Book Review: Grzegorz Ignatik, *Communicating Life: Karol Wojtyła & Humanae vitae*

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Grzegorz Ignatik's *Communicating Life* faithfully presents Karol Wojtyła's extensive contribution to and interpretation of Paul VI's encyclical, *Humanae vitae.* As one of the leading scholars of the thought of Wojtyła / St. John Paul II, Ignatik both demonstrates the breadth of his philosophical and theological understanding and illustrates the critical, albeit less well-known, impact of the great Polish prelate on the Second Vatican Council, as well as his formative influence on the final text of *Humanae vitae*.

The formal object of the book focuses the theme of "the value of the human person in the mystery of life and its transmission" by exploring *Humanae vitae* through the Polish prelate's personalistic thought (p. 2). The book thus provides critical pedagogical instruction as to why and how *Humanae vitae* speaks to the most pressing issues of the human heart. Ignatik notes however that the ultimate goal of the text, drawing from the thought of Wojtyła / St. John Paul II, allows the reader to discover the true image of God within himself — in all his dimensions, "functional, relational, sacramental" (p. 4).

The scope and sources of *Communicating Life* include texts prior to works written before 1978, namely Wojtyła's interventions and memoranda related to Vatican II (particularly the Pastoral Constitution *Gaudium et spes*), the Papal Commission for the Study of Population, Family and Births, *Humanae vitae*, as well as Wojtyła's *Love and Responsibility, Person and Act, The Lublin Lectures, Sources of Renewal,* and St. John Paul II's *Man and Woman He Created Them* (also called *The Theology of the Body*) (p. 5).

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Chapter One

To ascertain the theme of the human person in the mystery of life and its transmission within the thought of Karol Wojtyła (p. 10), Ignatik begins by unfolding the necessary links between three recent historical events (pp. 8,10): Vatican II (which includes both Wojtyła's documents which preceded the Conciliar event as well the Polish bishops' interventions during the Council); the final conciliar documents particularly *Gaudium et spes*; and post-conciliar correspondence by the Polish episcopate under the leadership of Cardinal Wojtyła; the Papal Commission for the Study of Population, Family and Births; and finally the encyclical *Humanae vitae*.

Wojtyła's significant role in shaping the Second Vatican Council is evident through his twenty-five direct interventions during the course of the Council (p. 13), which were focused entirely on the context of Christian personalism, a theme central to the Polish prelate both prior to the convening of the Council as well as afterwards. Christian personalism, as Ignatik explains, centers around the context of man's unique creaturely status: man, as *imago Dei*, is made in the image and likeness of God, but as *capax Dei,* he alone in the visible world is capable of "responding to [God's] self-communication" (p. 14). This theological-anthropological identity of the human person shares a particular resonance with the term "gift," a unique feature of both conciliar personalism (*GS* 22 and 24) and eventually the personalism distinctive to Wojtyła / St. John Paul II (p. 14).

Of the aforesaid twenty-five conciliar interventions, Ignatik assesses two in some detail, which pertained exclusively to marriage and the family (p. 15). The first occurred in the third session of the council during which Wojtyła suggested "making a closer link between the natural and supernatural dimensions of marriage and the family," within the context of "the Christian family as an image and participation in the covenant of Christ with the Church" (p. 15). Ignatik shares that the final version of *Gaudium et spes* adopted these suggestions and was reformulated in light of the Pauline teachings of Ephesians 5:32 (p. 16), a text which eventually became the keystone to the Pope's *The Theology of the Body*.

Exploring in more detail the second of the two interventions which occurred during the council's fourth session (p. 15), Ignatik specifies that certain aspects of this text greatly resembled several themes from Wojtyła's 1960 ethical study *Love and Responsibility:* In his intervention,

Wojtyła "expresses a dissatisfaction with the suggested chapter [of *Gaudium et spes*]" and encourages genuine dialogue with married couples that would substantiate the reasons for the Church's teachings on sexual ethics (p. 16). Likewise, the Cardinal criticizes opinions "that sought artificial solutions to the problems of personhood and nature in conjugal relations" and instead stresses the "integral proclamation of marriage" which underscores the importance of incorporating sacramental grace in marital daily life (p. 17). Ignatik comments that "to some degree, all three postulates" (p. 18) found their way into the final text of *Gaudium et spes* (p. 18).

Later in the chapter, Ignatik turns to Wojtyła's assessment of the final published Conciliar texts, particularly in Polish prelate's *Sources of Renewal*, which prepares the reader to see a forthcoming link between *Humanae vitae* and "general context of Vatican II" (p. 18). Ignatik treats the thematic conciliar vision of the mystery of redemption as outlined in two interconnected directions, *ad intra* and *ad extra,* both of which "correspond to the mystery of the Church and her mission, respectively" (p. 19). Wojtyła's explanation of the council's pastoral character accordingly highlights these two aspects; he explains, "[t]he work of Jesus Christ … is continually being effected in the Church, and through the Church, in mankind and the world" (p. 19).

Under the section "Man's Free Action and Autonomy of Creation" (p. 23), Ignatik sketches out a recurring principle discussed in Vatican II, namely freedom, which is intimately linked to human life and its transmission; reaffirming the divine origin of human freedom, the Council urges that "the authentic signs of God's presence and purpose are to be discerned … in the happenings, needs, and desires of the modern age" (p. 23). Here, Ignatik explicates God's mandate for man "to subdue the earth" (Gen. 1:26) which necessarily concerns the issue of technological progress, an issue "extremely important for understanding the teaching of *Humanae vitae*" (p. 27). Ignatik shares Wojtyła's word of warning directed to married couples and the potential use of artificial contraception, "'Man may not exercise power over his own body by means of intentions or techniques that, at the same time, compromise his authentic governance over himself and that even, in a certain way, annihilate this governance … *man is himself, namely, a person, through self-governance, and this self-governance enters into the integral definition of his freedom*'" (pp. 29-30)

After unfolding the three aspects of Wojtyła's interpretation of *Gaudium et spes,* Ignatik includes an in-depth review of the divided Papal Commission for the Study of Population, Family, and Births (pp. 35, 51-55). Ignatik summarizes that while the minority report faithfully adhered to

the Church's long-held moral teaching that bans artificial contraception, the majority report advocated for the use of contraceptives to secure the "supra-psychological good of the human person;" yet he demonstrates a certain "'instrumentalization'" of the person in both approaches, which seems to presuppose and foster a dichotomy between nature and the person (pp. 52-54). The chief issue with the minority report, Ignatik argues, which Wojtyła will correct subsequently, concerns its purely authoritative approach which "surrenders the personalistic considerations to the generative power of the conjugal act and its finality" (p. 54). In contrast, the majority report's principal error lies in its faulty use of "the personalistic terms of Vatican II" which "remain 'technological,'" without a proper "discernment of the signs of the times in unfolding the work of creation" (p. 54).

The final sections of chapter one deal with *Humanae vitae* and its reception (pp. 55-63). Unfolding the structure of the encyclical and summarizing its key points, Ignatik underscores the Magisterium's competency to interpret divine law but also natural law, noting Pope Paul VI's proposal that the transmission of life must considered "in light of the integral vision of man … natural and earthly aspects but also supernatural, eternal ones" (p. 57). Summarizing the Italian Pontiff's vision of conjugal love and responsible parenthood, Ignatik reiterates the central parenetic point of the encyclical, namely that "the unitive and procreative aspects" of the conjugal act are inseparable; "[this] connection, established by God, … man on his own initiative may not break" (p. 57). Ignatik concludes by drawing attention to the last sections of the encyclical which highlight that the Church as "the guardian and interpreter" of the law, stands in service to "man and human civilization" as a whole (pp. 58-59).

Chapter Two

After summarizing the relevant background in chapter one, Ignatik outlines Wojtyła's direct approach to the teaching of *Humanae vitae* by exploring three related memoranda, dated in 1966, 1968 and 1971, respectively (p. 78). Ignatik states that these documents are again guided by the same theme, that of *accommodata renovatio,* the theme of reconciling the Christian tradition with the essence of personalism (p. 79).

Concerning the 1966 Memorandum, which Ignatik notes was sent directly to Pope Paul VI since Wojtyła was prevented by the communist government of Poland from attending the papal

commission, the document unfolds both conjugal sexual morality and pastoral care related to the methods of regulating conceptions in Poland (pp. 39, 81-82). Ignatik underscores that the memorial provides evidence of the continuity between Wojtyła's Christian personalistic approach to sexual morality and the Church's traditional teaching on the ends of marriage (as expressed through the pontificates of Pius XI and Pius XII) (pp. 79-80); in other words, Wojtyła's recognition of only a "shift in emphasis" (p. 79) (as opposed to a radical break with Tradition) helps provide a critical explanatory bridge between the "council's stress on love (the commandment to love) and the traditional stress on the natural law and the ends of marriage" (p. 83). Ignatik further adds that Wojtyła's emphasis on renewal focuses on developments on "the teaching of the human body, its sexual properties, and its positive role of culture and human relationships" (pp. 84-85).

Ignatik likewise articulates aspects of part two of the 1966 memorandum which details Wojtyła's extensive pastoral engagement with the lived experiences of the Polish people. The thoroughness of Wojtyła's evaluation can be seen in his inclusion of issues ranging from the problem of regulating conceptions and births in Poland to collecting medical research which verifies the salutary influence of natural family planning methods (pp. 86-87).

1968 Memorandum of the "Cracow Commission," prepared "by a group of Polish theologians [and ethicists and physicians]" was convoked by Cardinal Wojtyła and worked under his active guidance (p. 88). The purpose of the Cracow Commission with its continued personalistic focus was to defend the moral teaching of the Church concerning conjugal morality and to proclaim divine law using "rational arguments that would convince experts from various disciplines" particularly those who undermined the traditional teaching of the Church on parenthood and natural methods of regulating conceptions (p. 90). It is worthwhile to note that Ignatik's inclusion that the 1968 memorandum was both drafted by primary editors, Frs. Smoleński, Turowicz, and Meissner, and conveyed some divergence from Wojtyła's own ethical approach to sexual ethics (pp. 91-92), shows an evident intellectual and spiritual agility of the Polish prelate as well as a degree of collaborative openness.

Ignatik openly acknowledges that any extent of Pope Paul VI's reception of these 1966 and 1968 memoranda "cannot be demonstrated with certainty" (p. 113). Yet, he finds several points of convergence, particularly regarding the 1966 memorandum (pp. 112, 114).

Regarding the 1971 memorandum, Wojtyła explores the pastoral implementation of encyclical *Humanae vitae* (pp. 116-128); the Cardinal expresses gratitude for the encyclical and

the Church's adherence to traditional ethical principles concerning the transmission of life but commends Paul VI's intention to pastorally apply them "in today's day and age" (p. 117). Depicting the reception of the encyclical in the Christian world, both favorably and unfavorably, (p. 117) Wojtyła also includes an in-depth proposal for pastoral instruction which includes the necessary reminder that the encyclical "meets the condition that determines the infallible character of ordinary teaching" (p. 120).

Ignatik concludes chapter two by emphasizing Wojtyła's conviction that "the encyclical possesses tremendous pastoral potential, which should be realized in the Church" (p. 128). The Polish prelate's measures to achieve this realization within his own Kraków archdiocese is worth commending, especially as the instruction continues to offer timely suggestions for pastoral implementation (pp. 128-129).

Chapter Three

Chapter three delves deeper into the "logic and framework of Wojtyła's ethical teaching pertaining to *Humanae vitae,*" beginning first with relevant presuppositions to Wojtyła's personalistic ethics followed by the fundamentals of his teaching, namely, "values, duties, and moral norms of responsible parenthood" (p. 130). Much of the anthropological presuppositions outlined in this chapter were previously covered in Ignatik's book, *Person and Value: Karol Wojtyła's Personalistic and Normative Theory of Man, Morality and Love,* but are now set in dialogue with *Humanae vitae* and a discussion on the transmission of life.

Returning to the concept of freedom, Ignatik explores from Wojtyła's pre-papal works its deeper anthropological roots. For the Polish prelate, a correct understanding of freedom necessitates a pedagogical reintroduction concerning man's contingent nature; metaphysically (and known by experience) man understands that he is "dependent on others" and above all on God, "the only necessary, absolute being … and real foundation and source of the world;" and ethically, man is "destined to actualize himself through action… to become good [or evil]" since he is not absolutely 'good' (p. 137). Freedom, properly understood within the conditions of man's contingency, allows "the human person to choose and strive for the goods that are proper to his actualization … and true fulfillment" (pp. 137, 139).

Relatedly, Ignatik emphasizes the link between freedom, efficacy, morality, and personhood (pp. 133-135); genuine freedom demands conscious efficacy (man must constitute his own "I" and be dependent on this "I" for fulfillment) (p. 138) but "*true fulfillment is accomplished … [only] through the moral goodness of [the] act*" (p. 139). Wojtyła's teaching on efficacy and morality expresses the profound unity between freedom and truth – a unity, which Ignatik comments, is "a trademark of Wojtyła's philosophical and theological thought that radically separates him from many contemporary views on freedom" (p. 138).

Moreover, for the Polish prelate, intertwined with freedom is responsibility. In an oral intervention at Vatican II dated September 22, 1965, the Polish prelate offered a necessary correction, "each and every man … should be able to say not only 'I am free in this matter,' but also 'I am responsible'" (p. 137). Applying this concept of responsible freedom to man's daily life, it is incumbent upon man to discern how his "freedom is grounded in reality and truth," and then responsibly apply it in his own unique circumstances (p. 139).

Specifically relating human freedom to conjugal morality, Ignatik instructs that "Wojtyła's theory of conscious human action" corrects a twofold error concerning the marital sexual act and the use of contraception: First, the prelate's theory amends a false interpretation that the prohibition of contraception is strictly rooted in a rigid biologism, such that the fullness "of the human person [is] degraded by being subordinated to 'laws and rhythms' of his body with its natural functions and ends," (pp. 140-141). Second, the Cardinal's action theory corrects a pernicious overreach of a counterfeit "law of love" which permits man to shun "submission to the biological functions in favor of the 'higher level,' the level of the personal covenant uniting the conjugal and parental vocation" (p. 141). Instead, Wojtyła's personalistic vision of sexual ethics preserves the inherent anthropological unity of the person, namely the body's integral relationship to the spirit: the sexual drive therefore does not take "on a deterministic character, which is treated independently of the human will" (p. 143) but must be practiced with "the existence of virtue" in which self-determination and fulfillment seek to be "governed by the truth about the good in conformity with the hierarchy of values" (p. 144). Ignatik further asserts that Wojtyła's complete vision does not place either "person and nature or love and natural law" in opposition (p. 142).

Personalistic Perspective of Humanae Vitae— Values

Ignatik further delves into Wojtyła's Christian personalism, commenting that the Polish thinker had presented a personalistic vision of sexual ethics in his pre-papal texts "Instynkt, miłość, małżeństwo" (1952) and "Religijne przeżywanie czystości" (1953) and *Love and Responsibility* (1960), all of which "champion the understanding of human nature and sexuality in light of the love of persons" (p. 144). Applying this to *Humanae vitae,* Ignatik acknowledges that while the encyclical letter uses the word 'person' only sparingly, the Polish prelate, with the aforesaid 'expertise' in Christian personalism, verifies the encyclical as deeply personalistic (p. 144).

Ignatik confirms Paul VI's personalistic approach by citing texts from the encyclical, which begin "not with abstract concepts or definitions, but with the concrete historical human person taken within his integral vocation" (p. 144). Accordingly, the biological, psychological, demographic, and social factors of human life, referenced in the letter, must be considered in light of man's whole mission, to which is he is called in its natural and supernatural, earthly and eternal dimensions (HV 7) (p. 145). Ignatik underscores that any danger of the aforesaid "naturalism and biologism is averted" because the ethical norm proposed in *Humanae vitae* is "formulated within the perspective of man's integral anthropology and vocation" (p. 145). Furthermore, he adds, referring the encyclical text, "[m]arriage is described as an interpersonal communion that perfects the persons who belong to it; the gift of self [is] the means by which man and woman constitute this communion of persons" (p. 145). (What is striking here is the resemblance between these themes and the aforementioned pre-papal texts of Wojtyła.)

To further ascertain the personalism within the encyclical and its connectivity to the thought of the Polish prelate, Ignatik devotes an extensive study on the theme of value (which was unfolded more at length in his *Person and Value*)*,* an essential element within the thought of Karol Wojtyła. Here we focus only on Wojtyła's treatment of the term 'value' as it pertains to human life, *Humanae vitae*, and marital love, under the aspect of the human body and sexuality.

Human Person — Ignatik confirms Wojtyła's definition of "the 'dignity' of man as a person" as above all a fundamental quality of the person (p. 163). Referencing Wojtyła's reliance on *Gaudium et spes* 24, Ignatik will explicate more deeply the theological roots of the dignity of the human person in chapter four, but in chapter three he explores the term's metaphysical roots.

As previously unfolded, the personalistic norm states that "a person can never be treated as a mere object of use by anyone (not even by God)" (p. 163). The metaphysical foundation for the personalistic norm relates to the terms "*sui iuris et alteri incommunicabilis"* which secures "that [man] exists for himself and that his existence and identity are not exchangeable with or replaceable by another being" (p. 165). The anthropological structures of "self-possession and self-governance" undergird this ontological incommunicability, yet they also provide the foundation for an "openness to reality and a disposition to voluntarily entrust [oneself] to another" (p. 165); the person thus possesses an "intrinsic orientation to another," but finds the greatest fulfillment in self-transcendence and in the giving of himself to another (p. 165-166).

Body — Exploring the value of the human body, Ignatik, following Wojtyła, demonstrates that the body, is not "merely that which limits or burdens man but [serves] as an asset that is *sine qua non* for human creativity and communication" (p. 167). Specific to the sexual distinctiveness of the human body, Ignatik writes that this value is "a particular good" which helps "the human person to become conscious of his identity as a person, his purpose for living in the world, and his difference with respect to other beings" (p. 167). Moreover, the human body in its sexual differentiation is "capable of expressing the whole truth in his transcendence and freedom" (p. 167). Within the context of marriage, "the body allows the spouses to 'experience the meaning of their oneness'" (p. 168, referencing *GS* 48).

Marriage — Applying this understanding of person and value to the "Ends and Ontology of Marriage" as outlined in Vatican II, Ignatik first acknowledges that Wojtyła maintains that the council "adopted a more personalistic viewpoint concerning marriage and conjugal morality" in an effort to engage "the people of today" who typically view "marriage in light of its own worth rather than in any functional light," which Ignatik notes, relates more to "the ends that marriage is ordained to achieve" (p. 151). Pertinent to the discussion on value, Ignatik however demonstrates that this trend should not be interpreted exclusively as subjectivistic turn to self, but instead exposes an inherent positive aspect, namely the aforesaid "recognition of human values" and especially "man's dignity" which "prevents an instrumentalization of persons" (p. 151). In this regard an excessively personalistic interpretation of marriage (versus a strict "end-oriented vision" which views that "only procreation justifies marriage") attempts in a way, albeit insufficiently, to avoid any instrumentalization of marriage which undermines the value of the persons who constitute it (pp. 152, 157-168).

Thus, while neither the Council nor the encyclical *Humanae vitae* alter the traditional teaching on the ends of marriage and their hierarchy, a more personalistic perspective, which emphasizes the value of love and a communion of persons, will only manifest more "the intrinsic unity between teleology and ontology" (p. 153). Relating Wojtyła's teaching in *Love and Responsibility* on the personalistic norm to matrimony, Ignatik states "only in and through love can man attain the three ends of marriage in a manner worthy of persons" (p. 154).

Conjugal Act — Specific to the context of the "community of marriage," the conjugal act is of unparalleled value, a point which will be further clarified in the final chapter of the book. Here, Ignatik draws from "Wojtyła's approach to sexual relations in conjugal life," and states that "[a]s long as this act is performed in a properly human way" (which includes the natural finality of the act) and "realized through self-determination in transcendence and integration… it retains its personalistic value" and is an "expression of true love" (p. 181).

Chapter Four

Chapter four presents the Christological and Sacramental dimension of Wojtyła's interpretation of human life, drawing from his theological works, especially his commentary on Sacred Scripture in *The Theology of the Body,* which was authored prior to his papal election, but disseminated during his pontificate; hence Ignatik's occasional reference to the Polish prelate's papal name, St. John Paul II (p. 9). In this chapter, Ignatik will demonstrate Wojtyła's personalism as a distinct Christian personalism since the Polish Pontiff's "interpretation of the person, his life, and his action" are "permeated and guided by divine revelation" (p. 237).

To more thoroughly understand St. John Paul II's personalistic vision, which seeks to ground and deepen the norms specified in *Humanae Vitae,* Ignatik underscores the Polish Pope's twofold understanding of the mystery of life as it pertains to the sacramental character of creation and redemption; beginning with creation, Ignatik returns to Wojtyła's unique understanding which lies in the principle called the "'hermeneutics of the gift,'" which, as mentioned earlier, became the "central hermeneutical prism" of the Pope's thought (p. 251).

Ignatik notes that Wojtyła's interpretation of the hermeneutics of the gift can be applied in every setting of man's life, be it anthropology and ethics (as well as governance, economy or culture)," however, it is most fully applied within the context to the spousal gift of self (pp. 253,

255). Drawing from John Paul II's theological anthropology in *The Theology of the Body,* Ignatik summarizes both the foundation and fruit of the law of the gift within the context of the Pope's spousal meaning of the body; "created in God's image, man discovers the law of the gift in his being as a unique and personal mark of the Creator in him. First and foremost, he discovers himself as received, thus participating in the generosity of God himself" (p. 255). Moreover, since the law of the gift is written on the human heart (p. 256) it "permeates the entire human person, including his body and sexual distinctiveness, this means that the gift of self to another can be truly total" (p. 256). Thus, applied within the setting of the transmission of life, "the body is [and becomes] the very instrument and sign of this gift and communion in the visible world" (pp. 258, 260). Ignatik underscores that the "self-giving of spouses in marriage does not undermine their relationship to God" but "confirms and fulfills" it, adding, "[t]his is because God himself is a *communio personarum,* and he is the source of the law of gift in man" (p. 255).

Concerning the sacrament of redemption, Ignatik explores the great Pope's reliance on Ephesians 5:21-33, which links sacramental marriage with the union of Christ and the Church. He comments that the historical realization of the divine mystery which began in creation through marriage "receives its definitive form in Jesus Christ and his union with the Church" (p. 264). Linking marriage with the sacrament of redemption in Christ, the Pope thus teaches that "marriage as a sacrament remains a living and life-giving part of man's journey to salvation," and continues to "efficaciously transmit … God's divine life in the visible world" (pp. 260, 265). Bringing together chapters three and four, Ignatik thus explicates that while truly giving of oneself is not possible on the ontological level, the gift of self is possible in the moral order and becomes an unparalleled "participat[ion] in the self-giving of God in creation and redemption" (p. 255).

And so, Christian spouses are called to participate in and reveal this mystery of love precisely by their openness to human life and its transmission. Returning to *Humanae vitae,* "the moral norms in [the encyclical] simply ensure and guide man's participation in the divine life… and open the space for God in the world, the human body and soul, and the interpersonal relations of marriage and the family" (p. 239). Consequently, any immoral acts in the sphere of conjugal life, especially concerning the transmission of life will "not only damage human love and prevent personal fulfillment but also will close the acting person to the mystery of love … and the divine blessings that come with it" (p. 239). In sum, the human body is tasked to be "an expression of the divine mystery," uniquely of the life-giving love of Christ for the Church, but its "speech,"

particularly in conjugal intimacy, must be in accordance with the true "language of the body" because "God the Creator is the author of this speech" (pp. 266-269).

Conclusion

Ignatik achieves his goal of exploring the extensive nature of transmission of human life within Wojtyła's thought; the author faithfully includes an abundance of historical information, including official and behind the scenes historical developments and social cultural trends that help parse the great Polish prelate's involvement and extensive contribution to Vatican II and the development of *Humanae vitae.* To effectively accomplish the book's objective, the author likewise includes in the Appendix section his own critical translations of relevant texts of the Polish cardinal.

Two critiques appear as an inevitable consequence of the magnitude of this project:

First, the sheer volume of material included in the book and the multi-disciplinary nature of investigation may, at first glance, have the unintended effect of obscuring the role that Wojtyła played in both the conciliar event and the promulgation of *Humanae vitae*. However, a penetrating, ongoing study of *Communicating Life* demonstrates the contrary. It is deeply enriching and should be used as a required textbook in any course on Karol Wojtyła, St. John Paul II, *Humanae vitae* or the Second Vatican Council, especially as it serves as an invaluable instructional manual between the Pope's *Theology of the Body* and *Humanae vitae.*

Second, the endeavor to verify Wojtyła's role in the development of both Vatican II and *Humanae vitae*, may seem circular, in that the evidence both overlaps and is mutually referential. However, a proper analysis of the text makes evident that the similarity of themes and presentation among Vatican II, Wojtyła's texts, and *Humanae vitae*, are due in part, because the Polish cardinal was a faithful "authentic interpreter" of the Council and Tradition (p. 11), and also because he served as a consummate teacher in the understanding of marriage and the transmission of life (p. 12). Ignatik's methodical work makes clear that the great Polish prelate emerged as a leading actor of the 20th century, indeed arguably one of the most prophetic voices in Church history.