

Person As 'That Which Is Most Perfect In All Of Nature'

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This characterization of person by Thomas Aquinas was made by him mainly for two reasons.¹ First, following Aristotle, he considered the human soul to be capable of intellectual and volitional activities over and above the sentient activities it shares with animals and the vegetative activities it shares with plants. Second, according to his Christian faith he held that a human being is created in the image of God, which is not to be said of plants or animals or any non-living things.

However, I propose to offer another additional reason why "person is the most perfect thing in all of nature." This will entail a closer analysis of what is involved in the concepts of *substantial form* and of *person*, both of which are associated by Aquinas with soul in a human being. This will also involve a fuller investigation of the contemporary emphasis on conceiving person as a relational being. The latter connotes, at first, relatedness to other things and to other persons. But what I would like to emphasize is that the human substantial form, i.e., the person, connotes even more importantly relatedness within itself.² This requires, first of all, a closer look at that Aristotelian-Thomist notion of substantial form.

It is a basic assumption of all scientists, as well as our shared experience, that everything around us, including ourselves, has an internal basic structure that differentiates it as a specific kind from everything else, despite whether we succeed in knowing that structure or not. Aquinas, following Aristotle, named this structure its substantial form and also its nature and its essence.³ We might add other synonyms like "blueprint" or "pattern" or "plan." Moreover, this distinctive structure which makes us *human* beings, rather than any other kind, is precisely that which gives us a dignity and uniqueness. By the time of Aquinas, this uniqueness was named "person."⁴

Notice that this form, this structure, is always present; otherwise the being would cease to be that *kind* of thing. Thus, the substantial form in a human being is patterning it to be that kind, namely human, all the time. In this initial sense, a human being is an actual person as long as it exists.

But further analysis of substantial form reveals that any structure, both internal to beings, and as understood by us, is a *pattern of relations* among its parts and elements. For example, in an apple tree, its process of osmosis is related to its process of photosynthesis, and both are related to its production of apples in a way different from the way those processes are related in an orange tree which pro-

duces not apples but oranges. Beings with a great number of parts have complex sets of relationships. The former have a complex substantial form while the latter have a simpler form.

An obvious conclusion is that human beings seem to be the most complex of all. Our substantial form, our person, consists of a unified pattern of many sets of relationships of our various parts, processes, elements, etc. Humorously we have to admit sometimes that we find some person too complex to understand. Humor aside, however, we can conclude that each and every being's substantial form is its integrated, internal, blueprint of relations of its parts to one another so that it functions as a single being. The same is true of a human being; its substantial form, its person, is the very pattern of relationships among its myriad parts.⁵

This is why you, the person, can simultaneously watch television, eat popcorn, stroke your pet, smell the flowers on the table beside you, and feel excited while you judge the politics of the speaker you hear from the screen. That real structure, which is you, the person, is *inside* of your watching eyes, your chewing mouth, your feeling, your thinking, your hearing. Or, rather, we should say, it is the person, you, who is watching, chewing, smelling, hearing, feeling, and thinking.

More technically, it must be pointed out that the substantial form of any being, including purely material beings, is said to be "distinct" from its parts, particularly its extended (material) parts.⁶ In fact, in any being that has diverse parts, processes, elements, etc., which are both really and intelligibly non-identical to each other, such parts are said to be "distinct" from each other but are not "separate" from each other, i.e., do not exist independently by themselves.

For example, in a human being, each ear is distinct from the other, and from every other organ, without being separate, i.e., an independent being. Likewise, the capacity to think is distinct from the ability to will or to remember, but neither of them is a separate being. So, too, "person" is distinct from any capacity or bodily-part, and from the total body (abstractly conceived), but "person" is not separate from one's body, although it may be *separable*, as in loss of limb or organ, or from the whole body in death.⁷

Thus, a "person," which is a unitary, highly complex *pattern* of internal relationships of its parts, is distinct from any one of those parts. That this must be so is revealed if we consider that if person were identical with any mere power (potentiality) or material part, it would always have to be exercising that power and retain that material part, both of which are contrary to fact. A person is an actual person even when he or she ceases for a while to exercise any power, as in sleep, or in loss of some bodily part.

Further, "person" cannot be identified with any specifically human action, nor with any action, nor with the power to do that action, not even with consciousness, since animals are also conscious beings, but they are not persons. Even more cru-

cially, "person" cannot be identified with self-consciousness (although only persons have self-consciousness), because we remain persons even when unconscious.⁸ Nor, for similar reasons, is person identical with habits of action (virtues and vices), except insofar as these habits are part of the relationships authenticated by that person, as will be shown below. What must be highlighted here is that an *actual* person cannot be equated with one's potentialities for acting, not even with those which are distinctively human, i.e., rational and volitional, nor even with the acts of those potencies, without further qualification. On the other hand, a so-called *potential* person, i.e., one open to further development, can be associated with those uniquely human potentialities for rational and volitional operations, without, however, being totally identified with those potentialities. The reason for such an association is that an actual and actualized person *is* identifiable with the *pattern of relationships* that arise from the *actual authentic use* of those powers. Let me elaborate on this.

With the establishment that "person" is initially, and primarily, our substantial form, our structure, our pattern, which each one of us *is*, let us turn to our behavior.⁹ For, structure is only structure; it has a static connotation. On the other hand, not only ourselves, but every other being that we experience, is also very dynamic. Yet, the structure, the substantial form, of anything is also the source and reason for its dynamic actions as well. In any being, that which is the pattern of its static elements ("static," at least, according to our conceptualizations) is also simultaneously the pattern and structure of its dynamic operations. We call this its nature, and define nature as the sum total of potentials for action.¹⁰

But a caution is needed here. Strictly speaking, "nature" does not act; rather, it is the substantial form that does the action. Thus, it is the apple tree, that actual existing substantial form, that produces apples. Yet, the form of the tree is not potential; it is always actual, although actuating only some of its potentials at any one time.

So, too, our form, our person, is always actual, but we are not always acting, for we have a vast array of distinct potentials, which we activate only selectively.¹¹ And, almost an obvious point, we note that we exhibit gradually, by our behavior, that we are persons, which behavior itself develops into *patterns* of action, bringing us back again to note relationships. The person, acting, demonstrates its stage of development of one or other of its potentials. And, actuation of these potentials is actuation of new sets of relationships of its own patterned parts, i.e., its form, its person.

This is why we can speak of "becoming a person," for, that which is an actual structural pattern ("person" in its primordial meaning) must develop its possible additional structuring as an "acting person" ("person" in this second meaning). This latter meaning I have termed "personization," a term I have borrowed.¹²

To introduce the discussion of this term, let us note that we are born actual persons, but we are not born actually *functioning* persons. Put in another way, we are born potentially acting persons, and we must become actually functioning persons. No species other than *homo sapiens* exhibits this capacity and necessity. Link this unique characteristic of each human person with the equally unique characteristic of being able to perform moral or immoral actions and there is manifested a correlation between personization and morals.

There is no need at this point to detail how we start to become acting persons.¹³ The first steps of personization are well documented by psychologists and philosophers when they speak of "self-actualization" or "developing one's personality," all in close relationships with other persons.¹⁴ What is needed is to emphasize that personization requires the further stage of taking responsibility for each of one's actions, – again, a unique aspect of person.

Briefly, to take responsibility for one's behavior is a re-relating of one's person; it is the forging of new relations; it is a kind of auto-creation of a fuller substantial form. This occurs through our intellectual and volitional powers by which we can commit ourselves to the good and value as we understand them.¹⁵ This commitment, a "thrusting" and "towards" of ourselves to a good or value is adding a new relation to our very person.¹⁶ This re-relating is an augmentation of our basic structure because action re-relates any being. Actions, as we noted above, are not identical with person. But the relationships caused by actions *are* identical with person when they emerge from the self-determined commitments of that person. Our very person becomes more actualized by the added relatedness. Through this self-reflective authentic commitment, the person becomes *more* of a person. Let me quote the eminent Thomist, Etienne Gilson, who is using soul instead of person in his context:

... [I]t seems clear that, out of itself, such a form as a human soul is an act that stands in need of some further actualization. It does not need to be confirmed in its own nature: as has been said several times, there is no form of the form nor any act of the form *qua* form, but it still does need to become more fully that which it is. "Become what thou art" is for such a form an imperative order, because it is inscribed as a law of its very nature. And this is a purely existential problem, since the question never is for a soul to become *what* it is (it is such *qua* form) but *to become that which it is*. In other words, a human soul has more and more to actualize its very definition.¹⁷

Only persons can re-relate themselves and thus become more fully what a person is basically and can be additionally. Only persons can do this because of the

powers of intellect and will – powers that constitute person as “most perfect in all of nature” according to Aquinas. Persons can make themselves *become* the *kind* of person they *want* to be by responsible commitments. Animals and other beings in our world give no evidence that they are capable of personization.

With these clarifications, it can now be stated how personization is also the norm of morality. Given that we have established that a person has *potential* for personization, which can be actualized by authentic commitments, it is clear that a person *ought* to actualize that potential. Not to do so is contrary to our existential reality. To use Kant’s phrase, the “categorical imperative” for a person is personization. It is also, therefore, the norm of morality. More precisely, one can speak of a moral and metaphysical necessity in this, for we cannot *be* an actualized person unless we choose freely to authenticate that *relation* to the good which does the actualizing. We must do the good which actualizes our person and avoid the evil which could frustrate it.

And, if it be asked, what is that good which actualizes our person, the answer is that it is self-reflective commitment to the good and value as we understand them; it is the taking of responsibility for our actions. And, if it be asked still further, why is this so important, the answer is that this binding of oneself to the good of one’s own person and that of others is what produces consistency in our very form, our person. With this total wholeness, both interior and exterior, we become what existentialists call an “authentic” person. With the whole-hearted pledging of oneself to responsibility for every action, we actualize that re-relating of our person which establishes the *kind* of person we will be henceforth. This, I suggest, is the metaphysical basis for that incommunicability of the human person which is analogous to that supreme incommunicability of the divine persons.¹⁸

But, it might still be asked, what is the highest good and value that we ought to understand and to which we ought to commit ourselves. The answer is that *person* is the highest good and value “in all of nature” as Aquinas said. Anything less than person is a lesser good, and to commit oneself to anything less than person is not only contrary to personization but is also most probably immoral. Thus, commitment to material possessions, to power, to addictions of any and every sort, to uncontrolled emotions, to injustice and hatred of another person, these are all contrary to personization and are immoral. To subject “person” to anything less than “person” is immoral. To have respect for person as “that which is most perfect in all of nature” and to uphold the “personization” of each person is morally good.¹⁹

Doubtless, this delineation of moral good as consisting in personization is not compatible with any theory of hedonism, epicureanism, utilitarianism, social contract ethics, proportionalism, consequentialism, etc., etc. But neither is it compatible with theories based on identifying the teleology of an operative potency or of a bodily part with moral good. For example, the potentiality of the eye to see is

fulfilled by the good of light and color. But this is not a moral good; it is simply a natural good, an a-moral good. What renders any action and any actualization of a potency to be morally good is whether it furthers personization. Thus any version of so-called “natural law ethics” that bases morality on fulfillment of physical capacities and tendencies has overlooked the supereminence of person and personization. It must be maintained that it is not whether one’s natural potencies are fulfilled or frustrated which constitutes a moral or immoral deed. Rather it is in the fact that such actualization of potencies furthers personization that they can be called morally good. Nor did Aquinas base morality on actualizing natural tendencies with their habituation into virtues. For him the ultimate good of the human person is fulfillment by the divine good, God. Fulfillment of natural potencies has value only in relation to love of God and love of neighbor.²⁰ This needs some further elaboration.

For it must be noted that there is a further, and final, aspect of this re-relating of one’s person, this personization. Commitment does “make one’s essence,” as the existentialists are wont to proclaim. But there are less and more perfect kinds of commitment. A person is able to commit him or herself to evil relationships. We commonly say that such a one has “gone bad.” However, our focus here is on becoming a good person, – even a “perfect” one.

Let us note that commitment at any level, i.e., being responsible, does bring about personization and therefore a re-relatedness of person. But there are degrees or levels of commitment. Aquinas, in line with other philosophers, employs the metaphysical principle that “good is self-diffusive.”²¹ Beings, both physical and personal, tend to share the goodness which they are or have. There is a natural tendency to benevolence as perfective of all beings.

The same is true for persons. Their highest perfective principle is also benevolence, i.e., altruism. Aquinas even goes so far as to say that such benevolence to other persons is a self-evident principle of the natural law.²² Thus, the perfection of personization is benevolence. Put in another way, the perfection of person as such is benevolent love, whether this person be human, angelic, or divine.

Note that benevolence is not the norm of morality. Rather, personization is the norm, while benevolence is the highest stage of that norm.²³ One might remark that respect for the personization of oneself and that of others is an implicit and incomplete love because the norm requires that we do nothing to hinder personization. However, that is rightly the area of justice, rather than benevolence, because the norm, as such, does not require *constant active* promotion of others. The abiding, active, affirming of all persons, in attitude and action, is a culminating stage and the perfection of person.

But, isn’t this a paradox? Total gift of self to others is *self-perfection*? To give away one’s person is the final fulfillment of person? How can this be? Here is

another way of stating this dilemma:

Here we strike upon the paradox of the moral life, perceived in many traditions – that the man who would “save” his life, that is to say, preserve it as a static possession, actually loses it, whereas the man who is prepared to venture out beyond himself and even empty himself attains the truest selfhood.²⁴

Well, the paradox does have a solution: it’s a matter of relatedness! When we freely give or commit ourselves to others, we internalize these relationships, set up by loving others, and these actualize our own person! Not mere intellectual recognition of relationships, but self-determined commitment to these relationships is what is so constitutive of person. So, the more we freely commit ourselves in benevolent love to persons, the more “related” we become, and thus the more actualized as a person.

The act of loving, in itself, although emerging from person, is not identical with person. Rather, the *relationship* established by loving is that which actualizes the person, is identical with person, and is the perfecting of person. Put in another way: When we freely choose to love others precisely as persons – as befitting persons – those very relationships, engendered by loving, are altering our person. They are giving our person a “toward-ness,” a “directionality,” that impinges on our whole being. We are re-relating our own person, *which is good for us*, by upholding, promoting, affirming, sustaining other persons, precisely as persons, who are a supreme good and value in themselves. So, we cannot ever stop loving, or worse, hate a person, because we would break those relationships and start losing some of our own actualized person!

To sum up at this point, the person who is becoming more perfectly a person is one who loves more persons, and loves them more and more, precisely as the persons which they actually are and/or can become. It is not essential that the other person be in need of something from another. What is essential is that we affirm that this person be, and be all that he/she can be. This is why Aquinas can maintain, “Person is that which is most perfect in all of nature.”

Notes

1. Thomas Aquinas' Latin text is “Respondeo, dicendum quod persona significat id quod est perfectissimum in tota natura, scilicet subsistens in rationali natura.” *Summa Theologiae*, I, q.29, a.3. (Rome: Marietti, 1952), I:158. Trans. Fathers of English Dominican Province, (Westminster, MD: Christian Classics, 1981), I:158, as: “I answer that, Person signifies what is most perfect in all nature – That is, a subsistent individual of a rational nature.” See also his *De Potentia Dei*, q.9, a.3.

2. Relatedness to other things and to other persons would fall within the Aristotelian predicaments, whereas, internal relations could be termed “transcendental” according to John Poinsoot in John Deely, *Tractatus De Signis: The Semiotics of John Poinsoot*. (Berkeley, Calif.: University of California Press, 1985), 474; or termed, as I prefer, “primary relativity” according to Bernard Lonergan, *Insight* (New York: Philosophical Library, 1970), 494: “... internal relations constitute no more than the component of primary relativity ...” For Aquinas, a *human* person is both body and soul, obviously, but person as such, i.e., human, angelic, or divine, is subsistent formal relatedness along intellectual-volitional modes, as in the opening quotation. Although Aquinas refuses to use “person” for a human soul alone (*op. cit.*, I, q.29, a.1, ad 5; q.75, a.4, ad 2; *Summa Contra Gentiles*, 75), he does admit that such a soul, after the death of the body, can enjoy God because happiness is the perfection of the soul on the part of the intellect (*op. cit.*, I-II, q.4, aa. 5&6). I shall continue to use “person” as principally one’s substantial form, one’s soul, because an incomplete person is still a person, nonetheless, and not a dog or a tree. See the studies by Joseph Owens, “Soul as Agent in Aquinas,” *New Scholasticism* 48 (1974): 40-72; and Horst Seidl, “The Concept of Person in Aquinas,” *Thomist* 51 (1987): 435-460.

3. Aquinas, *op. cit.*, I, q.5, a.5; q.45, a.1, ad 2; q.67, a.3. Denial of substantial form (and essence and nature) by some is not a sign of their un-reality, but only a sign of perspectival misunderstanding. See M.L. Gill, *Aristotle on Substance* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1989) and T.M. Olszewsky, “Functionalism Old and New,” *History of Philosophy Quarterly*, 9 (1992): 265-286. The most recent and comprehensive analysis of “person” as “form” can be found in David Braine, *The Human Person* (Notre Dame, Ind.: University of Notre Dame Press, 1992), 496-511.

4. A recent compendium of the history of the idea of person can be found in Mary T. Clark, “An Inquiry into Personhood,” *The Review of Metaphysics* 46 (1992): 3-28. Aquinas speaks of this dignity in S.T., I, q.29, a.1; a.3, ad 2; *De Potentia Dei*, q.9, aa. 2&3.

5. Lonergan, *op. cit.*, 518, calls substantial form a “central form” and says that man’s “unity has its metaphysical ground in his central form,” Aquinas notes “that the soul is in the body as containing it, not as contained by it,” (S.T., I, q.52, a.1); and “that the whole soul is in the whole body and in each of its parts,” (S.C.G., II, 72).

6. Even in non-human beings, “form” (pattern, structure) is not equatable with “matter” for two reasons: (1) Material beings are “extended,” i.e., their parts are outside of each other (are spatial) and their processes are durational (take time), whereas, form is within each and every part; otherwise these parts would be *unstructured*, which is contrary to fact. (2) “Matter,” *per se*, is an abstract term with a misplaced referent (Whitehead’s “fallacy of misplaced concreteness”), i.e., we mentally abstract the characteristics of “extension” and “duration” from beings around us and term this a being called “matter.” Whereas, in the definition of “matter,” the genus is “a *kind of being*” and the specific difference is “extended in space and time.” Above all, recall that for Aristotle and Aquinas, every form is act while matter is potency.

7. We do commonly speak of all of our material extended parts as our “body” i.e., collectively, we conceptualize them as a unit. But, correctly speaking, a body, without a person, is not a body; it is a corpse, and it quickly degenerates into various dead elements which revert to their own patterning. More correctly, persons *have* bodies, are *distinct* from their bodies, but are not identical with those bodies. Likewise, person is not identical with “personality,” defined as individual characteristics (accidents in the Aristotelian sense), since they are only distinct parts. This usage also coincides with contemporary psychology. In the same vein, person is not identical with “self” which is a set of socially conditioned attitudes and behavior patterns and is the product of cultural conditioning. Nor is person identical with “psychosomatic unit” because we can lose one or many parts of our psychophysical whole, or even be born with some parts missing, yet cease not to be a person.

8. "Consciousness" and "self-consciousness" are not single capacities in themselves. "Consciousness" is only our abstract term for all of our multiple distinct modes of awareness of other beings by our senses and intellect. "Self-consciousness" is only our abstract term for our intellect and will in their reflective operations. To use consciousness and self-consciousness as if they represented distinct powers in themselves is to commit, again, the fallacy of misplaced concreteness or Ryle's "category mistake." See also P.F. Strawson, "Persons" in *Individuals* (New York: Doubleday, 1959), 100-113.

9. This is not to say that the person (soul, substantial form) alone is a *human being*, as if without a body, as was clarified in note #2 above. Rather, it is to say that the soul, as *subsistent*, is the person, which, for a *human* person, is united with a body, in order to act, operate, and develop its very person. On the other hand, angelic and divine persons are totally separated from bodies and operate without them.

10. Defining nature as "the sum total of potentials" in a being is using another abstract concept. Analytically, each potency is really distinct from the substantial form, but the *sum-total* of those potentials, which we arrive at conceptually, is not real. Rather, the real unification of potentials is the actual substantial form.

11. Person as structure, pattern, form, essence, etc., leaves intact the Thomist metaphysical distinction of essence from existence, for, a person is distinct from one's existence (*esse*), since we come into existence and have not always existed. It is also compatible with the intelligible possibility that a person can add or subtract various ways of operating (additional "natures"). Christian theologians speak of Christ as one divine person who acted according to two "natures": human and divine.

12. I borrowed the term from Andrew Tallon, "Rahner and Personization," *Philosophy Today* 14 (1970):44-56; "Person and Community: Buber's Category of the Between," *op. cit.*, 17 (1973): 62-83; and *Personal Becoming: In Honor of Karl Rahner*, rev. ed. (Milwaukee, Wis.: Marquette University Press, 1982). I hope that my exposition is in line with these works. On the other hand, the two recent articles by Robert A. Connor, "Relational *Esse* and the Person," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly, Annual Supplement* 65 (1991): 253-267; and "The Person as Resonating Existential," *A.C.P.Q.* 64 (1992): 39-56, use the term "personogenesis." Although Connor, indeed, stresses intrinsic relatedness as the hallmark of person., he seems not to be fully Thomist because he identifies (or at least partially identifies) intellection and volition with existence (*esse*).

13. The correlation between becoming an acting person with becoming a moral person is also highlighted in Karol Wojtyla, *The Acting Person*. Trans. Andrzej Potocki. (Boston: D. Reidel, 1979), especially pp. 96-101.

14. The works of eminent philosophers who were Personalists are replete with analyses of personality development. Prominent here is that of Peter Bertocci, *Personality and the Good* (N.Y.: David McKay, 1963) and "The Person, His Personality and Environment," *Review of Metaphysics* 32 (1979): 605-621.

15. That G.E. Moore found it impossible to define "good" does not entail that good is indefinable. What he did was to state that good is in the category of "quality," *Principia Ethica* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1903), 9-10, which was a "category mistake." Instead, good is in the category of "relation," because it is a relation between a potency and its respective act. That is, it is a relation between a need or tendency and that which can fulfill that need, tendency, inclination, etc. See Henry B. Veatch, *For an Ontology of Morals: A critique of Contemporary Ethical Theory* (Evanston, Ill.: Northwestern University Press, 1971), Ch. VI. Thomas Aquinas had modified Aristotle's "the good is that which all things desire" by saying that good consists in the fact that something is perfective of

something else by way of finality, *On Truth*, 21, 2. Trans. R.W. Schmidt (Chicago: Henry Regnery, 1954) 3:10.

16. For the sake of clarity, it is advisable to differentiate "good" from "value" by noting that a "good" is apprehended intellectually and it becomes a "value" when given emotive adherence. One can know intellectually that exercise is good for one's health, but not deem it a value to be pursued. Joseph Owens elaborates on good as a transcendental relation versus value as a human creation in "Value and Metaphysics," *The Future of Metaphysics*. ed. R.E. Wood (Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1970): 204-228.

17. Etienne Gilson, *Being and Some Philosophers*. 2nd ed. (Toronto: Pontifical Institute of Medieval Studies, 1952), 181.

18. See the treatment of this in John F. Crosby, "The Incommunicability of Human Persons," *Thomist* 57 (1993): 403-442.

19. See John D. Caputo, "The Presence of the Other: A Phenomenology of the Human person," *Proceedings: American Catholic Philosophical Association* 53 (1979): 43-58; and Kenneth T. Gallagher, *The Philosophy of Knowledge* (N.Y.: Fordham University Press, 1984), 47-50.

20. Mary Hayden, "Natural Inclinations and Moral Absolutes: A Mediated Correspondence for Aquinas," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly, Annual Supplement* 64 (1990): 130150, notes that natural inclinations correspond to moral absolutes only through the mediation of man's last end. Of pertinent interest is the interpretation of Pope John Paul II that "The different commandments of the Decalogue are really only so many reflections of the one commandment about the good of the person, ... The commandments ... are meant to safeguard the good of the person, the image of God, by protecting his goods.: *Veritatis Splendor*, 13.

21. The phrase is found in Pseudo-Dionysius' *On the Divine Names*, a late 5th century neo-Platonist Christian, while the earliest origin is probably Plato's *Parmenides*. See Frederick Copleston, *A History of Philosophy* (N.Y.: Doubleday 1962): 2, part I, 106-115. For Aquinas' use of it, see his *Summa Theologiae*, q.19, a.2, English trans, *op. cit.*, p. 104.

22. "Those two principles [love of God and love of neighbor] are the first general principles of the natural law, and are self-evident to human reason, either through nature or through faith. Wherefore, all the precepts of the decalogue are referred to these, as conclusions to general principles." *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q.100, a.3, ad 1. English trans. *op. cit.*, 2:1039.

23. This was the mistake of those "moral sense" ethical theorists, like Francis Hutcheson (1694-1747), David Hartley (1705-1757), Adam Smith (1723-1790), and David Hume (1711-1776). They proposed that benevolence was the *foundation* of moral obligation. Instead, benevolent love is the perfection of morality, not its foundation, because only the actualized person is capable of benevolent love.

24. John Macquarrie, *Three Issues in Ethics* (N.Y.: Harper & Row, 1970), 109. See also Robert Johann, *The Meaning of Love: An Essay Towards a Metaphysics of Intersubjectivity* (Glen Rock, N.J.: Paulist Press, 1966) as well as his *Building the Human* (N.Y.: Herder, 1968). Another line of metaphysical reasoning along these lines is Kenneth L. Schmitz. "The First Principle of Personal Becoming," *The Review of Metaphysics* 47 (1994): 757-774.