

# John Paul II and the Theology of the Body

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In the Theology of the Body, our being embodied as male and female “in the beginning” is a window into the nature and purposes of the Creator God.... Virtually every thesis in theology - God, Christ, the Trinity, grace, the Church, the sacraments –could be seen in a new light...[1] According to John Paul, the human body has a language that proclaims the mystery of God and it is in this sense that he speaks of the body as a theology. Because of sin we find it hard to read this theology. John Paul’s theology of the body is like an epiphany which helps us to read the theological language of the body. In our fallen world the naked body is a symbol of licentiousness and indignity. Guided by Christ’s words, John Paul challenges us to realise that “from the beginning it was not so.”[2] John Paul aims to sketch a biblical anthropology which has, as its key, nakedness without shame. In the beginning the naked body witnessed to love, to purity and to the sheer goodness of creation and God’s plan for humanity so the appearance of the fig leaf marks a great disaster. However, the Good News of the Gospel is that “Jesus came to restore creation to the purity of its origins.”[3] And so with the help of John Paul’s epiphany “even now [purity of heart] enables us to see according to God; it lets us perceive the human body – ours and our neighbour’s – as a temple of the Holy Spirit, a manifestation of divine beauty.”[4] Defining the Theology of the Body

The inspiration for the Theology of the Body came in the work that John Paul did as a young priest and then as a bishop in Krakow . It was then that he accompanied many young and engaged couples who were trying to live faithfully to the Church’s teaching on marriage and sexuality in communist Poland . The fruit of much of this work can be read in his book Love and Responsibility, written when he was a bishop, which is a philosophical work on human sexuality. Just as he was elected Pope, John Paul seems to have been working on a further book to continue the themes which he explored in the first. The content of this book, it is said, was basically to make up what we now call the Theology of the Body. Theology of the Body is the working title that John Paul gives to the first major catechetical project of his pontificate. It consists of 129 texts from general audiences beginning on 5 September 1979 . It is, in essence, a biblical reflection on the meaning and experience of human embodiment and erotic desire.

In Christian catechesis, people are used to an emphasis on the spiritual realm. However, many people are unfamiliar, and even uncomfortable, with a marked emphasis on the body. For John Paul this is a false dichotomy. There is, without doubt, an ontological priority to the spirit. Yet, “at once body and spirit, man expresses and perceives spiritual realities through signs and symbols... [he] needs signs and symbols to communicate with others ...The same holds true for God.”[5] It is through our bodily senses and the “stuff” of the physical world that

we encounter God. Moreover, the human body in itself is in some sense sacramental and it is from this perspective that John Paul wants to study the human body as a theology, as a sign of the spiritual and divine mystery. The Pope tells us that it is “the body, in fact... [that] is capable of making visible what is invisible: the spiritual and divine. It was created to transfer into the visible reality of the world, the mystery hidden since time immemorial in God, and thus to be a sign of it.”[6] The human body, male and female, has the mystery of salvation written into it.

#### The importance of the Spousal Analogy

The divine mystery which the body symbolises is the mystery of Trinitarian Life and Love. The mystery of the Trinity is understood as the beauty and mystery of sexual difference and the call to fruitful communion. In male and female union we also see something of God’s plan for humanity; the scriptures employ many images to describe God’s relationship with man, but the nuptial image is the one which is used most often. This “spousal theology” looks to the nuptial bookends of Genesis and Revelation as a key for interpreting what lies between. “The Church cannot therefore be understood as the mystical body of Christ, as the sign of man’s covenant with God in Christ, or as the universal sacrament of salvation unless we keep in mind the ‘great mystery’ involved in the creation of man as male and female and the vocation to conjugal love, to fatherhood and to motherhood.”[7]

But if it is through the body “and it alone” that the divine mystery is made visible to us then this is where the enemies of the divine plan will begin their offensive. And so the battle for man’s soul is a battle which is always fought over the primordial truth of his body, causing estrangement of body and spirit. Accordingly, a fallen world is then a world of estrangement; estranged spouses; estrangement between divinity and humanity; between heaven and earth; soul and body; spirituality and sexuality; sacredness and sensuality; masculinity and femininity. It is the dualistic tendency inherent in these separations that leave man swinging between angelism and animalism, prudery and permissivism, rigorism and indecency, repression and indulgence. When the wartime quarry worker ponders the great acts of barbarity that he has witnessed and when he looks for the answer to the evil of this century and for the whole of human history, he believes that humanity’s greatest crimes are, at base, a rejection of God’s revelation of the love that He has inscribed on our bodies. The body is “the fundamental element of human existence,”[8] and as such is “the deepest substratum of human ethics and culture.”[9] The world finds itself in a profound crisis of ethics and culture and John Paul believes the deep answer to it is in the Theology of the Body. And so this is where his catechetical journey must start.

#### Structure of the Catechesis

The Theology of the Body is inspired by the call for a “total vision of man” in the encyclical *Humanae Vitae*. In seeking to bring about this total vision, John Paul in the first part of the catechetical programme wants to establish an “adequate anthropology” which considers original man, historical man and eschatological

man. In the second part of the catechesis the Pope considers the application of his adequate anthropology and deals firstly with celibacy for the kingdom, the sacramentality of marriage and thirdly to love and fruitfulness (a reflection on *Humanae Vitae*).

In trying to promote his vision of the body and what it means to be a human being, John Paul adopts a phenomenological approach. It is from this point of departure that he seeks to show that the Church's vision of man is not foisted on him from the outside but rather corresponds to his self-experience as a person on the inside. The Pope does not force assent to his proposals through rigorous, logical argumentation. Rather, he asks us to reflect honestly on our own self-experience to see if his proposals are confirmed there. John Paul seeks a subjective resonance for objective norms.

## ESTABLISHING AN ADEQUATE ANTHROPOLOGY (PART I)

### (a) Original Man

This is the first part of the triptych of the proposed Adequate Anthropology and it is where the Pope begins the whole series of general audiences which make up the Theology of the Body in September 1979. Here he reflects upon the body, sexuality, and marriage as man and woman experienced them "in the beginning". It is to this which we must return if we are to understand who God wants us to be. The Pope begins his great catechetical project with Matthew's Gospel, "For your hardness of heart Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but in the beginning it was not so." Here John Paul is making a specific anthropological statement: Christ fully reveals man to himself. Christ helps the historical man to view the beginning (original man) as his true fullness. In Jesus Christ we have the hope of returning to the beginning at the end (eschatological man).

In his phenomenological approach, the Pope wishes to reconstruct man's original experience so as to understand better who we are now. He approaches this through the symbolism of biblical language and focuses on three original human experiences: original solitude, original unity and original nakedness.

#### (i) Original Solitude

"Then the Lord God said, 'It is not good that man should be alone; I will make him a helper fit for him.'"[10] Man is aware of himself as the only creature who "names" and "tills", he is aware that he is alone. The body expresses man's difference from the animals, his subjectivity, and his call to communion with God and with an "other" like himself.

#### (ii) Original Unity

"Therefore a man leaves his father and mother..."[11] The original unity overcomes the solitude and the Pope defines it as *communio personarum*. About this unity he says that, "[m]an becomes the image of God not so much in the moment of solitude as in the moment of communion." [12] This is to say that man images God through the communion *personarum* which man and woman form

from the beginning and this “constitutes the deepest theological aspect of all that can be said about man.”[13]

### (iii) Original Nakedness

“And the man and his wife were both naked and they were not ashamed.”[14] *Communio personarum* is what helps us to understand original nakedness which is the Pope’s key to biblical anthropology.[15] Original nakedness shows full awareness of the original meaning of the body as the revelation of the person; original nakedness shows a total trust and absence of barriers before the others; it shows the total unity between the physical and the spiritual. This nakedness, “this seeing each other is not just a participation in [an] ‘exterior’ perception of the world, but has also an interior dimension of participation in the vision of the creator Himself... Nakedness signifies the original good of God’s vision through which the ‘pure’ value of humanity as male and female, the ‘pure’ value of the body and of sex, is manifested.”[16]

In God’s declaration of the goodness of creation we recognise that His motive is love. God initiates His own self-gift by creating us in His own image and likeness and for our own sake. Man and woman recapitulate the gift of God in creation by becoming a gift to each other, sexual desire was not experienced as a compulsive urge, but as the desire to make a sincere gift of self – to love as God loves. Furthermore, “in the primordial awareness of the nuptial meaning of the body ... there is constituted a primordial sacrament understood as a sign that transmits effectively in the visible world the invisible mystery.” Man will never avoid this indispensable ‘theme of his own existence... In fact, in the whole perspective of his own ‘history,’ man will not fail to confer a nuptial meaning on his own body. Even if this meaning undergoes and will undergo many distortions, it will always remain, at the deepest level ... as a sign of the image of God.’ The way that goes from the mystery of creation to the Redemption of the body also passes here.”[17] In short, the conjugal act is an icon of the Trinity.

### (b) Historical Man

This is the second cycle of lectures beginning in May 1980. Here the Pope reflects on the body, sexuality and marriage as man experiences them in history as influenced by sin in the context of his being redeemed by Jesus Christ. It is in this cycle that the Pope considers the effects of the fall and redemption as an efficacious reality.

The entrance of shame marks the frontier between original man and historical man. Nakedness once revealed man’s participation in grace and holiness but now it reveals their loss. The shame of nakedness shows that man loses the freedom of the “gift” and purity of heart and so it is hard to see the body as the revelation of the person and of the divine gift. The pope says that with the entrance of shame, it is as if man “felt that he had just stopped ... being above the world of living things or ‘animalia.’ It is as if he felt the break of the personal integrity of his own body, particularly in what determines its sexuality.”[18]

The historical man finds it difficult to be aware of the conjugal act as a *communio personarum*. Lust, which “passes on the ruins of the matrimonial significance of the body ... to satisfy only the sexual need of the body,”[19] shatters the original experiences of original solitude, original unity and original nakedness.

As we seek to reconstitute the way in which we see the human body and the conjugal act we must be conscious that the Redemption is not just an eschatological reality, but an historical one as well. From the Redemption man is not asked to return to his state of original innocence but is asked in its light and power to rediscover “the living forms of the new man.”[20] Historical man “should find again the dignity and holiness of the conjugal union ‘in the body’ on the basis of the mystery of redemption.”[21]

(c) Eschatological Man

The total vision of man inspired by *Humanae Vitae* must also look towards man’s ultimate destiny. It is in this light that our origin and our history take on their meaning. It is here in the third part of the triptych that the Pope weds his Carmelite spirituality to his phenomenological insights to produce his vision for the eschaton never before articulated. It is here that he reflects on the body and sexuality as we shall experience them in the resurrection.

The Pope reaffirms the Christian doctrine of the resurrection of the body as the definitive accomplishment of the redemption of the body and then considers Christ’s words, “For in the resurrection they neither marry nor are given in marriage.”[22] He tells us that “marriage and procreation in themselves did not determine definitively the original and fundamental meaning of being a body, or of being, as a body, male and female.”[23] In the eschaton, the body as the primordial sacrament, will give way to the divine prototype; the union of the sexes is not man’s end all and be all, it is only an icon of the end all and be all. The sexual difference and our longing for union reveal that we are created for eternal communion with the Eternal Communion: Father Son and Holy Spirit.

## APPLYING AN ADEQUATE ANTHROPOLOGY (PART II)

This cycle, beginning in March 1982, marks a shift in the development of the “adequate anthropology” to its application. John Paul applies his “total vision of man” to the vocation of celibacy for the kingdom which he treats before the sacramentality of marriage moving lastly to a reflection on *Humanae Vitae*.

(a) Celibacy for the Kingdom

The Pope tells us that earthly continence for the kingdom “is a sign that the body, whose end is not the grave, is directed to glorification. Already continence ‘for the kingdom of heaven’ is a witness among men that anticipates the future resurrection.”[24] The celibate person chooses to remain in the “ache” of solitude to emphasize that man’s ultimate destiny is to be a partner of the Absolute.

The difference between matrimony and celibacy is not to be understood in terms of a legitimate outlet for concupiscence on one hand and the repression of it on the other. “At the basis of the Christ’s call to continence there is ... the

consciousness of the freedom of the gift, which is organically connected with the profound and mature knowledge of the nuptial meaning of the body.”[25] Marriage and celibacy do not “divide the human (and Christian) community into two camps [as if there were] those who are ‘perfect’ because of continence and those who are imperfect or ‘less perfect because of the reality of married life.”[26] The Pope confronts the notion of marriage as the *remedium concupiscentiae*[27] saying that it must be understood in the integral sense of the scriptures which also teach of the Redemption of the Body and point to the sacrament of matrimony as a way of realizing that Redemption.[28] Celibacy is far from a rejection of the deep meaning of sexuality, but a living of human sexuality which is even fuller, more profound and complimentary to the extent that it explains the married vocation. Man and woman “become gifts to one another through their masculinity and femininity, also through their physical union. Continence means a conscious and voluntary renouncement of that union and all that is connected to it”[29] and at the same time points to that of which matrimony is the icon: God Himself and the eternal physical and spiritual communion for which were made. The fullness of both states of life is seen in the lives of Mary and Joseph who, although in a matrimonial union, were continent for the sake of the kingdom.[30]

(b) The Sacramentality of Marriage

This part of the catechesis is made up of twenty-two general audiences delivered in 1983. Here John Paul seeks to apply his “total vision of man” to deepening our understanding of the sacrament of marriage. His reflections, centred on the text of Ephesians 5:21-33, seek to uncover the divine dimensions of the covenant of grace and the human dimension of the sacramental sign:

Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ. Wives be subject to you husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its saviour. As the church is subject to Christ, so let wives be subject in everything to their husbands. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, that he might present the church to himself in splendour, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. Even so husbands should love wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. For no man ever hates his own flesh but nourishes and cherishes it, as Christ does the church, because we are members of his body. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, and I mean in reference to Christ and the church; however, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband (Eph 5:21-33).

The Pope says that the passage contains a great mystery which is to be understood “as God’s salvific plan in regard to humanity, it contains the “central theme of the whole of revelation, its central reality. It is that God, as creator and Father, wishes above all to transmit to mankind His word.”[31]

(i) The Head/Body analogy in Ephesians 5

The Pope is keen to show that the Head/Body analogy presents the spouses as one organic unity, showing the depth of their union, whilst recalling that Christ says that any proper “headship” among His followers must not be modelled after the gentiles who “lord it over” their subjects and make their authority felt.[32] Conjugal love is so unifying that the spouses are mutually penetrated spiritually.”[33] “The analogy does not blur the individuality of the subjects.”[34] “Christ is a subject different from the Church; however in virtue of a particular relationship, He is united to her as an organic union of head and body.”[35] Therefore, the spouses’ “uni-subjectivity is based on a bi-subjectivity and has not a real character but only intentional.”[36]

(ii) The Spousal analogy in Ephesians 5

In the passage from Ephesians we see that the analogy of body head becomes the analogy of groom-bride. Accordingly the wife is the icon of the Church and the husband is the icon of Christ. The spousal analogy “operates in two directions.” It “helps us better to understand the relationship of Christ and His Church [and], at the same time, it helps us to see more deeply into the essence of marriage.” In fact, at the basis of an understanding of marriage in its very essence is the relationship of Christ to the Church.” In turn, marriage “becomes a visible sign of the divine eternal mystery as an image of the Church united with Christ. In this way the letter to the Ephesians leads us to the very foundations of the sacramentality of marriage.”[37] “[T]he letter to the Ephesians examines the sacramental reality, proclaiming its grand analogy: both the union of Christ with the Church, and the conjugal union of man and woman in marriage are in this way illuminated by a particular supernatural light.”[38]

The good news of the Gospel is that that which was hidden in God from eternity has been revealed – first through the sign of man and woman’s original unity and definitively through the sign of the union of Christ and the Church; “if in the most general way, the body enters the definition of a sacrament, being ‘a visible sign of the invisible reality,’ in this sign – and through this sign - God gives Himself to man in His transcendent truth and His love.”[39] The conjugal union of man and woman then can rightly be called a primordial sacrament. In this light it is hard to see that the Incarnation could be considered as an afterthought since the relationship of man and woman was in the plan of God “in the beginning” as a symbol of what we shall be, a symbol that finds its full meaning in Christ’s relationship with the Church. In this way the language of the body can be understood as prophetic.

(c) Love and Fruitfulness

This section of the catechesis is the sixth and final cycle of 21 addresses delivered in 1984. The Pope, with fresh insight into the scriptures, together with reflections on the Song of Songs and the book of Tobit and some new themes from Ephesians 5, applies his “adequate anthropology” to the teaching of *Humanae Vitae*. Here John Paul speaks of how the language of the body relates to contraception

The Pope centres his reflection on *Humanae Vitae* n.12 which speaks of the “inseparable connection, established by God, which man, on his own initiative, may not break, between the unitive significance and the procreative significance which are both inherent to the marriage act.” If we consider the sacramental character of the body and the conjugal act as an icon of the Trinity, a life giving communion of persons, then the introduction of contraception makes it a counter sign of the “great mystery”, it becomes an anti-sacrament, no longer a symbolic Word but a diabolic anti-Word. This is not a condemnation of contraception from philosophy and natural law but is, in fact, theological: it is a falsification of the sacramental sign of married love, “one can speak of the moral good or evil” in the sexual relationship “according to whether ... or not it has the character of the truthful sign.”[40] The Holy Spirit is Lord and Giver of Life, contraception marks a specific closing off to Him in the conjugal union.

The Pope is of course clear that the unitive and procreative aspects of the conjugal act may not be separated. He reiterates also the concern that even natural methods may be sinful because of their immediate motivations. It seems that there is no explicit moral distinction between sex for the procreation of children and sex had with the use of the infertile period with the correct intentionality. However, it would seem that the distinction is in fact implicit in the Pope’s thought if the conjugal act is to be considered as iconic of the Trinity.

## COMPARISON WITH THE THOUGHT OF EDWARD HOLLOWAY

### (a) Original Man

Both John Paul and Holloway, when considering the true perspective of human relationships which are so damaged go to Matthew’s Gospel, “but from the beginning it was not so...” Like John Paul, Holloway considers original man in order to discover who the historical man is, “it is not possible to judge rightly of the place and meaning of sex in human life without recourse to the original state of man’s nature.”[41] The soul, as the new principle in the original man, is “the principle of knowing, of recognising relations, perspectives, and the balance of proportion”[42] and it is in historical man that these principles are warped in relation to his own body, the body of his neighbour and sex. Holloway comments, in agreement with the Pope, that principal among the phenomena distorted by sin is man’s sexual faculty.

According to Holloway, “in the beginning” our freedom from the disordered desire of the physical passions was derived partly from the body itself because “the flesh had always through the ages of development looked for and responded to its natural law.”[43] The balance and proportion which human nature would have exhibited in such matters was only partially due to the soul. The flesh assented with the spirit; it was not just that the spirit had a better hold over the flesh before the fall. Holloway’s perspective could be useful in realising the final exorcism of the Manichean heresy, which is certainly one of the Pope’s goals with the Theology of the Body.

### (b) The Centrality of the Incarnation

In the Theology of the Body, the first Adam and Eve were an icon of Christ and the Church who were the prototypes. Humanity, split in sex between male and female would be constantly pointing to the Christ who was to come and wed the Church which, presumably, would have consisted of the whole human race. We might say here that the Pope is talking in terms of a symbolic necessity (e.g. a constant reminder, a making present of the salvation to come) for the splitting of the sexes meanwhile Holloway speaks in the more concrete terms of a “functional necessity.”[44]

The Pope speaks of the “great mystery” of man as male and female, as if hinting to the unplumbed depths of its meaning. Holloway recognises the idea that there is no good reason for the biologically costly process of splitting sexes and of sexual reproduction, still a problem in modern biology. If the whole of material creation finds its consummation in man and man’s proper end is his adoption as a son of God in the person of Jesus Christ, then the “incarnation should be fundamental to the developmental plan of the universe.”[45] In the splitting of the sexes Jesus Christ can come to earth as true God and true man.

Few theologians have taken our embodiment as male and female as seriously as the Pope, but Holloway is certainly close. There is also an obvious Scotist thread which runs through the Theology of the Body and through Holloway’s writings. Perhaps it is from here that there could even be brought about a synthesis of the two.

### (c) In Remedium Concupiscentiae

In the twenty-second chapter of *Catholicism: a new synthesis*, Holloway states clearly that the second end of the sexual act (unitive) is defined through the first (the procreative), something which does not seem to be mentioned specifically in the Theology of the Body. In agreement with Orthodox Judaism he writes that sex “exercised in its most perfect use”[46] is for children: “[t]he best and most holy way of birth control is then to order one’s use of sexual intercourse to the original and aboriginal mind of God. That alone is the perfection of holiness and pure love in human personality and family life.”[47] Admitting of some qualitative differences between artificial contraception and natural methods he contests that even when the natural methods are used with correct intention, it is a “less perfect” conjugal act than that which is had to bring about children. The natural methods are used in *remedium concupiscentiae*, ‘for the tempering of disordered natural desire’. “This after all, is an extrinsic principle in theology in the sense that its admittance is a concession to the stresses brought into human nature by original sin and its effects.”[48]

According to Holloway, historical man is subject to involuntary sexual urges because of the Fall. In original man sex was only for children. Holloway says that we may not speak in terms of an evolution of the meaning of sex “since the soul is distinct in order from matter.”[49] “The nature of man, and the physical

meaning of relationships of body and soul in terms of function and fulfilment were the same in the first man on earth as they will be in the last one.”[50]

The Pope does not explicitly say that sex only for children is the most perfect way. However, if according to the Pope the conjugal union is supposed to be an icon of the life of the Trinity, a fruitful communion of persons, then such a view would seem to be implied in the Theology of the Body.

#### (d) A New Synthesis of Science and the Theology of the Body?

There is much talk about the regulation of sexual activity, particularly among the young. As ever, the discussion may only boil down to the mechanics of how to avoid conception and venereal diseases. What is so frustrating about this discussion is that sex can never be spoken about as having meaning or even having its own proper context. The Pope’s Theology of the Body presents the body, the married couple and the conjugal act as having particular significance and context in reference to Christ and the Church, the nature of salvation and the life of God Himself in which we are to participate. But will the Theology of the Body be able to walk outside the Church to inspire modern men?

Holloway tells us that “the philosopher and the theologian must go back continually and anew to nature, to discover more fully the nature of being and its organic relationships.”[51] It is from the considerations then of science that we might be able to achieve a more complete synthesis of knowledge which can penetrate more fully the interrelationships of creation, both spiritual and material. If this were possible it might give some feet on the ground to the Theology of the Body. The problem, according to Holloway, is that today “the Church cannot formulate an intellectualism which embodies the proven fundamentals of modern scientific knowledge within orthodox theological speculation” as happened in the Middle Ages.[52] The scholars of the Theology of the Body would be the first to recognize the density of each of the Wednesday catechesis, of how they have not yet been fully understood and of how they are quite ‘unpacked’. Perhaps one avenue to grow or even confirm the ideas is to look for how they might ring true by what is observed in nature for, as Holloway tells us, “the energies of knowledge are the factors which must be synthesised anew in a new unity of knowledge both human and divine, if any possible meaning, dignity or final goal is to be affirmed of man’s person.”[53] The Theology of the Body is charged with man’s meaning, dignity and final goal.

If Holloway is right then the Theology of the Body, if it wants to turn around the behaviour of modern men, which must be one of its goals, is not enough. There must in fact be a new synthesis of science and religion before the Theology of the Body can go anywhere. In the modern world, outside the Church, the Theology of the Body, on its own, is like a powerful missile with no launch pad.

## CONCLUSION

There will be no renewal of the Church and the world without a renewal of the family, and there will be no renewal of the family if we do not return to the proper meanings of our bodies and sex. John Paul's catechesis takes the human body and sexuality out of the vacuum in which they exist in the modern world and gives them proper meaning and context. Because of the Theology of the Body, the body, marriage and the conjugal act can now coherently point beyond themselves to salvation and to the life of God.

George Weigel comments that the catechetical addresses are a "theological time bomb which is set to go off with dramatic consequences some time in the third millennium of the Church. [And] [w]hen that happens, perhaps in the twenty-first century, the Theology of the Body, may well be seen, not only as a critical moment in Catholic theology, but in the history of modern thought." [54] If men like Scola, West and Weigel are right, the Theology of the Body is to have massive implications for every area of theology. But if it is to realise this massive predicted potential it is not enough for scholars of the Theology of the Body simply to rehash quotations from the Wednesday catechesis and then to stand back saying how wonderful it is.

In his phenomenological approach, the Pope hopes that the Theology of the Body will be accepted through the honest reflection of men and women who will find something inside them which resonates with his words. Is this enough in the post-Christian West? Perhaps in order to engage the world with this question, the Theology of the Body must be able in some way to go to the world, even to point to other disciplines to shore up the things that it says, it needs to be part of a synthesis.

[1] G. Weigel, *Witness to Hope*, (New York: Cliff Street Books, 1999) 343.

[2] Mt 19:8.

[3] CCC, n.2236.

[4] CCC, n.2519.

[5] CCC, n.1146.

[6] John Paul II, *The Theology of the Body: Human Love in the Divine Plan* ( Boston : 1997) 76. This book contains all 129 texts from the general audiences which make up the Theology of the Body.

[7] John Paul II, *Letter to Families*, 1994, n.19.

[8] *Theology of the Body*, 16.

[9] *Theology of the Body* 163.

[10] Gen 2:18

[11] Gen 2:24.

[12] *Theology of the Body*, 46.

[13] *Theology of the Body*, 46.

[14] Gen 2:25.

[15] *Theology of the Body*, 52.

[16] *Theology of the Body*, 57.

[17] *Theology of the Body*, 65-66.

- [18] Theology of the Body, 116.
- [19] Theology of the Body, 149.
- [20] Theology of the Body, 175.
- [21] Theology of the Body, 176.
- [22] Mt 22:30.
- [23] Theology of the Body, p.247.
- [24] Theology of the Body, 267.
- [25] Theology of the Body, 283.
- [26] Theology of the Body, 276.
- [27] I Cor 7:9.
- [28] Rom 8:23 .
- [29] Theology of the Body, p.274.
- [30] Theology of the Body, 268.
- [31] Theology of the Body, 322.
- [32] Theology of the Body, 315.
- [33] Theology of the Body, .320.
- [34] Theology of the Body, 316.
- [35] Theology of the Body, 315.
- [36] Theology of the Body, 319.
- [37] Theology of the Body, 313.
- [38] Theology of the Body, .318.
- [39] Theology of the Body, 305-306.
- [40] Theology of the Body, 141-142.
- [41] Edward Holloway, Catholicism: A New Synthesis (London: Faith Keyway, 1976) 420-421.
- [42] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 398.
- [43] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 398.
- [44] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 149.
- [45] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 149.
- [46] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 421.
- [47] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 437.
- [48] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 437.
- [49] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 425.
- [50] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 425.
- [51] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 32.
- [52] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 33.
- [53] Catholicism: A New Synthesis, 33.
- [54] Weigel, Witness to Hope, 343.