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The Hierarchy of Creation



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The Hierarchy of Creation

We saw in the first talk that God wills to communicate His goodness outside of Himself. And He wills to maximize this goodness by creating all the different levels of goodness by which His infinite goodness can be participated by creatures. Since God infinitely transcends any creature that could be created, many levels of created goodness more fully represent God's Goodness than any one level would, no matter how great. And if there are many levels, this will mean that some levels will be higher, endowed with more and greater perfections, and others will be lower, endowed with fewer and lesser perfections. But all the levels taken together produce a more excellent universe than if only the highest levels were created. This is the key principle for understanding the hierarchy of creation.

Everything that God does is ordered. There is a twofold order in creatures: with respect to God and with respect to one another. All things are ordered ultimately to God, and all are also ordered in various ways to other creatures. The classic example of these two kinds of order are given by an army. The entire army is ordered to its final, extrinsic purpose: national defense and victory. In order to achieve defense and victory, however, the army must have a precise interior order of the various members of the army to one another and to the commander-in-chief. The second order (intrinsic) is subordinated to the first (extrinsic). In this talk we shall look at the intrinsic order of creation in relation to its being extrinsically ordered to giving glory to God.

Many useful analogies for understanding creation come from observing human artistic creation. Artistic creation always involves a rich correlation of numerous elements: the spectrum of sounds in music, the spectrum of colors in painting, the variety of kinds of lines and shapes in sculpture, the variety of subjects and personalities in works of literature. A glorious example of a musical creation is the symphony. Not all the instruments are equally expressive or important. The first violin has a pride of place because of the expressive capacities of the instrument in imitating the human voice and heart. The triangle or cymbal is far less expressive, having only one note, but an orchestra has a place for them and other percussive instruments, and in fact in the context of the whole, their measured beat can produce a strong emotional impact. The whole symphony requires the complementary contributions of each instrument. Even in a single instrument such as the piano or organ, there is an order of notes, with the higher tones generally more expressive and distinct. However, the glory of the piano lies in its great variety of notes and tempos.

Likewise, in painting we may think that bold primary colors have a pride of place. However, subtle greys and

browns also have an essential role. Glorious colors only have their effect when set against less brilliant tones. A novel likewise has a symphonic quality and would not be satisfying if only one character type were portrayed. The glory of a novel lies in its breadth of scope.

The zoo also brings out the beauty of variety and hierarchy. The lion may be the king of the wild, but if every animal at the zoo were a lion it would not be a zoo! The zoo needs its odder specimens, such as the warthog and the pink flamingo. The great number of different birds and monkeys shows God's love of complementary variety.

The Cause of the Inequality of Creatures: The Divine Wisdom

Because God infinitely transcends any creature, no one creature can adequately manifest the perfection of God. The variety of different creatures better manifests God because one creature will mirror one aspect of God more than others. What God has together in infinite fullness, creatures have separately. Hence creation needs the multiplicity and variety of creatures in order to properly represent God. The very inequality and complementarity of creatures increases their ability to represent the divine Goodness.

St. Thomas poses the question concerning the cause of the distinction of creatures in *ST I*, q. 47, a. 1. He begins by reviewing the thought of the philosophers on this question. Some thinkers, such as Democritus, ascribe the variety of creatures not to the divine wisdom but to chance movement of matter. Charles Darwin further developed this line of thought by adding to chance variation a second principle of the survival of the fittest.

The Neo-Platonists, such as Plotinus and Avicenna, attribute the variety and distinction of creatures to a necessary process of emanations from the One. According to this idea, God, who is referred to by them as the One, thinking Himself produces another being, Intelligence. This second being produces two emanations, one looking at himself and another looking up to the One. From there, multiplicity and distinction gradually increase. However, according to this idea, the multiplicity and distinction of creatures is merely a natural necessity, and not the result of any plan of the divine wisdom. In such a view, creation would not be a free act of God but simply the unfolding of a necessary process.¹

¹ St. Thomas explains and refutes this position in *ST I*, q. 47, a. 1: "Others have attributed the distinction of things to secondary agents, as did Avicenna, who said that God by understanding Himself, produced the first intelligence; in which, forasmuch as it was not its own being, there is necessarily composition of potentiality and act, as will

In modernity, Hegel has maximally developed this line of thought with his dialectical scheme of evolution. History would be the necessary result of the dialectical process of thesis, antithesis, and synthesis. In this system, God Himself is the maximal model of dialectical unfolding. Thus Hegel's system is a dynamic and dialectical pantheism. The distinction of creatures would be the necessary result of the dialectical process.

In contrast to these two fundamental positions that ascribe the variety of creatures to chance and dynamic natural necessity, St. Thomas assigns the fundamental cause of the variety of creatures to the divine wisdom and love that desires to produce a maximum communication of the divine goodness outside of Himself.

Hence we must say that the distinction and multitude of things come from the intention of the first agent, who is God. For He brought things into being in order that His goodness might be communicated to creatures, and be represented by them; and because His goodness could not be adequately represented by one creature alone, He produced many and diverse creatures, that what was wanting to one in the representation of the divine goodness might be supplied by another. For goodness, which in God is simple and uniform, in creatures is manifold and divided; and hence the whole universe together participates the divine goodness more perfectly, and represents it better than any single creature whatever.

And because the divine wisdom is the cause of the distinction of things, therefore Moses said that things are made distinct by the word of God, which is the concept of His wisdom; and this is what we read in Genesis (1:3, 4): *God said: Be light made.... And He divided the light from the darkness.*

Benedict has spoken of the tremendous importance of the doctrine that creation with all its variety is a free act of God and not the blind outcome of necessity. In *Spe salvi* 5 he speaks of the pagan worldview that ascribed everything to chance and necessity. He sees this overturned in the Gospel account of the Magi following the star to Christ, for here the stars do not rule human life, but are subordinated to Christ and His plan:

appear later (q. 50, a. 3). And so the first intelligence, inasmuch as it understood the first cause, produced the second intelligence; and in so far as it understood itself as in potentiality it produced the heavenly body, which causes movement, and inasmuch as it understood itself as having actuality it produced the soul of the heavens.

“But this opinion cannot stand, for two reasons. First, because it was shown above (q. 45, a. 5) that to create belongs to God alone, and hence what can be caused only by creation is produced by God alone—viz., all those things which are not subject to generation and corruption. Secondly, because, according to this opinion, the universality of things would not proceed from the intention of the first agent, but from the concurrence of many active causes; and such an effect we can describe only as being produced by chance. Therefore, the perfection of the universe, which consists of the diversity of things, would thus be a thing of chance, which is impossible.”

This scene, in fact, overturns the world-view of that time, which in a different way has become fashionable once again today. It is not the elemental spirits of the universe, the laws of matter, which ultimately govern the world and mankind, but a personal God governs the stars, that is, the universe; it is not the laws of matter and of evolution that have the final say, but reason, will, love—a Person. And if we know this Person and he knows us, then truly the inexorable power of material elements no longer has the last word; we are not slaves of the universe and of its laws, we are free. In ancient times, honest enquiring minds were aware of this. Heaven is not empty. Life is not a simple product of laws and the randomness of matter, but within everything and at the same time above everything, there is a personal will, there is a Spirit who in Jesus has revealed himself as Love.

The Variety and Distinction of Creatures Is Not Due to Sin or the Fall

Another philosophical position ascribes the variety and distinction of creatures in the physical world not to the will of God but to sin and the exercise of free will. This view is found in many currents of thought that hold a doctrine of reincarnation according to which the species in which one is born is determined by one's moral behavior in a previous life (karma). This view is also found in the great third-century theologian Origen, and was one of his most significant errors. Origen was seeking to combat another heresy: the dualist position that posits two creators: one the creator of good and the other the creator of evil. In order to refute dualism, Origen stresses that evil is not caused by God, but by the abuse of free will. This is quite true of moral evil. However, it is a great mistake to think that the inequality of creatures is a result of an abuse of free will! On the contrary, the inequality of creatures is a consequence of the divine love and wisdom that wills to maximize created goodness. St. Thomas explains and refutes Origen's position in *ST I*, q. 47, a. 2:

When Origen wished to refute those who said that the distinction of things arose from the contrary principles of good and evil, he said that in the beginning all things were created equal by God. For he asserted that God first created only the rational creatures, and all equal; and that inequality arose in them from free-will, some being turned to God more and some less, and others turned more and others less away from God. And so those rational creatures which were turned to God by free-will, were promoted to the order of angels according to the diversity of merits. And those who were turned away from God were bound down to bodies according to the diversity of their sin; and he said this was the cause of the creation and diversity of bodies. But according to this opinion, it would follow that the universality of bodily creatures would not be the effect of the goodness of God as communicated to creatures, but it would be for the sake of the punishment of sin, which is contrary to what is said: *God saw all the things that He had made, and they were very good* (Gen. 1:31). ...

St. Thomas then gives his own explanation of the variety and distinction of creatures. He first points out that there are two kinds of distinction among creatures. Creatures differ by belonging to a multiplicity of different species, and also by the multiplicity of individuals in a given species. The multiplicity of individuals in the animal world makes possible the survival of the species over time and thus serves to maintain the multiplicity of species.² In the angelic world, it is not necessary to have many individuals of a given species of angel, because angels are incorruptible as pure spirits. Thus each species of angel has only one member who will last for all eternity.

The more important multiplicity is that of species. Why did God create such a plethora of a different species of things? As we have said, God wills that all the kinds and grades of goodness be represented in the universe. The variety of grades of goodness also implies inequality. If God gives a given perfection to one creature and not to another, an inequality results. Thus a spiritual nature is given to some creatures—angels and human beings—and not to others. This makes possible a greater manifestation of goodness through the addition of all the different grades.

Aristotle compares the different grades of goodness found in different species to the multiplicity of numbers. A higher species is like a higher number to which an additional perfection has been added that is lacking to a lower species. St. Thomas explains:

Now, formal distinction always requires inequality, because as the Philosopher says (*Metaph.* viii. 10), the forms of things are like numbers in which species vary by addition or subtraction of unity. Hence in natural things species seem to be arranged in degrees; as the mixed things are more perfect than the elements, and plants than minerals, and animals than plants, and men than other animals; and in each of these one species is more perfect than others. Therefore, as the divine wisdom is the cause of the distinction of things for the sake of the perfection of the universe, so is it the cause of inequality. For the universe would not be perfect if only one grade of goodness were found in things.³

Spiritual and Material Creation

A first distinction within creation is between material and spiritual being. Many of the Fathers see this distinction

2 *STI*, q. 47, a. 2: “Therefore it must be said that as the wisdom of God is the cause of the distinction of things, so the same wisdom is the cause of their inequality. This may be explained as follows. A twofold distinction is found in things; one is a formal distinction as regards things differing specifically; the other is a material distinction as regards things differing numerically only. And as the matter is on account of the form, material distinction exists for the sake of the formal distinction. Hence we see that in incorruptible things there is only one individual of each species, forasmuch as the species is sufficiently preserved in the one; whereas in things generated and corruptible there are many individuals of one species for the preservation of the species. Whence it appears that formal distinction is of greater consequence than material.”

3 *Ibid.*

implied in the first verse of Genesis: “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.” The word “heavens” could be taken to mean either the physical heavens, or figuratively the angelic creation, and the word “earth” could be understood of this physical earth, or of all material creation taken together. St. Augustine writes:

Where Scripture speaks of the world’s creation, it is not plainly said whether or when the angels were created; but if mention of them is made, it is implicitly under the name of “heaven,” when it is said, “In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth,” or perhaps rather under the name of “light.”⁴

Matter is a principle of limitation, determination, and mutability. It is a principle of limitation because it limits being to the here and now. Matter is what causes being to be located in the continuum of space and time. On the other hand, matter is also a principle of mutability because it makes possible substantial change from one being into another. Substantial change happens when a material being loses its prior substantial form and acquires another one. Matter is what enables the same “stuff” to have a succession of substantial forms, becoming distinct substances, one after the other. Because of matter, the apple that is eaten loses its original identity as an apple, and becomes part of our body. On account of matter, likewise, our bodies at death lose their substantial form—the soul—and become corpses decomposing eventually into dust. All the radical and dynamic change in the material world is the unfolding of the intrinsic mutability of material creation. Matter makes history, growth, and development possible.

Spiritual being is a principle of permanence, simultaneity, freedom, and self-awareness. Purely spiritual beings—angels—cannot undergo substantial change because they have no matter that could lose its previous form and acquire a new one, as happens with the human body when the soul departs. All purely spiritual beings—and also our own souls—are thus naturally immortal and indestructible.

Spirit is a principle of simultaneity because it is not limited by matter to the here and now. A material being can have many different substantial forms, as we have said, but always in succession and never simultaneously. A spiritual being, on the contrary, can simultaneously have many forms, including substantial forms, as objects of knowledge. Spirit is the principle of intellectual knowledge.

In other words, we have to distinguish two ways in which forms can exist: in extra-mental reality, or in the mind. Forms can be either (1) the *physical or natural* form of some material object, or (2) the *mental* form of some object known. In knowledge, a form which was outside in extra-mental reality now gains a new way of being: it has being in the mind.

4 St. Augustine, *City of God* 11.9.1, in NPNF1, 2:209.

St. Thomas explains knowing as an *enrichment* of one's own being through mental possession of the forms of other things:

We must note that intelligent beings are distinguished from non-intelligent beings in that the latter possess only their own form; whereas the intelligent being is naturally adapted to have also the form of some other thing; for the idea of the thing known is in the knower. Hence it is manifest that the nature of a non-intelligent being is more contracted and limited; whereas the nature of intelligent beings has a greater amplitude and extension.⁵

The simultaneity made possible by knowledge also extends to love, for love follows on knowledge of the good. Spiritual beings can have a great richness of what is loved.

Finally, spirit makes free action possible. Matter is determined by its material conditions, and incapable of free action. However, every person has the experience of making free choices, in which we are conscious of not being entirely determined by the object of our choice or by our environment or tendencies. This experience of free choice manifests itself in the experience of moral responsibility. Furthermore, the existence of moral responsibility is constantly exhibited in the reprimands, exhortations, and accusations of moral guilt that we make to one another and that our own conscience makes to ourselves. This is one of the most powerful arguments for the spiritual nature of the human soul.

Together with freedom, spiritual being is endowed with the capacity to reflect on itself and have global self-awareness. Bodies, on the contrary, are not reflexive, because every body is composed of parts outside of other parts. No one part can have the whole body present to it, either in its being or in its action.

Man's Place in the Hierarchy of Creation

While man tends to consider himself as the highest creature in the universe and the summit of creation, this is actually incorrect. Man's place in creation is squarely in the center, bridging the material and spiritual worlds of creation. In the beginning, God created the spiritual world of angels as well as the physical world of bodies. Man's place lies right in the middle, at the top of one half of creation, the physical creation, but at the bottom of the other invisible half of creation, the spiritual creation, peopled by myriads of angels. Psalm 8 has eloquent words on this subject, as the Psalmist marvels at man's place in the cosmos:

What is man that you are mindful of him? Or the son of man that you visit him? You have made him a little less than the angels, you have crowned him with glory and honor: And have set him over the works of thy hands. You have subjected all things under his feet, all sheep and oxen: moreover the beasts also of the fields. The birds of the air, and the fishes

of the sea, that pass through the paths of the sea. O Lord our Lord, how admirable is your name in all the earth!⁶

The Psalmist perfectly indicates man's position in the cosmos as being higher than all the beasts, but lower than the angels. Man occupies a unique and central position in the hierarchy of creation, as the intersection of the material and spiritual worlds. This is the profound sense in which man is said to be a *microcosm*—a cosmos in miniature or “little universe.” Man is a little universe because he has in himself both orders that God created. In his body is the perfection and summary of the physical universe, and in his soul is a part of the spiritual universe, although in its lowest form. Man unites in himself all the different levels of God's creation.

At the same as he is a microcosm in relation to the whole of creation, man is also head with respect to material creation. All material creation is for the sake of man and it achieves its end of giving glory to God through man and his act of contemplation of God through creatures. God has given to mankind in general a kingship or headship over the rest of material creation, as seen in first chapters of Genesis. He set man in the garden to tend and cultivate it, and He gave man the order to dominate the earth.

Headship in the Angelic World

Even in the angelic world we see a certain headship. It can be seen in Scripture that there is a hierarchy of angelic beings, and it is reasonable to think that the higher ones illuminate the lower ones. Pseudo-Dionysius profoundly developed this principle of mediation among the angelic hierarchies:

The first intelligences [angels] perfect, illuminate, and purify those of inferior status in such a fashion that the latter, having been lifted up through them to the universal and transcendent source, thereby acquire their due share of the purification, illumination, and perfection of the One who is the source of all perfection. The divine source of all order has established the all-embracing principle that beings of the second rank receive enlightenment from the Godhead through the beings of the first rank.⁷

St. Michael the archangel exercises a headship with regard to the good angels, as we see in Revelation 12:7–9, in which “Michael and his angels” fight against the dragon, who represents Satan and his minions. Both Michael and Satan exercise a certain headship in the angelic world, for good and for evil respectively.

Hierarchy, Headship, and Responsibility

Every hierarchy in creatures (especially rational creatures) implies a kind of headship of the higher levels with respect to the lower. We naturally use the analogy

⁶ Psalm 8:5–10, Douay Rheims version.

⁷ Pseudo-Dionysius, *The Celestial Hierarchy* 8.2, in *Pseudo-Dionysius: The Complete Works*, trans. Colm Luibheid (New York: Paulist Press, 1987), 168.

⁵ *ST I*, q. 14, a. 1: “Whether there is knowledge in God?”

of head and body to describe a governing function of one with respect to others. As the head contains the principal organs of the external senses and the internal senses by which animals are guided, the head is a natural metaphor for every exercise of guidance.

Every headship involves responsibility. The head receives must guide the other members and becomes responsible for them. Part of headship is receiving something in trust that is to be passed on to the other members.

Ultimately all moral responsibility carries with it the possibility of wreaking havoc through abuse of that responsibility, not only to oneself but also to others. This fearful capacity is of the very essence of created responsibility, which involves the obligation/vocation to preserve a trust that has been received for the sake of others, for the sake of the common good.

Nevertheless, moral responsibility is itself a great good, despite its immense potential for abuse. It is an inestimable good in that it makes possible a unique and free sharing in God's own kingship or providence exercised over those very creatures that God has willed for their own sake. Through moral responsibility the creature is elevated to share in the distribution of God's gifts to His beloved creatures.

Headship of Adam

As we shall see more fully in a later talk, a magnificent example of headship is that given to our first parents. Their privilege of being the first human couple entailed an immense privilege of kingly mediation. They had been given human nature adorned with supernatural and preternatural gifts as a sacred endowment or trust to pass on to all the future members of the human race. This privilege necessarily contained an awe-inspiring responsibility to be faithful to their trust of being God's agents in passing on to all their descendants—and through them to all mankind—not only His natural, but also of His supernatural gifts.

This kingly trust was violated by their seeking to make themselves morally autonomous, capable of deciding good and evil for themselves without responsibility towards God and His law, making themselves as gods. The claim of moral autonomy includes the lack of recognition of oneself as the recipient of an utterly gratuitous endowment. The result of their failure to live up to their responsibility of headship is the tragedy of Original Sin.

Headship of the Patriarchs; Headship in Civil Society

We see in Genesis that the Patriarchs continued to exercise a certain headship. We see this headship in a particular way in Noah. The head of the family had a natural priestly duty which was inherited by the firstborn. The very no-

tion of priesthood implies headship, for the priest acts as mediator between God and man on behalf of all.

All society requires that some individuals exercise a role of headship with respect to the others so that there be order in society. Within human society, a share of God's authority and kingship is given to parents within the family, and to governors over nations and societies. The same is true of intermediate societies formed by association. Every business requires a leader, and every athletic team needs a captain. A headless society would mean anarchy, which is the most miserable condition.

Hierarchy in Israel and the Church

If all creation is endowed with hierarchy, then Israel and the Church can be no exception. Since hierarchy means order and headship, Israel and the Church must be no less well endowed than civil society. But since they are supernatural societies, their headship must be supernatural and given from above.

In Israel, we see three forms of headship: prophet, priest, and king. The prophet exercises a kind of headship by speaking on behalf of God to the people. The king mediates by governing the people through a certain participation in the authority of God. The priest mediates by being "appointed to act on behalf of men in relation to God, to offer gifts and sacrifices for sins" (Heb 5:1). The worship of Israel was hierarchically ordered in three grades—the high priest, the priests, and the Levites. The Levites, like deacons in the Catholic Church, aided the priests, who were under the supreme authority of the High Priest.

This threefold participation in priestly mediation prefigures the division of Holy Orders in the Church into bishops, priests, and deacons. Through Holy Orders, the Church is fittingly ordered as a Body endowed with headship that is a participation of the headship of Christ.

Headship of Christ

All headship present in creation in varying degrees is "recapitulated" in Christ in the Incarnation. In Ephesians 1:9–12, St. Paul speaks of Christ as *recapitulating* all things:

For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ as a plan for the fulness of time, to *unite all things in him*, things in heaven and things on earth. In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will, we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory.

The Greek word in Ephesians 1:10 that the RSV translates as "unite" is literally "recapitulate."⁸ This means "to bring things back to their head." Christ recapitulates all

⁸ In Greek: ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι; in the *Nova Vulgata*: "recapitulare."

things in Himself by being the Head of all creation, its Exemplar and goal.

Everything before the Incarnation was a preparation for and prefigurement of Christ, and everything after Him is to be conformed to His image in the Church, which shall finally be brought into the splendor of His glory. Christ can be the recapitulation of everything because in His Person He unites two natures: human and divine. Through His humanity He recapitulates human history, especially the history of Israel. Through His divine nature He recapitulates and is the exemplar of the glory of which He makes us partakers, in the Church and in heaven.

Another text speaking of the universal headship of Christ is Colossians 1:15–23:

He is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of all creation;¹⁶ for in him all things were created, in heaven and on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or authorities—all things were created through him and for him.¹⁷ He is before all things, and in him all things hold together.¹⁸ He is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning, the first-born from the dead, that in everything he might be pre-eminent.¹⁹ For in him all the fulness of God was pleased to dwell,²⁰ and through him to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven, making peace by the blood of his cross.

In this text, Christ is first spoken of in His divinity, through which all things were created. As the Word of God, Christ exercises divine headship over creation. However, Christ is Head also as man. As such He is head of the Church. As Head He reconciles the members of His Body with the Father “through the blood of his cross.” His headship is exercised both over the Church militant and the Church triumphant, over which He will reign as king for all eternity.

St. Irenaeus puts great emphasis on this notion of “recapitulation” in his work, *Against the Heresies*, and it becomes perhaps the key element of his theological synthesis. He stresses that Christ recapitulates salvation history, for it was all modeled on Him as the Exemplar:

But when He became flesh and was made man, He recapitulated the long history of men in Himself, granting us salvation in brief compass, so that what we had lost in Adam, i.e., to be, according to the image and likeness of God, this we might recover in Christ Jesus.⁹

And again:

There is, then, one God, the Father, . . . and there is one Christ Jesus our Lord, who came throughout the entire dispensation and who recapitulated in Himself all things. Among these “all things” is also man, the moulded figure of God. So, He has recapitulated man also in Himself, the Invisible become visible, the Incomprehensible, comprehensible, the Impassible, capable of suffering, the Word, man, recapitulat-

ing all things in Himself so that, just as the Word of God has the primacy among supercelestial and spiritual and invisible beings, so also He should be first among visible and corporeal beings and, taking into Himself this primacy and also giving Himself as head to the Church, He might draw all things to Himself at a suitable season.¹⁰

St. Thomas Aquinas develops the notion of the headship of Christ in his Christology. Christ redeems us as the new head of mankind. As Head, Christ’s action in His Passion and Resurrection affects all men. As Head, Christ distributes to all the members of the Church a share of His immeasurable fullness of grace. St. Thomas explains: “For Christ, as man, is the ‘Mediator of God and men,’ as is written, 1 Timothy 2:5; and hence it was fitting for Him to have grace which would overflow upon others, according to John 1:16: ‘And of His fullness we have all received, and grace for grace.’”

As Head of the Church and of creation, Christ is fittingly invoked as King of creation, as He is portrayed in Messianic prophecy.¹¹ Pius XI, instituting the feast of Christ the King, wrote:

If to Christ our Lord is given all power in heaven and on earth; if all men, purchased by his precious blood, are by a new right subjected to his dominion; if this power embraces all men, it must be clear that not one of our faculties is exempt from his empire. He must reign in our minds, which should assent with perfect submission and firm belief to revealed truths and to the doctrines of Christ. He must reign in our wills, which should obey the laws and precepts of God. He must reign in our hearts, which should spurn natural desires and love God above all things, and cleave to him alone. He must reign in our bodies and in our members, which should serve as instruments for the interior sanctification of our souls, or to use the words of the Apostle Paul, “as instruments of justice unto God” (Rom 6:13).¹²

⁹ St. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3.18.1, translation in Paul Quay, *Mystery Hidden for Ages in God*, 193.

¹⁰ St. Irenaeus, *Adversus Haereses* 3.16.16–17, in Quay, *Mystery Hidden for Ages in God*, 191–192.

¹¹ See, among others, 2 Sam 7:13; Psalm 72, 89 132.

¹² Pius XI, encyclical *Quas Primas* 33.