The Theological and Philosophical Premises concerning the Person in the IPS Model of Integration

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This text presents a Catholic-Christian view of the human person as a basis for the psychological sciences. Or more simply put, it is an overview of the main theological and philosophical premises featured in the Institute for the Psychological Sciences (IPS) Model of Integration, which proposes a view of the human person as informed by Christian faith and by reason. The text outlines and organizes the distinctive qualities of complex human nature and the dynamic human person. Its intention is to produce a richer and truer understanding of the person and thus promote more effective therapeutic interventions. An explication of the model, examples of theoretical and clinical applications of these premises, and a set of psychological premises are forthcoming.

Although this text provides theological and philosophical elements for a general model of the person, in actual practice, each human being remains unique. While interpersonal encounters disclose something significant about one’s personhood or identity, each person remains a mystery revealed fully only in the eyes of God. With this proviso, we have developed a synthetic, Christian definition of the person: The human person is an individual substance of a rational (intellectual), volitional (free), relational (interpersonal), embodied (including emotional), and unified (body-soul) nature; the person is called to flourishing, moral responsibility, and virtue through his or her state of life and life works and service; in an explicitly theological (Biblical and Magisterial) perspective, human persons are also created in the image of God and made by and for divine and human love, and, although suffering the effects of original, personal, and social sin, are invited to divine redemption in Christ Jesus, sanctification through the Holy Spirit, and beatitude with God the Father.

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A. A THEOLOGICAL VISION OF THE PERSON: based on Christian faith and tradition (the Bible and Catholic magisterial teaching), according to a tripartite ordering of salvation history.

The human person is...

I. CREATED. Humans are created by God “in the image” and “after the likeness” of God (Gn 1:26); “in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them” (Gn 1:27).

1. Goodness and Dignity. They are good (as is everything created by God) and have special dignity and value as persons (Gn 1:31).

2. Gift of love. Their lives (and every good thing) are ultimately a gift of love that has been given and is continually sustained by God. In turn, acceptance of the gift, gratitude, worship, service, and self-gift (love of God and of others as oneself) are appropriate responses to the original gift (Jm 1:17).

3. Unity of person. Human persons are created as a unified whole, constituted of a material body and a spiritual soul (Gn 2:7).

4. Communion with God. By knowledge and by love, humans are created as persons to enter into communion with God (Jn 17:26), who is a knowing and loving communion of persons (a Trinity of Persons).

5. Communion with Others. They are created to enter into communion and friendship also with other persons. In the beginning, Adam experienced loneliness in original solitude, which was overcome by an original unity when God created Eve to be Adam’s wife, “a helper fit for him,” and “the mother of all the living” (Gn 2:18-20). The nuptial meaning of the body (its basic structure to receive and give, to know and love) informs all vocations to married and celibate life. Being created in the image of God is the basis for all vocations.

6. Flourishing. Human persons are called to flourishing, that is perfection and holiness, through interpersonal accepting and giving of love (“be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect” Mt 5:48). Although the perfection of flourishing is reserved for heaven, human persons are called at present to flourish in the integrity of the individual (psychological, moral, and spiritual level), as well as the integrity of relationships with God and neighbor (including the distinct relationships related to one’s vocational state in life and the application of the virtues needed for that state).

7. Divine and Moral Order. Creation is marked by a divine order that humans can know in terms of the divine law (e.g. the Decalogue; Ex 20:1-17) and the natural moral law (which is the human rational participation in the eternal law, Rm 2:14). Divine law and natural law are made concrete in the Christian life. Even the happiness of the non-believer is dependent on living in accord with natural law.
II. **FALLEN.** Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, the divine likeness in mankind is wounded and disfigured (Gn 3:16-19).

1. **Disorder and Trials.** Experiences of sin, weakness, decay, death, and disorder constitute the difficulties and trials experienced in human temporal life (1 P 1:6).

2. **Consequences of Sin.** Original sin and the consequences of every personal and every other sin pit mankind against God, each human person against himself, person against person, and mankind against nature (Ps 78:19).

3. **Goodness is Foundational and Evil is not.** The tendency toward evil is a disordering of inclinations that are themselves basically good. While the wounds of evil are not foundational, the enduring goodness of God’s creation is (“where sin increased, grace abounded all the more,” Rm 5:20).

4. **Our Struggle with Evil.** Evil and sin put human flourishing in peril. Evil is a disordering and privation of what should be, according to human nature created in the image of God: emotions (hatred), thoughts (lies), choices (suicide), commitments (adultery instead of fidelity), or development (in adulthood expressing immature levels of responsibility). Evil opposes God through disobedience to the law of love, demonic obsessions, and spiritual opposition, for example. In the context of struggles with evil and the restlessness due to sin, God offers redemption and can make all things work for the good (Rm 8:28).

III. **REDEEMED.** In Jesus Christ’s Incarnation, God gives a new dignity to human nature and, through Christ’s death and resurrection, redeems mankind, calling each person to communion with God and neighbor and to interior healing and growth (Tt 2:14).

1. **Eternal Happiness and Beatitude.** Human persons are called to the communion with God that is only fully granted through divine assistance in the loving presence and beatific vision of God in the life to come. However, this communion is already received, as a foretaste in this life, through the gifts of faith, hope, and love (the theological virtues) and in the flourishing experienced in our vocations (1 Jn 3:2; Mt 5:8).

2. **Faith.** Through faith in God and union with Jesus Christ in baptism every human person is invited to become God’s son or daughter (Ga 4:5; 1 Jn 3:1) and to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Ac 2:38; Jn 14:26). They are called to partake in the redemptive work of evangelization and sanctification that Christ achieves through his Body the Church.

3. **Hope.** Sin, death and disorder are definitively overcome by Jesus’ redemption (1 Co 15:54-55). Moreover, the suffering caused by their effects can be turned to salvific purposes (Rm 5:3). Supported by hope in the midst of suffering (spiritual sacrifice), human persons participate in overcoming the effects of sin through the redemptive
work of Christ, who has promised the guidance of the Holy Spirit, eternal beatitude with God, the resurrection of the body, and the other promises of the Kingdom of God at the end of time (Rm 6:3-6; Mt 4:17).

4. Love. The whole law and the prophets depend on two commandments: to love God, “with your whole heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind […] and to love your neighbor as yourself” (Mt 22:37-40; see also Dt 6:5; Lev 19:18; Mk 12:30; Lk 17:33). Jesus Christ makes mankind known to itself, making clear the human supreme calling through his definitive gift of self, which is love (GS 22); having a likeness to God, man “cannot find himself except through a sincere gift of himself” (GS 24). Self-gift often involves a form of self-sacrifice.

5. Nature and grace. Human nature always remains weakened by sin (“concupiscence”—disordered emotions, weakness of reason and will), but can be assisted, and in certain ways healed and divinized, by divine grace (1 Th 5:23). Persons can become holy, through a life of Christian faith, hope, and love as well as the other infused virtues. They can become “participants in the divine nature” (2 P 1:4).

6. Vocation. A ‘vocation’ is often understood as a religious phenomenon, in which people respond to a ‘calling’ from God to fulfill a spiritual function or life work. From a Christian perspective, vocations or callings take three basic forms: (i) a person’s call to relationship with God—through holiness; (ii) a person’s committed state in life—single, married, ordained, or religious; and (iii) a person’s work and service—through paid and volunteer efforts. They are all forms of self gift and are all graced transformations of human capacities. (On the philosophical underpinning of vocations, see Premise VI.1-4.)

7. Vocation to Holiness. The common vocation to holiness is based upon the call in this world to a life of love of God and of neighbor as oneself, and to the life of good works, which God prepared beforehand, for each person to walk in (Lk 10:27; 1 Th 4:3; Ep 2:10). God gives to each a personal vocation that involves the unique and unrepeatable role God calls each person to play in carrying out the divine plan (2 Tm 1:9; LG n. 39).

8. States of Life. All people start life as single and may continue their lives as single in love and service to God and neighbor. Nonetheless, there are also committed vocations to a state in life, that is, to commit oneself to be married, ordained, or consecrated (religious). All these states involve collaboration in God’s work of sanctifying oneself and other people (1 P 5:1-4; LG, n. 41-43).

9. Work and Service. Through a third level of vocation, human persons engage in work and service, paid or not, that not only serves their personal flourishing and sanctification, but also contributes to the good of the family, other persons, and of the world (Gn 2:15; Mt 25:20). It is through such work that one can exercise the divine command to reach even beyond one’s friends and family to love one’s neighbor, to welcome the stranger, to exercise justice for the poor, and to do good to one’s enemy.
10. *Prayer and Sacraments*. Each person is called to communion with God through prayer. Religious practices of prayer unite individuals to community and to God. Because of the importance of the whole person, worship involves the use of the body (through silence and song, standing and kneeling, eating and drinking) and relationship (through greetings and signs of peace, through blessings and communal responses). In this way, our body participates in and even knows the faith. God offers not only eternal salvation but also temporal support, healing, and guidance through the sacraments, which are available to Christian believers. The sacraments are the seven efficacious signs of divine grace, instituted by Jesus Christ, offered through the work of the Holy Spirit, and entrusted to the Church (2 Co 5:17; Lk 22:19-20; CCC 1210). God’s grace is not limited to the sacraments and includes the baptism of desire.

This Christian theological vision of the person (outlined through the premises in sections A.I, A.II, and A.III) refers to an ontological, existential, and teleological reality for all temporal human life. The following section addresses metaphysical or ontological, epistemological, and ethical issues in a synthetic approach to the person that is grounded in human experience and reason from a perspective of Christian philosophy.

**B. A CHRISTIAN PHILOSOPHICAL VISION OF THE PERSON**: based on human experience, reason, and Christian philosophical tradition in dialogue with the sciences and other forms of knowledge.

The human person is…

**IV. A PERSONAL UNITY.** The spiritual soul, created by God, is the animating principle and substantial form of the living human body (Ps 139:13; CCC 362-368).

1. *Human Dignity*. Every living human being has basic dignity and a complete human soul, including human intellectual powers, even if they are at times not able to express them because of disorders or lack of development (Gn 1:31; Vatican II, Gaudium et spes, 14-15).

2. *Body-soul unity as gift of life*. A human person is a complete, wholly unified, living being constituted of a material body and an immaterial, incorruptible and immortal soul. The body-soul unity constitutes the gift of life that is always dependent on God. Since the person’s spiritual intellect subsists in a body, without being reduced to the bodily aspect per se, a person’s soul survives the body’s death. The human soul is so deeply united to the body that it is considered the substantial form of the body (Gn 1 & 2; Council of Vienne, DS 902; Pius XII, HG: DS 3896). The deepest aspect of the person is sometimes called the ‘soul,’ the ‘spirit,’ the ‘heart,’ or the ‘mind’ (Mt 22:37-40; Lk 10:27; Mk 12:30; Dt 6:5).

3. *Personalist Norm*. The person is a self-possessing subject with distinct personal ends and should not be used instrumentally as a mere object or as a mere means to someone else’s ends (Mt 7:12).
4. **Multiple capacities.** Animate human nature includes multiple capacities at the organic (vegetative and motoric), cognitive (sensation and reason or rational intellect), and affective (emotion and will or volitional intellect) levels of the person (Lk 10:27).

5. **Wholeness.** A unified notion of the whole person, on the one hand, includes a transcendent and personal dimension and recognizes that flourishing (through virtue and vocation) requires an interconnection between the four domains (relationality, embodiment and emotion, reason, and will) (Pr 20:7). This view of wholeness, on the other hand, avoids distorted understandings of the person that develop as a result of individualistic, materialistic, reductionistic, relativistic, deterministic, dualistic, or behavioristic conceptualizations.

V. **FULFILLED IN VIRTUE.** Human flourishing involves a teleological (purposeful) development of the person’s capacities and relationships, through virtue, vocation, and related practices that aim at the good life.

1. **Natural Inclinations.** Human capacities express basic positive inclinations toward existence (being), truth (knowledge), goodness (love), relationship (family, friends, and society), and beauty (integrity, ordering, and clarity). These natural inclinations serve as a basis for understanding natural law (Rm 1 & 2) and for natural human virtues, callings, and flourishing.

2. **Inclined toward flourishing and God.** From a Christian philosophical perspective, every human person, from the first moment of existence, grows toward temporal flourishing, moral goodness, and ultimate flourishing. This teleological movement shapes human life from conception until death. The human person has a natural capacity to know that there is an ultimate source and end of human life (the creator God); in this way, humans express a natural desire for God (Mt 5:8; Ac 17:27; Vatican II, Gaudium et spes, 19).

3. **Development over time.** The person comes into existence when his or her living body-soul unity comes into existence at conception. The unfolding of the multiple capacities of human nature is subject to development over time through biological growth as well as through family and social experiences, which prepare for growth understood in terms of virtues and vocations. This mature development is manifest in relationships, especially marriage and family, friends and community, work and service, and religion. Through this moral and spiritual development, the person seeks to overcome the divided heart, social discord, and religious indifference (1 Co13:11).

4. **Health and illness.** Health can be conceived in terms of integral human development. It is a function of the unique unfolding of bodily, mental, and spiritual capacities (i.e., their realization at the proper time to the proper degree). Illness is a function of some privation or deterioration of integral human development (i.e., the absence or loss of some proper fulfillment of one or more of these three capacities) (Ps 1:3).
5. **Virtues.** Virtues are distinguished by the capacities that they perfect and the ends that they attain. For example, the virtue of prudence (served by conscience) perfects the human inclination to truth and the intellectual capacity to attain reasonable goals through fitting action, as when a mother and father take counsel, make decisions, and act concretely in order to raise their children to be honest and caring. The nature of the person demands that virtues be expansive and interconnected, for example, that prudence also be loving (1 Co 13:1-3).

6. **Types of virtue.** Virtues perfect human capacities, as they aim at full flourishing. They are differentiated in three major types. First, theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity or love) are divine gifts that also influence the other virtues (see premise III.2-4, on faith, hope, and love, this chapter), for example, as when theological hope encourages a person’s confidence in daily activities. Second, the natural virtues are commonly acquired. These virtues are called cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, courage, and temperance or self-control), which group related virtues or character strengths, such as patience and perseverance. Third, the intellectual virtues are theoretical (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge or science) or practical (art and practical wisdom). In addition to the above three-part presentation, a simple list is also used to identify virtues whose importance is sometimes overlooked, such as forgiveness, humility, obedience, creativity, and piety.

7. **Connection of the virtues through practices.** The basic virtues, associated virtues, and practices create the interconnected paths of intellectual, moral, and spiritual development. For example, courage (a basic virtue) and hope and perseverance (two of its associated virtues) must be formed through particular practices such as training in dealing with emergency situations. While the virtues primarily perfect one of the human capacities (listed below), they interrelate in a dynamic connection of intellectual, moral, and theological strengths (1 Co 13:13; Ga 5:22-26).

8. **Moral Disorder and Evil.** Often people make evil choices as if they were good, because of prior distorted interpretations and actions (defensive interpretations, denials of compromise, rationalization of ideologies, etc.). Due to moral disorders at personal and social levels, humans tend to inordinately seek pleasure, power, and recognition. For example, distorted emotions, cognitions, or volitions impede flourishing as when fear results in the failure to act rightly or anger blocks true love and justice (Ga 5:19-21).

9. **Vice.** The Christian tradition identifies pride as the root of all sin and the seven capital sins or deadly vices as: vanity, envy, hatred (and wrath), sloth, greed, gluttony, and lust. In the face of moral evil and vice, human beings are in need not only of development, but also of healing, forgiveness, and reconciliation at personal, interpersonal, and religious levels (Lk 15; Mt 1:21).

10. **Prevention.** Integral human development in virtue helps to prevent and overcome inadequacies in moral judgment such as relativism (the denial of objective truth), emotivism (the construal of ethical judgments simply as expressions of positive or negative emotions about a thing), subjectivism (the affirmation that a person’s perception or knowledge is necessarily correct), consequentialism (the determination
of goodness by an act’s consequences alone and the denial that any acts are intrinsically evil), and materialism (the reduction of the person to biological determinants, such as genetic and neural processes).

VI. FULFILLED THROUGH VOCATION. Human flourishing also involves a teleological (purposeful) development through three types of vocation: (1) distinct responses to goodness, (2) different committed states of life, and (3) work and service.

1. Calling or Vocation. In the strict sense, having a ‘vocation’ means the personal response to the call of goodness and truth that characterizes a person’s life globally, but especially through the personal development of the “gift of self.” The basic notion of a calling comes from a source: from the world, a person, or God that attracts as intrinsically good. For example, people report being attracted to a “soul mate,” committing themselves in marriage, and, thus, finding their true calling. The callings are perfective of the human person (For an explicitly theological treatment of these callings or vocations, see Premise III.6.a-c). (Dt 6:18; Mt 19:16-21)

2. Calling to goodness. Each person is attracted to and perfected through existence (being), truth (knowledge), goodness (love), relationship (family, friends, and society), and beauty (integrity, ordering, and clarity). Such goods underlie human experiences of the world, which is, nonetheless, not only a place of wonder and good, but also of fatigue and evil. A fitting human response involves, first, affirming the goodness and beauty that one finds and, then, contributing to the goodness through choices, before experiencing some sense of flourishing in the act, e.g., being compassionate instead of cruel; defending the weak instead of taking advantage of their plight; helping families in need; and enriching human culture. Such responses to the many faces of goodness contribute both to one’s everyday and ultimate flourishing. (Mt 5:2-12)

3. Calling to Committed States of Life. Through a second level of calling, a human being responds to natural and transcendent desires to enter into committed states of life: (1) to commit oneself to a husband or a wife in order to form a family through the marriage bond; (2) to commit oneself to ultimate goodness in service of God and others through ordained or religious commitments; as well as (3) to seek, in integrity of life, to contribute one’s intelligence, goodwill, and resources to others as a single person. (Gn 2; Eph 5)

4. Calling to Work and Service. In a third level of calling, a person engages in diverse types of work and service that one must do in order to flourish personally and to contribute to the well-being of other members of the family and society. For example, people report being attracted to the beauty, purposefulness, and useful nature of work with wood, committing themselves to learn and practice carpentry in an honest manner, while creating goods for others, and, thus, finding meaning in their call to work and service (Gn 2:15; Mt 25:20).
Although the human body and spiritual soul are naturally inseparable and purposeful and always in relationship with other persons, for the sake of analysis we distinguish the following structures or capacities of human nature, which are available to the person in their search for purpose and flourishing:

VII. INTERPERSONALLY RELATIONAL. Humans are naturally social with inclinations and needs for family, friendship, life in society, and other interpersonal relationships. As such, human persons are:

1. Receptive and Interpersonal. They are intrinsically receptive and oriented towards other persons. This is expressed through communicative acts of receiving and giving. Furthermore, social acts serve personal flourishing only inasmuch as they serve the good of other persons and the common good (1 Jn 3:17-18).

2. Centered in love. The highest expression of interpersonal communication is the self-giving love that is also known as the virtue of charity or friendship-love. While having a unity of purpose, love takes different forms depending on the type of interpersonal relationship at hand. It informs and interconnects all the other virtues, while being served by them as well, especially the virtues that concern relationships, such as justice, religion, chastity, courage, and obedience (1 Jn 4:8) (see premise X.3, this chapter, on the “Types of Human Love”).

3. Relationship with God. They have a natural desire to know, love, and be united with God, who is not only the creator (first cause) and sustainer (efficient cause) of human life, but also its ultimate end (final cause). It is therefore fitting that human persons enter into religious practices (such as prayer, rituals, scriptural readings and sacraments, and other expressions of faith, hope, love) in order to worship, respect, and love God (Jn 1:12-13).

4. Spousal relationships and the spousal meaning of the body. The nature of natural marriage is built upon the complementarity of the sexes and an attraction to the opposite sex (see premise VIII.2, this chapter, either male or female). Natural marriage involves a life-long covenantal commitment and total gift of self (union). This love is formalized in monogamous marriage that is open to the gift of new life (procreation) and committed to the goods of family. In the sacrament of marriage, God provides graces for the spouses to face the challenges of intimacy, fidelity, and family. Some persons commit themselves to celibate self-giving in order to love and serve God and other people (Gn 2:18-24).

5. Family. Interpersonal relationality is first developed in the family, which is the basic unit of society. Humans have both a natural need for family and natural inclinations to establish families, i.e., for the goods of marriage and the procreation and education of children (Lk 2:51).

6. Friends. Human friendship contributes to human fulfillment. It underlies the relationships of affection, companionship, and intimacy that are grounded on a mutual gift of self and a common sharing of the good, in ways other than through sexual love (Jn 15:15).
7. Communities. Humans are situated in a community of persons, expressed in socio-cultural, civic-political and faith-based contexts, all of which shape persons but do not totally determine them. Humans contribute to community by working and expressing responsibility for others. Friendship serves as the bonding force for community (Eph. 4:4-13; Ps 122:1-2).

VIII. EMBODIED (BODILY). Human persons are embodied (bodily). Their bodies are fully personal, and their persons fully embodied. As such, human persons are:

1. Organic living beings. Humans are capable of bodily health and flourishing. They possess a natural inclination to preserve and promote their bodily well-being. Bodily health (at its different levels) can be recognized to influence, without being equated to, overall personal flourishing (Ps 16:9).

2. Either male or female. Males and females are complementary embodiments of human nature. Sex differences are not mere social conventions. While equal in dignity and worth, masculine and feminine persons are neither identical nor mutually exclusive at the levels of the physical body and spiritual soul (including emotional and psychological characteristics). Their complementarity has a nuptial significance, which is revealed and actualized through a “disinterested gift of self,” typified not only in marital sexual love but also in celibate forms of self giving. Sex differences reach beyond the marital relationship and the home, inasmuch as there are masculine and feminine characteristics that influence behavior in society (Ep 5:28-33).

3. Beings with sensation, perception and memory. Through sensation, memory, imagination, and the evaluative sense persons perceive, evaluate, and interact with the sensible world around them. Human knowledge, whether sensory or intellectual, begins with sense perceptions (Rm 1:20).

4. Emotional. In response to perceptions, memories, imagination, and evaluations about their situations, they experience emotional appraisals (responses and reactions) and are aware of their emotions. Although often not initially responsible for their emotions, through formation, humans can develop enduring emotional dispositions ordered in accord with what is truly good for them. By using reason and will, the ethical level of this education of the emotions involves the moral virtues (tempered love or temperance and courage) and their associated virtues and character strengths, such as natural hope (initiative), patience, perseverance, integrity, modesty, chastity (Jn 2:15; Jn 11:35).

5. Motoric. Persons move themselves and are moved in response to cognitions (pre-discursive, intellectual, and intuitive), and affections (emotional, intellectual, and intuitive) regarding things to be sought and avoided (2 Tm 4:7).

6. Culturally, historically and ecologically located. They are situated in history and culture. They shape and are shaped, but not totally determined, by their sociocultural and physical environment (Ga 4:4; Lk 2:1-2).
IX. RATIONAL. Human persons are intelligent and actively seek truth and freedom. They have different levels and types of intelligence and knowledge.

1. Rational inclinations. Humans have rational inclinations to seek and know the truth and to find flourishing (Jn 8:31-32).

2. Objects of knowledge. Humans are capable of knowing: (a) themselves, others and God (Rm 1:19-20); (b) the created order (Ps 8:6-7); (c) truth, including divinely revealed truth (Lk 8:10); (d) the beauty of all creation and of God (Ps 8:1-2); and (e) good and evil, and that good is to be done and pursued and evil avoided (Jn 14:15).

3. Sense and intellectual knowledge. Human knowledge is sensory (including instinct), perceptual, cognitive, and intellectual, the latter of which can be intuitive (insight), discursive (reasoning), and infused (graced). Self-knowledge and knowledge of the world is supported by bottom-up and top-down influences, even from sources that are originally non-conscious. Examples of the latter are instinct (sexual urge) and natural inclinations (to family), which display bottom-up influences. Examples of the former are of two sorts. One involves the natural top-down influences, such as moral decisions that reject temptations. The other involves graced top-down influences, such as intuitions (about divine mercy that impact one’s being merciful) and other movements of grace (inspiration that supports giving of counsel) (Jn 7:32).

4. Types of belief. Belief, in general, requires the witness of a trusted authority. It involves assent, choice, or judgment that first arises from cognition (sensation or thought) or affect (emotion or will) based on a trusted source. On the one hand, an everyday belief involves some intelligible object (e.g. a friend saying: “I am suffering”) and an affirmation concerning the authority found in oneself or the other person (e.g. I have confidence in my friend). On the other hand, religious belief or faith is directly a gift of grace that entails that we “ponder with assent” God and his authority (and related intelligible objects, e.g. Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ and head of his body the Church, and “The human person is created in the image of God”). Religious faith is communicated indirectly through witnesses (e.g., Sacred Scripture and Tradition) (2 Cor 5:7).

5. Self-knowledge and self control. Through a realist knowledge of oneself and the world, human persons can knowingly choose to influence their emotions indirectly and their behavior directly. The aim of developing rational beliefs and virtues is to aid the person in making free choices that contribute to their flourishing (Eph 5:8-9).

6. Rational virtues. Rational inclinations can be further developed in knowledge, beliefs, and enduring dispositions of mind called intellectual virtues at theoretical and practical levels (wisdom, understanding, and knowledge or science). On the moral side, right practical reason, concerning self and others, is manifested through the cardinal virtue of prudence and its associated virtues that aid in discerning and counseling, adjudicating, and performing moral action. Moral norms guide human judgment (conscience) and action in accordance with good and away from evil. These norms are rooted in the natural law and divine law (Jn 14:26; Rm 2:15).
7. **Beauty.** Humans are aesthetic and seek beauty. They are drawn to the deeper levels of beauty, as found in beautiful persons, actions, or things, through luminosity, harmony, and integrity. Beauty has these qualities that are expressed in culture, creation, and God. The experience of beauty also elicits a thirst to contemplate the ultimate source of beauty. (Ps 27:4).

X. **VOLITIONAL AND FREE.** Humans are the subject of moral action, capable of responsible volition and free-choice.

1. **Responsibility.** To a large degree, human persons are capable of responsibility for their own actions concerning themselves and in regard to others (Jn 8:10-11).

2. **Self determination.** They can act so as to shape their moral characters, that is, the enduring dispositions of their minds, wills, and affect (Rm 12:2).

3. **Types of human love.** They are capable of loving natural and divine goods and persons. Although exhibiting a basic common structure, human love is manifest distinctly in affection (storge), friendship (philia), romance, courtship, and marriage (eros), and the virtue of charity (agape), which can purify and rightly order all the other loves (1 Co 13:4-13).

4. **Creativity.** Like God (by analogy), they are able to conceive of and deliberately bring into existence things that once were not, although not from nothing, i.e. not ex nihilo (Gn 2:15).

5. **Limitation.** Although free, humans are limited by multiple factors and to varying degrees. These limitations include the influence of different disorders and effects of sin (Rm 7:19).

6. **Volitional Inclinations.** Human persons have natural volitional tendencies or inclinations to actualize diverse human goods and, through grace and faith, divine goods. Even in the midst of the challenges of negative influences of family, friends, and society, humans have a natural tendency toward virtues related to love and justice (Mt 6:19-21).

7. **Capacity for Freedom.** The human capacity for freedom can be developed in two ways. The “freedom for excellence” involves growth in the human capacities to know truth and reality, to choose good, and to avoid evil. Freedom for excellence is intimately linked to truth and cannot be reduced simply to the second type of freedom, which involves attaining “freedom from” psychological disorders or from outside influences. The flowering of true freedom requires both growth and healing as found in the intellectual and moral virtues, especially justice, self-control, courage, and forgiveness (as well as in the theological virtues, as discussed in Premise III) (Phil 4:8-9).