

What Might Bernard Lonergan Say to Bruce Morrill?

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Abstract

In his analysis of Monika Hellwig's and John Paul II's thought on penance, Bruce Morrill identifies a breakdown of shared meaning in the church. This response introduces Bernard Lonergan into the conversation. If Morrill has identified a collapse of consensus around sacramental reconciliation, Lonergan's theological anthropology, especially regarding questions related to conversion and authenticity, may provide resources for a renewed ecclesial practice grounded in a restored common meaning.

Keywords

authenticity, church authority, conversion, John Paul II, Lonergan, penance, reconciliation, theological anthropology

Bruce Morrill has engaged a dialectical analysis of some views on the Rite of Penance. My response raises some foundational points that draw on Bernard Lonergan's theological anthropology.

Repentance and reconciliation are fundamental to Christian living. Sacramental reconciliation would seem to be, therefore, a potentially very meaningful ritual mediation of graced encounter with Christ. In its most recent survey of sacramental practices in the United States, however, the Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate at Georgetown University found that 75 percent of Catholics participate in the Rite of Penance less than once a year or never, and that only 39 percent find the sacrament

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“very meaningful.”¹ That so many find sacramental reconciliation less than meaningful might reflect a crisis of common meaning regarding Catholic teachings about sin and salvation underlying the larger crisis of authority in the church. It may also be related to a more fundamental theological crisis. Either way, the situation indicates the kind of breakdown of meaning Morrill has called to our attention. I find three contributions from Lonergan’s theological anthropology helpful for understanding the conflict Morrill identifies: (1) Lonergan’s account of conversion directs our attention to the concrete experience of transformation at the center of the Rite of Penance; (2) Lonergan identifies the foundations of authority in authenticity and contrasts that view with the exercise of institutional power; and (3) Lonergan’s understanding of community as a result of common meaning clarifies the foundations of ecclesial identity. In each case Lonergan’s theological anthropology brings the conversation about sacramental reconciliation back to concrete experience, thereby responding to Monica Hellwig’s similar concerns in her *Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion*.²

Lonergan’s Notion of Conversion

Lonergan’s discussion of conversion as intellectual, moral, and religious indicates the basic transformations that are the fruit of self-transcendence. Human beings are naturally self-transcending. The desire to know, which normally operates spontaneously, is the foundation of self-transcendence. While self-transcendence can expand the horizon of the subject, there are also experiences that not only expand horizons but also place the subject in a new horizon. For Lonergan these changes of horizon are conversions.³

Intellectual conversion turns away from “the myth that knowing is like looking, that objectivity is seeing what is there to be seen and not seeing what is not there, and that the real is what is out there now to be looked at.”⁴ Intellectual conversion turns toward a world mediated by meaning and known in a judgment that comes at the end of a process of cognitional self-transcendence. A person living within the horizon of intellectual conversion has entered fully into the world mediated by meaning,⁵ the

1. Mark M. Grey and Paul M. Perl, “Sacraments Today: Belief and Practice among U.S. Catholics,” *Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate*, Georgetown University (2008), <http://cara.georgetown.edu/sacraments.html>. All URLs referenced herein were accessed April 11, 2014.

2. Monika K. Hellwig, *Sign of Reconciliation and Conversion: The Sacrament of Penance for Our Times* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glazier, 1982) 107.

3. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1990) 237.

4. *Ibid.* 238.

5. Lonergan uses the phrase “world mediated by meaning” to indicate the uniquely human use of language. Through language we move beyond mere sensory experience toward meaningful statements that communicate to others the true judgments we make about the intelligibilities of things. The intelligible world is mediated to us by the meaningful statements of others. Furthermore, Lonergan explains that the human world is not only mediated but

concrete human world, and moved out of materialist and idealist versions of reality. While intellectual conversion may seem irrelevant to the sacrament of reconciliation, theologians from Augustine to Ignacio Ellacuria have highlighted the importance for Christian discipleship of being honest with reality.⁶ It is often the case that sin is some form of participation in one or another distortion of the concrete situation by rationalization of one's behavior in it. Failure to deal with the reality of the situation and a rationalization of one's actions go together, often with disastrous consequences. The tendency to recognize only what is immediate to my senses, what is there to be seen as real, reflects a lack of intellectual conversion. For example, if the suffering of others is hidden from view, then, one might conclude, it does not exist, and one can go about one's business as usual. Normally a list of sins to confess is not likely to include such failures of intellectual conversion, but concrete failures of intellectual conversion, sometimes on a massive scale, create a context of social sin.⁷

While morality can be conceived in terms of adherence to laws or precepts, moral conversion, in Lonergan's sense, means turning out of oneself in order to serve the good of others. The good is concrete,⁸ and because it is concrete, repeating abstract principles like "do good and avoid evil" gets us only so far. Further questions for moral reflection concern the particular situations and circumstances in which one exercises moral judgment. In his elaboration of the structure of the human good, Lonergan distinguishes between particular goods and terminal values.⁹ Particular goods relate to our basic needs for survival: food, shelter, clothing, and so forth. To meet those basic needs, we humans coordinate our actions in communities that constitute goods of order. Those goods of order are often informed by terminal values that orient a culture. Terminal values are moral judgments made at the end of a process that begins with affective responses to certain goods or feelings. These judgments of value distinguish between what is truly good and what is only apparently good. That distinction is at the heart of moral conversion.

Sin is almost always some apparent good. A particular good that fulfills a desire for some satisfaction almost always appears good to the one who desires it. The further

also constituted by the meaning. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Is It Real?," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965–1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2004) 119–39.

6. See Kevin F. Burke, *The Ground Beneath the Cross: The Theology of Ignacio Ellacuria* (Washington: Georgetown University, 2000) 100–114.

7. This is increasingly the case in our global economy. While we may be more aware of the suffering others endure in the production of goods destined for consumer markets like our own, do we not still rationalize the economic arrangements that entail such suffering? A factory fire in Bangladesh might provoke horror, but does it lead to systematic change? Economic transformation would require an intellectual conversion. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, ed. Philip J. McShane (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2005).

8. *Ibid.* 27.

9. *Ibid.* 28.

question about whether it is truly good is a matter for judgment. Often enough the question of judgment, "Is this truly good?," goes unanswered. Instead, we rationalize our actions. If sacramental reconciliation leaves these rationalizations untouched, recidivism is nearly guaranteed. Moral conversion involves the ongoing development of moral self-transcendence that moves ultimately in the direction of a habitual praxis of justice, but progress in moral self-transcendence requires honest conversation and discernment of spirits, which one learns through spiritual direction. While the Rite of Penance may assist the faithful in identifying places in their lives that need moral development, the rite alone cannot be asked to do all the work of moral conversion.

Religious conversion is falling in love with God. It means turning away from self-assertion and falling in love to the point of complete self-surrender. The juridical imagery associated with the practice of confession fails to communicate this loving relationship. Emphasis on divine mercy aside, the practice of penance is often shaped by juridical images of God or, worse, market images. For instance, while the word of absolution precedes the penance, thereby affirming the priority of the divine initiative, the work of penance itself, especially when certain numbers of prayers are meted out, implies a quid pro quo, like restitution or payment of debts. Again, the introductory remarks to the revised Rite of Penance indicate a different direction,¹⁰ even while the older model prevails in the imagination and practice of many. For example, a student of mine once expressed her frustration about having been assigned three Hail Marys after confessing. She was looking for real spiritual advice and counsel in addition to a penance, while the confessor was acting according to the standards of an older model in which the penance itself suffices. Another example: I once heard a priest give a homily in which he argued that God withholds sanctifying grace when we sin, and waits for us to confess to a priest before restoring the grace. In this case we find an exclusive emphasis on a quid pro quo relationship with God mediated by a sacrament, not to mention the profoundly inadequate theology of grace it implies.¹¹ Religious conversion is easily imagined in such juridical or contractual terms. In contrast to this often-employed model, Lonergan offers a distinctive resource to the Catholic tradition. Concretely, religious conversion, for Lonergan, is falling in love.¹² It involves the ongoing existential reorientation of the subject that is the result of recognizing in oneself the gift of the Holy Spirit.¹³ And hence, without the fundamental displacement from self-centeredness elicited by religious conversion, intellectual and moral conversions are unlikely.

10. Rite of Penance no. 6 in *The Rites of the Catholic Church: Volume One* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1990) 528–29.

11. See Louis-Marie Chauvet, *Symbol and Sacrament: A Sacramental Reinterpretation of Christian Existence*, trans. Patrick Madigan and Madeleine Beaumont (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1995) 44–45, 106–9.

12. See Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 105–7.

13. See Romans 5:5.

Lonergan's analysis of conversion invites us to consider a more adequate account of conversion, reconciliation, and repentance. Crucially Lonergan relates conversion to authenticity:

Insofar as one is inauthentic, there is needed an about-turn, a conversion—indeed, a threefold conversion: an *intellectual conversion* by which without reserves one enters the world mediated by meaning; a *moral conversion* by which one comes to live in a world motivated by values; and a *religious conversion* when one accepts God's gift of his love bestowed through the Holy Spirit.¹⁴

Others have built on Lonergan's threefold elaboration of conversion. Robert Doran, Donald Gelpi, and Walter Conn each expanded it in different ways.¹⁵ Despite a greater awareness of conversion as an ongoing process and revisions to the Rite of Penance, a juridical model of sacramental confession remains in place in the imagination and practice of many Catholics, and the dynamics of conversion are neglected.

The old practice of confession was often imagined in terms of a juridical framework in which particular sins were identified, catalogued, confessed, and absolved, and the multiple dimensions of conversion were easily overlooked. The penitent could thereby regard sins as episodic failures to uphold certain precepts and consider them not to be issues of existential concern crying out for ongoing reform. The revised Rite of Penance moves in a different direction.¹⁶ Nevertheless, the imaginations of the faithful and clergy are still shaped by juridical elements in the theological tradition, whether in relation to sacramental confession or soteriology.¹⁷ Morrill details how this

14. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Reality, Myth, Symbol," in *Philosophical and Theological Papers, 1965–1980*, ed. Robert C. Croken and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto, 2004) 389–90, emphasis added.

15. See Robert M. Doran, "Psychic Conversion," *Thomist* 41 (April 1977) 200–236; Donald L. Gelpi, *Committed Worship: A Sacramental Theology for Converting Christians* (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical, 1993); and Walter Conn, *Christian Conversion: A Developmental Interpretation of Autonomy and Surrender* (Eugene, OR: Wipf & Stock, 2006).

16. For example, *Rite of Penance* no. 6 says, "For conversion should affect a person from within toward a progressively deeper enlightenment and an ever-closer likeness to Christ" (emphasis added).

17. Although it is beyond the scope of this response, an exploration of the soteriologies underlying penitential practices would aid our understanding of the breakdown of common meaning under consideration here. My hunch is that the crisis of authority we are exploring in these essays is closely related to an evolving understanding of salvation among the faithful. A soteriology that emphasized Christ's repayment of debts fits nicely with a practice of sacramental reconciliation informed by similar juridical images. Although such juridical soteriologies are no longer persuasive to many contemporary Christians, no consensus has yet emerged to replace them. Today, a variety of ways of imagining and understanding redemption is available to the faithful, some of which make sacramental confession of sins seem like a dated or dubious practice.

imagery informs part three of John Paul II's *Reconciliation and Penance*.¹⁸ A fully elaborated account of conversion like Lonergan's orients the examination of conscience in an existential direction. Certainly, we can identify acts of commission and omission as particular sins and may feel the need to confess them. But one's existential orientation or subjective horizon is notably more complex and therefore more resistant to change. If the Rite of Penance is to effect the graced reconciliation it signifies, then ministers of the sacrament should be careful to discard all juridical imagery and move penitents explicitly into the world of interiority, helping them attend to the dynamics of conversion in their own lives. Again, the revised Rite of Penance moves in this direction by attending to the many ways the faithful "accomplish and perfect continual repentance" in developing "friendship with God."¹⁹ Juridical imagery, however, reemerges whenever considerations of validity and legality enter the discussion, as Morrill has shown in his analysis of John Paul II's exhortation "Reconciliation and Penance." Concerns over validity and legality have little to do with conversion, and overemphasizing them may lead the faithful to look elsewhere for resources to feed the desire for growth that leads to self-transcendence and authenticity—a fact Hellwig highlights in her examples of the mother at the dinner table or elder in the desert.²⁰ These figures have authority because of their authenticity, not because of their institutional approbation. But concrete experiences of conversion mediated by authentic, holy persons not vested with institutional authority raise a further question for our consideration: what is the relationship between authenticity and authority?

Authenticity and the Dialectic of Authority

If the foregoing analysis of conversion attends to the self-transcendence and authenticity of the subject, the following examines the authenticity of institutions in their exercise of authority. Authenticity, in Lonergan's view, is the fruit of the self-transcendence found in conversion. Critically, however, it is never a permanent achievement; "it is ever a withdrawal from unauthenticity."²¹ Just as individuals reflect authenticity or unauthenticity, so do communities and institutions. And within those communities and institutions, authenticity legitimates authority, while unauthenticity among authorities "reveals power as mere power."²² The temptation for institutions is to declare the authority of superiors by fiat, rather than earn authority through authenticity.²³

18. The pope himself, having introduced the juridical imagery of the tribunal, seems aware of the limitations of that imagery for contemporary people, and adds to it the imagery of medicine and healing. See John Paul II, "Reconciliation and Penance" no. 31.

19. *Rite of Penance* nos. 4, 5.

20. See Hellwig, *Sign of Reconciliation* 111–12.

21. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 110. (My use of "unauthentic" rather than "inauthentic" conforms to Lonergan's usage.)

22. Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Dialectic of Authority," in *A Third Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe (New York: Paulist, 1985) 5–12, at 8.

23. Morrill identifies this practice as "ecclesiastical positivism" (n. 81). The assertion of power by bishops or popes without the authority of authenticity is likely to seem arbitrary to

The decline in participation in the Rite of Penance suggests that the power of a priest to absolve sins may be experienced by the faithful as an unauthentic exercise of power. Indeed, John Paul II's admonition that priests themselves should participate regularly in the sacrament indicates an awareness of the loss of authority resulting from such unauthenticity in sacramental practice. Further, John Paul's concern over the decline in private auricular confession indicates a general concern over the loss of clerical authority. While the goal of the Rite of Penance is reconciliation and conversion mediated, in part, by absolution from a minister of the church, the cause of reconciliation and conversion is God alone. Where, then, does the mediating authority of the church fit? And further, what is the role of the community whom the authority represents in the Rite of Penance?

Hellwig makes the crucial point that all Christians are "called to minister to others by mediating reconciliation and conversion whenever they can."²⁴ The primary mode of their reconciling presence in the community is the friendship Christians have with one another and with non-Christians. The role of friendship in the mediation of conversion and reconciliation is too easily forgotten when attention turns to the validity of the act requiring ministers duly ordained by institutional authorities. In this instance, the concern for institutional power can prevent the church from being the sacrament it should be to the world. Emphasis on validity moves from an authentic expression of authority in service to others to an exercise of power. While the tradition of consulting elders for spiritual direction shaped the history of sacramental reconciliation, that imagery no longer informs a context in which priests in their 20s might play the role of confessor. As Hellwig indicates, this experience "places an intolerable burden on many priests," especially younger priests.²⁵ But in the eyes of the faithful, it may also seem an utterly arbitrary exercise of power. Where there is a shortage of priests, authenticity and authority are often compromised in favor of power and validity. As a result the faithful may be more inclined to forego confession for a time, seek out priest confessors at parishes other than their own, or reject the sacrament altogether in favor of a more organic mentoring relationship with a non-ordained spiritual director.

Common Meaning and the Breakdown of Community

Like any community, the church is an achievement of common meaning. Speaking theologically, the church is "the community that results from the outer communication of Christ's message and from the inner gift of God's love."²⁶ Because it is concrete like

penitents. Such assertions of authority as an exercise of power can undermine the real authority of authentic, holy confessors and dilute the goal of reconciliation and conversion, which is authenticity: only authenticity begets authenticity. The ministry of Pope Francis demonstrates the power of authenticity in the exercise of authority, particularly in relation to the sacrament of penance. Francis's public participation in the rite reflects the kind of authentic witness that may lead to a revitalization of the sacrament among the faithful.

24. Hellwig, *Sign of Reconciliation* 133.

25. *Ibid.* 135.

26. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 361.

authenticity, community is an ongoing process of communication.²⁷ It exists in what Hellwig describes as a “genuine, practical, far-reaching sharing of life and resources and ideals and mutual respect and support.”²⁸ Common meaning becomes real in history through the common decisions and actions of the group. But there are also breakdowns of common meaning:

Such common meaning calls for a common field of experience and, when that is lacking, people get out of touch. It calls for common or complementary ways of understanding and, when they are lacking, people begin to misunderstand, to distrust, to suspect, to fear, to resort to violence. It calls for common judgments and, when they are lacking, people reside in different worlds. It calls for common values, goals, policies and, when they are lacking, people operate at cross-purposes.²⁹

In a similar vein, Morrill highlights Hellwig’s analysis of sin as a failure of community:

To sin is always to damage the fabric of the community and cause rifts that call for reconciliations within the community. Moreover the sin of each is the responsibility of all. The work of repentance and reconciliation is the work of the whole community. All must pray and mourn and fast for the sins that break the fabric of the community and all must mediate the possibilities of repentance and conversions for one another.³⁰

Morrill details the collapse of common meaning around the practice of sacramental reconciliation through his dialectical analysis of Hellwig’s and John Paul II’s thought. But even in the midst of this breakdown of meaning, community does not simply cease to exist. Insofar as individuals share a common experience, the common meaning that creates community remains potential. Common meaning becomes formal when members of the community share a common understanding, and actual when members affirm and deny in the same way.³¹ It is at the levels of understanding and affirmation that the Catholic community diverges over the meaning of sacramental reconciliation. Many continue the practice of sacramental reconciliation in some form, some regularly. But what it means is not perfectly clear to the faithful. That may be partly the result of a feeling of unease related to what some might suspect is an unauthentic dimension of the community.

We become ourselves in community, either authentically or unauthentically, within a dialectical tension in relation to the corresponding authenticity or unauthenticity of the community. Consequently, Lonergan calls our attention to instances of unauthentic appropriation of a tradition that waters down, devalues, and distorts the language of that tradition.³² Further,

27. Ibid. 363. Terms like “authenticity” and “community” can become vague, static abstractions if not grounded in the concrete reality of human living together.

28. Hellwig, *Sign of Reconciliation* 24.

29. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 356–57.

30. Hellwig, *Sign of Reconciliation* 65–66.

31. Lonergan, *Method in Theology* 79.

32. Ibid. 80.

devaluation, distortion, corruption may occur only in scattered individuals. But it may occur on a more massive scale, and then the words are repeated, but the meaning is gone. . . . So the unauthenticity of individuals becomes the unauthenticity of tradition. Then in the measure a subject takes the tradition, as it exists, for his standard, in that measure he can do no more than authentically realize unauthenticity."³³

It may be that many of the faithful experience sacramental reconciliation as an unauthentic expression of Christian meaning and so eschew it, while others genuinely experience its transforming power and do not feel a need to raise further questions about power and authority. Nevertheless, recovering the authenticity of the tradition is critical to mediating the authentic message of the church—the message of Christ communicated by the Mystical Body in history—to future generations. This is why the church is always reforming. At present, part of this reforming involves repenting previous failures to be the body of Christ. Indeed, one might argue that the church is never so much its true self as when *as a community* it does penance for sins. In this way the church imitates Christ, who mediates reconciliation with God the Father by expressing on the cross his own sorrow over the sins of the world.³⁴

The differing views of power and authority indicated by Morrill raise the prospect of a dialectic affecting the church that leads to misunderstanding, distrust, and suspicion between hierarchy and laity. This seems to be preeminently the case in their diverging views of sin, particularly sexual sin. The excessive emphasis on sexual sins in Catholic moral theology in the past, and perhaps still today in certain quarters, is characteristic of a reductive understanding of human sexuality that disregards developments in contemporary psychology and neurobiology. For a long time it filled confessionals, but that is no longer the case because many of the faithful judge authority in that particular area to be unauthentic.³⁵ For example, many contemporary Christians are increasingly aware of the neurobiological basis of sexual orientation, which raises questions natural law theories of sexuality are ill-equipped to handle. Even John Paul II's theology of the body, though it attempts to portray human sexuality as a potential good, reduces human sexuality to physical potencies.³⁶ On the other hand the hyper-sexualization of our

33. Ibid.

34. For an elaboration of this understanding of redemption through an analogy with penance see Charles C. Hefling Jr., "A Perhaps Permanently Valid Achievement: Lonergan on Christ's Satisfaction," *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies* 10 (1992) 51–76. I would suggest that in an ecclesiology that recognizes the foundations of the church in the community of forgiven sinners, rather than in an eschatological perfection, communal repentance would be a more complete expression of the reconciling sacramental presence of the church in history than individual auricular confessions.

35. Leslie Woodcock Tentler, "Souls and Bodies: The Birth Control Controversy and the Collapse of Confession," in *The Crisis of Authority in Catholic Modernity*, ed. Michael J. Lacey and Francis Oakley (New York: Oxford University, 2011) 292. See, in the same volume, Lisa Sowle Cahill, "Moral Theology after Vatican II" 194–200.

36. This is consistent with most discussions of human sexuality based on natural law theory, which can overlook the psychological and existential dimensions of sexuality and marriage. Lonergan was aware of the problems embedded in reductive readings of marriage

culture routinely reduces human sexuality to mere entertainment. But because of the ongoing breakdown in common meaning the church often operates at cross-purposes in this area. Of course, *Humanae vitae* serves as the preeminent example in this regard. Leslie Woodcock Tentler suggests that

Shortly after the issuance of *Humanae Vitae* (July 1968), contraception largely disappeared as a topic in Catholic public discourse, presumably because the encyclical made dissent far riskier for priests and theologians. The ultimate effect was to muzzle the clergy as credible sources of moral authority, at least with regard to sex. One can hardly speak intelligibly about sex to the world as we know it if one can't be honest about contraception. The clergy's silence further confirmed the laity in their newfound sense of moral autonomy, which may have been replicated among the young as a growing moral confusion.³⁷

The potentially prophetic witness of an integrated and healthy understanding of human sexuality is sidelined as Catholics argue with one another over who has authority in this area.

The breakdown of communication between hierarchy and laity itself calls for conversion, perhaps especially intellectual conversion. Such a conversion would entail a definitive embrace of historical consciousness among church authorities. The Second Vatican Council moved in this direction, but the classicist worldview that thinks in terms of positive law and casuistry remains partially intact in church teaching.³⁸ Lonergan's analyses of conversion, authority, and community emerge within a horizon shaped by historical consciousness and attentiveness to the concrete.

The survey data cited at the beginning of my article indicate a failure of common meaning that impacts the very nature of the church as a reality constituted by meaning. Morrill's analysis helps us understand the nature of the breakdown. It raises some critical questions that require further reflection. For example, how would the Rite of Penance operate in our contemporary context? Is the efficacy of this sign held hostage to a juridical imagination among clergy and laity? Does it address the multiple aspects of conversion Lonergan calls to our attention? More fundamentally, does the decision not to participate in the sacrament of reconciliation indicate a basic refusal of self-transcendence of the hardened sinner, or is it an implicit judgment on the authenticity of the tradition and present authority? Finally, are these differing views dialectically related and irreconcilable, or can the church retrieve common meanings that would

and sexuality. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Finality, Love, Marriage," in *Collection*, ed. Frederick E. Crowe and Robert M. Doran (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1988) 17–52.

37. Tentler, "Souls and Bodies" 294.

38. See Bernard J. F. Lonergan, "Transition from a Classicist World-view to Historical Mindedness," in *A Second Collection: Papers by Bernard Lonergan*, ed. William F. J. Ryan and Bernard J. Tyrrell (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) 1–10. Lonergan identifies classicism with a worldview that works "methodically from the abstract and the universal towards the more concrete and particular," the result being that one is increasingly "involved in the casuistry of applying a variety of universals to a concrete singularity" (3).

lead to a revival of the practice of public ecclesial penance and ultimately individual auricular confession, but in a transformed mode?

Author biography

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