

## COLLEGE THEOLOGY SOCIETY PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

### Learning What Your Face Is Like

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**T**HIS year we are blessed with a beautifully expressed convention theme: “God Has Begun a Great Work in Us: The Embodiment of Love in Contemporary Consecrated Life and New Ecclesial Movements.”<sup>1</sup> I hear in the phrasing of this theme profound faith, great hope, and deep joy. And while the theme’s focus is on the special witness of consecrated lives and ecclesial movements, still it seems to me that within all of us, individually and even more so collectively, God’s work has begun, and we are called to embody love. Tonight I want to use the time that I have been given for my presidential address, a privilege indeed, to reflect on this embodiment from one perspective. This evening, I want to consider faces.

This topic has come to me from several disparate sources over a number of years. A relatively recent source is last year’s College Theology Society Eucharistic celebration at Creighton University in Omaha, Nebraska. I served as lector and sat behind and a little to the side of the altar. From that vantage point, I could view the faces of colleagues, including many of you present this evening, processing forward to receive the Body and Blood of our Lord. I was deeply moved. Among those processing forward were many friends from the National Association of Baptist Professors of Religion. They came forward to receive a blessing, but not the Eucharist. I could see each of their faces (your faces) as they (you) sought the blessing with reverence and humility. Our Christian disunity suddenly became all too clear to me, because it took on a face, or really the faces of those whose faith inspires and teaches me, and I found to my surprise a few tears trickling down my cheeks. Something powerful

<sup>1</sup> The following is the presidential address delivered at the 2014 College Theology Society convention banquet on Saturday evening, May 31, 2014, at Saint Vincent College, Latrobe, Pennsylvania.

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happened in me as I gazed on those faces, your faces. If love is humanly embodied, then it has a face. Or to consider it another way: Where do we see, how do we recognize, the face of the Body of Christ?

Contemplate the face for a moment—contemplate your face. You never truly see it—selfies notwithstanding. Of course, we have mirrors, photos, videos, holographs, and the already mentioned selfies (and my purpose this evening is not to denigrate any of these). I have seen the image of my face many times. Yet, I have not, nor never will, truly see it in its day-to-day interactions with family, friends, colleagues, students. Now, contemplate the faces of your tablemates. We usually only fully recognize individuals when we see their faces. In all of our face-to-face interactions (note the phrase!), we gaze at other faces, watching for clues about how the interaction is going, and generally others are doing the same, unless one of us is looking down to avoid that uncomfortable exposure that comes with looking into someone's face. My face, which I can never see, serves as a kind of visible sign of myself, just as a face of another is a visible sign of her or him to me. Embodiment has a face. Consider the sensation caused by the photo of Pope Francis embracing Vinicio Riva, the gentleman who suffers from neurofibromatosis. His face, covered in tumors, is buried in the pope's robe, with Francis' hand embracing the back of Vinicio's head and the pope's own face bent close to his. I cannot understand Mr. Riva's struggle nor do I want to sentimentalize the embrace as some kind of cure or counterweight to the cruelty he has endured. The reactions to the photo—including my reaction, predominantly of unease—speak volumes about how much our sense of identity is wrapped up with our faces, ever heightened in our image-saturated culture.

This point leads me to the second source of my musing about faces. In *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century*, Warren I. Susman concludes with an essay entitled "‘Personality’ and the Making of Twentieth-Century Culture."<sup>2</sup> One reads here a familiar argument concerning "the development of consciousness of self" as a key feature of the "modern."<sup>3</sup> Susman turns his attention to a shift from the nineteenth-century self as development of moral character to the twentieth-century cultivation of personality. He uses Nathaniel Southgate Shaler's *The Individual* (published in 1900) to illustrate his point. Touted as a "purely scientific analysis," Shaler's self-help book discusses "an instinctive need 'to externalize the self,' . . . [evident] in dress and fashion, in song and speech, in the richness of language. . . . The key to all expressions of self, however, is the face [with] the power of an instrument able to express intellect as well as

<sup>2</sup> Warren I. Susman, *Culture as History: The Transformation of American Society in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1984), 271–85.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, 271.

emotion.”<sup>4</sup> Susman then concentrates on a concurrent cultural development, the burgeoning motion picture industry. Interestingly enough, before 1910, Susman notes, the movie star did not exist; in fact, screen actors remained relatively anonymous. The cultivation of personality found a powerful means of expression in the motion picture, and the movie industry made “personality,” in a sense, a profession, with its creation of “the movie star or a celebrity.”<sup>5</sup> This shift in the screen actor’s profession is evident in the innovations of D. W. Griffith, yes, of *Birth of a Nation* infamy. Of particular note is Griffith’s use of two contrasting screen shots—the crowd and the close-up. Susman writes: “To the depiction of the crowd, and often in striking contrast to it, Griffith added the extraordinary form of the close-up. Almost as if he were following the teachings of Shaler, the face, bigger than life and abstracted from it, provides a brilliant expression of self, of an individual.”<sup>6</sup>

I think that there is much theological food for thought in the close-up’s shaping of how we imagine the face, the visible sign of the self. I wonder what it was like in 1915, the year *Birth of a Nation* was released, to sit in a darkened theater probably with a few friends and certainly with dozens of strangers and, for the very first time, to see someone’s face “bigger than life and abstracted from it,” a person whom you felt as though you knew, since he, or more likely she, fully exposed herself, allowing you to see her face expressing intimate feelings and thoughts. I had never given the close-up a second thought until I read this essay. How does the close-up change our perspective on other human beings, not to mention ourselves? Susman even concludes the essay, perhaps tongue in cheek, with brief musings about the motion picture experience as a “new religion (perhaps a special religion for the antinomians of the twentieth century),” the theater as a cathedral, and the stars as gods and goddesses. He even gives a nod to fundamentalist Christians who recognized the movies as “a surrogate or competing religious order” and declared them taboo.<sup>7</sup> While I find the moving picture as religion less than convincing, I do think that Susman’s discussion of the close-up is something to consider in our contemporary reflections on theological anthropology, and the essay certainly brings to the foreground the contemporary fascination and unease with “the face” evident in the various measures taken to reshape its look on the big screen and, more and more, in everyday life, from softer lighting to radical surgical procedures. The 1950 movie *Sunset Boulevard* shows the psychological ravages of aging on a

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, 281–82; Shaler quoted in Susman.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, 283.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*, 282.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 284.

former movie goddess when, in a final scene, Gloria Swanson, as the crazed Norma Desmond, descends the staircase, announcing, “All right, Mr. DeMille, I am ready for my close-up,” when in reality, she is being arrested for the murder of her live-in younger male companion, played by William Holden.<sup>8</sup>

We are quite accustomed to seeing celebrities’ faces, close-up, larger than life, though not necessarily true to life. How many women and men seek faces in their mirrors that resemble those kinds of larger-than-life but not necessarily true-to-life faces? Our medical knowledge of Mr. Riva’s condition, disfiguring tumors that are explicitly described as “a noninfectious genetic disease” in the news reports, does not lessen our discomfort and fear of our own disfigurement, from disease or, like poor Norma Desmond, time—a fear magnified in our current hyperconsciousness about the image.<sup>9</sup> The close-up may, in fact, hinder our ability to recognize the face of the Body of Christ, the face of embodied love, or maybe it sharpens our ability (like Pope Francis’?) to see it, because of its startling, distinctive qualities. The clues of recognition that will provide the remainder of this presentation’s content come from a variety of sources with a single origin. So, let me refocus our gaze.

Look, my servant will prosper, / will grow great, will rise to great heights. /  
As many people were aghast at him—he was so inhumanly disfigured /  
that he no longer looked like a man— / so many nations will be astonished  
/ and kings will stay tight-lipped / before him, / seeing what had never  
been told them, / learning what they had not heard before.

He had no form or charm to attract us, / no beauty to win our hearts; / he  
was despised, the lowest of men, / a man of sorrows, familiar with suffering,  
/ one from whom, as it were, / we averted our gaze, / despised, for  
whom we had no regard. (Isaiah 52:13–15; 53:2b–3)<sup>10</sup>

This passage from Isaiah, proclaimed every Good Friday, has a companion piece, found in all three of the Synoptic Gospels, and read every Second Sunday of Lent for those following the Roman Catholic common lectionary. The following is how it appears in the Gospel of Matthew:

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter, James, and his brother John  
and led them up a high mountain by themselves.  
There in their presence he was transfigured;  
his face shone like the sun  
and his clothes became as dazzling as light. (Matthew 17:1–2)

<sup>8</sup> “Greatest Film Mis-Quotes,” <http://www.filmsite.org/momentso2.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Ben Wedeman, “Meet the Disfigured Man Whose Embrace with Pope Francis Warmed Hearts,” *CNN World*, November 27, 2013, <http://www.cnn.com/2013/11/26/world/europe/pope-francis-disfigured-man/>.

<sup>10</sup> Translations taken from *The New Jerusalem Bible: Pocket Edition* (New York: Doubleday, 1989).

The one who is transfigured, whose face shone like the sun, is the same one who is so “inhumanly disfigured, that he no longer looked like a man”—a human being. In both cases, those who come face-to-face with him avert their eyes: his face is feared in its glory and despised in its suffering. For the Eastern Orthodox, the Transfiguration is among the twelve great feasts, proclaimed in iconography and hymns. The morning-prayer hymn celebrates the oneness of the transfigured and the disfigured:

On the mountain wast Thou transfigured, O Christ God, and Thy disciples beheld Thy glory as far as they could see it; so that when they would behold Thee crucified, they would understand that Thy suffering was voluntary, and would proclaim to the world that Thou art truly the Radiance of the Father. (*Kontakion*)<sup>11</sup>

The feast is celebrated on August 6—the day remembered in modern history as the anniversary of the world’s disfiguration—the day the first atomic bomb was dropped on Hiroshima.

In contrast to this human-made radiance that literally melted faces, the Radiance of the Father becomes a face that shone like the sun and brings to light the divine presence in all creation. As Olivier Clément, whose *The Roots of Christian Mysticism* will be a frequent guide in locating the clues of recognition this evening, explains, “The divine energies, reflected by creatures and objects, do not lead to anonymous divinity but to the face of the transfigured Christ.”<sup>12</sup> But this fullness of radiant glory is not separate from but intimately tied to the divine kenosis. Clément further explains that “Jesus reveals to us the human face of God, a God who, in the foolishness of love, ‘empties himself’ so that I may accept him in all freedom and that I may find room for my freedom in him.” A Jewish-Christian text, the Odes of Solomon, proclaims:

His love for me brought low his greatness. . . .  
I had no fear when I saw him, for he is mercy for me.  
He took my nature so that I might understand him,  
my face so that I should not turn away from him.<sup>13</sup>

The icon of the Pantocrator (Ruler of All), the face of Christ intently gazing at its viewer, rewrites the Odes in image.

<sup>11</sup> “The Church Year: Transfiguration,” Orthodox Church in America, <http://oca.org/orthodoxy/the-orthodox-faith/worship/the-church-year/transfiguration>.

<sup>12</sup> Olivier Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism: Texts from the Patristic Era with Commentary* (Hyde Park, NY: New City Press, 1993), 35.

<sup>13</sup> *Ibid.*, 37.

Rowan Williams, in his *The Dwelling of the Light: Praying with Icons of Christ*, makes the following claim based on his own prayerful gazing on the Pantocrator icon: “Divine action appears to us in all the human detail of this life, not as an extra to it, not as a mysterious something floating above the surface of history, but embodied in it. If like Pontius Pilate, we ask, ‘What is truth?’, the answer is before us: ‘He is.’”<sup>14</sup> The familiar Latin phrase *Ecce homo!*, Pilate’s dramatic words when he presents Jesus, now scourged and wearing a crown of thorns, is perhaps Pilate’s unwitting answer to his earlier question. The fullness of Jesus as Truth is revealed on the Cross, the Mercy Seat. “I had no fear when I saw him, for he is mercy to me.” Jesus, who is the truth, is the face of God’s mercy, gazing unafraid as Pantocrator and yet as vulnerable as any human who allows another to look on him or her.<sup>15</sup>

The face of mercy made manifest on the Cross comes to the fullness of expression in the glory of the Resurrection and remains truly the face of the one transfigured-disfigured. Paul writes in his second letter to the Corinthians, “It is God who said, ‘Let light shine out of darkness,’ that has shone into our hearts to enlighten them with the knowledge of God’s glory, the glory on the face of Christ.” He continues with an image of sharp contrast: “But we hold this treasure in pots of earthenware, so that the immensity of the power is God’s and not our own” (2 Cor 4:6–7). These pots of earthenware, like the crucified Body of Christ, are being taken up in the new creation, transfigured in the light of Christ’s resurrection, “so that what is mortal in us is swallowed up by life” (2 Cor 5:4)—not by death but by life!

The early Christians knew from Scripture that humans are made in the image of God. The paschal mystery reveals the fullness of this truth. As Clément explains, “It is the whole human being, soul and body, that is in the image of God. The body, by receiving the life-giving breath of the Spirit, is enabled to be the visible expression of the person: to be not a mask but a face.”<sup>16</sup> The Greek word for “face” is *prosopon*, a term used to describe the masks of Greek theater, and the word translated as “face” in Matthew’s account of the Transfiguration. It also serves in the early church’s attempts to articulate God as Trinity. Clément, as he continues his commentary on “the whole human being,” suggests a sacramental-like quality to the face. He writes, “The visible aspect of humanity would not exist if it were not *the*

<sup>14</sup> Rowan Williams, *The Dwelling of the Light: Praying with Icons of Christ* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2003), 71.

<sup>15</sup> Cf. Williams, *The Dwelling of the Light*, 70.

<sup>16</sup> All the quotes from Clément in this paragraph are from *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 82.

*invisible made visible.*" The close-up gives the illusion of a three-dimensional image, but, as Susman suggests, the silver-screen image is "bigger than life and abstracted from it." The close-up resembles the mask, the *prosopon* of Greek theater, more than the face, the *prosopon* of the Gospel. The face that Clément has in mind is something more than Shaler's "instrument able to express intellect as well as emotion," because the invisible that is made visible comes from, as Paul explains, "God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ." "That is why," Clément explains, "the Saints, even when they are very ugly, are beautiful, with a beauty that springs from their intelligent and loving hearts"—thus offering a slightly different perspective from that of Christopher Hitchens on Mother Teresa's countenance. Clément offers a deep sense of the integrative whole of our human mortality that is not abstracted from but swallowed up by life, the glorious life in God shining forth in the face of Christ.

The earliest Christians, according to Clément, were "concerned not with the immortality of the soul, . . . but with the resurrection of the body, of the cosmos as a whole, the body of humanity."<sup>17</sup> Our Christian ancestors embraced Paul's vision and expanded it, "so that what is mortal in us [and in the cosmos] is swallowed up by life" (2 Cor 5:4). Borrowing from the Romanian Orthodox priest and theologian Dumitru Stăniloae, Clément asserts that "the whole of the Church's life should be a 'laboratory for the resurrection' (Dumitru Stăniloae); it ought to vibrate with a mighty resurrectional upsurge embracing all humanity and the whole universe."<sup>18</sup> I take this vibrating resurrectional upsurge to have some relation to those "divine energies, reflected by creatures and objects," that Clément made clear "do not lead to anonymous divinity but to the face of the transfigured Christ."<sup>19</sup> All creation acts as a mirror reflecting in some way the face of the transfigured Christ.

The mirror is ubiquitous in our contemporary culture—my morning preparations involve standing before a mirror. But what am I seeing in that mirror? Whose close-up is in my mind's eye as I judge the acceptability of my image in the mirror? How often do I consider what Clément writes: "The Christian knows that the Self is the image of Christ. And Christ is the faithful mirror who reflects the truth not only of creatures and objects, but also of the Self that is no longer an undifferentiated

<sup>17</sup> Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 82.

<sup>18</sup> *Ibid.*; biographical information on Dumitru Stăniloae taken from [http://orthodoxwiki.org/Dumitru\\_Stanoiloe](http://orthodoxwiki.org/Dumitru_Stanoiloe).

<sup>19</sup> Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 35.

abyss but the interior expression of a face.”<sup>20</sup> Another passage from the Odes of Solomon declares:

See! The Lord is our mirror:  
open your eyes,  
look into it,  
learn what your faces are like.<sup>21</sup>

Christ becomes the mirror; he reflects the true image of the self, the interior expression, the invisible, made visible, in a face.

The identification of Christ as our mirror has many expressions but few as beautiful as that found in Saint Clare’s fourth letter to Blessed Agnes of Prague. The letter seems to me an amazing vessel that transports her holiness to its reader. She interweaves passages from Hebrews and Wisdom to evoke the vision of Christ: “*the splendor of eternal glory* (Heb 1:3), *the brilliance of eternal light and the mirror without blemish* (Wis 7:26). Clare instructs Agnes: “Look upon that mirror each day, O queen and spouse of Jesus Christ, and continually study your face within it,” look upon “blessed poverty, holy humility, and ineffable charity.” As explained in a footnote, Clare’s mirror probably consisted of “a thin disc of bronze that was slightly convex on one side.” Unlike our glass mirrors, “only certain in-depth parts of the mirror reflected an image clearly.” After considering various images from Christ’s life, Clare directs Agnes’ gaze to the sharpest image: “in the depths of this same mirror [where the image is reflected clearly], contemplate the ineffable charity which led Him to suffer on the wood of the Cross.” Christ as “that Mirror, suspended on the wood of the Cross, urged those who passed by to consider, saying, ‘All you who pass by the way, look and see if there is any suffering like My suffering!’” The response, as Clare imagines it, moves from the lamentation of a downcast soul to intense love. She writes, “O queen of our heavenly King, [Agnes] let yourself be inflamed more strongly with the fervor of charity.”<sup>22</sup> The fervent charity that comes with gazing in that mirror which is Christ crucified offers further insight into “why the Saints, even when they are very ugly, are beautiful, with a beauty that springs from their intelligent and loving hearts.”<sup>23</sup> Their beauty comes in mirroring the beauty of Christ’s ineffable charity made manifest on the Cross.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 226.

<sup>21</sup> Odes of Solomon 13, quoted in Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 226.

<sup>22</sup> *Francis and Clare: The Complete Works*, trans. and intro. Regis J. Armstrong, OFM, Cap., and Ignatius C. Brady, OFM, preface by John Vaughn, OFM, in *Classics of Western Spirituality* (New York: Paulist Press, 1982), 204–5.

<sup>23</sup> Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 82.



The saints' "intelligent and loving hearts" brings to my mind the passage from Scripture, "Blessed are the pure in heart: they shall see God" (Matt 5:8). Saint Isaac of Nineveh provides an explanation of "purity":

What is purity, briefly? It is a heart full of compassion for the whole of created nature. . . . And what is a compassionate heart? He tells us: "It is a heart that burns for all creation, for the birds, for the beasts, for the devils, for every creature. . . . That is why he prays with tears every moment . . . for all the enemies of truth and for all who cause harm, that they may be protected and forgiven."<sup>24</sup>

Jesus' disfigurement is in some mysterious way the fulfillment of his transfiguration, for it fills the whole cosmos with the transfigurative power of his compassion. We marvel at the transfigured Christ because we know that the face that shone like the sun is the same one disfigured in suffering. We marvel at the disfigured Christ because that face now radiates the fullness of life, including the triumph over death in the Resurrection. The radiance of God permeates all creation, bringing into the light of God's glory even "the enemies of truth." The faces written into icons proclaim in image what Paul proclaimed with these words: "It is God who said, 'Let light shine out of darkness,' that has shone into our hearts to enlighten them with the knowledge of God's glory, the glory on the face of Christ" (2 Cor 4:6). Clément helps us to understand. "As the icons suggest, the whole person becomes vision, filled with the light that issues from the face of the transfigured Christ."<sup>25</sup> We are mysteriously taken up into the light emitting from Christ's transfigured face. As explained in an early Christian homily,

So the soul that has been illumined with the ineffable beauty and the glorious brightness of Christ's face and has been filled with the Holy Spirit, the soul that has been found worthy to become the dwelling and the temple of God, is all eye, all light, all face, all glory and all Spirit, since Christ is adorning it in this way, moving it, directing it, upholding it and guiding it, thus enlightening it and embellishing it with spiritual beauty.<sup>26</sup>

What might it look like to be this glorious face of Christ—seeing the world as Christ sees it? Clément gives us a clue: "Jesus took his meals with tax collectors and prostitutes, the better to express his love for them. To love one whom others despise is to demonstrate God's love for that person, for one who is more precious than the whole world. It is perhaps to save that person from

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 227.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 248.

<sup>26</sup> Pseudo-Macarius, "First Homily," quoted in Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 248–49.

self-hatred.”<sup>27</sup> And Isaac of Nineveh instructs: “When you give, give generously, your face lit up with joy. And give more than you were asked. . . . Let all people be equal in your eyes.”<sup>28</sup>

I was once accused or perhaps more accurately dismissed as a “romantic” by someone who heard my reflections on teaching theology to undergraduates. My incredibly witty response was, “Well, maybe we need a little more romance.” But the stuff of the Christian romance is found in this passage from John:

Jesus knew that the Father had put everything into his hands, and that he had come from God and was returning to God, and he got up from table, removed his outer garments and taking a towel, wrapped it round his waist; he then poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples’ feet and to wipe them with the towel he was wearing. (John 13:3-5)

As a former pastor noted in his Holy Thursday homily, Jesus had everything placed in his hands and what he grasped were dirty feet.<sup>29</sup> He drew close to his disciples’ feet; their feet were quite literally in Jesus’ face. I cannot help but wonder if Jesus recalled what Mary of Bethany had done in a far more extravagant manner just a few days earlier (at least in John’s Gospel). “Mary brought in a pound of very costly ointment, pure nard, and with it anointed the feet of Jesus, wiping them with her hair; [followed by the wonderfully evocative phrase] the house was filled with the scent of the ointment” (John 12:3). Perhaps Jesus had learned something from Mary who drew her face close to Jesus’ feet to use her hair as a towel in a beautiful, unnecessary gesture, whose sweet fragrance lingered maybe even until Jesus’ last supper, where he too performed an unnecessary gesture, washing the disciples’ feet. Yet, if you have ever had your feet washed, you know very well the utter refreshment that comes in that simple act.

But I digress. Back to our original question: where do we see, how do we recognize the face of the Body of Christ? Look for faces alit with joy in their lives of service and love, “illumined with the ineffable beauty and the glorious brightness of Christ’s face,” a face glorious on Mount Tabor and made more glorious on the Cross, where even disfiguring suffering is transfigured. Look for the faces drawing near to dirty feet. Look at all of our faces that bear the marks of disfigurement and that also bear the marks of transfiguration that come in the embrace of compassion. Look for faces alit with joy as they

<sup>27</sup> Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 283.

<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 284.

<sup>29</sup> Father James Schutte, priest for the Archdiocese of Cincinnati. He was pastor of Corpus Christi Parish, Dayton, Ohio, when he preached the homily.

begin to recognize the disfigured in the transfigured and more unexpectedly the transfigured in the disfigured because “the face of the transfigured Christ” is also “the human face of God, a God who, in the foolishness of love, ‘empties himself’ so that I may accept him in all freedom and that I may find room for my freedom in him.”<sup>30</sup>

This year marks the sixtieth year of the society’s existence, and I suppose there is some irony in my being the one to note that, given my role as the historian of the society’s first fifty years. No worries. I am not going to rehearse the ten volumes of the last decade, though each deserves its due. Tonight I am not going to dwell on essays, papers, or board meeting minutes, but on people who enliven this society, who embody this crazy movement of teaching theology to undergraduates. I am going to dwell on those people whose faces light up with joy in their talking about the teaching of theology to undergraduates—a mere preview of their faces alit with joy when actually engaged in teaching. Let us for a moment conjure up the images of the faces of those no longer here with us, those who have gone before us marked with the sign of faith and those whose lives have taken them down different roads. At the beginning of the evening, those at the banquet had an assignment: to write the names of those whom they wanted to remember on index cards. We then spent a few minutes calling out some of those names . . . and so many names of so many beautiful people were called. I mention here only three: Sister M. Rose Eileen Masterman, CSC; Father John Harvey; and Father Gerard Sloyan. These three were instrumental in founding the College Theology Society, known in 1954 as the Society of Catholic College Teachers of Sacred Doctrine. Perhaps those reading this address may also call out a few names and include them in the blessing that concluded our remembrance of the many faces of the College Theology Society:

May the Lord bless all of us here in plain sight or hidden in the life of God and keep all of us; may the Lord make his face to shine upon us and be gracious to us; may the Lord show us his face and give us peace. And may the souls of the faithful departed rest in peace.<sup>31</sup>

And those in attendance responded with a wholehearted “Amen!”

<sup>30</sup> Clément, *The Roots of Christian Mysticism*, 37.

<sup>31</sup> An adaptation of the blessing in Numbers 6:24–26.