). This is how our mind operates : we look at some thing, our intellect expresses a term wherein it understands the thing as to its nature, *the concept*. By means of the concept we identify some essence identical with the essence of *this* material thing. We acknowledge the existence of this essence in the mind, and acknowledge, too, that it differs from the singular existence the thing has in the real.

Note, that we may perform this action even before we can give the essence a name. This is what happens with children as they work to master their knowledge of reality.

The Jesuit, Fr G H Joyce, has expressed the truths at stake succinctly :

“Definition is always of *the universal*. Nature gives us general classes, and phenomena which occur subject to general laws. The individual members of these classes, the individual instances of the phenomena, are all different : each has accidental characteristics, by which it differs from every other. The aim of definition is to seize on the type, which is constant amid all this variety. [So, for instance] [o]ne attack... of malarial fever differs from another in a hundred particulars, —in duration, in intensity, in collateral effects, etc., etc. These are of no importance to the definition ; for it is concerned alone with what is essential—with the permanent type.” [G H Joyce, *Principles of Logic*, 2nd edition, 1916, Ch. X, p. 151]

It is important to *realise*—i.e., not just to 'know', but to make a reality in our lives—that our knowledges (at the sensed level) and analyses (at the intellectual level) correspond with reality. *What we know is what is*. That there is adequation between reality and the mind, between the mind and reality, is a fundamental principle underlying all sound philosophy. This reality demonstrates, by implication, the existence of an intellectual Author of reality, One who has established this proportion. From this realisation flows the definition of logical truth. It is *the identity between what is asserted and what is*.

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Before we end this lesson, there are two things I want to do. First, to identify for you the supreme principle behind all human reasoning, and second, to show how the truths we have been exploring explain a fundamental truth of the Catholic faith.

Principle of Non-Contradiction

Let us take Ambrose, sitting at the back there, as an illustration. We can, thanks to the remarkable power of our minds, divide the whole of material reality into two, right out to the end of the solar system ; we can divide it into *Ambrose* and *everything that is not Ambrose*. Let's call the two terms of this division A and non-A. The supreme principle of logic requires that we admit, if we are going to make any statement, explicitly or implicitly, about anything whatsoever, that between A and non-A there is no third. It may seem, at first glance, strange, even confusing, to insist upon it. But the truth is that we can say nothing about Ambrose, for good or ill, unless we acknowledge that he is unique in reality in being utterly separate from every other element of it. The principle is expressed in three ways :

A is A

A is not non-A

Between A and non-A there is no third.

As soon as I assert something, I endorse this principle. As soon as I deny something, I endorse it.

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Transubstantiation

Let us recall the two essential truths about the *substance* (substantial form) of any thing : 1. it is immaterial, and 2. its definition is *be-in-self*. Here are two substances, completely different, with instances of their accompanying (so far as we can tell) accidents :

<i>Bread</i>	Substance	<i>Our Lord Jesus Christ</i>
small wafer	Quantity	glorified body
brownish, fresh	Quality	5 ft 10 in (?), 155 lbs (?)
nearby	Relation	Creator and Saviour of men
now	When	in eternity
here	Where	in heaven
nourishing	Action	acting for salvation of men
being cut	Passion	loved by His faithful
covered	Habitus	clothed
lying flat	Situs	standing

It's not easy to ascribe to Our Blessed Lord the various accidents that must be attributed to Him because physically He is in heaven. But we can imagine. St Thomas explains how, at the ministration of a priest, *by force of the words* of consecration—*vi verborum*—the *substance* of bread he has before him is replaced by the *substance* of Jesus Christ while the accidents of the bread remain. Let us recall with attention that it is its accidents that reveal the underlying substance of a thing, *the substance is immaterial*. If, by a miracle, the *substance* of bread is replaced by the *substance* of Our Blessed Lord, the accidents remaining unchanged, we may see how bread may be changed into Christ's body, and how

wine may be changed into His blood. Each is, as St Thomas says, a special sort of physical presence.

There is an important thing to note. The accident of *quantity* proper to a man provides a body with the dimensions mentioned above. The accident of *quantity* proper to bread, however, belongs to the smallest that bread can be, a complex molecule (since bread is a compound of organic materials) smaller than the eye can see. The accidents of bread being retained in the body of Christ—for it is only the *substance* which is changed—the whole of Christ's substance is present in that smallest particle ! Where there *was* bread, *now* there is Christ.

“I am the living bread which has come down from heaven. Anyone who eats this bread will live for ever ; and the bread that I shall give is my flesh for the life of the world... Anyone who eats my flesh and drinks my blood has eternal life.” *John 6 : 51, 54*

Unbelievers have scoffed at the assertion that Christ could render Himself present in the Blessed Eucharist. In the above analysis St Thomas explains how their faith is justified by philosophic principle. Protestants mocked the reality by calling it 'hocus pocus', a play on the Latin words of consecration, *Hoc Est Enim Corpus Meum*, uttered by the priest. But Our Lord Himself foretold how this would happen.

Many of his disciples murmured at this, “This is a hard saying,” they said. “Who can accept it ?” And Jesus, knowing they were murmuring, said : “Does this scandalise you ? What if you were to see the Son of Man ascend to where he was before ? It is the spirit that gives life, the flesh has nothing to offer. The words I have spoken are spirit and they are life. But there are some of you who do not believe... This is why I said to you that no man can come to me unless he be drawn by my Father.” *John 6 : 61-65, 66.*



Pope Benedict XVI & the Blessed Eucharist

“The Only begotten Son of God... offered his body to God the Father on the altar of the cross as a sacrifice for our reconciliation ; and he shed his blood for our ransom and our cleansing that we might be redeemed from wretched captivity and cleansed from all sins. In order that we might always keep the memory of this great act of love, he left his body as food and his blood as drink, to be received by the faithful under the appearances of bread and wine...” [St Thomas Aquinas, *Opusc.* 57, 1-4]
