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# Beyond Ecumenical Dialogue

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## BEYOND ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

**Thomas Hughson SJ\***

*In a session on ‘Dialogue Beyond the Ecumenical Movement’ at Assisi 2012, Thomas Hughson and Martyn Percy explored unofficial ecumenism. ‘Beyond Ecumenical Dialogue’ reprises a limit in official, modern dialogues and applies a theme in Aquinas’s analysis of love to ecumenism. Aquinas locates a triadic not dyadic structure in friendship. A third element in friendship implies that dialogical language and a concept of mutuality do not fully account for the relationship. Friendship between and among churches also can be a ‘we’ because of a common orientation to people, causes, and values external to churches.*

### Introduction

From 17 to 20 April 2012 the Ecclesiological Investigations Research Network convened an unusual ecumenical conference in Assisi. The banner theme was ‘Where We Dwell in Common: Pathways for Dialogue in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century’. Approximately two hundred ecumenically concerned Christians gathered from fifty-five countries, most Christian traditions, and three generations. Presentations, panels, discussions, friendships new and renewed, common meals, and inimitable Italian restaurants generated a lively, hopeful spirit in an uncertain time. Reverent, carefully prepared public prayer was part of each day in such striking churches as the basilicas of Santa Maria degli Angeli, San Francesco, and Santa Chiara. Some services featured a participant also an excellent recorder player. The closing banquet was filled with joy and good humor. Three times Archbishop Domenico Sorrentino, Bishop of Assisi, led prayer with the assembled

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ecumenists. But there were no official dialogues between church spokespeople, no delegates, and no authorized theological positions that defined the theological space. Instead there was conscientious fidelity to various traditions along with readiness to think anew about paths to deeper unity. 'Assisi 2012', the short form of the conference title, was unusual in seeking new pathways in ecumenism instead of treading the well-worn pathways of existing dialogues.

An opening talk by lead organizer Gerard Mannion (University of San Diego, US), 'Thinking Outside the Ecumenical Box: Pathways and Resources for Dialogue That Lie Behind and Before Us', put ecumenism in an atypical, illuminating framework.<sup>1</sup> Mannion directed attention to the essential role of informal, unauthorized, unofficial concerns for unity no less than to official dialogues. With attention to Northern Ireland Mannion drew an analogy between diplomacy connecting aggrieved parties and ecumenism linking divided churches. In the opening plenary lecture, 'Thinking Beyond Conflict and Confrontation: Lessons from the Quest for Peace', Paul Arthur (University of Ulster, N. Ireland) spoke from personal involvement in and academic expertise on the peace process in Northern Ireland. Arthur identified two tracks essential in bringing about a new state of affairs in Northern Ireland. Track 1 was diplomatic, seeking ways to connect the two sides in official, authorized meetings and protracted negotiations for the sake of binding agreements. However, any official outcome would have been fruitless unless received into an already changing set of conditions that had been emerging from grass-roots developments. A successful outcome depended on an accompanying, independent, parallel track 2 in local, unofficial initiatives and on an allying of personal, familial, and neighborhood interests toward a peaceful Northern Ireland. Art, poetry, music, and literature played indispensable roles.

Mannion applied the two tracks to divided Christianity. The short-lived, East/West rapprochement at the 1439 Council of Florence provided a case in point of track 1 ecumenism having proceeded on its own apart from track 2. Perhaps I was not alone in hearing Florence as a cautionary tale about excessive reliance on Faith and Order or other dialogues concentrating on reconciliation of doctrinal meanings. A track 2 in diplomacy or in ecumenism generates conditions for the

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<sup>1</sup> See Gerard Mannion's report on Assisi 2012 below, 146-52.

possibility of receiving an accord reached on track 1. However, more than preparing a passive soil for reception of track 1, track 2 provides a substratum of momentum, desire, hope, and commitment expressed in insights, local praxis, and creative art able to inspire and instruct track 1. Local initiatives and informal activities rather than authorized representation characterize track 2. At the same time, insisted Mannion, sometime and somehow there also needs to be a mid-point between the two tracks so they can be of benefit to each other in movement toward a deepened Christian unity. Assisi 2012 was a theologically-reflective track 2 conference open to seeking that mid-point with track 1 but not strictly dependent on it.

During the four-day conference concurrent panels followed morning, afternoon, and evening plenary sessions. In one such panel chaired by Revd Randy J. Odchigue (Philippines), Revd Canon Dr. Martyn Percy from Cuddesdon Hall (England) and myself from Marquette University (US) teamed up on the topic, 'Dialogue Beyond the Ecumenical Movement'.<sup>1</sup> Thanks to emailed correspondences and a history of common interest in the Society for the Study of Anglicanism that Percy and Rob Slocum (US) convene at the annual American Academy of Religion meeting we were on the same or a similar wavelength. Percy had some powerful things to say for which I am grateful but that I won't attempt to summarize. Nor will these reflections try to incorporate Percy's narratives and insights. Instead, and before the event slips too far into the past there follows a brief, edited resume of my preparatory notes that sketch some ideas. During and after the conference the track 1/track 2 distinction inflected my pre-conference thinking. As a result the title to this article alters the name of the session.

## **Dialogue**

The topic of the Percy/Hughson session may seem to come from transgressive ingrates. Dialogue 'beyond' the ecumenical movement suggests that dialogue within the ecumenical movement no longer suffices, thereby placing in question rather than celebrating or advancing the conference theme, 'Pathways for Dialogue in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.' In light of a two-track model for ecumenism the dialogue

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<sup>1</sup> For Martyn Percy's article 'Strangers in Our Midst: Adoption and Implicitness in Ecclesial Life' see below, 38-48.

made an object of inquiry in our session was on the track 1 level. Perhaps that is why a proposal for the session did not trouble open-minded conference organizers attentive to what was to be called track 2 ecumenism. There is no derogation of official dialogues. But there is a line of questioning. In terms of Hans-Georg Gadamer's philosophy the ecumenical movement has entered into a hermeneutical situation in which a familiar tradition has become strange and so, to be sustained, needs interpretation. Ecumenical dialogue, that is, has left the realm of self-evident validity and has become something to interrogate before resuming.

To be sure, dialogue has been the method par excellence of the modern ecumenical movement. From Edinburgh in 1910 on, commitment to a method of dialogue has sprung from the theological virtues nurtured by the Holy Spirit in various Christians of all participating churches, denominations, and movements. Historically conscious recognition of misguided triumphalisms has humbled stalwart faith. Hope has looked ahead to some type of visible unity. Charity has attended to what already united rather than what still divided. What more apt manner of relationship and communication than faithful, hopeful, and charitable dialogue to express at once that Christians hold more in common than what divides them, and that divisions countering the known will of Christ require respectful exchanges?

And in official dialogues representatives have presented, listened, learned, and discovered unsuspected common ground with those from whom they have been divided. The method of dialogue has produced outstanding results. Immense progress has taken place in understanding and appreciating different beliefs, worship, polity, piety, and normative value judgments that shape discipleship. Setbacks are part of the picture too but do not erase multiple commitments to seeking unity. Eventually the Catholic church pledged itself to ecumenism at Vatican II. Evangelicals and Pentecostals, two of the most rapidly growing bodies of Christians, have entered into ecumenism as well. Bi-lateral and multi-lateral dialogues under the auspices of the World Council of Churches' Faith and Order Commission have produced heralded and some lesser-known areas of agreement. Milestones have been reached, such as ARCIC I-III, and Lutheran/Catholic agreement to differ in non-church dividing approaches to justification.

At the same time, and often, ecumenists lament a gap between what has transpired in formal dialogues and facts on the ground within and among churches. Sometimes the lament looks to the gap in terms of distance between a church's leaders and the people in the pews, with a tone of regret that the people are so slow to catch on, so bound by inertia, so far behind their leaders. Mannion's tracks 1 and 2, however, and the Percy/Hughson session do not join that lamentation. Nor do tracks 1 and 2 coincide precisely with Faith and Order and with Life and Work respectively. The tracks usher in genuine development when both meet at a mid-point between them, humorously called track 1½. Track 2 has prudential and artistic originality to which track 1 can appeal and from which it can receive inspiration and insight. The tracks are in a relationship more akin to theory/praxis reciprocity than to a teaching church/learning church model.

Track 1 ecumenical dialogue has come to seem productive at the highest levels among churches yet less than effectual as an influence both on pastoral practice and in the lives of people within churches. Religious indifference to Christian divisions registers the impact of heightened secularization, but ecumenical lassitude has fallen upon even active church members. Speaking about an ecumenical winter, a stalemated condition, a loss of momentum has lost its capacity to provoke and a non-eschatological fatalism has settled in. Hence Assisi 2012 had a timely purpose in resisting fatalism and exciting hope.

Many of us seem to feel a degree of disenchantment but not resistance to church authorities. Have major outcomes in lived religion, practice, and local actualizations of Christian fellowship ensued upon track 1 reconciliations and convergences? For example, the long-standing Lund question seems mainly to have been forgotten. Why not carry out interim modes of cooperation and common witness wherever uncompromised consciences permit before eventual fuller communion? On the whole the question does not seem to have prompted a lot of enacted answers on the part of leaders and people. With some noteworthy exceptions an interim possibility of developing common witness to many principles on a Christian social agenda languishes. Assisi 2012 offered an opportunity to refresh traditional ecumenical thinking.

The method of dialogue has been at once an enveloping horizon within which words and deeds have transpired when churches have opened their doctrinal standpoints and modes of polity to those of

other churches. Dialogue also has been the definite, formal structure of reciprocal, strenuous respect, love, and inquiry in official discussions between and among divided churches. Presupposing support for all that the track 1 method of dialogue has brought about to benefit unity, a question can be raised without prejudice to ongoing, official work. Might the method of dialogue itself be an unnoticed part of the problem? At some point, and who knows exactly when, might the formal structures of ecumenical dialogue have become in certain respects constraints? How could that be?

Ecumenism is first of all a new way of being Christian, an unprecedented reception and activation of the grace of personal and ecclesial faith, hope, and charity. The Percy/Hughson session on 'Dialogue Beyond the Ecumenical Movement' signals departure in thought from principal reliance on formally structured dialogues, not from the spirit of dialogue. We wonder if highly organized structures of ecumenical dialogue, the letter of the method, may not have over-determined the horizon and spirit of dialogue. That is, in a new vocabulary of tracks 1 and 2 has track 1 embodied over-determination of the horizon within which dialogues emerged? Might new pathways return to a yet-to-be-determined, non-methodical practice, spirit, or horizon of dialogue that focuses on friendship among Christians from divided churches and among the churches as itself a method or model for a new way of being Christian? Could friendship among churches and members retain the horizon and spirit of dialogue without over-commitment to official, authorized exchanges? Could the horizon and spirit of dialogue be loosened from exclusive realization in formal structures in order to allow more room for friendships? From attention to which limits in dialogue does the question proceed?

Three pre-understandings of dialogue are common and pertain first of all to bi-lateral and by extension to multi-lateral dialogues. One pre-understanding gained traction as corrective to assumptions about formation of the self as an autonomous individual with a personal identity. Wilhelm von Humboldt's (1767-1835) philology identified a multi-linguistic grammar of personal pronouns in which an 'I' (*Ich, je, io...*) speaking involves a 'you' (*du/Sie, tu/Vous, tu/Lei...*) hearing. That is a basic structure in language and in formation of identity. The meaning of an 'I' entails a 'you'. A self cannot be realized except in continual relationship with many who step into the role of 'you' and with others who speak as 'I'. Participation in a linguistic community

means being both an 'I' and a 'you', a speaker and a hearer. Philologically and conceptually, as a German phrase ran, 'Kein Ich ohne Du'. Speaking has a dialogical structure. Dialogue has a privileged role in communication. Formal dialogues exit from me/you, or us/them antitheses to a mode of speech and relationship true to our linguistic selves. Consequently in an abeyance of former polemics ecumenical dialogues have presented themselves as authentic communication between formerly estranged churches and movements. A dyadic grammar structures dialogue. But, as will be seen, friendship is not dyadic.

A variant on that pre-understanding flows from Martin Buber's (1878-1935) famous exposition of the I-Thou relationship. Dialogue was the language of mutuality, so different from an I-It relationship in which, and with an overtone of domination, a person was demoted to instrumental significance for an 'I'. In this pre-understanding too dialogue has a privileged status because it expresses respect for persons and openness to their self-understandings. Ecumenical dialogues exemplify that openness and desire for mutual understanding that respects an otherness of churches, previously an opposition between churches. This pre-understanding solidifies the privileged status of official dialogues. Yet again, friendship involves a third element that could be referred to as an 'it'.

A third, political pre-understanding may be closer to ordinary usage of the term 'dialogue'. Spouses, friends, family members, close associates, and participants in a common task customarily do not describe their verbal communication as 'dialogue'. More simply, 'speaking with', 'talk', 'conversation', 'discussion' or 'a meeting' fill the everyday bill. To say groups or individuals are engaging in 'dialogue' already connotes a prior state of tension or conflict that good will and concern for renewing ties seeks to bring beyond brokenness, animus, and polemics. Dialogue is the language of détente and negotiation not of unbroken bonds in a community of shared interest. In reference to Arthur's and Mannion's two tracks, 'dialogue' belongs to track 1. Has 'dialogue' come to be an ideal and practice so exemplary of seeking unity that it has pre-empted the search? Does 'dialogue' now limit that search? Might a little bit of criticism of track 1 'dialogue' open up space for an encouraging emphasis on unofficial, unauthorized, interchurch friendships at more accessible, local, grass-roots sites on



track 2? Maybe the right side of the tracks temporarily has become the wrong side.

### **Dialogue: Critical Questions**

The method of dialogue characterizes ecumenism. The modern ecumenical movement, as distinguished from earlier, uncoordinated initiatives toward reconciliation, is a modern phenomenon. Its birth in modernity may well be to some extent a birth from modernity. Modern parentage has imparted taken-for-granted features open to postmodern interrogation. For instance, to what extent has the meaning of 'movement' in the modern ecumenical movement been entangled with a dubious modern ideal of Progress that does not distinguish lack of forward movement from stillness? Can there be a hope for unity unalloyed with and not pre-defined by 'Progress'? What would such a hope be like? Would it be less modern? Has a modern (not postmodern!) ideal of 'Progress' provided the unspoken horizon of hope within which bi-lateral and multi-lateral dialogues have taken place? If so it would explain why, as with Progress in science, technology, medicine, communications, transportation, etc. advances in ecumenical unity seem to involve a pressure to move forward, to establish clear benchmarks of movement. Has desire for unity tinged with Progress driven concern for achieving new degrees of ecclesial proximity that when absent stir disappointment?

Is formation and consolidation of the ecumenical movement in the nineteenth and early twentieth century heyday of enthusiasm for Reason and Progress the reason why ecumenical dialogues ratchet along from an anthropocentric approach to the human agency of participants to a challenging reminder that a divided Christianity has to depend and wait on God? And if a modern ideal of Progress has bled into the modern ecumenical movement, has Progress also brought along all the problematic assumptions about the West as history's privileged avant-garde, the universal standard, the classical norm associated with post-sixteenth century colonialism and a nineteenth century missionary movement out of which the ecumenical movement arose at Edinburgh in 1910?

Missionaries' awareness of how fractured, rivalrous presentations of the gospel blocked hearing of the gospel outside the West directed attention to Christian division as contrary to Christ's prayer, will, and instituting of a community of faith with a mission to spread the gospel

to all nations. Beyond adjustments in attitudes toward the global South and East on the part of Western Christianity, what internal changes to ecumenical consciousness and practice might postmodern extrication of evangelizing from association with Western colonialism portend? Do ecumenical dialogues bear within their structure many unexamined, historically effected meanings whose very taken-for-granted quality eliminates other possible paths in seeking Christian unity? If Christianity's new centers of population will be in the global South, it would seem that ecumenism too will re-locate to some extent. What visions of time, history, harmony, and poverty will be forthcoming in a redefining of ecumenism? Can official dialogues gain perhaps a new finality, a tendency toward, church friendships of deepening charity and growing appreciation not only of Christian gifts in other churches but also with some degree of cooperation with other churches' projects?

On the other hand is there a valid, redeemed idea of progress that survives postmodern criticism? The following suggestion is but a marker for further reflection. I suggest that Bernard Lonergan's theme of a dialectic between progress and decline as a constant in individual lives, in societies, and in history preserves a legitimate and discriminating ideal of 'progress'. Progress in this view occurs in self-transcendence by persons and societies in a clear, continual tension with 'decline' due to lack of individual and corporate/social/ecclesial self-transcendence. History has fits and starts not an overall sweeping course. Refusals of religious, intellectual, and moral conversions are decline. In chapter 14 Lonergan concludes *Method in Theology* on an ecumenical note.<sup>1</sup> He proposes that the constitutive meanings of a gospel way of life, meanings incarnated in chosen, enacted ways of living faith, hope, and charity under the influence of the Spirit, already provides common ground in divided Christianity. Most Christians and churches are able to recognize and praise holy lives. Constitutive Christian meaning is the realm of received and lived, not only formulated and professed, beliefs. The New Testament, for example, did not present the doctrines of the early councils starting with 1 Nicaea but the Apostles lived and evangelized according to Christian meanings the doctrines later expressed.

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<sup>1</sup> Bernard Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (New York: Seabury Press, 1972).

What most divides churches are divergent doctrinal formulations of the gospel's cognitive meanings. While doctrinal dialogues continue without cessation Lonergan recommends that what may be most efficacious in the mean time are efforts to actualize constitutive meanings especially in ecumenical alliances among churches on behalf of authentic progress in societies beset by all manner of injustice. In other words, without belittling track 1 doctrinal dialogues, track 2 ecumenism can express gospel meanings in praxis of concrete realizations on a social agenda. Cooperation and common witness then underwrite and offer new insights to track 1 dialogues, nourishing their continuation and facilitating later reception.

### **Alternative to Dialogue: Friendship as 'We'**

Here I will venture retrieval of a traditional Catholic resource. The purpose is to offer a heuristic concept for discovering alternatives to the pre-eminence of dialogues. I have no finished plan suited to applications, only something of a thought-experiment and a recommended praxis that allows wholesale re-orientation of desire and search for unity. Let me begin with an inductive moment in contemporary conditions.

I know a number of members of the Anglican communion in the Episcopal church who teach at Catholic colleges and universities in the US. These faculty members endorse the Catholic project of higher education under Christian auspices. They cooperate toward goals set by Catholic administrators and faculty, sometimes themselves assuming administrative responsibilities. Common constitutive meanings on Christian education underlie this cooperation. They and their Catholic and other faculty colleagues speak as a 'we'. As well, Catholic faculty members in graduate and undergraduate programs have been assisting Episcopal students toward advanced knowledge in theology. The graduate faculty of which I was a part for decades has had Catholic faculty in Theology teaching, supporting, and guiding Episcopal PhD candidates along with students connected to other churches. The Catholic members of the faculty (a majority) gave their expertise and encouragement to younger theologians in the Anglican communion, mainline Protestant denominations, evangelical and Pentecostal movements, and in the Lutheran tradition. Yet there was no official or unofficial departmental 'dialogue'. Instead, there was common attention to Scripture and tradition, to authors, texts, and

themes under study within an atmosphere of faith. In an important respect all of this collaboration exceeds mutuality inherent in an ideal of dialogue. Those involved have not looked to each other as much as to realities external to themselves before which they are side by side as a 'we'. I elide and presuppose a common, graced focus on the Trinity, Incarnation, Kingdom of God, grace, along with increased mutual understanding due in part to doctrinal dialogues.

And the work of St Thomas Aquinas offers a basis for starting to conceive the above kinds of collaboration as hinting at another pathway in ecumenism. Aquinas's ideas enable thought to get beneath dialogues and to extricate the ecumenical 'movement' from attachment to a modern ideal and measurement of Progress. In the *Summa Theologiae* (ST) 1a2ae on love, and 2a2ae on charity Aquinas inquires into friendship and love.<sup>1</sup> Rather than detailed exegesis I will sum up relevant themes and appropriate them to ecumenical purposes. In both parts of the ST love has a triadic structure that eludes I/you mutuality structured and spoken in a dialogue. The triadic structure is 'beyond mutuality' and outside dialogue because friendship has two objects not just the one that is the other person, group, or church.

Aquinas distinguished two objects in the love of friendship. W. S. Sherwin points out that 'in both early and later works Aquinas discerns a twofold tendency in love: the action of love directed toward a person (in the love of friendship) and toward the good we affirm for that person.'<sup>2</sup> Primarily, friends are appreciated for their own sake. Secondly, good things are desired for friends and so love of friendship extends to those good things we want friends to have. Goods desired for friends are a third element in friendship. Love of friendship includes a primary appreciation for persons and a secondary desire for their welfare. The desired welfare comes about in

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<sup>1</sup> Thomas Aquinas, Eric D'Arcy Latin text, English translation, Introduction, Notes and Glossary, *Summa Theologiae 1a2ae. 22-30, Volume 19, The Emotions* (Great Britain: Blackfriars, 1967); and Thomas Aquinas, R.J. Batten, OP, Latin text, English translation, Notes, Appendices & Glossary, Thomas Gilby, OP. Introduction, *Summa Theologiae Volume 34, Charity, 2a2ae. 23-33* (Great Britain: Eyre & Spottiswoode Ltd, 1975).

<sup>2</sup> W. S. Sherwin, OP, *By Knowledge and By Love: Charity and Knowledge in the Moral Theology of St. Thomas Aquinas* (Washington, D.C.: Catholic University of America Press, 2005), 80.

some measure by access to goods essential to human flourishing. Love for friends includes love for those essential goods. So friendship involves: 1) a friend, 2) goods essential to the flourishing of the other, 3) the other friend. A love desiring a good for a friend occurs within the dynamics of love of friendship seeking that good for another. The middle element, goods wanted for another, broadens mutuality to a triad.

For example, spouses love one another and in that love also want each other to have and enjoy concrete goods such as a pleasant dwelling, a sufficient level of prosperity to enable a decent life, opportunities to associate with other friends, music, literature, growing faith, hope and charity, etc. The most exuberant third element in their love is a child/children they have procreated and love. Parents love their children and love food, clothing, shelter, and education that they want their children to have. In other friendships too there is not only appreciation of the good in another but also desire for other goods that benefit the other. Some goods are external to both persons and some are developments in another's own capacities.

Friendship can be applied in three ways to ecumenism. First, Christians of divided churches and the churches themselves can desire goods, the third element in friendship, for other churches. That does not mean only the good of an eventual visible unity but simpler things like projects arising out of the other's present self-understanding. Presuming concord in conscience, Catholics might support some Anglican ministries. Anglicans might do likewise. The example of St. Basil/All Saints parish comes to mind, as do instances of Catholics and Anglicans cooperating in one another's theological education.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> In an Assisi 2012 presentation on 'The Reality of an Ecumenical Shared Church' Christine Lappine and Kevin Kelly explained a remarkable example of track 2 ecumenism. The one parish of St. Basil/All Saints outside Liverpool in Widnes was a 'shared community'. Two congregations, one Anglican and the other Catholic, shared one church building, many parish activities, outreach, and non-Eucharistic services, including a common Liturgy of the Word then distinct Liturgies of the Eucharist. Starting in 1983 the Anglican and the Catholic bishop have assigned an Anglican and a Catholic priest to the joint parish. Recent changes on the Catholic side due to the priest shortage probably will make operation of the dual parish more difficult. A parish bulletin states that, 'While we rejoice in being authentically Roman Catholic

Second, friendship tends not to speak primarily in 'dialogue' but more in terms of a 'we' that can act toward external goods like operating a parish, going to a theater, translating Scripture, working for social justice, or communicating the gospel to others. Friends and family often act together. That kind of common act and community precedes, grounds the initial emergence of, and sustains an 'I' and a 'you' who can assume reciprocal roles. That commonality recommends continuous focus in ecumenism on what churches already have in common, not letting it be eclipsed by awareness of divisions and whatever model or prospect of eventual unity prevails. That sense of common faith already comes to realization when official dialogues begin with prayer in which all relate among themselves as a 'we' acting together in turning to God. The Percy/Hughson discussion dwelt on Anglican Evensong attended by Catholics as an instance of how singing together in worship exceeds ecumenical dialogue. Song goes somewhere that speech does not, and common worship goes past ecumenical dialogue into a 'we' before God.

Thirdly, not only the triadic structure of love but Aquinas's analysis of the origin of love bears on ecumenism. The first moment in human love, and in charity due to the influence of the Holy Spirit, is passive, receptive, and appreciative. For Aquinas, sums up Sherwin, '... before love is a principle of action love is a response to value ...' Love's first act is 'an affective enjoyment and affirmation of some good thing made known to us by reason ... love is a response to the goodness of reality, to the real as it is or as it could be ... a good that is [judged by reason as] somehow already in harmony with us.'<sup>2</sup> A concrete good impresses us and evokes a positive response of appreciation that can become a motive for action.

The project of receptive ecumenism out of the University of Durham and led by Paul Murray has this just right.<sup>3</sup> Receptive ecumenism, it can be noted in light of Aquinas on love, is not one project among many but gives organized, conceptual direction to the very origin of a

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and Anglican respectively, we are committed to living out on a daily basis the implications of our baptismal unity'.

<sup>1</sup> W. S. Sherwin, *By Knowledge and By Love*, 93.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.* 95.

<sup>3</sup> See Paul Murray (ed.), *Receptive Ecumenism and the Call to Catholic Learning: Exploring a Way for Contemporary Ecumenism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

search for unity. A tendency toward deeper connection with another or others does not arise, according to Aquinas, from seeking some manner of deeper communion with them but from appreciating some already actual Christian excellence in them. Anglican Evensong and holy Anglican lives, for example, evoke admiration from Catholics, and others too. Apart from appreciation of Christian excellences in other churches all the repentance in the world for divisions cannot produce desire for deepening unity with other churches. Rather, ecclesial repentance ensues from realization of overlooked good in others now able to be welcomed. Heeding Christ's injunction that they all may be one begins when some in one church are affected positively by Christian excellences, gifts, in other churches.

### **Conclusion**

The forgoing sections have proposed a direction in track 2 ecumenism enlightened by Aquinas on love. Despite my initial intent not to risk misrepresenting by subsuming any of Percy's content I cannot fail to do so in a Conclusion. One theme in our emailed exchanges before Assisi 2012 was his focus on shared or common problems facing the Anglican/Episcopal and Catholic communions. In standing side-by-side Anglican/Episcopal and Catholic churches enact something more than dialogical mutuality. A common struggle with consumerism, secularism, and on behalf of a coherent conjunction of daily life and faith joins them as a collaborative 'we'. More, if each can throw some support where conscience permits to the other's projects already underway according to present self-understandings the 'we' of cooperation becomes the 'we' of enacted friendship. And the common struggle extends I think to dealing with the causes and effects of rapacious rather than regulated capitalism, racism, nationalism, and the ecological crisis. Parallel social agendas could become in part at least a common agenda on which two communions have moved beyond dialogue into friendship that includes concern for the third element in love, goods wanted for those loved. The universal scope of Christ's commandment to love others as oneself insures that 'those loved' are not limited to present members of either communion.