

THE ONE NECESSARY ENCYCLICAL

“Naturally stupid are all men who have not known God and who, from the good things that are seen, have not been able to discover Him who is; or by studying the works, have failed to recognise the artificer...”¹

They do the greatest harm in the world who have the greatest power. Who are these with such power? Catholics: because they have been invested with the Divine Sonship. In comparison with the harm done in the world by (Catholics) Martin Luther and Henry Tudor (Henry VIII), the harm done by a Hitler, a Stalin or a Pol Pot is insignificant. Their harm is ended: the harm done 500 years ago by Luther and Henry VIII continues today. For the all encompassing atheism which afflicts the 21st century is an inevitable consequence of the heresy they initiated, Protestantism.² Under atheism’s impetus the world is heading for perdition with the inevitability of the Gardarene swine.³ Atheism has gutted the minds of men of any but the faintest perception of the reality of their Creator, or of their utter reliance upon Him.

“Every sin,” St Thomas teaches,

“consists formally in aversion from God. Hence the more a sin severs man from God, the graver it is. Now man is more than ever separated from God by unbelief, because he has not even true knowledge of God: and by false knowledge of God, man does not approach Him, but is severed from Him... Therefore it is clear that the sin of unbelief is greater than any sin that occurs in the perversion of morals.”⁴

In April of this year the editor of the *Chiesa* website reported on the actions of Msgr Giuseppe Betori whom, on 8th September 2008, Pope Benedict XVI had appointed Archbishop of Florence. Sandro Magister, wrote—

“At the beginning of October, shortly before he was installed in the diocese, [Msgr Betori] carried on a public dispute with the philosopher Roberta de Monticelli. She had announced that she was going to leave the Catholic Church precisely because of Betori: because he had condemned, ‘in the name of the Italian Church,’ self-determination in the decision to end one’s life prematurely. She accused him of ‘diabolically’ denying ‘the very possibility of all morality: conscience and its freedom.’ Betori answered her with a restrained editorial in the newspaper of the CEI, *Avvenire*, entitled: ‘I, too, ask for freedom of conscience. Self-determination is another matter.’”

One must admire the new Archbishop for his activism at a time when many, if not most, of his peers, are refusing to face the crucial issues of abortion and euthanasia. But the narration shows a problem in his approach. One does not deal with people

¹ *Wisdom* 13: 1

² Once a man rejects the authority of God in what he shall believe, there remains only his own authority. He places himself on a knife edge: on the one hand there is the order and majesty in the things God has made—which incline him back to God; on the other there is his pride and self regard—which incline him to take for granted the great goods he holds and, foolishly, to reject the reality that he is both dependent on his creator, and contingent. The devil, who never ceases to act, leads him via the second of these courses to unbelief.

³ Matthew 8: 28-34; Mark 5: 11-17; Luke 8: 32-7.

⁴ St Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q. 10, a. 3

like Roberta de Monticelli by expressing a contrary opinion. This is the sort of thing the media does, reporting each side of a question without seeking to resolve it. One deals with atheists by demonstrating that they are fools.⁵

In decades gone by the generality of men still shared a belief in the Divine. It was appropriate then for Pius XI, in 1930 in *Casti Connubii*, to condemn the lapse from moral principle of the Anglican Lambeth Conference of that year, as it was for Paul VI to confirm, in 1968 in *Humanae Vitae*, the evils of that lapse. But today the vast majority of men have lost the sense they once held in common and, in the process, have lost the sense of the critical importance of moral issues in their lives. Until the folly of atheism is laid out for them, they will not acknowledge any moral rule. Here is the subject of the one encyclical essential for the modern world.

What should that encyclical say? Before we suggest its argument, we should first address a problem which besets the clergy and theologians of the Church no less than it affects the world in general—yet another effect of Protestantism—the loss of faith in reason.⁶

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Pope Benedict XVI dedicated his catechesis of Wednesday, August 5th, to that majestic saint, Jean-Marie Vianney, the Curé of Ars, patron of parish priests.

"He distinguished himself by a singular and fruitful pastoral creativity, capable of demonstrating that the reigning rationalism of the time was in reality far from satisfying the authentic needs of man, and therefore absolutely unlivable... 150 years after the death of the holy Curé of Ars, the challenges of today's society... have become more complex. If in that era there was the 'dictatorship of rationalism', in the present era a sort of 'dictatorship of relativism' prevails... Rationalism was inadequate because it failed to take into account human limitations and presumed to elevate reason as the one measure of all things, transforming it into a goddess. Contemporary relativism destroys reason, because it goes so far as to affirm that the human being can know nothing with certainty beyond the field of positive science. But today, as then, man 'begging for meaning and fulfillment' goes out to search constantly for exhaustive answers to the fundamental questions that he does not cease to pose to himself..."

The Church of the nineteenth century demonstrated the falsity of the rationalist thesis to the whole world. Thus, Pius IX in the encyclical *Qui Pluribus* (9.11.1846):

"[B]y a preposterous and deceitful type of argument [rationalists] never cease to invoke the power and excellence of human reason... against the most sacred faith of Christ; more than this they boldly assert that [faith] is repugnant to human reason... Nothing more insane, more impious, more repugnant to reason itself could be

⁵ She may have called herself 'Catholic' but her abandonment of the Church confirmed the *de facto* situation, namely, that she is an atheist.

⁶ We have dealt elsewhere with the consequences for the philosophical mind of Luther's rejection of the authority of God; cf. *The Loss of Metaphysics* at <http://www.superflumina.org/metaphysics.html> and Romano Amerio, *Iota Unum*, [translated from 2nd Italian edition by Fr John P. Parsons], Sarto House, Kansas City, 1996, pp. 23-25.

imagined... For though faith is above reason no true dissonance or disagreement could ever be found between them since they both emanate from one and the same fount... the great and glorious God..."

In other documents, including the allocution *Singulari quadam* (9.12.1854) and the encyclical *Quanta Cura* (8.12.1864), the same Pope demonstrated rationalism's folly. The Fathers at the Vatican Council did the same, confirming that—

"the Church which together with its apostolic duty of teaching, has received the command to guard the deposit of faith, has also from Divine Providence the right and duty of proscribing knowledge falsely so called [1 Tim. 6: 20], lest anyone be cheated by philosophy and vain deceit [cf. Col. 2: 8]..."⁷

One of the less happy of the acts of Karol Wojtyla, Pope John Paul II, was to deny the teaching of innumerable of his predecessors that the Church has a philosophy of her own.⁸ The Church *does have* a philosophy of her own, the one philosophy which accurately reflects reality, the philosophy of St Thomas Aquinas. No philosopher has demonstrated more forcefully than St Thomas the power given to man by reason, but his philosophy has been systematically suppressed⁹. The consequence for modern churchmen bereft of a proper philosophical formation, is that they now doubt whether the Church can prove the folly of relativism. One issue demonstrates this loss of faith in reason more than any other—the uncritical endorsement by the Vatican of Darwinian evolutionary theory.

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Atheism, the Greatest Sin¹⁰

Atheism is the rejection of the existence of God as a conclusion of the mind reflecting on reality perceived by the senses. It is fundamentally a philosophical, rather than a theological, issue. When analysed through its ultimate causes, it demonstrates in its adherents an unwillingness to face reality.

All reasoning begins with the *Principle of non-contradiction*, which is succinctly put in three assertions ("A" here stands for any element of reality):

A is A;

A is not non-A;

Between A and non-A there is no third.

This is the fundamental logical principle. If a man refuses to acknowledge its truth he cannot speak. For every acceptance or rejection of a proposition presupposes it.

Next for consideration is the first principle of reality: *nothing is without a reason of be*, or more colloquially, *nothing comes from nothing*. This principle is fundamental and

⁷ Session III, 24.3.1870

⁸ Purporting to rely for his authority on Pius XII in *Humani Generis* who taught the very contrary of what Papa Wojtyla claimed. Cf. *Fides et Ratio* (14.9.1998), n.49.

⁹ For an analysis of the eclipse of the influence of St Thomas's teachings in the Church's seminaries after Vatican II, see *The Loss of Metaphysics* at <http://www.superflumina.org/metaphysics.html>

¹⁰ We repeat here in essence the argument advanced in the paper *The Pompous Atheist* written against the Australian journalist, Padraic McGuinness; cf. http://www.superflumina.org/pompous_atheist.html

is naturally known: it is the principle to which the child appeals from his earliest years with his constant plaint 'Why?' and demonstrates that the native intellect of the child sees better than professors of secular philosophy that there is no element of reality that does not have a cause—*ex ore infantium et lactantium perfecisti laudem...*¹¹

In those moments of introspection that befall every man, he is bound, if honest, to conduct with himself a soliloquy along the following lines—

"I am not the source of the good that I am—a person—or of the powers I possess and enjoy. I may not know by what, or by whom, they were given me but one thing is certain: I did not give them to myself."

Here is the first issue, whether to be honest or not about reality. The atheist admits the gift—not as gift but as *thing*; as *reality*—but denies the source; denies a giver. Look more closely at any part of reality and two elements appear, *essentia et ens*—essence and existence. Not only am I not the source of my existence¹² (*ens*)—*that* I am—neither am I the source of my nature (*essentia*)—*what* I am. I am supremely conscious that I did not choose to come into existence as a man, rather than as monkey, donkey, dog or snail. That choice was made for me.

More does not come from less. If I find myself possessed of the highest of the gifts given to the creatures of this world, intellect, will and all that goes with them—not just a beast determined by brute nature, but a *person* with the facility to work out my own destiny—why am I not justified in concluding that the giver, IT, must be a being which has, too, at least virtually, the same attributes as I have received? that this IT, too, must have intellect and will? *nemo dat quod non habet*¹³—if I am a person, surely the IT must be a person too! In other words, this IT cannot be an 'it' at all. IT must be SOMEONE, as I am someone.¹⁴

Now atheists the world over reject these arguments because their major premise, so they say, has been discredited. They laugh at the proposition that their person, powers and existence have been given them: these realities, they say, are but the end result of a series of blind accidents, happy accidents perhaps, but the inevitable evolution of matter. Hence, something *can* come from nothing. More *can* come from less. It has been shown—by Charles Darwin!

But Darwin demonstrated nothing. He advanced a theory, but it has never been anything more than a theory. And the theory is false.

The issue is a philosophical, not a scientific, one. It was not natural scientist, Charles Darwin, but the philosopher, Herbert Spencer, who first propounded it. Spencer's teaching was rooted in subjectivism and materialism¹⁵, disorders in

¹¹ *Psalm* 8: 3

¹² And here, also, there are two elements—*coming into* existence, and *remaining in* existence.

¹³ No one gives what he has not got.

¹⁴ This is precisely the realisation that befell the French poet, Paul Claudel, when on Christmas Day, 1886, the reality of God came to him in an inspiration in Notre Dame Cathedral, Paris—"Et voici que vous êtes Quelqu'un tout à coup!"

¹⁵ Spencer is said, on his deathbed, to have rejected everything he had written.

understanding flowing from Luther's rejection of the Divine authority. At the heart of it is a false theory of knowledge. Truth is the identity between what is asserted and reality; i.e., the identity of *what is asserted* with *what is*. Against all common sense, subjectivism denies that the senses truly report reality; indeed it denies that we can ever know reality as it is, and insists, despairingly, that the only thing that matters is the consciousness of the individual. This theory of knowledge gives rise to universal uncertainty in disciplines as varied as philosophy, morals and history. It denies the doctrine of causality.

Of every thing that exists in the universe there are four causes, as St Thomas demonstrated conclusively in the 13th century. There are not less than four; there are not more than four.

"A cause is that upon which the be (*esse*) of another follows. Now the be (*esse*) of that which has a cause can be considered in two manners. In one manner absolutely, and thus the cause of be (*causa essendi*) is the **form** by which something is in act. In the other according as, from being in potency, it comes to be in act. And since whatever is in potency is reduced to act by that which is itself in act, it is necessary that there be two other causes, namely the **matter**, and the **agent** which reduces the matter from potency to act. But, the action of the agent tends towards something determinate, and so it proceeds from some determinate principle, for every agent acts according to what is fitting to it. But that towards which the action of the agent tends is called the **final** cause. Therefore, there must be four causes." [*In II Physica*, 10, 240 (n. 15)]¹⁶

St Thomas wrote for a populace better equipped than those of the 21st century to understand the concepts to which he was referring. We will now explain his teaching, then illustrate it by reference to human art.

Nature Of Cause

A cause is a positive principle which exercises influence unto the be (*esse*) of a thing dependent in regard to its be. Every element in this definition has a determinate meaning.

Principle is defined by Aristotle as "The first reality from which a thing either is, or comes to be, or is known." [*Metaphysics*, V, ch. 1] But not every principle is a cause, for principle is twofold, namely—

- a. *in the order of knowledge*, as e.g., the principles of a syllogism lead to the knowledge of the conclusion, (logical) and,
- b. *in the order of reality* (ontological), from which something proceeds really.

A cause is, then, a principle in the order of reality, an ontological principle.

Positive

Not every ontological principle is a cause, for ontological principle is twofold, namely—

- a. *negative*, which is privation, as, e.g., water is produced from that which is not water (hydrogen and oxygen), which, though it has not

¹⁶ St Thomas's commentary on *The Physics* of Aristotle at the reference shown. Emphasis added.

- the form of water is yet apt to be water—for water cannot be produced save from those elements which are apt for its form; and,
- b. *positive*, as, e.g., the form whereby the elements become water and not some other compound.

A cause is a positive ontological principle.

Exercising influence unto be (esse)

Not every positive ontological principle is a cause, for it may be either—

- a. a mere beginning, as a point is the beginning of a line and does not exercise influence unto the be (*esse*) of the line; or,
- b. an influence unto be, as the draftsman who draws the line brings the line into being.

A cause is a positive ontological principle unto be.

Of a thing dependent in regard to its be (esse)

All created things are dependent in regard to be for there is real distinction between *what* they are, [their nature, or essence], and *that* they are, [their be, or existence (*esse*)].¹⁷

There can, then, only be a cause, of some thing which is dependent.

Let us now illustrate what St Thomas teaches by reference to the carpenter who sets out to build a table.

The first cause of the table he produces is the *formal* cause, that which determines this thing to be a table. It is not the form of gate, or of chair, or of house, or of boat; but of table. If this form (table-ness) was absent, the thing would not be a table. Form is what gives it the essence, so to speak, of what it is.¹⁸

The second cause is the *material* cause, that which can be any thing but which is determined (by the formal cause) to be this thing, a table. Matter is that which is determined. If the matter was absent, there would be no table.

The third cause is the agent, or *efficient* cause, the maker of the table; who “reduces the matter from potency to act” by importing into it tabular form. If the efficient cause is absent, the table would not come into existence.

The fourth cause, and the most critical, is the *final* cause. Every agent acts on account of an end; so the end, or final cause, must exist before the table can come into existence. It is the first thing intended by the agent, and the last to be attained.

Now, human art is nothing but the application by man of his intellect to the works of nature, in imitation of those works. Hence, by art man does nothing but reproduce in the things he makes the fourfold causality that obtains in all natural things. Just as there are four causes of the table produced by the carpenter, there are four causes of the carpenter. His *material* cause is patent; it is the matter out of which

¹⁷ In contrast, something which is not dependent in regard to be could not be caused, since *to be caused* means to be brought from potency to act; that is, brought from *can-be* to *does-be*. But God is not dependent in regard to be, for he *is* be; that is, he exists necessarily. *What* he is = *that* he is. Hence God is not the effect of any cause.

¹⁸ Though artificial things do not strictly have essence.

he is made. The *formal* cause, that which makes him be a man (and not a mineral, or a tree, or a monkey, donkey or other beast) is his human (and immaterial) soul. The *efficient* cause is his Creator. And the *final* cause is the reason why his Creator made him and the end He intends for him consistent with his human nature.

The Atheist is Materialist

The atheist is pleased to contrast himself with the religious believer: his position, he asserts, is founded on facts, not on stories or myths. But facts are not at all his starting point. He begins, like Karl Marx, with a thesis—an idea—then endeavours to accommodate the facts to his idea¹⁹. This is the *modus operandi* of all subjectivism and the reason it is aptly termed *ideology*. What is the atheistic idea? That matter alone can explain everything.²⁰ What drives the materialist scientist, and the huge numbers that support him, is not reason *but faith in this idea*. And, indeed, atheism has many of the characteristics of religious faith: it is a sort of anti-faith.

As he sits before his computer, the atheist scientist will tacitly concede the machine's fourfold causality: the matter from which it is made—its *material* cause; the intricate formality according to which the matter is designed and constructed—its *formal* cause; the inevitability of a maker, or makers—its *efficient* cause; and, the reason it was brought into existence, an instrument to aid men in their considerations and works—its *final* cause. Yet when he turns to his proper subject, the elements of the natural world, he will deny the existence of any but the *material* cause and pretend that factors which are not causes at all, time and chance, are sufficient to make up for any *lacunae* in logic. The scientist is not compelled to this view by science, but by the philosophy to which science has given its allegiance—*materialism*.²¹ If the natural scientist has doubts about the rationality of this position, he looks for consolation to the huge numbers of its supporters; for how could such a body of opinion be wrong? Yet truth is not attained by a majority vote, but by conformity (of what is asserted) with reality.

Many years ago the commentator, E.F. Schumacher, remarked on the dishonesty of this position. The natural scientist *says* he is interested only in phenomena, in facts; but should some fact come along which falls outside the *a priori* setting of his atheism, he turns his back on it.²² Schumacher cited *inter alia* the instance of Therese Neumann of Konnersreuth in Germany. For 35 years she lived, observed by all, on no other food or drink than the daily reception of the Blessed Eucharist. Yet scientists ignored the phenomenon. Schumacher remarked with justice—

¹⁹ Cf. Paul Johnson's study on Karl Marx in his *Intellectuals* (London, 2000). The subjectivist's preoccupation with his idea provides the name for what follows: "ideology".

²⁰ Thus, the very ground on which Darwinian evolutionary theory is based is defective. Its failure explains the proliferation in recent time of so many works addressing the evidence for order and design in nature; that is, evidence of *final* and *formal* causality. Cf., for example, Michael Denton, *Nature's Destiny*, The Free Press, New York, 1998.

²¹ There is no antipathy between science and metaphysics (the philosophy of St Thomas and of the Catholic Church); but there is antipathy between metaphysics and materialism.

²² *A Guide for the Perplexed*, London, 1977; my copy, Abacus, 1986, pp. 106 et seq.

“If the documentary evidence and eye-witness accounts relating to [her] cannot be accepted as reliable evidence, then all evidence is unreliable, nobody can ever be believed, and human knowledge is impossible.”²³

The atheist cannot explain such things. He cannot explain the incorrupt body of St Marie Bernard Soubirous in the church of the Visitation nuns at Nevers in France. He must label such things as the products of hysteria, or fraud. Moreover, he *dare not investigate them closely* for fear his atheistic faith may be destroyed.

Thomas Merton related how, in February 1937, while still an atheist, he stumbled upon the central truth of Catholic philosophy in a book he had purchased under a misapprehension at Scribner’s in New York, Etienne Gilson’s *The Spirit of Medieval Philosophy*. Too late, he realised it had a Catholic *Imprimatur*.

“They should have warned me that it was a Catholic book! Then I would never have bought it. As it was, I was tempted to throw the thing out of the window... to get rid of it as something dangerous and unclean...”²⁴

But he kept it, and he read it.

“The one big concept I got out of its pages was to revolutionize my whole life. It is contained in one of those dry compounds that the scholastic philosophers were so prone to use: the word *aseitas*... *Aseitas* simply means the power of a being to exist absolutely in virtue of itself, requiring no cause, no other justification for its existence except that its very nature is to exist. There can only be one such Being: that is, God. And to say that God exists *a se*, of and by reason of Himself, is merely to say that God is Being Itself. *Ego sum qui sum*.”

The last quote here is from the Book of *Exodus* where God speaks to Moses. In this passage, the Catholic Church teaches, God defines himself.

“Moses said: ‘I shall go to the children of Israel and say to them: The God of your fathers has sent me to you. If they should ask me: What is his name? What shall I tell them?’ God said to Moses: ‘I am who am. This is what you shall say to [them]: HE WHO IS has sent me to you.’”²⁵

Thus, does the Church confirm in her philosophy what Almighty God has revealed in sacred scripture.

Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster from 1865 to 1892, reduced the issues for mankind to these four—

“[T]hat it is a violation of reason not to believe in the existence of God... that it is a violation of our moral sense not to believe that God has made himself known to man... that the revelation he has given is Christianity; and... that Christianity is Catholicism...”²⁶

The Atheist Addressed

You, Dear Atheist Reader, exist now. One hundred years ago you did not: in another hundred you shall have ceased to do so (at least as far as your body goes).

²³ Ibid, pp. 109-110

²⁴ *The Seven Storey Mountain*, New York, 1948; my copy a 1961 reprint of the edited version, *Elected Silence*, (London, 1949), p. 115

²⁵ *Exodus* 3: 13-14, emphasis added.

²⁶ Henry Edward Cardinal Manning, “The Temporal Mission of the Holy Spirit”, quoted in *Manning and Chesterton*, Sheridan Gilley, *The Chesterton Review*, vol. xviii [November 1992], p. 494.

You are *contingent*: you *have* existence—and are only too conscious of the fact that you can lose it. You are *dependent*: you do not keep yourself in existence; another does that for you. In these two characteristics you share the lot of every creature in the universe, for each is a compound *entis et essentiae*, of *what* it is, and *that* it is.

Now why may there not exist—as a possibility—a being which is not compound, but simple? whose essence *is* existence? a being that is not contingent, but *necessary*? not dependent, but *self-sufficient*? a being that encompasses within itself *actually* all the potentiality of every contingent and dependent thing in the universe?

Why exclude the possibility of such a being just because no one has ever observed it? Why should we allow our intellects to be fettered by the materialist imperative? We are surrounded by realities that are not observable, but no less real for that. We may see a *just* action performed, but no one has ever seen *justice*. A judge may exercise *mercy* in passing sentence on an offender, but the thing, *mercy*, does not fall under the senses: it is known only through its effects. We may observe a loving mother, but the thing, *love*, has never been seen. The reason is that *justice*, *mercy* and *love* are not material things. Yet who will deny that these *immaterial* things are real? We can see that a man is alive, we observe in him the effects of life: but no one has ever seen the reality that keeps him alive, his soul. It is not material, yet it is real. Indeed, the soul of a man is the greater part of his reality. Remove it and what is left but a material shell which quickly resolves into its elements. Why is it impossible, then, that there exists such a BEING just because it does not fall under our senses?

However imprecisely he may understand or express it, the religious believer has a logical solution to the conundrum of his existence. He accepts with humility that he is an effect of intrinsic and extrinsic causes: he faces reality. In contrast, the believer in the secular faith of atheism has no logical solution to the issue: he refuses to face reality. Because he refuses to face reality, the atheist is a fool. Indeed, sacred scripture calls him a fool [Cf. *Psalms* 13: 1; *Wisdom* 13: 1] and St Paul spells out the measure of his folly:

“Ever since God created the world his everlasting power and deity—however invisible—have been there for the mind to see in the things he has made. That is why such people are without excuse: they knew God and yet refused to honour him as God or to thank him...” [Romans 1: 20-21]

The ultimate folly of the atheist is suicide. Deluded by an all embracing materialism, he thinks that in killing himself he will annihilate himself. But he will not! If he would but give himself the time to consider it, the reason is obvious: since he did not give himself existence, *it is beyond his power to deprive himself of it*. There is a part of his being—much the most important part, his soul—which is not material. And if it is not material, it cannot suffer the fate of material things, namely, corruption.

What, then, becomes of the suicide at the moment of death? His body is consigned to the earth from whence it came. But his soul which is identical with the person that he is, finds itself confronted by his Creator and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will

demand an accounting of the talents that have been given him. [*Matthew* 25: 14-30; *Luke* 19: 12-27] That reckoning will inevitably take into account the presumption of the suicide in arrogating to himself the Divine prerogative over life and death.

Atheism's Effects in Society

The world is afflicted by the evil fruits of this besetting evil. St Paul has summarised them.

“The anger of God is revealed from heaven against all the impiety and depravity of men who keep truth imprisoned in their wickedness. For what can be known about God is perfectly plain to them since God himself has made it plain... That is why God has left them to their filthy enjoyments and the practices with which they dishonour their own bodies since they have given up truth for a lie, and worshipped and served creatures instead of their Creator...” [*Romans* 1: 18-19, 24-25]

Atheism is hateful of mankind. It is driven by mankind's eternal enemy, the devil, who goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour (I *Peter* 5: 8-9). Atheistic indoctrination occurs in every public, and almost every private, school. It degrades and dispirits our children, stealing from them the God-given spontaneity which is their right, and hardening them to the grim acceptance of the Masonic doctrine that they are nothing but beasts, albeit beasts with intelligence.

It is due to atheism that men deny the need to demonstrate dependence upon God in public, or in private life; that they reject God in every day speech and abuse the name of His Son, failings parroted in the media, in literature and in the visual arts; that their speech and their dress is degraded; that they engage in maceration and abuse of the body reaching depths not manifest even in the most degraded of savages; that they think that gluttony, fornication and sexual indulgence are acceptable forms of behaviour; that they engage in contraception, the fertilisation *in vitro* of human embryos, abortion, homosexuality, and the innumerable varieties of sexual abuse that plague the modern world.

Such conduct is the inevitable result of the loss of that grace in living which is proper to man who was created in the image and likeness of God [*Genesis* 1: 26]. Chesterton encapsulated the truth in one short sentence: “There is nothing natural without the supernatural.” Man is incapable of living even at the human level if he does not acknowledge dependence on his Creator.

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Almighty God wants all men, not just Catholics, to be saved. He is patient. “He knows of what we are made; he remembers we are but dust.” [*Psalms* 102: 14] The Catholic Church, His creation, is the one thing in this world which is different from all other.²⁷ She exists, *and exists only*, to bring men to God, to heaven, the eternal home which He has predestined for them from all eternity. Atheism threatens the eternal salvation of vast numbers of the world's population.

²⁷ Hilaire Belloc, *Letter to Dean Inge*, in “Essays of a Catholic”, London, 1931; reproduced on this website at http://www.superflumina.org/belloc_inge.html

That is why it is necessary for the Pope to explain publicly and formally to all the world atheism's folly at the earliest possible moment.

Michael Baker

15th August 2009—*Solemnity of the Assumption of the Blessed Virgin Mary*

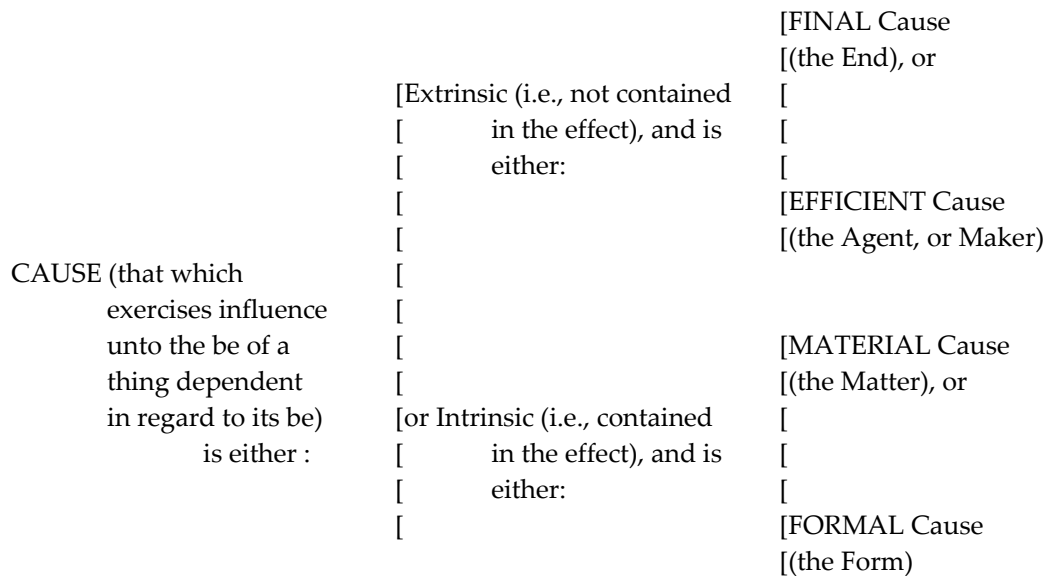
APPENDIX

THERE ARE FOUR CAUSES—AND ONLY FOUR

Source: St Thomas Aquinas, *In II Physica*, 10, 240 [n. 15]²⁸

“A cause is that upon which the be (*esse*) of another follows. Now the be (*esse*) of that which has a cause can be considered in two manners. In one manner absolutely, and thus the cause of be (*causa essendi*) is the **form** by which something is in act. In the other according as, from being in potency, it comes to be in act. And since whatever is in potency is reduced to act by that which is itself in act, it is necessary that there be two other causes, namely the **matter** and the **agent** which reduces the matter from potency to act. But, the action of the agent tends towards something determinate, and so it proceeds from some determinate principle, for every agent acts according to what is fitting to it. But that towards which the action of the agent tends is called the **final** cause. Therefore, there must be four causes.”

This analysis of St Thomas may be illustrated with the following schema.



²⁸ St Thomas’s commentary on *The Physics* of Aristotle at the reference shown. Emphasis added.