

# ***HEALING THE RIFT? CHRISTIANS AND ECOLOGY***

***Mary Taylor***

*[An unabridged version of the article that appeared in Second Spring 14, 2011, 17-23.]*

*A further implication of the doctrine of creation from nothing is that all of God's creatures are intimately connected to one another in an echo of the primordial coinherence of the Trinitarian persons. Since all creation is centered in God, all finite things, despite their enormous differences in size, position, quality, or metaphysical status, are linked together as ontological siblings. When Francis of Assisi spoke of 'brother sun and sister moon,' he was using language not only poetically evocative but metaphysically precise. – Robert Barron [\[1\]](#)*

## **I INTRODUCTION**

When we think of the antagonism and disagreements that obtain between Christians and “Greens,” we usually think of issues such as animal rights versus human rights, or population control and the push by Europe and North America of “abortion imperialism” and “contraceptive colonialism” to countries of the Southern Hemisphere. Or perhaps we remember Lynn White’s 1967 essay, “The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis.” Using deliberately provocative language (“Christianity ...insisted that it is God’s will that man exploit nature”), White traced the ecological crisis back to the presumed call of Genesis to “dominate” the earth (a misconstrual of “to have dominion”).

It is unlikely that we think of Martin Heidegger’s negative critique of Western science, metaphysics, and technology. That critique had such an overwhelming and profound effect on philosophies of nature, ecology and the environment that it often passes completely unnoticed, like the air we breathe. It entered the thought processes, the concepts, the very foundations of almost all schools of environmental thought. Generally only academic environmental writers reference Heidegger, and only a very small percentage of those have engaged in first-hand critical studies, but his work has entered the mainstream by repeated second-hand, third-hand, (and so on) accounts. Popular environmental authors - who perhaps have never heard of Heidegger - repeat his concepts without knowing it. [\[2\]](#) He even has a part to play in the thought of those who repudiate him, since that repudiation shapes some of their discourse.

Though his critique of technology and his re-invigorating of ontology were praised by many,

the key issue I want to concentrate on is his view of creation. Heidegger said, “One must start by rejecting the first article [of Christianity], that the world was created by God, that what exists is merely an artifact, something made by a divine craftsman. **This was the origin of the false devaluation of the world, contempt for the world, and denial of the world.**”[\[3\]](#) His contempt for what he sees as the understanding of a Creator as merely “First Cause” is palpable:

Abandonment of being is strongest at that place where it is most decidedly hidden. That happens where beings have – and had to – become most ordinary and familiar. That happened first in Christianity and its dogma, which explains all being in their origin as *ens creatum* [created beings], where the creator is the most certain and all beings are the effects of this most extant cause. But cause-effect relationship is the most ordinary, most crude, and most immediate, what is employed by all human calculation and lostness to beings in order to explain something, i.e. to push it into the clarity of the ordinary and familiar. [\[4\]](#)

True Being, he says, has now been obscured, seen *only* in relation to created beings as their First or Highest Cause.[\[5\]](#) Being’s dynamic nature has been congealed into static presence. We have forgotten Being by mistaking the ontical for the ontological, [\[6\]](#) and, as so many ecologists repeat, we have created a two-tier or two-level reality, a transcendental, distant, supernatural Above and an immanent, natural Below – the source of all our problems, demanding a solution in re-discovering that the two realms are one, a single “identity,” whether that identity is naturalistic or pantheistic.

Some ecologists are quite clear about their debt to Heidegger; he has been called “the metaphysician of ecologism.”[\[7\]](#) Arne Naess, father of the Deep Ecology movement, said that he wanted to express what Heidegger said in a simpler way.[\[8\]](#) Deep Ecologists George Sessions and Bill Devall included as a contribution that Heidegger made to ecology “his indictment of Western philosophy since Plato.”[\[9\]](#) For eco-phenomenologist Ingrid Stefanovic, “Heidegger himself proposed that phenomenology is ontology. To explore sustainability from a phenomenological perspective means, therefore, to examine the ontological foundations of environmental thinking.”[\[10\]](#) Michael Zimmerman agrees with Heidegger. Roman dogma, he claims, states “as ‘revealed truth’ that creatures are products.”[\[11\]](#)

Ecologist Bruce Foltz summarizes Heidegger’s position on “ontotheology”[\[12\]](#) and its relation to the ecological crisis:

Ontotheology is problematic because it has substituted for the “divine God” the “god of philosophy,” an ontic god, a highest being, whose primary role is to lead and legitimate our understanding of an ontic realm: nature as *ens creatum* [created things, created beings]. Especially important for environmental philosophy is Heidegger’s claim that this ontotheological concept of God as *prima causa* has not only denigrated (and indeed, blasphemed) the divine God, **but degraded and “de-natured” nature as well, “dis-enchanted” (Entzauberung) and even “de-deified” (Entgotterung ) nature, freeing it for the new “enchantment” (Verzauberung) of technology.** If what is wrong with metaphysics is ontotheology, and if what is wrong with ontotheology is this understanding of the relation of God and nature, then at the same time it seems clear that **what is discreditable about metaphysics is epitomized in the medieval scholasticism where these concepts come of age and assume a predominance that persists throughout modernity.**[\[13\]](#)

A clearer statement of the hostility in which creation is held can scarcely be imagined.

## II OVERCOMING ANTAGONISM

The antagonism between secular and catholic ecological views seems impossible to overcome. But at least part of the negative effect of White’s essay has been softened through dialogue on the real meaning of stewardship; secular ecologist J. Baird Callicott, something of an *eminence grise* in the field of environmental ethics, says:

I think that those who have argued that the stewardship interpretation is better supported by the text [of Genesis] than White’s despotic interpretation have entirely won their case....I would like to further say that the Judeo-Christian stewardship environmental ethic is elegant and powerful.[\[14\]](#)

Keeping in mind that alongside the similarities are greater dissimilarities, further dialogue might begin with what Catholics have in common with eco-philosophers. The latter would be very surprised indeed, as they see Catholics primarily as world-denying Gnostic dualists supposedly trapped by a totalizing discourse of the kind postmoderns repudiate as “metanarratives.” Many eco-philosophers have an extraordinary mastery of their own fields and an impressive understanding of other fields – until it comes to Catholic philosophy, theology, and history. What they condemn, mistakenly seeing it as Catholic belief – an other-worldly, anti-material, rule-bound dualism – is rightly condemned by Catholic teaching as well, and what they praise as opposed to Catholic thinking – a relational, iconic vision of the earth that embraces both the immanent and the transcendent – is rightly praised by Catholic teaching. Even those who should know better, who concentrate on “eco-theology” or “ecological spirituality,” most often use a generic Christianity as

their foil. Catholicism is either left out of the picture entirely: if it is included, it is a Catholicism emptied of all its rich patrimony; or they borrow only from the writings of certain mystical saints, or stories of St. Francis, unmoored from their own complex history, traditions, and sources, and therefore turned into an abstraction, a kind of Rorschach ink blot into which eco-philosophers project their own visions. Some studies deal with pragmatic social justice applications that follow from, for example, isolated papal statements mentioning the environment.

Never referenced is the broad and deep watercourse of Catholic ontology and phenomenology: it is as if the entire 20<sup>th</sup> century of Catholic thought, with the profound work of Stein, Guardini, Pieper, *The Acting Person* and the *Theology of the Body*, the towering achievement of Hans Urs von Balthasar,[\[15\]](#) and so much more, never happened; to put the matter simply, in every instance ecologists confuse neo-Scholasticism or the “manual theology” that had its heyday when Ratzinger, Balthasar and Heidegger were in school with Catholicism itself.[\[16\]](#)

All those positions can be repudiated: Catholics, like postmoderns, reject the hegemony of calculative, instrumental reason alone; a representational, rather than participatory, epistemology that requires a mediator between mind and the world; ethics as reduced to Kantian moralism; Being as a static, ontic *concept* rather than an event; a “two-tier” division of the world in which God is remote. But an understanding of creation is at the heart of all of them.

### **III FIRST CAUSE**

Those who see God as a First Cause in the Heideggerian sense understand, as G.K. Chesterton would say, neither “First” nor “Cause.” The *ex nihilo* of *creation ex nihilo* has proven to be most difficult notion to grasp because creation, and with it, “first,” and “cause,” is always reduced to a purely materialist understanding, akin to misinterpreting the creation stories in Genesis as scientific accounts. The grip the materialistic understanding has on the mind has proven extremely difficult to break; as with an optical illusion, it seems the path of least resistance, and it is notoriously difficult not to revert back to it.[\[17\]](#)

Regarding “First:” the materialist presupposition of ecologists is that creation is something that happened once in the distant past, almost as if there were a *positive* “nothing” or emptiness awaiting material to fill it up. Stephen Hawking said that if the universe had a beginning, the supposition of creation might make sense, but “if the universe is really self-contained...it would have no beginning nor end: it would simply be” in which case creation was a meaningless addition. [18] This entirely misses the point; creation is not “the thing that happened first,” as if God made the world as a factory stamps out a product. Creation instead is an *ongoing relationship*, not a one-time episode lost in the mists of time. Aquinas understood that whether the universe is eternal or not, it needs a creator, and – against ecologists who see Catholicism as creating an abyss between immanence and transcendence, preferring *identity*, that is, the material immanence of emergence or the spiritual immanence of pantheism – the creator is immanent precisely *because* he is transcendent, in *unity* with creation precisely in his *difference* from it:

God is present in all things, but not as part of their nature, nor as a modification of their being, but in the way something which acts is in contact with what it acts upon... Since God is by nature sheer Being, it must be he who causes being in creatures as his characteristic effect...God has this effect on created realities not only when they first begin to be, but as long as they are kept in being, as light is caused in the air by the sun as long as the air remains illuminated. So, for as long as anything is, God must be present to it in the way that it has being. But ‘to-be’ is that which is the most intimate to each thing, and what most profoundly inheres in all things: everything else about any reality is potential compared to ‘to be’. So God must be in everything, and in the most interior way.[19]

It would undoubtedly surprise emergent[20] ecologists to hear that their claim that “there is a way in which the universe is re-enchanted each time one takes in its continuous coming into being,” [21] which they look at as unique to themselves, is at the very heart of the Catholic vision of Creation.

Regarding “Cause,” modernity has reduced the term from the beautiful and luminous array of formal, final, efficient and material causation to a mechanistic “pushing and pulling” alone. Creation is seen as the transition of one state to another: the arrangement or rearrangement of matter and energy. The creation stories – including scientific ones – of emanations, emergence, division, etc., all deal with a stage *after* the original question of why there is something rather than nothing. All of them presuppose *something*, some substratum, being there before a change is undergone.

Even Stephen Hawking's claim that "Spontaneous creation is the reason there is something rather than nothing,"[22] is still the claim of "a spontaneity latent within an original matter,"[23] even if that "matter" is conceived as "negative gravitational energy."

But it is more than simply "backing up" creation by one more step, on the same quantitative level. There is pertinent and intriguing section in Canto II of Dante's *Divine Comedy* which readers might tend to dismiss as an example of bad science that slows down the narrative. They would be mistaken to do so. Dante has asked Beatrice about moon spots – why the moon appears lighter in some areas and darker in others. Dante's theory that it might be due to the varying density and rarity of parts of the moon is shot down by Beatrice when she points out that during an eclipse, none of the sun's light passes through the opaque disk of the moon; she also describes what is perhaps the first optical experiment in poetry. When she is ready to answer, she says:

Observe well now how I advance  
through this pass to the truth which you seek,  
so that hereafter you may know how to take the ford alone.[24]

This "pass" - a discourse on the principle of diversity as being not quantitative, but qualitative - is a pass skipped over at one's peril. The purpose is to wean the mind away from a strictly material form of explanation, to dispel the trance that sees only quantitative differences, not the qualitative ones necessary for the mind's opening up and breaking forth into the fathomless light of the mystery of reality. It is a Thomistic-inspired polemic against the reduction of all explanations to one (quantitative) type; as Aquinas said,

Eliminated hereby is the opinion of the ancient natural philosophers who held that there was but one cause, a material one, from which all things were made by rarity and density. For these thinkers were obliged to say that the distinction of things which we observe in the universe resulted not from the ordering intention of some principle, but from the fortuitous movement of matter.[25]

Creation concerns not the accidental motion of matter in this stage or that, but a *principle*.

"Creation" is widened to encompass the plenitude of meanings, circling each other in an interpenetrating and reciprocal relation, a unity-in-difference. Creation includes the communication

of not only of being but of likeness, as (analogously) the sun communicates likeness to a plant. A green plant does not resemble the sun, but there is a communication of likeness in that if the sun is removed, the plant withers and dies. This is not likeness “in any strict sense of figural resemblance” but rather a “life-line that communicates a presence,” thereby establishing an “analogy of community.” [26] Without denying the emergent claim that all creatures share in matter and energy, the state of being “ontological siblings” can be seen as deriving from the fact that all entities share in *act*, that by which something comes into being, and by participation in the Transcendentals of Truth, Beauty, and Goodness, through cause understood as the communication of likeness.

#### **IV GIFT**

The Catholic vision of Creation is something very different from what Heidegger and the ecologists imagined. Rather than the cartoon-like characterization of creation, with that notion being the cause of the environmental crisis through the belief that a (conceptual) First Cause fabricated “products” which then supposedly can be dominated, manipulated, or used up, the notion of Creation as a *gift* is at the heart of solidarity with other persons and with “brother sun and sister moon.” It means that persons are already united at the deepest level, ontologically, not merely physically or biologically or socially, with all that exists, bound together with all of creation, with stones, plants, animals, the land, sea, and stars; second, it means that the mutuality of participatory giving and receiving draws the parties into a relationship deeper than the merely extrinsic:

When the true God creates, he doesn’t manipulate, dominate, or wrestle into submission anything outside of himself, but rather through a sheerly generous and non-violent act of love, he gives rise to the totality of finite reality. And because this act is *ex nihilo*, there is literally nothing that stands between God’s causal presence and that which he makes. Therefore, even as he remains ontologically distinct from the world, God is, to paraphrase Augustine, closer to creation than creation is to itself. In short, the *communio* universe nests non-violently in the primordial *communio* of the Trinity. [27]

The creature may feel himself or herself to be separate from God, but this is not the separation of a product from its manufacturer; it is the “separation” of a family member, of newborn child from its mother, and it is “precisely when its essential finitude shows it to be something quite different from God that it knows that, as a real being, it has had bestowed upon it

that most extravagant gift - participation in the real being of God,” [28] and hence with all one’s “ontological siblings.”

The true act of giving is not like the “exchange” of a contract or business deal, nor is it a bribe, nor something for which one expects a return: its impetus is gratuitousness and freedom, not necessity. Kenneth Schmitz says that the concern is not with the “physics of transference” – how an object passes from one to another – but with an internal change, an interior bond, a new relationship. “The giver does not hand over something outside himself but under his control; rather... [through] his own conscious intention as he attends to the receiver...he makes **himself** present to the receiver.” [29] What if a parent gives a child the means (life, a home) for the child to give a small gift probably of little material value, to its parent? In a sense this is really a “giving back” of what has already been received. Does this unequal relationship somehow make the gift meaningless? No; the very “valuelessness” of the gift makes the act a transparent act of the child’s presence and love. What about a situation not of relative inequality, as between parent and child, but absolute inequality, when the donor, Schmitz continues, institutes *the whole order*? “Now in this situation, nothing can be introduced from outside as from an independent source; the situation is *creation ex nihilo*.” [30]

At the heart of the vision of the creation as gift is the sense of *the radical contingency and dependency of all things*. Though at one point this dependency may have been seen by some ecophilosophers as the very reason for the loss of the world’s integrity (for how can it be integral if it is dependent? Wouldn’t dependency undermine autonomy?), oddly enough, contingency and dependency have been re-discovered, and this is another point of contact with emergent ecologists (although, again, the “dissimilarity” is greater):

Emergentism offers fresh ways to think about contingency. Whereas contingent is often understood to mean accidental or fortuitous, its etymology (*contigere*, to touch, meet) carries the sense of dependency, of something being conditional on something else, and this certainly maps on to the core understanding of the emergentist perspective. [31]

Emergent ecologists would be surprised to learn that these are not “fresh ways” but very ancient

ways.[\[32\]](#) They imagine that most believers are locked into a dualism that includes “conventional transcendence frameworks” because they fear that “losing one's grip on the Absolute and falling into unredeemed time is the recipe for absurdity,”[\[33\]](#) the sense of meaningless explored in 20<sup>th</sup> century novels of absurdity. That is, unenlightened people supposedly think that without a grounding in the transcendent conceived of as some distant, supersensible, and authoritarian Above, there is only contingent meaninglessness. These ecologists believe that “people cannot recognize and live by the implications of contingency” and “until we grasp our radical contingency, we have small chance of really understanding the nature of what is at stake.”[\[34\]](#) But the truth is, Catholics know that the dilemma of choosing between absolute, value-laden transcendence and meaningless contingency is a false one, and that, in fact, radical contingency is of central importance to Catholic teaching. Emergent ecologists say that their “perspective opens countless opportunities to encounter and celebrate the magical while remaining mindful of the fully natural basis of each encounter;”[\[35\]](#) remove “fully” (and perhaps substitute “mysterious” for “magical”) and you have a precise Catholic characterization of a grace and freedom that are not in opposition to nature, but are its flowering.

It is sad that so many ecologists accepted the Heideggerian view of creation - that Christian theology made of God little more than a “First Cause,” a manufacturer, and so began the road to ecological destruction. While they may never accept the doctrine of creation, if they at least understood what Catholics really believe, there would be the possibility for dialogue, and – dare we hope – perhaps even solidarity. It is not impossible: even the atheist (agnostic?) Marxist critic Terry Eagleton understood full well that

God for Christian theology is not a mega-manufacturer. He is rather what sustains all things in being by his love, and would still be this even if the world had no beginning. Creation is not about getting things off the ground. Rather, God is the reason why there is something rather than nothing, the condition of possibility of any entity whatsoever. Not being any sort of entity himself, however, he is not to be reckoned up alongside these things. . . . God the Creator is not a celestial engineer at work on a superbly rational design that will impress his research grant body no end, but an artist. . . . who made the world with no functional end in view but simply for the love and delight of it. Or, as one might say in more theological language, for the hell of it. He made it as a gift, superfluity, and gratuitous gesture – out of nothing, rather than out of grim necessity.[\[36\]](#)

## NOTES

---

- [1] Robert Barron, “Evangelizing the American Culture,” *Second Spring* 3, 2002, 28.
- [2] Ben A. Minteer and Robert E. Manning never mention Heidegger in their important paper, “An Appraisal of the Critique of Anthropocentrism and Three Lesser Known Themes in Lynn White’s ‘The Historical Roots of our Ecologic Crisis,’” *Organization Environment* 2005, 18; 163. Available at <<http://oae.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/18/2/163>>. Instead they say, “In the end, it is White’s (1967) groundbreaking turn to history and associated environmental scientific and philosophical thought in the effort to uncover the deeper cultural sources of our environmental problems that should always continue to inspire and challenge new and important work on these foundational questions” (173).
- [3] S.J. McGrath, *The Early Heidegger and Medieval Philosophy: Phenomenology for the Godforsaken* (Catholic University Press 2006, 55, quoting Heinrich Buhr’s *Erinnerung an Martin Heidegger*. Emphasis added.
- [4] Martin Heidegger. *Contributions to Philosophy: from Enowning*. trans. Parvis Emad and Kenneth Maly (Indiana University Press, 2000), 77.
- [5] The first question of metaphysics, he says, is “Why are there beings at all instead of nothing?” but that question should force upon us a *prior* question, about Being *itself*: “*Wie steht es um das Sein?*” (“How does it stand with Being itself? What is the status of Being?”). Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics* (Yale University Press, 2000), 35.
- [6] The ontic concerns things (individual beings) and their properties and relations, concerns of not only the sciences but religious practice as well. “While the terms 'ontisch' ('ontical') and 'ontologisch' ('ontological') are not explicitly defined, their meanings will emerge rather clearly. Ontological inquiry is concerned primarily with *Being*; ontical inquiry is concerned primarily with *entities* and the facts about them.” *Being and Time*, translator’s footnote, 31.
- [7] George Steiner, “The House of Being”, *Times Literary Supplement* (9 October 1981) quoted in Peter Marshall, *Nature’s Web: Rethinking Our Place on Earth* (Paragon House, 1994), 367.
- [8] “I think that Heidegger is profound, but his position is so complicated that you cannot go out to people and say, ‘Read Heidegger.’ I try to write in a much simpler way. I think that the really important things can—must—be said in a way that can be understood by quite a lot of people.” “Here I stand: An Interview with Arne Naess,” *Journal of Environmental Philosophy*, 1:2 (2004), 10.
- [9] Bill Devall and George Sessions, *Deep Ecology: Living as if Nature Mattered* (Gibbs Smith Publishers, 1985), 98.
- [10] Ingrid Stefanovic *Safeguarding Our Common Future: Rethinking Sustainable Development* (SUNY Press, 2000), 66.
- [11] Michael Zimmerman, *Heidegger’s Confrontation with Modernity: Technology, Politics, and Art* (Indiana University Press, 1990), 177.
- [12] The congealing of Being into conceptualization is what Heidegger calls “ontotheology.” He derided any attempt to bring God down into philosophy as a First Cause or Highest Being. He declared that all of Western philosophy since Plato is tainted with ontotheology; in fact, metaphysics *is* ontotheology. See Heidegger, *Identity and Difference*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), 54. It “is sharpened to the question: How does the deity enter into philosophy?”
- [13] Bruce V. Foltz, “Nature Godly and Beautiful: The Iconic Earth,” *Research in Phenomenology* 31:1 (2001), 117. Emphasis added.

[14] J. Baird Callicott “Genesis and John Muir,” *Re-vision*. 12:3 (1990), 32.

[15] It is especially odd that ecological philosophers write on Heidegger, Hölderlin, Maximus the Confessor, and an aesthetics that is not a matter of taste but of ontology, without ever mentioning Balthasar, who wrote so incomparably on all these subjects, especially Heidegger! To write about Heidegger, whom Balthasar both admired and critiqued, without referencing or responding to Balthasar, would be like writing critically about Dostoevsky without ever having read Bakhtin.

[16] There has, however, been a growing interest in Eastern Orthodoxy, perhaps because Lynn White’s essay contrasted the Eastern Christians of the Patristic period, of whom he approved, with Western ones, of whom he did not. Another oddity of contemporary ecological writing is that it doesn’t understand that these Fathers are Fathers to the Catholics as well.

[17] This is not to imply, of course, that the notion Creation has nothing to do with what we call “the material world” and is simply to be understood as a formal principle; what is being rejected is the modern (late Nominalist, etc.) reductive and abstract understanding of concrete reality.

[18] *A Brief History of Time: From the Big Bang to Black Holes* (Bantam Books, 1988), 141.

[19] *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 8, a. 1.

[20] Emergence theorists claim to reject the scientific reductionism of modernity. Higher-order properties emerge by virtue of the interactions between their constituent parts; the arrival of novel, unexpected, coherent structures, properties, or events, and even *the uniqueness of a particular thing* – which usually vanishes into the abstraction of the generalizations of natural science – can be explained by emergence, which includes the individual’s history. Emergence is a legitimate, accepted, and useful form of scientific explanation for high-order properties. But it does not escape reduction entirely. It is in the nature of all reductionists to be unaware that they are reductionists, and emergent philosophers are no different; they simply exchange the reductionism of physics with that of evolution in their attempt to describe how things like value, meaning, gratitude, and transcendence can be explained naturally. Formal theories or sequences like that of Fibonacci may “emerge” from numbers, and the sequence may have properties not found in the constituent numbers, but the sequence does not “transcend” the numbers, for it is on the same quantitative level; the *mathematician* transcends both the numbers and the sequence.

[21] Ursula Goodenough and Terrence W. Deacon, “The Sacred Emergence of Nature,” *Oxford Handbook of Religion and Science* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 867.

[22] Stephen Hawking, *The Grand Design* (Bantam Books, 2010), 180. He says stars cannot come out of nothing, but whole universes can due to “negative gravitational energy” which balances the “positive energy needed to create matter.” Where either of those two comes from he does not say.

[23] Kenneth Schmitz *The Gift: Creation* (Marquette University Press, 1982), 9. He mentions the Japanese *Nihongi*, the Chandogya *Upanishad*, and Polynesian, Bantu, Egyptian, and some American Indian myths.

[24] Canto II, 124-6.

[25] Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*, Book II, 39, 9.

[26] Schmitz, *The Gift*, 124-5.

[27] Robert Barron, “Evangelizing the American Culture,” *Second Spring* 3, 2002, 28.

[28] Hans Urs von Balthasar, *The Glory of the Lord IV: The Realm of Metaphysics in Antiquity* (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 1989), 404.

[29] Kenneth Schmitz, *The Gift*, 59.

[30] *Ibid.* 63.

[31] Ursula Goodenough and Terence W. Deacon, “The Sacred Emergence of Nature,” 866.

[32] Just one example, on Edith Stein and Aquinas: “Stein had a further quarrel with Heidegger’s conception of *Dasein*. She followed Aquinas in holding that, if one has understood adequately what it is for any particular finite being, including oneself, to be, one will have understood that particular being as a dependent being. Finite being can only be adequately understood as a gift that we have received and the same time is true of those aspects of our finite being that make us free and self-determined. This conception of our lives as gifts is as central to Stein’s understanding of *Dasein* as it is alien to Heidegger’s.” Alasdair MacIntyre, *Edith Stein: The Philosophical Background* (London: Rowman and Littlefield, 2006), 185.

[33] Michael C. Kalton, “Green Spirituality: Horizontal Transcendence,” *The Psychology of Mature Spirituality: Integrity, Wisdom, Transcendence*, eds. Polly Young-Eisendrath, Melvin E. Miller (London: Routledge, 2000), 150.

[34] *Ibid.*, 151.

[35] Ursula Goodenough and Terence W. Deacon, “The Sacred Emergence of Nature,” 867.

[36] Terry Eagleton, *Reason, Faith, and Revolution: Reflections on the God Debate* (Yale University Press, 2009), 8.