



Nicolae V. Dură

Ovidius University of Constanța, Romania

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1175-5551>

About *Fides et Ratio*: Theological, Philosophical and Legal Reflections

A b s t r a c t: The dialogue between revealed Faith and Reason, i.e. between Theology and Philosophy, was initiated by St. Paul the Apostle, the one to whom the Lord's revelation on his way to Damascus was granted. This is how Saul's conversion to faith started. (*Acts* 9:3–20) This dialogue was made possible by the fact that the Apostle to the Gentiles had both a theological training with a rabbinic formation, and good familiarity with ancient Greek philosophy. It is not surprising, therefore, that the one whom God called the “chosen vessel” to bear the name of the Lord before “the Gentiles and their kings and to the people of Israel” (*Acts* 9:15) was also privileged to have his first debates with the pagan philosophers of his time. From the pages of this work – with their theological, philosophical and juridical content – the reader will be able to see that a dialogue between theology and philosophy cannot be conducted from the perspective of one of the two, that is from the perspective of religious faith or reason, but only through a syntony, that is through a joint concentration of the efforts of the servants of the two fields to discover and make explicit the revealed Truth. Some theologians and philosophers through their works on the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy have remained in the history of theological and philosophical culture as names of reference. Pope John Paul II has a special place among these theologians and philosophers. He managed to offer us a Theology of the dialogue between Faith and Reason through his pragmatic approach to enhancing the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy and through the statements in the texts of his papal *Apostolic Exhortation, Encyclicals, Messages*, etc. As a leading exponent of the approach to the renewal of the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy, the Roman Pontiff also contributed to the awareness of the urgent need to reconcile the two fields of theology and philosophy. It enables us to understand and express the Truth both through faith and through the contribution of reason, as the text of his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* amply confirms.

Key words: faith, reason, theology, philosophy, dialogue

Introduction

One year after the publication of the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, Oxford University Press published a monumental collective work entitled *Faith and Reason*, edited by Paul Helm, who in his “Preface” stated that “*Faith and Reason* is an attempt to display in historical perspective some of the rich dialog and dialectic between faith and reason, and to show that this is part of the warp and woof of Western philosophy.”¹ But as will also be seen from the considerations and evaluations that I have presented on the pages of this paper on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, accompanied by some excerpts from the text, its content and approach are different from those of the book published in Oxford in 1999. The editorial team included some outstanding scholars who give the impression that they are strangers to “divine science”, which is Theology, and even more so to the Gospel of Christ, which is indeed the “hope of Europe” and humanity.

The 25th anniversary of the publication of the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* has also provided an opportunity for theologians “to identify potential areas for defending the rationality of the Christian faith”², and to point out the fact that “the exceptional opening of the Church to science occurred during the pontificate of John Paul II, who emphasized not only the necessity and possibility of dialogue between the Church and the sciences but also sought to define its subject matter and conditions more precisely”³. Andrzej Anderwald claimed that *Fides et Ratio* “continues to inspire the search for new forms of interaction between faith and reason within the Church’s openness to science and theology’s dialogue with other disciplines”⁴. Hence he concludes that “the dialog between theology and other sciences is crucial for justifying the rationality of faith”⁵. According to the teaching of the Apostle of the Gentiles, Paul of Tarsus in Cilicia, the knowledge of God means “the knowledge of the truth” (*I Timothy* 2:3–4) revealed by God (*Revelation* 1:1), but for the “revealing of the truth” (*II Corinthians* 1:2), “God has been revealed in the flesh” (*II Timothy* 1:10; *Hebrews* 9:8, 26; *I Peter* 1:20; *I John* 1:2, etc.).

¹ P. Helm, ed., “Preface”, in *Faith and Reason* (Oxford/New York: Oxford University Press, 1999).

² A. Anderwald, “In Defense of the Rationality of Faith: the Relevance of the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*”, in *Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne* 46 (2024): 39.

³ Anderwald, “In Defense of the Rationality of Faith: the Relevance of the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*”, 42.

⁴ Anderwald, “In Defense of the Rationality of Faith: the Relevance of the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*”, 49.

⁵ Anderwald, “In Defense of the Rationality of Faith: the Relevance of the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*”, 49.

In order to be endowed with this knowledge, “God, ..., freely created man to make him share in his own blessed life.”⁶ The man is a rational being that has this freedom as one of spiritual powers making up “the image of God” (*Genesis* 1:27), that is “the image of the heavenly one” (*I Corinthians* 15:49) which has given him the possibility of becoming divine and attaining immortality. This freedom is first and foremost – according to the biblical text – a gift of God and a presence of the Holy Spirit in the human heart because only where “the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom” (*II Corinthians* 3:17). Indeed, only the man, the human being in which dwells the Spirit of the Lord, is a free one, and only this one “seeks the truth” and “lives by belief.”⁷

According to the teaching of the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “the person who seeks God discovers certain ways of coming to know him. These are also called proofs for the existence of God, not in the sense of proofs in the natural sciences, but rather in the sense of converging and convincing arguments, which allow us to attain certainty about the truth.”⁸ There are two ways of knowing God, namely the way of faith and the way of reason, because “man stands in need of being enlightened by God’s revelation, not only about those things that exceed his understanding, but also about those religious and moral truths.”⁹ In his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II pointed out that without the perspective offered by Divine Revelation “the mystery of personal existence remains an insoluble riddle”¹⁰, and that “faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently.”¹¹

In other words, the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy can only be carried out from the perspective of Divine Revelation, which can only be understood through Faith. However, in the process of defining and clarifying the truths of faith, the man also needs the contribution of Reason, hence the need to renew and strengthen this dialogue. The same Roman Pontiff recognized that “there are religious truths which are to some degree grounded in philosophy, and which we find in the answers which the different religious traditions offer to the ultimate questions.”¹²

⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, revised in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II. Washington, 2019, 9.

⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 31.

⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, II, 31: 14–15.

⁹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, II, 31: 16.

¹⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, II, 31: 12.

¹¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. No. 13.

¹² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. No. 30.

Faith is indeed the only way to “sharpen the inner eye, ..., to discover ... the workings of Providence”¹³, and thus to know Him who “made all things in heaven and on earth” (*Colossians* 1:16). A psalm of David tells us that “the vault of heaven”, that is the firmament, the starry heaven (cf. *Genesis* 1:8), “proclaims his handiwork” (*Psalms* 19:1). As for the Christian faith, St. John Chrysostom told his contemporaries that it is not “from us” because “if Christ had not come and called us, how could we have believed?”¹⁴ The Christian faith is indeed a gift from God (cf. *Romans* 10:14; *I Corinthians* 12:9), namely from the One who was crucified, resurrected in Jerusalem, and was preached, formulated and made explicit so that people might know and understand it.

The Apostle Paul tells us that only the man who has a pure and uncorrupted mind (*δίανοία*), can reach the “things above, not on earthly things” (*Colossians* 3:2), since he received the gift of “wisdom” and “knowledge” which are the grace of the Holy Spirit (*I Corinthians* 12:8; *II Corinthians* 4:6; 8:7). We can acquire “the knowledge of Him who called us to glory” (*II Peter* 1:3) and, *ipso facto*, to the knowledge of “the truth” (*Romans* 2:20; *I Corinthians* 1:5, etc.). The same Apostle of Christ advised the Romans, the Corinthians, and the Ephesians that they should no “longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking” (*Ephesians* 4:17), since these ones “are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.” (*Ephesians* 4:18) That the ignorance is “the mother of all wickednesses” (Evagrius Ponticus) was also recognized by philosophers.

According to the teaching of the ecumenical Church, God alone is “the True One” (*Romans* 3:14) and his law is true (cf. *Psalms* 119:142). Therefore, we Christians are called to live in the truth (cf. *Matthew* 5:37) and to live a life of faith, since only “*by faith*, man completely submits his intellect and his will to God.”¹⁵ The same teaching tells us that “believing is possible only by grace and the interior helps of the Holy Spirit”¹⁶, and that “trusting in God and cleaving to the truths he has revealed are contrary neither to human freedom nor to human reason”¹⁷. In the act of faith, the mind and will of the man work together with the grace of the Holy Spirit. It is attested by some theologian-philosophers, such as Thomas Aquinas, who affirmed that faith “rests on the first truth (*fides innititur primae veritati*).”

¹³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*. No. 16.

¹⁴ Apud I. Mircea, *Dicționar al Noului Testament* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMBOR, 1995), 107.

¹⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, III, 143:39.

¹⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, III, 154: 42.

¹⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, III, 154: 42.

(Art. 2, 2)¹⁸ It also “perceives the unseen things of God ... in a way higher than natural reason.” (Art. 3, 3)¹⁹ The same theologian added the clarification that “it is superfluous to accept by faith what can be known by natural reason.” (Art. 4, 1)²⁰ Hence, the statement of some theologians that Thomas Aquinas did not adopt Aristotelian philosophy, were reintroduced in Western Europe around the beginning of the 12th century in order to reconcile it with the Christian faith, or “to explain and defend faith.”²¹

According to the statements made by Thomas Aquinas, “science and faith are not about the same thing, ..., for science is about all that can be known by natural reason” (Art. 4, 2)²², but “it is necessary for man to accept by the mode of faith not only those things which are beyond reason, but also those things which can be known by reason.” (Art. 4, 3)²³ The renowned theologian stated, however, that “human reason is very deficient in regard to divine things, and the proof of this is that philosophers, who scrutinize by a natural investigation of human things, have erred.”²⁴ Therefore, he opined that “the divine” should be transmitted to men “by the mode of faith, as if spoken by God.” (Art. 4, 3)²⁵ The same western scholar, Thomas Aquinas, affirmed that the “light of faith” is “infused into man by the divine way” (Art. 3, 3)²⁶, and known through the illumination of the power of divine grace, and not through natural reason.

On September 14, 1998, Pope John Paul II published the Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, in which among other things the Roman Pontiff asserted that “faith and reason are like two wings on which the human spirit rises to the contemplation of truth”²⁷, and by this, we arrive to the knowledge of God by which we, the men, “may also come to the fullness of truth”²⁸ about ourselves. On October 16, 2008, on the occasion of the 10th anniversary of the publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical *Fides*

¹⁸ Tomas de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), trans. S. Avram *et al.* (Iași: Publishing House Polirom, 2016), 27.

¹⁹ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 29–30.

²⁰ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 30.

²¹ C. Setiawan, “The Dialogue Between Faith and Reason According to John Paul II and Thomas Aquinas,” *FORUM Filsafat dan Teologi* 2 (2023): 72.

²² de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 30.

²³ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 30.

²⁴ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 30.

²⁵ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 30.

²⁶ de Aquino, *Summa Theologica*, III (IIa IIae), 29.

²⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.*

²⁸ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.*

et Ratio, Pope Benedict XVI said that it “enables one to perceive admirably its lasting topicality; it reveals the farsighted depth of my unforgettable Predecessor.”²⁹

From the same festive speech of Pope Benedict XVI – who proved himself to be an outstanding theologian, and who also valued the role of philosophy in the dialogue with Theology, like his illustrious predecessor Pope John Paul II – we also learn that “there exists a truth” that reason “will never be able to discover based solely on itself.”³⁰ It is of course about “the truth of Revelation” which “does not superimpose the truth achieved by reason; rather, it purifies and exalts reason, thereby enabling it to broaden its horizons to enter into a field of research as unfathomably expansive as mystery itself.”³¹

The same Roman Pontiff pointed out that both reason, which is “strong in its autonomy and its rich intellectual tradition”³², and faith in the revealed Truth, can find a common way to understand and serve “true Philosophy”, that is “the truth of Revelation”³³, which St. Paul the Apostle proclaimed in the Aeropagus of Athens. Finally, Pope Benedict XVI also pointed out that “Science ... is unable to work out ethical principles; it can only accept them and recognize them as necessary to eradicate its potential pathologies. In this context, philosophy and theology become indispensable aids ... in maintaining vigilance about the sense of responsibility that reason possesses in regard to science, so that it stays on track in its service to the human being.”³⁴

On Knowledge of God by Faith and Reason

From the witness of Holy Scripture, we know that God called Himself “The One who is” (*Exodus* 3:14), that is an eternal existence (cf. *Revelation* 1:8; 4:3). The same biblical witness tells us that “God is Spirit”, and as such we have a duty to worship

²⁹ Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

³⁰ Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

³¹ Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

³² Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

³³ Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

³⁴ Benedict XVI. *Address of His Holiness to Participants in a Congress Held on the Occasion of the 10th Anniversary of the Publication of Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Fides et Ratio.*

Him “in the spirit (ἐν πνεύματι)” and “truth (ἀληθεία)” (*John* 4:24). The same evangelist of the New Testament, St. John the Apostle, tells us that “God is light” (*John* 8:12; *I John* 1:5) and “love.” (*I John* 4:8) We, humans, can know God, as far as we are able, through the power of faith and reason. But, as biblical theologians also warn us, “God cannot be known in his being and deity, but only through his works and manifestations in the world.”³⁵

In the words of the Holy Scriptures, “the knowledge of God” (*Ephesians* 1:17; *Colossians* 1:10), or the knowledge of the mystery of God (*Colossians* 2:2), is an innate ability of the human being (cf. *Matthew* 7:16–20; *Luke* 10:22; *John* 4:1; 5:42; *Romans* 5:19–21), offered by God (cf. *I Corinthians* 12:8; *II Corinthians* 4:6; 8:7), by means of which the man can attain “true knowledge” (*Colossians* 3:10), and *ipso facto* the “knowledge of salvation” (*Luke* 1:77), and of “the truth” (*Romans* 2:20; 11:33; *I Corinthians* 1:5; 7:1, etc.), and which is entirely distinct from “lying knowledge (ἐπίγνωσις).” (*I Timothy* 6:20) The same biblical text tells us that it is only through true knowledge, conditioned by living, working faith as a gift of the Holy Spirit (*I Corinthians* 12:9) that the man can understand the truths of faith. They cannot be understood rationally, for it is only by faith – defined by the Holy Apostle Paul as “blessings that we hope for” or use to “prove the existence of the realities that at present remain unseen.” (*Hebrews* 11:1) That is how we receive the grace of Christ.

Regarding the knowledge of faith, St. Paul tells us that it comes from hearing “God’s message” (*I Thessalonians* 2:13) which we find in the text of the Holy Scriptures, and that is why we must remain “in the faith of the truth” (*II Thessalonians* 2:13). But the Gospel of Christ does not come “merely in words alone but also in power and in the Holy Spirit with profound conviction.” (πληροφορία πολλῆ) (*I Thessalonians* 1:5). It is precisely this profound conviction that gives our faith its foundation in divine Revelation, which we must understand “in the light of the teaching of Scripture and of the entire Patristic tradition.”³⁶

Bearing in mind the social realities and the mentality of the society in which mankind found itself at the end of the second millennium, Pope John Paul II made it clear that in “everyday life, ... each one of us is preoccupied by the pressure of a few fundamental questions”³⁷, and that “there are religious truths which are to some degree grounded in philosophy.”³⁸ As it is defined by the ancient philosophers,

³⁵ Mircea, *Dictionar al Noului Testament*, 145.

³⁶ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 8.

³⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 29.

³⁸ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 30.

Philosophy is “the knowledge of divine and human things” (Pythagoras), “the art of the arts and the science of the sciences” (Aristotle), as well as “the likeness of the Divine” (Plato).

In the words of Plotinus (3rd century), “it was the blessed philosophers ... who discovered knowledge” (Aeneid, III, VII, 1), that is the knowledge of divine and human things. But the philosophers, those of yesterday and today, as the founder of Neoplatonism pointed out, are “but the exegetes of those ancient doctrines” (Aeneid, VII, 1, 9). A reputed 6th century Christian philosopher David, a native of Armenia, also reiterated that Philosophy is the “man’s striving to be like the Divine”³⁹, and “he who strives to be like the Divine wants it both through knowledge and practicality.”⁴⁰ He wishes “to bring man’s character into harmony and to ensure the harmony of his being by cultivating the virtues.”⁴¹ He also added that “the philosopher wishes both through knowledge and practice to imitate the Divine as far as it is possible for man to do.”⁴²

As for imitating the Divine, David, the 6th century Christian philosopher, took Plato’s statement and the words “as far as it is possible for man to do.” Since these words were also reproduced in the text of their works by some Arabic-speaking Muslim philosophers of the 9th–12th centuries, it shows that they were accustomed to ancient philosophy and *ipso facto* to the knowledge of divine and human things. In fact, the works of the ancient Greek-language philosophers had been translated into Syriac before the advent of Islam, but these continued into the second phase of the history of the Caliphate (661–750), in which the Islamic state, which incorporated Mesopotamia, central and western Iran, Syria and Egypt, was ruled by the Umayyad dynasty. During the existence of the Abbasid dynasty (750–1250)⁴³, Hārūn al-Rashīd (786–809), “the best-known ‘Abbasid’ sovereign figure”⁴⁴, entered “the legend of the Thousand and One Nights”⁴⁵ and became “known in Europe for his relations with the Byzantine Empress Irina and Charles the Great.”⁴⁶

With the conquest of Syria, the Arabs were to become neighbours of the Byzantines, which also helped to promote cultural contacts between the two worlds,

³⁹ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. L. Liiceanu (Bucharest: Publishing House Academiei R.S.R., 1977), 101.

⁴⁰ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 101.

⁴¹ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 101.

⁴² David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 100.

⁴³ V. Ciocîltan, “Arabii și Islamul până în secolul al XIII-lea II. Expansiunea islamică,” in *Analele Universității Dunărea de Jos din Galați. Seria Istorie* 2 (2003): 49.

⁴⁴ Ciocîltan, “Arabii și Islamul până în secolul al XIII-lea II. Expansiunea islamică,” 59.

⁴⁵ Ciocîltan, “Arabii și Islamul până în secolul al XIII-lea II. Expansiunea islamică,” 59.

⁴⁶ Ciocîltan, “Arabii și Islamul până în secolul al XIII-lea II. Expansiunea islamică,” 59.

i.e. the Byzantine, Christian, and the Arab, Islamic. These contacts also contributed to the translation of works of the ancient Greek philosophers by some clerics of the Jacobite Syrian Christian Church. This practice of translating the works of ancient Greek-speaking philosophers was to culminate in the translations made by some clerics of the Jacobite Church in the 9th century, as was the case of *Abū Zakariyā' ibn Adī* (893–974), a Jacobite Christian philosopher noted in the literature as “a famous translator of the works of Aristotle.”⁴⁷

The translations of Aristotle’s works into Arabic had thus been preceded by those made into Syriac by some Christian clerics who had studied ancient philosophy. It served as a source of documentation and study for Arabic-speaking philosophers. One of these philosophers was Al-Fārābī († 950/951), who came into contact with Aristotle’s works through Christian clerics while studying in Baghdad, where he became acquainted with both Aristotelian and Neoplatonist philosophy. But with the help of philosophy, Al-Fārābī also discovered the finitudes or limits of human knowledge, which led him to admit that the Koranic text, which – according to Muslim theologians – constituted “the first foundations of the divine religions”⁴⁸, i.e. of the two monotheistic religions (Mosaic and Christian). Koranic text, therefore, can only be known through the two ways of knowledge, i.e. through faith and reason, but, according to Al-Fārābī, reason is “the highest possible form of happiness: just as the divine mind rules the universe, man must be ruled by reason.”⁴⁹ He took a stand for “the primacy of reason and Philosophy”⁵⁰ over Muslim Theology.

Another Arabic-speaking philosopher, Ibn Sina (Avicenna) (980–1037), a Persian born in today’s Uzbekistan, wrote a work entitled “Kitab al-hudud” (*Book of Definitions*), which had “an enormous influence on the most important scholastic debates of the 13th and 16th centuries.”⁵¹ This enormous influence was connected with the fact that Avicenna⁵² made Aristotelian philosophical thought available to the West and had a decisive impact on Thomas Aquinas, “who took up some Avicenna’s ideas in Catholic theology, including the distinction between essence and existence. This distinction would become one of the foundations of Thomistic philosophy, *De ente et essential*, being tributary to a large extent to Avicenna’s thought.”⁵³

⁴⁷ G. Tartler, *Înțeleptul singuratic* (Bucharest: Humanitas Publishing House, 2006), 35.

⁴⁸ *Coranul cel Sfânt. Traducerea sensurilor și comentariu* (Timișoara: Islam Publishing House, 1998), 6.

⁴⁹ G. Tartler, *Înțeleptul singuratic*, 25.

⁵⁰ G. Tartler, *Înțeleptul singuratic*, 25.

⁵¹ Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), *Cartea definițiilor* (Iași: Polirom Publishing House, 2012). 8.

⁵² The name ‘Avicenna’ is in fact a corruption of his name due to the Hebrew pronunciation, Aven Sina, rendered in Latin by Avicenna (Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), *Cartea definițiilor*, 145).

⁵³ Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), *Cartea definițiilor*, 167.

It is also well known that other Catholic theologians with philosophical training, such as Albert the Great, Roger Bacon and Duns Scotus, also took up “some of the ideas of Avicenna”⁵⁴ and, *ipso facto*, Aristotelian philosophical thought. The same Persian philosopher, Avicenna, stated that “Philosophy is concerned with all that is, since it is concerned with divine things; it alone is legitimately called *theoria*.”⁵⁵ Consequently, the word ‘theoria’ (theory) comes from the “contemplation of divine things.”⁵⁶

According to the philosopher David, Platonic philosophy “has to do with the soul” which “has two kinds of faculties: knowing and vital.”⁵⁷ Those of cognition are “intuitive intellect, discursive thought, opinion, representation, sensation.”⁵⁸ Only “intuitive intellect, discursive thought and rational opinion are rational cognitive faculties.”⁵⁹ The views of the 6th century Christian philosopher David, a native of Armenia, are certainly worthy of noting since he spent most of his life in the milieu of Greek philosophical culture. There he wrote his works on Theology and Philosophy, and on the contribution of the exponents of the two fields to the process of knowledge.

For example, in reference to Theology, the philosopher David tells us that the object of Theology is the “divine” things which, “being indivisible and unperceivable”, “are known more readily by conjecture than by exact knowledge.”⁶⁰ “The soul’s sight, weakened and darkened by the lust of the flesh, is brought to awakening and light by Philosophy”⁶¹, which also has a determining role in the argumentation and explanation of the truths of faith.

In the words of St. John Damascene († 749)⁶², “no one has ever known God except the one to whom he has revealed himself. No one, not only among men, but not even among the powers of the earth, not even among cherubim and seraphim.”⁶³ The knowledge of God was, therefore, gained only through the act of divine Revelation. When we speak about the knowledge of God, we must refer to the things

⁵⁴ Ibn Sīnā (Avicenna), *Cartea definițiilor*, 167.

⁵⁵ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, trans. L. Liiceanu (Bucharest: Publishing House Academiei R.S.R., 1977), 99.

⁵⁶ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 99.

⁵⁷ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 100.

⁵⁸ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 102.

⁵⁹ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 102.

⁶⁰ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 76.

⁶¹ David, *Introduction to Philosophy*, 100.

⁶² On his life and work, see D. Fecioru: *Viața Sfântului Ioan Damaschin. Studiu de istorie literară creștină* (Bucharest, 1935).

⁶³ St. John Damascene, *Dogmatica*, trans. D. Fecioru (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMBOR, 2005), 15.

and realities revealed by divine Revelation, and not to those obtained by a purely cognitive act. Referring to the text of *Genesis* 1:26, when God decided to create man “in our image and likeness”, St. John Damascene specified that “in the image” meant “mind and freedom”, while “in the likeness” meant “likeness in virtue as far as possible.”⁶⁴

The statement that God has made himself known to humans can be found in *The Dogmatics* of St. John Damascene. It testifies to us peremptorily that the Holy Father knew and used both the statements of Platonic philosophy and of Aristotelian philosophy in listing his arguments regarding the knowledge of God. The same Holy Father of the Ecumenical Church tells us about Faith that it “is twofold: one is faith of hearing” (*Romans* 10, 17) and the other is the confidence of things hoped for, which is the proof of things not seen (cf. *Hebrews* 11, 1).⁶⁵

As for the “Godhead”, the famous Christian philosopher and theologian of Damascus, namely St. John Damascene, stated that it “is ineffable and incomprehensible.”⁶⁶ However, “God has not left us in complete ignorance, because the knowledge of God’s existence is sown by Him naturally in all men.”⁶⁷ Then, “God made himself known, as far as it is possible for us to understand him, first through the law and the prophets, and then through his Son, the only begotten, our Lord and God and Saviour Jesus Christ.”⁶⁸ Therefore, from the knowledge of God’s existence, naturally planted by Him in the mind of every mortal, the man has been able to know his Creator, “as far as it is possible for us to comprehend Him”, first through law and prophecy, and then through the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, the Incarnate One, at the “fullness of time” (*Galatians* 4:4).

Under the impact of Platonic and Aristotelian philosophy, however, there were also some reputed Arabic-speaking philosophers whose works contain reference to the inability of the man to know the nature of the divine. For example, the philosopher Al-Kindi (c. 800–873), who dominated the landscape of Arab-Islamic philosophical culture with his treatise “On First Philosophy”, stated among other things that philosophy is defined as “the knowledge of things in their truth, as far as it is possible for man to know them.”⁶⁹

Another Arabic-speaking philosopher, Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (1126–1198), who made use of both the text of the Koran and Aristotelian philosophy, stated in his

⁶⁴ *De Fide Orthodoxa*, lb. 2, chapter 12, in PG 94, col. 920.

⁶⁵ St. John Damascene: *Dogmatica*, 191.

⁶⁶ St. John Damascene: *Dogmatica*, 15.

⁶⁷ St. John Damascene: *Dogmatica*, 15.

⁶⁸ St. John Damascene: *Dogmatica*, 15.

⁶⁹ Al-Kindi, *On First Philosophy. Bilingual Edition*, trans. G. Grigore (Iasi: Polirom Publishing House, 2017), 31.

work titled *A Decisive Word on Establishing the Connection between Philosophy and the Revealed Law*⁷⁰ that “there is no insurmountable contradiction between Revelation, by which is meant here the Koran, and reason – by which is meant here philosophy – they can complement each other at certain levels as possible ways of access to truth.”⁷¹ The same philosopher added that it was God who “opened the way ... to people who have taken the path of rational inquiry in their aspiration to know the truth”⁷², and that Revelation and Philosophy are “friends by nature, loving each other because of their innate essence and nature.”⁷³

With the conquest of Baghdad by the Mongols in 1258, which put an “irreversible end to the Abbasid caliphate”⁷⁴, the process of effervescent creativity of Greek philosophical thought in the Arab world also came to an end. The abolition of this Caliphate also brought about a new stage in the process of knowledge, implicitly in the dialogue between faith and reason, i.e. between Islamic theology and Islamic philosophy. It also had an impact on scholastic theology, which affirmed, among other things, that “fides quaerens intellectum” (Anselm, *Proslogin*), i.e. faith seeks understanding.

In referring to the knowledge of God, some Christian theologians of our days have also expressly referred to the “Reason of God,” for example, Rev. Prof. Iustin Popovici († 1979). He affirmed that there are “no delimitations between being and knowing. His knowledge, ..., is Self-knowledge”⁷⁵ because He is indeed “the Lord of knowledge” (*I Kings* 2:3) and “the depth of wisdom and knowledge.” (Romans 11:13) Another Orthodox theologian, Rev. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae († 1993), familiar with the language of Philokalia and Philosophy, speaks both of “Natural Revelation as the basis of natural faith and of a meaning of existence”⁷⁶ and of “Supernatural Revelation as the source of Christian faith.”⁷⁷

The same theologian affirmed that, “according to the patristic tradition, there is a rational or cataphatic knowledge and an apophatic or negated knowledge. The latter is superior to the former and complements the latter. However, God is not known in his being through neither of them.”⁷⁸ Then he adds that “rational knowledge

⁷⁰ Ibn Rušd, *Cuvânt hotărâtor privind stabilirea legăturii dintre filosofie și legea revelată*, trans. G. Grigore (Iași: Polirom Publishing House, 2020), 9.

⁷¹ Rušd, *Cuvânt hotărâtor privind stabilirea legăturii dintre filosofie și legea revelată*, 9.

⁷² Rušd, *Cuvânt hotărâtor privind stabilirea legăturii dintre filosofie și legea revelată*, 173.

⁷³ Rušd, *Cuvânt hotărâtor privind stabilirea legăturii dintre filosofie și legea revelată*, 171.

⁷⁴ Ciociltan, “Arabii și Islamul până în secolul al XIII-lea II. Expansiunea islamică,” 64.

⁷⁵ I. Popovici, *Dogmatic of the Orthodox Church*, trans. Z. Markovski (Iași: Publishing House Doxologia, 2017), 150.

⁷⁶ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 9.

⁷⁷ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 24.

⁷⁸ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 115.

cannot be renounced either ... What it says must only be deepened by apophatic knowledge”⁷⁹, which “when it wants to understand itself at all, must have recourse to the terms of intellectual knowledge.”⁸⁰ As far as the dogmas of the Church are concerned, he describes them as “revealed truths of saving faith.”⁸¹ The dogmas of the Church are “natural dogmas”⁸² and “supernatural dogmas.”⁸³

In the context of “natural revelation”, we come to God “through thought”⁸⁴, while “in supernatural revelation it is the divine personal Logos”⁸⁵ through which “the truths of our salvation are made known to us.”⁸⁶ Then, Professor Dumitru Stăniloae adds the clarification that, in the case of natural dogmas, “their self-evidence or truth is a function of their meaning, which is not imposed naturally, but by an act or a series of acts of God’s self-discovery or of God’s putting himself in evidence.”⁸⁷

In the words of the same theologian, theology is an “ecclesial ministry of explaining and deepening the dogmas or plan of salvation and of revitalizing the Church’s ministry of service.”⁸⁸ This explication and deepening of the Church’s dogmas – which are “strict delimitations (horoi)” – must, however, be done by the Church’s theologians “on Holy Scripture and Holy Tradition”⁸⁹, that is on the basis of both fundamental sources of the Christian Religion. On the contrary, another Orthodox theologian, Rev. Prof. Ioannis Romanidis († 2001), stated that “Theology has nothing to do with Philosophy, because the path of each is different. Theology is based on the sight of God, while Philosophy is based on the human word, on rational speculation.”⁹⁰ In his view, there can, therefore, be no connection between Theology and Philosophy.

Concerning the knowledge of God, the same theologian affirmed that it is “a spiritual one – a knowledge of the heart, and not of reason”⁹¹, and it is “acquired

⁷⁹ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 115.

⁸⁰ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 115.

⁸¹ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 72.

⁸² D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 72.

⁸³ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 72.

⁸⁴ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 74.

⁸⁵ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 73.

⁸⁶ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 73.

⁸⁷ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 73.

⁸⁸ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 94.

⁸⁹ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă* (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMO, 2010), 94.

⁹⁰ Ierotheos, Metropolitan of Nafpaktos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, trans. from Greek by T. Petrache (Iași: Publishing House Doxologia, 2014), 134.

⁹¹ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. 53.

with the mind (νοῦς) and the heart. Reason (λογική) is incapable of acquiring the knowledge of God: it only formulates it in words, according to the possibilities it possesses.”⁹² The proper organ of the knowledge of God is the “mind”, perceived and defined by Prof. Ioannis Romanidis as “the noetic energy of the human soul.”⁹³ It has the capacity to be an organ of the knowledge of God “only after it has been illuminated and transfigured by divine energy.”⁹⁴ However, this definition directs us to the doctrine of St. Gregory Palamas and to the hesychast tradition, hence his apodictic statement that “Orthodoxy has not the slightest connection with Metaphysics”⁹⁵, and therefore Theology should not be confronted “with the philosophical method.”⁹⁶

Professor Ioannis Romanidis also made it clear that “the dogmas, the dogmatic decisions, were not formulated for philosophical reasons”⁹⁷, but for pastoral reasons, namely “to protect the faithful from heretics and to catechize them in the life of Christ.”⁹⁸ The same Greek theologian – called “Teacher of Hesychasm and of the Empirical Dogmatic Theology of the Orthodox Church”⁹⁹ – also recalled that “in 794, at the Council of Frankfurt, the Franks condemned the decisions of the VII Ecumenical Council, ..., as well as the methodology of rational speculation in the knowledge of God, and consequently rejected the method of cure, enlightenment and deification, annulled the distinction between essence and energy in God (*actus purus*), and introduced the theory of the knowledge of the essence of God, Filioque, etc.”¹⁰⁰

At the Council of 794, the Franks of Clovis did not condemn the methodology of rational speculation in the knowledge of God, but, on the contrary, it was

⁹² Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. 53.

⁹³ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. 53.

⁹⁴ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. 53.

⁹⁵ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. I, 53.

⁹⁶ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, 502.

⁹⁷ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, 503.

⁹⁸ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, 503.

⁹⁹ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, 560.

¹⁰⁰ Ierotheos, *Dogmatica empirică după învățăturile prin viu grai ale Părintelui Ioannis Romanidis*. Vol. II, 558–559.

the theologians of the Frankish kingdom who empowered rational speculation as a method of research for knowledge, including the knowledge of God. The excerpts presented in the above pages show that although philosophers and theologians sometimes have different views, we can see that both philosophers and theologians, when speaking about the knowledge of God, remained largely tributary to ancient philosophy (Platonic, Aristotelian and Neoplatonic). But both Catholic and Orthodox theologians agree that the two sure paths to knowledge of God remain Faith (religious) and Reason. And with both the man was endowed by God at his creation, that is “from the dust of the ground, and He breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul.” (Genesis 2, 7)¹⁰¹

The man, therefore, being created by God can participate in the act of knowledge through faith as well as through rational knowledge, apophatic knowledge and natural knowledge. As the means of our dialogue with God, the man has a prayer and reason, which God has given him “as an organ” of knowledge of things of his hands, hence the statement of the theologians that the world is a “rational work of God”¹⁰², in which we identify the “reasons of things.”¹⁰³

As an eminent theologian stated, “the rationality of the world is for man and culminates in man, not man is for the rationality of the world”¹⁰⁴ because “the very words addressed by God to us through things stimulate us to understand them, and their understanding provokes a response on our part. For there is no word understood by a man to which he does not take an attitude, that is, respond. He began to speak when he began to respond to God, having to respond, being compelled by God to respond through the things set before him by God, he began to actualize himself as a partner in dialogue with God.”¹⁰⁵

In the spirit of these theological statements, we could therefore say that through the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy – for which Pope John Paul II was one of his main militants of our days – we will also be partners in dialogue with God. Certainly, through such a dialogue, under the power and light of the Holy Spirit, the man will also be able to realize that in order to know and understand the revealed truths of faith, he needs both faith and reason.

¹⁰¹ Apud, *Biblia sau Sfânta Scriptură. Ediție jubiliară a Sfântului Sinod*, edited and annotated by B. V. Anania (Bucharest: Publishing House IBMBOR, 2001), 24.

¹⁰² D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*. Vol. I, 360.

¹⁰³ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*. Vol. I, 364.

¹⁰⁴ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*. Vol. I, 366.

¹⁰⁵ D. Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*. Vol. I, 367.

On the Role of ‘Faith’ and ‘Reason’ in the Process of Formulating and Explaining the Truths of Faith

St. Paul the Apostle tells us that by faith alone “we are saved” (cf. *Matthew* 9:22; *Mark* 5:34; *Luke* 7:50, etc.). This faith, however, was “promised” and given by God “to Abraham” (*Hebrews* 6:13), which was an act of righteousness (*Romans* 3:30; *Galatians* 3:6 etc.). From the text of the book of Jesus, son of Sirach, we note that the “beginning of everything” is “the word” (*Wisdom of Jesus Son of Sirach* 37: 16), that is “the reason for a thing to exist, which implies the reason of the One who brings it into existence.”¹⁰⁶

For the preaching and explanation of the truths of faith, the Church has used the contribution of Philosophy since the apostolic age. It is clearly attested by the dialogue of St. Paul the Apostle with “some of the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers”, who accused him that, among other things, he blesses “Jesus and the Resurrection.” (*Acts* 17, 18) In Aeropagus, St. Paul told indeed to the Athenians that, with the Resurrection of Christ, God passed over the ages of ignorance to the Gentiles (*Acts* 17:30) and that God, “from one single stock ... created the whole human race so that they could occupy the entire earth.” (*Acts* 17:26) Hence the Apostle’s exhortation to the Gentiles that they too “seek God” because “He is not far from any of us.” (*Acts* 17:27)

Therefore, according to the word of the Apostle Paul, people – including philosophers – can find God only if they seek him, hence the categorical imperative that people “seek the Lord (ζητετεῖν τὸν κυρίον)” (*Acts* 17:27) to find the “true philosophy”¹⁰⁷, that is the faith in the risen Christ who sits at the right hand of the Father. This search for God has two ways, one by faith and the other by the power of reason, on which both theologians and some of the philosophers, in whose minds Paul’s preaching in Aeropagus had the gift of penetrating deeply and bearing fruit, were enrolled in the earliest centuries of the Church.

The history of the early Church has also noted that theologians, such as St. Justin Martyr and Philosopher, Origen etc., who also had a philosophical training, also used the logic and reasoning of philosophy to give Christian teaching a form accessible to the philosophers of the pagan world of their time. In this way, they enslaved Philosophy *nolens-volens* to the interests of Theology, of which St. Paul the Apostle remains the exponential founder.

¹⁰⁶ *Biblia sau Sfânta Scriptură. Ediție jubiliară, 1355* (note A to verse 16, ch. 37).

¹⁰⁷ *Clement of Alexandria, “Stromate”* I, 18, 90, 1, in *Sources Chrétiennes*, 30:15.

The message of St. Paul was to be even clearer in this regard when he urged the Colossians not to let their minds be deceived “by philosophy (διὰ τῆς φιλοσοφίας)”, that is by the teaching of philosophy, or by “the principles of the universe (τὰ στοιχεῖα τοῦ κόσμου)”, but to seek and follow “Christ.” (*Colossians* 2:8) Certainly, this reference of St. Paul the Apostle to the principles or to the elements of the universe proves without a doubt that he was also well acquainted with the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle about the universe and its creation.

This text from *Colossians* 2: 8 was the first in the history of Christianity to warn that those who bear the name of Christ, that is, Christians, should not be deceived by “deceptive arguments” (*Colossians* 2:4), since in Christ alone “are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge.” (*Colossians* 2:3) In order to have the full riches of the knowledge of the mystery of God (cf. *Colossians* 2:2) which “Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus” (*Ephesians* 3:1) was made acquainted with “by a revelation” (*Ephesians* 3:3), Christians must not, therefore, be deceived by the various philosophical systems, including the rational system of the Gnostics.

Following the example of St. Paul, around the beginning of the 3rd century, one of the first Roman jurists to adopt the Christian faith, namely Tertullian († 240), questioned himself whether there is anything in common between Christianity and pagan religion and, *ipso facto*, between theology and philosophy: “What does Athens have in common with Jerusalem? The Academy with the Church?”¹⁰⁸

And yet Athens and Jerusalem also had something in common, namely the wealth of ancient philosophical thought, which even the Apostle to the Gentiles appropriated, as we know from his dialogue with pagan philosophers in the Aeropagus in Athens. This common dowry was to be used by the Church’s clerics and lay scholars to formulate those “Horoi” or “Definitiones fidei”, that in the Theology of the Eastern and Western Churches were to be known as “dogmas of the Church”, and which were formulated by the ecumenical Church as early as 325, that is during the first ecumenical Council (Nicaea 325).

But as the Roman Pontiff, Pope John Paul II, also stated, the interrogation of the famous Latin-speaking Christian jurist, writer and apologist “clearly indicates the critical consciousness with which Christian thinkers from the first confronted the problem of the relationship between faith and philosophy, viewing it comprehensively with both its positive aspects and its limitations.”¹⁰⁹ Both the negative and positive aspects, as well as the limits of the dialogue between the two fields of the search for and definition of Truth, were caused by the fact that over centuries,

¹⁰⁸ Tertullianus, “De Praescriptionem Haereticum”, VII, 9, in *Sources Chrétiennes*, 46: 98.

¹⁰⁹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 41.

the relationship between these fields of research practiced different ways and possibilities of searching for and defining Truth, and the diversity of the theologians' and philosophers' conceptions was also enhanced by the "divortia doctrinarum" (Cicero), i.e. by the separation into different systems and Schools of (philosophical or theological) thought.

In contemporary times, however, the relationship between the ministers of Theology and Philosophy shows a growing interest in the relationship between the two fields, Philosophy and Theology, because we live in a world in which different conceptions of the world and life are emerging, some of them produced by the new ideologies of the time. As for "Truth", for us Christians, and *ipso facto* for Christian theologians, "the Way, the Truth and the Life" (*John* 14:6) is Christ the Lord, who "wants everyone to be saved and reach full knowledge of the truth." (*I Timothy* 2:4) The same *New Testament* text tells us that this "Truth" alone makes us "free" (ἐλευθέροι). (*John* 8:32) Although ancient philosophy recognized that "no man is wise except God alone" (Pythagoras), yet it did not help the man "to come to the knowledge of the mystery of God" (*Colossians* 2:2) since he did not operate with the data provided by divine Revelation, but relied only on the power of reason and the logic of its rational arguments. They helped him to discover only some laws of nature (cf. *Romans* 2:14–16), which his Creator placed in man's heart when he was created. (cf. *Romans* 2:14)

According to Pope John Paul II, at the First Vatican Council the Fathers of the Council revealed "the supernatural character of God's Revelation"¹¹⁰ because the rationalist critique at that time denied "the possibility of any knowledge which was not the fruit of reason's natural capacities."¹¹¹ As a result, the Fathers of the Council reaffirmed "emphatically that there exists a knowledge which is peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason."¹¹²

Taking into consideration the ways of knowing divine Revelation, and *ipso facto* of God, Pope John Paul II refers first to the knowledge that comes through faith, "based upon God's testimony"¹¹³, which enjoys "the supernatural assistance of grace."¹¹⁴ Here then is the reason why "faith is of an order other than

¹¹⁰ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 8.

¹¹¹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 8.

¹¹² *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 8.

¹¹³ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 9.

¹¹⁴ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 9.

philosophical knowledge which depends upon sense perception and experience, and which advances by the light of the intellect alone.”¹¹⁵ The Roman Pontiff also mentioned the fact that “Philosophy and the sciences function within the order of natural reason, while faith enlightened and guided by the Spirit”¹¹⁶, and that “Revelation remains charged with mystery. ... Faith alone makes it possible to penetrate the mystery in a way that allows us to understand it coherently.”¹¹⁷

In the same Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II remarked that “the rationality of certain truths expressed in Sacred Scripture ... challenge reason to recognize that there is something true and rational lying far beyond the straits within which it would normally be confined.”¹¹⁸ There is, therefore, rational truth beyond the boundaries of rationality, an area in which we need the “work of critical reason in the light of faith.”¹¹⁹ Now, the rationality of some of the things expressed in Holy Scripture is precisely this work of critical reason in the light of revealed faith.

On the rationality of certain truths concerning the Divinity and its nature, a pioneering contribution was made by the ancient Greek-speaking philosophers, and in particular by those who had a special contribution in the constitution of the system of thought of the “First Philosophy”¹²⁰, that is of the Metaphysics to which Aristotle referred. If the “First Philosophy”, identified also with the “Philosophy of Consciousness”¹²¹, is endowed with a metaphysical horizon and content, it can indeed “allow the *intellectus fidei* to give a coherent account of the universal and transcendent value of revealed truth.”¹²²

According to the statement of Pope John Paul II, “theology needs philosophy as a partner in dialogue in order to confirm the intelligibility and universal truth of its claims. It was not by accident that the Fathers of the Church and the Medieval

¹¹⁵ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 9.

¹¹⁶ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 9.

¹¹⁷ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 13.

¹¹⁸ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 76.

¹¹⁹ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 77.

¹²⁰ N. V. Dură, “From ‘Proti Philosophia’ to Nietzsche’ Thinking. Some Considerations as Philosophical Knowledge Is Concerned”, *Philosophical-Theological Review* 5 (2015): 9–25.

¹²¹ N. V. Dură: “The Theology of Conscience and the Philosophy of Conscience”, *Philosophical-Theological Review* 1 (2011): 20–29.

¹²² Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 84.

theologians adopted non-Christian philosophies.”¹²³ Indeed, “because of its noble and indispensable contribution”¹²⁴ to the field of theological research, which “pre-supposes and requires in all its research a reason formed and educated to concept and argument”¹²⁵, philosophy is therefore an indispensable tool for any theologian who wishes to formulate and explain the truths of faith set forth in the revealed text of the Holy Scriptures. And, fully aware of this reality, Pope John Paul II pointed out both “the necessity of the link between the two sciences and the impossibility of their separation”¹²⁶, which also confirms the imperative of our times.

From the Catechism of the Catholic Church, we retained also the fact that God “can be known with certainty from the created world by the natural light of human reason”¹²⁷, and that “without this capacity” the man “would not be able to welcome God’s revelation.”¹²⁸ For the definition of the knowledge of God, the authors of the Catechism – published at the Vatican in 1992 – reproduced the definition of the First Vatican Council (D.S. 3004). However, they considered necessary to add the clarification that “in the historical conditions in which he finds himself, . . . , man experiences many difficulties in coming to know God by the light of reason alone”¹²⁹ since there are indeed “things that exceed their understanding”¹³⁰, and there are also difficulties with penetrating the meaning of “those religious and moral truths which of themselves are not beyond the grasp of human reason.”¹³¹

The Holy Scripture tells us that the man can also know God “through reason”, by which he “recognizes the voice of God”¹³², and can come to a natural knowledge of God “on the basis of his works”¹³³, that is from “his handiwork.” (*Psalms* 19, 1). But, as it is stated in the Catechism of the Catholic Church, “we must also face the fact that certain attitudes” derive “from the *mentality* of ‘this present world’”¹³⁴,

¹²³ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 76.

¹²⁴ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 77.

¹²⁵ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 77.

¹²⁶ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 77.

¹²⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III 36: 16.

¹²⁸ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III 36: 16.

¹²⁹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III, 37: 16.

¹³⁰ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III, 38:16.

¹³¹ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III, 38:16.

¹³² *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, III, 38:16; III, 1, 1706: 425.

¹³³ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, II, 50: 19.

¹³⁴ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* IV, 2, I: 654.

such as the fact “that only that is true which can be verified by reason and science.”¹³⁵

We Christians also know that “God desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth; that is, God wills the salvation of everyone through the knowledge of the truth. Salvation is found in the truth”¹³⁶, and that “this knowledge of faith is possible only in the Holy Spirit: to be in touch with Christ, we must first have been touched by the Holy Spirit.”¹³⁷ In his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II set out the content of the Church’s faith in a language that allowed him to participate in the reflection of the two ways of knowledge, namely by faith and by reason, or, in theological terms, by Theology and by Philosophy. His theological and philosophical training allowed the Pontiff to make also some adequate remarks in reference to the process of knowing God, and thus to bring more clarifications to the texts of the Second Vatican Council and of the Catechism of the Catholic Church.

By these remarks, which have the gift of precious theological-philosophical contributions, the need that the dialogue between Philosophy and Theology to move from its state of divergences of an ideational nature to convergent ideas and opinions¹³⁸ is more than evident. The fact that the Church is the guardian of revealed truth, and that her bishops are “the witnesses to the truth”¹³⁹, obliges her to point out “the elements in a philosophical system which are incompatible with her own faith”¹⁴⁰, hence the duty of any philosopher to appreciate “*recta ratio*, or of reason reflecting rightly upon what is true.”¹⁴¹

Despite this critical discernment of the Church in relation to the various philosophies of the time that contradicted “Christian doctrine”¹⁴², there were “signs of a resurgence of *fideism*, which fails to recognize the importance of rational knowledge and philosophical discourse for the understanding of faith, indeed for the very

¹³⁵ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* IV, 2, I: 654.

¹³⁶ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* IV, 2, I: 654; I, II, 851: 225.

¹³⁷ *Catechism of the Catholic Church* I, II, III, 683: 179.

¹³⁸ N. V. Dură: “Despre Filosofie și Teologie. De la divergențe de natură ideatică, la idei și păreri convergente,” *Studii filosofice* II (2016), 111–129.

¹³⁹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 50.

¹⁴⁰ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 50.

¹⁴¹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 50.

¹⁴² *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 50.

possibility of belief in God.”¹⁴³ As it is known, the recognition of the importance of reason in the process of knowledge also led to its absolutization, and implicitly to primacy of reason over faith, hence the reaction of the Catholic Church in 17th century France against Enlightenment rationalism. At the same time, the denial that reason is not important for the explicitness of religious faith led the First Vatican Council to condemn both Fideism and Rationalism in the Constitution *Dei Filius*.

Aware of this reality, Pope John Paul II made it clear in his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* that “since the middle of the last century ..., not a few Catholics felt it their duty to counter various streams of modern thought with a philosophy of their own”¹⁴⁴, which obliged the Magisterium of the Catholic Church to prohibit “on the one hand, *fideism* and *radical traditionalism*, for their distrust of reason’s natural capacities, and, on the other, *rationalism* and *ontologism* because they attributed to natural reason a knowledge which only the light of faith could confer.”¹⁴⁵

The Roman Pontiff added that “the positive elements of this debate were assembled in the Dogmatic Constitution *Dei Filius*, in which for the first time an Ecumenical Council – in this case the First Vatican Council – pronounced solemnly on the relationship between reason and faith. The teaching contained in this document strongly and positively marked the philosophical research of many believers and remains today a standard reference-point for correct and coherent Christian thinking in this regard.”¹⁴⁶ By this Christian reflection on the relationship between faith and reason, the Second Vatican Council really searched to eliminate both the doctrine of Fideism, theorized by the Catholic priest Félicité Robert de La Mennais (Lamennais † 1854) – a philosopher and political scientist, and the doctrine of Rationalism based on the ideas of John Locke, René Descartes, Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz, Immanuel Kant etc., according to which human knowledge must find its source in the powers of reason alone.

In his Encyclical of 1998, Pope John Paul II did not reject the contribution of reason, and *ipso facto* of Philosophy, in the act of knowledge. He also did not limit it to the text of Scripture as the doctrinalists of Protestantism, but he put Faith and Reason at the service of the knowledge of the supreme Truth, that is God, who can be seen peremptorily from its pages. To define the notion of faith, the traditional

¹⁴³ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 55.

¹⁴⁴ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 52.

¹⁴⁵ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 52.

¹⁴⁶ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 52.

theologians of the Eastern Church have in fact reiterated the words of the Apostle Paul, according to which faith is the confidence of things hoped for and the proving of things not seen. (cf. *Hebrews* 11:1) In the interpretation given by these theologians, it is “the confidence of things not seen as though they were seen, and the desire and hope of things hoped for as though they were present.”¹⁴⁷

In the spirit of the traditional Catechism of the Eastern Church, a *sine qua non* for the “salvation of the soul” is “the knowledge of the true God and the right faith.”¹⁴⁸ Therefore, in the same Catechism of the Eastern Church, it is stated that “in the teaching of the faith there is need not only of knowledge, but also of faith”¹⁴⁹, and that “knowledge belongs properly to the mind.”¹⁵⁰ Faith also belongs “to the heart, although it has its beginning in reason.”¹⁵¹ In the Catechism of the Romanian Orthodox Church published in 1957, it is stated that the “teaching of the Church” is the result of “divine Revelation” and that “the power by which we receive as unquestionable truth all that God has revealed and teaches the holy Church” is “the faith.”¹⁵²

As can be seen from the text of these Catechisms, it follows that for the knowledge of God, faith is needed first of all, but also reason, namely the philosophy, which the theology uses “as an instrument of truth in order to establish conclusions which are not philosophical but theological.”¹⁵³ Although the philosopher Jacques Maritain stated that Philosophy can no longer be labelled as “ancilla Theologiae”, i.e. the handmaid of Theology, because Theology “treats Philosophy according to its own laws”¹⁵⁴, he also questioned himself whether there is a “Christian Philosophy”¹⁵⁵, whose authors use indeed the contribution of reason to unravel the mystery of revealed Truth.

Among those who have called on the contribution of this Christian Philosophy is also the Church, which “reaffirms the need to reflect upon truth”¹⁵⁶, both through faith and reason. “Theologians and philosophers” should “explore the different aspects of truth, ... in order to offer some reflections on the path which leads

¹⁴⁷ St. Philaret, Metropolitan of Moscow, *Orthodox Catechism*, trans. G. Ciocoi (Alexandria: Publishing House Sofia, 2007), 7.

¹⁴⁸ *Orthodox Catechism*, 7.

¹⁴⁹ *Orthodox Catechism*, 8.

¹⁵⁰ *Orthodox Catechism*, 9.

¹⁵¹ *Orthodox Catechism*, 9.

¹⁵² Iustin, Metropolitan of Moldavia and Suceava: *Catehismul creștinului dreptcredincios* (Iași, 1957), 15.

¹⁵³ J. Maritain: *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*.

¹⁵⁴ Maritain: *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*.

¹⁵⁵ Maritain: *An Essay on Christian Philosophy*.

¹⁵⁶ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 6.

to true wisdom.”¹⁵⁷ Our reflection leads us to the true wisdom which is Emmaus (cf. *Luke* 24:13), where Luke and Cleopas, the two disciples of Christ from the group of the seventy, met our Lord Jesus Christ when they shared bread (cf. *Luke* 24:13–35), the prototype of the Holy Eucharist¹⁵⁸ – one of the seven Holy Sacraments of the Church.

From the very beginning, the Church has been aware that the Eucharist is “the most necessary (spiritual) nourishment” of every Christian, as it is stated in the “ancient and canonical law” (ὁ παλαιὸς καὶ κανονικὸς νόμος / *lex antiqua regularisque*) of the Ecumenical Church. (can. 13 of the First Ecumenical Council)¹⁵⁹ In the Western world, roles of Faith and Reason in the processes formulating and explaining the truths of faith were defined by the renowned theologian Thomas Aquinas, for whom “credo ut intellegam” and “intellego ut credam” presupposed a dialogue between Theology and Philosophy.

Pope John Paul II had also a meritorious contribution in the affirmation of the role of philosophy in the process of formulating and explicating the truths of faith mostly through his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*. In its text, the main thrust of his thought was to find more effective ways to reconcile faith and reason, *recte* Theology and Philosophy. It can only be achieved by harmonizing the contributions of the two fields of research in order to understand and make explicit divine Revelation.

The Need to Reactivate and Enhance the Dialogue Between Theology as the ‘Science of Faith’ and Philosophy as the ‘Science of Wisdom’

In some scholarly works, the dialogue between faith and reason is still perceived and defined “from the perspective of the secular rationalism”¹⁶⁰, which does not

¹⁵⁷ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 6.

¹⁵⁸ C. Mititelu, “The Celebrant of the Holy Sacrament of the Eucharist. Rules and Canonical Norms of the Orthodox Church”, *Annales Canonici* 10 (2014), 135–148.

¹⁵⁹ G. A. Rhali, M. Potli, *Σύνταγμα τῶν θείων καὶ ἱερῶν κανόνων*. Vol. II (Athens, 1852), 143.

¹⁶⁰ G. F. McLean, *Faith, Reason and Philosophy Lectures at the al-Azhar, Qum, Tehran, Lahore and Beijing* (Washington, 2000), 5.

promote the legal protection of fundamental human rights¹⁶¹, such as the right to Religion.¹⁶² It implies a social dialogue¹⁶³ and inter-religious cohabitation¹⁶⁴ but, on the contrary, affirms the principle of secularism in terms of the divorce between the “sacred and profane.”¹⁶⁵ It may entail manifestations of forms of discrimination based on religion or religious belief.¹⁶⁶

Aware also of these realities of our times, in his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* Pope John Paul II urged “theologians and philosophers ... to explore the different aspects of truth, and all those who are searching.”¹⁶⁷ At the same time, the Roman Pontiff exhorted the theologians and philosophers to rethink “in positive terms the relation of faith and reason and their mutual complementarity.”¹⁶⁸ In his scholarly endeavour, Pope John Paul II did not ignore or conceal the need “to revisit in a more systematic way the issue of the relationship between faith and philosophy”¹⁶⁹, and to envision both “the value of philosophy for the understanding of the faith, as well as the limits which philosophy faces when it neglects or rejects the truths of Revelation.”¹⁷⁰

The Roman Pontiff did not fail also to notice that, from the point of view of human thought, “the progress of humanity”¹⁷¹ was produced by “the encounter

¹⁶¹ C. Mititelu, “Provisions of Principle with European Constitutional Value on the ‘Person’s’ Right to Freedom and Security”, *Journal of Danubius Studies and Research* VI (2016), 158–165; C. Mititelu: “The European Convention on Human Rights”, *10th Edition of International Conference: the European Integration – Realities and Perspectives* (Galati: Danubius University Press, 2015), 243–252.

¹⁶² N. V. Dură, “The Right to Religion: Some Considerations of the Principal International and European Juridical Instruments”, *Religion and Equality. Law in Conflict*, ed. W. C. Durham, Jr. and D. Thayer (Routledge, 2016), 15–24; C. Mititelu, “About the Right to the Freedom of Religion”, *Rethinking Social Action. Core Values*, coord. A. Sandu et al. (Medimond, 2015), 833–838.

¹⁶³ N. V. Dură, “The Requirements for an Ecumenical Dialogue According to Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical Letter *Ut unum sint*”, *Ecumeny and Law*, 10 (2) 2022: 91–118; C. Mititelu: “The Service of the Romanian Orthodox Church to Migrants”, *Ecumeny and Law* 9 (2021), 45–66.

¹⁶⁴ N. V. Dură, “About the Freedom of Religion and the Laicity. Some Considerations on the Juridical and Philosophical Doctrine”, *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences*, 13 (2019), 156–164; C. Mititelu, “The ‘Globalization Era’ and the Right of the Church to Preach the Gospel to All Peoples. Canonical-Juridical Considerations and Assessments”, *Ecumeny and Law* 5 (2017), 127–146.

¹⁶⁵ N. V. Dură, “Le sacré et les fêtes religieuses”, *Dionysiana* III, 1 (2009), 9–18.

¹⁶⁶ N. V. Dură, “The Right to Freedom of Religion”, *Annales Canonici* 10 (2014), 27–40.

¹⁶⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 6.

¹⁶⁸ G. F. McLean, *Faith, Reason and Philosophy Lectures*, 6.

¹⁶⁹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 100.

¹⁷⁰ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 100.

¹⁷¹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 101.

between philosophy and theology”¹⁷²; the latter “endowed as it is with an openness and originality which allow it to stand as the science of faith”, “challenged reason to remain open to the radical newness found in God’s Revelation.”¹⁷³ Hence the finding of the Roman Pontiff that Theology has “duty to recover its true relationship with philosophy.”¹⁷⁴ “For the benefit and development of human thought”, IT “should recover its relationship with theology”¹⁷⁵, in which it will find “the wealth of a communal reflection”¹⁷⁶ because “in the search for truth” it is supported “by the tradition of the People of God.”¹⁷⁷ The Church of Christ promotes “the defence of human dignity and the proclamation of the Gospel message.”¹⁷⁸

In the same context of his thoughts on the relationship between Theology and Philosophy, Pope John Paul II added that, “through the mediation of a philosophy which is also true wisdom, people today will come to realize that their humanity is all the more affirmed the more they entrust themselves to the Gospel and open themselves to Christ.”¹⁷⁹ Referring to the pressing need to reactivate and enhance the dialogue between theology and philosophy, the Pope asked theologians to have philosophical training, “to pay special attention to the philosophical implications of the word of God and to be sure to reflect in their work all the speculative and practical breadth of the science of theology.”¹⁸⁰ At the same time, they are asked “to recover and express to the full the metaphysical dimension of truth in order to enter into a demanding critical dialogue with both contemporary philosophical thought and with the philosophical tradition in all its aspects, whether consonant with the word of God or not.”¹⁸¹ Therefore, in their research work, the theologians must not limit their theological reflection

¹⁷² *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷³ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷⁴ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷⁵ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷⁶ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 101.

¹⁷⁸ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 102.

¹⁷⁹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 102.

¹⁸⁰ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 102.

¹⁸¹ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason.* No. 105.

to only one of the two aspects, speculative or practical, but must also appeal to “Proti-Philosophy”, namely to Metaphysics, through which the theologian and the philosopher can enter critical and demanding dialogue that expresses the entire metaphysical dimension of the truths of God’s Revelation, and in which theologians and philosophers can indeed find the richness of a common reflection in the search for Truth.

The postulate of the search for truth, which Pope John Paul II outlined in the text of his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, is found in the ancient texts of philosophers, in the text of some “Books” of wisdom, such as the *Panchatantra*, and in ancient legal texts, such as the Code of Hammurabi and The Code of Manu. They, in turn, also served sources of inspiration for the authors of ancient Roman law (Gaius, Julian, Ulpianus, Modestinus, etc.). For example, the “Manava Dharma Sastra (The Code of Manu)” is believed to have been written by a Brahman in India between the 13th–7th centuries B.C.¹⁸² It states that in court “the truth must be spoken” (lb. VIII, 13)¹⁸³ because “where justice is stifled by injustice and truth by falsehood before the eyes of the judges, there the judges are lost.” (lb. VIII, 14)¹⁸⁴ “Justice is the only friend that accompanies man after death, for every other bond is subject to perdition like time.” (lb. VIII, 17)¹⁸⁵

For the anonymous Brahman, the notion of justice was therefore related to truth, hence the fact that, according to the precepts of *The Code of Manu*, the king could also appoint “as judge a Brahman who is not a cleric, but who must be from a good family,” (lb. VIII, 20)¹⁸⁶ thus to protect him from the temptations of corruption, to offer him the possibility of good education, and to help him “to distinguish between what is lawful and unlawful.” (lb. VIII, 24)¹⁸⁷ In the text of *The Code of Hammurabi*, we learn that “truth” comes “to light”¹⁸⁸ through prayers, and that “truth and justice”¹⁸⁹ cannot be known unless “justice is done to people on earth.”¹⁹⁰

In this Code, the notions of *truth* and *justice* have always been related to divine justice, understood by the Roman jurists as “the science of what is just and unjust” (*iusti atque in iusi scientia*)¹⁹¹, and called “*veram philosophiam*”¹⁹² (true

¹⁸² *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 6.

¹⁸³ *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 135.

¹⁸⁴ *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 135.

¹⁸⁵ *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 135.

¹⁸⁶ *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 135.

¹⁸⁷ *Cartea Legii lui Manu* (Bucharest: Publishing House Aldo Press, 2001), 135.

¹⁸⁸ *The Code of Hammurabi*, trans. O. Tămaș (Baia-Mare: Publishing House Proema, 2009), 19.

¹⁸⁹ *The Code of Hammurabi*, trans. O. Tămaș (Baia-Mare: Publishing House Proema, 2009), 20.

¹⁹⁰ *The Code of Hammurabi*, trans. O. Tămaș (Baia-Mare: Publishing House Proema, 2009), 20.

¹⁹¹ Ulpianus, “Libro primo regularum”, *Justiniani Digestorum seu Pandectarum* lb. I, I, X, in *Corpus Juris Civilis*. Vol. I, ed. T. Mommsen (New Jersey: Lawbook Exchange, 2010), 1.

¹⁹² Ulpianus, “Libro primo institutionum”, in *Justiniani Digestorum seu Pandectarum* lb. I, I, I, I, in *Corpus Juris Civilis*, 1.

philosophy). There is no escaping the fact that the text of the laws of antiquity did not lack the notion of the sacred and the reference to prayers is also attested by *Jus romanum antiquum*. For example, Gaius, one of its leading exponents, tells us that at the “confarratio”, i.e. religious marriage¹⁹³, was made “quoddam genus sacrificii” (a certain kind of sacrifice).¹⁹⁴ Juppiter Farreus was the patron of marriage and the main ritual was the prayer offered by the flamines (priests of Juppiter), including the “rex sacrorum” (pontiff of the priests). (Gaius, *Institutiones*, lb. I, 112)¹⁹⁵ In fact, during the Roman Empire (27 BC–476 AD), there were also “flamines imperatoris” (the priests of the emperor)¹⁹⁶, which attests to the fact that during that period there was no divorce between the sacred and the profane even among the Romans.

In his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, Pope John Paul II referred not only to Theology and Philosophy, but also to the “prayer of the Church”¹⁹⁷, and, last but not least, to the Philosophy of Law, which – according to his words – remains “the basic form of philosophical knowledge which is evident to this day in the postulates which inspire national and international legal systems in regulating the life of society.”¹⁹⁸ The reputed jurisconsults of the classical era of Roman law (1st–3rd centuries) also left us testimonies about the philosophical knowledge of law, according to whom jurisprudence was defined as “divinarum atque humnarum rerum notitia”¹⁹⁹ (knowledge of divine and human things), and which was in fact a Philosophy of Law. Therefore, the famous jurisconsults constituted the thesaurus of the Roman legal thought.²⁰⁰

Based on this knowledge of divine and human things, the Roman jurisconsults “were permitted to create law” by “decisions and opinions” which they took

¹⁹³ On the history and legal status of a religious marriage, see C. Mititelu, “Emperor Justinian’s Novel 74 and Its Importance for European Marriage Law” in *Teologia* 81 (2019), 26–37; C. Mititelu, “Matrimonium (Marriage) in Roman Law. The Impact of the Provisions of ‘Jus Romanum’ on International and National Matrimonial Law”, *Bulletin of the Georgian National Academy of Sciences* 14 (2020), 120–130; C. Mititelu, “On the ‘Concordat Marriage’ and its Legal Regime. Considerations and Assessments”, *Teologia* 90 (2022), 59–85.

¹⁹⁴ *The Institutes of Gaius*, trans. W. Gordon and O. Robinson (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1988), 75.

¹⁹⁵ *The Institutes of Gaius*, trans. W. Gordon and O. Robinson (London: Gerald Duckworth & Co. Ltd, 1988), 75.

¹⁹⁶ G. Guțu, *Dicționar latin-român* (București: Publishing House Științifică și Enciclopedică, 1983), 1483.

¹⁹⁷ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 108.

¹⁹⁸ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 3.

¹⁹⁹ *Justiniani Digestae seu Pandectarum* lb. I. I. 10.

²⁰⁰ N. V. Dură, “‘Responsa Jurisprudentium’ (Responses of the Roman Jurisconsults) about ‘Jus’ (Law) and ‘Justitia’ (Justice)”, *Dionysiana* 1 (2021/2022), 286–295.

in various cases, and which constitute those “*responsa prudentium*” (answers of the jurisconsults – Justiniani Institutiones lb. I, II, 8), and from which we learn that “*jus est ars boni et aequi*” – the law is the art of godness and fairness (Justiniani Digestae lb. I, I, I, 1), a definition which has entitled jurists to be called “priests” (sacerdotes) (Justiniani Digestae lb. I, I, I, 1) of justice and equity.

The same reputed Roman jurisconsults claimed that word ‘Jus’ (Right) “derives from the word Justitia” (justice) and that it has a pronounced “philosophical” connotation (Ulpianus, Institutiones lb. I, I, I, 1). The Roman jurist Lactatius († 325) added that the “*aequitas*” (equity) must characterize any judicial system.²⁰¹ It is, therefore, desirable that theologians and philosophers, in their endeavor to reactivate and strengthen their dialogue, should also appeal to the “*jus gentium*” (international law), which “*vero naturalis ratio inter omnes homines constituit*” (which natural reason makes for all mankind). (Gaius, Institutiones lb. I, I, I, 1)²⁰² “Priests”, this time Christians, must also create a legal framework for the development and promotion of the dialogue between Theology, as the science of faith, and Philosophy, as the science of wisdom. The jurisprudence of Roman Law promoted “law” (lex) as a “*ratio scripta*” (written rational explanation).

The biblical text confirms that for the followers of the two monotheistic religions (Mosaic and Christian), “wisdom, understanding, knowledge of the Law, . . ., come from the Lord” (*Ecclesiasticus* 11:15) and, consequently, both theologians and philosophers cannot “contradict the truth” (*Ecclesiasticus* 4:25) that was given to mankind by the One who is “the Way, the Truth and the Life.” (*John* 14:6) In this spirit, the truths of faith were also perceived and expressed by Pope John Paul II when he invoked Holy Scripture and Sacred Tradition as their basis and condemned “one currently widespread symptom of this fideistic tendency”²⁰³, known as “Biblicism.” It “tends to make the reading and exegesis of Sacred Scripture the sole criterion of truth. In consequence, the word of God is identified with Sacred Scripture alone, thus eliminating the doctrine of the Church that the Second Vatican Council stressed quite specifically.”²⁰⁴

Hence the statement of Pope John Paul II that “Scripture, therefore, is not the Church’s sole point of reference”²⁰⁵ because “the ‘supreme rule of her faith’

²⁰¹ N. V. Dură, *Annales canonici* 15 (2019), 9–38.

²⁰² *The Institutes of Gaius*, 18–19.

²⁰³ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 55.

²⁰⁴ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 55.

²⁰⁵ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 55.

derives from the unity which the Spirit has created between Sacred Tradition, Sacred Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church.”²⁰⁶ There are, therefore, three decisive factors in matters of faith, namely Holy Tradition, Holy Scripture and the Magisterium of the Church, and not just “sola Scriptura” as in the Churches of the Reformation and, by implication, in all the neo-Protestant communities that have emerged.

According to the teaching of the Orthodox Church, the two fundamental sources in matters of faith are Holy Tradition and Holy Scripture, and the Church can only formulate and make explicit the latter through its collegial-synodal bodies, such as the Ecumenical Synods, and through individual Church bishops. In this regard, the theologians of the Orthodox Church also speak about “ways of preserving supernatural Revelation”²⁰⁷, about “Sacred Tradition and its connection with the Church and Scripture.”²⁰⁸ The same theologians also add that “Tradition is the permanence of the Church’s dialogue with Christ. The content of Scripture received by faith handed down from the Apostles to the community of the Church, not being a human product but being inspired by the Holy Spirit, must on the one hand be preserved and on the other deepened in its unaltered meanings received from the Holy Apostles. Scripture is, therefore, required according to a tradition unchanged from the Apostles. This is – wrote Rev. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae – another form of preserving and using in its continuing effectiveness the integral Revelation realized in Christ.”²⁰⁹

The same Orthodox Theology affirms – also through its prominent exponents today – that it is Tradition which, “at the same time as preserving its authenticity”²¹⁰, also has “the quality of making Scripture truly explicit”²¹¹, and that it is Sacred Tradition which actualizes “the content of Revelation ... contained in the text of Holy Scripture.”²¹² Therefore, “the identity of the knowledge of Christ ... is made known through the Church.”²¹³ The statement of the same reputed Orthodox theologian Rev. Prof. Dumitru Stăniloae about the fact that “Tradition, whose basis is given by the Apostles”²¹⁴, that is, by the Apostolic Tradition, is in fact a “perpetuation

²⁰⁶ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 55.

²⁰⁷ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 53.

²⁰⁸ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 65.

²⁰⁹ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 59.

²¹⁰ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 59.

²¹¹ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 59.

²¹² Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 59.

²¹³ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 60.

²¹⁴ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 60.

of the Revelation completed in Christ”²¹⁵, but “its continuous newness, manifested through Tradition.”²¹⁶

As for the claim of some Protestant and neo-Protestant theologians that “Scripture ... would not need Tradition, an explanation that would preserve unaltered its original apostolic meanings.”²¹⁷ The same theologian stated that in this case, “it would be absurd to admit after it a lived explanation”²¹⁸, although Scripture needs “the completion by tradition”²¹⁹ through which we Christians, in Eastern and Western Europe, have received the mystery of faith in Christ.

From the teaching of faith of both the Catholic and the Orthodox Church, it follows that the dialogue of faith with reason, i.e. of Theology with Philosophy, also needs first of all the thesaurus of faith of the One, Holy, Apostolic and Catholic (Ecumenical) Church, which has been received and transmitted both through Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture. Thus, considering the teaching of the two Churches, Eastern and Western, we can conclude that we are saved not only by faith, as the theologians of the Protestant and neo-Protestant Churches still affirm, but by the teaching of faith preserved and transmitted by Holy Tradition in the area in which the revealed text of Holy Scripture appeared.

However, the formulation and explanation of faith attested by the ancient sources, that is by the Sacred Scripture and Sacred Tradition, were the responsibilities of the Church, which received a mandate from its Founder. Our Lord Jesus Christ endowed the Church with the task of receiving, preserving and transmitting the truth of faith. Moreover, it should not be an ignored or hidden fact that both Sacred Tradition and Sacred Scripture are the dowry and property of the Church (cf. Tertullian), namely “The One, Holy, Apostolic and Catholic (Universal) Church” which by divine mandate is the sole legatee and depository of her truths of faith.

Conclusion

From the introductory part of the work, the reader was able to see that in order to come to the knowledge of God, Faith and Reason must be enlightened by God’s Revelation. We have exemplified and explained this reality in Part I of the work

²¹⁵ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 60.

²¹⁶ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 60.

²¹⁷ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 61.

²¹⁸ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 61.

²¹⁹ Stăniloae, *Teologia dogmatică ortodoxă*, 61.

both based on the testimonies of the biblical text and of some of the renowned philosophers and theologians. In Part II of our study, we referred both to the text of *Holy Scripture* and to the works of theologians and philosophers, culminating of course in the excerpts from Pope John Paul II's Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, from which it is clear that only Faith allows us to 'enter' the mystery of divine Revelation. In addition to knowledge through faith, there is also knowledge specific to the natural capacities of Reason, whose role is indispensable in the field of theological research.

Finally, in Part III of our paper, we showed that the reconciliation of the two sciences, namely the 'Science of Faith', i.e. Theology, and the 'Science of Wisdom', i.e. Philosophy, is only possible through dialog which must be carried out by those who master the knowledge of both fields. In his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*, the Roman Pontiff suggested to theologians and philosophers to rethink positively the relationship between the two fields, so that their contribution might be complementary and reconciliatory.

According to Pope John Paul II, the "priests" of the two sciences, i.e. Theology, the science of faith, and Philosophy, the science of wisdom, should work "*in solidum*", but each of them must remain distinct and autonomous. This is the only way "the science of faith", i.e. Theology, and "the science of wisdom", i.e. Philosophy, can make a real contribution to the dialogue aimed at bringing about the much coveted "reconciliation of opposites." Nicolaus Cusanus (1401–1464) suggestively called it "*coincidentia oppositorum*." It can be achieved by eliminating contradictory and demonstrable statements, i.e. logical and semantic paradoxes which depend on the notion of reference to Truth.

To achieve this solid collaboration between the two Sciences, the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy – for which Pope John Paul II consistently advocated – needs to be renewed, as stated by the Roman Pontiff in his Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio*²²⁰, and about which the reader of our paper found more details in Part III of this study. Regarding this "renewal" of the dialogue between Theology and Philosophy, a distinguished Catholic prelate remarked that from the Encyclical of the Roman Pontiff, *Fides et Ratio*, one can learn both "the philosophical charism proper to Karol Wojtyła", and his frank invitation for "a sapiential renewal of the activity of thinking."²²¹

Catholic bishop Angelo Scola remarked that the way in which Pope John Paul II managed to overcome the inadequacies "between, and autonomy proper to the two

²²⁰ Encyclical Letter *Fides et Ratio* of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason. No. 100.

²²¹ A. Scola: "Human Freedom and Truth According to the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*", *COMMUNIO: International Catholic Review* 26 (1999): 492.

dimensions, invites all to pursue an integral conception of truth”²²², since the Roman Pontiff laid the foundations for a “new beginning, confident in the capacity of man – of his reason and freedom – to accede to the foundation of truth.”²²³ However, as the other Roman-Catholic theologian confessed, it remains to be seen to what extent “faith supports reason and how theology supports philosophy.”²²⁴ That is indeed the question.

From the text of this study, with a pronounced interdisciplinary character (theological, philosophical and juridical), the reader may also learn that the reflections on the dialogue between faith and reason oblige us to return *ad fontes* in order to reconsider and evaluate – even if only briefly – the statements of some prestigious theologians and philosophers about both Divine Revelation and the relationship between Faith and Reason, and *ipso facto* between Philosophy and Theology.

One of these scholars was Pope John Paul II, who returned to main sources and managed to bring a meritorious contribution to the reconciliation of the two Science, namely Theology and Philosophy, and to the reactivation of the dialogue between them. Indeed, in his Encyclical *Fides et Ratio* the Roman Pontiff put back into circulation the strong ideas of the Catholic Church’s teaching on the relationship between Reason and Faith. They still remain the ways of knowing and preaching the truths of faith.

In his scholarly approach, Pope John Paul II took as his main basis the text of the Holy Scriptures, the texts of the two Ecumenical Councils (First Vatican and Second Vatican), some papal Encyclicals, such as Pope Leo XIII’s Encyclical *Aeterni Patris* of 1879, and finally the texts of leading theologians of the Catholic Church. Its Catechism of 1992 provided the Latin-Rite Christian world with a reliable guide not only as to how the members of this Church can know and confess the truths of faith, but also as to how theology and philosophy can be reconciled so that, through their constructive dialogue in search of the Truth, the truths of faith can be better formulated and explicated. There is no escaping the fact that “there exists a knowledge which is peculiar to faith, surpassing the knowledge proper to human reason, which nevertheless by its nature can discover the Creator.”²²⁵ It is declared by the Second Vatican Council and Pope John Paul II.

²²² Scola: “Human Freedom and Truth According to the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*”, 499.

²²³ Scola: “Human Freedom and Truth According to the Encyclical *Fides et Ratio*”, 509.

²²⁴ J. E. Fagan, *Fides et Ratio*. Available at: <https://catholiceducation.org/en/education/fides-et-ratio-faith-and-reason.html>.

²²⁵ *Encyclical Letter Fides et Ratio of the Supreme Pontiff John Paul II to the Bishops of the Catholic Church on the Relationship Between Faith and Reason*. No. 8.

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Nicolae V. Dură

À propos de *Fides et Ratio* Réflexions théologiques, philosophiques et juridiques

Résumé

Le dialogue entre la foi révélée et la raison, c'est-à-dire entre la théologie et la philosophie, a été initié par saint Paul l'Apôtre, celui à qui la révélation du Seigneur a été accordée alors qu'il se rendait à Damas. C'est ainsi qu'a commencé la conversion de Saul à la foi. (*Actes* 9, 3–20) Ce dialogue a été rendu possible par le fait que l'Apôtre des Gentils avait à la fois une formation théologique et rabbinique, et une bonne connaissance de la philosophie grecque antique. Il n'est donc pas surprenant que celui que Dieu a appelé le « vase d'élection » pour porter le nom du Seigneur devant « les païens, leurs rois et le peuple d'Israël » (*Actes* 9:15) ait également eu le privilège d'avoir ses premiers débats avec les philosophes païens de son temps. À la lecture de cet ouvrage – avec son contenu théologique, philosophique et juridique – le lecteur pourra constater qu'un dialogue entre la théologie et la philosophie ne peut être mené du point de vue de l'une ou de l'autre, c'est-à-dire du point de vue de la foi religieuse ou de la raison, mais uniquement par une syntonie, c'est-à-dire par une concentration conjointe des efforts des serviteurs de ces deux domaines pour découvrir et rendre explicite la Vérité révélée. Certains théologiens et philosophes, grâce à leurs travaux sur le dialogue entre la théologie et la philosophie, sont entrés dans l'histoire de la culture théologique et philosophique comme des figures de référence. Le Pape Jean-Paul II occupe une place particulière parmi ces théologiens et philosophes. Il a su nous offrir une théologie du dialogue entre la foi et la raison grâce à son approche pragmatique visant à renforcer le dialogue entre la théologie et la philosophie, ainsi qu'à travers les déclarations contenues dans ses textes : *Exhortations Apostoliques*, *Encycliques*, *Messages*, etc. En tant que figure de proue de l'approche visant à renouveler le dialogue entre la théologie et la philosophie, le Souverain Pontife a également contribué à faire prendre conscience de l'urgence de réconcilier ces deux domaines. Cela nous permet de comprendre et d'exprimer la Vérité tant par la foi que par la contribution de la raison, comme le confirme amplement le texte de son encyclique *Fides et Ratio*.

M o t s - c l é s : foi, raison, théologie, philosophie, dialogue

Nicolae V. Dură

Informazioni su *Fides et Ratio* Riflessioni teologiche, filosofiche e giuridiche

Sommario

Il dialogo tra la fede rivelata e la ragione, ovvero tra teologia e filosofia, fu avviato da san Paolo Apostolo, colui al quale fu concessa la rivelazione del Signore durante il suo viaggio verso Damasco. Fu così che ebbe inizio la conversione di Saulo alla fede. (*Atti* 9, 3–20) Questo dialogo fu reso possibile dal fatto che l'Apostolo delle Genti possedeva sia una preparazione teologica con una formazione rabbinica, sia una buona familiarità con la filosofia greca antica. Non sorprende, quindi, che colui che Dio chiamò

“strumento eletto” per portare il nome del Signore davanti “ai Gentili e ai loro re e al popolo d’Israele” (*Atti* 9,15) abbia avuto anche il privilegio di intrattenere i suoi primi dibattiti con i filosofi pagani del suo tempo. Dalle pagine di quest’opera – con il loro contenuto teologico, filosofico e giuridico – il lettore potrà vedere che un dialogo tra teologia e filosofia non può essere condotto dalla prospettiva di una delle due, cioè dalla prospettiva della fede religiosa o della ragione, ma solo attraverso una sintonia, cioè attraverso una concentrazione congiunta degli sforzi dei servitori dei due campi per scoprire e rendere esplicita la Verità rivelata. Alcuni teologi e filosofi, grazie alle loro opere sul dialogo tra teologia e filosofia, sono entrati nella storia della cultura teologica e filosofica come figure di riferimento. Papa Giovanni Paolo II occupa un posto speciale tra questi teologi e filosofi. È riuscito a offrirci una Teologia del dialogo tra Fede e Ragione attraverso il suo approccio pragmatico volto a rafforzare il dialogo tra Teologia e Filosofia e attraverso le affermazioni contenute nei testi delle sue *Esortazioni Apostoliche, Encicliche, Messaggi*, ecc. In qualità di esponente di spicco dell’approccio al rinnovamento del dialogo tra Teologia e Filosofia, il Pontefice ha anche contribuito alla presa di coscienza dell’urgente necessità di riconciliare i due campi della teologia e della filosofia. Ciò ci permette di comprendere ed esprimere la Verità sia attraverso la fede sia attraverso il contributo della ragione, come ampiamente conferma il testo della sua Lettera Enciclica *Fides et Ratio*.

Parole chiave: fede, ragione, teologia, filosofia, dialogo