

THEOLOGICAL TRENDS

THE CONSCIOUSNESS OF CHRIST I

IN THE PAST decade or so, catholic exegetes and theologians have been showing themselves increasingly reluctant to accept traditional views concerning Christ's knowledge and consciousness. 'How much did Jesus know?', asks Fr Raymond Brown, in one of the books we shall be considering in this survey of recent literature on the subject. The question is not new, but many of the answers offered to it today are very new, and to some, upsetting and offensive. In view of its delicacy and importance the subject requires to be treated with the utmost rigour, honesty and tact.

The present survey is limited to books or articles by catholic writers which have appeared in english since 1960.¹ Consequently it will not touch directly upon the discussion of 'kenoticism' which flared up in anglican circles towards the end of the 19th century and of which a few charred embers are smouldering still. Nor will it be concerned with the solutions proposed during the course of the modernist crisis at the beginning of this century, relevant as these are to the theological issues involved. The attempts of the modernists to break up the ice-pack in which catholic theology had been jammed for centuries (in spite of the valuable work of the 19th century theologians like Scheeben) proved a disastrous failure. They wanted to apply methods elaborated in the alien territory of protes-

¹ The articles treated in this survey are as follows:

- (1) BERNARD LONERGAN, S.J., 'Christ as Subject: A Reply', in *Collection* (London 1967), pp 164-197. This article, which first appeared in *Gregorianum* 40 (1959), pp 242-270, was written in response to a criticism made of Lonergan's supplementary lecture-notes, *De Constitutione Christi ontologica et psychologica*, published in book-form in 1956.
- (2) KARL RAHNER, S.J., 'Dogmatic Considerations on Knowledge and Consciousness in Christ', in *Dogmatic versus biblical theology*, edited by Herbert Vorgrimler (London 1964), pp 242-267. (The german edition, entitled *Exegese und Dogmatik*, dates from 1962). This article first appeared in *Trierer Theologische Zeitschrift* 71 (1962), pp 65-68, and is also to be found in vol 5 of Rahner's *Schriften zur Theologie* (Einsiedeln 1964), pp 222-245, which includes a full bibliography.
- (3) ENGELBERT GUTWENGER, S.J., 'The problem of Christ's knowledge', in *Concilium* 1, no 2, January 1966, pp 48-55. This is a survey of recent literature on the problem, and the notes at the end give references to work done in six languages (not english: Lonergan's article is not mentioned).

Reference is also made to two other studies: one by Raymond Brown S.S., which will be discussed in detail in the April issue of *The Way*, the other by Piet Schoonenberg S.J., entitled 'The kenosis or self emptying of Christ', which appeared in the same number of *Concilium* as Gutwenger's bulletin, pp 27-36.

tant liberalism, methods as yet imperfectly mastered of historical and scientific exegesis, and Rome was understandably frightened of the explosive potential of these discoveries.

The form in which the problem we are concerned with most frequently appears is in the question: 'Did Jesus know that he was God?' Behind this question lies another: 'Could he be God without knowing that he was God?' There are also other connected problems, such as, 'Did Jesus know that he was the Messiah?', or 'How much knowledge did he have of his mission to redeem mankind?'; and behind these lies the further question: 'Could he really redeem mankind without fully intending to do so, without, that is, knowing what he was about?' The first thing to note about these questions is that they pre-suppose a belief in Jesus' divinity and in his mission to redeem the human race. They can indeed be a source of deep puzzlement, not to say distress, but only to those who have already accepted the articles of faith which they imply. This is one reason why the current debate on these issues is conducted chiefly in catholic circles. Not that faith in the divinity of Christ is confined to catholics (though many protestants nowadays are quite prepared to say that they do not believe that Christ was God); but the tension between modern views and traditional teaching, in this matter as in many others, is experienced most keenly and painfully by catholics, and fervent catholics at that. For those who have no faith there can be no problem; for those who, like the fundamentalists, believe that reason and research are the enemies of faith, the problem is suppressed. Only believers, and believers whose faith is robust enough to withstand what can be a fairly painful probing, are prepared to face up to the challenge. The fact that such questions have been asked by theologians of the stature of Rahner and Schillebeeckx indicates the extent of the change in the theological climate since the decree *Lamentabili* and the encyclical *Pascendi* were published in 1907.

Fr Rahner states the issue very clearly in an article entitled 'Dogmatic considerations on knowledge and consciousness in Christ':

The theological tradition attributes to Jesus as man a knowledge which embraces and penetrates everything past, present and future in finite reality, at least in so far as it has to do with his salvific mission. Thus for instance the encyclical *Mystici Corporis* (1943) ascribes to Jesus the direct vision of God from the first moment of his existence, a vision such as that which the blessed in heaven have in the final state of glory.

Such assertions, at first hearing, seem to savour almost of mythology. They seem at first sight to come into hopeless conflict with the data of sacred Scripture, which speaks of a developing consciousness in Jesus (Lk 2, 52), of a Lord who himself professes ignorance of decisive matters definitely part of his mission (Mt 24, 36; Mk 13, 32). He is shown as a man bearing the stamp of his times, as modern research into ancient religion and culture demonstrates clearly, and with ever-increasing precision. We almost have the impression that the only original thing about him was his own personality, and the unique manner in which the influences of his milieu were concentrated in him – though every single human being is in his own way a unique sounding-board for his milieu.

The standard manuals of dogmatics have their solution. We are to distinguish an 'infused' knowledge from an 'acquired' knowledge, which is not excluded by the former. We are to remember the 'condescension' of the Lord in freely and deliberately adapting himself to his surroundings. We are to distinguish direct from indirect knowledge. But all this sounds artificial and improbable. Indeed, we even have the impression that all that is aimed at is merely verbal reconciliation between what history and dogma have to say about the self-consciousness of Jesus.

The question is therefore in the category of those which undeniably cause a certain strain between exegetes and dogmatic theologians. This strain is mostly 'relieved' by a sort of pretence between them that the other does not exist. Thus O. Karrer can say, in his *Neues Testament*, that 'Even the Son during his earthly pilgrimage had not yet the blessed vision of God as at the right hand of the Father'. Modern exegetes, like J. Schmid, do not deal with the dogmatic question which arises from these texts. A public breach is avoided simply because formulas are sought which prevent one discipline from coming into express contradiction with the views of the other. But justice is not thereby done to the real situation.

This lengthy quotation makes it clear why it is necessary to treat the question from a double point of view, or rather, from a single vantage point which embraces both exegesis and dogma. It has been a major weakness of catholic theology to date that there are so few men capable of clambering up to this vantage point. Rahner himself avows that he has 'neither the intention nor the competence to do an exegetical study'. Perhaps he does not do himself justice; but some proficiency in exegesis would certainly be of immense benefit to a theologian; and in fact all the authors discussed in this survey tend to stay on their own side of the border-line between the two disciplines, glancing enviously across from time to time at the

activities going on on the other side of the frontier. At all events no solution to the problem is possible until we have a clear idea of both its facets, and for this reason I propose to discuss first two or three major articles written from the dogmatic standpoint and then, in a second article, to appear in the next issue of *The Way*, to turn to the exegetical problems.

But before going on to discuss the articles of Lonergan and Rahner in detail, it is worthwhile pointing out how the traditional distinction between dogmatic and speculative theology bears on our problem. Dogmatic theology is primarily, though not exclusively, concerned with the genesis and interpretation of the conciliar and papal definitions of faith, whose formulations are binding, not in the sense of being absolute or definitive expressions of the particular truth they enshrine, but in the sense that they give one expression of a truth which cannot be denied without imperilling the whole edifice of the faith. Just such a definition is that of Chalcedon (451 A.D.), which states that Christ was truly God and truly man, and that the divine and the human natures, while remaining distinct and unconfused, are found together in a single hypostasis; or that of the third Council of Constantinople (681 A.D.), which asserts that there are two wills and two 'operations' or 'activities' in Christ. These are not the only christological dogmas, but for our purposes they are the most important.

Speculative theology takes up where dogma leaves off; it attempts to construct a rational synthesis of the truths of the faith as they come to us in scripture and tradition. Dogmatic formulations inevitably make some use of philosophical concepts, but speculative theology uses them much more systematically: the style and structure of its arguments (though not the content, for it works within the faith) are often indistinguishable from those of philosophy. The best-known (and no doubt the best) of such theological syntheses is the *Summa Theologica* of St Thomas, which has since been set up as a measure of orthodoxy all but supplanting scripture and dogma.

Where christology is concerned, the speculative theologians have an exceptionally difficult task; for the attributes of divinity are not simply different from those of humanity, they are often incompatible. Omniscience, for instance, is a divine prerogative, ignorance an ineluctable human weakness. In the past, theologians have argued that, because Christ was divine, he must have been omniscient; nowadays they argue that, because he was human, there must have been some things he did not know. The difficulty is that al-

though there are two wills and two 'operations' (the human consciousness and the divine consciousness?) in Christ, the subject of both is the same, the person of the Word. Some, firmly grasping both horns of the dilemma, maintain that as God he knows everything, as man he knew only a limited amount. And to the puzzled question, 'How can this be?', they blandly reply, 'With God all things are possible'. One solution (the one I personally favour) is to say that in becoming man the Son of God temporally (and the word 'temporally' is itself a paradox) divested himself of *all* his divine prerogatives. This does not mean that he had only one will, a human will (this was where kenoticism went wrong), but that he exercised his divine will in a renunciation of the privileges and qualities of divinity or possibly, as Schoonenberg suggests, in 'a renunciation of what we, men, imagine to be the life of God's Son'.

But this solution is a relatively modern one, and the basis of most christological argument for centuries was what is known as the hypostatic union, an expression which occurs in no conciliar document but which evidently lends itself to speculation concerning the privileges conferred on the humanity of Christ by his divinity. When, for instance, Pius XII asserted in *Mystici Corporis* that Christ enjoyed the beatific vision (*beata visio*) almost from the first moment of his conception, he was only repeating a quite ordinary thesis that had been held for centuries by the vast majority of catholic theologians.

To many modern theologians it seems obvious that speculations of this kind are totally unjustified extrapolations from the central texts of Chalcedon and Constantinople III. Where the Councils contented themselves with a discreet affirmation that Christ was both God and man (thus confining themselves strictly to the ontological order), the theologians have ventured upon brash speculations concerning his psychological make-up. Yet it is very questionable just how far philosophical and phenomenological analogues can help us to elucidate this greatest of all mysteries. Are we justified in drawing any *a priori* conclusions in the psychological order? It seems at least doubtful.

At this point the traditionally minded catholic may well find himself objecting strongly to what could seem a rather cavalier dismissal of centuries of theological reflection. Nor is it enough to reply that the patristic and later the scholastic conclusions in this field have no binding force. For in that case, how did they come to dominate christological thinking almost up to the present day? The

answer to this question is complex. It lies partly in the pages of the gospels themselves which, read uncritically, often appear to attribute to Jesus an unclouded insight into his own divinity, a complete assurance about his destiny and a total mastery of his environment. And in a culture in which God's regular intervention into the workings of the physical universe was taken for granted, the miracle stories of the gospels seemed perfectly credible accounts of what actually took place – the precise and literal truth. Jesus was therefore all-powerful and all-knowing. The humanity was in some respects, though no theologian would put it as baldly as this, a fairly thin veil through which the divinity was almost continuously visible. Critical exegesis was unknown until the latter half of the 17th century, and it has taken it the best part of three hundred years to gain admission into catholic theological circles. Other contributory factors include the dominance of greek idealism, and in particular the primacy accorded to contemplation over action, which made it possible to hold that a perfect man could be, indeed must be, all-wise and all-knowing. The background of christological thinking in the patristic and mediaeval eras would make a vast study in itself, but once we perceive, however dimly, just how much of traditional theology has its roots in a totally exhausted soil, then we can see why it bears no more fruit today and go in search of new soils and fresh plantings.

But to reject theology is not the same as to reject dogma. And one wonders who or what can be the target of one of the most recent warnings of the Holy Office on this subject, included in a questionnaire dated July 24, 1966 and sent out to all the bishops: 'There is afoot a certain christological humanism that would reduce Christ to the condition of a mere man, who gradually became conscious of his divine Sonship'. Fr Brown, who quotes this document, comments quite fairly: 'It is not clear whether the Holy Office was maintaining that all theories of gradual development of consciousness would reduce Christ to mere man, or was objecting only to such theories of gradual development of consciousness as would reduce Christ to a mere man'. However, it seems to me probable that this worry could only arise within a theological framework that allowed no room for a distinction between human consciousness and divine consciousness, since once you have posited such a distinction you are in no immediate danger of reducing Christ to a mere man. (Besides, what mere man could *ever* become conscious of his divine Sonship, as long as this term is taken, as it is

presumably meant, in the sense of natural rather than adoptive Sonship?)

Fr Lonergan, at any rate, in a most stimulating and cogent article, not merely accepts such a distinction between the human and the divine consciousness but regards it as the only position fully consistent with Chalcedon. It is worth quoting his position, explicitly based though it is on the principle of *analogia fidei*, at some length:

A parallelism is to be recognized between ontological and psychological statements about the incarnate Word. The main parallel statements are that, as there is one person with a divine and a human nature, so there is one subject with a divine and a human consciousness. As the person, so also the subject is without division or separation. As the two natures, so also the divine and the human consciousness are without confusion or interchange.

As the person, so also the subject is a divine reality. As the human nature, so also the human consciousness is assumed. As there is a great difference between 'being God' and 'being a man', so also there is a great difference between 'being conscious of oneself as God' and 'being conscious of oneself as man'. As the former difference is surmounted hypostatically by union in the person, so the latter difference is surmounted hypostatically by union in the subject. As the two natures do not prove two persons, so the divine and the human consciousness do not prove two subjects.

The two sides of the parallelism have not, at present, the same theological note. The ontological side was developed centuries ago, and it has the authority of the decrees of Chalcedon and of the third council of Constantinople as understood by all catholic theologians. The psychological side is an opinion on a question raised by contemporary theology; still, this opinion has in its favour arguments that seem rather peremptory.

Earlier on, Fr Lonergan makes the (to me) dubious assertion that 'a difficult, recent and primitive notion (he is talking of the notion of the subject) is not theologically useful until it has been transposed into the classical categories of scholastic thought'. However this may be, the distinction on which his own account is founded, between what he calls the *conscientia-experientia* (which he accepts) and the *conscientia-perceptio* (which he rejects), is crucial in any consideration of the consciousness of Christ. Superficial treatments of consciousness assume that, like other kinds of knowledge, it is a matter of knowing an object. If this were so then the subject

known would be known as the *object* of consciousness. But knowledge of an object has no constitutive effect upon its object; it only reveals its object as it was prior to the occurrence of the cognitive act. And consciousness is simply not like this; it is not merely cognitive but also constitutive: 'consciousness not merely reveals us as suffering but also makes us capable of suffering'.

The value of this notion of the conscious subject for understanding the nature of Christ's consciousness will be seen clearly from the following quotation (from an article of G. van Riet, quoted by Lonergan):

In our opinion, every conscious activity is necessarily present to itself without reflexion, or, as Sartre writes it, is conscious (of) itself. What characterizes this consciousness (of) self, is the fact that it is still unexpressed; it is presence to self, not knowledge of self; it does not use concepts, or judgments, or words; it is silent, it does not speak. From the moment it reflects, it speaks; to reflect is in fact to elucidate through expression; the fruit of reflexion is the judgment. The paradox of human consciousness, which is incarnate and not angelic, is that even the elucidating act is unreflected for itself, conscious (of) self. It expresses something not reflected on, something lived or perceived, it does not express itself. Only a new act of reflexion will elucidate it by giving it expression, but this new act will in its turn remain unreflected.

The subject of Christ's human consciousness is, of course, divine: it is the Person of the Word. But his consciousness of himself is, *ex hypothesi*, irreflective, inexplicit. On this view of consciousness it is misleading to ask whether Christ knew that he was God; one should expose and reject the unspoken presupposition behind this question, namely that without such reflective, propositional, conceptual knowledge as an affirmative answer to the question would imply, Christ could have no awareness whatever of his own divinity. There is another, exegetical reason why the question is misleading, which we will come to later. To say that Christ was humanly conscious of himself as the Word neither entails nor excludes a subsequent, reflexive, propositional knowledge. Lonergan's view leaves this question entirely open. No doubt we may still have some reservations about the applicability of the principle of *analogia fidei* in this matter. Where the hypostatic union is involved, the step from the ontological to the psychological order may be just too great for us to manage. But Lonergan's cogently argued position is certainly attractive, plausible and entirely consistent with any view

one cares to adopt about the extent of Christ's explicit, reflexive knowledge of his own divinity.

Karl Rahner begins the expository section of his important article, 'Knowledge and consciousness in Christ' with a similar sort of distinction to the one Lonergan makes between consciousness and objective knowledge, though in so far as he fails to reserve the term 'consciousness' for the immediate self-knowledge constitutive of the subject, his position lacks the clarity and precision of Lonergan's. However, the point he makes is identical. 'There is an objective conceptual consciousness, and also a transcendental knowledge, unreflective, situated at the subjective pole of the consciousness. There is a knowledge which is composed of judgments and there is a knowledge admitted or suppressed. There are psychical events in consciousness and their reflective interpretation'. And so on. Like Lonergan, Rahner stresses the importance of the kind of knowledge which is a basic condition of existence for the spiritual subject, and which is never adequately grasped by subsequent reflexion.

Next, he draws attention to the fallacy contained in the greek ideal of man, 'in which knowledge is simply the absolute measure of man' and ignorance is and can only be a falling short of the perfection to which man is ordained as his end. In a splendid paragraph, marred only by an excess of existentialist jargon, he argues that 'risk is of the essence of the self-perfecting of the finite person in the historical freedom of decision. Risk is involved; committing oneself to what is not totally visible, the hidden origin and the veiled end - a certain manner of not-knowing is essential to the free act of a man'. He goes on to speak of the voluntarily accepted emptiness of freedom as 'its dark foothold', without which freedom is simply not possible. 'There is therefore undoubtedly an ignorance which, since it renders possible the accomplishment of the free act of the finite person while the drama of his history is still being played, is more perfect than a knowledge which, in the act of the free will, would abolish the latter'. So in attributing a certain ignorance to Christ we are not in fact implying that he in any way fell short of human perfection: on the contrary, were he omniscient he could not be perfectly human.

In the next section of his article, Rahner disposes of the argument that Christ must have possessed the beatific vision. 'Why', he asks simply, 'should the absolute nearness and immediacy to God be necessarily and always productive of blessedness?' Nevertheless,

he does accept the opinion that Christ had an immediate vision of God, even though he qualifies it as 'non-beatific'. His argument at this point is complex, resting on thomistic metaphysics. We have already admitted the reasonableness of Lonergan's view that Christ was conscious at least in a non-reflective way of his own Person, the Person of the Word (though Lonergan, of course, prefers to speak of 'subject' here); and Rahner adduces a further powerful argument in its support. But in doing so he makes what appears to me an illegitimate shift from *consciousness* to *vision*. His argument (based on the fundamental notions of 'presence to self' and 'self-possession' in the philosophical sense) will carry consciousness, an obscure self-awareness, but fails to carry *vision*, a clear and direct perception. It seems to me that with regard to the old thesis of Christ's beatific vision a modern theologian can cheerfully drop the 'vision' as well as the 'beatific' into the morass of the unreal and the unacceptable; and in fact when Rahner goes on to explain what he means by 'immediate vision', it is in terms of the immediate non-reflective consciousness we have already discussed. In particular, he insists that Christ's consciousness of his divine Sonship 'is not to be thought of as a way of having God before the mind as an object, towards which the thoughts of the human consciousness of Jesus would be directed, as though towards "the other", "the object", which stands opposite'. Rahner is aware that the term 'vision' is difficult here, suggesting as it does an object presented to the gaze of the beholder. He himself insists that it is necessary to eliminate from the notion any idea of an objectivated 'thing in front of our thought'. But if he is prepared to do this, it is hard to see why he prefers the term 'vision' to 'consciousness' or 'immediate awareness'. Nothing in his explanation of what the 'immediate vision' consists in justifies the use of a word whose central core of meaning is evacuated by his own qualifications.¹

In the final part of his essay, Rahner goes a step beyond Lonergan:

Just as a man . . . has to come to himself, and to learn in the course

¹ This is an example of one of Rahner's most remarkable characteristics as a theologian: an almost obsessive determination to retain traditional terminology even when he has re-interpreted the tradition itself beyond all recognition. One suspects, however, that this fad may have been largely responsible for his relative immunity at a period when theologians, whose originality of thought was certainly no greater than his own, were being regularly 'investigated' by the Holy Office. The roman theologians, finding Rahner just as hard to understand as most of the rest of us, were no doubt reassured by the sight of well-worn and familiar formulae.

of a long experience to tell himself what he is and how he has already always perceived himself in the consciousness of his basic condition; just as what was always aware of itself inarticulately and unobjectively, though not always consciously perceived, comes to self-awareness reflectively in terms of known objects: so it is also with Jesus' consciousness of Sonship, with his basic immediacy to God. It has been, in its spiritual history, *en route* to itself, that is, to its reflective objectivation, because the Son, by taking up a human nature, has also accepted a spiritual human history. And such a human history is not only, and first and last, the process of being engaged with this or that outward reality. It is the asymptotic appropriation of what and who man himself is, which man already possessed himself in the depths of his being.

Thus Rahner, with a breathtaking boldness, suggests the lines along which Christ's initial irreflective consciousness of his own divinity might have developed into a more explicit knowledge. Whether in making these *a priori* judgments he had an eye on recent work done on the gospels is hard to say. At any rate, he is convinced that if research into the life of Jesus is rightly conducted, it will find no evidence which tells against the hypothesis of Jesus' irreflective consciousness of his basic condition of immediacy to God. But he admits that any detailed charting of the history of Jesus' progressive self-consciousness must be left to the exegetes:

Such a progressive self-interpretation of its own basic condition by a spirit always takes place, of course, in the process of confronting the whole breadth of its outward history, as it finds itself in a milieu and exists in the midst of its surroundings. This is the material through which that which was always present to itself comes to itself. It is therefore quite legitimate to try to observe in what given world of concepts, in what eventual development – to be noted simply *a posteriori* by means of history – this gradual articulate self-possession of the God-man's basic condition, of Jesus' Sonship and immediacy to God, took place from the start. It is legitimate to trace the concepts used by Jesus, which were provided for him by his religious milieu, in order to say slowly what he already of himself knew in the depths of his being. Such a history of his self-expression does not need, at least on principle, to be interpreted only as the history of his pedagogical adaptation to his surroundings, but may calmly be read also as the history of his self-interpretation for himself.

Concluding his essay with a review of the three kinds of knowledge attributed to Christ, Rahner has no difficulty in allowing an acquired knowledge, gained in the ordinary way through experience

and reflection; he also accepts the theory of an immediate vision of God, at least in the qualified sense explained above; he rejects as arbitrary and factitious the theory which would assign to Christ what is called 'infused knowledge'. The other two kinds of knowledge are enough, he argues, to do justice to the statements of the *magisterium*. Considering the theological climate of the day, Rahner's is a courageous and valuable study; his retention of the terminology of 'immediate vision of God' marks, I feel, a failure in nerve, but his interpretation of the disputed phrase, though forced, is nevertheless liberating.

The last article to be discussed here is of less importance than the first two. 'The problem of Christ's knowledge', by E. Gutwenger, is itself a 'bulletin', a critical survey of recent literature on the subject. He begins with a careful statement of the impasse into which christology had been led by an over-reliance on the deductive reasoning characteristic of the theology of the scholastics. How, for instance, 'can we maintain that Christ suffered abandonment by the Father and death in the very depths of his soul when this very soul was permeated in its depths by ineffable, heavenly joy? Even if these two ideas did not contradict each other logically, they are bound to do so psychologically, and there is no point in using logical props to get round psychological obstacles'. Understandably, Gutwenger has no time for the tortuous solutions adopted to get round difficulties such as these, and his only purpose in describing them is to convince his readers of the need for a new approach.

Much of the rest of his article is devoted to a review of Rahner's opinions, which he accepts almost entirely, though not uncritically. He also comments on the views of P. Galtier, the first catholic in recent times seriously to broach the question of Christ's consciousness. Since Galtier's work is of limited value and puts forward views that have found few supporters, there is no need to comment upon it here. More important is an article of Schillebeeckx, whom Gutwenger criticizes for failing to allow for a centre of activity in the human consciousness. I fail to see the force of Gutwenger's objections here; he seems to be accusing Schillebeeckx of veering too close to monophysitism, but one feels that he himself stops not very far short of nestorianism. If Schillebeeckx were right, he says at one point, 'should we not then have to say that the Logos, who is God, suffers himself?' But surely this is precisely what we *do* have to say: *Unus de Trinitate passus est* (cf *Denzinger-Schönmetzner*, 432). Gutwenger asserts that 'we cannot introduce a distinction between

Logos and Divinity which would imply that the Logos can suffer as a Person but not in so far as the divine nature is concerned'. But of course we can and must: the most important effect of the Incarnation is to make it possible for the Son of God, the Person of the Word, to endure the common lot of humanity; which he can only do through his human nature. Lonergan, at any rate, has no doubts on this score, as we can see from the miniature catechism he inserts towards the end of the article already discussed:

Q. Do you mean that his soul was sorrowful, but he himself was not sorrowful?

A. That does not make sense. The Apostles's Creed says explicitly that Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord, suffered under Pontius Pilate.

Q. Do you mean that his body was scourged and crucified, but he himself felt nothing?

A. No, he felt all of it. Were our bodies scourged and crucified, we would feel it. His was scourged and crucified. He felt it.

Q. Is not Jesus Christ God?

A. He is.

Q. Do you mean that God suffered?

A. In Jesus Christ there is one person with two natures. I do not mean that the one person suffered in his divine nature. I do mean that the one person suffered in his human nature.

Q. It was really that divine person that suffered though not in his divine nature?

A. It was. He suffered. It was not somebody else that suffered. It was not nobody that suffered.

'Such', concludes Lonergan, 'is the doctrine we have all believed from childhood'. And because of the careful, meticulous thinking of men like himself and Fr Rahner, it is now possible for the catholic, without compromising any of his fundamental beliefs, to hold that Christ also suffered from ignorance and doubt, uncertainty and fear, and that he never attained a clear objective knowledge of his own divinity. Just how far these *a priori* possibilities correspond to the actual story of Jesus' life and spiritual growth we shall never know. But biblical scholarship can take us part of the way, and in the concluding section of this bulletin we shall be considering how far it has taken us up to now.

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