

Editorial

Claritas offers a platform for scholarly inquiry from a fresh perspective—that of unity. It must be said at the outset that this unity, to be true to itself, requires diversity. So, our journal provides a forum for serious scholarship and conversation between people who share a similar vision of the value of a more united world. In this way, the journal hopes to contribute to building an international “culture” of unity.

Being inspired by the work and writings of Chiara Lubich, founder of the Focolare, *Claritas* has a special interest in her experience of unity, particularly from a period beginning in 1949. Therefore, *Claritas* plans regularly to publish scholarship concerning those writings in a section entitled “To the Source.”

In this issue, we have an article by Gérard Rossé: “Entry into the Paradise of ’49 and Biblical Revelation” is published under the “To the Source” section. This article explores some texts in which Chiara Lubich speaks about the beginning of her mystical experience during the summer of 1949 that is known as “Paradise ’49.”

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This exploration seeks to understand these texts in the light of biblical revelation, in particular Pauline and Johannine theology. The author focuses on two aspects. The first of these concerns the role of living the Word of God leading up to this experience. The second concentrates on what Chiara wrote about the special circumstances in which the mystical experience began after a “Pact” made with Iginio Giordani, a noted Catholic writer and politician.

In the second section, “In Focus,” we have included three papers presented at a plenary session on April 11 during the 2011 World Catholicism Week at DePaul University. The WCW is an annual program of the DePaul Center for World Catholicism and Intercultural Theology. The plenary was on “Catholic Spirituality: A Global Communion,” and was moderated by Peter Casarella, director of the CWCIT.

The article by Maria Voce is entitled “Spirituality and Trinitarian Theology in the Thought and Life of Chiara Lubich.” Here, Voce describes four essential traits of the new spirituality of communion, that is a fruit of the charism received by Chiara Lubich, and the theology that is being developed from this charism. These four traits are: God is Love, love for one’s neighbor in each present moment, mutual love and unity, and Jesus forsaken as the highest act of God’s love and the key to a lived unity that reflects the life of the Trinity. She presents these points in the context of telling the personal story of Chiara’s experience including a period of illumination referred to as “Paradise ’49.” Voce concludes with comments on the effects of this life of unity, and its academic expressions in the Abba School and the Sophia University Institute.

In his article, “A Spirituality that Inspires Ontology: The Discovery of God-Love and the Renewal of Ontology,” Thomas Norris reflects on the insights emerging from the unique communal

spirituality of Chiara Lubich that provide discoveries for philosophy, in particular for ontology. He begins by asking how it is that many Christians are monotheists rather than Trinitarian theists. In his answer, he notes the biblical, patristic, liturgical, and theological renewal that began in the 19th century and flowered in Vatican II. The Trinitarian emphasis of this renewal was complimented by the emergence of spiritualities in the 20th century such as Chiara Lubich's Focolare Movement. To show how this is the case, Norris reflects on the four traits of the spirituality of the Focolare as presented by Maria Voce. He shows how the Trinitarian experience arising from the life of the collective spirituality brings forth a theology of the Trinity that comes from life.

David L. Schindler's article, "The 'Yes' Under Every 'No,'" attempts a proposal regarding the center of the charism of Chiara Lubich and the Focolare, drawing also from a retreat given by Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger. The proposal is that one must penetrate to the "yes" that is straining to come out into being in all those places and ways in which the world, at least on its surfaces, appears to be saying "no." Chiara's spirituality of communion does this in building a new culture of love and unity distinct from the modern culture of distraction and chatter. Schindler argues that this new life has two important pillars: Jesus forsaken and Mary's "yes." Jesus forsaken took on all the "noes" of the world, putting them in the hands of the Father. Mary's "yes" provides an unwavering and creative way of embracing Jesus forsaken that penetrates and lives together the "yes" of God pouring forth on the world from the heart of Jesus forsaken.

The second section is followed by two articles. First is by Charles C. Camosy and is entitled: "Intellectual Strangers No More? Peter Singer and Roman Catholicism on Ecological

Concern." Camosy argues that while Peter Singer's approach to ethics as a preference utilitarian seems to have little to say to Christian ethics in general, for important issues related to ecological ethics, we find a number of his views to be more in agreement with the Catholic approach. While disagreement with regard to significant and important issues like intrinsic value and overpopulation remain, we can find broad agreement not only with regard to the seriousness of our ecological problems, but more importantly about the radical lifestyle changes that the developed world is morally required to address. The article concludes that, because both approaches have such power in their respective spheres of influence, our ecological crises demand that they work together to change hearts, minds, and lifestyles. This article adds an important contribution to Camosy's new book, *Peter Singer and Christian Ethics: Beyond Polarization*, which is also reviewed in this issue of *Claritas*.

The second article is "Fraternity in Politics: New Scholarship and Publications from Latin America," by Rodrigo Mardones. Mardones begins with an account of a series of conferences in South and Central America that began a serious academic study of the notion of "fraternity." These conferences paved the way for a visit by the Italian scholar, Antonio Baggio, who had published a recent book on this topic. Mardones discusses how Latin American scholars have answered this intellectual challenge brought from Italy during the past five years: studies on fraternity have expanded throughout Latin America. As an introduction to specific questions and findings on the study of fraternity, Mardones describes the academic collaboration that this research theme has developed, as well as an important book series on fraternity published in Spanish since 2006.

Finally, we have included reviews of the following two books. First is a review by Brendan Purcell of Charles C. Camosy's *Peter Singer and Christian Ethics: Beyond Polarization*. Second is a review by Paul O'Hara of Brendan Purcell's *From Big Bang to Big Mystery: Human Origins in Light of Creation and Evolution*.

The editors of *Claritas* hope that our readers appreciate the scholarship that the journal provides. As an open-access journal with no subscriptions, we depend on contributions from our readership. On our website, www.claritas-online.org, you will find a tab for supporting the journal. We also hope that all who come across these pages will feel inspired to share in the project of dialogue that contributes to an international culture of unity.