The Dignity of Being a Substance: Person, Subsistence, and Nature

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IN HIS Disputed Questions *De potentia*, written about 1265/66, just before the *Summa theologiae*, St. Thomas Aquinas asked "whether there can be a person in God" (*utrum in Deo possit esse persona*). His answer reads as follows:

> *Person* signifies a certain nature (*quaedam natura*) with a certain mode of existing (*quidam modus existendi*). Now, the nature which *person* includes in its signification is the most worthy (*dignissima*) of all natures, namely, the intellectual nature according to its genus; and likewise the mode of existing signified by person is the most worthy (*dignissimus*), namely, such that something be existing by itself (*per se existens*). Therefore, since all that is most worthy (*dignissimum*) in creatures should be attributed to God, this name *person* can fittingly be attributed to God, like other names which are said of God in a proper way.[1]

This short answer stresses the dignity of the person three times in the superlative form: "most worthy, most exalted (*dignissimum*)." In this text, the dignity that characterizes the person is first considered according to the common signification of the name "person," a common signification that applies—by analogy—to human beings, to angels, and to the three divine persons. This dignity consists of, not one, but two features.

The first feature is the intellectual nature. By "intellectual nature," Aquinas does not mean the act of understanding, but the *essence* of beings endowed with the faculty of intellectual knowledge and, consequently, the faculty of will (which implies free choice and the capacity of performing

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[1] St. Thomas Aquinas, *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 3, corp.

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free acts). The accent is put first of all on the nature itself,[2] and then on the faculties or powers that belong to this nature: rationality also designates a faculty (the faculty of understanding and consequently the faculty of will as "intellectual appetite"), but first, it characterizes a *nature*. The second feature is what Aquinas here calls "a certain mode of existing" (*quidam modus existendi*), that is, existing by oneself (*per se existens*), which means *subsistence* as the mode of existence that properly belongs to first substances: existing not in another, but in oneself and by oneself. As the *Summa theologiae* explains: "Insofar as [the substance] exists by itself and not in another (*per se existit et non in alio*), it is called subsistence (*subsistentia*)."[3] These are the two features that ground the dignity of the person, namely, (1) subsistence as denoting the substance under the aspect of its special mode of existing, and (2) intellectual nature.

Finally, by *dignity* ("the greatest dignity"), in this context, Aquinas does not mean something that comes to the person from the outside, as would a special honor bestowed on a person by virtue of his or her high social standing, but he means the excellent goodness that *intrinsically* characterizes the person as such: "Dignity (*dignitas*) signifies someone's goodness (*bonitas*) on account of himself or herself (*propter seipsum*)."[4] Such dignity of the person is not first of all a moral worth but a *metaphysical* worth (which grounds the moral worth of the person).

The Person: Modern Views and the Patristic Tradition

This metaphysical understanding of the person in terms of substance (subsistence) and nature is—to say the least—no longer common in our culture. It is quite often dismissed, for several complex reasons into which I cannot enter here. We can think, for instance, of Immanuel Kant, who reduced the substance either to the thing inaccessible in itself, or to an epistemological category—a schema of understanding (*Schema des Verstandesbegriffs*).[5] The understanding of the person as a substance ceded

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[2] *ST* III, q. 2, a. 2, corp.: "*Person* has a different meaning from *nature*. For *nature* signifies the specific essence (*essentia speciei*) which is signified by the definition."

[3] *ST* I, q. 29, a. 2, corp.

[4] *In* III *Sent.*, d. 35, q. 1, a. 4, qla 1, corp.

[5] Immanuel Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, in Idem, *Werke in sechs Bänden*, vol. 2 (Darmstadt: Wissenschaftliche Buchgesellschaft, 1963), 191–92. The "schema" is, in itself, "always a mere product of the imagination" (*nur ein Produkt der Einbildungskraft*), 189. Kant applied the same reduction to the notion of causality. Whereas for Aquinas the wisdom and love of God are especially manifest by the fact that God communicates to creatures a participation in his goodness by giving them the *dignity of being a cause* (*Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk. III, ch. 69; cf. *ST* I, q. 23, a. 8, ad 2: "dignitas causalitatis"), Kant reduced causality to the

its place to various conceptions that put the principal accent on the subjective aspects of the person, either in terms of thought (a person is a subject who thinks and who has self-consciousness),[6] or in terms of moral autonomy and freedom (to be a person is to be able to dispose freely of oneself and to be autonomous in one's action), or in terms of relations (the person is then defined by his or her insertion into the network of social relationships, or the person is understood as being constituted by the otherness of other persons: "I exist only through an other"), or in terms of forming projects, or again in terms of the capacity to enjoy something, and so on.[7]

The concept of person in not an invention of Christian thought: it is already found in classical Latin culture (with a social, moral, literary, theatrical, and juridical background). But the Christian tradition certainly offered a decisive contribution to the development of the understanding of the person. Tertullian, at the beginning of the third century, was the first Christian author who made systematic use of the word "*persona.*" He did so in a Trinitarian context, in order to reject modalism, that is, the heterodox view that considered the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit just as three *modes* of manifestation of a God who, in himself, would be without distinction. The affirmation of "three divine persons" aimed precisely to maintain, against modalism, that the tri-personal "disposition" that *appears* in the history of salvation exists in the *very reality* of God. To speak of "person," from the beginning of the Trinitarian use of this word, is to signify the being that exists truly in itself, the reality that underlies the manifestation to others, the foundation of what appears in the action. To say, for instance, that the Son of God is a "person" is to affirm that he has a proper existence or subsistence in himself, that he is not confused with the Father. A similar purpose inspired the development of the Trinitarian concept of *hypostasis* in the East, notably in Origen. Much later, in the eighth century, St. John Damascene summarized the Eastern patristic tradition by explaining that the hypostasis signifies "that which is and which subsists by itself."[8] In sum, in Trinitarian and Christological contexts, the person or hypostasis is a distinct subsisting reality endowed

"schematism of the pure conceptions of the understanding" (*der Schematismus der reinen Verstandesbegriffe*): Kant, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, 192.

[6] See Philip Dixon, *"Nice and Hot Disputes": The Doctrine of the Trinity in the Seventeenth Century* (London: T. & T. Clark, 2003).

[7] For an overview and a critical discussion of these conceptions, see *L'humain et la personne*, ed. François-Xavier Putallaz and Bernard N. Schumacher (Paris: Cerf, 2009).

[8] John Damascene, *Dialectica*, ch. 43, in *Die Schriften des Johannes von Damaskos*, vol. 1, ed. Bonifatius Kotter (Berlin: Walter de Gruyter, 1969), 108.

with a proper mode of existing. The person as a substance is defined foremost by its distinct existence in itself and through itself.[9]

The Metaphysical Understanding of the Person

On this basis, Christian reflection has progressively elaborated an understanding of the person that applies to the Triune God (and therefore to Christ Jesus) as well as to human beings and to angels. This analogical understanding of what a *person* is found an important expression in the well-known definition given by Boethius at the end of Antiquity: "A person is an individual substance of rational nature (*naturae rationabilis individua substantia*)."[10] According to St. Thomas's interpretation of Boethius, the person is defined by the integration of the following three features: (1) individuality; (2) substance; (3) a nature defined by and endowed with intelligence and will.

1. The *individual*, by definition, signifies that which is "undivided" in itself (one in itself) and which is also distinct from others (one with comparison to others). To speak of the individual is to signify the singular in its distinction and undividedness. St. Thomas specifies: " 'Individual' (*individuum*) is included in the definition of the person in order to designate the individual mode of being (*individualem modum essendi*)."[11] This means that, in Aquinas's understanding of the definition given by Boethius, the word "individual" means the *incommunicable manner of existing* of the real singular, the irreducibility of the singular's uniqueness.

2. The "individual" can apply to accidents, but it finds its supreme realization in the substance. The "substance" designates what stands beneath the accidents; and, by extension, it designates that which is apt to exist through itself, in itself and not in another, that is to say, subsistence. When discussing whether, in the definition of the person, *substance* refers to the first substance or to the second substance ("second substance" signifies the "nature of the genus absolutely in itself," while "first substance" signifies "that nature as subsisting indi-

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9 See *La personne et le christianisme ancien*, ed. Bernard Meunier (Paris: Cerf, 2006).

10 Boethius, *Treatise against Eutyches and Nestorius*, ch. 3 (PL 64, col. 1343).

11 St. Thomas Aquinas, *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 2, ad 5. Cf. *ST* I, q. 29, a. 3, ad 4: when applied to the divine persons, who are not individualized by matter, "individual" only implies incommunicability (*incommunicabilitas*). See Lawrence Dewan, "The Individual as a Mode of Being according to Thomas Aquinas," *The Thomist* 63 (1997): 403–24.

vidually"), Aquinas insists that the division of *substance* into "first" and "second" substance should not be taken as a division into genus and species, but rather as a division according to "different modes of being" (*secundum diversos modos essendi*), since this division is analogous. And, here again, Aquinas makes this important clarification: "In this way, *person* is contained in the genus of substance, although not as a species, but as determining a special mode of existing (*ut specialem modum existendi determinans*)."[12] This applies by analogy to God, not that God would be contained in the genus of substance (God is beyond any genus), but insofar as God is the principle of the genus of substance.[13]

According to this explanation, the "individual substance" signifies the individual whose "special mode of existence" is to subsist through itself and in itself. Since the person is an *individual substance*, it is a reality that possesses its proper being in a complete manner, in itself and through itself, and which exercises on its own the act of existing. What is at stake in this explanation can be expressed in the following way: what accounts for my uniqueness is not only my concrete individual essence (my own humanity), but my proper act of existing in the human nature common to all human beings. Thus, the "individual substance" signifies the subsisting singular that exists through itself and in itself, according to an irreducible mode, as a complete whole, a "hypostasis" that exercises the act of existing on its own account.

3. The third element of the definition of the person is *rational nature*, that is to say, the essence of beings endowed with intelligence. Here we must add that rationality implies, as a constitutive feature, will and freedom: the will itself as a free inclination, and free choice.[14] Free will is the characteristic of beings endowed with intelligence: they are not merely

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[12] *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 2, ad 6.

[13] *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 3, ad 3. When applied to the divine persons, "substance" does not mean what underlies the accidents (since there are no accidents in God), but it means *subsistence*, that is, substance insofar as it exists in itself and by itself (*ST* I, q. 29, a. 2, corp.; a. 3, ad 4). Faced with the objection that Boethius's definition of the person is unfitting since the divine essence itself is an "individual substance," Aquinas replies: "In the definition of the person, individual signifies that which is not predicated of several; and in this sense the divine essence is not an 'individual substance' by predication, inasmuch as it is predicated of several persons (*non est individua substantia secundum praedicationem, cum praedicetur de pluribus personis*)" (*De potentia*, q. 9, a. 2, ad 12).

[14] *De veritate*, q. 23, a. 1, corp.: "In an intellectual nature, in which something is received altogether immaterially, the essence of a free inclination is found

"propelled" toward an end to attain, but instead they have the capacity to direct themselves freely, by their will, toward the end that they have apprehended by their mind.[15] This is the ultimate determination that makes of an individual substance a person: a nature endowed with the power of understanding the truth and of loving the good (not only particular goods, but the universal good).[16] The rational nature is a principle of being and of acting. Free action is the clearest *manifestation* of such rational nature, insofar as action follows upon being. Put otherwise, rational nature blossoms and makes itself known by the voluntary command of acts, which has its root in the mind, insofar as these faculties belong to the *nature* itself. By virtue of this nature, the human person possesses the ability to relate to the world, to others, to himself or herself, and to God through knowledge and love. The interpersonal dimension that characterizes the person is precisely inscribed *within* this rational nature. I will return to this below.

In this view, the person is neither a thinking being nor a being that is immediately apt to think or to will, but a being who exists in a *nature* that is essentially defined by rationality (which applies to all human beings, including severely handicapped people who will perhaps never be able to think or to form projects).

Of course, this metaphysical understanding of the person is not the first thing we notice in our experience of being "persons." It is not spontaneous, but we discern it by reflecting on the immediate given of our experience, that is, on the objects of our acts, and on our acts themselves, so as to discern what lies at the root of these acts. At the root of free action, of knowledge, and of self-consciousness, at the root of our relations with other people and creatures, we discover a being that holds itself in existence, that is to say, the deep reality that is the radical principle of knowledge, of free action, of openness to others, and of relations. The metaphysical understanding of the person shows that we are open to the real, open to being—open not just sometimes at some moments of our lives, but open by our nature, by what we are.

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perfectly verified; and this free inclination constitutes the essential character of will (*quae quidem libera inclinatio rationem voluntatis constituit*)."

    ST I, q. 83, a. 4, corp.: "Within the intellective appetite, the will (*voluntas*) and free choice (*liberum arbitrium*), which is nothing other than the power of choosing (*vis electiva*), bear the same relation to one another as, within the intellective apprehension, the intellect (*intellectus*) and reason (*ratio*)."

[15] *ST* I, q. 29, a. 1, corp.

[16] *ST* I, q. 59, a. 1, corp. and ad 1; q. 64, a. 2, corp.

This metaphysical approach, it should be clear, excludes neither the psychological, moral, and relational features of the person nor the importance of action. Rather, it enables one to integrate these aspects, and it guarantees their foundation. One can observe this, for example, in the teaching of the Third Council of Constantinople (in 680–681). In the wake of Chalcedon, this Council stressed the unity of Christ's person (Christ is one and the same hypostasis or person), and it paid special attention to the full integrity of his human nature, consisting of a rational soul and a body (*psuchē logikē kai sōma*, according to the dogmatic definition of Chalcedon). The document by which this Third Council of Constantinople addressed its results to the emperor explains that, since Christ assumed a true human nature (*phusis*) he exercises a true human activity (*energeia*). The document then specifies: "Nothing other constitutes the perfection of the human substance (*anthrōpinē ousia*) than the essential will (*ousiōdes thelēma*) by which the power of free choice (*autexousiotès*) is inscribed in us."[17]

Established on a solid metaphysics of the person/hypostasis, the Church's doctrine regarding Christ Jesus was led to place the *will* and *freedom of action* at the heart of the understanding of human nature—a determination that had the greatest importance for the development of the notion of person in Christian culture. And this is precisely what the theme of the *imago Dei* expresses, as St. Thomas explains in the prologue of the second part of his *Summa theologiae* (this prologue specifies the aspect under which moral theology studies the human being): "The human being has been created to the image of God," which means that the human being "is endowed with intelligence and free will, and has the power to act by itself." In this way, Christian theology elaborated a conception of the person marked by proper subsistence, individuality, unity, and totality, as well as by an intelligent and free nature.

Divine Persons and Human Persons

According to Aquinas, the divine persons are distinguished and constituted by relations, and they *are* indeed relations: the divine person is a "subsisting relation."[18] But, according to St. Thomas, this is not the case

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[17] Greek text with Latin translation in *Sacrorum Conciliorum nova et amplissima collectio*, ed. J. D. Mansi, vol. 11 (Paris: H. Welter, 1901), col. 663–64. The Latin translation reads: "Nihil enim aliud constituit humanae substantiae integritatem, nisi essentialis voluntas, per quam liberi arbitrii vigor in nobis designatur" (col. 663).

[18] The divine person *is* a subsistent relation (*ST* I, q. 40, a. 2, ad 1: "personae sunt ipsae relationes subsistentes"); and the name "person" *signifies* the relation as subsisting (*ST* I, q. 29, a. 4, corp.: "persona igitur divina significat relationem ut subsistentem").

with human persons: I am neither a relation nor a set of relations. The constitution of a person by a relation remains the exclusive prerogative of the Trinity, because only in God does a relation "subsist."[19] In a human being, a relation does not constitute the person as such. However, many Christian philosophers and theologians today ask: why shouldn't we apply the understanding of the person in terms of *relations* to human persons? An answer to this question can be found in Aquinas's distinction between the *common* notion of the person, and the *special* notion that applies distinctly to God and to humans.

There is, first, a common notion of *person* that is applied by analogy to the divine Three, to angels, and to human beings. This common notion, which is analogical, is expressed by the definition of Boethius. And there is, second, a special notion of *person* that is applied distinctly either to human beings, or to God the Trinity. This special notion can be expressed either "formally" (*formaliter*), so as to signify what belongs the *ratio* of the person, or "materially" (*materialiter*): such "material signification" includes that which accounts for the distinct individuality and uniqueness of one person.[20]

The "principle of individuation," so to say, among the divine persons,[21] is a relation, to the point that St. Thomas explains, concerning the divine person of the Son of God: "The Son is a subsisting person by virtue of his relation [namely, filiation]: for his relation is his characteristic personhood (*sua enim relatio est sua personalitas*)."[22] To the objection: "No substance is a relation," Aquinas gives the following answer: "The divine essence is not in the genus of substance, but is, rather, above every genus, embracing in itself the perfections of all genera. This is why nothing prevents one from finding that which pertains to relation within it."[23]

For its part, the human person is composed of a rational soul and a body. The substantial unity of *this* body and *this* soul constitutes one human person. According to the special notion that characterizes it, the human person is a substantial existent of an intelligent and free nature,

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[19] *ST* I, q. 39, a. 1, ad 1.

[20] *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 4, corp.: "We must observe that a thing is signified in two ways, formally and materially. Formally a name signifies that which it was chiefly intended to signify, and this is the *ratio* of the name: thus 'man' signifies something composed of a body and a rational soul. Materially a name signifies that which is required for such *ratio* (*illud in quo talis ratio salvatur*): thus 'man' signifies something that has a heart, brain, and such parts as required in order that the body be animated with a rational soul."

[21] *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk. IV, ch. 14 (no. 3503): "Id quod est quasi individuationis principium."

[22] *In* I *Sent.*, d. 19, q. 3, a. 2, ad 1.

[23] *De potentia*, q. 8, a. 2, ad 1.

individualized by and subsisting in matter.[24] According to this view, the matter is the "principle of standing under" (*principium substandi*), whereas the form (in our case, the human rational soul) is the "principle of subsisting" (*principium subsistendi*)[25]—so that the soul accounts for the subsistence without which there could be no substantial individual.

This is not to imply that relations have no importance in such an understanding of the human person. First of all, a relation to God is implied by the very *existence* of the human person as created by God,[26] a relation that necessarily follows on the being of the creature (this relation to God is a "proper accident" belonging to the genus of "relation"), with real ontological weight.[27] Second, relations are constitutive of the human person if we consider the human nature *insofar as* it implies family relations, social life, mutual help, and the development of the image of God in the human person. Aquinas accounts for these interpersonal relations (as he accounts for human language) by considering the *rational nature* that grounds them:

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[24] The principle of individuation is "signed matter" (matter as referred to definite quantity and dimension). "Signed matter" individuates form, and consequently (together with the form) the individual substance composed of matter and form. *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk. IV, ch. 40 (#3781): "The singular is individuated by designated matter (*materia designata*) which is not included in the quiddity and nature of the species. For, in designating Socrates, one includes this matter (*haec materia*), which is not included in the *ratio* of human nature. Therefore, every hypostasis subsisting in human nature is constituted by signed matter (*materia signata*)." *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk. I, ch. 65 (no. 531): "Singularis autem essentia constituitur ex materia designata et forma individuata."

[25] *ST* I, q. 29, a. 2, ad 5. In *De potentia*, q. 9, a. 5, ad 13, Aquinas writes that the individuating principles (*principia individuantia*) are both the *principle of subsisting*— since a nature does not subsist except in singular beings—and the *principle of distinction* from other individuals of the same species. And, in *ST* I, q. 29, a. 4, corp., he explains: "*Person* in any nature signifies what is distinct in that nature: thus in human nature it signifies this flesh, these bones, and this soul, which are the individuating principles of a man, and which, though not belonging to the signification of 'person' [in general], nevertheless do belong to the signification of [a particular] human person."

[26] *De potentia*, q. 3, a. 5, ad 1: "Although the first cause that is God does not enter into the essence of creatures, yet *esse* which is in creatures cannot be understood except as derived from the divine *esse*: even as a proper effect (*proprius effectus*) cannot be understood save as derived from its proper cause."

[27] *ST* I, q. 44, a. 1, ad 1; q. 45, a. 3, ad 1. Cf. *In* II *Sent.*, d. 1, q. 1, a. 2, ad 4: "If 'creation' is taken in the passive sense, it is a certain accident in the creature, and so it signifies a certain reality which is not in the predicament of passion, properly speaking, but in the genus of relation (*in genere relationis*)."

> The divine providence disposes rational creatures in a different way from other beings, because they differ from other beings in the way that their own *nature* was established. . . . Since they have an *intellectual nature*, they are able by their operation to attain to intelligible truth. . . . And because they can reach intelligible truth by their natural operation, it is clear that divine provision is made for them in a different way than for other things. Inasmuch as the human being is given understanding and reason, by which he can both discern and investigate the truth; as he is also given sensory powers, both internal and external, whereby he is helped to seek the truth; as he is also given the use of speech, by which he is enabled to convey to another person the truth that he conceives in his mind—thus constituted, human beings may help one another in the process of knowing the truth, just as they may in regard to the other needs of life, for man is *by nature a social animal*.[28]
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> Speech is proper to human beings, since it is proper to them, in contrast with other animals, to have knowledge of good and evil, just and unjust, and the like [the useful and the harmful], which speech can signify. . . . Therefore, human beings *by nature* communicate about these things. And communication about these things makes the household and the political community, so that the human being is *by nature* (*naturaliter*) a social (*domesticum*) and political (*civile*) animal.[29]

These quotations from Aquinas could be developed, but they are enough to show that, for him, our interpersonal relations are grounded in our *nature*. They are, so to speak, the blossoming of our nature—to be more precise: these relations are grounded in the "rational nature" that is part of the very definition of the person, a rational nature which in turn finds its foundation in the subsistence of the person as an "individual substance."

Finally, let us briefly consider a problem posed by the Church's doctrine on the Trinity and on Christ. Christian monotheism holds that, in God the Trinity, the three persons are one understanding and one will, one freedom, exercising one operation as they are one identical essence or nature: one single God. Consequently, if one defines the person solely by reason, or freedom, or the capacity for autonomous action, how can we recognize "three persons" in God? This would imply three intelligences, three freedoms, three centers of spiritual life, in brief, three Gods (tritheism). This is far from a false or superficial difficulty. It has been vividly perceived by Christian theologians ever since the seventeenth century when, with John Locke and René Descartes, the person began to be understood in terms of acts of thought. The problem is found also in

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[28] *Summa contra Gentiles*, Bk. III, ch. 147 (no. 3201–3202); emphasis mine.
[29] *Sententia Libri Politicorum*, Bk. I, ch. 1/b (Leonine edition, vol. 48 A, p. 79); emphasis mine.

Christology: how can we profess that Christ Jesus is "one single person" while recognizing in him a true and complete human mind (with intelligence and will) that remains really distinct from his intelligent and free divinity? To define the person by the life of the mind would lead one to posit two persons in Christ. Attempts during the twentieth century to speak of three "modes of being" (*Seinsweisen*) in God the Trinity (Karl Barth), or to specify the "personality" of the Three by the notion of "distinct modes of subsistence" (*distinkte Subsistenzweisen*) (Karl Rahner), did not solve the problem. In fact, the theologians who made such proposals adopted a conception of the *human* person based on the life of the mind, so that the analogy with the divine persons became quite obscure.

St. Thomas's understanding of the person still offers today a helpful resource for pursuing Christian reflection on the human being and on the Triune God. It places the metaphysical foundation of the person in the foreground. [30] This foundation is at the root of the dignity of the person. The person is "what is most worthy" (*dignissimum*) and "what is most perfect (*perfectissimum*)"[31] by reason of its mode of existing through itself as a substance of an intellectual nature. Being a substance is the most fundamental dignity of the person. The human person is not a "rational individual," but a *subsisting* being of a rational nature. The criterion for the dignity of a person is not only of the moral order, but it is—more fundamentally—of the metaphysical order. The criterion is the possession, not of a property or of a set of properties, but of a *nature*; and not just any possession, but the person's *existence as a substance* of this nature. This approach to the person, in terms of *subsistence* and of *nature*, grounds and promotes the psychological, ethical, relational, and social traits of the person. Further, this approach constitutes the indispensable foundation for understanding *analogically* the divine person and the human person, that is, for a consistent account of the human person and of the divine person by way of analogy: "It is because *subsisting in a rational nature* is a great dignity that *every* individual of a rational nature is called a person."[32]   N&V

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[30] "Metaphysical" should in no way be confused with "conceptual." Metaphysics deals with being as being, with the real as real, that is, with what is at the heart of all reality.

[31] *ST* I, q. 29, a. 3, corp.

[32] *ST* I, q. 29, a. 3, ad 2 (emphasis mine): "Et quia magnae dignitatis est in rationali natura subsistere, ideo omne individuum rationalis naturae dicitur persona."