Perfecting Ecological Relationality: Acknowledging Sin and the Cardinal Virtue of Humility

Lindsay M. Marcellus

A Dissertation
submitted to the Faculty of
the Department of Theology
in partial fulfillment for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Boston College
Morrissey College of Arts and Sciences
Graduate School

November 2022

Perfecting Ecological Relationality: Acknowledging Sin and the Cardinal Virtue of Humility

Lindsay M. Marcellus

Adviser: James F. Keenan, S.J.

Abstract: This dissertation argues that humility is a cardinal virtue that governs our ecological relationality. I define humility as the virtue of knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings. Humility is acquired via the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance and enabled by the "graces" of self-doubt and self-affirmation. A global survey of recent Christian scholarship on environmental issues and magisterial Roman Catholic teaching supports three conclusions: 1) interconnectedness characterizes human relationships with creation; 2) current ecological crises indicate the presence of sin and 3) we need to understand our place within creation and appreciate other-centered ways of knowing. Utilizing these three themes, I expand upon James Keenan's framework of rethinking cardinal virtues in terms of human relationality in order to account for an underdeveloped aspect of human relationality, that is, ecological relationality. I propose a more robust account of humility as a mean between two equally problematic extremes: pride and self-deprecation. Furthermore, humility helps us better identify sin both by recognizing how pride and self-deprecation can lead to indifference, understood as a failure to bother to love that stems from our strength, and by rejecting the isolation that enables the sin of indifference so understood. The final chapter addresses how humility can be understood and cultivated in the United States today. In particular, I argue that the adoption of a plant-based diet generally fosters humility in individuals living in wealthy nations with high rates of meat consumption. In conclusion, I suggest that Catholics reinvigorate the Lenten penitential practice of Friday abstinence from meat by seeing it also as an opportunity to foster the virtue of humility.

Contents

Acknowledgements

Writing this dissertation took me on a journey that was both more rewarding and much longer than I expected. From the perspective of virtue ethics, I find the metaphor of journey particularly apt, and especially given my concern with our "place" in the world, I wish to thank the many people who accompanied me, challenged me, and guided me (sometimes with a gentle push!) along the way.

Arriving at Boston College before even beginning to unpack from a cross-country move with a four-month-old, I remain forever grateful for the welcome and kindness I received from Cara Burke and Patti Donnellan during those first blurry days. In my colleagues I found a wonderful community in which to grow, learning from the experiences of others and sharing ideas, struggles, and victories—especially Xavier Montecel, Joseph McCrave, John Carter, Pete McFay, Jennifer Lamson-Scribner, Jon Cahill, Nicholas Hayes-Mota, Elyse Raby, Katie Mylorie, Stephanie Edwards, Megan McCabe, Kate Jackson-Meyer, Andrew Massena, and David Kwon. Thank you also to Robin Landrith, whose willingness to be my writing check-in partner these last few months was instrumental in breaking through a serious case of writer's block.

As Aristotle recognized, and a point on which he and I can agree, friendship is integral to the good life. In addition to those at Boston College mentioned above, I am rich in friendships that have transcended many life stages—especially those of Mary Janssen, Kayla Sykora, Mindy Asher, Amber Jackson, Rachel Chow, Amanda Bernard, Nicola Bunick, Amanda Kelly, Rachelle Lindo, Marie Burns, and Lynne and Joe Ventress.

For better or for worse, our families influence our characters and our interests and I am grateful for the family I was born into as well as the families that have welcomed me along the way. In some ways, this dissertation feels like the natural progression of theologically-focused conversations with my dad, who patiently engaged with my concerns for decades, beginning with questions about eternity at the age of five. I am grateful for the love of my parents, Laura and Dean Marcellus, and of my parents-in-law, George Chin and Elaine Massock, all of whom have been supportive not only of this academic endeavor (at times helping with childcare or other practical matters) but of me as a person. More generally, my family, including my brother John Ward, sister-in-law Laura Ward, godmother Anna Gray and my brothers- and sisters-in-law, nieces, nephews, cousins, aunts, and uncles, have enriched my life with their love, generosity, and perspective. I am further blessed to have developed lasting ties with Ericka Abreu and Patricia Vigorena and their families. I also carry the memory of those who have already entered eternal life with me wherever I go, from the grandmothers after whom I was named, to my siblings Andy and Katie Ward, whose deaths provoked questions of faith to which I still do not have the answers, and most recently, my father-in-law George, whose warmth and hospitality I will never forget.

Special thanks also go to the many mentors from whose guidance I have benefited at various points during this journey. An introductory undergraduate theology class, taken while I studied abroad in Santiago, Chile, revived my interest in the Catholic faith by introducing me to Catholic social teaching. Upon graduation, my connection to Catholicism was still a tenuous one, and I am grateful to several members of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart who encouraged me to ask more questions and to trust my instincts—especially Frs. Peter Campbell and David Foxen, MSC. As a master's student at the University of Notre Dame, David Clairmont nurtured my nascent interest in food ethics and Cathy Hilkert's class on feminist and multicultural theologies helped me see a path forward in theology. At Boston College, I found a theological home. In particular, Lisa Sowle Cahill's course on global Catholicism and James Keenan's virtue ethics course changed the way I approach my research. Andrea Vicini has guided me through questions of sustainability as well as prompted greater precision in my writing, all while being unfailingly supportive. Kristin Heyer has been an all-around role model and has consistently offered constructive feedback while encouraging me to find my own voice. I could not ask for a better advisor than

James Keenan, who has had an almost uncanny ability to know exactly what I needed in any given moment, has generously shared his insights and his good humor, and has both challenged me to discover my own voice and guided me through the entire process despite several setbacks.

I wish to thank my children Joseph, Jeremy, and Geordi, who have also accompanied or joined me along this journey and whose presence in my life is both blessing and education. They have never let me get lost in the "ivory tower" and have challenged me to take a broad view when it comes to defining human flourishing. They have also pushed me to develop the practical skills of prioritization (of both values and tasks) and becoming a more efficient writer. Parenting is perhaps the most challenging school of virtue I have experienced, but it has also been more rewarding than I could have imagined.

I do not have the words to express my gratitude for my husband, John Chin, whose support has been unwavering despite significant cost, including living apart at times. Yes, you have most certainly been my rock, or, in the terms of this dissertation, you show what it means to live out the virtue of fidelity in daily life.

For John, Joseph, Jeremy, Geordi, and Nike

Chapter 1

Acknowledging Interrelatedness: The Interconnectedness of Creation and the Need for Conversion

This chapter offers a survey of the ways Catholic leaders and theological ethicists identify the sources of the climate crisis and what responses they propose. Anticipating a largely Catholic audience, this literature review begins with Roman Catholic magisterial teaching. Due to my social location as a white, middle-class, U.S. scholar, and because I agree with Lisa Fullam that other-centeredness is a crucial component of the virtue of humility, I have chosen to engage with scholars from other parts of the world whose work is less familiar to me. Therefore, I will engage with a total of five clusters of interlocutors: (1) magisterial Roman Catholic teaching represented by *Laudato Si'*, the *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, and the statements of local bishops' conferences; (2) a circle of African theological voices featuring Teresia Hinga, Peter Knox, and Edward Osang Obi; (3) a circle of Asian theological voices featuring Christina Astomia, John Casta, and Prem Xalxo; (4) a circle of Native American theological voices featuring Stan McKay, George Tinker, and

Jace Weaver, and (5) two North American theologians: Willis Jenkins and Erin Lothes Biviano.

This survey is organized around three key themes: (1) human beings are in relationship with nonhuman creatures, (2) there is a need for conversion in order to repair these ecological relationships, and (3) these relationships are characterized by interconnectedness or interdependence, which must be acknowledged. Each cluster of authors describes human beings as in relationship with creation. Overwhelmingly, they identify that the interconnectedness or interdependence of all creatures characterizes this relationship, and in many cases, also identify harmony as a key feature. I argue that this growing sense of ecological kinship carries within it challenges to the stewardship model. Most but certainly not all clusters of authors use the language of sin and ecological conversion. While there is consistent and sustained attention to structural factors, I argue that overall the category of sin is under-utilized and under-developed, especially in the United States context. Lastly, this chapter will sketch the ways in which the theme of acknowledging our ecological interdependence found throughout these writings anticipates a rethinking and redeployment of the virtue of humility, which will be the subject of the following chapter.

A special note is needed to clarify how I approach sin in this chapter. For each group of writings, I examine whether or not sin terminology is present. If present, I consider whether this terminology reflects a general understanding of sin as a rupture in our relationship with God or identifies particular sins of concern and further, whether there is a focus on individual or social aspects of sin.[1] If the terminology is absent, I still attend to themes that relate to a relevant dimension of sin (i.e., irresponsibility, greed, pride, selfishness, or inattention/insensitivity).[2] One of my underlying concerns is that the writings that come

1. More attention to this distinction between *sin* and *sins* can be found in chapter 3, in which I build upon James Keenan's exposition of sin as "a failure to bother to love" that often stems from a position of relative strength and also attend to the specific sins associated with the vices (as identified in chapter 2) opposed to humility.

2. The concern with irresponsibility tracks the way that acknowledging sin prompts us to accept responsibility, a theme to which I will return in chapter 3. The attention to greed and pride stems from my larger

from more privileged contexts, especially those of the United States bishops, tend to elide sin or frame sin in terms of weakness in a way that promotes complacency in the face of global problems such as climate change rather than challenging us to recognize and take responsibility for the ways we sin out of our (individual, social, and/or economic) strength.

1.1 The Ecological Crisis in Catholic Magisterial Teaching

In keeping with the above-stated methodology of seeking out voices from outside of my social location, this section pays special attention to the statements of bishops' conferences outside of the United States. As a survey rather than a comprehensive review, this section does not aim to trace the full arc of papal and episcopal teaching on the environment, but rather to look beyond some of the most frequently cited papal documents in order to better identify any differences in emphasis by the teaching authority of the Catholic Church in a variety of national contexts. I will proceed chronologically, starting with the statements of bishops' conferences in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Italy, and the Philippines, before turning to Pope John Paul II's well-known *1990 World Day of Peace Message*. I will then consider the pastoral statements[3] issued by bishops in the United States, South Africa, Japan, New Zealand, Canada, and Bolivia before concluding this section with a close reading of Pope Francis's 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'*.

The Dominican Episcopal Conference (1987)

The bishops in the Dominican Republic situate their 1987 *Pastoral Letter on the Relationship of Human Beings to Nature* in response to the continuing and worsening problem

---

concern with the vice of pride in relation to humility. Likewise, I pay close attention to selfishness and lack of attention to others, which are opposed to the other-centered understanding of the virtue of humility which I develop in chapter 2.

3. The 2008 statement by the Canadian Conference of Bishops was issued by their Commission for Social Affairs. I have included it here because the comparison between the approach taken in this document and in the two documents from the US bishops is fruitful.

of deforestation and its consequence of soil erosion. Unsurprisingly given the title of the letter, the relationship of human beings with nature is stressed, and that relationship is marked by suffering. Our actions against nature, such as abusing natural resources, are also actions against God the Creator and against other human beings who need those resources.[4] Nonetheless, while the relationship of human beings with nature is inextricably linked with our relationships with other human beings and God, it is not identical with these relationships. Human beings and nature depend on each other and this interdependence gives rise to serious human obligations toward the rest of nature (no. 36). Nature "demands" and "forbids" certain things of human beings (no. 35). From the beginning of the letter, the bishops write in terms of humanity sinning against nature, naming the destruction of the forests as such a sin (no. 1).

While Christ taught us how to respect nature and use it well (nos. 53-54), through our sin, we have failed to do so and therefore reconciliation is needed. St. Francis's call for reconciliation between human beings and between human beings and all of nature is cited as a historical model that continues to be applicable (no. 56). After drawing from Christian scriptures and spirituality to illustrate the proper relationship of human beings with the rest of nature, the bishops argue for a solution that is necessarily both technical and ethical, and which involves all levels of society. Within this pastoral letter, the special place of human beings in God's creation as governors, custodians, and even perfecters of the rest of

4. See The Dominican Episcopal Conference, "Pastoral Letter on the Relationship of Human Beings to Nature (January 21, 1987)," in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter E. Grazer, trans. Sr. Helen Philipps MM (Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996), no. 50. For the original letter in Spanish, see "Carta pastoral sobre la relación del hombre con la naturaleza" [in spa], in *Documentos de la Conferencia del Episcopado Dominicano (1955- 1990)*, Colección Quinto centenario. Serie Documentos 2. (Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Comisión Dominicana Permanente para la Celebración del Quinto Centenario del Descubrimiento y Evangelización de América, 1990), 593–611.

creation is unambiguous (nos. 33, 35e-f, 55). God put human beings "in charge over the earth" (no. 31).[5]

Like other Catholic documents, the bishops in the Dominican Republic note the connections between environmental crises, poverty and injustice, and seek to meet the needs of both current and future generations. They also speak of the relationship between human beings and nature in terms of stewardship, governance, and custodianship and stress that culpability for the sins causing the current problems is not equally distributed (i.e. between campesinos, landowners, and public authority). Yet unlike several other Catholic documents that will be explored in this survey, the Dominican Bishops spend more time talking about sin, and their approach is noteworthy in two ways. First, they attribute the serious social and environmental problems that their country is facing not only to human sins against God and other human beings, but also to human sins against nature. Indeed, part of the role of the Church in response to these problems is to stress human obligations to nature and help people become aware of their sins against nature (no. 77). Second, they do not simply discuss sin in general but rather name sins that are contributing to the environmental crises and injustices, including indolence, desire for luxury, greed, complicity, negligence, carelessness (22), and a "destructive instinct" in which humans enjoy killing (26).

Guatemalan Bishops' Conference (1988)

Like the pastoral letter by the Dominican Episcopal Conference, that of the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference a year later is also concerned with the connections between land use and injustice within their society, particularly the exploitation of campesinos. The Guatemalan bishops identify land ownership, and specifically dispossession of the land by the majority, as the heart of the structural injustice that results in excess for a few and abject poverty for many.[6] Their proposed responses and solutions include an exhortation to

5. Furthermore, the earth is "the patrimony of humankind." The Dominican Episcopal Conference, "Relationship of Human Beings to Nature," nos. 32, 33, 35a. These conclusions are supported by passages in Genesis, Psalm 8, and Wisdom.

6. See Guatemalan Bishops' Conference, "The Cry for Land, Joint Pastoral Letter by the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference (February 29, 1988)," in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the*

awareness and a refusal to remain passive in the face of the urgent need for change (sec. 3.2.1), an invitation to solidarity (sec. 3.2.2), a reiteration of the need for integral development and a privileging of the campesino and the Indian people (secs. 3.2.3, 3.2.4.3), and a general call for using nonviolence and legal means to bring about changes to social structures (3.2.5).

While their emphasis is not on environmental issues, the Guatemalan Bishops do draw some theological conclusions regarding how to view the earth and human beings' proper place in it, identifying the latter in terms of farmwork.[7] Like the Dominican Bishops, their reading of the Christian scriptures emphasizes that the earth belongs to God, not to humans. However, they do not express particular concern about the relationship between human beings and the rest of nature, and their view of the earth is comparatively as an inert object.[8]

While the interconnectedness of humanity and other creatures is not a theme in this pastoral letter, the denunciation of sin is. The Guatemalan Bishops express deep concern about the indifference of people to the dehumanizing poverty of their campesino brothers and sisters. This indifference can be seen in the acceptance of young children doing heavy physical labor, the failure to react to the sight of the transportation of thousands of peasants to coastal plantations, and the glossing over of evidence of abject poverty, such as portraying "the damp, unlivable, and unsanitary shacks" as "'folklore' and tourist attractions"

Environment, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer (Washington, DC, 1996), sec. 1.1.3.2. For the original pastoral letter in Spanish, see El Episcopado Guatemateco, *El Clamor por la Tierra, Carta Pastoral Colectiva del Episcopado Guatemateco (29 de febrero de 1988)* [in spa] (1988), accessed September 2, 2022, http://www.iglesiacatolica.org.gt/19880229.pdf.

7. Drawing on Genesis 2:7, they write, "Thus farmwork appears as the essential task defining and situating the human person in the world and before God." Guatemalan Bishops' Conference, "The Cry for Land," sec. 1.1.

8. The earth is a resource analogous to wealth; it is to be used to serve justice within human communities. See ibid., sec. 2.1.7. Although creation is dissimilar to wealth in that it will be redeemed, the document lacks any mention of human obligations to nature or of nature "demanding" anything from human beings found in the pastoral letter of the Dominican Episcopal Conference.

(sec. 1.4.2.2). They draw on the Prophets and the Gospels (especially Luke) to denounce the sins of avarice and excessive wealth by name (secs. 2.1.4-5).

Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy (1988)

From the opening line, the Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy frame their 1988 treatment of ecology in terms of human rights.[9] They attribute the ecological destruction they are witnessing to the pollution caused by current agricultural production practices, increased industrial production, and increased demand for energy.[10] The moral causes of this degradation include a crisis of conscience and "the acceptance of ambiguous ethical values" which go against God's commandments.[11] Since their concern is with the environment as a human habitat, the bishops of Northern Italy reject the idea of "return" to some pristine natural state as part of the solution. Rather, they focus on responding to the moral dimensions of the causes of ecological degradation by forming consciences, encouraging discernment, and stating the need both for individuals to adopt ecologically appropriate lifestyles, and for a new economic world order that is founded on the knowledge of the interdependence of humanity's future and nature.

Unlike the pastoral letter of the Dominican bishops and like that of the Guatemalan bishops, the relationship between human beings and nature in this statement is unidirectional, primarily framed in terms of stewardship, human rights, appropriate resource utilization, and intergenerational justice.[12] Our ecological obligations then are understood in

9. See Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy, "Ecology: The Bishops of Lombardy Address the Community (September 15, 1988)," in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer (Washington, DC, 1996), 295.

10. See ibid., 298.

11. Ibid., 303.

12. For example, the earth is from God but it is gifted primarily, if not exclusively, to humans since, "the earth is ordered and arranged in a manner suited for human needs." See ibid., 300. Here the bishops are drawing scriptural support from Isaiah 45:18 and Psalm 104:24b, see notes 6 and 7. Drawing from Genesis 1:26-28 and *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, the bishops define the place of human beings in creation in terms of our God-given but not absolute dominion over nature which is laborious but a blessing that properly inspires gratitude to God. At times the dominion language is very strong, blurring the line between dominion and domination, such as when they quote Psalm 8:6b-7b, "All things you have put under his feet" Ibid., 299. Nonetheless, the bishops stress that such dominion is not absolute. Ibid., 302.

terms of our obligations to God and to other human beings. While the bishops of Northern Italy identify "defiling nature" as a sin, it is a sin against God rather than against nature itself.[13] Unlike the letter of the Dominican bishops, there is no mention of any obligations to nature or the earth.

The respect, moderation, and voluntary asceticism for which the Bishops of Lombardy advocate is in service of the needs of present and future generations of human beings. Sin language is present in this document, but sins are talked about in a general rather than specific manner. They state the need for an "ecological conversion,"[14] but it is not clear from what exactly they are calling their readers to convert. However, there are brief, undeveloped mentions of consumerism, resignation, and erroneous attitudes towards nature, such as an arrogant use of technology that views the earth simply in terms of material resources and ignores its God-giveness.

Catholic Bishops of the Philippines (1988)

Similar to the bishops in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and Northern Italy, the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines are concerned with the environmental degradation they are witnessing. They frame this degradation as "the ultimate pro-life issue."[15] The immediate causes include food production practices that do not respect the rhythms of nature and provide short-term benefits for only a few people, the destruction of forests and forest species due to excessive hunting and logging, soil erosion, and widespread pollution of rivers and seas. On a deeper level, this degradation is caused by the sins of thoughtlessness and greed. Specific suggestions for responding to the ecological crisis include: that individuals increase their awareness of local environmental issues in their area and organize locally, that the Church set up a Care of the Earth ministry at every organizational level,

13. Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy, "Ecology," 304.
14. See ibid.
15. Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?: A Pastoral Letter on Ecology from the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines (January 29, 1988)," in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer (Washington, DC, 1996), 317.

and that the government establish an independent Department to deal with ecological issues. More broadly, they propose that Christians respond by acting immediately and with hope, recognizing that the Christian vocation consists of both working for justice and to preserve the integrity of creation. Defending the Earth is a life and death issue and the bishops call Christians to "take a stand on the side of life."[16]

Like the other episcopal documents examined here, the 1988 pastoral letter by the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines notes the links between environmental degradation, human health, and justice for current and future generations. While environmental degradation has been described as a result of progress, the bishops find little real progress once they consider who has benefited the most and who has paid the price. They conclude that the natural world has been "grievously wounded" while the poor remain "as disadvantaged as ever."[17]

However, while the focus is on human beings, and humans undeniably have a special place within creation that is defined in terms of stewardship, compared to the statements by the Guatemalan and Northern Italian bishops, there is more attention to the interconnectedness of all creation and to creatures besides human beings. Interconnectedness is closely related to harmony and peace in this letter. Part of the current problem facing the Philippines is that "Humans have forgotten to live peacefully with other creatures."[18] The earth is a household whose inhabitants include human beings as well as other creatures. All life in the "earthly household" is sustained by a "web of dynamic relationships."[19] All creatures are bound "together in a mutually supportive community,"[20] a fact Jesus realized

16. Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?," 310. Similarly, they conclude their letter with the choice between life and death that Moses gave the Israelites in Deuteronomy 30:19-20. Ibid., 318.
17. Ibid., 313.
18. Ibid., 312.
19. Ibid., 310.
20. Ibid., 312.

and acted upon in his earthly life.[21] Uniquely among the Catholic documents surveyed here, the Filipino bishops use the term "community of the living" a few times.[22]

Like the Dominican bishops the year before, the Filipino bishops understand ecological degradation as the result, in part, of human sin against nature. Also like the Dominican (and Guatemalan) bishops, the Filipino bishops do not simply talk about sin and the need for conversion in general terms. Rather, they name the specific sins of thoughtlessness and greed, writing, "We have stripped it bare, silenced its sounds and banished other creatures from the community of the living. Through our thoughtlessness and greed we have sinned against God and His creation."[23] They repeat Jesus' warnings against hoarding and the seductions of wealth and power and exhort Christians to follow Jesus' example of living lightly on the earth and respecting the natural world and to also turn to Mary for help choosing life over death.

Pope John Paul II (1990)

Notwithstanding the absence of any reference to the writings of local bishops' conferences, Pope John Paul II's *1990 Message for the World Day of Peace* affirms several of the key themes mentioned above, including the pervasive concerns with greed, justice, and meeting the needs of current generations, as well as some of the more unique contributions of particular conferences. For example, similar to the bishops of Northern Italy, he identifies the *right to a safe environment* as part of the solution.[24] Also, like the Filipino bishops,

21. Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?," 316.

22. The term "community of the living" resonates with the term "community of creation" that some biblical scholars have recently introduced as a proposed corrective to biblical interpretations of human beings' place in creation that focus disproportionately on stewardship. This theme will be taken up in the next chapter. For now, it is important to note that while the Filipino bishops definitely understand the place of human beings in creation as stewards, they also understand humans as in some way fellow members of this "community of the living." This community predates human beings, is the intended beneficiary of the world that God created (i.e., the earth is for all God's creatures to live in, not just human beings), and is a party (along with human beings and God) to the covenant that God made with Noah.

23. Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?," 313.

24. John Paul II, *1990 World Day of Peace Message, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility*, no. 5 and no. 9, respectively, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace.html.

but to a greater degree, John Paul II connects environmental degradation and peace and harmony, specifically by linking peace with God to peace with creation and peace among all people. He also frames environmental degradation as a life issue, the response to which requires respect for life. The message emphasizes harmony and the interconnectedness of life on earth, as we now must realize that interference in one part of the ecosystem has consequences in other areas. Nature is characterized by order and harmony, and human disregard of this order has led to ecological devastation. Humans have a special dignity and responsibility, and their intended place in creation is characterized by the dominion granted in Genesis 1:28. However, creation is not presented as an entirely passive entity, a mere resource for human beings that must be used wisely but that has no independent status or voice. While the strong language of humans sinning against nature present in the letters of the Dominican and Filipino bishops is absent here, humans do have a duty to nature as well as to God (no. 16). Creation, like human beings, waits for liberation (no. 3), is part of the "all things" reconciled and made new through Christ (no. 4), and is called to praise God (no. 16).[25]

The language of sin is not as prominent as in the letters by the bishops in the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, and the Philippines. Sin is only mentioned three times, twice in the context of original sin and only once in the context of personal sin. In all three cases, the discussion of sin is general and fairly far removed from daily life.[26] Yet the message's emphasis on respect for life, the interdependence of all creation, and ecologically and socially harmful lifestyles characterized by instant gratification and consumerism point to a concern, albeit underdeveloped, with specific sins: disrespect for life, greed, selfishness, and indifference. Disrespect for life is the fundamental cause of the ecological problem (no. 7)

25. John Paul II, *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, Here John Paul II draws on Romans 8:20-21, Colossians 1:19-20 and Revelation 21:5, and Psalm 148:96, respectively.

26. The intended harmony of creation was destroyed by human sin, which not only resulted in an alienation from the self but also the rebellion of the earth (no. 3) and the subjection of creation to sin and decay (no. 4). Catholics must extend their respect for life and human dignity to the rest of creation and need to recognize the effects of both original and personal sin (no. 16).

and also leads to a lack of interest in others and in the earth (no. 13). Greed and selfishness go against the natural order of creation which is characterized by mutual interdependence (no. 8). Modern lifestyles are not only shaped by instant gratification and consumerism but also by indifference to the damage these cause (no. 13).

United States Catholic Conference (1991)

Like the *1990 World Day of Peace Message* and all of the pastoral statements surveyed here, the 1991 pastoral statement of the United States bishops also identifies humans' place in creation as stewards.[27] Based on Scripture, they affirm the existence of a relationship between humanity and nature that is described in terms of kinship and care.[28] They also focus on interdependence in the sense of the interrelationship between ecological and economic concerns. "Renewing the Earth" is concerned with several aspects of environmental degradation, including the effect of greenhouse gases on the atmosphere as well as smog, erosion, chemical pollution of food and water systems, inadequate disposal of toxic waste, and acid rain (I). Like John Paul II, the US bishops frame the moral challenge in terms of living in harmony with the rest of creation and emphasize respect for human life and dignity, which is extended to respect for all creation. Their statement includes a few general calls to action for members of different sectors of society (V,B), but their primary focal points are calling their readers to reflect and pointing out the attitudes and principles which should guide any actions taken.

Sin language is present in the document but not emphasized. Drawing on Scripture, the United States bishops attribute human alienation from nature, a breach which has been overcome by Christ, to human sin, specifically arrogance and acquisitiveness (II,A,B).

27. See United States Catholic Conference, *Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991)* (1991), I,C; III,A; V,C, accessed September 2, 2022, https://www.usccb.org/resources/renewing-earth. It is interesting to note that the contrast is between "stewards" and "gods" (I,C). In other words, the clarification needed regards exercising too much dominion rather than too little.

28. For example, the Sabbath teaches us that there is a "kinship with all" (II,A) and the gospels especially show that the relationship between humanity and nature is fundamentally "one of caring for creation" (II,B).

There is also a general assertion of the need to recognize sin and failure (V,A). In two sections of the document there is a call to conversion but conversion *from what* is not clearly identified (I,D; V,C). Humans can and do sin against creation, but abortion is the only sin named as such (III,H). Addressing the resource-intensive, destructive, and wasteful consumption in developed countries (such as the United States) is mentioned as a top priority for those living in such places (III,H) but is not addressed in detail or using the language of sin or vice. By contrast, more attention is given to positive developments, such as briefly identifying some of the specific local and international environmental efforts supported by the Campaign for Human Development and Catholic Relief Services (I,C). Hence, overall, the document has a positive and hopeful tone. The "moral challenge" is serious, but contrition is not paired with sin but with gratitude.[29] While the relatively minimal attention to sin seen in this 1991 statement by the United States Bishops is by no means unique among episcopal or papal statements, it is interesting to note that so far, bishops writing from less privileged contexts seem more willing to name the sin(s) they see in those contexts. I suspect that the US bishops underutilize sin language in part because they think of sin more in terms of weakness than of strength, and so find it more difficult to identify sin in a social context marked by relative privilege and strength.[30]

The Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference (1999)

Eight years later, the Southern African Catholic Bishops' Conference published their *Pastoral Statement on the Environmental Crisis*. Written from the perspective of the environmental damage that past economic development efforts have caused in their region, the statement approaches the environmental crisis through the lens of justice. The bishops' concern with environmentally mediated injustices is strengthened due to information

29. For example, the United States bishops write, "Grateful for the gift of creation and contrite in the face of the deteriorating condition of the natural world, we invite Catholics and men and women of good will in every walk of life to consider with us the moral issues raised by the environmental crisis." United States Catholic Conference, *Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991)*, I,D.

30. See chapter 3 for more on sinning out of strength and the United States social context.

that the Hearings on Poverty had made recently available.[31] Human living conditions and life spans have been negatively affected by environmental degradation. The environmental crisis is urgent and is about survival, not just aesthetics and the bishops are clearly most concerned with its impact on human beings, especially poor human beings.[32] The relationship between human beings and nonhuman creation is primarily discussed in terms of responsible stewardship and appreciation for God's creation. The South African bishops identify human irresponsibility as the problem and responsible stewardship and working for environmentally sustainable development as the solution. The faithful should become familiar with the new civil legislation as well as the Church's teaching on the environment, and help disseminate this information to others. The response requires everyone's efforts, "Everyone's talents and involvement are needed to redress the damage caused by human abuse of God's creation."[33] While the term "sin" is absent in this short document, the concern for taking responsibility and the language of violation and abuse are present.

The Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan (2001)

Like the *1990 World Day of Peace Message* and the 1991 statement by the United States Catholic Conference, the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan also places the environmental crisis within the broader context of respect for life. Their 2001 statement, *Reverence for Life: A Message for the Twenty-First Century*, has a tripartite structure, with the first chapter focusing on Scripture, the second on the troubled family, and the third on specific life and death issues. The environment is the last subject treated in this third chapter. In response to global warming, ozone depletion, pollution, and acid rain, the Catholic bishops in Japan emphasize local action to a greater degree than other episcopal conferences.

31. See South African Catholic Bishops' Conference, "Pastoral Statement on the Environmental Crisis (5 September 1999)," 1, accessed September 1, 2022, `https://web.archive.org/web/20050225010631/https://sacbc.org.za/environmentalcrisis.htm`.

32. They do note that the environmental crisis has an impact on all living beings and are concerned with the "delicate and complex system that allows life to continue." See ibid., 1 of 2. The document does not use the terms "interconnected" or "interdependent," but there is one use of kinship language: a reference to "Mother Nature."

33. Ibid., 2.

Rather than focusing on national and international efforts, they stress the need to rethink the lifestyle and mass production prevalent in developed countries.[34] Industries should focus more on saving energy, recycling, and producing less waste. Individuals can avoid excess packaging, question the necessity of purchases, reduce their air conditioning use, and try to make more informed purchases (i.e., by asking how much electric power a product consumes or if it is made from recycled materials). Like every other Catholic document surveyed here, the bishops of Japan identify the place of human beings in creation in terms of stewardship. Their understanding of stewardship affirms human responsibility for maintaining the order and harmony of creation (nos. 13, 72). Harmony means that both nature and humanity can "coexist in abundance" (no. 85).[35] The bishops also use the language of interconnection and cooperation when writing about the relationship between human beings and nonhuman creatures.

The themes of selfishness and disordered values pervade the document as a whole. However, the message intentionally does not focus much on sin, a move which is presented as a corrective to past statements where there has been a disproportionate focus on sin and judgment at the expense of God's love, mercy, forgiveness, and kindness (no. 93). Sin is not absent from the message, but rather, it is applied to the authors rather than to the readers of the document.[36] The relationship between humans and the environment is disordered and the language of pride is used in contrast to the divinely-willed harmony and balance in

34. See Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, "Reverence for Life: A Message for the Twenty-First Century from The Catholic Bishops of Japan (January 1, 2001)," no. 89, accessed January 14, 2019, https://www.cbcj.catholic.jp/2001/01/01/2700/.

35. While drawing a distinction between humanity and nature can itself be problematic by implying that human beings somehow stand apart from nature, the bishops' focus on harmony and their association of harmony with abundance for nonhumans as well as humans suggests that they do not intend this distinction to support a relationship of human domination or exploitation in the name of stewardship. For example, they again draw a distinction between nature and humanity when they write, "Both nature and humanity have been exquisitely created by God's hands," but the same paragraph emphasizes interconnection and uses the language of cooperation when referring to humans, plants, and animals. Ibid., no. 88.

36. The bishops explicitly "repent" of past responses of the church in Japan to people who are divorced and of a cold and judgmental policy toward suicide. Ibid., no. 24, no. 62, respectively. They also join in Pope John Paul II's repentance of past errors of the church, such as the treatment of Galileo (no. 72).

nature. Making the necessary "new start" in our relationship with the environment requires us to "know our limits," recognize the "God-given balance of nature," and "correct our pride" (no. 88).

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops (2001)

In the same year that the bishops in Japan issued their message, the United States bishops issued another statement on the environment, this time specifically addressing climate change. This document contains all of the expected themes of creation as gift, humans as stewards, and the need for intergenerational justice. As might be expected from the document's title, "Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good," the primary response to the problem of climate change that the US bishops call for is dialogue. They express a concern that the voices of poor people and poor countries be heard because these voices are "sometimes" neglected in a debate that is dominated by more powerful interests.[37] Given this concern, it is notable that the US bishops do not cite any of the writings related to the environmental crisis from other episcopal conferences mentioned above (or any other sources from "poor countries").[38]

Whereas other bishops' statements identify specific negative environmental damage in their countries, the US bishops cite no examples of how climate change is affecting anyone in the United States. Since their awareness of the issue comes largely from scientific research and public debate over the contribution of humans to climate change, perhaps it is not surprising that their discussion of the issue remains at a mostly theoretical level throughout their statement.[39] They do mention that other countries have been convinced

37. This concern is mentioned in the second paragraph of the introduction. See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good," accessed January 14, 2019, `http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/global-climate-change-a-plea-for-dialogue-prudence-and-the-common-good.cfm`.

38. The bulk of the US bishops' citations refer to the writings of John Paul II and the work of the International Panel of Climate Change (IPPC). They also cite their own previous statements, *Gaudium et Spes*, and the National Academy of Science.

39. Nonetheless, as the 2008 statement by the Social Affairs Commission of the Conference of Canadian Bishops shows, it is certainly possible to rely on international reports rather than national experiences of the

by the evidence and so frame their own message as, in part, a response "to the appeals of the Church in other parts of the world," but even here, they neither mention any concrete examples nor refer to any local episcopal statements.[40] The bishops accept the scientific consensus on climate change, but despite the global nature of the problem and the disproportionate ways that the United States contributes to it, the urgency found in other episcopal documents on environmental issues is lacking. Rather, the United States bishops take pains to note that there are uncertainties in scientific models, that the issues are oversimplified or made excessively controversial in the media, that science is "too often used as a weapon," and that "[r]esearchers and advocates on all sides of the issue often have stakes in policy outcomes, as do advocates of various courses of public policy."'[41] In light of these observations, and absent any concrete, close-to-home examples of the harm that climate change is causing or will soon cause, their conclusions that "most experts agree that something significant is happening to the atmosphere," and that global warming "could be quite serious" hardly communicate a pressing need for action. Rather, the document risks masquerading excessive caution (to the point of inaction) as the virtue of prudence, robbing that virtue of the very tension that facilitates growth.[42]

Given the lack of urgency that comes through in the message, it is perhaps no surprise that there is even less attention to sin in this document than in its predecessor ten years before.[43] Excessive consumption is to be rejected but there are no guidelines for what

impacts of climate change and still communicate more urgency in addressing the problem. See Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops Commission for Social Affairs, *Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion*, 3, accessed September 2, 2022, https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/enviro_eng.pdf. This statement will be considered in more depth shortly.

40. This is mentioned in the seventh paragraph of the introduction. See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "A Plea for Dialogue."

41. Ibid.

42. James Keenan has made the point that prudence is not, in an Aristotelian and Thomistic framework, about caution, but rather about finding the mean "where there is adequate tension for growth." See, for example, James F. Keenan, "Virtue Ethics," in *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*, ed. Bernard Hoose (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998), 87-88.

43. The single use of the term "sin" is a reference to John Paul II's connection of "protecting the environment to 'authentic human ecology,' which can overcome 'structures of sin' and which promotes both human dignity and respect for creation." United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "A Plea for Dialogue," cf.

makes consumption excessive, or how its identification might be complicated by living in a privileged context. Whereas the bishops in the Philippines and Guatemala reiterated warnings against hoarding, with the Guatemalan bishops lifting up the holding of property in common seen in Acts,[44] the United States bishops dedicate three paragraphs to linking the stewardship of creation to the right to private property and economic initiative as well as to the freedom to act needed for exercising moral responsibility in caring for the earth. Citing John Paul II's encyclical *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, they note the "social mortgage" on property found in the Catholic tradition, but offer no warnings against greed, accumulation of wealth, or hoarding. Lifestyle changes that incorporate more restraint, moderation, and sacrifice are needed, but the call to conversion is general. No specific sins or vices to turn away from are named and no concrete examples of necessary sacrifices or lifestyle modifications are offered. Nor does it appear that much difficulty will be encountered in this conversion process, since technology can help us "ease" our way into accepting sacrifice.[45] Furthermore, the changes needed have personal benefits.[46] The bishops close their statement with a call to their readers to be guided by traditional values of respect for life, humility, and sacrifice, and to engage in dialogue and prudent action. Yet how can the virtue of prudence effectively guide us if we cannot identify the sins or vices we need to turn away from or recognize the difficulties as well as the benefits that will be involved in the process of conversion?

New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference (2006)

By contrast, in a shorter statement issued just five years later, the New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference recognizes that climate change is already an urgent issue for the peo-

John Paul II, *On the Hundredth Anniversary of Rerum Novarum: Encyclical Letter Centesimus Annus*, no. 38.

44. As will be seen shortly, a few years later, the Bolivian bishops will also focus on Jesus' critique of absolute private ownership.

45. The U.S. bishops write that through technological innovation and lifestyle changes, we can "ease the way to a sustainable and equitable world economy in which sacrifice will no longer be an unpopular concept."

46. For example, the bishops assert that rejecting excessive consumption makes more time available for friends, family members, and civic responsibilities.

ples of the Pacific and that there will be more than one million environmental refugees from that region by the end of the century. They do not spend any time cautioning about the ways in which climate change can be exaggerated for political ends or how the science behind it is so complex that it can make public discussion difficult. Rather, they open their statement with three provocative questions that frame the issue in terms of justice, right to life, and stewardship.[47] Like the other statements surveyed here, the New Zealand bishops are concerned with environmental justice, understand the ecological crisis as inextricably related to crises of economics and poverty, call for solidarity with the poor, and presume that the proper understanding of human beings' relationship to the rest of creation is as stewards.

Although, like the statement by the United States bishops, the New Zealand bishops do not here use the term "sin," they clearly identify the root of the problem of climate change as selfishness. Individual selfishness damages society by helping create a society characterized by short-term thinking, consumerism, a desire to consume more, and immediate gratification. The necessary response is identified as acts of selflessness, both individually and collectively, "of self sacrifice for the greater good, of self denial in the midst of convenient choices, of choosing simpler lifestyles in the midst of a consumer society." Whereas the solution ultimately must be global since the problem is global, the New Zealand bishops stress that individuals and churches can take action at the local level. Unlike the United States bishops, they give some concrete ideas for what this action might look like: reducing energy use, buying local, avoiding excessive packaging and water waste, or even changing the kind of car one drives. They caution that while lifestyle changes are needed, they should

47. These three questions are: "What does the commandment 'Thou shall not kill' mean when twenty percent of the world's population consumes resources at a rate that robs poorer nations and future generations of what they need to survive? What does it mean to respect life when 30,000 people die each day from poverty? What does it mean to be stewards of the earth when up to half of all living species are expected to become extinct in the next 200 years?" New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference, "Statement on Environmental Issues," accessed January 14, 2019, https://www.catholic.org.nz/about-us/bishops-statements/statement-on-environmental-issues/.

be made by those who can best afford them rather than forced on the more vulnerable members of society, such as elderly persons who have already been affected by power crises. In their conclusion, they note that the Catholic faith offers the "importance of simplicity, and of learning to give up some things that we want, so others may have what they need."

The Canadian Bishops' Conference (2008)

The 2008 statement of the Commission for Social Affairs of the Canadian Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion," provides another instructive counterpoint to the approach taken by the bishops in the United States.[48] This brief document begins with Scripture, proceeds to consider the rupture of harmony with nature and with other creatures, then attends to positive developments before outlining a three-fold conversion of our relationships with nature, other human beings, and God.[49] Without denying human stewardship, the image of the human being that the Canadian bishops choose to highlight is that of a gardener.[50]

Although the term sin only appears once in the phrase "structures of sin," the idea of sin as a rupture in relationship pervades the document. Human beings have "violated the laws of life" and "mismanaged the 'domain' entrusted to us."[51] This rupture in human harmony with nature results in a rupture in our relationships with other human beings, which can be seen in the injustice of how the poorest countries will bear the greatest burden of climate

48. Like New Zealand and the United States, Canada is considered a high-income developed nation. Development Policy, Analysis Division of the Department of Economic, and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat, "Country Classification: Statistical annex to *World Economic Situation and Prospects*," 2014, Table A, p. 145 and Table E, p. 149, accessed September 3, 2022, `https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2014wesp_country_classification.pdf`. Yet unlike New Zealand, Canada is geographically proximate to the United States.

49. See Catholic Bishops Commission for Social Affairs, *Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion*.

50. While the document makes a passing reference to being created in the image and likeness of God, it interprets this role of steward or manager not in the light of Genesis 1:28 but rather Genesis 2:15 and links "tilling" and "keeping" the garden to sustainable development and intergenerational justice. See ibid., 1-2. Here it is worth recalling that the Guatemalan Bishops drew on Genesis 2:7 for the image of the human being as a farmer.

51. Catholic Bishops Commission for Social Affairs, *Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion*, 2. Furthermore, the "dominion" of human beings is linked to obedience to nature.

change and future generations will pay the price for our mismanagement.[52] The Canadian bishops suggest that the roots of this injustice and mismanagement of "the Garden of Eden" are to be found in selfishness.[53] Since the ecological crisis is also a moral crisis, conversion is needed. That conversion is predicated on an understanding of our interdependence[54] and partially tied to lifestyle changes that respect the limits of planetary resources.[55] In turn, through voluntary simplicity, we can free ourselves from habits of overconsumption and waste at which point we will be more likely to properly approach nature with an attitude of contemplation rather than exploitation.[56]

While both the 2001 statement by the US bishops and this 2008 statement by the Canadian bishops cite the IPCC on the effects of climate change at an international level rather than local impacts, the Canadian bishops communicate both a greater sense of urgency (i.e. conversion is a matter of "choosing between life and death")[57] as well as a welcome recognition of national failure to live up to important obligations.[58] While the US bishops' general call for conversion is subordinated to their call for dialogue, the Canadian bishops spend almost half of the short document addressing the need for conversion and how we are called to renew our ties with creation, other human beings, and God. The Canadian bishops' treatment of the ecological crisis and the need for conversion is also much stronger,

52. See ibid., 3.

53. See ibid., 5. Note that selfishness is tied to indifference. The bishops' write, "Many of our brothers and sisters are forced into a way of life that is unacceptable and unworthy of their human condition. We are more aware of this than ever, but we behave as if we were blind, deaf and insensible."

54. The term interdependence is used in the document, but with reference to our relationships with other creatures, particularly other human beings. However, a more general understanding of interdependence between human beings and non-human creatures is present. For example, under the heading "Re-establishing Links with Nature," the Canadian bishops note that "We now know that we are tied much more closely to the environment in which we live than we had imagined." ibid., 4.

55. The bishops write, "To convert is also to regain a sense of limit." ibid.

56. See ibid.

57. See ibid., 6, cf. Deuteronomy 30:15. In addition, the statement by the Canadian bishops contains none of the qualifiers mentioned by the US bishops (i.e., scientific uncertainties, oversimplification of the issues, and that policy recommendations by both sides are often influenced by private interests).

58. While the Canadian bishops do not here note the immediate impacts of climate change on Canadians, they do note the nation's failure to meet its Kyoto Protocol commitments. See ibid., 2.

which in turn supports an image of the human being as a relatively more responsible and capable moral agent.[59]

The Bolivian Bishops' Conference (2012)

In their 2012 Pastoral Letter on the Environment and Human Development in Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios para la Vida," the Bolivian Bishops' Conference addresses the problems of climate change, deforestation, and pollution due to excessive use of pesticides and fertilizers. Like other bishops' conferences (except the United States), they also note specific, local consequences of ecological degradation.[60] While Bolivia's contribution to global deforestation is very small, the bishops call for action because they are already seeing devastating effects. They diagnose the root of the problem as a failure to respect life (no. 6). Unlike the United States bishops, they identify multiple violations of respect for life: first and foremost abortion, but also the exploitation of natural resources, irrational consumer behavior, and the scandalous accumulation of goods (no.14). A life driven by

59. Consider that the US bishops' statement indicates that conversion will be reflected at least in part in greater restraint in lifestyles, but is undermined by strongly connecting stewardship to private property, weakly interpreting the scientific and political landscape with the effect of downplaying the pressing nature of climate change, neglecting to mention any concrete sins or vices from which those in the US should turn away, and eliding the difficulties or sacrifices that will arise in adopting such voluntary simplicity. The Canadian bishops also promote voluntary simplicity in positive terms. See Catholic Bishops Commission for Social Affairs, *Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion*, 4. Yet their statement emphasizes national and individual responsibility by acknowledging national failures to meet obligations of justice, focusing on the role of selfishness in the current crises of justice and ecology, connecting conversion to regaining a better sense of limit, and recognizing that while some choices flow from "structures of sin" not only is our participation in such structures differentiated, but other choices are a matter of our individual behavior and, as Christ's followers, we face a choice between life and death.

60. These negative consequences include social conflict (i.e., violence over water) and lower agricultural output, which in turn prevents rural families from getting adequate nutrition and accessing basic services. See Los Obispos de Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia," no. 14, accessed January 14, 2019, `http://historico.cpalsj.org/wp-content/uploads/anos_anteriores/CartaPastoralObisposBoliviaEcologia.pdf`.

consumption disrespects the natural order of creation (no. 52). This order is characterized by interrelatedness, a concept the bishops draw from indigenous knowledge,[61] and peace.[62]

Perhaps in part because the statement was issued during Lent, it includes more sin language than do the statements of the United States bishops in particular. The earth has been desecrated by both personal and social sin (no. 51). Drawing from the gospels and Jesus' critique of absolute private ownership, the Bolivian bishops define the primary sin as greed (no. 55). Greed currently characterizes the abusive relationship human beings have with the earth, which can be seen in the exploitation and misappropriation of natural resources as well as the destruction of entire species. Human beings must work to transform the structures of sin that exploit both the natural world and other human beings (no. 70). Finally, the category of mortal sin is brought in through the Canticle of St. Francis of Assisi, with which the letter ends (no. 115).

Human responsibility pervades the document. Ecological justice requires taking responsibility for damages caused (something that the countries who have contributed the most to climate change refuse to do), adopting a temperate lifestyle, rejecting consumption and the desire to have more, and adopting an alternative model of development. The bishops acknowledge that some of the global circumstances that contribute to the ecological crisis are beyond the control of their readers, but reject the victim mentality these facts can engender which leads to an avoidance of each person's responsibility for the environment

61. The Bolivian bishops affirm that all creation is related and the use of kinship language with respect to earth while rejecting animism and the strategy of legal rights for earth. Los Obispos de Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia," nos. 36-39.

62. When humans alienate themselves from God, they provoke disorder that affects the rest of creation. When humans are not at peace with God, the earth also is not at peace (no. 51). While St. Francis did not face climate change, we need to follow his example of living peacefully with human beings and all of God's creatures (nos. 73-74). Notably unlike any other Catholic document on the environment surveyed here, the Bolivian bishops' scriptural citations include the Book of Job to support the message that human beings are not the owners of life. They remind their readers that creation ended on the seventh day, and warn that resisting the Sabbath leads to human beings confusing themselves with God, which leads to domination and the culture of death (no. 48).

in the areas in which they can and must act (no. 14).[63] Bad structures and mechanisms have their origin in selfish desires and policies. Disinterest and indifference contribute to the silence which also enables social injustice and ecological degradation to occur. The combination of the willingness to identify a specific sin (greed, with hints of indifference) and the emphasis on human responsibility for ecological destruction causes the overall tone of the document to be much more challenging to readers than some of the other documents surveyed, most notably those of the United States bishops. When the Bolivian bishops call for conversion (no. 4), the reader has some idea of conversion from what.

Pope Francis (2015)

In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis affirms, both indirectly through imagery and directly through consideration of human anthropology, that human beings are not only properly understood to be persons-in-relationship, but specifically that one such constitutive relationship is that between humanity and nature. A relationship between humans and non-human nature is implied from the beginning of the document in the kinship language of "our Sister, Mother Earth"[64] and is consistently affirmed throughout the encyclical.[65] This relationship is characterized by interrelatedness. The category of "integral ecology" itself, to which chapter four of the encyclical is dedicated, points to the interconnectedness of all creatures. Francis writes that the creation accounts in Genesis suggest "that human life is grounded in three fundamental and closely intertwined relationships: with God, with our neighbour and with the earth itself" (no. 66). Carrying forward the emphasis on harmony

63. While the responsibility is shared and differentiated, it also falls on every single human being. Likewise, every person is obligated to help protect the earth. Los Obispos de Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia," no. 71.

64. Francis, *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home* (2015), no. 1, `http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html`.

65. Human beings have a relationship with the world (LS, 65). All members of the created world (including planetary bodies and rivers) are in relationship with each other (no. 92). The term "environment" is a relational term, a shorthand way of expressing the relationship between nature and the society that lives in it (LS, 139). If we feel "intimately united with all that exists," we will be caring toward all that exists (LS, 11). Our call to be other-centered is directed both to caring for our human brothers and sisters and for our natural environment (LS, 208).

found in many preceding Catholic documents on the environment, Francis teaches that harmony is the divinely willed characteristic of these relationships but has been ruptured by sin.[66]

The third chapter of the encyclical is dedicated to the "Human Roots of the Ecological Crisis." Francis writes that an "inadequate presentation of Christian anthropology" is the source of the misunderstanding of the relationship between humanity and the world (no. 116). Human beings are part of an interdependent world and interdependence is divinely willed. Acknowledging interdependence helps us become more aware of the negative impact of certain lifestyles and models of production and consumption, motivates us to use a global perspective when proposing solutions, and "obliges us to think of *one world with a common plan*" (no. 164). In a methodological move that is consistent with the call to use a global perspective, Francis' encyclical is notable for its multiple citations of statements by local episcopal conferences.[67]

---

66. See Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 98. Kinship language is also repeatedly connected to human beings living harmoniously with nonhuman nature (LS, 64, 92, 208, 228, 246). I recognize that this teaching on harmony is itself the subject of scholarly critique. As theologians such as Willis Jenkins and Celia Deane-Drummond have noted, understanding human relationships with nature as peaceful is challenging in a post-evolutionary context. For instance, Jenkins argues persuasively that the category of natural evil poses a challenge to the Christian strategy of ecojustice. Natural processes are not all peaceful, so natural evils raise questions about the goodness (or lack thereof) of creation. Do all parts of nature reflect divine will and friendship with creation? See Willis Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013), 71-72. Trained as both a scientist and a theologian, Celia Deane-Drummond's analysis of how *Laudato Si'* uses the natural sciences points to a few missing elements and inconsistencies, despite the encyclical's "unprecedented" consideration of the natural sciences at the magisterial level. One of these issues is that Pope Francis' interpretation of "ecological relations as harmonious relations, which seems to emerge from his particular theological commitment to the value of peace, reflects a specific understanding of ecology in terms of stable relationships that is no longer in vogue among ecological scientists...." See Celia Deane-Drummond, "*Laudato Si'* and the Natural Sciences: An Assessment of Possibilities and Limits," *Theological Studies* 77, no. 2 (2016): 403. Deane-Drummond also notes that adequate consideration "of evolutionary aspects of the natural world, including creaturely suffering and death, which would have moved the focus away from any notion of fixed harmony" is absent from the encyclical. Ibid., 412. While resolving these questions is far beyond the scope of this project, it is helpful to keep this critique in mind, especially since, as will become evident in the fourth section of this chapter, theologians writing from a Native American context do not appear to see a conflict between living in harmony and peace with other creatures and the death that is constitutive of natural processes.

67. For example, of the statements considered in this chapter, *Laudato Si'* cites those of the bishops of the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, New Zealand, Japan, South Africa, and the United States (the 2001 statement). It also cites documents from various other bishops' conferences (i.e., in Germany, Brazil, Paraguay, Portugal, and Australia) as well as a 2003 statement by the Canadian Bishops, the 1993 declaration of the colloquium

The encyclical certainly utilizes more sin language than the statements of the United States bishops, and points to the sins of pride and indifference in particular. Sin is mentioned by name in six paragraphs (and ten times total). In several of these instances, the reference to sin is fairly general, for example, describing the state of our hearts or our world.[68] Recognizing our sins as well as our failures and errors is necessary to the conversion process because it "leads to heartfelt repentance and desire to change," and the example of Saint Francis of Assisi makes us "realize that a healthy relationship with creation is one dimension of overall personal conversion" (no. 218). There are some indications of what this conversion might be turning away from. For example, citing Patriarch Bartholomew, the encyclical does mention sinning against creation, sins which include destroying biological diversity, causing climate change, deforestation, and pollution (no. 8). However, here it must be noted that the role of human agency is not always clear. For example, what actions constitute the sin of causing climate change, and by whom is this sin committed?[69] Francis also names the sins of indifference[70] and greed.[71] Indifference itself is mentioned another seven times, including as a violation of the sense of communion with nature.[72] Pope Fran-

sponsored by the Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences, and the 2007 *Aparecida Document* of the Fifth General Conference of the Latin American and Caribbean Bishops.

68. Our hearts have been "wounded by sin" and the ecological crises we face today are evidence of that wound (LS, 2). Similarly, the three-fold relationship humans have with God, neighbor, and earth has been damaged by sin (LS, 66). Here the definition corresponds to the sin of pride, though that term is not used in this section. Sin is manifested in our current situation, not only in attacks on nature but also in war, violence, abuse, and abandoning the vulnerable. In another instance, the reference is to an interpretation of original sin by St. Bonaventure (LS, 239).

69. Willis Jenkins has persuasively outlined the difficulties in applying traditional notions of moral agency to global and intergenerational problems like climate change. For example, see Willis Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers, Global Injustice, and Moral Incompetence: Challenges to Doing Social Ethics from Below," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 34, no. 1 (2014): 65–82. His work will be discussed later in this chapter.

70. The closing prayer includes a plea that the wealthy and the powerful might avoid the sin of indifference. Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 246.

71. For discussions of greed and excessive consumption, see ibid., nos. 9, 204, 213, 237.

72. Indifference is listed as one reason concrete solutions to the environmental crisis have not yet been effective (LS, 14). It is a widespread response (or lack thereof) to the suffering of the poor in our world (LS, 25). It is globalized, which poses a clear problem, especially in terms of the foreign debt of poor countries (LS, 52). Indifference is also a violation of a sense of deep communion with nature, and indifference to other human beings is intertwined with indifference to other creatures (LS, 91-92). It is part of the problem with modern anthropocentrism (LS, 115), is "induced by consumerism" and is combated by forming relationships (LS, 232). Concern with indifference is also present in other terms that are linked to selfishness, such as the

cis also addresses “extreme” consumerism or the “culture of consumerism,”[73] which were frequently cited by local bishops’ conferences as some of the moral sources of the environmental crisis. Yet the difficulty of recognizing specific individual sins of indifference or greed and moving toward “ecological conversion” remain. In what do those sins consist? Similarly, while substantial attention is paid to virtue, there is only one reference to vice (no. 59). This reference is general, identifying no specific vices but noting that complacency and avoidance of the seriousness of the problems are ways “human beings contrive to feed their self-destructive vices.”

At this point, some key themes across Roman Catholic episcopal and papal documents have begun to emerge. I conclude this section by arguing the following three points. First, according to magisterial Catholic teaching on the environment, human relationships with creation are characterized by interconnectedness, which is increasingly understood in terms of peace and harmony. Second, while it is clear that these relationships have been wounded by sin and that there is a need for conversion, in the United States context, this call to conversion is hampered by a combination of insufficient attention to specific sins, a lack of urgency regarding the need to respond to ecological degradation, and a failure to take seriously the difficulties or sacrifices that can be expected to accompany conversion. Lastly, even as Catholic teaching unanimously supports the understanding of human beings’ place in the world as a special one of stewardship, it also insists that we acknowledge the interdependence of our world, not only in terms of our reliance on other human beings but also in terms of our reliance on other creatures and natural resources. This insistence points to an understanding that our ecological relationships are character-forming and is consistent with the topic of the next chapter: redeploying the virtue of humility as a cardinal virtue within a relational framework.

“selfish lack of concern” that is causing such ecological damage (LS, 36). See also the identification of the need for “disinterested concern for others” and the need to overcome individualism in order to bring about serious social changes (LS, 208).

73. See Francis, *Laudato Si’*, nos. 50, 203, 209; no. 184, respectively.

1.1.1 Stewardship Characterized by Interconnectedness, Peace, and Harmony

The surveyed magisterial documents unanimously speak of human relationships to nonhuman creation in terms of stewardship, care, and protection (and sometimes co-creation). The image of stewardship varies, ranging from resource utilization or at least urgently needed for human survival to co-membership in the "community of the living" in which many creatures have voices but in which humans still have a special place and role. Yet there is a clear trend toward describing that relationship of stewardship in terms of the interconnectedness, peace, and harmony between human beings and nonhuman creation. While not every document talks about the relationship of human beings with other creatures in terms of peace and harmony, this idea was present in the 1988 statement by the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, prominent in Pope John Paul II's *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, and, since 1990, has been reaffirmed both at local episcopal and papal levels. Similarly, the papal documents examined here have affirmed the understanding all creatures, including human beings, as interconnected and interdependent (a theme stressed particularly and early by the statements of the Dominican Episcopal Conference and the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines) and the extension of kinship language to nonhuman creatures.

The status of nonhuman creation in that relationship is not always as clear. Is nonhuman creation merely a resource for human beings to use properly or can it exert demands upon human beings? In part, the differences in the answers found in these documents correlate with differences in which scriptural texts and passages are drawn upon. For example, the bishops of Lombardy draw on dominion language such Genesis 1:26 and Psalm 8:6b-7b, but do not draw on the covenant language in Genesis 9, while the bishops of the Philippines and of the United States (1991) draw on both dominion and covenant language.[74]

One way of interpreting the status of nonhuman creation in these statements is to see if it is understood to be a party against whom we can sin. Is committing ecological destruction only a human sin against God and other humans, or is it also a sin against nature? The statements of the Guatemalan bishops and bishops of Northern Italy seem to take the former position, while the statements of the bishops in the Dominican Republic and the Philippines clearly state that humanity is also sinning against God's creation. Most recently, *Laudato Si'* seems to affirm that human beings can and do sin against nature as well as against God and each other as Pope Francis includes the language of acknowledging our "sins against creation" in his discussion of Patriarch Bartholomew's call for the need to repent. Combined with the encyclical's emphasis on the three-fold relationship humans have with God, neighbor, and earth, the trend in hierarchical Catholic teaching on the environment is towards understanding human beings as in a relationship with nonhuman creation that is: (a) one of the foundational relationships of human beings, (b) intimately intertwined with our relationships with God and with (human) neighbors, (c) characterized both by the interconnectedness of all creation and a special role of stewardship for human beings, and (d) wounded by sin.

1.1.2 The Search for Sin

The episcopal and papal documents surveyed here consistently link the exploitation of the poor to the exploitation of nature and are concerned with structural factors that cause not

74. While the Guatemalan bishops draw on covenant language, they do so in terms of the earth being the sign of a covenant between God and humanity and do not draw from Genesis 9 or the idea that God's covenant was made not only with Noah and his descendants but also with all living creatures. See Guatemalan Bishops' Conference, "The Cry for Land," sec. 2.3.1. The Dominican Episcopal Conference also draws on dominion language in Genesis 1:26-28 and Psalm 8:5-9 and views the earth and all it contains as the *common patrimony* of the whole of humanity, yet this is tempered by the capacity of nature to "demand" and "forbid" a list of qualities drawn from Wisdom 9:1-4. See The Dominican Episcopal Conference, "Relationship of Human Beings to Nature," II, 35, f.

only widespread political and economic injustice but also environmental degradation. They also consistently teach that conversion is needed in order to respond effectively to ecological crises. The teaching is less clear on conversion from what. Many documents frame conversion in terms of repairing our relationships, including our ecological relationships, but this framing is often very general. At one end of the spectrum are the statements that barely use the terminology of sin, although the rationale varies from being intentionally done as a corrective to an overemphasis in previous statements, to absent without any reason provided.[75] Among documents which take the latter approach, there are still significant differences regarding the urgency of the situation and suggestions for how to respond.

The 2001 statement of the United States bishops is significantly longer than the statements of the bishops of South Africa or New Zealand. Yet in contrast to these episcopal conferences, the US bishops are: (a) much more hesitant in the language they use to describe the need to respond to climate change, (b) cite no concrete examples of how climate change is actually affecting anyone in the United States (or elsewhere for that matter), and (c) offer fewer concrete examples of actions that might be taken in response to climate change.[76] Their (general) call to reject excessive consumption is weakened by a combination of a lack of any concrete suggestions for what more restrained or moderate lifestyles might look like, little attention to the outsized role that consumption patterns in the United States have played in contributing to ecological crises, and the overall lack of urgency that pervades the document.

75. For the former point, see the discussion of the Catholic Bishops' Conference of Japan, "Reverence for Life: A Message for the Twenty-First Century from The Catholic Bishops of Japan (January 1, 2001)." The 2001 statement of the bishops of the United States (which addresses climate change specifically) and the statements of the bishops of New Zealand and South Africa do not use the category of sin and do not specify a reason for not doing so.

76. It should be noted that while the statement of the US bishops is earlier than the other two statements, and the latter could reflect the ongoing work of climate scientists, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) was established in 1988 and had already issued two comprehensive Assessment Reports before 2001 and was working on their third.

In the middle are statements that do not clearly identify specific sins but utilize sin language and in which there are clear (if underdeveloped) concerns regarding respect for life, consumerism, greed, selfishness, and indifference. These documents include the *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, the 1988 statement by the bishops of Northern Italy, the 1991 statement by the bishops of the United States, and *Laudato Si'*. At the other end of the spectrum, several documents utilize sin language and identify specific sins they see as playing a large role in their context. The bishops of the Dominican Republic name the sins of indolence, desire for luxury, greed, complicity, negligence, carelessness, and a "destructive instinct" in which humans enjoy killing. The bishops of Guatemala are especially concerned with indifference (in this case to human suffering). The bishops of the Philippines also identify at least two specific sins, thoughtlessness and greed, and the Bolivian bishops identify greed as the capital sin, while also condemning disinterest and indifference. Unlike some other statements, most notably the 2001 statement by the United States bishops, all four of these documents also make specific suggestions for actions that should be taken at different levels, including actions to be taken by the Church. Interestingly, three of these documents also write of incorporating ecological awareness into the liturgical calendar and celebrations in a way that not only celebrates the beauty of creation but also acknowledges pain or sacrifice.[77] By contrast, the 1991 statement by the United States bishops urged "celebrants and liturgy committees to incorporate themes into prayer and worship that emphasize our responsibility to protect all of God's creation and to orga-

77. The Filipino bishops write: "Our different liturgies must celebrate the beauty and pain of our world, our connectedness to the natural world and the ongoing struggle for social justice." See Catholic Bishops of the Philippines, "What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?," 317. The Dominican bishops tell pastors and other pastoral agents to stress the obligations of human beings to nature through, among other possibilities, the adaptation of Ember Days (traditionally days of fasting and abstinence) as well as to organize special liturgical celebrations for Arbor Day or around a harvest. See The Dominican Episcopal Conference, "Relationship of Human Beings to Nature," no. 77. The Bolivian bishops' suggestions include liturgical celebrations not only for St. Francis of Assisi but also during Lent. See Los Obispos de Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia," no.93.

nize prayerful *celebrations of creation* on feast days honoring St. Francis and St. Isidore" (emphasis added).[78]

In short, Catholic magisterial teaching on the environment is very concerned with structural issues that lead both to the exploitation of the poor and of nature, and identifies some sins from which "ecological conversion" is needed, including greed, sloth (indolence), pride, selfishness, disrespect for life, irresponsibility/carelessness/negligence, and indifference/disinterest. Yet some documents rarely use the category of sin, whether structurally or individually. This is particularly problematic when it occurs within relatively privileged contexts and seemingly without awareness of the concrete problems ecological devastation is already causing, as in the case of the 2001 statement on climate change by the United States bishops. This imbalance suggests that more attention to sinning out of strength, as outlined by James Keenan,[79] is warranted when considering global issues, especially in the United States. Yet it is not a problem limited to the US context. Both the *1990 World Day of Peace Message* and *Laudato Si'* use the term sin, but in the former case it is primarily spoken about in the context of original vs. personal sin, and in the latter, there is quite a bit of recognition that the current situation, including the ecological crisis, manifests sin, but little information about which sins in particular readers are called to convert from. As Darlene Fozard Weaver argued persuasively, a general discussion of sin that lacks specific content poses problems for theological understandings of sin.[80]

78. United States Catholic Conference, "Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991)," in *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, ed. Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer (Washington, DC, 1996), V, B.

79. Keenan identifies four developments after the Second Vatican Council that lead to a more adequate understanding of sin when taken together: sinning out of strength, sinning against our relational nature, the relationship between goodness and rightness, and structural sin. See James F. Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," *Theological Studies* 77, no. 1 (2016): 165–180.

80. Darlene Fozard Weaver, "Taking Sin Seriously," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 31, no. 1 (2003): 45–74. See also Darlene Fozard Weaver, *The Acting Person and Christian Moral Life*, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011), 31-63.

1.1.3 Special Stewards but not Self-sufficient: Humans' Place in the World

The third key point is that Catholic teaching is beginning to insist that human beings acknowledge the interdependence of our world in order to respond to the ecological crisis or repair our damaged relationships with nonhuman creatures, God, and other human beings. There is little question that Catholic teaching sees human beings' place in the world as stewards of creation, and that this place is a special one conferred upon us as a result of our God-given human dignity. Yet although we are "above" other creatures in many ways, we are not self-sufficient and it is imperative that we acknowledge our interdependence. The bishops of Lombardy call for a new economic world order that is based on the knowledge of the interdependence of the future of humanity and the future of (nonhuman) nature. For similar reasons, the South African Conference of Catholic Bishops calls for environmentally sustainable development, one which takes into consideration that environmental damage is a threat also to the survival of humans. Pope John Paul II identified acknowledging that the order of creation is "characterized by mutual interdependence" as part of the solution in his *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, even as he carried forward an understanding of the earth as gifted to humanity (exclusive of other creatures).[81] In *Laudato Si'*, Pope Francis both affirms that interdependence is a divinely willed part of the created order and insists that acknowledging that interdependence helps us come up with better solutions.[82] In combination with the growing emphasis on human beings as living in relationships with nonhumans that can be described in terms of kinship, peace, and harmony, and as I will argue in chapter 3, this awareness of the interdependence and interrelatedness of all creatures fosters attentiveness to others and is the primary characteristic of the

81. John Paul II, *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, no. 8.
82. See Francis, *Laudato Si'*, nos. 86, 164, respectively.

virtue of humility, which, in a relational framework, should be understood to govern our ecological relationships.

1.2 The Ecological Crisis and African Theological Voices

Theologians writing from African contexts repeatedly make connections between politics, economic sustainability, and the health of the environment that resonate strongly with the interconnectedness between economics and environment stressed throughout Catholic magisterial teaching and termed "integral ecology" in *Laudato Si'*. For example, Alex Muyebe, SJ and Peter Henriot, SJ write that *Laudato Si'* is very meaningful to Malawians, where deforestation is contributing to climate change but where an over-dependence on the export crop of tobacco as well as an overwhelming lack of access to electricity (which means relying on wood for cooking and heating) are contributing to deforestation.[83] Similarly, Léocadie Lushombo shows that deforestation is a pressing issue in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with socioeconomic, political, and ecological consequences.[84] Writing from a Nigerian context, Benedict Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku begins with the question, "Why is Nigeria poor?" and offers a two-fold response that shows the links between political disintegration, economic sustainability, a paradigm of domination, and environmental degradation in the Niger Delta.[85]

This section will focus on the work of three authors: Teresia Hinga, from Kenya; Peter Knox, from South Africa; and Edward Osang Obi, from Nigeria. Like the authors men-

83. See Alex Muyebe and Peter Henriot, "What *Laudato Si'* Means to Malawi," *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 743-744.

84. Léocadie Lushombo, "Deforestation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Climate Change: An Ethical Analysis in Light of *Laudato Si'*," *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 724–740.

85. Nwachukwu-Udaku argues that since people place tribal identity before Nigerian identity, tribal interests supersede the national interest and so tribalism fosters short-term thinking to gain benefits for a few and so weakens economic sustainability and leads to environmental degradation. See Benedict Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku, "The Problem of Economic Sustainability in Nigeria: A Call for a New Paradigm," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 40.

tioned above, Hinga, Knox, and Obi each draw attention to the ways in which politics, economics, and ecological crises are related. Hinga focuses on food security, but that focus inevitability leads her to political issues as well as the ecological crisis of climate change. Knox analyzes how the extraction of mineral resources is linked to economics, environmental degradation, and human health. His concerns about the ecological crisis include but go beyond climate change, as he also focuses on planetary boundaries. Obi stresses the connection between economics and ecology, and how intragenerational justice (not just intergenerational) is needed to ensure sustainability.

1.2.1 Teresia Hinga on Food Security, Climate Change, and Colonization

In her work related to environmental crises, Teresia Hinga addresses the connections between food security and climate change, the interconnected crises surrounding access to adequate food, clean water, and clean energy, and the ways in which land practices and worldviews enforced during colonial rule are linked with present-day environmental degradation and social injustice. With respect to food security, Hinga draws attention to underlying causes including the prioritization of cash crops over food crops, the sale of bumper food crops to meet other needs, and postelection violence that led to the vandalization of granaries. One of the direct causes of Kenya's famine between 2007 and 2013 was the combination of a lack of proper storage and natural disasters such as drought, crop failure, and ill-timed rains. However, as Hinga points out, these natural events are linked to climate change, which has in turn resulted from human degradation of the environment. Therefore, the deeper question is "how societies effectively address such cascading negative consequences of unpredictable and complex weather patterns."[86] As she writes elsewhere, food security is just one part of an interconnected crisis that also involves insufficient access to

86. Teresia M. Hinga, "Of Empty Granaries, Stolen Harvests, and the Weapon of Gain: Applied Ethics in Search of Sustainable Food Security," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extrac-*

clean water and clean energy and which results in an estimated 15,000 Africans dying each day from preventable causes.[87]

In response to food insecurity, Hinga carries forward Jean-Marc Ela's "ministry of the granary," for which she finds ethical resources in the work of Peter Singer, Amartya Sen, and Vandana Shiva. Hinga identifies five key features of such a ministry, including that it is prophetic, monitors and evaluates proposed solutions, and draws from diverse knowledge systems. Such a ministry would be "wary of the *overemphasis* on Western scientific knowledge while ignoring or demonizing local and indigenous knowledge systems."[88] Given the connection between climate change and food security, responding to climate change is also an important dimension of her proposal.[89]

In her analysis of the interlocking and persistent crises of access to food, water, and clean energy, which are all connected to, and exacerbated by, anthropogenic climate change, Hinga identifies four root causes: (1) greed (both individual and corporate), (2) "monocultures of the mind" (drawing from Shiva), (3) "silo" thinking, and (4) confusing what we can do with what we ought to do.[90] A monocultural mindset, specifically the privileging of the Western knowledge system, ignores the relationships between humans and nonhuman nature by viewing nonhuman nature in terms of commodities. Silo thinking files to recognize how everything is interconnected. Hinga sees "a morally viable approach to ecological ethics" in Pope Francis' integral ecology, one which successfully combats silo thinking.[91] She also thinks that African Catholics can draw on six "cardinal virtues" that are based on the four key features of the African worldview as identified by Sambuli Mosha. One of these key features is the "belief that the universe is a living, interdependent,

tion, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 97.

87. See Teresia M Hinga, *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 119-120.

88. Hinga, "Of Empty Granaries," 101.

89. Ibid., 97.

90. Hinga, *African, Christian, Feminist*, 123-124.

91. See ibid., 125.

and interconnected whole."[92] The six virtues include reverence, self-control, silence (which is voluntary and enables one to listen and hear the other),[93] diligence, courage, and communality (which is the "master virtue" according to Mosha).

When analyzing the causes of the environmental crisis in Africa more broadly, Hinga rejects the explanations of drought-prone areas, poor political leadership, and overpopulation. Instead, she argues that the environmental crisis is due to a history of colonization that was informed by the ideology of racism.[94] She supports this conclusion with a case study of the Agikuyu[95] of Kenya, reconstructing their theology of the land, land practices, and the changes that occurred due to colonization. Again, the idea (though not the term) of monocultural mindsets is operative here because colonizers rejected and demeaned the understanding of the relationship of human beings to nature of the peoples they conquered. Not coincidentally, the concept of dominion supported by a colonialist reading of the Genesis creation accounts also supported imperialist ideology, leading to the domination of both the environment and human beings, especially women. Gikuyu views of land as a gift from the creator and the environment as belonging to that creator and for which human beings have responsibility were rejected in favor of an idea of absolute land ownership that not only turned the Giyuku land "owners" into squatters but also caused overuse of tracts of land, the privileging of cash crops that were not well-suited to that land (and the accompanying heavy use of chemical fertilizers and insufficient production of food crops), and practices (and later laws) that excluded women from land negotiations and further restricted their access to land both in terms of land ownership (as defined by the colonizers) and the use of land owned by others. In response, Hinga writes that both recovering the idea of God's absolute ownership of the universe and an acknowledgment that we human beings

92. Hinga, *African, Christian, Feminist*, 126, cf. R. Sambuli Mosha, *Heartbeat of Indigenous Africa: A Study of Chagga Educational System* (New York: Garland Publishing, 2000), 7–15.
93. See ibid., footnote 17.
94. See ibid., 183.
95. Agikuyu is a noun (referring to Gikuyu's people) whereas "Gikuyu is an adjectival form and was the name of the founder of the ethnic group..." See ibid., 183, footnote 1.

are dependent on nature is needed to help us avoid the illusion of control over nature and to develop both gratitude and respect for nature.

1.2.2 Natural Resources and Planetary Boundaries in the Work of Peter Knox

Like Hinga, but writing from a South African context, Peter Knox also attends to the impact that colonization has had on environmental degradation and social injustices, particularly in the case of the ownership of "natural capital." Focusing on the sustainability of the extraction of mineral resources, he notes that neither the criteria for sustainability offered by the Brundtland Report nor the Five Capitals Model address the prior question of who owns natural capital.[96] Furthermore, "[p]atterns of ownership often follow patterns of colonial conquest and privilege."[97]

To begin to address this prior question from a Catholic perspective, Knox turns to the concept of human beings as stewards rather than owners as seen in Genesis 1-2, and to the teaching on the universal destination of goods found in Catholic Social Teaching. Since the Brundtland Report's vision of sustainability has limited applicability to mining given that the resources mined are both finite and not constantly being renewed, Knox focuses

96. See Peter Knox, "Sustainable Mining in South Africa: A Concept in Search of a Theory," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 118. The "Brundtland Report" is the common way of referring to the following: United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (Oslo: United Nations, 1987), available online at https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/5987our-common-future.pdf. For more on the Five Capitals Model, see Forum for the Future, *The Five Capitals Model: A Framework for Sustainability*, available for download at https://www.forumforthefuture.org/the-five-capitals.

97. ibid., 121. In the case of South Africa, under colonization and apartheid, the mineral rights were given to landowners and land ownership was heavily restricted for black South Africans, who were only allowed to own 13 percent of the land. Elsewhere, Knox gives another example of how some missionaries have erroneously condemned traditional African understandings of the way in which human beings related to the whole of creation, which while he does not use the language of colonialism here, is an example of the intersection between colonialism and its legacy and Christianity. See Peter Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," in *The Church We Want: African Catholics Look to Vatican III*, ed. Agbonkhianmeghe E Orobator (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016), 238.

on the criteria for sustainability of natural capital and human capital offered by the Five Capitals Model. He concludes that mining in South Africa fails each of the features of sustainability of natural capital since the process destroys other natural capital and the manufactured products exceed the capacity to provide ecological system integrity due to their polluting effects and the limitations on recycling in practice. He is more optimistic about the sustainability of South African mining in relation to human capital, seeing it as at least moving in the right direction.[98]

While Knox sees some promise in the Five Capitals Model, he also critiques it and its promoters for advocating a more responsible approach to "business as usual" that is too optimistic and complacent in the face of the realities of the limits of sustainability.[99] He finds an important corrective to this tendency to complacency in the nine planetary boundaries developed by scientists from Stockholm Resilience Center in 2009. Human beings have already transgressed two of these boundaries (biosphere integrity and nitrogen flows), and are risking transgressing two more: climate change and land-system change.[100] While the theory is still being refined, Knox argues that it is sufficiently developed to inform policy. Indeed, there is a historical example (the boundary of stratospheric ozone) where the boundary was identified and acted upon before absolute scientific consensus about the cause of this depletion was achieved.[101]

98. Knox, "Sustainable Mining in South Africa," 124-125.

99. Peter Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," chap. 7 in *Fragile World: Ecology and the Church*, ed. William T. Cavanaugh, vol. 5, Studies in World Catholicism (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 114.

100. As bad as climate change is then, it is by no means the only global ecological disaster we are facing. Knox writes, "If we think that climate change is our worst nightmare, then we haven't even begun to dream yet." Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 231. In other words, even if we succeed in reversing the causes of climate change, we will still have to deal with the effects of our transgression of two-to-three other planetary boundaries, any of which "have the potential to make this planet uninhabitable for human beings, or at least highly hostile to the continuation of human life" (232).

101. See Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," 118. See also his discussion of the UN Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer in Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 232.

Knox identifies several climate change implications for Africa: the vulnerability of small-scale agriculture, the increasingly common "rare weather events" which exceed the capacity of traditional shelters, the need to convert more land into cropland with the accompanying use of nitrogen- and phosphorus-based fertilizers, and how economic growth is leading to higher material aspirations. These material aspirations are problematic because they are based on Global North paradigms that do not always work for Africa, the technology involved often contributes to the degradation of the environment, and they lead to "emerging markets" which in reality are "dumping grounds for much of the wasteful technology of the industrialized nations."[102]

Responding to planetary-boundary theory requires every single person to take action and "modify his or her use of modern conveniences" but this poses the epistemological problem of how to persuade people to give up aspirations to some of the comforts and conveniences that people in industrialized countries already have but which are harmful to the environment and the common good.[103] Knox looks to Catholic social teaching for resources to begin to respond to this epistemological problem. Elsewhere he identifies a few examples of local initiatives in which ordinary people can get involved, such as ending the cut-flower-for-export industry. While he acknowledges that worldwide action is required in order to respond effectively to the transgressions of planetary boundaries, he notes that individuals can combine efforts to exert political pressure.[104]

1.2.3 Edward Obi on Economics, Ecology, and Intragenerational Justice

Like Knox, Edward Osang Obi is also concerned with the impact of the exploitation of natural resources on both the environment and the economy. He approaches this issue

102. See Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," 121.
103. Ibid., 122.
104. See Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 241.

from the angle of the virtue of justice. In the squandering of oil wealth in Nigeria since the 1970s, Obi sees an example of the puzzle identified by economists in which resource-rich developing countries do not achieve good economic growth because they favor boom-directed economic measures. These measures also have devastating environmental consequences.[105] Obi identifies a need to change the economic structures so that they support *intra*generational justice rather than the current overconsumption in some parts of the world and abject poverty in others. Since economy and ecology are interrelated, focusing on intragenerational justice will ensure sustainability, but it requires adjusting our highly individualistic understandings of the human person and property rights.

Hence, the interconnection between economy and ecology mirrors the interconnection between human beings and other creatures, which in turn is related to the unjust use of natural resources. While it is true that human beings have a special role in God's creation as stewards, Obi stresses that humans are a part of nature, not outside of it.[106] We are part of the ecological-chain-of-being, and this chain-of-being is weakened by our consumerist attitude and behavior. Part of the problem is that human beings have allowed industrial development to separate us from the rest of creation as we have adopted what Kevin Ahern identifies as "'misconceived notions of greatness and agency.'"[107] Pope Francis' concern with "globalized indifference" is validated in the colonialist patterns of exploiting the natu-

105. He writes, "Apparently, in the haste to exploit more and more of the resources, a certain recklessness creeps in with regard to the environment and supporting ecology." Edward Osang Obi, "The Exploitation of Natural Resources: Reconfiguring Economic Relations Toward a Community-of-Interests Perspective," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 22.

106. See Edward Osang Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems and the Pressures of Anthropogenia: Recovering a Theo-ethic of Relationality in Our Common Home," in *Fragile World: Ecology and the Church*, ed. William T. Cavanaugh, vol. 5, Studies in World Catholicism (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018), 1, which cites LS 138.

107. Here Obi quotes Ahern. See Edward Osang Obi, "Creational Solidarity Strengthens the Weakest Link: Energy Ethics and Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa," 2016, 10, accessed August 31, 2022, `https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jBwLcfLqEqQfmITFUVG5UQC4muc7xwdv/view`, cf. Kevin Glauber Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene," in Turning to the Heavens and the Earth: Theological Reflections on Cosmological Conversion, ed. Julia Brumbaugh and Natalia Imperatori-Lee (Collegeville, Minnesota: Liturgical Press, 2016), p. 106.

ral resources from the Global South to help the markets of the Global North. The practices and dynamics of multinational corporations tend to direct the resources they obtain in the Global South northwards while simultaneously implementing corporate strategies to keep Africa dependent on fossil fuels instead of cleaner, renewable energy sources. Like Hinga, Obi identifies confusing *can* and *ought* as one of the causes of the current ecological crisis, which he describes by using the term *anthropogenia*. This confusion is an abandonment of virtue in ecological be-ing and act-ing and creates an "ever-expanding relational *di*-stance between human beings and other earthly creatures."[108]

What then is the solution? An ecological conversion is needed in order to adopt a new lifestyle, and people in some regions of the world, such as North America, will have to reduce their consumption. Obi is concerned with overconsumption and the economic structures that undergird it,[109] and he later specifies that people in North America, Europe, and parts of Oceania need to consider reducing their consumption.[110] Even more fundamentally, human beings have to realize that they are not outside of the natural world but rather a part of the planetary ecosystem and so need to learn to live within the limits of these systems.[111] In his most recent chapter, Obi draws more heavily on virtue ethics as an expression of our responsibility to preserve, and when necessary, restore, the integrity of creation.[112] Pursuing virtue requires us to exercise restraint in our ecological, political, and economic relationships. In other words, we have to rediscover our "appropriate place in creation," which requires rejecting the individualistic, independent, and separate understanding of the human being and "recovering relationality as a central pillar of ethical

108. Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 176.
109. Obi, "The Exploitation of Natural Resources," 223.
110. Obi, "Creational Solidarity," 1-2.
111. Here Obi is citing Whitney A. Bauman that human beings must "learn to live within these systems rather than falsely see ourselves as exceptional in relation to the rest of the natural world." Ibid., 2, cf. Whitney A. Bauman, "Developing a Planetary Ethic: Religion, Ethics and the Environment," in Religious and Ethical Perspectives for the Twenty-First Century, ed. Paul O. Myhre (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2013), p. 228.
112. Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 189-190.

living."[113] While we do need to understand ourselves as distinct individuals, that understanding must be accompanied by a recognition that others, including "Earth's *others*," are not extensions of ourselves or our technological prowess but rather are truly *other*.[114]

1.2.4 A Relationship of Stewardship Characterized by Interconnectedness

All three authors tend to write of a human relationship with nature in terms of stewardship, with an emphasis on the necessity of recognizing the interconnectedness of all things. The idea that human beings have a special responsibility to nature found in Gikuyu theology certainly has parallels to the description of humanity's relationship with nature as one of stewards or protectors that is so pervasive in Roman Catholic episcopal and papal statements. Nonetheless, there is a greater emphasis on the interconnectedness of nature and the need for recognizing human beings' dependence on nature in Hinga's work than in some of the pastoral letters and statements seen in the first section. In part, this is because Hinga draws on an African worldview that is characterized, among other things, by the belief that the universe is an interconnected whole.

Like Hinga, Knox contrasts stewardship with an understanding of absolute ownership.[115] He also carries forward the universal destination of goods found in Catholic social teaching and seen in some recent episcopal teaching on the environment as intended for all *people* rather than for all living creatures. Yet the theme of interconnectedness (though not that term) is in the background of the planetary boundary theory upon which he draws.[116] Furthermore, in discussing *Laudato Si'*, Knox highlights the way in which drawing on Saint Francis emphasizes interconnectedness and the need for fostering feelings of kinship that

113. Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 191.
114. Ibid., 190.
115. See Knox, "Sustainable Mining in South Africa," 121.
116. For example, Knox writes, "The theory speaks of the 'Earth system' in which many of the boundaries are interlinked." See Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," 119.

extend past other human beings and toward all creatures as well as the planet and proceeds to show how this idea of interrelatedness is consonant with African tradition.[117] Similarly, Muyebe and Henriot find a parallel between Malawian traditions of setting boundaries on the use of natural resources based on beliefs in a spirit-filled world and the theological foundation of Pope Francis' encyclical that emphasizes a common relationship between all that exists.[118]

Obi also writes in terms of human stewardship and responsibility for other creatures and uses the image of the ecosphere as "God's household," the common household that humans occupy.[119] Since human *be*-ing and *act*-ing are currently disordered, characterized by belligerence and voracity (i.e., *anthropogenia*), we are not respecting the limits of that household and so new house rules are needed.[120] These new rules are based on a better understanding of the relational nature of the human person, who must realize that he or she is a part of the interconnected web nature, not completely independent of it,[121] and so needs to maintain "a relational balance between humans and other creatures."[122]

1.2.5 Human Agency and the Sins of Greed and Thoughtlessness

Hinga identifies individual and corporate greed as a root cause (and possibly the most important cause) of the interconnected crises surrounding food, water, and energy and "monocultures of the mind" and "silo" thinking as two of the root causes of the persistence of

117. Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 237-238.
118. They write, "Simply put, that foundation is the fact that God is the Creator of everything that exists: rocks and water, weeds and trees, insects and elephants, moons and stars, and every woman and man who has ever passed time here on earth. The common source of creation means a common relationship that is essential and life-giving." See Muyebe and Henriot, "What *Laudato Si'* Means to Malawi," 742.
119. Obi, "The Exploitation of Natural Resources," 228.
120. See Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 176.
121. See Obi, "Creational Solidarity," 1-2 in which Obi draws from *Laudato si'*, nos. 117 and 138 to argue that "Human beings do not stand outside of, but are fully integrated with and sustained by this awesome array of natural processes." This interconnectedness is highlighted by the ways in which climate change is behind violent conflicts in Africa, which strongly warn against the dangers of an understanding of the human person as entirely independent from and in a position of dominion over other creatures.
122. Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 177.

these interconnected crises in the Global South. She also envisions the prophetic aspect of the ministry of the granary that she proposes as identifying and challenging behaviors that exacerbate climate change, including greed and indifference.[123] While the category of sin does not feature in the work cited here, her emphasis on greed as being both individual and corporate helps caution against conceptions of sin with respect to contemporary ecological crises that focus exclusively on social structures and seem quick to excuse individuals, such as was seen in a couple of the magisterial documents in the first section.

Knox's work cited here also does not give prominence to the category of sin, but he is certainly concerned with evil and the negative impacts of consumerism. He identifies the "failure of planetary systems, under anthropogenic influences, to support the life that God intended" as an evil that is caused by "human ignorance, greed, or neglect."[124] Knox also stresses individual agency. For example, he writes that "God uses human agents to achieve God's salvific purpose"[125] and elsewhere that planetary-boundary theory requires every person to make changes, since the use of many modern conveniences and comforts are harmful to the planet.[126] Consistent with the emphasis on human agency throughout his work, human beings, specifically those who deny this threat, can be and are the agents of the evil of planetary systems failure. His emphasis on human agency is also found in the way he offers concrete suggestions for taking action.[127] Furthermore, in the post-synodal apostolic

123. The other behaviors named here are denial and fear. See Teresia M. Hinga, "The Food-Energy-Water Nexus in the Age of Climate Change: (Afro)Faith Responses to the Ethical Challenges and Imperatives," in *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 127.

124. He names this evil in Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 230. For his identification of greed, etc. as the causes of this evil, see footnote 5.

125. Ibid., 236.

126. See Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," 122.

127. Knox finds that African bishops attending the Second African Synod urged both macro- and micro-level actions in response to environmental protection and he tends to do the same in his own work. As an example of the former, Knox mentions that in the Synod discussions, Proposition 22, "Environmental Protection and Reconciliation with Creation," contained several concrete, achievable proposals, which he judged to be empowering to the laity. Conversely, calls for international-level legislation, as in Proposition 29, "Natural Resources," were clearly more macro-level at that time, but were still accompanied by the more practical suggestion that the Church should take on a monitoring role of natural resource management by establishing "desks" in different countries. See Peter Knox, "Theology, Ecology, and Africa: No Longer

exhortation, Pope Benedict attended to "what *persons* are doing," an approach Knox sees as "more suited to an African personalist epistemology than impersonal, physical forces, and chemical reactions."[128]

While not caring for the earth is a moral failure that calls for conversion, and while this ecological conversion will be the basis for a new lifestyle at least for some of us, Obi does not write about the failures of individuals or communities to reduce (or bother to reduce) their consumption as sins. In part, this may be because his writing tends to be in the key of virtue, with a particular focus on justice as well as recovering an adequate understanding of the relationality of the human person, including our responsibility towards not only other human beings but also other creatures. Nonetheless, the theme of overconsumption in some parts of the world while others remain in dire poverty (including energy poverty) resonates both with Hinga's identification of greed as a root cause of the multifaceted economic/ecological crisis and with those statements of local bishops conferences (i.e., in the Dominican Republic, Bolivia, and the Philippines) who explicitly identified greed (and sometimes a desire for luxury) as a sin at the root of the environmental crisis. Furthermore, his concern with the problematic understandings of absolute independence from and dominion over the web of nature exhibited by "the technological person" who confuses *can* with *should* likewise echoes a second root cause identified by Hinga as well as concerns about human pride identified especially in Catholic papal teachings on the environment. Finally, his identification of how foreign investors are continuing colonial patterns of exploiting natural resources from the Global South to benefit the Global North, while working to keep the former dependent on fossil fuels as an instantiation of the

---

Strange Bedfellows," in *Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace: the Second African Synod*, ed. Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 165. In his own work, Knox emphasizes the need for international cooperation but also for Africans to get involved now in local initiatives as well as combine their efforts in order to help put pressure on legislators and industrialists. His attention to the need for local initiatives, combining efforts to exert political pressure, and the need for worldwide action is perhaps strongest in Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 241.

128. Knox, "Planetary Boundaries: Africa's Vulnerabilities and Resilience," 125.

"globalized indifference" which Pope Francis condemned in *Evangelii Gaudium*. It is also consistent with how the bishops in the Philippines and Pope Francis explicitly identified the sin of thoughtlessness as part of the cause of the environmental crisis, and how other local bishops' conferences likewise condemned carelessness, disinterest, and indifference.

When it comes to sin, theologians from Africa consistently stress the impact of greed, overconsumption, and indifference on both social injustice and environmental degradation. Listening to their analyses and arguments challenges those of us in the United States (and other areas of the Global North) in at least two ways. First, we must recognize the ongoing impact of the history of colonialism. Though they write from three different contexts, Hinga, Knox, and Obi all specifically identify ways in which historical colonialism continues to affect current economic structures and cause environmental degradation.[129]

Second, theologians from Africa tend to write about the multiple levels of action needed in response to climate change and stress the need to recognize differentiated responsibilities. Overconsumption in certain parts of the world and exploitation by the Global North undergird seriously unjust and ecologically devastating social practices. Yet poverty and positions of relative powerlessness are not excuses to avoid taking action. Hinga and Obi focus on virtue cultivation and changes needed in underlying attitudes such as radically individualistic understandings of the person. Knox is particularly concerned with maintaining individual human agency and proposing concrete actions that individuals can take. In part, this may be because he is writing from South Africa, which is the country in Africa

129. Similarly, Nwachuku-Udaku writes that both tribal politics and multinational corporations are operating within a paradigm of domination, which is an inheritance from the colonial dictatorship that continues to foster the "pseudopolitical virtue" of paternalism, obstruct true economic development, and lead to environmental degradation. See Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku, "Economic Sustainability in Nigeria," 40-41. Likewise, the roots of Malawi's current economic over-dependence on the single export crop of tobacco, a significant contributor to deforestation in that country that now is the source of 60-70 percent of their foreign earnings, go back to British colonization. See Muyebe and Henriot, "What *Laudato Si'* Means to Malawi," 743.

with the highest fossil fuel CO2 emissions.[130] This is not the case for Malawi,[131] and yet Muyebe and Henriot, while acknowledging that Malawians cannot sufficiently address deforestation or climate change on their own, go on to highlight local initiatives that are responding to these issues.[132] Similarly, without discounting the fact that some countries have disproportionately high levels of C02 emissions and thus a greater moral responsibility to reduce their emissions, Lushombo looks for ways that people living in the DRC can respond to deforestation and social injustice.[133] Nwachukwu-Udaku proposes a new "paradigm of recognition," which draws upon the cultural virtue of *dimpka* (literally translated as "husband of necessity") and tools of social epistemology and cultural hermeneutics such as stories, narratives, and local wisdom.[134] Importantly, *dimpka* is characterized by the agency and capacity of individuals to address serious problems.[135]

130. According to 2008 data, South Africa is the 13th largest emitting country worldwide. See T.A. Boden, G. Marland, and R.J. Andres, "Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO2 Emissions," 2011, accessed January 31, 2019, doi:`10.3334/CDIAC/00001_V2011`.

131. In 2014, Malawi contributed only 0.7 tons of carbon dioxide emissions per capita, compared to South Africa's 8.98 and the United States' 16.49. See U.S. Department of Energy Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center Oak Ridge National Laboratory, "CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)," accessed January 31, 2019, `https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.PC`

132. These initiatives include a statement by the Episcopal Conference of Malawi to the Malawi Parliament, local efforts to substitute energy-efficient stoves (*mbuala*) which reduce the use of firewood by 70-80 percent compared to traditional methods of open-fire cooking, and a new Jesuit high school which is striving to embody education for ecological change in its construction as well as in its curriculum. Muyebe and Henriot, "What *Laudato Si'* Means to Malawi," 746.

133. She writes, "Responsibilities have to be differentiated, but they must be shared." Lushombo, "Deforestation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Climate Change: An Ethical Analysis in Light of *Laudato Si'*," 740. For the latter, she finds promise in the vision and practice of Community Forestry in the DRC, which reduces deforestation but also enables the much-needed increase in participation at the local community level (especially by members of marginalized groups) and so is an instantiation of a more theologically robust exercise of the preferential option *with* the poor instead of *for* the poor.

134. Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku, "Economic Sustainability in Nigeria," 41.

135. While a reader might question why Nwachukwu-Udaku draws on just one virtue from one tribe in a context characterized by tribalism, or point to concerns that the virtue named is strongly associated with manliness, it is worth bearing in mind that this call for a paradigm of recognition appears in a very short chapter. More importantly from my perspective, I see this virtue as one example of a necessary corrective to a tendency in Catholic hierarchical teaching, especially from privileged contexts such as the United States which are characterized both by relative privilege and greater responsibility for the environmental crisis, to offer vague calls for responsibility or draw upon virtue language without connecting it to the urgent reality of environmental degradation caused by human activities.

This stress on local initiatives and individual agency is a welcome complement to some of the statements by Roman Catholic bishops' conferences, especially those of the United States, which not only tend to elide sin but also identify responses to the environmental crisis or climate change only in very general terms that do not communicate the urgency of the problem or the need for every person (especially those living in these countries with higher CO2 emissions!) to take action. It is also a welcome corrective to tendencies focusing on the overwhelming nature of the problem, tendencies which I will argue risk understanding sin as only occurring out of our weaknesses and inevitable, which in turn obscures how individuals can and ought to get involved. In the next section, I will show how two other themes that came up in this section (i.e., our place in creation and other-centeredness) resonate with the virtue of humility.

1.2.6 Acknowledging Our Dependence: Human Beings' Place in the World

The language of place within creation and other-centered ways of knowing both connect with the virtue of humility as discussed by Lisa Fullam, James Keenan, and Margaret Farley. For example, while Hinga does not address the virtue of humility, she does write that humility (and "all hands on board") is needed in order to transcend monocultural mindsets and silo thinking.[136] Monocultural mindsets fail to recognize and value non-Western ways of knowing. By contrast, the cardinal virtue of silence enables one to listen to the other. Hinga's understanding of the individual in community such that "a person is a person through others" not only "subverts radical individualism" as she says,[137] but also resonates

136. See Hinga, "The Food-Energy-Water Nexus in the Age of Climate Change: (Afro)Faith Responses to the Ethical Challenges and Imperatives," 124.
137. Ibid., 126.

with Fullam's emphasis on the other-directedness as a key characteristic of the virtue of humility, which needs to be pursued in community.[138]

Likewise, Obi's strong focus on recovering a more relational and less individualistic understanding of the nature of the human person, and particularly his emphasis on respecting the "otherness" of others (including creation's others) rather than viewing them as extensions of ourselves, is consistent with this characteristic of othercenteredness. The connection he makes between recovering relationality and retrieving "our appropriate place in creation" shares similarities with both the reworking of the cardinal virtues in a relational framework done by James Keenan and Keenan's identification of the virtue of humility as "knowing the truth of one's place in the world."[139] One way to understand our place in the world is as a member of God's Household who ought to stand in solidarity with all creation and has a special responsibility toward other creatures.

Knox does not address the virtue of humility in the context of responding to ecological crises, but he does recognize that it is necessary when offering his reflections, given the multi-vocality of the terms *Africa* and *African*.[140] Yet he goes on to say that "admitting such multi-vocality should not intimidate the writer into silence,"[141] which aligns with Margaret Farley's understanding of the grace of self-doubt, which she argues must be paired with courage of conviction.[142] Furthermore, while Knox does not use the term "monocultural mindsets" like Hinga, and he does stress the need for all Christian theologians to emulate *Laudato Si'* in taking scientific discourse seriously, he also writes that it is critical that theologians draw on different discourses (in this case Christian, African, and western sci-

138. See Lisa Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," in *Virtue: Readings in Moral Theology*, ed. Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011), 256.
139. James F. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," *Theological Studies* 56, no. 4 (1995): 709–729 and Daniel J. Harrington and James F. Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology* (Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2002), 191.
140. See Knox, "Theology, Ecology, and Africa," 159.
141. Ibid., 160.
142. Margaret A. Farley, "Ethics, Ecclesiology, and the Grace of Self-doubt," in *A Call to Fidelity: On the Moral Theology of Charles E. Curran*, ed. James J. Walter, Timothy E. O'Connell, and Thomas A. Shannon, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002), 55–75.

entific) in order to "fashion a culturally aware, relevant, effective, and prophetic response to the ecological crisis facing our common home."[143] This requirement to draw on different discourses is, I argue, consistent with the epistemological understanding of the virtue of humility offered by Fullam.

1.3 The Ecological Crisis and Asian Theological Voices

Like theologians writing from African contexts, theologians writing from Asia repeatedly make connections between politics, economics, and ecological crises that resonate strongly with the interconnectedness between economics and environment stressed throughout Roman Catholic magisterial teaching and especially in *Laudato Si'*. Among these authors, there is also a tendency to affirm the concept of harmony with creation that has become a theme in Catholic social teaching as in line with traditional sociocultural and religious values. This section will focus on the work of a selection of authors according to three themes: a human relationship with creation that is characterized by interconnectedness; greed, pride, and indifference as root causes of the ecological crisis; and the necessity of recovering a more adequate notion of our place in the world in order to live in right relationship with others, including all creation. While I particularly focus on the work of theologians writing from an Indian context, including Prem Xalxo, John Casta, Clement Campos, and D.J. Margaret, this focus will be complemented by considering articles by Christina Astomia and Reynaldo Raluto from the Philippines; Reginald Alva and Osamu Takeuchi from Japan, and Jeffrey Goh writing from Malaysia. Compared to previous sections, this section draws on the work of a greater number of authors but fewer or shorter works for each. Therefore, instead of summarizing the thought of each theologian first, I organized this section directly around the three themes addressed throughout this chapter.

143. Knox, "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet," 242.

1.3.1 Relationships Characterized by Interconnectedness

The interconnectedness of all creation is a prominent theme in the writing of theologians from Asia. Human beings are in relationship not only with other human beings and God but also with creation. D.J. Margaret writes, "Everything relies on everything else around it. Our planet is alive and interconnected and we are part of that web."[144] Asian theologians find much to draw upon in *Laudato Si'*, including the sense of interrelatedness of all creation and the category of *integral ecology*.[145] The theme of the interconnectedness of all creation is often integrated with the understanding of human beings as occupying a stewardship role in creation although some, like Jeffrey Goh, argue that Catholic teaching is now moving beyond the stewardship model.[146]

In his appraisal of *Laudato Si'*, Prem Xalxo draws attention to the category of *integral ecology* and the emphasis on human relationship with the natural environment found in the encyclical. He identifies interconnectedness as the first of the encyclical's five salient features.[147] Furthermore, its emphasis on the interrelatedness of all creation resonates with Pan-Asian spirituality, most of which "is based on human interconnectedness with everything in nature, both non-animate and animate beings."[148] Similarly Jeffrey Goh lifts up the category of "integral ecology" in *Laudato Si'* as the heart of the response to environmental

144. D.J. Margaret, "Interrelated Option for the Poor and the Earth," *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 662.
145. This is not to say that there are not also strong critiques. For example, in her evaluation of *Laudato Si'* that draws upon Asian Catholic feminist theologians and activists from the Ecclesia of Women in Asia (EWA), Sharon A. Bong critiques the encyclical for not attending to the intersections between gender justice and climate justice, heterosexist assumptions, and for reinforcing a fundamentally anthropocentric theology of creation that obstructs "'ecological conversion' *from within* the Christian faith." Sharon A Bong, "Not Only for the Sake of Man: Asian Feminist Theological Responses to *Laudato Si'*," in *Planetary Solidarity: Global Women's Voices on Christian Doctrine and Climate Justice*, ed. Grace Ji-Sun Kim (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017), 81–96.
146. See Jeffrey Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 646-647.
147. See Prem Xalxo, "Poor, Periphery and Ecological Concerns in *Laudato Si'*: A Moral-Pastoral Appraisal," in *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, ed. James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2016), 241-243.
148. Ibid., 246.

and social problems, which are "one complex crisis."[149] For Xalxo, Goh, and Margaret, like for the theologians writing from African contexts, the interconnectedness of all creation cannot be separated from concern for the poor.[150]

Clement Campos, CSsR, observes that one of the contributions of *Laudato Si'* is that it has expanded the concept of "social" from inter-human (and inter-community) relationships to include nature as well.[151] Our perception of ourselves as essentially relational needs to attend to the fact that this relationality extends to all creation. For Campos, this relationality with creation is framed in terms of responsibility.[152] Goh goes even further, identifying *Laudato Si'* as a "watershed moment" for Catholic creation-consciousness which moves beyond not only dominion, but also stewardship, into a deep awareness of the interconnectedness of all creation. This awareness emphasizes the intrinsic worth of creation and promotes a "universal communion" and a sense of kinship that extends beyond human beings.[153]

The understanding of the interconnectedness of creation in the work of theologians writing from Asian contexts is often accompanied by a focus on harmony which affirms

149. For Goh's discussion of integral ecology, see Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 651-652. The wording "one complex crisis" is drawn from LS, 139.

150. Xalxo writes, "For the larger Pan-Asian context of poverty and misery, *Laudato Si'* is both an invitation and a challenge to hear both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor (LS, 49)." See Xalxo, "Poor, Periphery and Ecological Concerns in *Laudato Si'*," 247. Goh notes that the interrelatedness of all created realities means that ecological degradation "at once alerts us to the degradation of the living conditions of the Poor." See Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 649. A few pages later he reiterates this point, writing, "Ultimately, however, the inter-dependence of all things draws us to the singular truth: to ignore the connection between ecological degradation and human degradation is to ignore the inviolable human dignity of the Poor." Ibid., 652. Margaret insists that the option for the poor cannot be separated from the option for nature and envisions working for the latter by addressing the former. She writes, "Human concern for the earth must be manifested in the concern for the poor" and that "Nature will truly enjoy its second spring only when humanity has compassion for its own members." See Margaret, "Interrelated Option for the Poor and the Earth," 663, 668, respectively.

151. Clement Campos, "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective," *Theological Studies* 78, no. 1 (2017): 215.

152. He concludes, "We realize then that we are not just our brothers' keepers, but carry a responsibility for all creation. This is the task of preserving biodiversity." Ibid., 223.

153. See Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 647-648. Goh also points out that in September 2015, Pope Francis spoke of a "*right of the environment*." Ibid., 651. Goh is correct that this is an early but significant development in Catholic thinking, although, as seen in section one, it is not completely without precedent in episcopal statements.

the trend toward speaking of the human-nature relationship in terms of peace and harmony found in episcopal and papal statements. For example, Xalxo says that according to almost every Indian indigenous worldview, there is a recognized need for human beings to maintain a harmonious relationship with God, other human beings, and nonhuman creatures.[154] John Casta finds in the understanding of the human-nature relationship of the Chotanagpur Tribes "a paradigm of cosmotheandric interrelatedness, which is the foundation for any ethical discourse on environmental issues."[155] This relationship between human beings and nature is characterized by harmony. Practically, it results in restricted property ownership practices that have preserved large areas of the forest, taboos related to totemic life, peaceful protests against mining and industrialization, and a communitarian approach to life, including worship and festivals. Casta identifies the relationship of Chotanagpur Tribals with nature as a much-needed corrective to human attitudes towards nature and as "a paradigm of human-nature coexistence."[156]

Christina A. Astomia, who is from the Philippines and currently teaches at the University of Portland in the United States, challenges her readers to listen to the "triple cries" of the poor, women, and the earth that are caused by the connection between the domination of women and the domination of the earth. While these connections resonate with the category of integral ecology, like Hinga, Astomia draws out the connections between the domination of women and the ecological crisis. This connection is not explicitly attended to in *Laudato Si'*. Yet, just as for Pope Francis the sinful rupture of the three-fold relation-

154. See Xalxo, "Poor, Periphery and Ecological Concerns in *Laudato Si'*," 246. He made a similar point in 2014, when he found that the Greek root "*oikos*" resonated with some traditional Indian socio-cultural and religious values, including feeling "at home" in creation, honoring an interdependent relationship with Mother Earth, and seeking happiness and prosperity through harmonious relationships, including with the earth." See Prem Xalxo, "Responses to Ecological Challenges: An Indian Perspective," in *New Horizons in Christian Ethics: Reflections from India*, ed. Scaria Kanniyakonil (Bangalore: Association of Moral Theologians of India, 2014), 481-484.
155. John Crasta, "The Chotanagpur Tribes As Agents of Environmental Redemption in the Context of the Current Ethical Debate on the Ecological Crisis," in *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, ed. James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara (Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2016), 226.
156. Ibid., 236.

ship between Creator, humanity, and creation is the source of conflict between humans and nature as well as other sources of intrahuman violence (LS, 66), for Astomia, the violation of interconnectedness leads to the logic of domination and subjugation of the poor, of women in particular, and of the earth. Astomia writes, "The ultimate root of this logic is the destruction of the universal relatedness and connectedness at the heart of all creation."[157] Hence the three-fold solution that she proposes includes not only prophetic lament but also gender resistance, and her understanding of ecological kinship overcomes the dualism of "ecological kingship" that associates earth and matter with female, and spirit with male.[158]

Several authors rely on the paradigm of stewardship, linking human recognition of the interconnectedness of all creation to our ability to exercise our responsibilities as stewards. For example, Xalxo writes that in response to current ecological crises, Indians should draw on some traditional values such as considering creation as Mother Earth (*Dharti Mata*) and the idea of universal brotherhood or kinship (*Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam*).[159] Yet as seen above, Goh brings that paradigm into question. There are also a couple of cases in which the understanding of stewardship that features in much of Catholic magisterial teaching on the environment is challenged. For example, drawing on the creation myths of the Chotanagpur Tribals, Casta highlights beliefs that will sound familiar to Christian readers: the belief in a Supreme God who is the creator and who gave human beings, made in his image, a special task "to work towards the preservation and conservation of the entire

157. Christina A. Astorga, "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth: Interlocking Oppressions in the Christian Context," in *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, ed. Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James F. Keenan, and Shaji George Kochuthara (Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 2016), 250.

158. Ibid., 261.

159. See Xalxo, "Responses to Ecological Challenges: An Indian Perspective," 483-484. While acknowledging the interconnectedness of all creation is necessary to adequately discharge our responsibility to care for creation, Xalxo does not seem to see this kinship in terms of a community to whom the earth is given. Rather, creation is a gift from God to humanity. He writes, "The ultimate implication of the sacramentality of creation is the invitation to care and cultivate creation, to preserve its order and integrity and make responsible use of everything in creation as God's gift for the entire humanity." See Prem Xalxo, "God-Centered Approach to Creation: A Need of the Hour," *Jeevadhara* XLII, no. 252 (2012): 474.

creation."[160] However, the image of human beings as co-workers and stewards, though with parallels to that found in Catholic teaching, is tempered by a belief that God is present in all creatures (some of whom helped God shape the world), and that the land belongs to the spirits (though ultimately to God), whom humans need to honor. Astomia's focus on "ecological kinship" implicitly challenges stewardship because it calls into question the hierarchical relationships between human beings and the earth. Ecological kinship comes from a recognition of interconnectedness and undercuts the dualism that impedes proper relationships both with other human beings and with the earth.[161] Likewise Sharon A. Bong is also concerned that *Laudato Si'* reinforces dualities between men and women, culture and nature, protector and protected.[162] Though she does not focus her analysis on stewardship, her criticism of these dualistic understandings as well as the centrality of human beings in creation and the understanding that only human beings are made in the image of God certainly challenges the stewardship paradigm. While Goh does not focus on dualism, there are some similarities between Astomia's concept of "ecological kinship" and his identification of a third wave in Catholic creation-consciousness that goes beyond the stewardship paradigm, in particular the focus on having a greater sense of unity in human relationships with each other and with other creatures.

1.3.2 The Evils of Greed, Pride, Domination, and Indifference

Theologians writing from Asian contexts frequently identify greed, pride, domination, and indifference as causes of the ecological crisis. While the focus on the long-lasting impact of colonialism is not as pervasive here as it was in the work of African theologians,

160. Crasta, "The Chotanagpur Tribes As Agents of Environmental Redemption," 232.
161. Astomia considers ecological kinship to be accountable to the creation accounts. She writes, "Where there is interconnectedness, in reciprocity and mutuality – in love – there the Creator God is most present and active in the world." See Astorga, "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth," 261. She also finds support for this concept in *Laudato Si'*, including paragraph 42, which notes that we are all dependent on each other because we are all connected.
162. Bong, "Not Only for the Sake of Man," 89-91.

it is still present. For example, Reynaldo D. Raluto highlights the connections between historical injustices against the Indigenous Peoples of the Philippines that occurred during Spanish colonization and ecological destruction, realities which he argues need to be better integrated into Catholic Social Teaching.[163] Nature was also "colonized" due to the introduction of unsustainable land practices (including foreign crops and tree species). In many aspects, his analysis parallels Hinga's: indigenous views of creation were attacked, indigenous peoples were displaced from their ancestral lands due to a combination of the abrogation of their property rights, the institution of crown lands, and agrarian capitalism, colonization resulted in the domination of both human beings and the environment, and indigenous women suffered even more than indigenous men because of imported ideas and practices of gender inequality.

Astomia focuses on domination and subjugation, but also mentions indifference and callousness. Indeed, prophetic lament can help overcome indifference because grief pierces our insensitivity.[164] Those who have benefited from injustice can join in the lament, but only after they have honestly and courageously faced the truth that they have benefited from the suffering of another. Astomia's focus on lament resonates with Goh's identification of learning to weep as a key takeaway of *Laudato Si'*.[165]

Goh identifies three cultures that develop due to current patterns of materialistic seeking of happiness in things rather than in relationships: self-centered comfort, waste, and desensitizing indifference.[166] These three cultures resonate with the concerns of selfishness, domination, and indifference that recur in the works surveyed in this chapter. Furthermore, technology has been put into the service of greed, leading both to environmental degrada-

163. See Reynaldo D. Raluto, "The Intersection of Historical Injustices and Ecological Destruction in Asia: Enriching Catholic Social Teaching on Indigenous Peoples," *Landas* 31, no. 1 (2017): 101–129.
164. See Astorga, "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth," 257.
165. Goh concludes, "In sum, as Pope Francis praises God for His glorious creation, he simultaneously urges the world to learn to weep. It is only after we have cleansed our eyes with tears that we can begin to see the immense reality of the ecological destruction and human suffering in the world and right around us." Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 657.
166. See ibid., 646.

tion and rampant injustice, increasing rather than decreasing the "ecological debt" between the Global South and the Global North, in which rich nations engage in rampant overconsumption while the poor are excluded from accessing even basic resources. A forgetfulness of both creation and the Creator is at the root of the ecological crisis. This forgetfulness can be seen in our lifestyles and attitudes toward creation. We must remember who we are in order to make an ecological conversion and the needed cultural and lifestyle changes.[167] Instead of viewing creation as "nature" to be used, we must appreciate creation as gift, a view that fosters gratitude and attentiveness.

There are parallels between Goh's focus on forgetfulness and Reginald Alva's concern with irrational rationalization. In his reading of *Laudato Si'*, Alva focuses on the ways in which Pope Francis challenges "irrational rationalization," which Alva sees as a significant cause of the moral-ecological crisis.[168] While Alva's focus is not on indifference, I read "irrational rationalization" as helping to fill out a sketch of the sin of indifference, since it enables us to accept status quo policies and structures (such as "absurd" notions of justice and development).

Other theologians focus more on greed, pride, and selfishness than indifference or forgetfulness. Margaret, like Hinga, identifies both collective and individual greed and selfishness as the causes of ecological devastation. Greed and selfishness violate the order of creation, "which is characterized by mutual independence."[169] Writing from Japan, Osamu Takeuchi focuses on arrogance as the cause of the human-made disaster (with serious ecological consequences) of the meltdown at the Fukushima No. 1 nuclear plant.[170] Casta

167. See Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 649-650.
168. See Reginald Alva, "*Laudato Si'* Challenges Irrational Rationalization," *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 709–723.
169. See Margaret, "Interrelated Option for the Poor and the Earth," 668. While she does not name indifference, in the context of necessary lifestyle changes she is concerned about the impact that the "careless habits of a few" have on the environment.
170. See Osamu Takeuchi SJ, "Nature, Human Beings, and Nuclear Power in Japan," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 23. Perhaps Western readers in particular need to be cautious not to interpret this arrogance too individualistically. Takeuchi goes on to refer

identifies greed and arrogance as the source of the current environmental crisis because these have "led to the rupture of God-creation relationship."[171] Past religious and philosophical thought has sometimes contributed to this breakdown by being either too anthropocentric or too theocentric and failing to recognize the interconnectedness between God, human beings, and nature. One of the consequences of this failure has been a denial of the sanctity, beauty, and mystery of non-human nature, and a disproportionate emphasis on human rights over nature compared to human obligations toward nature.

While many authors identify various sins as the source of the rupture of the relationship between humanity and all creation and focus on the need to revise our self-understanding and our understanding of our relationship with creation, Campos is more explicitly concerned with the role of naming our sins, repentance, and restitution in ecological conversion. As he correctly notes, "Conversion implies a turning away from sin."[172] In light of the critique offered in section one that some Catholic episcopal and papal teachings tend to focus on ecological conversion without adequately identifying sins, it is noteworthy that when it comes to actually naming sins (as opposed to identifying the key elements of ecological conversion or the new self-understanding needed), Campos cites not *Laudato Si'* but rather Bishop Gianfranco Girotto for examples of social sins, including economic injustice and accumulation of excessive wealth, and Patrick T. McCormick and Russel B. Connors,

to global trends promoting nuclear power after World War II and the establishment of nuclear power as a main power source in Japan due to "a need and greed for energy" and a failure to adequately consider the impact on the environment or the long-term impact on human beings (24). This socially understood arrogance resonates with Haruko K. Okano's analysis of a Japanese ethics of relationship and harmony, which resulted in a largely cohesive national identity but one drawback of which is a "blatant distinction between *us and others*" which fosters a lack of attention to human rights, human dignity, and the impacts of the exclusion that occurs when a society believes itself to be complete as is. Haruko K Okano, "Theological Ethics in Relation to Japanese Religions Regarding Moral Responsibility," in *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, ed. James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara (Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 2016), 201.

171. Crasta, "The Chotanagpur Tribes As Agents of Environmental Redemption," 228.

172. Campos, "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective," 223.

Jr. for the environmental sins of anthropocentrism and consumerism (which are linked with the sins of pride and greed and envy, respectively).[173]

Lastly, in language that strongly parallels but predates *Laudato Si'*, Xalxo writes that the ecological crises facing India result from a rupture of a three-fold human relationship between other human beings, creation, and God.[174] In other words, human beings no longer seem to feel "at home" in creation. While he does not focus on sin, this rupture language anticipates understanding sin as against our relational nature. Xalxo is also concerned with structural issues, identifying an urgent need for India to adopt an alternative model of development that is not based on materialistic ideology, conflict of interests, and consumerism.[175]

1.3.3 Acknowledging Our Dependence: Human Beings' Place in the World

Authors from India tend to highlight how acknowledging our dependence on other creatures and the interrelatedness of all creation is necessary for forming both better attitudes towards and better relationships with nonhuman creatures.[176] These better attitudes and healthier

173. See Campos, "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective," 223-224.

174. Xalxo, "Responses to Ecological Challenges: An Indian Perspective," 481.

175. See ibid., 480.

176. Given that India has the largest Hindu population in the world, it is not unreasonable to ask whether this focus on interrelationship has been formed by Hindu religious beliefs. The question is complicated by the diversity of traditions within Hinduism, some of which value and personify nature, as well as peace between (and nonviolence toward) all beings on earth, while others consider matter to be opposed to the spirit. See Vasudha Narayanan, "Ecology and Religion: Ecology and Hinduism," in *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., ed. Lindsay Jones, vol. 4 (Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005), 2620–2624. For the purposes of this discussion, I have set aside this question both because it lies beyond my competency and because ultimately, the emphasis on interconnection that is found in multiple contexts suggests that it is not inextricably tied to any single religious tradition. Nonetheless, two points are worth mentioning here. First, Campos calls attention to the fact that despite the ways in which the spirituality of creation in *Laudato Si'* was seen to resonate with Indian philosophy (he notes that the overall message was affirmed by high-profile Hindu leaders in India), and despite Francis' emphasis on dialogue and use of a wider set of sources in the encyclical, the encyclical does not cite any of the sacred writings from India or even Asia. Campos, "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective," 214-216. Second, other religions are not exempt from the dynamics of colonization which are repeatedly seen to intersect with Christianity. Xalxo points out that the loss of identity of the tribals of the Chotanagpur plateau has included religious dimensions, carried out by Christian mis-

relationships will be expressed in our lifestyles. For example, for Xalxo, Campos, Goh, and Margaret, responding to the ecological crisis requires both a change in attitudes and a change in lifestyles. Drawing on *Laudato Si'*, Xalxo repeatedly calls attention to the need for people, especially the affluent, to adopt a new lifestyle "which promotes human dignity and enhances human interconnectedness with the entire creation."[177] It is necessary for human beings to again establish a relationship with and feel "at home" in their earthly house ("*oikos*").[178] Hence, acknowledging our interdependence and our place in creation will lead to action, specifically adopting a more sober lifestyle that reduces consumption and so better respects the limits placed upon us by the complex webs of interrelationships of which we are a part. Campos makes a similar claim, linking re-discovering our proper place in creation with reparation, justice, and adopting a new lifestyle. This proper place in creation is one of kinship with other creatures. Campos writes, "In the context of the environment, we need to recover our God-given place as creatures that share a bond of kinship with all created realities; to undertake the task of repairing the wounds inflicted on creation and render justice to the victims of exploitation and greed; to adopt a lifestyle whereby we learn from the Taoist maxim 'to walk lightly on the earth.'"[179] Also drawing on *Laudato Si'*, Goh argues for both cultural and individual lifestyle changes that take into consideration the poor and their dignity. These changes can come about once we stop forgetting our limits as creatures and begin to remember who we are and our proper place in creation.[180] According to Margaret, a proper education focused on concern for the poor and

sionaries, but also by some Hindu fundamentalist groups, who "have been vehemently trying to amalgamate the tribals into the Hindu fold," in part by arguing that "'the tribal India is practically by religion a Hindu.'" Prem Xalxo, "Alarming Situation of the Tribals and Indigenous Peoples Today," *Jeevadhara: A Journal of Christian Interpretation* XLVI, no. 274 (2016): 16.

177. Xalxo, "Poor, Periphery and Ecological Concerns in *Laudato Si'*," 248.

178. Xalxo, "Responses to Ecological Challenges: An Indian Perspective," 481, 483.

179. Campos, "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective," 224.

180. He writes, "The core of the message in LS is an appeal to remember who we are as created and part of creation, and to an ecological conversion and change in culture and lifestyle." Goh, "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*," 649.

care for creation will result in changes in our patterns of thinking as well as in our actions and lifestyle.[181] We need simplicity, moderation, discipline, and a spirit of sacrifice.

Astomia's call for "prophetic lament" is another example of the relationship between ecological conversion and rediscovering our place in the world. Prophetic lament helps us learn our place in the world through others because it requires those who benefit from the suffering of others to face that harsh truth and thus "holds the power to bring those who benefit from injustice to penitence and conversion."[182] I read prophetic lament as a response to indifference, particularly the "globalization of indifference" with which Pope Francis has been concerned throughout his papacy. As Astomia noted, for things to change, it is necessary to see reality as it is and "proclaim that all is not well."[183] Likewise, Goh argues that in order to see reality as it is, we must first "cleanse" our eyes with tears. Another way of expressing this idea of indifference is found in Alva's concern with irrational rationalization, because such rationalization makes it more difficult for us to see things as they truly are, and insulates us from the terrible harm inflicted upon other human beings and human communities as well as on our environment that might penetrate our insensitivity and lead to change.[184]

In short, our economic structures, models of development, and lifestyles do not reflect a proper understanding of our place in creation but rather ruptures in our relationships due to greed, arrogance, selfishness, and indifference. By seeing ourselves as outside of creation, or above others, we fail to question patterns of overconsumption and scarcity or the attitudes and policies that undergird them. Indeed, indifference makes it difficult

181. See Margaret, "Interrelated Option for the Poor and the Earth," 668-669.
182. Astorga, "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth," 257-258.
183. Ibid., 257.
184. Drawing on *Laudato Si'*, Alva notes some examples of how those who wield more power and dominance in society attempt to rationalize actions that contribute to social evils in terms of development. For example, he reads Pope Francis as challenging a rationality that has faith that technological developments can solve all problems or that elevates technology progress over ethics, as in the lack of responsibility by those who produce weapons of mass destruction. See Alva, "*Laudato Si'* Challenges Irrational Rationalization," 710-712. He also joins in Pope Francis' critique of employers that "treat their workers as commodities" and neglect long-term investment in people in favor of short-term financial benefits. See ibid., 712-713.

to even see the damage inflicted. Human beings need to rediscover our proper place in creation and act accordingly. As Xalxo writes, “Rediscovery of the inter-dependent human relationship with the Mother Earth will already lead one step further in providing with an adequate answer to the ecological challenges.”[185] This rediscovery of our true place in creation will involve more awareness of creation’s interconnectedness and how we relate to other creatures, with more emphasis on kinship to, at the very least, complement (if not challenge) the image of stewardship. It will also involve listening to others in order to pierce our insulation and indifference and learn to see things as they really are. I will argue in the next chapter that this rediscovery is part of the virtue of humility. As Takeuchi writes, “We should learn again who we are as human beings and live more humbly.”[186]

1.4 The Ecological Crisis and Native American Theological Voices

Like theologians writing from African and Asian contexts, theologians writing from American Indian contexts repeatedly make connections between politics, economics, and ecological crises that resonate strongly with the connections between justice, economics, and environment stressed throughout Catholic magisterial teaching. Native American scholars emphasize the role that colonization and oppression, which are ongoing, have played both in contemporary ecological destruction and injustice to Native Americans. Hence, as Jace Weaver writes, “Environmental destruction is simply one manifestation of the colonialism and racism that have marked Indian/White relations since the arrival of Columbus

185. Xalxo, “God-Centered Approach to Creation,” 483-484.
186. Takeuchi, “Nature, Human Beings, and Nuclear Power in Japan,” 26. Forgetting our interdependence, both on other human beings and on our environment, promotes arrogance and exceeding our limitations, and this leads to disasters that have high environmental and human costs. Given Japan’s history as the only country to have experienced the devastation of the atomic bombs, in addition to nuclear disaster precipitated by a natural disaster, Takeuchi thinks that Japan is in a particularly good place to warn the rest of the world about the temptations and terrible costs of nuclear power.

in 1492."[187] According to Weaver, Native Americans identify the most pressing issue as sovereignty, but this issue is part of ecojustice because ecojustice cannot be intelligibly discussed apart from racism and colonialism.[188] George Tinker also identifies regaining sovereignty as a priority that does not just affect political justice, but also ecological sustainability.[189]

This section will focus on the work of George E. Tinker (Wazhazhe/Osage Nation),[190] complemented with selections from Jace Weaver, Stan McKay (Cree), and Laura E. Donaldson (Cherokee) as well as several chapters of the recent edited volume *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*. The discussion is organized around three themes: (1) relationships with others are characterized by harmony and reciprocity; (2) rupture in these relationships is understood in terms of broken harmony; and (3) the relatively equal place of human beings in the world.

First, a note on terminology is needed, since, as Weaver notes, the terms "Native" and "Indigenous" both "carry with them the baggage of imperialism."[191] Since I am focusing on the writings of scholars indigenous to North America, particularly in what is now the United

187. Jace Weaver, "Introduction: Notes from a Miner's Canary," in *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 3 It is worth noting that Weaver finds Tinker too charitable in his assessment of the good intentions of missionaries. Jace Weaver, "From I-Hermeneutics to We-Hermeneutics: Native Americans and the Post-Colonial," *SEMEIA*, 1996, 156. In the same piece, Weaver cautions against the way in which post-modernism can relate to a post-colonial critique, writing, "It is no coincidence that just as the peoples of the Two-Thirds World begin to find their voices and assert their own agency and subjectivity, post-modernism proclaims the end of subjectivity" (165).
188. For example, see Weaver, "Defending Mother Earth," 19-21 and the Editor's Note in Jace Weaver, "Triangulated Power and the Environment: Tribes, the Federal Government, and the States," in *Defending mother earth: Native American perspectives on environmental justice* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 107.
189. He writes, "Returning Native lands to the sovereign control of Native peoples around the world, beginning in the United States, is not simply just; the survival of all may depend on it." George E. Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," *Ecotheology*, no. 1 (2 1997): 108-109. However, in his previous work, Tinker also identified respect for creation as the proper starting point for theological reflection, arguing that just as Christians realize that peace flows from justice, justice and peace will flow from concern for creation, at least from an American Indian perspective. See George E. Tinker, "Creation as Kin: An American Indian View," in *After Nature's Revolt: Eco-Justice and Theology*, ed. Dieter T Hessel (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992), 146.
190. Also cited here as Tink Tinker, depending on the date of the publication.
191. Jace Weaver, "Misfit Messengers: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Climate Change," *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83, no. 2 (2015): 320.

States, in this section, I follow Weaver's lead in using the terms Native American, American Indian, and Native interchangeably. In general, I strive to use the same terminology present in the text I am discussing.

Second, given the focus on interconnectedness and harmony in this chapter, and the tendency by some within the environmental movement to remake the Indian "in their own image as the first ecologist, living in perfect harmony with nature," I recognize that I run the risk of perpetuating in my own work the appropriation of Native understandings of what I termed ecological relationality.[192] While I strive to mitigate the risk of homogenizing the experiences, traditions, and insights of Native authors by citing multiple authors from different backgrounds and focusing on learning from the authors cited in this section rather than using their work to "buttress" my own argument, I do not pretend to have completely transcended the context in which I live, which continues to be marked by racism and colonialism. Hence, I offer my conclusions provisionally.

1.4.1 Relationships Characterized by Harmony and Reciprocity

The interconnectedness of all creation as a lived experience features in the work of the authors cited in this section. Tinker argues that the dominant group in North America desperately needs to learn this truth, asserting that "The particular gift of Native American peoples (and of other indigenous peoples) is an immediate awareness and experience of the sacredness and interdependence of all creation."[193] He also identifies seeing a relationship between all created things as an aspect of a Native American reading of the kingdom of God that can help Western Christianity gain much-needed insight.[194] Tinker also draws attention

192. Weaver, "Misfit Messengers: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Climate Change," 322.

193. George E. Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," *The Ecumenical Review* 41, no. 4 (1989): 528. See also Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 91.

194. Divine rule implies two relationships: one between all creation and its Creator, and a second between all creatures who have been created by the Creator. Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 150. In his more recent writing, Tinker has backed away from using creation-creator language due to difficulties in translating these euro-Christian concepts into the Native worldviews, especially within the context of colonization. See Tink

to the sacred symbol of the circle in Native traditions, which expresses the interrelatedness of all living things and has egalitarian tendencies.[195] McKay, a Canadian Minister from the Fish River Cree Nation in Manitoba, also notes the use of the symbol of the circle and how it points to an understanding of human beings and other creatures as interdependent.[196]

Other creatures are kin to humans. Tinker identifies "the sense of having been created in kinship with the land" as an essential aspect of the self-understanding of Native peoples.[197] There is no category of "inanimate" as we are all relatives.[198] Furthermore, he points out that the phrase *mitakuye oyasin*, which is used in all the prayers of Lakota and Dakota peoples and functions similarly to *amen* in American and European Christianity, is usually translated as "for all my relations" and yet has a much more inclusive understanding of "relations" that extends to not only close kin but even to all "two-leggeds," as well as "the four-leggeds, the wingeds and all the living, moving things on mother Earth."[199] This inclusive understanding of relatives is not limited to Tinker. In a poem that forms his response to Anthony Hall's chapter on creation and colonization in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, McKay identifies relations as "all plant life, the ones that crawl, swim, and fly, the four-legged and the two-

Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 167–179.

195. This is a theme throughout his work. The "circle is a key symbol for self-understanding... representing the whole of the universe and our part in it." Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 147. The circle is a fundamental symbol of Plains Indians that signifies "the family, the clan, the tribe and eventually all of creation." George E. Tinker, "The Full Circle of Liberation: An American Indian Theology of Place," in *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, ed. David G Hallman (Maryknoll, NY: WCC Publications; Orbis Books, 1994), 222. This symbol cannot be made hierarchical. See Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 98. Furthermore, the symbol of the medicine wheel is not a cross surrounded by a circle but a bringing together of the sacred figure of the circle and the symbol of the four directions. See George E. Tinker, "Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival," *Word & World* 6, no. 1 (1986): 72.

196. See Stan McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," in *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, ed. David G Hallman (Maryknoll, NY: WCC Publications; Orbis Books, 1994), 217.

197. Tinker, "Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival," 68.

198. Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," 532.

199. Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 148. Tinker also discusses *mitakouye oyasin* in Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 91.

legged."[200] Elsewhere McKay writes, "Those parts of creation which biologists describe as inanimate we call our relatives."[201] Daniel Wildcat (Muscogee) argues that one of the differences between how Indigenous peoples view creation and culturally dominant views can be described in terms of relatives vs. resources.[202] Woodley (Keetowah Cherokee) understands God's *shalom* community to include others besides human beings.[203] Laura Donaldson proposes covenant as an alternative paradigm for "the relationship among humans, the earth and the waters."[204] Such a paradigm presupposes the ability of two parties, whether equal or unequal, to come to an agreement.

This more inclusive definition of *kin* or *relative* is also closely related to an understanding of the need to live in harmony or balance with all creation. Tinker writes that American Indian worldviews are more egalitarian and are "predicated on balance and harmony."[205] All Native American spirituality (including Christian and traditional) begins with harmony with nature.[206] Human beings have a responsibility to help maintain "the harmony and balance, the interdependence and interrelationship of all things in our world."[207]

While scholars caution against the ways in which conceptions of American Indians' harmonious relationship with nature have been idealized and coopted, including by those

200. Stan McKay, "Together We Share," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 47.
201. McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 214.
202. Wildcat identifies the understanding of community as inclusive of more than human beings as one of the "four features of Indigenous spiritual traditions or 'worldviews,' which produce conceptions of justice desperately needed in this human-centered Age of the Anthropocene and its current global life crisis." When noting the distinction between viewing creation as resources or as relatives, he cites Oren Lyons' 1997 Earth Day speech. See Daniel R Wildcat, "Just Creation: Enhancing Life in a World of Relatives," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 295, 305, respectively.
203. See Randy Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 94.
204. Laura E. Donaldson, "Convenanting Nature: Aquacide and the Transformation of Knowledge," *Ecotheology: Journal of Religion, Nature & the Environment* 8, no. 1 (2003): 100.
205. Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 171.
206. Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," 532.
207. Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 144-145. Likewise, he reads the creation stories in both Genesis 1 and Genesis 2 as showing that "the harmony and balance of the created order was good" (151).

in environmental movements,[208] the perception that, at least when properly studied, there is insight in Native understandings of harmonious relationships with others, is echoed by other American Indian authors. For example, McKay describes the spirituality of his people in terms of wholeness. He writes, "The need of the universe is the individual need to be in harmony with the creator. This harmony is expressed by living in the circle of life."[209] Woodley sees a parallel between the Christian concept of the kingdom of God and Indigenous people's concept of belonging to a *community of creation*, because heaven's economy is characterized by shalom, peace, harmony and mutuality, which is similar to the concept of harmony found in many indigenous traditions.[210] The ideal of living in harmony with creation is in the background of Chief Lawrence Hart's identification of and response to the struggle of even those who understand the interconnectedness of creation "to live lives in harmony with it."[211]

In Tinker's work, harmony is linked to an understanding of reciprocity.[212] All human actions have consequences and it is our responsibility to balance the effects of our actions. This balance is usually achieved spiritually, through rituals or ceremonies. Such a balance is necessary regardless of whom our actions affect (i.e., humans, animals, plants) and whether our actions are necessary for our survival (i.e., for food or medicine).[213] Tinker

208. Weaver notes the problems with both the romanticized remaking of the Indian as the first ecologist in the 1970s and the backlash against this image by radical ecologists. See Weaver, "Misfit Messengers: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Climate Change," 322-323. Tinker sees a similar set of extremes that must be avoided, a romanticization of American Indian insights, and "the openly racist concern for protecting the privilege of White power and discourse in North America" that is used to "deprecate American Indian environmental consciousness." Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 86.
209. McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 216.
210. See Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 93.
211. Chief Lawrence Hart, "The Earth is a Song Made Visible: A Cheyenne Perspective," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 153.
212. Among the authors surveyed here, reciprocity comes through most strongly in Tinker's work, although the concept is also found in the writing of Woodley and Weaver. When writing about the kingdom of God as the community of creation, Woodley argues that the Western church needs "to recognize integrated constructs that encompass reciprocal relationships and the well-being of all things." See Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 93. Weaver briefly mentions reciprocity in the context of hunting, drawing on the work of Dennis McPherson and J. Douglas Rabb. See Weaver, "Defending Mother Earth," 6-7.
213. See Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 93.

writes, “Precipitous action, even violence, cannot always be avoided. But respect for the sacredness of all and acknowledgment of our inter-relatedness with all creation demand some sort of reciprocation in order to maintain harmony in the face of disharmony.”[214] A reciprocal action can be offered through a ritual before killing an animal for food, cutting down a tree for an important ceremony, or beginning the harvest. Yet there are limits. Tinker questions what reciprocal action is being taken (or could possibly be taken) for clearing rainforests or accumulating nuclear waste.[215]

One further aspect of the understanding of the interconnectedness of all creation in the writings of American Indian theologians is that it is place-oriented. Tinker questions where God actually reigns if not in the place (understood in its entirety) that God created. He offers reciprocity and spatiality as “two aspects of what might be called a general Indian theology that Christians and other Euro-Americans might do well to note.”[216] Throughout his work, Tinker sees a stark difference between spatially-oriented American Indian peoples and temporally-oriented Euro-American peoples and Western Christianity.[217] For example, Christian worship is organized around time. The sacred is a specific day in a seven-day cycle and the place can vary. For American Indians, worship is organized around a specific place and the time of worship can vary. Weaver seems to agree with Tinker, stating that “This spatial aspect of Native worldviews must not be underestimated.”[218] Hart also

214. Tinker, “The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance,” 534.

215. ibid.

216. Tinker, “An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice,” 93.

217. Space is primary for Native peoples and sacred symbols are symbols of spatiality including the symbol of the four directions as well as the image of the Red Road and the Blue Road. See Tinker, “Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival,” 69-72. Spatiality is a key aspect of anything that would be called a general Indian theology, and differences can be seen in how the sacred is measured. See Tinker, “An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice,” 93, 96. For another discussion of the Indigenous worldview as primarily spatial and the euro-western worldview as primarily temporal, see Tinker, “Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator,” 170-171.

218. Weaver, “Defending Mother Earth,” 13. In his discussion, Weaver draws on Tinker’s identification of the temporal as subordinate to the spatial (as opposed to absent), and how, for example, time in Native worldviews is usually understood cyclically rather than linearly. Elsewhere, Weaver argues that any post-colonial hermeneutic will “take seriously the importance of land for Native peoples.” Weaver, “From I-Hermeneutics to We-Hermeneutics: Native Americans and the Post-Colonial,” 171.

identifies the sacredness of the earth as a key feature of Native American worldviews that is in tension with Christian practices of worship, which are not tied to place.[219] McKay describes the land as "the Creator's resting place"[220] and repeatedly refers to the land as sacred.[221] Tinker further makes connections between a primarily temporally-oriented worldview and the history of colonization, since those who hear the gospel later are always at a disadvantage relative to those who heard it earlier.[222]

Overall, in the writings of American Indian theologians, there is an emphasis on how human beings are in relationships with all other creatures, part of a circle of creation that is fundamentally interconnected and interdependent.[223] This interconnectedness of all creation is characterized by harmony and understood primarily in terms of space, not time. While violence towards another relation is sometimes unavoidable, it can be mitigated by reciprocity. Nor does death threaten this harmony, because death is seen as continuous rather than discontinuous with the cycle of life. Importantly, especially given the historical

219. Not only are Christian worship practices not place-based, but in some cases, like the Anabaptist tradition within which "Christian family" Hart locates himself, such practices have been formed in part by negative reactions to beliefs in the sacredness of certain things, including objects and places.) Hart, "The Earth is a Song Made Visible: A Cheyenne Perspective," 155-156.

220. McKay, "Together We Share," 47.

221. See McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 214; Stan McKay, "When Earth is Property, Where is Covenant?," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013), 32 and McKay, "Together We Share," 47.

222. See Tinker, "The Full Circle of Liberation: An American Indian Theology of Place." Furthermore, time influences the way in which white settlers understand space, linking the latter to expansion. Tinker writes, "Space as it has been understood by the children of Europe in America has tended to mean room to expand, to grow, or to move around in: these are temporal processes." Tinker, "Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival," 70.

223. This view bears similarities with the views expressed in the previous section by authors from India, particularly with respect to indigenous populations in India, as seen in the work of Casta and Xalxo. Although beyond the scope of this chapter, it is noteworthy that in general, the emphasis on interconnection found in indigenous communities is not limited to a North American or Asian context. For example, in *The Anchorage Declaration*, which was issued following the 2009 Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change, indigenous representatives from around the world reaffirmed "the unbreakable and sacred connection between land, air, water, oceans, forests, sea ice, plants, animals and our human communities as the material and spiritual basis for our existence" and identified their "vital role in defending and healing Mother Earth" as stemming from, among other things, their relationships with their "traditional lands, territories, waters, air, forests, oceans, sea ice, other natural resources and all life." Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change, "The Anchorage Declaration," 2009, accessed April 24, 2009, https://indigenousclimate.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=58&lang=en.

and ongoing colonization of Native peoples, this harmony is not characterized by a lack of use or modification of the land that would erase Native personhood and agency.

1.4.2 Broken Harmony

There is not much sin language in the writings of these authors. In part, that is because Christian understandings of sin and fall-and-redemption theology often do not translate well into American Indian languages or worldviews. Tinker writes that there was no comparable word or concept of individual sin in American Indian cultures and languages. In communitarian cultural contexts, the source of the disharmony was considered to be in the community, not the individual. Nor does a euro-Christian concept of original sin make sense in cultures that see the sacred in all of creation and understand the self and the cosmos to be interrelated. In addition, Tinker writes that focusing on sin leads to victim-blaming, which is especially problematic in the context of the historical and ongoing colonization and oppression that led to American Indians being the poorest ethnic community in the United States today.[224]

Not only does Tinker argue that conceptions of individual sin do not translate well into American Indian worldviews, he makes the stronger claim that too much concern for the individual overall, including (but certainly not limited to) Christian theological concern for individual sin and salvation, contributes to contemporary ecological devastation. For example, this overly individualistic concern distorts interpretations of sacred texts, such as the concept of *basileia tou theou* found in the Synoptic Gospels.[225] McKay also finds European and North American Christology to be incomplete. It has focused too narrowly on the individual, first by constricting biblical references to God's love for the world as

224. See Tink Tinker, "Towards an American Indian Indigenous Theology," *The Ecumenical Review* 62, no. 4 (2010): 344-345. Elsewhere Tinker writes that the world was balanced from the beginning in Indian "creation" stories and that there was no evil influence or human fallen-ness understood to be part of the process until "Christian euro-forming of our traditions." Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 176.
225. See George E. Tinker, "Ecojustice and Justice: An American Indian Perspective," in *Theology for Earth Community: A Field Guide*, ed. Dieter T Hessel (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996), 180-181.

interpreted only in relation to human salvation and later insisting that human salvation is individual. He writes, "This entire message of hope is detached from the creation which in the beginning was 'good' and which is a part of the world that God 'so loved.'"[226] This problematic individualism is also found in the conflict of ideas over property ownership which is inextricably connected with the history of colonization.[227]

While the idea of broken harmony, particularly as discussed by Tinker, certainly does not map neatly to more recent Christian interpretations of the rupture of the harmonious three-fold relationship between God, humans, and other creatures such as that found in *Laudato Si'*, some American Indian authors do connect it to language that echoes the concerns with greed and pride that are found in the previous three sections. For example, Woodley appears more comfortable with the language of fallen-ness than Tinker, and draws connections between a Keetoowah account of "The Origins of Disease and Medicine," and Genesis 1 and 2, saying that both narrate "a 'fall.'"[228] Woodley notes that in both stories, all creation was initially living in harmony with each other and the Creator. In the Keetoowah account, harmony was broken by human beings, who overcrowded, overconsumed, and became ungrateful. Ingratitude follows greed. Here Woodley makes a connection between Christian vocabulary of the sin of greed and Native American vocabulary of broken harmony.[229] In the Genesis 1 account, Woodley reads an "abuse of the land" in addition to

226. McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 217.

227. McKay notes that it makes no sense from an aboriginal perspective to speak of owning the earth, that the Christian church played a role in dividing up the earth so that it could be a possession, and that land claims are devastating to tribal cultural values. Ibid., 214. This conflict between private property and understanding the earth in terms of kinship (i.e., "our mother") or as belonging to the Lord also appears in his poem. See McKay, "When Earth is Property, Where is Covenant?," 32. In a description that parallels Hinga's account of what happened in Kenya and Raluto's account of the impact of colonization in the Philippines, Weaver notes that European conquerors rejected common use and imposed their ownership notions which were then used to deprive Native inhabitants of what is now the United States and Canada of any title to the land and were legally codified. Drawing on Kenyan conservationist Perez Olindo, Weaver argues that this in part was due to a lack of a term corresponding to "tenure," (which is a complex idea that usually goes against Western understandings of ownership and is distinct from "usufruct" or "right of occupancy") in "colonial lexicon." See Weaver, "Defending Mother Earth," 19-20.

228. Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 100.

229. ibid., 97.

human pride or disobedience as causing the breakdown in harmony. While he does not use the term "pride" here, his description coincides with Christian understandings of the sin of pride.[230] For Woodley, the task is to restore the community of creation, to use God's space more reverently to serve community harmony, not greed (whether individual or corporate). Though a passing reference, Tinker also uses the term greed to identify the motivation for the forced displacement of indigenous peoples, their continued oppression in the world today, and ecological destruction[231] and denounces "the modern value of acquisitiveness and the political systems and economics that consumption has generated."[232] McKay talks about an imbalance in the circle of life rather than broken harmony.[233] This imbalance is characterized by undue prioritization of economic benefits, short-term thinking, materialism, and militarism (the latter two are supported by science and technology). Such an imbalance is supported by a theology that focused excessively on individual human salvation, separated hope from creation, and too often characterized the natural order as the enemy.

Tinker argues that repentance should be understood in terms of "return" to God not "change of mind."[234] Repentance is tied to living out our proper place in the world.[235] This focus on living out our proper place in the world is also found in the writing of McKay, who does not talk about repentance or conversion, but rather about self-discovery that "leads to an understanding of our interdependence with the whole creation" and the "intention to live in balance and harmony with creation."[236] It is worth noting again that several Ameri-

230. He identifies the "original sin of humanity" as "seeing ourselves as more important than all other creatures, and by doing so, viewing ourselves as wiser than God!" Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 101.
231. See Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 153.
232. Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 109.
233. He identifies a "critical imbalance in the circle of life when our life-style does not reflect a holistic and inclusive vision of the creation." McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 217.
234. He argues for this based on Aramaic vs. Greek in Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 151.
235. Tinker writes, "We understand repentance as a call to be liberated from our perceived need to be God and instead to assume our rightful place in the world as humble human beings in the circle of creation with all the other created." Tinker, "The Full Circle of Liberation: An American Indian Theology of Place," 222.
236. McKay, "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation," 217.

can Indian authors critiqued the radical individualism they identified in Western and Euro-Christian thought as this may help explain why the emphasis on lifestyle changes found in previous sections is largely absent from the writings of American Indian theologians. For Tinker, changing individual patterns of behavior simply doesn't work.[237] While Woodley identifies urban planning and construction of roads, parking lots, and houses as moral decisions,[238] these decisions are regulated by communities, not individuals. Similarly, Hart's response to the struggle of those who recognize the interconnectedness of all creation to translate that knowledge into the action of living in harmony with the earth focuses on communal practices, especially liturgical practices, rather than lifestyle changes.[239] Both broken harmony and repairing that harmony are understood in much more communitarian terms than is found in Roman Catholic magisterial documents and the writings of Christian theologians from African and Asian contexts.

1.4.3 Equal, Not Special: Human Beings' Place in the World

For the American Indian theologians surveyed here, the concept of kinship is broad enough to include other creatures, and there is no category of the inanimate. We are all relatives, which itself poses a challenge for any conception of "natural resources." Perhaps even more challenging for those of us "settlers" who think comfortably within Western philosophical categories, the concept of personhood can extend beyond human beings to include four-legged, two-legged, flying, and living-moving persons.[240] Furthermore, the symbol of the circle not only expresses the interrelatedness of all creation, but it also points to a more egalitarian relationship between creatures. Human beings' rightful place is within this

237. He offers the example of recycling and how, despite many individuals committing to the practice, overall more landfill trash was generated. See Tinker, "Ecojustice and Justice: An American Indian Perspective," 177.
238. See Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 102.
239. Hart, "The Earth is a Song Made Visible: A Cheyenne Perspective."
240. See Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 176-177 and Wildcat, "Just Creation: Enhancing Life in a World of Relatives," 297.

circle, which means that human beings do not have the primacy of place that is typically asserted in the Western Christian tradition. Tinker writes, "We see ourselves as coequal participants in the circle, standing neither above nor below anything else in God's creation. There is no hierarchy in our cultural context, even of species, because the circle has no beginning nor ending."[241]

The understanding of other creatures as relatives and the symbol of the circle as presented by the authors in this section are in significant tension with hierarchical understandings of human relationships with non humans creatures and the land, including contemporary Roman Catholic understandings of human beings' place in creation as stewards entrusted with a special dignity and a special role. However, American Indian scholars do not deny that human beings have special duties toward other creatures. Rather, they assert that a duty to other creatures is not unique to human beings. Tinker writes that every life form, including but not limited to humans, has a responsibility to help maintain harmony.[242] Drawing on the book *Solar Storms*, Donaldson notes a traditional understanding that human beings used to be able to ask other creatures for help which was tied to tenth day of creation. In contrast, "the peoples of the sacred Book remain trapped in the sixth (and, in the Jewish and Christian traditions, final) day of creation, which granted humans *radah*, or dominion over every living thing on earth."[243]

Nonetheless, there is a high degree of critique of Christian understandings of human beings as stewards. For Tinker, contemporary euro-christian stewardship:

> continues precisely this notion of hierarchy in an anthropocentric modality that is antithetical to an Indian worldview and the values that emerge from that worldview. Since our experience of the world is one of interrelationship, we cannot conceive of a human superiority to any of the other living things of the world. They are all 'relatives.' And to put ourselves somehow in charge seems

241. Tinker, "Creation as Kin," 147-148.
242. See Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 178.
243. Donaldson, "Convenanting Nature," 109-110. For the comparison to the characters in *Solar Storms*, see ibid., 102-109, cf. Linda Hogan, *Solar Storms: A Novel* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1997).

> to Indian peoples to be a very dangerous move, which puts the balance of the whole in great jeopardy.[244]

Weaver gives Leonardo Boff credit for attempting a non-hierarchical alternative paradigm to dominion but concludes that it is lacking precisely because it continues to reserve a special place for human beings.[245] Similarly, he is wary of applying the language of guardianship to Mother Earth, finding the language of defense and protection more appropriate.[246] For Donaldson, even if stewardship is interpreted more gently, it still obscures the alternative, covenantal form of relationship between humans, plants, animals, the land, and the sea, which she sees most strongly in Hosea.[247] While Woodley thinks that the Genesis creation accounts clearly indicate that human beings have a "special role," his reading of these texts relativizes humanity's special place in creation compared to the understandings found both in Catholic episcopal and papal documents, and most of the writings of the theologians cited in previous sections.[248] Furthermore, he prefers the term "creation keepers" to stewards and reads the call to "be fruitful" as applying not just to humans, but to all creatures - a reading that is found only in some of the Catholic episcopal documents on the environment cited above, but which, as will become clear in the next chapter, finds support

244. Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 176.

245. He writes, "Although there is much in such a description that Native peoples could affirm, it nevertheless falls short. It reserves for humanity a 'special place.' The world is, according to Boff, 'assigned to humanity to till and keep.' While it seeks to create for humankind an ethical responsibility, it nonetheless contains the seeds of the very dominion it seeks to overthrow." Weaver, "Defending Mother Earth," 15.

246. See ibid., 16. Here there is potential for common ground with Christian eco-feminist critiques like that of Sharon A. Bong cited in the third section of this chapter

247. "Even when *radah*, whose Hebrew root means to subjugate and prevail against, is interpreted in the less adversarial form of stewardship, it has nevertheless obscured other, much more radical, forms of relationship among humans, plants, animals, the sea and the land—among which is the abiding reality of covenant." Donaldson, "Convenanting Nature," 109.

248. For example, he reads Genesis 2 to have an "unstated but clear sense of equality and kinship among all creation" as human beings share with other creatures both being made of earth and spirit. See Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 99. While he draws the idea that human beings are creation keepers from God's command to name the animals, his reading of this passage is informed by Job 12:7-10, and he concludes that the invitation is to get to know the animals, not to control them.

in the work of multiple biblical scholars. Lastly, his understanding of a special role for humans is not identical to human superiority over other creatures.[249]

I argue that Christian theologians such as myself who are working within Western contexts can learn from the challenge that American Indian understandings of interconnectedness, kinship, and equal standing pose to framing humanity's place in creation as stewards. The implications of this assertion will become more clear in the next chapter, which will include a section devoted to biblical accounts of the place of human beings in creation and their relationship to other creatures. Furthermore, American Indian concerns with participation, such as listening to those whose voices have been excluded expressed by Tinker,[250] or Donaldson's critique of deep ecologists who speak for Mother Earth rather than listening to her[251] suggest a connection with Farley's understanding of humility as aiding communal discernment.[252]

1.5 The Ecological Crisis and North American Theological Voices

This section will examine the identification of the causes and suggested responses to climate change in the writing of two prominent North American theological ethicists: Willis Jenkins and Erin Lothes Biviano. In the process, I will include a few observations on how the theological emphases and insights from the preceding sections affirm or challenge those identifications. In this way, I strive to enact the methodology for which I have argued

249. Recall that Woodley briefly identifies original sin as humans identifying ourselves as more important than other creatures. Also, he writes, "We humans too easily consider ourselves superior to the rest of creation, competing for space with the animals instead of caring for them (and letting them care for us) and sharing the land." Woodley, "Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation," 97.

250. See for example Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," 528.

251. Donaldson writes, "Instead of speaking for the rest of Mother Earth, Deep Ecologists might spend more time listening to her." See Donaldson, "Convenanting Nature," 115.

252. See Farley on the "grace of self-doubt" aiding both individual and communal discernment, Farley, "Grace of Self-doubt," 68-69. Before this, she cites Charles Curran on the need for epistemic humility for communal moral discernment within the church community. See ibid., 60.

elsewhere: listening to theologians (and others) writing from different contexts in order to learn our own place in the world and thus respond more constructively to ethical challenges within our own context.[253]

1.5.1 The Ecological Crisis in the Work of Willis Jenkins

Willis Jenkins has long been dissatisfied with the framing of environmental questions and their theological ethical responses in terms of anthropocentrism and nonanthropocentrism, which has been the legacy of Lynn White's famous 1967 critique.[254] Instead, Jenkins aligned his work with the pragmatist critique within the broader field of environmental ethics and offered the strategy of "prophetic pragmatism," a term he draws from Cornel West, as the way forward in Christian ethics.[255]

In his first book, Jenkins begins with soteriology instead of creation theology and offers a different map through Christian environmental ethics according to three practical strategies which are not founded on a commitment to nonanthropocentrism: ecojustice, stewardship, and ecological spirituality.[256] In his more recent work, he continues to argue that there is too much emphasis on worldviews and that more attention to concrete practices is necessary, but methodologically he has moved away from the task of creating an alternative moral vision that backgrounds environmental behavior.[257] Rather, he argues that the task of Christian environmental ethics is to interpret the theological diversity of con-

253. See Lindsay M. Marcellus, "The Emerging Vocation of a Moral Theologian: Commonalities across Contexts," in *The Catholic Ethicist in the Local Church*, ed. Antonio Autiero and Laurenti Magesa, vol. 6, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018), 304.

254. See his engagement with Lynn White's critique as well as subsequent criticism of that critique in Willis Jenkins, "After Lynn White: Religious Ethics and Environmental Problems," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2009): 283–309. For Lynn White's field-shaping critique, see Lynn White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis," *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203–1207.

255. See Willis Jenkins, "Ecological Management, Cultural Reform, and Religious Creativity," 2010, 16 and Willis Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013).

256. Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*.

257. For a self-critical note on the failure to address particular problems in *Ecologies of Grace*, see Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 80.

crete practices, cultivate helpful ethical resources, and develop effective critiques.[258] Since applying a particular worldview is both inadequate to current global problems such as climate change, and ethically risky in the context of neocolonial power dynamics, dialogue is essential.[259] The task of global ethics is not the application of a worldview or even the discovery of a single moral foundation common to diverse moral traditions, but rather loving our neighbors, which requires "overcoming the everyday fear, alienation, and indifference that prevents persons from cultivating relationships across borders."[260]

Jenkins' identification of the plurality of concrete practices as the starting point for environmental ethics is premised on the argument that religious ethics currently lacks the resources to respond to problems like climate change, which are "unprecedented," "planetary," and "wicked" and so preclude the application of current formulations of ethical concepts (such as justice) and defeat our moral agency.[261] Climate change is not the result of readily identifiable evil actions by easily identifiable moral agents, but rather an unintended and partially inherited outcome of the cumulative effect of everyday life by generations of people in a global context marked by radical inequality, the "perverse" incentive to defer the problem to future generations, and the disincentive to take action for wealthier nations who have contributed more to climate change but currently feel its effects less.[262] Climate

258. See Jenkins, "After Lynn White," 296.

259. See Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 141 as well as his discussion in chapter five of how "anthropocentric" environmental justice projects intersect with racism and colonialism (as well as insufficient attention to the disproportionate risks of chemical exposure to children and pregnant women), and confront the ecologically mediated violence that ecocentric approaches have elided (190-224). See also Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 78 for a discussion of the need for mutual critique in a frame of moral incompetence, and Willis Jenkins, "The Mysterious Silence of Mother Earth in *Laudato Si'*," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 46, no. 3 (2018): 446 for his interpretation of the call to conversion and dialogue in *Laudato Si'* as "a deep pragmatism".

260. Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 141.

261. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers"; Willis Jenkins, "Feasts of the Anthropocene: Beyond Climate Change as Special Object in the Study of Religion," *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 1 (2017): 78-79; and the first three chapters of Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*.

262. Jenkins works from Stephen Gardiner's three perfect moral storms argument (global unfairness, intergenerational deferral, and theoretical ineptitude) and adds a fourth, radical inequality. Gardiner's identification of the perfect storm of "theoretical ineptitude" bears similarities to Jenkins' argument for moral incompetence. For more on these "perfect storms," see Ibid., 34-45 and Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 71-73.

change is a structurally "wicked" problem because it is not solvable; the problem will never go away. We human beings now have significant influence on planetary systems, and this influence poses ongoing ethical challenges because there is no way to "go back" to the insignificant influence that would remove this responsibility.[263]

In short, Jenkins argues that we are morally incompetent to respond to climate change. Therefore, before religious ethics can respond to overwhelming problems such as climate change, it must first develop our competency, which requires an interdisciplinary, pragmatic approach that engages with the great plurality of concrete responses of particular communities. Interpretation precedes response.[264] Throughout his work, he identifies ways in which particular communities are redeploying theological resources to effectively interpret the problem within the moral experience of that community and open up possibilities for new sites of moral agency as well as develop new strategies and patterns of action that result in cultural and religious transformation.

1.5.2 The Ecological Crisis in the Work of Erin Lothes Biviano

In her recent work, Erin Lothes Biviano has attended both to the motivations that prompt individuals in faith communities to take action in response to the ecological crisis and to the urgent need to quickly move away from fossil fuels in response to both climate change and energy poverty. She conducted twenty-nine focus groups at (mostly mainstream) faith congregations in the United States and found that those people who take faith-based environmental action are scientifically literate, hold very interdependent worldviews, and have strong commitments to social justice.[265] Their interest in the environment

263. See Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 20-21.
264. Jenkins writes, "Ethics cannot start by responding to problems, but must participate in the interpretation and construction of problems, which requires attending to climate science, models of poverty, and the economics of discounting." Ibid., 9.
265. See Erin Lothes Biviano, "Worldviews on Fire," *CrossCurrents* 62, no. 4 (2012): 496. These are the first three of seven patterns of Green Spirituality that Lothes identifies and discusses at more length in Erin Lothes Biviano, *Inspired Sustainability: Planting Seeds for Action*, Ecology & Justice (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016), 1-29. Notably, given the critique of excessive focus on worldviews offered by Jenkins, understandings

was initially prompted by "noticing something" (such as the death of a loved one due to an environmentally-related illness), and by influential information (which included books, films, as well as environmental degradation that affected their lifestyle). Moreover, their interest was sustained by the influence of others, including both congregational leadership and the "upward peer pressure" that came from trying to follow the models offered by friends.[266]

Participants experienced what Lothes calls "the green blues," which is recognizing the shocking reality of ecocide which stems from the emotional reality of their sense of interconnection and includes an element of grief.[267] Human beings are limited creatures, and while our limitations are not themselves blameworthy, they can become so if we do not honestly confront them and instead allow them to become weaknesses which leads to willful ignorance, avoidance of commitment, and "irresolute motivation."[268] Yet hope was a driving factor for only about half of the participants, meaning that about half were motivated to keep taking environmental action despite thinking that both structures and time were against them.[269] Lothes concludes that overcoming the "green blues" and moving toward a "theology of green possibility" requires working toward a more interdependent understanding of the world which prompts compassion (helping bridge the knowledge gap), prioritizing values when conflicts of feeling arise (helping bridge the caring gap), and balancing the needs of the other and the self (helping bridge the action gap).[270]

---

of stewardship, while present, were not the most influential doctrines identified. See Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 504.

266. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 38-52.

267. Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 508.

268. See especially chapter four, Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 146-186. The term "irresolute motivation" appears on page 180, at the end of the discussion of will vs. velleity.

269. See Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 509. Indeed, Lothes has identified this as a contribution that religious environmentalists can make to the larger society, writing, "This may be one of the most important contributions of religious environmentalists to an often cynical society that easily takes refuge in denial and distraction: the willingness to keep holding the flame even when realistic about the depth of the darkness."

270. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 190-191.

Individual action is important, not because it solves the environmental crisis, but because participants found making individual lifestyle choices essential to maintaining integrity and empowering as they expanded their efforts to advocate for changes at higher levels.[271] Lifestyle is also related to the "caring gap" that Lothes identifies, as consumerism affects what we care about. Furthermore, in a "super-developed" lifestyle, it can be difficult to identify excesses.[272] Yet in order to live out a commitment to social justice, which is one of the key motivations for actually taking action, "excess resources must be identified as excess so they can be given to others."[273]

Consistent with the theme seen throughout this chapter that the current crisis is both economic and ecological, and like Hinga and Obi specifically, Lothes is concerned with energy poverty. Developing cleaner sources of energy will reduce both energy poverty and air pollution. At the same time, energy poverty is inextricably connected to both historical and present-day injustices and there is a tremendous disparity both in who has contributed to vs. suffered from air pollution the most, and in access to energy between the top four billion people living on this planet and the bottom three billion. Lothes makes the analogy between fossil fuels and war, exploring how just war theory might help assess "what 'interim violence,'" in the form of limited use of fossil fuels might be justified during the transition to more sustainable and renewable sources of energy.[274]

Along with David Cloutier, Elaine Padilla, Christiana Peppard, and Jame Schaefer, Lothes finds the six principles from the United States Bishops' 1981 statement "Reflec-

271. Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 509. See also Erin Lothes Biviano, "Working Together to Address the Climate Crisis," in *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si': Everything is Connected*, ed. Vincent J. Miller (London: Bloomsbury, 2017), 242.
272. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 87-91.
273. Ibid., 47.
274. See Christiana Z. Peppard et al., "What Powers Us?: A Comparative Religious Ethics of Energy Sources, Power, and Privilege," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 36, no. 1 (2016): 15-19. Lothes finds more justification for the continued use of fossil fuels by members of the lower three billion, according to the principle of self-defense.

tions on the Energy Crisis" to still be applicable today.[275] While the authors focus on the necessity of policies and strategic investment at the federal and state levels, as well as the obligations developed countries have to assist developing countries, they also offer several action items that individual Americans can take regarding their energy decisions and ways they can facilitate local leadership. Furthermore, Lothes focuses on how fossil fuels now hinder freedom and a true image of the good life and thinks faith communities can help reimagine both the good life and how authentic Christian freedom (and its integration of limits) relates to energy decisions.[276]

1.5.3 Interdependence and Ecological Relationships

Like the other authors cited in previous sections of this chapter, Lothes finds that an awareness of our interdependence with creation is essential. Specifically, it is the second-most important part (after scientific literacy) of the motivational bridge between being aware of environmental crises and taking action.[277] Recognizing multiple levels of interdependence is one of the key elements of a green spirituality.[278] An interdependent worldview is also one of the key characteristics of the theology of green possibility that Lothes outlines as a response to the "green blues." Furthermore, this sense of interdependence is not only known intellectually but also experienced in terms of relationship. Lothes writes, "In addition to the existential unease resulting from the conflict between humanity's inevitable

275. See Erin Lothes Biviano et al., "Catholic Moral Traditions and Energy Ethics for the Twenty-First Century," *Journal of Moral Theology* 5, no. 1 (2016): 8-10. The authors add a seventh principle to the list, *developing technological prudence*.

276. Erin Lothes Biviano, "By Night in a Pillar of Fire: A Theological Analysis of Renewable Energy," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 234–249.

277. Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 500.

278. The other six patterns are: scientific literacy; "commitment to social justice; reverence for creation; interfaith connections; expanding religious visions of God, neighbor, and self; and prizing freedom of inquiry within their communities." See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 37. It should be noted that while here and elsewhere Lothes uses the term "global interdependence," she specifies that such interdependence has several levels, including economic, political, ecological, and spiritual dimensions. Ibid., xxix, 15-22.

limits and the world's infinite options (the non-coincidence of self to self), the painfully honest faith-based environmentalists seemed to experience a non-coincidence of self to community, a rupture between themselves and the earth."[279]

The way participants in the focus groups articulated their experience of relationship with the earth resonates not only with the theme of interconnectedness but also with the emphasis on peace and harmony seen in previous sections. The fact that a strong commitment to social justice was also a key motivating factor provides evidence to support that the category of "integral ecology" as expressed in *Laudato Si'* and the repeated emphasis on how social, economic, and political crises cannot be separated from ecological crises found in Catholic social teaching and resoundingly affirmed by theologians in African, Asian, and Native American contexts, can indeed be translated into action, at least if other key elements such as scientific literacy, an awareness of interdependence, and a community in which to explore ideas, are present. Lothes's recent coauthored work on energy ethics also reflects this linking of justice and ecology.[280]

Unlike others cited in this section, Lothes distinguishes between the terms "interconnectedness," "interrelated," and "interdependence." In her work, "interconnectedness" names the "causal links within material systems," "interrelated" expresses a sense of spiritual kinship that is a form of self-knowledge, and "interdependence" refers to the linking of "physical needs and vulnerabilities" that indicates both the ability to harm and be harmed, respectively.[281] All three definitions used by Lothes are found in recent Catholic teaching, though I argue that the recent trend has been an increasing sense of interrelatedness that has

279. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 188. The exploitation of the earth is not just a matter of being imprudent, but "a fundamental self-contradiction because of their spirituality of interdependence," and ruptured relationships with the earth are spiritual crises.
280. See the way that energy ethics is developed with a view to concerns with participation, transparency, climate change as a life issue, the reality of "energy poverty," and needed changes in infrastructure in Lothes Biviano et al., "Catholic Moral Traditions and Energy Ethics for the Twenty-First Century" as well as Lothes's consideration of fossil fuels from within the framework of the Catholic just war tradition in Peppard et al., "What Powers Us?: A Comparative Religious Ethics of Energy Sources, Power, and Privilege," 15-19.
281. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 194.

grown out of the recognition of our social and ecological interconnectedness and interdependence. While I have been using the terms interchangeably, as recent Catholic teaching also tends to do, the sense of "interrelatedness" as a sense of kinship that is not limited to human beings, and which is a form of self-knowledge, will be the primary angle that I will explore in relation to the virtue of humility in the next chapter.

The terms interdependence, interconnectedness, or interrelatedness do not feature in Jenkins' work. Nor is interdependence itself a feature of *Laudato Si'* that Jenkins highlights, though he does draw attention to the striking kinship language of that document. Yet Jenkins is concerned with the relations between humans and nonhuman nature and how human beings should understand themselves as earth inhabitants. He reads *Laudato Si'* as reshaping how human dignity is understood in Catholic social thought. Without rejecting the concept of human dominion over creation, which has been repeatedly tied to human dignity, Jenkins thinks Pope Francis is correcting Christian conceptions of dominion by connecting human dignity to contemplation so that authentic humanity "emerges from spiritual intimacy with other creatures rather than by practical mastery over them."[282] Furthermore, Jenkins reads *Laudato Si'* as shifting toward ecological anthropology, because our relationships with other creatures shape our character.[283] Jenkins finds these shifts underdeveloped in the encyclical, and suggests that it would have been strengthened by more attention to the thought of Thomas Aquinas, particularly how Thomas links dominion, contemplation, and the goodness of other creatures.[284]

Jenkins' development of prophetic pragmatism also clearly allows for thinking through the relationship between human beings and Earth or other creatures. For example, he dis-

282. Jenkins, "Mysterious Silence of Mother Earth," 449.
283. See ibid., 451.
284. Lest it seem that appealing to Thomas' thought would simply reinforce a (spiritually) instrumental use of other creatures that would fail to challenge exploitation, Jenkins argues that the goodness and dignity of other creatures is essential to contemplation and so places limits on how we can relate to them and in turn, "anticipates ecological virtues as habits through which persons learn friendship with God by realizing the goods of their kinship with Earth." Ibid., 452.

cusses how the Indigenous Peoples' Climate Justice movement has built up a shared identity and worldview, redeployed creation theology in terms of special vocation rather than stewardship, fall, and redemption, and extended the concept of human rights to Mother Earth as well as multigenerationally and collectively.[285] Given that chapter refch4 of this dissertation will focus on food choices, it is also worth noting that Jenkins identifies food choices as "a site of relative agency" that "generates ways to think about general relations of humanity and nature."[286] Consistent with his emphasis on pragmatism and plurality as essential to the ethical task of finding ways to adequately respond to "wicked" problems like climate change, here the emphasis is on what insights practices can give us into our ecological relationships, rather than beginning with a theoretical account of our ecological relationships and then attempting to apply it to practices.

1.5.4 Difficulties in Applying the Traditional Category of Sin

In her focus groups, Lothes found that a sense of our interconnectedness gave rise to the emotional reality of the "green blues." Since the experience of the green blues includes grief, the green blues bear some similarities to Hinga's prophetic lament and Goh's identification of learning to weep as a key takeaway from *Laduato Si'*. Appreciating "ecocide as shockingly real" is necessary, but it is also overwhelming.[287] Drawing considerably from Ricouer, Lothes dedicates a lot of time to talking about human finitude and fallibility in terms of our knowledge, perspectives, feelings, and actions. People respond to these limits either by avoiding deep commitments or by choosing and living out a deep commitment. Lothes suggests that intellectual hospitality, prioritizing values when there are conflicts, and accepting that our ability to act is limited and so working toward collaboration will help us live out the latter response.

285. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 75-77.
286. Jenkins, "Feasts of the Anthropocene," 79.
287. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 53-58, with the quoted material found on page 53.

Instead of the category of sin, Lothes tends to use the philosophical synonym of fault. She flags that while being limited is not itself blameworthy, willful ignorance is, writing, "The innocent fallibility of limited perspective becomes a fault only when it is internalized and dishonestly accepted as unavoidable ignorance."[288] We deceive ourselves as far as what we actually will (volition), and what we would will if things were easier (whim or velleity).[289] In a reflection on *Laudato Si'*, Lothes notes, "As Pope Francis observes, we are very good at pretending that what is hard to do is unclear."[290] Even as we live out clearly ecocidal, "super-developed" lifestyles, we have trouble identifying excess and so also have trouble distinguishing between well-being and greed.[291] Lothes also makes a connection between the themes of wholeness and forgetfulness in Islamic spirituality to forgetting our creaturely identity and so viewing the knowledge and caring gaps as the sin of forgetfulness.[292] Hence, some connections can be made between her work and the sins of indifference and greed identified by theologians from other contexts.[293]

Nonetheless, climate change and other environmental crises complicate the question of agency, of whose sin it is. Where she uses sin language, Lothes tends to focus on the social dimensions of sin and to write in terms of sin as weakness. For example, she identifies misinformation as a social sin that seriously challenges attempts to overcome

288. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 169.
289. Lothes draws on Daniel C. McGuire in this discussion of volition and velleity. See ibid., 177, cf. Daniel C. McQuire, *Ethics: A Complete Method for Moral Choice* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2010), 98.
290. Lothes, "Working Together to Address the Climate Crisis," 238.
291. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 89.
292. See ibid., 230.
293. There are also clear connections to the category of willful ignorance, a concept that will be revisited in light of sinning out of strength in chapter 3.

scientific illiteracy.[294] Her focus on fallibility defines fault in terms of weakness.[295] She also supports a non-judgmental attitude based on the recognition of human weakness.[296]

Jenkins also draws attention to how global ecological problems like climate change complicate the question of human agency and accountability.[297] Like Lothes, he does not tend to focus on the category of sin. However, he explicitly attends to why he is hesitant to use sin language. In part, it is because he argues that moral incompetence is the greater contemporary challenge to religious ethics, and in part, it seems to be due to practical considerations in addressing his target audience. If, as Jenkins argues, the problem of climate change exceeds our current moral competencies, then while exposing hypocrisy remains an important moral task, his concern that focusing on sinful actions may elide the more important ethical challenge of addressing moral incompetence is well-founded.[298] Furthermore, he thinks that proposals for a specific kind of conversion are likely to thwart the pluralist learning that he thinks is necessary to respond to the problem by "hardening disagreements into foundational culture wars."[299] This practical concern extends beyond responding to the crisis of climate change. For example, Jenkins cautions against framing criticisms of plutocracy in terms of sin (whether understood individually or socially), on the grounds that while it might be helpful within Christian communities, in the broader

294. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 83. Structural sin is also mentioned in her coauthored writing on energy ethics. See Lothes Biviano et al., "Catholic Moral Traditions and Energy Ethics for the Twenty-First Century," 31-32. Since these references draw on the U.S. Bishops' 1981 statement as well as papal documents (including *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis* which emphasizes how structures of sin are affected by individual sin), individual sin is implicitly present.

295. For example, she writes, "But along with our limitedness there is the reality that limitations can become weakness, and weakness become failure." Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 160.

296. She writes, "Religious visions of the person and community can illuminate the spiritual conflicts of the fallible person trying to care for the earth without necessarily casting a judgmental glare. In fact, monastic traditions, which safeguard some of the most ancient spiritual practices, speak with great compassion and forgiveness about human weakness." Ibid., 191.

297. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers" and the first three chapters of Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*.

298. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 68.

299. Ibid., 74.

society it can make it easier for those living in and formed by capitalist culture to disregard the criticism itself as reality-avoidant and inapplicable to the economic sphere.[300]

Jenkins is well aware that his pragmatic approach to climate change, in conjunction with his focus on moral incompetence and his position as a white ethicist at a northern institution, is vulnerable to the critique that it unwittingly enables complicity with structural violence and injustice. This is a critique that some in the indigenous peoples' climate justice movement voiced to him,[301] as well as a broader critique of environmental pragmatism in general.[302] While he does not claim that his approach can be made immune from such risk, he defends the frame of moral incompetence on the practical grounds that it spurs the cultural transformation and theological creativity needed to truly respond (in dominant-culture communities) to the overwhelming challenge of climate change.[303]

Nor does Jenkins advocate for excluding the category of sin entirely. After detailing the issues with any facile naming of plutocracy as sinful, he goes on to argue that within Christianity, naming the sins of plutocracy may indeed assist the practical task of defending and deepening "a pluralist association of practices that register [the] spiritual dissent" needed to corrode the cultural legitimacy of extreme or radical inequality by resisting "the interior disciplines of plutocracy."[304] He goes on to explore two ways in which plutocracy is sinful: as exclusion from social life and as theft. Here the focus is not on repentance, but on self-formation so that people can engage in practices that embody spiritual dissent. There are parallels with the sins of indifference and greed that were so frequently identified in Roman Catholic teaching and by theologians in African and Asian contexts.[305] Although Jenkins is wary of calling for specific kinds of conversion, he does see a role for confes-

300. See Willis Jenkins, "Is Plutocracy Sinful?," *Anglican Theological Review* 98, no. 1 (2016): 34-36.

301. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 75.

302. See Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 37 and Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 158.

303. See Jenkins, "Atmospheric Powers," 77.

304. Jenkins, "Is Plutocracy Sinful?," 43. Earlier in this article, Jenkins distinguishes between radical inequality (which is about survival) and extreme inequality (which is about living decently).

305. Jenkins draws on the concept of the "globalization of indifference" to support his description of how exclusion from social life is one way that plutocracy is sinful, and frames his identification of radical inequality as theft in terms of greed. See ibid., 44-49. He has also identified overcoming indifference (as well as

sion and repentance within Christian communities, tying these practices to possibilities for responsibility rather than personal judgment or spiritual purity, and noting that Christians in the United States ought to go first in confessing our guilt.[306] Here he does not identify particular sins, and he ultimately places the value of such practices in the context of the possibility that future generations might forgive us.

1.5.5 Human Beings' Place in the World and Limited Knowledge

Unlike the Catholic documents reviewed in the first section, or many of the theologians writing from African and Asian contexts, Lothes does not focus on the stewardship model of understanding human beings' place or role in creation. Her work does not advocate for a specific worldview, however anthropocentric or nonanthropocentric that may be, as part of the necessary response to the environmental crises we face.[307] While some participants in her focus groups made connections between environmental issues and stewardship theologies, in general, stewardship theologies were less influential than social justice doctrines.[308] This suggests that emphasizing church teachings on human beings as stewards of creation may not motivate Christians to take environmental action as much as emphasizing teachings on social justice.

However, understanding how human beings are interconnected with the natural world was linked to spirituality for participants in Lothes's focus groups, resulting in an expanded sense of spiritual connection that saw others (and not just human others) as neighbors or even kin. Drawing from Mitchel Thomashow, Lothes writes, "[t]hese are elements of an

fear and alienation) as crucial to the ethical task of loving our neighbor, which remains the primary task for global ethics. See Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 141.

306. See ibid., 57.

307. While small group discussions helped create scientific literacy and motivation in part by "renegotiating worldviews through the creation of new doctrinal syntheses," here the focus was not on whether worldviews were anthropocentric or not, but on questions of divine providence, the impact of one's actions, and human responsibility. However, dominion did come up in at least some of these discussions. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 114-115.

308. See Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 505.

ecological identity...."[309] While awareness of our multiple levels of interdependence was itself a pattern of green spirituality, it is also present in some of the other patterns that Lothes identified.[310] In the following chapter, I will be arguing that this revised understanding of the self as existing in relationship (and experiencing that relationship) with non-human others affects how we understand the good life and our place within it. I will explore this relationship through the virtue of humility, understood as knowing our place in the world. Yet there is another aspect of the virtue of humility that connects well with Lothes's attention to the limits of human knowledge and the need to acknowledge and face the limits of our understanding. Lothes's call to cultivate intellectual hospitality by engaging multiple philosophical frameworks and diverse conversation partners resonates with Lisa Fullam's definition of humility as an epistemological virtue that is other-centered.

Jenkins is less concerned with the "place" of humanity in creation due to his focus on practical strategies. While he recognizes stewardship as one of the practical strategies in environmental ethics,[311] like other strategies it too has its weaknesses. Specifically, stewardship strategies eventually lead to the view that humans are in some way the saviors of nature, which reinforces the oft-cited critique that understanding human beings as stewards of creation reinforces patterns of dominance. Stewardship certainly is not *the* answer to responding to climate change. In his discussion of radical inequality as the sin of theft, Jenkins notes that stewardship can be so weak as to support complicity in crimes against

309. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 21. For the term "ecological identity," as well as how such an identity is predicated on understanding our interconnectedness with the natural world, Lothes draws on Mitchel Thomashow, *Ecological Identity: Becoming a Reflective Environmentalist* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996), xiii.

310. For example, when discussing expanding religious visions of God, neighbor, and self, Lothes notes that many participants spoke of recognizing a "bigger God," in other words, who is also concerned about the earth and not just human beings. This expanded sense of God sometimes affected their understanding of the scriptures, and in general, understanding the sphere of divine action to be more expansive went along with a more expansive sense of the moral responsibility of human beings, including seeing nonhuman beings as neighbors. See ibid., 33. This expanded sense of neighbor is also present in the pattern Lothes calls reverence for creation. Lothes writes, "Indeed, the earth and its many living systems are increasingly sensed as neighbors in their own right, deserving protection as beautiful, good, as beloved creation." Ibid., 27.

311. See chapter four of Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*.

humanity and proposes that a greed line (above which theft can be defined) can help offset some of these vulnerabilities through promoting self-examination and a more robust conception of accountability.[312] Yet, as seen in his discussion of the innovations that have come from the Indigenous Peoples' Climate Justice movement, Jenkins does not see the stewardship understanding of humanity's role in creation as beyond retrieval.

Likewise, Jenkins reads *Laudato Si'* as subversive of anthropocentrism without rejecting the category of dominion itself due to Pope Francis's rethinking of human dignity and unique role in contemplative terms. He finds this rethinking underdeveloped because if humans are oriented toward a contemplative relation with other creatures, then authentic humanity requires the ability to hear the cry of "sister earth." However, it is unclear how we do that because the voice of Earth is largely silent in the encyclical, and there is insufficient attention to practices we could engage in and ecological virtues we could develop to "hear" her voice.[313] Despite Pope Francis's attention to environmental education, no teaching role of Earth (or any part thereof) is identified. Nor is the idea of legal rights for Earth attended to. How do we know what God wants for creation? What strategies do we employ in order to learn how to listen to nonhuman creatures? These questions pose challenges to an understanding of humility that seeks to combine learning our place in creation with an other-centered knowledge that is broad enough to include "listening" to and learning from non-humans.[314]

312. See Jenkins, "Is Plutocracy Sinful?," 48-49.
313. See Jenkins, "Mysterious Silence of Mother Earth," 453-458.
314. These questions also have implications for non-human agency. However, that is not the focus of this dissertation, although whether human listening to nonhuman creation is interpreted more in terms of reading the signs of the times or as receiving a message from a more expansive category of "persons" would have implications for how the cardinal virtue of humility would be thickened in particular contexts.

1.6 Conclusion: Implications for Ethics in the US Context

In this chapter, I identified a trend in Catholic social teaching from a focus on interconnectedness and interdependence to interrelation (using Lothes's language), that is, a sense that we live in relationships with the earth and other creatures. In the next chapter, I will develop a theory of the virtue of humility based on an awareness of this ecological interrelatedness that focuses on learning our "place" in creation, which in turn helps form our character as we strive to perfect our ecological relationships. The last section of that chapter will look at how the virtue of humility might be "thickened" in a Christian context. While Catholic social teaching frequently frames humanity's place in creation in terms of stewardship, the growing sense of ecological kinship carries within it challenges to the stewardship model, as seen in contributions from theologians writing from Asian contexts, and especially in the writings of theologians from Native American contexts. As will become evident by the end of the next chapter, this challenge to the stewardship paradigm is as accountable to Christian scriptures as the stewardship paradigm itself.

This focus on humility as rediscovering our "place" as ecologically interrelated is vulnerable to Jenkins' critique of cosmological approaches to overwhelming problems such as climate change. I will be arguing that we need to change how we view ourselves in relation to nonhuman others, and if this change in viewpoint were needed before any other action could be taken, then it could indeed enable moral incompetence. However, the understanding of humility that I will develop draws not only on learning our "place," but learning it in a specific way, by listening to others. Therefore, my response to an enabling moral incompetence critique is twofold. First, the emphasis on the need to change our understanding and attitudes toward nonhuman others is prevalent across multiple contexts, as is the call for dialogue. Given that I am writing from a "superdeveloped" country, which has contributed more to climate change and yet has less incentive to take action, it is especially important to listen to and take seriously the claims and insights from those whose voices are often silenced or ignored.

Second, the risk is mitigated by putting our view of our "place" within a virtue framework, as practices both shape habits and virtue and are influenced by them. Indeed, while Jenkins favors a pragmatic approach, he argues that pragmatic and cosmological approaches complement each other.[315] Lothes's work outlines a bridge between these two approaches by strongly suggesting that awareness of our interconnectedness as a lived experience of relationship with nonhuman others actually does motivate environmental action. While focusing on human beings as interrelated with other creatures, ecosystems, and the land can be used to critique and adjust worldviews (i.e., by challenging anthropocentric interpretations of human beings' place in creation), it also can and is motivating practical strategies of faith-based response to ecological devastation, including the "wicked" problem of climate change. In this way, I suggest that learning our place in the world as interrelated with non-human others can, by influencing the formation process of individuals and communities, support the plurality of pragmatic responses and creative redeployment of tradition that Jenkins argues is now needed to open up new possibilities for human agency. I propose that the virtue of humility, understood both ecologically and epistemologically, needs to be further developed but can be redeployed to: (1) help us engage in the dialogue called for by so many of the authors cited in this chapter and (2) help us form ourselves according to a more authentic image of humanity as also in relationship with nonhuman nature.

The "place" of human beings in creation that is consistently critiqued in Catholic teaching on the environment and by theologians around the world is that of exercising too much

315. Also, although he identifies weaknesses in a virtue approach to climate change, including that virtues can obscure injustices and that rely on a conception of the good that will remain controversial in pluralist societies, Jenkins also sees some potential for virtue ethic approaches to help interpret climate change and reimagine humanity's planetary role. See Willis Jenkins, "The Turn to Virtue in Climate Ethics: Wickedness and Goodness in the Anthropocene," *Environmental Ethics* 38, no. 1 (2016): 93-95.

control over others, particularly those who are poor (among whom the Earth is increasingly identified). Frequently written about in terms of justice, the themes of domination, undisciplined technological prowess, or exploitation of natural resources also show an underlying concern with pride, which in a virtue framework is considered the vice of deficiency relative to humility. Yet, as seen throughout this chapter, there is also significant attention given to the impact of indifference or thoughtlessness as a source of the crisis, and these sins or evils are frequently identified by theologians writing outside of dominant-culture, North American contexts. Weak (in)action and isolating ourselves from our responsibilities is just as much of a problem as harmful action that stems from pride. Therefore, in the next chapter, I seek to develop an understanding of the vice of excess relative to humility, which I argue has been under-attended to and suggest will be helpful when considering the problems that climate change poses to the exercise of human agency.

That climate change, planetary boundaries, and many environmental crises in general challenge current Christian conceptions of agency and individual sin has been briefly noted by theologians from multiple contexts and stressed by Lothes and especially Jenkins. To a large extent, I agree with Jenkins' identification of the challenge. In the following two chapters, I plan to contribute to the project of opening new possibilities for moral agency, first by updating and "redeploying" the traditional virtue of humility in the ways mentioned above and second by exploring the connections between this virtue and the concept of sinning out of strength. Therefore, the final implication I want to draw here is that in light of the pervasive identification of the sins of indifference, greed, and pride, especially by theologians in African and Asian contexts, and of the call for lament made both by Hinga and Goh, the category of sin is under-utilized in many official Catholic documents on the environment. More attention to sin is also needed within US Christian communities to complement and extend the work of Lothes and Jenkins.[316]

316. Compared to Jenkins, I am more concerned that in the US context, there is undue focus on overwhelming factors and too little emphasis on the practices in which we can engage, that while imperfect, will

It is noteworthy that in contexts where the responsibility for contributing to climate change is much less than in the United States, there are more reports of actions being taken, more exhortations to take action, and frequently more naming of the sins away from which we are called to turn. Given our position of relative political and economic strength, a position emphasized by theologians across contexts (though not in US magisterial documents), I maintain that in this country, we focus disproportionately on weakness in our response to climate change, which further diminishes our sense of both individual and collective responsibility. The sins of pride, greed, and thoughtlessness stem from strength, not weakness. So in chapter 3, I will focus on extending the concept of sinning out of strength, specifically the sin of indifference, to environmental action/inaction.

---

nonetheless help form our characters even as these factors continue to challenge us to seek out more adequate possibilities for exercising moral agency. Likewise, while I agree with Lothes that acknowledging human finitude is important, I am concerned that too much emphasis on our limits and weaknesses without an equal emphasis on our capacities and strengths seems to reinforce, rather than challenge, tendencies already present in the United States to minimize the urgency of the problem and/or to delay action, or, in her terms, exacerbate velleity rather than will.

Chapter 2

Humility as a Cardinal Virtue

The previous chapter highlighted the increased attention to how human beings relate to other creatures and the earth found in Catholic magisterial teaching as well as in the recent work of theologians around the world. This chapter turns to virtue ethics. The resurgence of interest in virtue ethics in the 20th century is often linked to Alasdair MacIntyre's 1981 book, *After Virtue*, which generated substantial discussion in both philosophical and theological circles. Since this chapter proposes a cardinal virtue, it should be noted that one line of critical response to MacIntyre's proposal focused on moral relativism. Because he does not suppose that individuals are free to cultivate virtues outside of the community, there are no universal virtues but only virtues specific to and formed in particular communities. Here, I follow Martha Nussbaum, who agrees that community narratives and practices certainly shape the definition of specific virtues in particular communities, but argues that human beings have some commonalities of experience and we can identify a set of universal virtues based on universal spheres of human experience.[1]

Nussbaum's work assists efforts to rethink "cardinal" virtues that hold universally but are still very much culturally informed, such as by exploring how virtues are "thickened"

1. See Martha C. Nussbaum, "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach," *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* XIII (1988): 32–53.

in particular contexts that can then inform and even critique how we currently thicken virtues in our own society. Yet rather than focusing on spheres of experience in terms of capabilities, I will do so in terms of general types of relationships, following James F. Keenan's rereading and adaptation of Thomas Aquinas' understanding of cardinal virtues. Keenan's proposed cardinal virtues draws on Nussbaum's idea of thin versus thick virtues, but argues that the cardinal virtues perfect aspects of human relationality rather than powers or capabilities.[2]

Paralleling the growth in interest in virtue ethics in general, environmental virtue ethics has grown as a subfield of environmental ethics since Thomas Hill's "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments" in 1983.[3] Humility is one virtue that has frequently been identified in environmental virtue ethics since the emergence of the field.[4] Humility is the first trait that Hill identifies in his seminal essay, and the one upon which he spends the most time developing his argument, although he also discusses gratitude and sensitivity to others.[5] Geoffrey B. Frasz analyzes, critiques, and builds on Hill's analysis by adding "other-acceptance" and analyzing the vice of excess in terms of the related virtue of "openness."[6] Lisa Gerber argues that the virtue of humility helps a person in his or her relationship with nature by seeing the value in nature and acting accordingly.[7]

---

2. See Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues."

3. For two overviews of the field of environmental virtue ethics, see Jason Kawall, "A History of Environmental Ethics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, ed. Stephen M. Gardiner and Allen Thompson (Oxford University Press, 2015), doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941339.013.6 and Philip Cafaro, "Environmental Virtue Ethics," chap. 31 in *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, ed. Lorraine L. Besser and Michael Slote (London: Routledge, 2015), 427–444.

4. Although she has subsequently abandoned the statistical approach in searching for key environmental virtues, Louke van Wensveen found that humility was in fourth place in terms of frequency of appearance in environmental literature, appearing 34 times in nine sources, not counting the virtue of acceptance (of limitations), which appeared 20 times in nine sources. See Table 11.1 in Louke van Wensveen, "Cardinal Environmental Virtues: A Neurobiological Perspective," chap. 11 in *Environmental Virtue Ethics*, ed. Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 175.

5. See Thomas E. Hill, "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," *Environmental Ethics* 5, no. 3 (1983): 211–224.

6. Geoffrey B. Frasz, "Environmental Virtue Ethics: A New Direction for Environmental Ethics," *Environmental Ethics* 15, no. 3 (1993): 259–274.

7. See Lisa Gerber, "Standing Humbly Before Nature," *Ethics & the Environment* 7, no. 1 (2002): 39–53.

Several other virtues have also been proposed, including friendship,[8] gratitude,[9] and variations of virtues long traditionally considered cardinal in Western contexts, such as courage[10] and temperance or simplicity.[11] In her survey of environmental literature after 1970, Louke van Wensveen identified 189 virtues and 174 vices.[12] More recently, she has reexamined the traditional cardinal virtues in light of neurobiology, finding that virtues of position, care, attunement, and endurance parallel the cerebellar, frontal lobe, dopaminergic, and stress systems, respectively, and correlate with the classical list of cardinal virtues and more recent variations or understandings of those virtues in environmental virtue ethics.[13] A few scholars have also explicitly focused on environmental vices.[14]

Likewise, increased attention has been given in theological ethics to specific, ecological virtues.[15] Virtue is also starting to be explored specifically in relation to climate change.[16]

8. Frasz argues for extending the virtue of friendship to future generations and the land in Geoffrey B. Frasz, "What is Environmental Virtue Ethics that We Should Be Mindful of It?," *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 8, no. 2 (2001): 5–14.

9. See Karen Bardsley, "Mother Nature and the Mother of All Virtues: On the Rationality of Feeling Gratitude toward Nature," *Environmental Ethics* 35, no. 1 (2013): 27–40.

10. See Rachel Fredericks, "Courage as an Environmental Virtue," *Environmental Ethics* 36, no. 3 (2014): 339–355. Fredericks begins with a concern about the gap in self-professed attitudes of concern for the environment and the lack of action in a U.S. context and offers the explanation of inaction due to an unwillingness to take risks that stems from a lack of courage. She then extends Matthew Pianalto's account of courage to environmental courage.

11. See Joshua Colt Gambrel and Philip Cafaro, "The Virtue of Simplicity," *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 23, nos. 1-2 (2010): 85. Gambrel and Cafaro note that simplicity overlaps with other virtues, such as frugality and temperance, but consider simplicity broader in scope as the "virtue disposing us to act appropriately within the sphere of our consumer decisions," whereas temperance pertains to food and drink and frugality to use of wealth (90). Louke van Wensveen keeps the term temperance, but connects it to the dopaminergic system and to general desire, and so concludes that "the environmental favorites *simplicity* and *frugality* have become symbolic for its core meaning." Wensveen, "Cardinal Environmental Virtues: A Neurobiological Perspective," 184-185, 187.

12. For the full catalog of virtues and vices, see Appendix A in Louke van Wensveen, *Dirty Virtues: The Emergence of Ecological Virtue Ethics* (Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000), 163-167.

13. See Wensveen, "Cardinal Environmental Virtues: A Neurobiological Perspective."

14. Philip Cafaro explores four environmental vices based on harm to nature, self, and others in Philip Cafaro, "Gluttony, Arrogance, Greed, and Apathy: An Exploration of Environmental Vice," chap. 9 in *Environmental Virtue Ethics*, ed. Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005), 135–158. Van Wensveen devoted a chapter to ecological vice. Wensveen, *Dirty Virtues: The Emergence of Ecological Virtue Ethics*, 97-114.

15. See for example, Steven Bouma-Prediger, *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*, Engaging Culture (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001).

16. Jenkins, "The Turn to Virtue in Climate Ethics." Kevin Glauber Ahern retrieves the Thomistic virtue of magnanimity through a liberationist prophetic lens in Kevin Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue

Yet, within a relational cardinal virtue framework, ecological relationality is currently underdeveloped in virtue ethics. This chapter's contribution will be three-fold. First, I will sketch how the cardinal virtue framework proposed by Keenan needs to be expanded in order to account for our ecological relationality. Second, I argue that humility is the cardinal virtue that "perfects" this aspect of our relationality. Third, I offer a sketch of how humility so understood could be "thickened" in a Christian context.

2.1 James Keenan's Cardinal Virtues: The Missing Relationship

Keenan's proposal is elegant in its simplicity. Changes in both our understanding of human nature and our understanding of the possibilities for conflict between virtues require us to rethink the cardinal virtues as treated in the writings of Thomas Aquinas. Contemporary anthropology "insists on the relationality of the human," and philosophers and theologians alike have grounded their proposed virtues accordingly.[17] When a relational understanding of human beings grounds an understanding of virtues, we see that rather than perfecting powers we have, virtues perfect the "ways that we are."[18] Persons are relational in three ways (generally, specifically, and uniquely), and so Keenan proposes a list of cardinal virtues that govern each of these relational ways of being: justice, fidelity, and self-care, respectively.

---

for the Anthropocene," in *Turning to the Heavens and the Earth: Theological Reflections on a Cosmological Conversion: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth A. Johnson*, ed. Julia Brumbaugh and Natalia Imperatori-Lee (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, a Michael Glazier Book, 2016), 106–126. Jame Schaefer lists the moral virtues of prudence, moderation, fortitude, and solidarity as supporting our necessary commitment to the planetary common good. Jame Schaefer, "Environmental Degradation, Social Sin, and the Common Good," in *God, Creation, and Climate change: A Catholic Response to the Environmental Crisis*, ed. Richard W. Miller II (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010), 85.

17. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 718.

18. Ibid., 723, cf. Paul Lauritzen, "The Self and Its Discontents," *Journal of Religious Ethics* 22, no. 1 (1994): 189-210.

Prudence rounds out the list, integrating the other three virtues into our lives and seeking out ways to more fully acquire the other virtues. Prudence helps "find the mean where there is adequate tension for growth."[19] While this integrative function parallels prudence's role in the classical list of cardinal virtues, in Keenan's relationality-based framework, prudence also adjudicates in the case of conflicts between the cardinal virtues.[20] By contrast, Keenan argues that in Thomas' framework, justice is the primary virtue and the only relational virtue. Thomas' understanding that there could be no conflict between the virtues is based on an hierarchical framework in which each virtue perfects a different power and so there is no "shared ground" between the virtues in which a conflict might arise. Even if there were such overlap, justice is still the preeminent virtue. Since there is no other equally eminent virtue whose claims could compete with justice, there would still be no conflict. Taking seriously the relationality of human beings opens the door to possible, even expected, conflicts between the virtues.

Yet despite the emphasis on human relationality, the way in which human beings relate to the natural world is not mentioned. If human beings' relationship with the rest of nature were purely instrumental, this would not pose much of a challenge to the framework, as such a relationship with the natural world or "natural resources" could be subsumed under the virtue of justice (i.e., both intergenerational and intragenerational justice), as well as be classified as dimensions of the virtues of fidelity and self-care (since, like all other creatures, human beings also depend on certain natural goods to live, such as sufficient food, adequate shelter, and clean water). Yet this conceptualization of the human relationship with the Earth and non-human Earth inhabitants is unsatisfactory, both within theological ethics and environmental ethics.

Despite the connections between environmental degradation and injustice that are stressed throughout Catholic magisterial teaching and by Christian theologians around the

19. Keenan, "Virtue Ethics," 88.
20. See Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 728.

world, a purely instrumental way of relating to other creatures is inadequate from a Christian perspective in light of the insights from chapter 1 regarding the interconnectedness of all creation and the growing sense of human beings as kin to other creatures and as living in harmony with them. In environmental ethics more broadly, the instrumental use of nonhuman nature has frequently been contrasted with respecting the intrinsic value of nature, with the former critiqued as excessively anthropocentric. The field has been largely shaped by the categories of anthropocentric and nonanthropocentric, and has historically tended to favor the latter.[21] Likewise, there has been a tension between the goals of sustainability (which are understood to be anthropocentric) and the field of environmental ethics, although some scholars see environmental pragmatism as a way forward.[22] In any case, calls for a less anthropocentric or more biocentric view of the place of human beings within the natural world entail a rethinking of human relationships with at least some nonhuman others. Frequently, that relationship is discussed in terms of the interdependence of all life on earth.[23]

Provided that the thesis of chapter 1 is correct, that human beings are in fact in relationships with nonhuman others, this "way that we are" is under-attended to within Keenan's cardinal virtue framework. At best, human relationships with nonhuman creation are part of how we relate "generally" and so are included under the virtue of justice. Yet no such implication is found in Keenan's original proposal, in which "our relationality generally is always to be directed by an ordered appreciation for the common good in which we treat all *people* as equal" (emphasis added).[24] Four years later, Keenan wrote that the cardinal

21. See Kawall, "A History of Environmental Ethics."

22. See Ben A. Minteer, "Environmental Ethics, Sustainability Science, and the Recovery of Pragmatism," in *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, ed. Stephen M. Gardiner and Allen Thompson (Oxford University Press, 2015), doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941339.013.46.

23. For example, Mike Hannis builds on MacIntyre's virtues of inter-human dependence as found in *Dependent Rational Animals* and extends it to "ecological dependence," which he then proposes as an organizational principle for environmental ethics. Mike Hannis, "The Virtues of Acknowledged Ecological Dependence: Sustainability, Autonomy and Human Flourishing," *Environmental Values* 24, no. 2 (2015): 145–164.

24. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 724.

virtue of justice pertained to the way in which human beings "are related to all created life generally."[25] This expanded role of justice is supported by a discussion of human anthropology as articulated by theologians such as Enrico Chiavacci, Philipp Schmitz, and Klaus Demmer and which calls us "to recognize that each of us is constituted as human subjects who are profoundly relational with nature, God and humanity."[26] Curiously, this dimension of human relationality is not carried forward either in Keenan's review of the cardinal virtues in the context of New Testament studies in 2002 nor as applied to genetics in 2005, both of which continue to speak of justice in terms of impartial treatment towards all people.[27]

In its current state then, Keenan's proposed cardinal virtues do not adequately attend to human relationships with nature for three reasons. First, the insights into theological anthropology which inform his later discussion of genetic enhancement are not yet integrated into his proposal. At times he seems hesitant to use relational language with respect to the natural world, preferring the terminology of human beings "as constituted in and through nature" over a self-understanding of humans as "related" to nature.[28] Consideration of a closer treatment of the writings of Demmer and other Western European theologians upon whose work Keenan draws suggests that this parsing of language is likely out of a concern for tendencies in the modern era to consider nature as an object of human consideration and manipulation.[29] Humans are within nature, not set apart from it. The reintegration of humanity and nature is consistent with human "interaction with nature."[30] Nonetheless,

25. James F. Keenan, "Whose Perfection Is It Anyway?: A Virtuous Consideration of Enhancement," *Christian Bioethics* 5, no. 2 (1999): 111.
26. Ibid., 116.
27. See James F. Keenan, "What Does Virtue Ethics Bring to Genetics?," in *Genetics, Theology, and Ethics*, ed. Lisa Sowle Cahill (New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005), 102; Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 123-124.
28. Ibid., 189.
29. See James F. Keenan and Thomas R. Kopfensteiner, "Moral Theology out of Western Europe," *Theological Studies* 59, no. 1 (1998): 113.
30. Ibid., 114.

this sphere of human relationality, this interaction with and within nature, is insufficiently accounted for thus far in Keenan's proposed cardinal virtues.

Second, even if the understanding of the virtue of justice were to be explicitly broadened to govern how human beings are related to all life (or all creation) more generally, it is by no means evident that justice best governs relationships between humans and non-human beings. Ecojustice is a prevalent but still contested strategy in environmental ethics, secular and Christian alike. The Catholic magisterium has not embraced the idea that any creature outside of human beings can be properly understood to be the subject of rights.[31] Philosophers such as Brian Barry do not agree that "the concept of justice can be deployed intelligibly outside the context of relations between human beings."[32] The ethical discussion regarding animal rights is an example of how ecojustice is still a controversial framework.[33] It is also an example of the potential for conflict between the virtue of justice (understood to be directed toward human beings) and the virtue that would govern our relationships with non-human others.[34]

A Christian ecojustice approach to environmental ethics is based on the theological status of creation, and natural evil poses challenges to understandings of what constitutes

31. For example, consider that even as the Bolivian Bishops take pains to note the positive (and underappreciated) aspects of indigenous spiritualities and understandings of creation, such as the interrelationship of all creatures and the focus on living in harmony and balance with the universe, they explicitly reject the idea that the Earth can appropriately be considered a subject of rights, in part out of a concern about animism. See Los Obispos de Bolivia, "El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia," 37-39. In any case, they assert that only human beings have rights. See ibid., 38.

32. Brian Barry, "Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice," in *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, ed. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, vol. 19, Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 488.

33. See Peter Singer, "The Place of Nonhumans in Environmental Issues," in *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, ed. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, vol. 19, Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 55–64 and Tom Regan, "Animal Rights: What's in a Name?," in *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, ed. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, vol. 19, Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 65–73.

34. For another example, see Holmes Rolston III, "Feeding People versus Saving Nature," in *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, ed. Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, vol. 19, Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies (Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003), 451–461.

(or is not included in) the "integrity of creation."[35] Furthermore, the concept of justice has been strongly tied to what is due to other human beings, including within the Catholic tradition. As Charles Curran notes, the Thomistic understanding of justice formed the basis of Catholic social teaching, starting with *Rerum Novarum* in 1891. Justice governs the relationships between individuals (commutative justice), and between individuals and the wider society or state (distributive justice).[36] Given this history, attempts to place human relationships with non-human creation within the sphere of justice risk distorting the doctrine of the goodness of creation by tying this goodness to the ability to meet the needs of human beings.[37]

Third, within Keenan's current framework, human ecological relationships do not fit tidily into the sphere of a general, impartial relationality. In addition to the potential for conflicts between justice directed toward other human beings and justice directed toward nonhuman beings, subsuming the ecological relationship of human beings under the virtue of justice does not account for many of the ways in which human creatures relate to non-human creatures. Ecojustice is one valuable framework that is used to understand this relationship, but it is not the only one. Individually or in communities, human beings may have a particular relationship with specific animals or a particular connection to a certain area of land. This could be understood in terms of the virtue of fidelity, whether along the lines of human beings as faithful stewards of God's creation that is found in Catholic social teaching,[38] the restricted property ownership and totemic life with taboos of the Chotanag-

35. Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 70-77.

36. Charles E. Curran, "Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today," in *Virtue*, ed. Lisa Fullam and Charles E. Curran, vol. 16, Readings in Moral Theology (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011), 63-68.

37. This risk is present in Curran's own discussion of the doctrine of creation in relation to justice. He writes, "The doctrine of creation recognizes that God made the world and material creation to serve the needs of all God's people, not just a few. (However, the good of creation and ecological realities have some meaning in themselves apart from human needs)." Ibid., 65. The latter point is parenthetical, secondary. While "ecological realities" have meaning apart from human needs, the only needs considered are those of human beings.

38. For example, see Francis, *Laudato Si'*, nos. 116, 236.

pur Tribals in India discussed by John Crasta,[39] or in light of the spatial orientation of American Indian peoples and sacredness of the land that was stressed by George Tinker.[40] Attention to another sphere of relationality is needed in order to make sense of the differing approaches to human beings' relationship with nonhuman others and allow for the governing virtue to be "thickened" in a variety of contexts.

This section argued that not only does Keenan's proposal for cardinal virtues in its current form inadequately attend to the ways that human beings interact with nonhuman creation, but also that none of the cardinal virtues he identifies can simply be expanded to also serve as the cardinal virtue governing how humans relate to the nonhuman natural world. Neither justice nor fidelity sufficiently account for the great variety of approaches to environmental ethics nor for the variety of ways in which human beings experience themselves as in relationship with nonhuman creation. For Christians, subsuming ecological relationships under the virtue of justice also risks distorting the doctrine of creation by interpreting it exclusively in light of how the distribution of created goods benefits or harms human beings. Even if such a risk could be mitigated in theory, current Christian ecojustice strategies entail further commitments regarding natural evil that continue to be disputed among theologians. A distinction needs to be made between how human beings relate generally to other human beings and how we relate generally to the natural world of which we are part. Another cardinal virtue is needed in order to account for this fourth way in which human beings are relational. Despite containing a great variety of approaches to the question of how human beings are ecologically relational, the overview of Catholic magisterial teaching and insights from theologians around the world in the previous chapter suggest that the virtue that governs such relationships is humility.

39. See Crasta, "The Chotanagpur Tribes As Agents of Environmental Redemption," 229-230.

40. See Tinker, "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice," 93-96; Tinker, "Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival," 69-72; Tinker, "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator," 170-171.

2.2 Humility Perfects Ecological Relationality

In this section, I argue that humility is the cardinal virtue that governs this ecological relationality. I follow the general lines of the traditional understanding that humility is accurate self-knowledge,[41] though I will use the language of knowing the truth of our place in the world. I accept Fullam's addition of this self-knowledge occurring in the context of our relation to others, but specify that this context most fundamentally consists of a felt awareness of our interdependence on others, including nonhuman others. I also agree that humility has an epistemological function, the "grace of self-doubt" according to Margaret Farley, and especially as developed by Lisa Fullam. While I follow Fullam's emphasis on knowing our place through other-centeredness, and can agree with her that humility's basic act "is to turn our attention beyond ourselves,"[42] I place this definition in the context of perfecting a way of being, an aspect of human relationality, rather than as perfecting a capacity. Also, while Fullam indicates that humility is a mean between extremes, and thus opposed to the vice of excessive self-abnegation as well as the vice of pride, her overall emphasis is still more on humility as opposed to pride, because she thinks that humans less frequently tend to excessive self-abnegation. By contrast, this chapter will highlight the vice of excess, following the trajectory of Keenan's definition of that vice as "making oneself so weak as not to exercise oneself responsibly."[43] Particularly by highlighting this vice of self-weakening, this chapter continues the "rehabilitation" of the virtue of humility, which has been critiqued as a virtue oppressors use to sustain their oppression of others.

41. For example, Joseph Pieper defines humility as "man's [sic] estimation of himself according to the truth." See Josef Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965), 189.

42. Lisa Fullam, *The Virtue of Humility: A Thomistic Apologetic* (Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009), 175.

43. Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 191.

2.2.1 Humility According to Fullam, Farley, and Keenan

Humility According to Lisa Fullam

For Lisa Fullam, virtues "are perfections of the basic capacities of the human person."[44] One of the problems with some of the standard interpretations of humility is that these focus on the acts of, rather than the virtue of, humility.[45] Starting with the thought of Thomas Aquinas, Fullam contributes a richer account of humility as a virtue, thereby distinguishing it from its principal act of self-lowering. She argues that the virtue of humility has two levels. One is the traditional (if sometimes implicit) understanding of humility as truth, as accurate self-knowledge of one's place in relation to others. At this level, humility perfects the intellectual capacity for self-aggrandizement. Fullam defines this direct, or first tier humility as "a virtue of self-understanding in context, acquired by the practice of other-centeredness."[46] Although not a focal point of her work, she does include considering ourselves as creatures as part of the context of our self-understanding.[47] Here Fullam recasts Aquinas's motive of reverence as a mode of other-centeredness, and makes other-centeredness more broadly understood, rather than God, the essential referent for humility. The basic act of humility becomes to turn our attention beyond ourselves. The vices opposed to humility then are "narcissistic self-focus and extreme, self-annihilating other-centeredness."[48]

Other-centeredness is essential for Fullam, the mode of humility and the practice by which humility is acquired. She writes, "The central dynamic of humility itself leads to the development of moral communities by challenging us to widen the circles of those who

44. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 1.
45. Ibid., 3-12. Fullam also brings up this point in Lisa Fullam, "Humility: A Pilgrim's Virtue," *New Theology Review* 19, no. 2 (2006): 48. and Lisa Fullam, "Teresa of Avila's Liberative Humility," *Journal of Moral Theology* 3, no. 1 (2014): 175–198.
46. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 134.
47. See Lisa Fullam, "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance," *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry* 32 (2012): 42.
48. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 175. See also pages 86-87.

we see as 'us,' to extend our solidarity not just to those who can give us social standing in return, but to join with those to whom Jesus promised the kingdom of God."[49] Fullam's attention to the role of humility in building community comes from St. Benedict, who unlike Thomas (as well as Augustine and the desert ascetics), construed it "as an essential virtue for communal living" and emphasized "the ramifications of humility for relationships between people."[50] This other-directedness is also how Fullam distinguishes between the virtues of humility and magnanimity. Unsatisfied with Aquinas' distinction of restraint vs. encouragement, she argues that the mode of humility is outward attentiveness to the other whereas the mode of magnanimity is inward attentiveness.[51]

The second level of humility that Fullam explores is as a meta-virtue that affects the acquisition of virtue.[52] This second level is needed because the appetite which first-order, direct humility perfects, that of self-aggrandizement, more directly affects the intellect than do other appetites. She writes, "The data for humility, our self-assessment in particular or in general, reflects our degree of humility to start with, as Augustine knew."[53] In this sense, the virtue of humility "can be said to perfect an appetite *of* the intellect, here the intellect's self-apprehension."[54] We need a "hermeneutic of humility" that is other-centered in order to see moral truth.[55] This epistemological role of humility resonates with Margaret Farley's "grace of self-doubt."

---

49. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 261.
50. Ibid., 104-105.
51. See Ibid., 176. She notes that the way she revises Thomas' mode is closer to the distinction he makes by motivation and the category of reverence. Ibid., 61.
52. Humility is "a virtue that conditions the way we become virtuous." Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 254.
53. Ibid., 251.
54. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 98.
55. Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 255.

Margaret Farley and the Grace of Self Doubt

Reflecting on Charles Curran's understanding of epistemic humility, Farley concludes that humility stems from the grace of self-doubt, which constitutes "the basic condition for communal as well as individual moral discernment."[56] Not all self-doubt is a grace, and Farley notes that whether self-doubt is to be overcome or sought frequently correlates with "positions of powerlessness and power."[57] Doubting one's own worth, the value of one's experiences or the possibility of one's insight is not a grace but rather something to be overcome. Conversely, the grace of self-doubt fights the temptation for certitude by helping us keep our mind open and enabling us to listen to others. She writes, "It is a grace for recognizing the contingencies of moral knowledge when we stretch toward the particular and concrete. It allows us to listen to the experience of others, take seriously reasons that are alternative to our own, rethink our own last word."[58]

Farley is writing in the context of ecclesiology and ethics, the search for moral knowledge as a community and what happens when the church community is divided. Currently, humans are in a position of power relative to our biosphere, not to mention other animals,[59] plants, ecosystems, and tracts of land.[60] Our environmental interventions have had unforeseen consequences, with climate change being a salient example on the global level.[61] A

56. Farley, "Grace of Self-doubt," 69.
57. Ibid., 68.
58. Ibid., 69.
59. I intentionally use the term "other animals" throughout this chapter, accepting David Clough's invitation to "pause" with the animals. Clough argues that humans strive to absent themselves from the place of animals before God, which, he argues, "has resulted in a radical impoverishment of our vision of the place of animals before God, because what is animal has come to be understood as the opposite to all that is characteristically human...." Clough argues this view is inaccurate and furthermore, given our tendency to quickly lump animals in with the rest of nonhuman nature, we need to "pause" with the animals. David L. Clough, *On Animals: Volume I: Systematic Theology*, vol. 1 (London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012), 44.
60. I recognize that this power is not absolute, and that the consequences of harming our environment include the need to adapt to the changes we have caused over time if we are to survive.
61. For just one example of how complex environmental issues can be at the local level, consider the case of introducing lake trout in Flathead Lake in 1905. The population didn't rapidly expand until the subsequent introduction of *Mysis* shrimp by state fisheries (introduced to enhance the stock of kokanee, another nonnative species that was introduced in 1920), at which point the lake trout population skyrocketed and the native bull trout ended up being listed as threatened in 1996 under the Endangered Species Act. Measures to increase the population of the bull trout are complicated by relations between Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks and

measure of self-doubt would aid our communal discernment of how to respond to the problems the exercise of this power has caused, whether at local or global levels. Nonetheless, when it comes to contributing to and feeling the immediate effects of ecological disasters, some humans are in a position of much greater power than others are, and the burden of self-doubt should be weighted accordingly.

It seems then that the grace of self-doubt facilitates greater participation in the conversation about what our place in the world is, challenging those who have historically dominated the conversation to listen to individuals and communities who have been and continue to be excluded. Hence, the grace of self-doubt is especially apt given the identification of an over-reliance on Western knowledge systems seen in the previous chapter, and of the corresponding need, in Hinga's words, to overcome "monocultural mindsets," in order to address the ecological crisis.[62] Yet the question implied by Farley's observation that the grace of self-doubt correlates to positions of power and powerlessness is not answered: is overcoming self-doubt when warranted also an exercise of epistemological humility? Or is it simply that the virtue of humility, so understood, applies more to people in positions of power than to people in positions of powerlessness?

Humility According to Keenan

Within Keenan's cardinal virtue framework, humility falls under the cardinal virtue of self-care.[63] When writing of humility in relation to the New Testament, Keenan offers the definition of humility as "knowing the truth of one's place" and discusses the virtue in the

---

the Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes Fisheries Program, the economics of recreational fishery, an inability to "go back" to a pre-*Mysis* lake, and debates over what constitutes a stable population. Eric Wagner, "The Great Flathead Fish Fiasco," *High Country News News*, February 3, 2014, 1, accessed May 14, 2019, `https://www.hcn.org/issues/46.2/the-great-flathead-fish-fiasco`.

62. See Hinga, *African, Christian, Feminist*, 124.

63. This is not mentioned in his proposal in 1997. However, in a previous article, Keenan writes that self-esteem is the virtue that makes humility possible. James F. Keenan, "The Virtue of Self-Esteem," *Church* 9 (1993): 37–38. Fullam makes the same identification.

context of environmental ethics.[64] For Christians, knowing the truth of our place in the world requires seeing ourselves as creatures and recognizing our "profound dependence on the world in which we are made."[65] This attention to our creatureliness, and our dependence in particular, resonates with the pervasive theme of the need to acknowledge our creaturely interrelatedness that was identified in chapter 1.

Knowing the truth of one's place is a definition that remains within the traditional ambit of humility as self-knowledge, yet here knowing and respecting our place and the place of others includes a recognition of our own power. In contrast to Fullam, for Keenan, humility, at least within the context of biblically informed environmental ethics, is an empowering virtue. He places humility as the mean between the extremes of pride (domination) and a self-weakening self-deprecation that leads to detachment from the world and a failure to exercise oneself responsibly.[66] Humility empowers us "modestly and responsibly."[67] Yet this empowering aspect of humility needs more development, especially given that it is infrequently identified as part of the virtue of humility in philosophical accounts, which tend to focus on self-lowering or limitations, and likewise seems to stand in tension with much of the Christian tradition. Offered within the context of a collaborative engagement with both New Testament studies and moral theology, this definition of humility implicitly raises questions about how the scriptural basis for humility has been interpreted within Christian communities.

64. Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 191. Knowing one's place in the world is also the definition of humility he offers in the context of civil society, though in this context he also sees humility through an epistemological lens, like Fullam. James F. Keenan, "Virtues for Civil Society: Humility," *Commonweal*, June 2016, `https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/virtues-civil-society-humility`.

65. Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 192.

66. In a previous work, Keenan located the virtue of humility as the mean between the vices of pride and self-pity. Keenan, "The Virtue of Self-Esteem."

67. Harrington and Keenan, *Jesus and Virtue Ethics*, 192.

Remaining Questions

This section has outlined three recent theological-ethical accounts of the virtue of humility, each of which I think has made positive contributions to the understanding of humility as a virtue. Fullam's emphasis on the need to practice other-centeredness in order to understand ourselves in context both helpfully shifts the understanding of the virtue of humility away from the act of self-lowering that is so prevalent, especially in the Christian tradition, and creatively redeploys the Benedictine insight that humility is necessary to build community. Her identification of the second tier of the virtue of humility and how an other-centered "hermeneutic of humility" is necessary to see moral truth resonates with many of the themes of listening, participation, and being willing to engage with non-Western dialogue partners and ways of knowing that were raised by multiple theologians in chapter 1.

Farley's development of the grace of self-doubt also points to the ways in which humility can assist both individuals and communities in the process of discernment. While her focus is on discernment in an ecclesial context, her insight can be extended to other contexts, including discernment in the face of "wicked" global problems such as climate change. Like Fullam, Farley's epistemological focus has an other-directed component, prioritizing listening to others. Her distinction between when self-doubt is a grace or an obstacle to be overcome, together with her suggestion that these at least loosely correlate to our positions of relative power/powerlessness is consistent with the pervasive call for a simultaneous acknowledgment of both the universality and differentiation in responsibilities for global problems raised by theologians and episcopal conferences in the previous chapter. In fact, it offers a mode of critique of the relative absence or inattention to such calls in the United States.

Keenan makes a connection between humility and ecology and better places humility as a mean between extremes. Several aspects of his account also resonate with claims made within environmental ethics, including: the language of self-knowledge in terms of one's place in the world,[68] attention to our creaturely dependence,[69] and the understanding that humility is not necessarily a limiting virtue but can also be empowering.[70]

Nonetheless, I am unconvinced by Fullam's splitting of self-knowledge according to outer-directed and inner-directed attentiveness, such that the virtues of both humility and magnanimity are needed for true self-knowledge.[71] Nor am I convinced that Fullam has succeeded in defining humility as a virtuous mean between two extremes, and I am concerned about the implications of continuing to define humility primarily in opposition to the vice of pride.[72] While Fullam gives more attention to the vice of excess than did Thomas, describing it as "a self-annihilating other-centeredness that fails to value oneself at all,"[73] the vice of pride remains her primary focus. This focus seems to follow from her assess-

68. For example, Hill connected humility to the proper appreciation of our "place in the natural order" that helps us overcome self-importance, and also identified "self-acceptance" (which "involves acknowledging, in more than a merely intellectual way, that we are the sorts of creatures we are") as a crucial part of humility. See Hill, "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," 216, 221, respectively. Similarly, Gerber, who sometimes draws on Hill, frames humility in terms of overcoming self-absorption, putting a person in contact with a larger reality, and developing a perspective that enables us to understand ourselves as part of the natural world. She explicitly pairs perspective with the language of self-understanding and a person's place in the world. Gerber, "Standing Humbly Before Nature," 41.

69. Angela Kallhoff and Maria Schörgenhumer identify "knowing one's place" as one virtue of gardeners, which involves a realism regarding one's position, recognizing that nature is both enabling and limiting and that we are dependent on nature both for our gardening successes and failures. This virtue is very closely connected with the virtue of "a sense of reality" that avoids unrealistic views of nature, including harmony with nature and mastery over nature.Angela Kallhoff and Maria Schörgenhumer, "The Virtues of Gardening: A Relational Account of Environmental Virtues," *Environmental Ethics* 39, no. 2 (2017): 202-203.

70. While Hill identifies overcoming self-importance and cultivating self-acceptance as necessary to proper humility, he is careful to argue that the latter is "not passive resignation, for refusal to pursue what one truly wants within one's limits is a failure to accept the freedom and power one has," which is part of understanding and appropriately responding to who we are. Hill, "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments," 221. Frasz is not convinced that Hill's explication of humility adequately addresses the vice of excess, which he identifies as "the qualities of obsequiousness, false modesty, and deliberate underestimation of one's abilities and talents," as an environmental vice, but agrees that it needs to do so. Frasz, "Environmental Virtue Ethics: A New Direction for Environmental Ethics," 272. He analyzes false modesty in terms of "openness," concluding that it "can be extended into an environmental context in terms of an excessive devaluation of the importance of the individual human in environmental matters generally." Ibid., 273.

71. Fullam writes, "To know ourselves well involves being truthful with ourselves, but also seeking to understand where we and our gifts fit in the grander schemes of society, tradition, and God's creation." Fullam, "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance," 43.

72. While Fullam begins her book noting that it is important not to confuse the virtue of humility with its act of self-lowering, her concern is not that this primary act has been improperly identified. Although she adjusts the description of the act in her proposal, she still sees it as a "counterbalance toward a normal human tendency to self-celebration." Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 4.

73. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 86-87.

ment that human beings do not tend as often to self-abnegation. She writes, "For most people in most circumstances, the task of humility in perfecting that appetite is to limit or restrain the appetite from excess."[74] This is a bold claim about the way human beings are, and not one that I am convinced stands up to investigation, especially in light of the writings from the "epistemological South" that were featured in the previous chapter.

Farley's account raises the question of to what extent the grace of self-doubt can be considered a mean between extremes or whether it is a grace that primarily applies to people in positions of power, and so is not to be considered a universal virtue. Keenan's use of the language of knowing our place goes along with his attention to the ways that humility can be both empowering and limiting and suggests an important corrective to tendencies to define humility primarily in opposition to pride as well as a way in which the virtue of humility need not be limited to those in relative positions of power. Yet this aspect of humility needs more development, especially as it seems to stand in tension with much of the Christian tradition as well as many philosophical accounts. With these concerns in mind, I turn to my own constructive account of the virtue of humility.

2.2.2 Humility as Knowing Our Place in the World as Interdependent

I propose the following definition of humility: humility is the virtue characterized by knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings which is acquired through the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance, and enabled by the "graces" of self-doubt and self-affirmation. This virtue governs and perfects our ecological relationships. First, I keep the traditional emphasis on humility as accurate self-understanding, but put that self-knowledge in relation to the natural world, rather than limiting it to God or to other human beings.[75] Second, in line with the other-centeredness

74. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 4.

75. For Christians of course, humility would still include acknowledging dependence on God. For the cardinal virtue as I am describing it here, however, the focus is on interdependence, not dependence. Nonetheless,

that Fullam defends, but with more emphasis on also bringing that knowledge back to ourselves, I argue for a knowing-our-place through others. Third, I stress that knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent, so neither fully self-sufficient nor fully dependent, perfects our ecological relationality. To Keenan's framework then I am adding that human beings relate ecologically — not only impartially, specifically, and uniquely, but also interdependently.

On this account, humility is opposed to the vices of pride and self-deprecation. Underestimating our interdependence, or undervaluing it by seeing it as a vulnerability and weakness to be overcome, is pride. Overestimating our interdependence by overlooking or undervaluing our own unique powers and gifts is self-deprecation. We can miss the mark either by focusing too much on our own self-sufficiency, gifts, and power and overestimating our place in the world relative to others, or by not adequately acknowledging our own gifts and power and under-estimating our place in the world relative to others. In either case we fail to learn from others.

Knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings

While I agree with Fullam that humility involves accurate self-knowledge in context, I refine that definition by specifying that context as our interdependence. Acknowledging our interdependence helps us learn the truth of our place. For Christians, the truth of this place is fundamentally marked by the dependence of the very existence all creation, including human beings, upon God.[76] As the authors whose work was examined in the previous chapter stressed, we are interdependent on multiple levels, including with other human beings (near and far) and with the natural world. We are interdependent as individuals but also collectively: consider the various relationships within and between socioeconomic structures, families, social institutions, local communities, countries, regions of the world,

as the final section of this chapter strives to show, images of creaturely interdependence are found within the Christian scriptures.

76. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* I, q. 44, a. 1.

ecosystems, and the biosphere. All of these levels of interdependence affect each other and are relevant to the virtue of humility. However, I argue that fundamentally we are interdependent with the natural world. The last person on earth would still be ecologically interdependent even in the absence of other human beings.

Following the move made by Ian Church in his "doxastic account" of intellectual humility,[77] and Frasz's concern with Hill's account of humility as presuming a connection between facts and valuation of those facts,[78] I included "valuing" in my definition. Recalling Lothes's findings that scientific literacy, an interdependent worldview, and a commitment to social justice all predicted faith-based environmental action,[79] I argue that firm belief in our ecological interdependence is necessary but not sufficient to become a humble person. By adding "and valuing" I am signalling that this awareness is not abstract knowledge, but rather lived experience, as Lothes showed was the case for many who engaged in faith-based environmental action[80] and as George Tinker argued is an understanding that Native Americans traditionally have.[81]

Lastly, recognizing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent rather than simply dependent has the advantage of building on traditions of understanding the virtue of humility as including recognition of our vulnerability or dependence[82] with less risk

77. See Ian M. Church, "The Doxastic Account of Intellectual Humility," *Logos & Episteme* 7, no. 4 (2016): 424. Church includes "valuing" in his preliminary definition but while addressing objections moves away from that language to "accurately tracking what one could non-culpably take to be the positive epistemic status of one's own beliefs" (427). As I am not considering humility primarily as an intellectual virtue, I have kept the simpler language of knowing and valuing.

78. See Frasz, "Environmental Virtue Ethics: A New Direction for Environmental Ethics," 269.

79. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 37.

80. See ibid., 188 for an example of how faith-based environmentalists reported experiencing a rupture of their relationship to the earth.

81. See Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," 91.

82. For example, Fullam suggests that the pilgrim is one Christian archetype of humility because of their vulnerability. Fullam, "Humility: A Pilgrim's Virtue," 50-51. Her suggestions for practices to cultivate humility build upon this idea of humility beginning with the recognition of our own vulnerability by pushing us out of our comfort zone. See for example Ibid., 52 and Fullam, "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance," 45-46. It is important to note that vulnerability is not necessarily negative, at least if one is not proud. For example, Gerber stresses the sense of awe that comes from connecting to a reality greater than ourselves, and that can help us "resist the temptation to think that limitation and smallness are negative." Gerber, "Standing Humbly Before Nature," 47.

of distorting our perception of that vulnerability through inattention to our capability. As consideration of climate change (or how we have crossed or are close to crossing any other planetary boundary) shows us, we are both very vulnerable and very capable. These two aspects of our human reality are intertwined; exercise of our powers has affected the earth we inhabit and depend upon for life in ways that exacerbate our vulnerabilities.

Acquired through the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance

The virtue of humility as I have defined it also specifies how this awareness and valuation of our interdependence is acquired. Following Fullam (and others), I argue that the practice of other-centeredness is essential to growing as a humble person.[83] Yet unlike Fullam, I do not distinguish between modes based on the object of that practice, that is, by classifying the valuing the gifts of others as other-directed and the valuing our own gifts as self-directed. Other-directedness does indeed help us identify and appreciate the gifts, powers, and insights of others. It helps us learn the ways in which we depend on others. Yet other-directedness does not stop there. As shown in the previous chapter, attending to what others are saying can also help us appreciate our own (individual and collective) powers, gifts, and privileges.[84] At the collective level, this was seen in the explicit attention to the way global economic systems benefit the Global North at the expense of the Global South, the attention to the disproportionate share of resources enjoyed by the wealthiest and poorest people on the planet, and corresponding calls for differentiated responsibilities. At the individual level, this can be seen in accepting both critical and complimentary feedback

83. For example, Everett Worthington identifies being "other-oriented" (towards the benefit of others) as one of the elements of political humility as well as humility more broadly. Everett L. Worthington, "Political Humility: A Post-Modern Reconceptualization," in *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook (New York: Routledge, 2016), 77-78, accessed May 15, 2019, https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch5. Davis et al. look at humility in an interpersonal context and argue that "humility involves being other-oriented rather than self-oriented, marked by behaviors that indicate a lack of superiority within a relational and cultural context." Don E. Davis et al., "Relational Humility," in *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Everett L Worthington, Don E Davis, and Joshua N Hook (New York: Routledge, 2016), 106, accessed May 15, 2019, https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch7.

84. I would also add identification of our sins, but that is the topic of the next chapter.

as data that might tell us something about ourselves, whether about our strengths or our weaknesses.[85] Keenan offers the acceptance of a compliment — a simple "thank you" — for a job well done as an example of humility.[86] Directing our attention towards others can help us learn about ourselves in relation to others, including both our relative strengths and limitations and how those might be utilized or mitigated to contribute to the common good.

Other-directedness also helps us see how we may be benefitting from economic and political systems (even if we are facing serious economic challenges as individuals, families, or local institutions/communities), begin to recognize how unsustainable some elements of the status quo that we take for granted are, and identify which structural factors counter our individual actions and in what areas collective action is necessary for change. As we come to a more accurate and complete understanding of our place in an interconnected world, we are better equipped to identify opportunities to better leverage our power and resources at multiple levels, including political advocacy, fostering greater participation in dialogue and political processes, creating or collaborating with local initiatives, and implementing lifestyle changes.

In other words, while our self-knowledge must be other-directed, it does not stop at acknowledging and valuing the gifts of others, but brings that awareness back to our own self-understanding to help us see where we fit into the world. This involves openness to the insights and gifts of others, a comparison, and a open-to-revision judgment about where we are in relation to others, but it does not require that the resulting judgment always places us "lower" than another. Our practice and acquisition of self-knowledge is necessarily other-centered precisely because we are not self-sufficient beings, but rather interdependent ones. Completing this knowledge loop maintains the elements of self-knowledge in context and the practice of other-centeredness that Fullam identified, while separating that other-

85. This points to a relationship between the virtues of humility and gratitude, not only in response to an experience of awe before nature or valuation of others' gifts, but also from a proper valuation of our own gifts, which when recognized by others, we neither seek to minimize nor inflate.

86. Keenan, "Virtues for Civil Society: Humility."

centeredness from the act of self-lowering, which is no longer identified as the principal act of the virtue of humility.

While this other-directedness includes human beings, it is not limited to other persons but includes, and I argue, most fundamentally includes, non-human others. This form of other-directedness gets particularly tricky. As Jenkins questions, through what practices do we "listen" to nature and learn from nature? I do not have a comprehensive response, but I think we can identify some practices with which to start and through which, over time, we will come to identify more.[87] In chapter 4, I will argue that habituating ourselves to an increasingly plant-based diet is such an example for most people living in the United States. More generally, I suggest that we begin with scientific literacy, increasing our contact with other-than-human natural entities, and incorporating what Fullam calls the second-tier of the virtue of humility by listening to the suggestions and insights of people from contexts different than our own.

Lastly, I have included "other-acceptance" in this definition as a safeguard of the "otherness" of the others with whom the virtue of humility calls us to engage. In 1993, Frasz proposed "other-acceptance" as a corrective to Hill's exploration of the environmental virtue of humility in order to avoid sentimental distortions of nature by people who profess to love and respect nature but simultaneously refuse to accept death and other features of nature they judge to be unpleasant.[88] For Frasz, "other-acceptance" is connected to the virtue of openness, which is related to humility and can better account for the vice of excess (false modesty) than Hill's account could on its own. This concern for respecting the otherness of nature and avoiding sentimental distortions has continued in both philosophical and theological circles.[89] It is also related to the critique of conceptions of "harmony" with

87. For example, Kallhoff and Schörgenhumer argue that the virtues of gardening are relational, and not only specific to gardening but paradigmatic for environmental virtue more generally. One aspect of gardening is that it involves "learning about and learning from nature." Kallhoff and Schörgenhumer, "The Virtues of Gardening: A Relational Account of Environmental Virtues," 198.

88. See Frasz, "Environmental Virtue Ethics: A New Direction for Environmental Ethics," 271.

89. For example, in developing the virtues of gardening, Kallhoff and Schörgenhumer identify "a sense of reality" as the first virtue, and one closely related to "realism regarding position — knowing one's place."

nature, including that found in recent Catholic social teaching.[90] However, as I noted in the previous chapter, understanding harmony within nature does not necessarily preclude acceptance of death, as George Tinker showed in his explanations of the concepts of harmony and reciprocity.[91] Nonetheless, I think it is important to explicitly include acceptance of the other as other in any discussion of the characteristic practices of humility, especially here, where humility is understood as within a context characterized by interdependence. As seen in the previous chapter, Edward Osang Obi emphasized respecting the "otherness" of others, including non-human others to mitigate the risk that we view them as extensions of ourselves.[92] We cannot "perfect" our relationship with nature if that relationship is based on a false understanding that denies death or struggle (and so some of the ways that we are interdependent), or effectively views non-human individuals, species, land, or ecosystems as extensions of ourselves.[93]

Combined with the knowing and valuing of our interdependent place in creation, the inclusion of these practices of other-centeredness and other-acceptance also give an indication of how we might be able to recognize humility in others. Given the role of right motivation in virtuous action, the identification of a virtue in others is a fallible exercise, as the fact that an observable action aligns with a particular virtue does not itself mean that the action in fact stems from that virtue. Nonetheless, to the extent that we witness others

---

Kallhoff and Schörgenhumer, "The Virtues of Gardening: A Relational Account of Environmental Virtues," 202. A sense of reality precludes unrealistic views of nature, including both "harmony with nature" and "mastery of nature." Rather, they assert that "Our relationship with nature is — as much as we want it to be one of harmony, as suggested by the idea of the garden of paradise — basically a *struggle*" (206). In his development of a theology of eating, which emphasizes among other things that food must be accepted as a gift from God, Norman Wirzba identifies a widespread discomfort with the reality of death as a relevant and harmful cultural narrative in the United States. Gardens oppose this cultural denial of death. Norman Wirzba, *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 53.

90. See the treatment of *Laudato Si'* in Section 1.1.

91. See Tinker, "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance," 534.

92. Obi, "Fragile Ecosystems," 191.

93. This is not to deny that the otherness of nature can be exaggerated, as seen in approaches to environmental ethics that emphasize preservation of "pristine wilderness." However, I think this risk has been mitigated by developing the virtue of humility in a relational framework, which presupposes human contact with and influence upon with non-human nature and vice versa.

taking political or social action and/or making individual lifestyle changes out of an apparent recognition that they are in relationship to non-human others and that this relationship is characterized by interdependence, and in a way that is centers and accepts others, we can say that these actions or practices are likely to be humble ones. There are multiple such practices that a person might adopt, and of course, greater consistency across time and situations better supports any identification of the person as humble.

A brief overview of a concrete example, such as that developed in chapter 4, may be helpful here. Key elements of appropriately identifying the proposed practice of choosing an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern as humble include 1) proper motivation (i.e., that the change in the dietary pattern is prompted by an awareness of our interdependence vis-à-vis others, including non-human others and not—at least not solely or predominantly—by other motivations such as a desire to improve our own health or as a means to comply with social expectations that may or may not be conducive to our flourishing, such as a desire to lose weight), 2) the accuracy of the interdependence that is accepted and valued, which correlates with the extent to which the practice or action centers and accepts others (i.e., recognizing both the benefits and the limits of a plant-based dietary pattern and not misidentifying it as irrelevant to climate change, a panacea that solves all issues surrounding food production and sustainability, or as a means to overcome the reality of death) and 3) an other-acceptance that recognizes the other as other and not an extension of ourselves (i.e., by recognizing that while technological advancement is an important part of the food sustainability puzzle, it is not sufficient on its own).

Enabled by the 'graces' of self-doubt and self-affirmation

This other-directed orientation requires guidance. Which others do we seek out? While our understanding of our place in the world will need to be continually open to revision in light of new information, we clearly cannot simply accept all feedback simultaneously, nor would doing so promote our flourishing or the flourishing of our social and ecological communities. Human beings are fallible. Listening to others does not mean that every other to whom we listen is correct about our place in the world, whether that be our place in a family, educational institution, political community, or the natural world. Furthermore, human beings are, in a Christian worldview, sinful. Other-centered learning is not immune from the effects of injustice, sin, or structures of sin. So how do we begin to adjudicate? Whose opinions do we integrate into our understanding of our place in the world and whose do we reject? While real life is messy and virtue ethics does not aim to provide universally applicable rules, Farley's concept of the "grace of self-doubt" can be helpful to show how growth in the virtue of humility is both possible and has resources to avoid cooptation by those who are powerful to facilitate or maintain oppression and marginalization against those who are less powerful.

Farley suggested that viewing self-doubt as a grace or obstacle was correlated with positions of power and powerlessness. I accept that suggestion and propose to add the 'grace' of self-affirmation as its corollary. This grace may apply when self-doubt is an obstacle to virtuous living, and so be correlated with positions of relative powerlessness, but interestingly, these two 'graces' may also work together. Recent developments in positive psychology suggest that self-affirmation, when understood as reinforcing central values as opposed to asserting self-worth, can reduce defensive biases and enable "individuals to accept threatening information."[94] Hence, self-affirmation may not necessarily be predicated on closed-mindedness.

Still, I think it is helpful to maintain the expectation that the burden of self-doubt falls on people and communities that enjoy relative power, while the burden of self-affirmation, including asserting self-worth, falls on people and communities that suffer relative powerlessness. Given that the United States is a country of relative social and economic power

94. Peter M. Ruberton, Elliot Kruse, and Sonja Lyubomirsky, "Boosting State Humility via Gratitude, Self-Affirmation, and Awe," in *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook (New York: Routledge, 2016), 263-264, accessed May 10, 2019, https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch18.

that has contributed disproportionately to climate change, we in the United States can expect to be more in need of the grace of self-doubt than that of self-affirmation when it comes to questioning our current national policies, the national and multinational structures we maintain, and definitions of "enough" or "sustainable" in relation to individual and social practices.

Yet one 'grace' does not necessarily apply uniformly across the multiple roles and relationships that human beings exercise. There is no inherent conflict in acknowledging that our position of relative power or powerlessness can vary both over time and across different relationships. As a white, middle-class, highly educated mother of two young children, I will likely learn the truth of my place in the world better if I strive for the grace of self-doubt in discussions about white privilege and the grace of self-affirmation (understood as including affirming self-worth) in discussions about "reverse sexism." Hence, while every person will have to decide whether or how to incorporate what she learns from others into how she knows and values her place in the world in accordance with the virtue of prudence, she can use her relative position of power or powerlessness as a shorthand for how much "weight" to assign to the understanding of her place in the world that others offer her. Lastly, while this grace will vary considerably in human contexts, we can expect the grace of self-doubt and the grace of self-affirmation as affirming central values to apply more consistently in human interactions with non-human nature, as human beings overall are in a position of relative power over the biosphere.

That perfects our ecological relationality

Classical accounts of virtue understand virtues as perfecting human capacities or appetites, and as seen above, humility is often approached as a moral or intellectual virtue. By contrast, my account of humility makes the claim that humility governs the way human beings are ecologically, which is to say, the way we relate interdependently. Here further clarification is needed, as conceiving of the virtue of humility as perfecting relationships can be critiqued as removing the virtue from the virtuous agent. My argument that the virtue of humility is a cardinal virtue relies on Keenan's framework in which the cardinal virtues perfect the "ways that we are"[95] relationally and I intentionally move away from the specific capacities identified by Fullam, particularly in that I do not agree that the virtue of humility perfects the human capacity of self-aggrandizement. Nonetheless, the virtue of humility as I have defined it here is still perfecting a person-in-relationship, not that relationship itself. For this reason, the virtue of humility can be understood to perfect our ecological relationality by perfecting our capacity of knowing and valuing our interdependence, or in other words, our capacity to be in ecological relationship.

Here it may be helpful to recall that there is precedent for understanding humility as a virtue that pertains not just to the intellect, but also to human relationships. First, philosophical and religious understandings of the virtue of humility as an intellectual or moral virtue have implications for how we relate to others.[96] When humility is understood as a moral virtue, it involves not only the intellect, but also developing emotions that we can expect to influence our relationships.[97] Humility has also been explored as a political or civic virtue.[98]

95. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 723.

96. For example, Farley's focus is on epistemological humility and yet the context is communal discernment in the face of serious disagreements and disruptions. Farley, "Grace of Self-doubt." Similarly, Fullam describes humility as accurate self-knowledge as "essentially relational; it is always sketched in contrasts and comparisons." Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 86. She also links it to solidarity, writing that, "The central dynamic of humility itself leads to the development of moral communities by challenging us to widen the circles of those who we see as 'us,' to extend our solidarity not just to those who can give us social standing in return, but to join with those to whom Jesus promised the kingdom of God." Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 261.

97. For example, Jeffrie G. Murphy identifies the emotions of "empathy, compassion, and a disposition toward tolerance, forgiveness, and mercy" and suggests that practices to develop these emotions might include prayer, volunteering or otherwise "getting to know a wide variety of people and their circumstances" Jeffrie G. Murphy, "Humility as a Moral Virtue," in *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook (New York: Routledge, 2016), 27-28, accessed May 15, 2019, `https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch1`. Some psychological research supports the connection between humility and forgiveness or a tendency to apologize. Davis et al., "Relational Humility," 109.

98. See for example Worthington, "Political Humility: A Post-Modern Reconceptualization"; Elizabeth Lee, "The Virtues of Humility and Magnanimity and the Church's Response to the Health Care and Gay Marriage Debates," in *Religion, Economics, and Culture in Conflict and Conversation*, ed. Laurie M. Cassidy

Second, exploring virtues, including the virtue of humility, in the context of relationships is a strategy employed within both feminist and environmental ethics. Feminist approaches to virtue ethics tend to emphasize the sociopolitical context in which character traits are identified and developed. Furthermore, attention to women's experiences has resulted in feminist approaches to character ethics addressing "character issues in contexts of interpersonal relationships and caregiving."[99] In her feminist retrieval of the monastic virtues of obedience, silence, and humility, Shawn Carruth, OSB, places each in the context of relationship with others. Humility is to know ourselves profoundly, which includes knowing "ourselves as relational and connected with others, with the community and the world."[100]

Environmental virtue ethics sees a connection between environmental conditions and human flourishing, and so has also tended to frame a less individualistic conception of virtue and more emphasis on the context within which virtue is acquired.[101] Virtues have frequently been proposed in terms of human relationship with non-human nature and this is also the case for the virtue of humility specifically. For example, when considering environmentally responsive virtues, environmentally justified virtues, and environmentally productive virtues, Kawall highlights humility and courage. Humility falls into the first category because "it encourages beneficial relationships with environmental entities," and

and Maureen H. O'Connell, *Annual Publication of the College Theology Society; v. 56* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011), 32–47 and Keenan, "Virtues for Civil Society: Humility."

99. Robin S. Dillon, "Feminist Approaches to Virtue Ethics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Virtue*, ed. Nancy Snow, Oxford Handbooks Online (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 384, 386, respectively, accessed February 5, 2019, doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199385195.013.15.

100. Shawn Carruth, "The Monastic Virtues of Obedience, Silence and Humility: A Feminist Perspective," *The American Benedictine review* 51, no. 2 (2000): 144. Obedience emphasizes listening, to ourselves, to others, and to God. Silence is the "language of listening." Carruth gets this phrase from Mary Margaret Funk, OSB, "What is the Work of the Monastery? A Case for Silence, Humility and Obedience," in *The Proceedings of the American Benedictine Academy Conversation,* Vol. Two, New Series, edited by René Branigan, The American Benedictine Academy 1992, 91-108. Silence is essential to our relationships with others and facilitates, in the words of Nelle Morton, "hearing others into speech." See Carruth, "Monastic Virtues," 138, cf. Nelle Morton, *The Journey is Home* (Boston: Beacon 1985), 202-210.

101. See Cafaro, "Environmental Virtue Ethics," 439.

often includes an idea of a disposition to learn from nature.[102] By contrast, group arrogance "establishes hierarchical and nonreciprocal relationships."[103]

Third, the intersection between virtue and positive psychology is also a developing aspect of the field, including in environmental virtue ethics.[104] Although more research is needed, initial research suggests that humility, understood as being other-oriented, is linked to regulating social bonds, forgiveness, agreeableness, and promotion of prosocial behaviors, and there are also indications that it acts as a buffer for the negative impact that competitive behaviors or traits can have on relationships.[105] These findings from psychology are making their way into theological accounts of humility as well. For example, Michael W. Austin thinks that a humble person can bring enjoyment to others through relationships. People who are disposed to prioritize the interests of others may increase their value to society based on their willingness to contribute to the common good, and people who are good listeners, which "a self-lowering other-centered person will tend to be" are more enjoyable to be around than those who are proud.[106] My proposed account of humility as a virtue that governs ecological relationality bears some resonance with the work of psychologists who hold that humility "involves cultivating the relationships in which one

102. Jason Kawall, "Environmental Virtue Ethics," in *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, ed. Nancy E. Snow (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017), 662-663, doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199385195.013.24.

103. Ibid., 665.

104. See Cafaro, "Environmental Virtue Ethics," 438.

105. See Davis et al., "Relational Humility." This is not an exhaustive list. Also, the authors note that humility norms might be applied differently to members of different groups, such as women and Asian Americans, and thus "provide a covert mechanism for maintaining the status quo and protecting the power of more privileged groups" (115). Lastly, the authors distinguish between trait humility, state humility, and relational humility. The latter is used to refer to a person's perception that another person is humble (106), which is not what I mean here by humility as a virtue that perfects an aspect of our relationality. Yet there are certainly elements of overlap between my account of humility and the qualities the researchers identify, including other-orientedness and having an accurate view of oneself. Don E. Davis, Everett L. Worthington Jr., and Joshua N. Hook, "Humility: Review of Measurement Strategies and Conceptualization as Personality Judgment," *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 5, no. 4 (2010): 248, accessed May 16, 2019, https://doi.org/10.1080/17439761003791672.

106. Michael W. Austin, "Defending Humility: A Philosophical Sketch with Replies to Tara Smith and David Hume," *Philosophia Christi* 14, no. 2 (January 2012): 465-467. For both claims, Austin cites empirical research that links humility with generosity with time and money, and/or with gratitude, forgiveness, and cooperation.

is able to transform motivations through viewing oneself as belonging to and committed to something larger than oneself, so that sacrificing for the good of the relationship or collective is tantamount to acting in one's best interest."[107] with the caveat of course that this belonging and commitment is primarily understood ecologically.

Pride: The Vice of Deficiency

In this framework, pride remains the vice opposed to the virtue of humility by deficiency. Overestimating our place in the world stems from a lack of awareness or undervaluing of our interdependence and so can lead to a devaluation of others's contributions and their particular roles/places and an attitude of domination. If humility is the virtue of knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings, pride is a form of isolation from this context of interdependence. This isolation can stem from a lack of awareness of the reality of our interdependence with others due to an over-emphasis on the ways in which we are independent. Or it can stem from an awareness of that interdependence that is not sufficiently valued, leading to denial of or contempt for that interdependence in favor of narratives of self-sufficiency or mastery over nature.

For Christians, pride also ignores our creatureliness and dependence on God. Yet one does not need to be Christian to devalue our ecological interdependence, to refuse to pay attention to the vast webs of life that are interconnected and sustain all life on earth, and to adopt attitudes and habits that disregard the needs and contributions of other life forms and natural entities. Isolating oneself from one's context is a refusal to recognize how one is interrelated, both depending on others and being depended upon by others. When this isolation is due to an over-estimation of our independence, it tends to overemphasize our own powers, gifts, and insights and to overlook our weaknesses and limitations. This occurs when we attempt to know ourselves through ourselves, rather than through others.

Self-deprecation: The Vice of Excess

107. Davis et al., "Relational Humility," 106.

In this framework, the vice of excess is more visible as an underestimation of our place in the world. When we overestimate and overvalue our dependence on others, we irresponsibly weaken ourselves. Instead of overreaching, or trying to dominate others, self-deprecation does not adequately acknowledge our own gifts, powers, and insights in relationship to those of others, and so hinders us from making the contributions that we can and should make.

This self-deprecation is, like pride, a form of isolation from our context.[108] Overemphasizing our limitations and weaknesses can result in a withdrawal of our contributions from the world. Instead of being based on inaccurate notions of self-sufficiency, it is instead based on exaggerated notions of dependence. This form of isolation can stem from a lack of awareness of our interdependence due to excessive focus on our dependence on others, thereby obscuring or trivializing how we also affect those around us, and how others also depend on us. In this way, like pride, self-deprecation reflects a self-directed self-knowledge rather than an other-directed one. After all, we can learn from others what our strengths, gifts, privileges are just as easily as our weaknesses and limitations.

The vice of self-deprecation can also stem from overvaluing our interdependence in our self-understanding, a self-abnegation that rejects one's own good and uniqueness and downplays one's agency. In either case, the vice of excess of humility is disempowering, leading to a passive or even fatalistic perspective in which we identify too much as outside

108. While this self-deprecation is influenced by and corresponds to the identification of indifference highlighted in the previous chapter, I use the terms self-deprecation and isolation here in an effort to more easily distinguish this vice from the more positively regarded or retrieved indifference or detachment in the Christian tradition, such as in the figures of desert ascetics, St. Thomas More, St. Ignatius of Loyola, or St. Vincent de Paul. This form of indifference tends to be related to proper discernment and freedom to act rightly in difficult circumstances rather than a failure to exercise agency. For example, the indifference Joseph Koterski sees More as finding in Christ's example, a "poised readiness to do what is needed" despite aversion, is very different from the indifference and apathy decried by papal encyclicals and theologians in the previous chapter. Joseph Koterski, "Thomas More and the Prayer for Detachment"," *Moreana* 52 (Number 199-200), nos. 1-2 (2015): 77, doi:10.3366/more.2015.52.1-2.6. Likewise, I do not intend to enter the debate about the extent to which indifference, such as that practiced by desert fathers and mothers, might be a necessary corrective to Christian spirituality that is not sufficiently challenging. Belden C. Lane, "Desert Attentiveness, Desert Indifference: Countercultural Spirituality in the Desert Fathers and Mothers.," *Cross Currents* 44, no. 2 (1994): 193–206.

of our control and fail to recognize not only how others also depend on us, but also how we can contribute to our context.

2.2.3 Addressing Objections

Ecological Relationships Pertain to Multiple Cardinal Virtues

An initial objection to this proposal might focus on the overlap between ecological interdependence and other forms of interdependence found within human society. Throughout my development of the virtue of humility, I mentioned ways the virtue can pertain to relationships between human beings in addition to human relationships with nonhuman others. Furthermore, as seen in chapter 1, interdependence was initially developed in Catholic social teaching in terms of politics and economics. This insight gradually expanded to include our ecological interdependence, and eventually to understand that ecological interdependence not only in terms of justice between human beings, but as a form of kinship that extends beyond human boundaries. On this account then, knowing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings not only affects our ecological relationships, but also our relationships with all other human beings as well as our relationships of fidelity and our relationship with ourselves. Yet I argue that far from showing that humility is too diffuse to be intelligibly understood as governing our ecological relationships, this overlap points to the harmony of the virtues that is consistent with the relational cardinal virtue framework upon which I am building. It also suggests the stability of character traits across situations, thus offering a partial response to the situationist critique of virtue ethics.

First, while Keenan's proposed cardinal virtues framework allows for legitimate conflicts between cardinal virtues, it does not presuppose the dis-harmony of the virtues, that is, that the virtues necessarily conflict with each other such that the possession of some entails not possessing others.[109] Keenan argues against Thomas' understanding of the unity of the virtues on the grounds that such unity is premised on: (1) a combination of virtues governing completely separate domains (both within the human subject and the dimension of activity) such that they do not overlap, and (2) a hierarchical ordering, with justice providing "the real mean to human action," that would prevent conflict even in the case of overlap.[110] This argument anticipates areas of potential overlap between the virtues, as it is this overlap which sometimes (but certainly not always), can result in real conflict. While this allowance for conflict is in tension with a Thomas' understanding of the unity of the virtues, it does not necessitate the inapplicability of Thomas' understanding that the virtues are mutually reinforcing.[111] Rather, this mutual reinforcement faces limitations.[112] With respect to the question of conflict between Keenan's proposed cardinal virtues, Fullam states

109. For this definition of the dis-harmony challenge, see Micah Lott, "Does Human Nature Conflict with Itself?: Human Form and the Harmony of the Virtues," *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2013): 660-661.

110. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 718.

111. Jean Porter notes that for Thomas, "the different components of the human psyche develop in such a way as to reinforce one another in every action. Just as every truly virtuous human action will reflect the wisdom that is mediated through prudence, so it will also reflect the conscientiousness proper to justice, and the firmness and restraint proper to fortitude and temperance, considered as aspects of virtue generally considered." Jean Porter, "The Unity of the Virtues and the Ambiguity of Goodness: A Reappraisal of Aquinas's Theory of the Virtues," *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 21, no. 1 (1993): 154.

112. The source of these limitations can be debated. Fullam posits that the balance of these cardinal virtues is negatively affected by social sin. See Lisa Fullam, "Joan of Arc, Holy Resistance, and Conscience Formation in the Face of Social Sin," in *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, ed. David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 76. In Keenan's proposal, the source of the conflicts between justice, fidelity and self-care in the case of Mrs. Bergmeier do not appear to have their source within Mrs. Bergemeir but rather in the circumstances she faces: living under Nazi rule. Thus the case appears to fall within the "inevitable loss" objection to the harmony of the virtues, which can be responded to by arguing that the source of the conflict lies "in the *abnormal circumstances* that have befallen particular humans" rather than in the human form itself. See Lott, "Does Human Nature Conflict with Itself?: Human Form and the Harmony of the Virtues," 673. Since Lott does not think that we could identify "condition-independent Aristotelian categoricals for any living thing," he concludes that "the lack of some virtue is inevitable in a weaker but practically relevant sense: What is typical, statistically speaking, is that humans are faced with situations that force them to choose between some virtues or others." ibid. That the sinful condition of humanity gives rise to the circumstances that cause ourselves and others to face conflicts in virtuous living would not then appear to vitiate the harmony thesis. To the extent sin is considered an integral part of the human condition practically speaking (despite being a corruption of human nature), it broaches the more general question of whether it is possible for any person to attain true virtue at all throughout his (earthly) lifetime. That question lies beyond the scope of this chapter, which is premised on the understanding that the cardinal virtues can be distinguished from the theological virtues, and can be attained in some meaningful sense.

that the conflict is at the level of particular acts, not the virtues themselves, which remain aspects of a flourishing life.[113]

If we grant that a relational framework for the cardinal virtues allows for overlap between the virtues, which will result sometimes, but not necessarily, in conflict, then it is unsurprising that such overlap may also have the opposite result. If the cardinal virtues perfect the ways that human beings *are*, and human beings are constitutively relational, then we can expect not only that our different relationships will affect one another, but also that our underlying dispositions will affect multiple relationships. The impact of Thomas's unity argument drawn out by Jean Porter, that it can help us distinguish between genuine virtue and its similitude, still holds even if the unity cannot be understood to be conflict-free.[114]

In addition, one of the appeals of virtue ethics is that it deals with ordinary life, rather than the "exotically unsolvable."[115] Looking at real life examples shows many opportunities for understanding the cardinal virtues to work together synergistically. For example, nurturing special relationships is at least sometimes identified as helping people expand their moral vision, whether taking a step towards greater justice between persons or caring about something in the natural world enough to protect it.[116] Furthermore, as mentioned

113. See Fullam, "Joan of Arc," 76. Fullam gives the example of the conflict between fidelity and self-care experienced by parents of young children. Self-care will suffer in the practice of fidelity, but self-care remains an important part of the good life. Too little practice of self-care will negatively impact the very practice of parental fidelity that it is sometimes sacrificed for in the first place.

114. See Porter, "Unity of the Virtues," 155-161. Porter states, "Hence, the contrast between genuine viciousness and virtue reveals most clearly what is nonetheless true in every case: What is determinative of the shape of the individual's life is not the set of character traits that he possesses, considered as an ensemble of distinct qualities, but the underlying dispositions and commitments that inform those character traits" (159).

115. James F. Keenan, "7 Reasons for Doing Virtue Ethics Today," in *Virtue and the Moral Life: Theological and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Kathryn Getek Soltis and William Werpehowski (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 5.

116. For example, with respect to the latter, psychologists have noted links between people's connections to nature and engagement in environmental behavior as well as overall happiness. See Liuna Geng et al., "Connections with Nature and Environmental Behaviors," *PLoS One* 10, no. 5 (2015); Elizabeth K. Nisbet, John M. Zelenski, and Steven A. Murphy, "The Nature Relatedness Scale: Linking Individuals' Connection With Nature to Environmental Concern and Behavior," *Environment and Behavior* 41, no. 5 (2009): 715–740, and John M. Zelenski and Elizabeth K. Nisbet, "Happiness and Feeling Connected: The Distinct Role of Nature Relatedness," *Environment and Behavior* 46, no. 1 (2014): 3–23. Not all such studies find a link be-

in the previous chapter, ecojustice is one practical strategy that is being deployed by some communities to address environmental crises, and Lothes identified a strong commitment to social justice as one of the key motivating factors for faith-based environmental action. An overlap between the cardinal virtues of fidelity and justice would also be consistent with other projects such as John Paul II's concept of "domestic church" as developed by Lisa Sowle Cahill,[117] Margaret A. Farley's integration of justice into a framework for sexual ethics,[118] and Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore's challenge to rethink how we adults should think about children.[119] Furthermore, it can help us account for stories from real life, such as that of Daryl Davis befriending members of the Ku Klux Klan, many of whom, over time, changed their views and left the organization.[120] In short, once we allow for overlap between the cardinal virtues, we can expect more porous boundaries that result both in

tween attitudes and actions (see for example Catherine Broom, "Exploring the Relations between Childhood Experiences in Nature and Young Adults' Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours," *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* 33, no. 1 (2017): 34–47, in which experiences of nature in childhood were associated with an attitude of love of nature and the identification of taking care of the environment as a priority but not with increased environmental actions). Yet these connections between experiences of nature, attitudes, priorities, and in some cases behavior, still offer support for arguments that friendship (or other virtues of care) can be considered an environmental virtue. For an example of such an argument, see Frasz, "What is Environmental Virtue Ethics that We Should Be Mindful of It?" This suggests that practices of self-care (i.e., going for a walk in natural environment) or fidelity (i.e., caring for a particular natural entity or place) may provide opportunities for growth in our relationship with the natural world, and so in the cardinal virtue of humility.

117. For example, Cahill notes the challenges to the concept of "domestic church" posed by the complementarity model of justice, which can undermine gains in equality women have made within the family by "suggesting that family relations ought to emulate the unequal status of women within church structures" Lisa Sowle Cahill, *Family: A Christian Social Perspective* (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000), 93. This suggests that participating in unjust structures can form persons in ways that negatively affect how they relate to others impartially (justice) as well as specifically (fidelity).

118. Margaret A. Farley, *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics* (New York: Continuum, 2006).

119. See Bonnie J. Miller-McLemore, *Let the Children Come: Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective* (San Francisco: Jossey-Boss, 2003).

120. See Conor Friedersdorf, "The Audacity of Talking About Race With the Ku Klux Klan," *The Atlantic*, March 27, 2015, 1, accessed May 7, 2019, https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/03/the-audacity-of-talking-about-race-with-the-klu-klux-klan/388733/. Daryl's practice of treating all people with respect, even those with racist views who were actively participating in the KKK, led to practices of conversation and eventually the cultivation of unlikely friendships which in turn helped Ku Klux Klan members question and abandon at least some racist beliefs and practices. Such an example has certainly been controversial, and it is not offered here as an example of what faithful and just persons would or ought to do (though it certainly provides an opportunity to think through not only the relationship of the virtues of fidelity and justice, but also the role of prudence), but rather as an example of how the virtues of fidelity and justice can overlap.

conflict and mutual reinforcement. Such an understanding may not be tidy as we would prefer, but neither is it abstracted from the sphere of ordinary life in which these virtues are (hopefully!) acquired, challenged, and developed.

Humility Enables Rather than Challenges Oppression

Aquinas understood humility as the virtue "which tempers and restrains the mind, lest it tend to high things immoderately."[121] This self-lowering understanding persists and exacerbates the risk of portraying humility as a virtue of passivity and detachment to the detriment of persons who are oppressed. Given its history, stressing the virtue of humility can remain dangerous to women as well as to other persons who are oppressed or marginalized. Yet there have been significant changes in theological anthropology since the time of Aquinas, and understanding humility as a virtue perfecting a relationship is different from understanding it as a virtue that perfects an appetite. Given the history of sexism and the fact that humility has been considered a feminine virtue, I wish to explicitly address a further challenge: Does considering humility as a cardinal virtue contribute to the detriment, rather than the flourishing, of women and other marginalized or oppressed persons?

In practice, humility has tended to be associated with detachment or passivity rather than with empowering action. It has been critiqued "a virtue that the powerful recommend to the powerless, which keeps them powerless."[122] Humility has consistently been understood as opposed to the vice of pride, and pride has long been identified as a fundamental sin for all human beings. Yet this claim has in turn been contested particularly by feminist scholars since the landmark essay by Valerie Saiving Goldstein, which identified the fundamental sin for women in terms of negation of the self, rather than pride and will-to-power.[123]

121. *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 161, a. 1.
122. Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 261. This claim is made in the context of consideration of the work of Klaus Wengst.
123. See Valerie Saiving, "The Human Situation: A Feminine View," *The Journal of Religion* 40, no. 2 (1960): 100–112.

Feminist theologians have attended to the ways in which Christian (mis)understandings of women's place in the world have been used to oppress women, in part by emphasizing passive virtues such as submission and meekness.[124] Humility has been identified among these problematic virtues.[125] Yet feminist theologians have also offered new interpretations of how humility has helped or can help empower women in patriarchal contexts.[126] For example, female mystics could use the rhetoric of humility to mollify critics while simultaneously using humility to authorize their speech, which included making bold claims of intimacy with God.[127]

Nonetheless, humility is still thought of primarily in terms of its opposition to the vice of pride, and usually in terms of self-lowering. This approach is found not only in theological ethics, but also in philosophical circles as well as dictionary definitions.[128] One

124. See Mary Daly, *The Church and the Second Sex.* (New York: Harper & Row, 1968), 11-31. Although Daly later self-identified as post-Christian, her work has been enormously influential on feminist scholars, including Christian theologians. Nor has the danger of so-called feminine virtues to the flourishing of women been overcome in the decades since. For example, Kochurani Abraham has noted how "gendered socialization in the so-called feminine virtues of submission, self-sacrifice, and passivity" continues to contribute to Indian women's tolerance of abusive marriages. Kochurani Abraham, "Resistance: A Liberative Key in Feminist Ethics," in *Feminist Catholic Theological Ethics: Conversations in the World Church*, ed. Linda Hogan and Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 99. The virtue of patience is another virtue which has been critiqued for supporting sexist structures in the church (and retrieved in connection to fortitude and justice). Karen Lebacqz and Shirley Macemon, "Vicious Virtue? Patience, Justice and Salaries in the Church," in *Conscience and Calling: Ethical Reflections on Catholic Women's Church Vocations*, ed. Anne E. Patrick (London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013), 280–292.

125. Rosemary Radford Ruether identifies the equation of sin with anger and pride, and virtue with humility and self-abnegation, as a leading obstacle to feminist consciousness for Christian women, and a doctrine that while supposedly applicable to every Christian, is unevenly applied such that "it becomes, for women, an ideology that reinforces female subjugation and lack of self-esteem." Rosemary Radford Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1983), 186. Hence women need to question the ideology of pride and humility, allow themselves to experience anger, and develop a virtue of pride (as in self-esteem).

126. As an example of how humility can function positively in a patriarchal society, Ruether thinks humility can be reclaimed by women as "truthful self-knowledge of one's own capacity for oppressive pride." Ibid., 188.

127. For retrievals of humility based on examining the lives and writings of female mystics, see for example, Fullam, "Teresa of Avila's Liberative Humility" and Michelle Voss Roberts, "Retrieving Humility: Rhetoric, Authority, and Divinization in Mechthild of Magdeburg," *Feminist Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 50–73.

128. For example, Nancy Snow defines humility in terms of recognition of our limitations. This recognition must be taken seriously enough to affect us. She writes, "Humility can be defined as the disposition to allow the awareness of and concern about your limitations to have a realistic influence on your attitudes and behavior." Nancy E. Snow, "Humility," *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 29, no. 2 (1995): 210. The results of humility are lowering our estimation of ourselves or increasing our recognition of the gifts of others.

exception to this is the doxastic account of intellectual humility offered by Ian Church, who is explicitly concerned with how the virtue of intellectual humility in the low concern for status and the limitations-owning accounts both have trouble accounting for the vice of excess, which Church names as intellectual servility.[129]

There are resources within the accounts of humility that I have primarily engaged with here to suggest that the virtue of humility can be retrieved in a way that it challenges oppression. Fullam names the vice of excess, stresses other-centeredness, and challenges us to extend our solidarity. Farley clearly recognizes that not all self-doubt is a grace. Yet Fullam's account in particular, I argue, disproportionately defines humility in reference to

In the first case, humility "counters the tendency to exaggerate merits and other symptoms of improper pride." Snow, "Humility," 210-211. While Norvin Richards allows that splendid people can be humble, and defines humility in terms of accurate self-knowledge rather than low self-estimate, he thinks this accurate sense is formed in resistance to pressures to think too much of oneself. The pressure to think too little of oneself relates to dignity, not humility. Norvin Richards, "Is Humility a Virtue?," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1988): 254-255. Kellenberger sees a tradition of humility in opposition both to pride and the pride-shame axis. He argues that the kind of pride that is the core of the contrast with humility, is self-reflective pride. James Kellenberger, "Humility," *American Philosophical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (2010): 324-327. Although their definition is framed in terms of concern for self-importance and not in terms of self-lowering, Robert C. Roberts and W. Scott Cleveland explicitly start with pride when defining the virtue of humility, precisely because the two have been traditionally thought of as opposites. W. Scott Cleveland and Robert C. Roberts, "Humility from a Philosophical Point of View," in *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, ed. Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook (New York: Routledge, 2016), 33, accessed February 5, 2019, https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch2. In discussing humility as an intellectual virtue, they also begin with vices, specifically vanity and arrogance. However, this approach reflects the method of the book. Robert Campbell Roberts and W. Jay Wood, "Humility," chap. 9 in *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology* (Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 2007), 236–256. The seven competing views of humility that they think are most widely held also share a common focus on restraint or self-lowering, whether that is framed in terms of ignoring or not attending to one's own excellences, small-mindedness, low self-esteem, restraining irrational ambition, not overestimating oneself, or owning one's limitations. Cleveland and Roberts, "Humility from a Philosophical Point of View," 38-44. As an example from the theological side: while he locates the virtue as the mean between the extremes of pride and self-denigration, Michael W. Austin includes "self-lowering" in the definition of Christian humility which he defends. Austin, "Defending Humility: A Philosophical Sketch with Replies to Tara Smith and David Hume."

129. Church, "The Doxastic Account of Intellectual Humility." In part, this concern is related to his attention to folk accounts of humility and how intellectual humility functions in a clinical psychological setting. For example, some clinicians have noted that lack of intellectual arrogance corresponds to greater risk of some forms of depression. Church thinks that situating intellectual humility as a mean helps resolve that concern, by avoiding the identification of lack of intellectual arrogance with intellectual humility and allowing that a lack of intellectual arrogance might also reflect the vice of intellectual servility.

pride.[130] This focus on pride in turn risks either obscuring oppression (if we truly believe that most human beings in most times and most places tend to the vice of pride, then we risk viewing legitimate self-assertion as pride), or turning humility into a virtue that is only necessary and indeed only ought to be pursued by those in positions of power.

I argue that my account of humility is better equipped to respond to feminist and other critiques based on power dynamics for three reasons: (1) it is placed in a relational rather than a capacities framework, (2) it has further developed the empowering aspect of humility, and similarly, (3) the additional attention to the vice of excess helps offset a tendency to primarily view humility in opposition to the vice of pride. Nonetheless, given the way that the term "humility" is used in common discourse,[131] I acknowledge that some risk remains when advocating for understanding humility as a cardinal virtue.

First, I contend that the tendency to oppose humility primarily to pride that persists in the work of Fullam can be traced back to the understanding humility as perfecting an intellectual appetite, specifically that of self-aggrandizement.[132] Moving the virtue of humility to a relational framework dislodges it from its predication on an intellectual appetite that is already defined in terms of pride. Furthermore, feminist approaches to sin and virtue

130. Fullam understands human beings as typically much more at risk of excessive rather than insufficient self-regard. Indeed, it is only when the latter is "extreme," that it poses a problem. This de facto emphasis on pride hinders efforts to rehabilitate the virtue of humility against critiques that it has been used to justify, reinforce, or otherwise facilitate oppression. If we accept that advocating that people need the disposition to think less of themselves in order to be virtuous is problematic for human flourishing in at least some contexts, there is a tension between Fullam's first-tier definition of humility in terms of self-understanding, which she argues is relational, and maintaining that humility regulates an intellectual appetite which is defined in terms consistent with the vice of deficiency but not the vice of excess. For example, on humility being relational, Fullam writes, "humility is true self-knowledge, an accurate understanding of who one is and what one's proper place is, either in relation to other human beings, or in relation to some larger structure of meaning or in relation to God. Humility is essentially relational; it is always sketched in contrasts and comparisons." Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 86.

131. Nancy Snow gives a helpful overview of seven ordinary uses of humble/being humbled at the beginning of her article. See Snow, "Humility," 203. While I do agree that conceptions of humility should relate to how the term is used in ordinary language, I also think it is worth rethinking how we use the language of humility in ordinary speech, and think that less common or new uses according to the definition I have defended here could also enrich our ability to identify and analyze experiences of humility/being humbled.

132. See Fullam, "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications," 251 and Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 4, 175. She also mentions this relatively higher risk of excessive self-regard in the context of spiritual guidance. Fullam, "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance," 41.

in general, as well as feminist retrievals of the virtue of humility in particular, tend to focus on relationships. For example, Mary Daly identified women's "original sin" (which is "inherited through socialization processes") as the internalization of blame and guilt that enforces complicity in their own oppression.[133] Rosemary Radford Ruether identifies the feminist concept of "sin" in terms of "alienation and distortion of human relationality," with both pride and passivity corrupting human relationships and maintaining the distortion, and with sin having both an individual and social component.[134] Robin S. Dillon notes that feminist approaches to character ethics in general tend to be less individually focused than traditional virtue ethics.[135] Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty argues that genuine humility must be both voluntary and connect the person to a larger context, in other words, that it "should be understood as the means of empowering individual selves to be part of a larger 'we'."[136]

Second, as with every other cardinal virtue, humility requires prudence to set the mean that provides suitable tension for growth, and prudence must take into consideration history and context. On my account, humility is expected to be an empowering virtue as well as a restraining one. Knowing the truth of one's place in the world can encourage persons to become either less proud or more self-asserting, depending on the particular vice to which they tend. These tendencies may be very much socially conditioned and contingent. They may also vary according to the situation: I may need to be both more self-asserting with a co-worker and less proud with my sons, for example. A holistic approach to learning the truth of our place allows for learning our areas of relative strength through others as well as

133. Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1985), 49.

134. Ruether, *Sexism and God-Talk*, 161-164, 181.

135. Dillon, "Feminist Approaches to Virtue Ethics," 384.

136. Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, "Revisiting Feminist Discussions of Sin and Genuine Humility," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 114. She finds examples of this genuine (vs. false) humility in women's cooperatives. She even uses the term interdependent, although it is by no means clear that she has an ecological relationship like that outlined in this chapter in mind. She writes, "Genuine humility must always be understood as a means of seeing oneself as part of the larger, interdependent earth, in relationship with the larger community, and as an integral part of transforming attitudes, structures, organizations, and institutions that marginalize people who differ from the dominant norms" (112).

relative weakness, and combined with the emphasis on knowing ourselves as interdependent, augments rather than negates the need to put the burden of self-doubt on those who occupy positions of power.

When the focus is on knowing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings without an a priori judgment about the vice to which humans generally tend, we see better that both domination and self-minimization utterly fail as ways of interacting with the world around us, including as responses to the various ecological crises we face. Both of the vices opposed to humility are self-isolating. By giving equal weight to the vice of self-deprecation, this definition of humility has the advantage of better understanding the virtue as a mean between two extremes that actually exist, rather than as effectively defined in opposition to one extreme, which (dubiously) characterizes almost all people at all times in human history. It has the further advantage of helping combat negative understandings of vulnerability, not only by encouraging us to own our limitations and vulnerability, but also to see the positive aspects of such limitations and vulnerability.

Humility versus Magnanimity

I have presented an account of the virtue of humility in which humility can be at least modestly empowering. Since the virtue of magnanimity is frequently offered as the empowering corollary to humility, especially in Christian ethics in the Thomastic tradition and including in Fullam's work, it may be helpful to clarify the relationship between the two.

There tends to be a lot of overlap between the virtues of magnanimity and humility, especially in Christian virtue accounts. Often there is linguistic slippage between the two.[137]

137. For example, in his retrieval of the virtue of magnanimity, Kevin Ahern writes that the virtue is tempered both by the reign of God and the virtue of humility, arguing that magnanimity is an "empowered yet humble agency, exercised in a relationship with others that seeks to accomplish great things with a specific concern for those on the margins." Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene," 126. Yet this distinction between humble and empowered agency contrasts with a conception of humility as proper self-understanding that accounts for both our weaknesses and our strengths (Ibid., 120-121), which when addressed in the context of self-sufficiency, also poses the additional risk of wrongly interpreting interdependence as a weakness. While Ahern maintains the distinction between humility and magnanimity, he

Sometimes this overlap concerns the reception of honors, while other times the virtues are paired according to some variation of recognizing our strengths vs. recognizing our limitations. With respect to the former, the focus on observing "the mode of reason in great honors"[138] is sometimes combined with this knowledge of our strengths under the virtue of magnanimity, sometimes discussed under humility, and other times placed outside of humility without further identification.[139]

Yet, as seen in the discussion of Fullam's work, the two virtues are also often explicitly paired.[140] Greatheartedness has been interpreted along the Thomistic lines of "stretching

---

sometimes writes of magnanimity in terms of humility, comparing Thomas' understanding of magnanimity to Sarah Coakley's "power-in-vulnerability" and David Bosch's "bold humility." See Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene," 122, cf. Sarah Coakley, "Kenosis and Subversion: On the Repression of 'Vulnerability' in Christian Feminist Writing" in *Swallowing a Fishbone? Feminist Theologians Debate Christianity*, ed. Margaret Daphne Hampson (London: SPCK, 1996), 82-111 at 110 and David Jacobus Bosch, *Transforming Mission: Paradigm Shifts in Theology of Mission*, American Society of Missiology Series 16 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1991), 489. He also writes of patriarchy in terms of both virtues: it enforces passivity (a vice opposed to magnanimity) in the name of Christian humility.

138. *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 130, a. 3.

139. For example, Norvin Richards argues that the hero who shuns praise is not necessarily displaying the vice of excess of humility because he a) may recognize he deserves the praise but simply not want it or b) might correctly judge the praise to be excessive. Richards, "Is Humility a Virtue?," 256. Yet this example seems to place the handling of at least some external honors under the virtue of humility. While Richards does argue that thinking too little of oneself is a problem, he frames it in terms of dignity rather than humility, unless it stems from a perfectionism that in fact overestimates our talents (254-255). Roberts and Cleveland approach the virtue of humility through the vices of pride, defining the former as "intelligent lack of concern for self-importance, where self-importance is construed as conferred by social status, glory, honor, superiority, special entitlements, prestige, or power" and identifying "conceit, invidious pride (the pleasant counterpart of envy), vanity, arrogance, hyperautonomy (aspiring to be self-made), self-righteousness, haughtiness, and domination (the disposition to lord it over others)" as the vices of pride. Cleveland and Roberts, "Humility from a Philosophical Point of View," 33-34. Unlike Fullam, they do not necessarily see an athlete's concern for superiority as contrary to humility, since they specify that the vices of pride are rooted in a concern to be self-important that is noninstrumental as well as comparative (35). Yet they do not mention magnanimity in their account, and so it is not clear if or how humility relates to magnanimity. Michael W. Austin argues that humility can be understood to include risk-taking, but since this risk-taking stems from a lack of concern about how failure "might impact her reputation in the community," it is not clear then if or how the virtues of humility and magnanimity are distinct. Austin, "Defending Humility: A Philosophical Sketch with Replies to Tara Smith and David Hume," 466.

140. For other examples, Elizabeth Lee explores these two virtues as virtues of "public relations." See Lee, "The Virtues of Humility and Magnanimity and the Church's Response to the Health Care and Gay Marriage Debates." Josef Pieper distinguished the two virtues by the relationship to which they apply. Humility (and pride) are primarily in relation to God. He writes, "That which pride denies and destroys, humility affirms and preserves: the creaturely quality of man." Pieper, *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance*, 191. Pieper sees humility then as an inner attitude, while implicitly, magnanimity refers to the relationship between human beings. He argues that not only are humility and magnanimity (high-mindedness) mutually compatible, but that "both are equally opposed to either pride or pusillanimity." Ibid., 189. Also

forth of the mind to great things"[141] and linked to pushing ourselves to realize our potential. Fullam defines magnanimity as "the devoted and resolute cultivation of our own excellence."[142] In this way it complements the virtue of humility. As in her account of humility, Fullam also finds the extreme of deficiency of magnanimity to be more common. She writes, "While some of us naturally overreach, most of us need a little push to work hard to 'be all we can be.'"[143] That both virtues are often paired is not surprising given that: (1) Aristotle's definition of magnanimity is framed in terms of self-knowledge as well as honors,[144] and (2) that contemporary understanding of these virtues in Western contexts has been shaped by Christian concern that this virtue was actually the vice of pride, with Aquinas responding to the conflict by splitting the virtue into two. Such bifurcation has largely been maintained by Christian theologians and philosophers although alternative grounds for it have been proposed (i.e., Fullam's other-directed vs. self-directed knowledge vs. Aquinas' restraint vs. encouragement).[145]

I find this pairing of the virtues of humility and magnanimity insufficient for two reasons. First, the claim that the extreme of deficiency of magnanimity is more common is hard to reconcile with the similarities between the vices of excess that Aquinas identifies

following Aquinas, David Horner identifies humility as magnanimity's "twin virtue," and sees the lack of "moderating humility and positive concern for others" (and not the magnanimous man's consciousness of his own worth) as the "offensive" aspect of Aristotle's account of magnanimity. David Horner, "What It Takes to Be Great: Aristotle and Aquinas on Magnanimity," *Faith and Philosophy* 15, no. 4 (1998): 434, 428, respectively. Magnanimity is about reaching one's potential. Horner argues that it is not only about knowledge of one's worth (in which case it would be an intellectual rather than moral virtue), but rather also about properly valuing one's worth, gifts, and capacities and "desiring to fulfill its complete potential." Ibid., 417.

141. *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 130, a. 1.

142. Fullam, "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance," 43. Note that this definition does not address the handling of honors that may accrue due to such cultivation. She gives the example of Eli Manning's response to a question about whether he was an elite quarterback, which she says if true could fall under the virtue of truthfulness but not humility. Ibid., 39.

143. Ibid., 42.

144. "The magnanimous person, then, seems to be the one who thinks himself worthy of great things and is really worth of them." Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, trans. Roger Crisp, Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy (Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 4.3.

145. Fullam's work has been discussed. For another example, see Lindsay K. Cleveland, "A Defense of Aristotelian Magnanimity Against the Pride Objection with the Help of Aquinas," 88 (2014): 259–271.

for magnanimity (presumption, ambition, and vainglory), and pride, the vice of excess opposed to humility. Second, like the claim that the vice of deficiency of humility is more common, this claim about deficiency of magnanimity again raises questions of whom constitutes "us" and how human beings are in their essence.[146] After briefly revisiting Aristotle, I will offer an alternative relationship between the virtues of humility and magnanimity.

For Aristotle, the value of the external goods, rather than claiming a good appropriately, affects to which virtue such claims pertain. Honor is the greatest external good. Therefore, a person who rightfully claims minor things is temperate, but not magnanimous.[147] This understanding presupposes that magnanimity is not a virtue for the masses but for the few, and Aristotle's account is frequently critiqued for being limited to the powerful in a class-based society and involving contempt of others. While some scholars challenge this reading,[148] and while it is true that Aristotle states that one must be good, even great in every virtue, in order to be truly great-hearted,[149] we ought not to ignore that he clearly does not understand all human beings (such as women, slaves, or even the masses) to be equal in worth or dignity, and further, that this stems in part from his valuation of self-sufficiency.

146. As just one example, in response to evidence that female students outperform male students academically and yet women remain seriously under-represented in top career positions after formal schooling has ended, some commentators are starting to question whether girls and women should be encouraged to put in *less* effort during school to develop their confidence. See Lisa Damour, "Why Girls Beat Boys at School and Lose to Them at the Office," *The New York Times*, February 7, 2019, 1. Both this thesis and objections to it that focus on other structural factors point to the challenges facing the generalization of a need for additional "devotion and effort" or a "push" to "be all we can be" to all social groups. Even on a cursory look at the United States context, it is hardly self-evident that people in a country with long workweeks, documented increases in hours devoted to unpaid caregiving at home, and the highest reported stress levels need encouragement to "work harder."

147. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 4.3.

148. For example, Michael Pakaluk argues that being magnanimous "involves no contempt of others, nor any smug self-satisfaction," and that while Aristotelian magnanimity may presuppose a hierarchical society, it does not presuppose a class-based one, since "the tendency of the virtue is precisely to look *through* conventional distinctions in status, to discern, rather, what Aristotle regards as the true basis for judgments of differences in worth, of our achievements and accomplishments." Michael Pakaluk, "The Meaning of Aristotelian Magnanimity," *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2004): 273.

149. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 4.3.

Yet since Aristotle recognizes that happiness requires external goods,[150] Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung contrasts Aristotelian understandings of self-sufficiency with American understandings. The latter deny the ways we depend on others, while "Aristotle's magnanimous person acknowledges that he depends on others to become virtuous and to exercise virtue, but is appropriately independent of their opinions and their standards of greatness in assessing his own worth."[151] Yet Aristotle clearly correlates high self-sufficiency with virtue in a way that I argue is incompatible with the understanding of human beings as socially and ecologically interdependent that has been presented in this dissertation. With Roberts and Cleveland, I agree that Aristotle's magnanimous person appears to be "strongly oriented by the concern for self-sufficiency, or what we call the vice of hyperautonomy..."[152] With Kevin Ahern, I agree that the dominating model of agency defines greatness and agency in part in terms of self-sufficiency, that the Aristotelian approach does not leave room for "a thick appreciation for our interdependent nature," that Aquinas in part reconciles magnanimity and humility by addressing this presumption of self-sufficiency, and that we can expand on this approach by adding the acknowledgment of "our dependence on and profound interconnection with nature."[153]

I suggest then that the distinction between the virtues of humility and magnanimity can be maintained according to domain of application rather than mode, whether the latter is identified as restraint vs. encouragement or inwardly vs. outwardly-directed self-knowledge. One approach would be to update Aristotle's virtue of magnanimity according to our greater awareness of our interdependence, and split it along the general lines of self-knowledge and handling of honors. If humility, as I have argued, primarily relates to accurately knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world, magnanimity could

150. See for example, Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, 1.9.
151. Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "Aquinas's Virtues of Acknowledged Dependence: A New Measure of Greatness," *Faith and Philosophy* 21, no. 2 (2004): 217.
152. Cleveland and Roberts, "Humility from a Philosophical Point of View," 38.
153. Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene," 110, 116, 120, 121, respectively.

primarily concern how we react to others' valuations of our place in the world. Hence, I suggest that the difference between humility and magnanimity lies in that whereas the humble person knows and properly values the truth of her place in the world, the magnanimous person has a proper detachment from the benefits that others' recognition or valuation of that place can bring her. On this account, the virtue of humility would still shape the virtue of magnanimity. Indeed, the humble person will deal more virtuously with honor or recognition (or lack thereof) than either the proud or self-effacing person.

Furthermore, more attention to the ways that human beings are not self-sufficient offers an opportunity for understanding how all people might stretch their minds to "great" things. Though I argue that this valuation of our own gifts and ability to contribute positively to the world falls under the virtue of humility, it could also affect how we view honors. David Horner states that where Aquinas specifies the "great acts that particularly characterize the magnanimous person, they look surprising like 'loving one's neighbor'" and argues that Aquinas relativizes Aristotle's understanding of human worth by placing that worth within a framework of stewardship and gift (as well as by adding the twin virtue of humility).[154] Similarly Ahern notes that Aquinas' teleology and concern for the common good situate the virtue of magnanimity so that it "orients us in such a way so that any proximate good, such as honor or the so-called goods of fortune, must always be seen more broadly."[155]

For both Aristotle and Aquinas the virtue of addressing lesser honors (honors stemming from tasks that are not "great") is identified but has no name. Yet if our conception of greatness is shaped more by our understanding of our own interdependence and concern for the common good rather than a view of a self-sufficient person doing "great" things for others but receiving nothing or at least much less in return, we may be more likely to

154. Horner, "What It Takes to Be Great: Aristotle and Aquinas on Magnanimity," 433-434. In his note on the first point, Horner observes that this understanding is not completely contrary to Aristotle's view, but goes on to argue that the emphasis is different as great acts tend to have a military cast in the *Ethics*.

155. Ahern, "Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene," 118. Ahern cites ST II-II, 1. 129, a. 8, for the need to see honor and external goods in terms of their social and virtuous function.

identify "ordinary" gifts, powers, and acts of loving one's neighbor as also excellent and worthy of honor and so collapse the traditional distinction of a different virtue governing different degrees of honor. Instead of limiting magnanimity then to those individuals who occupy a "great" place in the world, perhaps anyone can grow in magnanimity by observing the mean of reason in honors, recognizing that we are all capable of using our gifts for the good of others. While questions remain as to whether magnanimity would still be restricted to those occupying positions of relative privilege, my primary concern here is to show that considering humility to be an empowering virtue does not, in itself, preclude the existence of a related, albeit subsidiary, virtue of magnanimity.

2.3 Christian Humility

This final section offers an overview of how the cardinal virtue of humility I have proposed would be "thickened" in a Christian context. There are multiple ways to approach this "thickening," and this account will be suggestive rather than exhaustive.[156] Given that humility in this chapter has been defined in terms of other-centered knowledge of the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings, an interdependence most fundamentally expressed in our ecological relationships, this section will engage primarily with biblical passages that focus on human beings' place in God's creation and our relationship with other creatures. While not typically how questions regarding what the Scriptures say about humility are posed, this question itself is not completely foreign to the text. Gene Tucker or-

156. I have chosen to focus on how biblical interpretation supports this proffered account of humility. All Christian theological ethicists are accountable to the Scriptures, and I follow Lúcás Chan regarding the suitability of a hermeneutics of virtue ethics for interpreting Scripture. See Lúcás Chan SJ, *Biblical Ethics in the 21st Century: Developments, Emerging Consensus, and Future Directions* (Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2013), 78-112. Both because I am not trained in biblical scholarship and as a simple matter of the methodology that flows from the account of humility given above, I recognize that I need to listen to others in order to exercise this accountability adequately and responsibly. Mindful of Chan's identification of the serious gaps and pitfalls present in attempts to integrate Scripture and ethics and of my own limitations in this regard, I engage substantially with the work of biblical scholars throughout this section. While I do not purport to offer here a developed biblical ethics, I nonetheless wish to show some of the intriguing points of connection between biblical exegesis and the understanding of humility as a virtue governing our ecological relationality.

ganized his seminal article on the Hebrew Bible's understanding of the relationship between the admittedly problematic (and anachronistic) categories of culture and nature around the question of the place of human beings in the natural order, which he stated is better understood as a question of relationship.[157] Likewise, while Terence Fretheim cautions readers about interpreting biblical texts "through a modern environmental lens," he nonetheless argues that "a relational perspective is basic to thinking about matters ecological in Genesis (and elsewhere) since "everyone and everything is in relationship."[158]

I will focus on Genesis 1-2 and Job 38-41 in the Christian Old Testament, and on selections from Luke 1, Matthew 6, and Romans 8 in the New Testament. Passages from Genesis 1-2 (and sometimes 9) are frequently cited in the papal and episcopal documents surveyed in the previous chapter, and are also frequently cited in biblical scholarship on questions related to ecology.[159] By contrast, the Book of Job, while frequently considered by biblical scholars, is often overlooked in Catholic hierarchical teaching; of the twelve

157. "Nevertheless, asking about the relationship between nature and culture is a useful way of posing a central question: What, according to the Hebrew Bible, is the place of human beings in the natural order? Or, to use language that is more indigenous to the biblical tradition, what is the relationship of humanity to the rest of creation?" Gene M. Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 32, no. 1 (1997): 6.

158. Terence E. Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," in *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, ed. Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, vol. 152 (Boston: Brill, 2012), 693.

159. It is certainly not the case that Genesis 1-2 are the only chapters of the book that are relevant to understanding humanity's place in God's creation. For example, Terence Fretheim discusses the environmental effects of sin in relation to Genesis 3-9; 13; 18-19. See Ibid., 695-705. Much could also be said about the interpretation of the "fall" in Genesis 3 and 4 in terms of anthropocentrism or domination. For example, drawing on Baird Callicott, Carol A. Newsom argues that rather than awakening sexuality (Adam was already aware of sexual difference) the main point in Genesis 3:1-7 is self-awareness which leads to anthropocentrism. After all, we cannot coherently talk about animals being naked. The consequences of this self-consciousness include the alienation from nature as seen in Genesis 3:8-24, including human females' unique (among animals) difficulties in giving birth and the birth of agriculture. She concludes that the Yahwist author is ambivalent about the shift from hunter-gatherer to agriculture. See discussion Carol A Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3," in *The Earth Story in Genesis*, vol. 2 (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 67-71. Brigitte Kahl argues that when Genesis 4 is read with gender categories, "It doesn't speak about the abstract human condition after the primary (female) fall, rather it confronts us with the male counterpart of the fall account...." Brigitte Kahl, "Fratricide and Ecocide: Rereading Genesis 2–4," in *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*, ed. Dieter Hessel and Larry Rasmussen (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001), 59. Furthermore, she reads the conversation of God and Cain as God trying to teach Cain about sin, and that "God not talking about human sin in general, but about the concrete, male sin of isolation and domination." Ibid., 62. It is Cain versus God, Adama, and Abel.

episcopal and papal documents examined in chapter 1, only one, that of the Bolivian Bishops, cites it. In the New Testament, Mary, the mother of Jesus, especially as portrayed in the Lucan infancy narrative (particularly the Annunciation of Jesus' birth in Luke 1:26-38 and the Magnificat in Luke 1:46-55) is often held up as a model of Christian humility. I will therefore look at those passages before turning to recent ecological interpretations of Matthew 6:9-13, 25-34 and concluding with Romans 8:19-23, another frequently cited passage in Christian environmental ethics.

In the process, I will show how more attention to biblical scholarship illuminates the question of why humility is better identified as the cardinal virtue governing human ecological relationality than another commonly proposed virtue in ecological ethics: stewardship. Engaging with biblical scholarship on humanity's place in creation results in both a critique and an affirmation of a Christian paradigm of stewardship. One key insight is that the understanding of humanity's place is skewed if we only look to the creation accounts in Genesis 1-2, but can be corrected by drawing on other biblical books such as Job. Nonetheless, the Christian scriptures affirm the location of human beings in God's creation as stewards. So while the category of stewardship needs rethinking, it is one legitimately Christian way of "thickening" the virtue of humility.

2.3.1 Humanity's Place in Creation in the Christian Old Testament

While passages from Genesis 1-2 are among the most frequently cited in Christian responses to ecological concerns, Genesis 1:28, with its reference to dominion, has exercised a particularly outsized influence on the interpretation of the place of human beings in creation.[160] Within Catholic papal and episcopal teaching, this dominion is overwhelmingly understood in terms of stewardship.[161] Sometimes this understanding of human beings'

160. This influence is largely due to Lynn White's famous critique, which has shaped the questions and the debate. White, "The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis."
161. See John Paul II, *1990 World Day of Peace Message*, 3; The Dominican Episcopal Conference, "Relationship of Human Beings to Nature."

role in creation is articulated in terms of care, cultivation, and safeguarding, drawing from Genesis 2 but still presupposing a special role of dominion.[162]

In this section I first consider the creation accounts in Genesis 1:2-4a and 2:4b-25 separately. Biblical scholars hold that the two creation stories were written by different authors, and so it is unsurprising that different images of the place of human beings emerge.[163] Given that Catholic episcopal teaching sometimes draws on Genesis to support the controversial theme of harmony of creation, I also briefly look at Noah and the Flood Narrative, in particular the covenant described in Genesis 9:1-17. After considering these passages from Genesis, I then conclude the section by turning to the divine speeches in Job 38-41.

A Distinctive Human Vocation: Genesis 1-2

Mindful of Claus Westermann's enjoinder that, while not written by a single author, Genesis 1-11 is a unity and that specific passages should be considered within that broader context, I will begin with a few general notes. First, Westermann states that Genesis 1-11 recounts a creation myth, and that such myths were not in response to intellectual questions, but rather "had the function of preserving the world and of giving security to life."[164] He argues that one of the key themes in the Book of Genesis is that human beings are not

162. See for example, United States Catholic Conference, *Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991)*, II, A. The Guatemalan Bishops identified farmwork as essential to defining and situating human beings' in God's world. See El Episcopado Guatemateco, *El Clamor por la Tierra*, 1.1. Note that the numbering in the PDF of this pastoral letter available online appears to include two sections 1. For the section related to Scripture referenced here, see page seven of the document. This understanding is also present in biblical scholarship. For example, Tucker draws on Hiebert's work to argue that the role of human beings in Genesis 2:5b is to serve the land, whereas God's role is to provide the rain. Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 8.

163. Claus Westermann maintains the traditional attribution of Genesis 1:1-2:4a to the Priestly, or P-source and Gen 2:4b-3:24 to the Yahwist author, or J-source. Carl S. Ehrlich notes that the Documentary Hypothesis has been challenged within biblical scholarship circles in recent years, but that Genesis 1:1-2:4a is ordered and well-structured, bearing "the unmistakable hallmarks of the P-source" and that Gen 2:4b-3:24 is certainly "non-P." Carl Stephan Ehrlich, "Humanity's Place in the Scheme of Creation: A Contextual and Gender Sensitive Reading of the Creation Accounts in Genesis," in *Ein Leben fur die judische Kunst: Gedenkband fur Hannelore Kunzl*, ed. Michael Graetz, Schriften der Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg, Bd. 4 (Heidelberg: Winter, 2003), 52.

164. Claus Westermann, *Creation* (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1974), 11.

only limited, but defective, with the defect — defined in terms consistent with Christian formulations of the vice of pride — consisting in "overstepping" human limitations.[165]

A second, related theme, is that work is constitutive of the human condition. For example, Genesis 4 recounts the origin of agriculture and ends with a genealogy that includes founding a city and the origin of music and metal-working. While work is not, ultimately, the goal toward which human beings are directed, which is made clear by considering the rest of the seventh day,[166] Westermann highlights that "The idea of a Paradise which is a perpetual state of bliss is quite foreign to the Old Testament."[167] We can thus expect to see that the place of human beings in creation will involve some kind of labor, which we can likewise suppose to affect our relationships not only with other human beings, but also with other creatures.

Genesis 1-2:4a

The first creation narrative is often considered to be a polemic against the mythology found in the *Enuma Elish*, a demythologization.[168] One noted difference is that whereas human beings are created as slaves to relieve the gods of their burden in the *Enuma El-*

165. Westermann, *Creation*, 26. This can be seen both in relation to creation and the flood. As Westermann writes, "In both cases the human state is characterized as being-in-the-world within certain limitations which alone make possible the true human state." Given that Genesis 4 has been long and widely interpreted as "the Fall," it is also worth noting that not just Genesis 1-3, but Genesis 1-11 constitute primeval history; our history does not begin with "the Fall." Just as in Genesis 3 human beings cannot be like God, neither can humankind reach heaven and be like God in Genesis 11. Furthermore, the understanding of human beings in the Bible is not that they fell to a lower place, but rather that they were defective from the beginning, which is part of the limitations of being a creature.

166. See ibid., 65.

167. Ibid., 81. Westermann goes on to say that "This idea belongs to an understanding of man which puts a very low value on manual labor, and which is preoccupied with the spiritual, with contemplation or mere bliss as the only thing worth striving for in life." Ronald A. Simkins also notes that the two creation stories address the significance of work for the ancient Israelites. He writes, "In other words, the biblical authors emphasize the importance of work in their own day by describing how God created work in the beginning. Moreover, the specific role that works plays in each creation story gives insight into the meaning and significance of work in the biblical tradition." Ronald A. Simkins, "Work and Creation.," *Bible Today* 47 (2009): 225.

168. See Ehrlich, "Humanity's Place in the Scheme of Creation: A Contextual and Gender Sensitive Reading of the Creation Accounts in Genesis," 55. Ehrlich notes that "this theme condemnatory of Babylon and its cult frames the primeval narrative of Genesis 1-11." Ibid. For examples in Genesis 1-2:4a, consider that while the word for deep, (*tehom* is a distant reminder of the conflict between Marduk and Tiamet in the *Enuma Elish*, the conflict mythology is rejected and the deep has no power of its own, but rather is only a passive element that is acted upon by God. Likewise, the sun and the moon, major Mesopotamian deities, are not referred to by name. Norman Habel argues against this interpretation. See Norman Habel, "Geophany: The Earth

ish, human beings are created in the "image of God" in Genesis 1:26-27.[169] Furthermore, compared to the *Enuma Elish*, violence and conflict are notably absent from Genesis 1, including within the "divine council."[170] Another dissimilarity with creation accounts outside of Israel that Westermann notes, that is helpful for this discussion of understanding human beings' place in the created world, is that plants (and animals) are presented as constitutive parts of the world in Genesis 1, rather than only in terms of their function vis-à-vis human beings.[171] Indeed, the understanding of the Creator in the Priestly account "depended completely on the fact that in relation to the one Creator all that existed was created, creature."[172]

This is not to say that there is an equality between plants and animals much less between plants and human beings. While very much stressing the fellow-creatureliness of human beings to the rest of creation, Richard Bauckham nonetheless concludes that there is a distinction between animate inhabitants and vegetation in Genesis 1. He writes, "Vegetation is treated as an aspect of the third environment, rather than as inhabitants of it, because it is viewed as part of the land's provision for the living creatures that inhabit it."[173] The creation of animals and human beings adds a blessing, which is essentially, "the power to be fertile."[174] Tucker sees this blessing as distinct from commandment,[175] whereas Bauckham stresses that animals are also told by God to multiply, and interprets God's command

Story in Genesis 1," in *The Earth Story in Genesis*, ed. Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst, The Earth Bible (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 34–48.

169. Ehrlich, "Humanity's Place in the Scheme of Creation: A Contextual and Gender Sensitive Reading of the Creation Accounts in Genesis," 56. Westermann, *Creation*, 51. Ehrlich includes in the contrast that the six days of creation "culminate" in the creation of human beings, though other scholars reject the interpretation of culmination.

170. Mark G. Brett, "Earthing the Human in Genesis 1-3," in *The Earth Story in Genesis*, ed. Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst, The Earth Bible (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 75.

171. See Westermann, *Creation*, 45.

172. Ibid., 44.

173. Richard Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, Sarum Theological Lectures (Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010), 14.

174. See Westermann, *Creation*, 46. While the creation of human beings contains different introductory words, and human beings undoubtedly have a special place in creation in this account, we nonetheless are like animals in that we share in the blessing of Creation. Ibid., 49.

175. See Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 6.

to (exclusively) human beings to both fill and subdue the earth in terms of agriculture.[176] In addition, while interpreters have sometimes made much about human beings being created last, construing this as human beings are the crown of creation, some biblical scholars cut against this tendency by stressing how the creation of human beings is similar to the creation of at least some other creatures.[177] For example, Fretheim notes that human beings are neither given a special evaluative word nor their own creation day.[178] Bauckham stresses that in the schema of Genesis 1, human beings are among the land creatures.[179] Mark G. Brett argues that human distinctiveness, while present, is undermined by points of continuity with other creatures including the blessing of procreation, and by the fact that not only are human beings not the only ones addressed by God (the earth is addressed in Gen. 1:11 and 1:24), but also that the earth fully participates in the creative process, with the result that "humankind has to share the divine vocation of co-creation with the earth and with other creatures."[180] By contrast, Habel stresses the points of disjunction: human beings do not emanate from the earth like the other creatures, human beings are made in God's image, and human beings have dominion, which, he argues, represents a shift in focus from *erets* (Earth) "as the source of living creatures to *adam*, a new creature with power over all the life that has emanated from *erets*."[181]

The image of God has often been understood in terms of a uniquely human capacity, specifically reason.[182] Yet Westermann argues that being created in the image and likeness

176. See Richard Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology* (Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011), 226-227.
177. Furthermore, since human beings are part of creation, it is inaccurate to interpret the pronouncement of creation as 'very good' as signifying that creation is intended for human beings. Westermann writes, "It can only mean that Creation is good for that which God intends it." Westermann, *Creation*, 61. Bauckham likewise rejects the view that the rest of creation was intended for human beings as having no support in the text. Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 15.
178. See Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 692.
179. See Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 4.
180. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 77.
181. Habel, "Geophany: The Earth Story in Genesis 1," 46.
182. Aquinas distinguished likeness of God and image of God, with other creatures able to share in the former by way of "trace" due to existing or being alive but only "intellectual creatures," who surpass other creatures through their rationality, being made in God's image (See Summa I-II q. 93, a.2, 6). These intellec-

of God is not about a special and specific quality of human beings, but rather about the Creation event itself: human beings are created such that something may happen between a human and God, through which a human being's "life may receive a meaning."[183] Furthermore, the repetition of the goodness of what is created throughout the narrative is like a response to each of the works, signalling that the works of God require a response, and praise is the proper response.[184] In this way, Genesis 1 indicates that human beings are not the only creatures called to praise the Creator.

Different biblical scholars understand the dominion granted to human beings in different ways. Some, such as Norman Habel, find the verb for subdue (*kabash*) to be irredeemably harsh, indicative of a direct conflict between the human story in Genesis 1:26-30 and the "Earth story" in Genesis 1:1-25.[185] Brett writes that while the language of "to rule" reflects royal ideology and could be interpreted in terms of caring for the weak, the language of "subdue" cannot, and "the imperative to ''subdue' the earth excludes a purely peaceful interpretation."[186] Several other scholars see less conflict between humans and other creatures, interpreting the dominion of the human creatures as decidedly not absolute on the basis of the biblical text. The understanding of dominion is limited by its point of reference. Westermann understands it to be modeled on the dominion of kings which, in an-

tual creatures include angels (a. 3) and human beings (a. 4). The image of God is found in all human beings in their "natural aptitude for understanding and loving God" (a. 4) but still to a greater extent in men than women (a. 4, reply to objection 1).

183. Westermann, *Creation*, 60.

184. See discussion ibid., 62-63. Furthermore, after discussing Psalm 148, which calls all Creation to praise God, Westermann concludes that "There is nothing which is not capable of praising its Creator... Praise is joy in a to-God-directed existence, and this joy in existence belongs to Creation as a whole" (63).

185. Habel, "Geophany: The Earth Story in Genesis 1," 46-47. Habel points to the other usages of the verb in the Hebrew Bible to refer to enslavement (Jer. 34:11; Neh. 5:5), rape (Est. 7:8), and the conquest of hostile nations (2 Sam. 8:11), which recalls the conquest of the land of Canaan (Num. 32:22; Josh. 18:1; 1 Chron. 22:18) and concludes, "There is nothing gentle about the verb *kabash*." ibid., 47. Notably, he reads Gen. 1:2 in terms of emptiness rather than in terms of the prevalent "conquest of chaos motif," and further suggests that the appeal of the latter is due, in part, to a dualistic and gendered lens brought to the text by male scholars, for whom a dichotomy between chaos and order appealed to "Western androcentric patterns of thought relating to conquest and 'power over' — especially as one element is overcome, conquered by might." See ibid., 39.

186. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 78.

tiquity, was understood in terms of mediating blessings and a responsibility to preserve.[187] In a twist on this interpretation, Brett argues that the command to humanity as a whole to rule over other living creatures "democratizes" the royal image of *Elohim* and so undermines Israelite royal ideology, part of a "covertly anti-monarchic" tone found throughout the Book of Genesis.[188] Fretheim argues that the understanding of the kind of dominion human beings have is in reference to God as the model, and hence it is severely limited by the kind of power God exercises. Far from the albeit common interpretation of Genesis 1-2 as showing God creating the world independently, unilaterally, and with absolute control, Fretheim argues that the text itself supports an image of God who "chooses to share power in relationship."[189]

Specific limitations of this dominion are also supported by the text, whether in terms of subject or degree. Fretheim understands the dominion that human beings have as limited to living creatures and not "the larger 'environment.'"[190] On the basis of the fact that in Genesis 1 both human beings and animals are vegetarian and that other uses of animals would only apply to domesticated animals and so would be a minor part of dominion, Bauckham excludes the use of animals from the meaning of dominion.[191] Indeed, that humans can kill animals for food, an allowance made after the Flood narrative, is a concession to the endemic violence in the world that breaks the harmony in creaturely relationships, the original sin.[192] Furthermore, Bauckham draws attention to the fact that God communicated the

187. See Westermann, *Creation*. Fretheim also notes the relationship between dominion and "ideal conceptions of royal responsibility." Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 690. Citing his previous work, *God and World in the Old Testament: A Relational Theology of Creation*, he also argues that the best understanding of the verb "subdue" is to "'bring order out of continuing disorder."' Ibid.

188. Brett argues that the exhortation in Gen. 1:27-28 for humanity to rule over other creatures "is best read as a polemical undermining of a role which is otherwise associated primarily with kings." Brett, "Earthing the Human," 77. This is one example of an anti-monarchic tone that suggests that the final editors of Genesis were "covertly anti-monarchic." Ibid., 84.

189. Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 691. See Ibid., 685-692.

190. Ibid., 690.

191. See Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 18-19.

192. Bauckham identifies violence as the original sin when discussing the narratives in Genesis 3. See Ibid., 23. He argues that Genesis 1 portrays the world as it ought to be, but is not, "That the Garden of Eden is a paradise lost (for the time being) is generally recognized, but that Genesis 1 also portrays the world not as it is,

giving of 'every green plant for food' to land animals and birds to humans (rather than the animals). He suggests this was because humans need to know that the earth is intended to sustain all living species, that they need to share with other creatures, that their right to use the earth is limited. Bauckham writes, "Dominion is a role within creation, not over it."[193] Nor is it a right of use unique to human beings; Genesis 1:29-30 shows that other creatures also have a right of use.[194]

What then is the place of human beings in the world according to the Priestly creation narrative? First, human beings are fellow-creatures who share in the call to respond to God through praise with all creatures and in the blessing of fertility with the animals. Yet we are also creatures who occupy a special role in relation to other creatures, that of dominion. Brett invites us to consider that this portrayal of human dominion was part of a hierarchy-undermining, polemical response to the Persian colonial administration, which is not motivated by an ecological critique, but "potentially subverts the 'species supremacy' which lies behind the ecological crisis."[195] Habel cautions us not to romanticize this dominion, paired as it is with the harsh language of subduing.[196] Nonetheless, the dominion granted to the human creatures is not absolute, though its limitations appear stronger in relation to other land animals than to plants, and its interpretation will vary along with the image of God one brings to the text. While some conflict between Earth and human beings

but as it ideally should be, is usually less admitted" (25). This violation of harmonious relationships includes not just human beings, but also animals, who are shown to be both victims and perpetrators in Genesis 3. Bauckham writes, "Humans fail to exercise their role of responsible care for living creatures, beginning to kill them for food, and animals take to attacking humans and to predation of other animals." Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 23.

193. Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 227.

194. See Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 32. As far as the history of the interpretation of Genesis 1:28, Bauckham elsewhere argues that "White's historical thesis does contain an important element of truth, but... fails as a whole because White neglected other elements in the traditional Christian attitude (or attitudes) which significantly balance and qualify the features on which he seized, and because White also neglected the new developments in the understanding of the human relationship to nature that occurred in the early modern period and to which the modern project of aggressive domination of nature can be far more directly linked than it can to the Christian tradition of pre-modern times." Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 19.

195. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 86.

196. See Habel, "Geophany: The Earth Story in Genesis 1," 46.

is present, whether understood through Westermann's lens of ancient kingship, Fretheim's sharing power in relationship, or Bauckham's nonviolent ideal, the dominion mentioned in Genesis 1:28 supports neither a concept of unlimited use of other creatures nor the idea that other creatures exist to serve the needs of human beings.

Genesis 2:4b-3

Turning to the second creation story, according to Westermann, the creature man lacks something at first. The Yahwist author shows that God intended human beings not to be solitary individuals, but rather to exist in relationship. The man is only truly man within the community of man and woman. Human beings are constitutively relational. Human beings also have a relationship with the earth and other creatures.

One salient point is that Adam was also created from the earth, and there is a wordplay between the name of the human being, *'adam*, and the word for earth, *'adamah*. While Westermann concedes that unlike the Priestly author, the Yahwist presents animals in term of their meaning to man, the animals and the man are made from the same substance. Tucker notes all life is formed from the ground, and all has the same "breath of life."[197] Bauckham argues that the formation of the first human along with other living creatures from the earth (with its wordplay between the name Adam and *'adamah*) in Genesis 2:7 points to a solidarity between human beings and other living creatures, a solidarity also found in Genesis 1, where human beings share being created on the sixth day with other land creatures.[198] Similarly, given that word similarity indicates the relatedness of things for the Yahwist author, Carol A. Newsom argues that the wordplay between *adam* and *adamah* indicates solidarity between Adam and Earth.[199] Brigitte Kahl goes a step further, writing that not only does the word play between Adam and Adamah indicate kinship and

197. Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 8.
198. Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 4.
199. Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3," 63.

mutual dependence, but that the emphasis is primarily on the earth. Adam is the servant of Adama.[200]

This observation leads to a second crucial point: human beings have a specific role in relationship to the earth, and that role can be interpreted in terms of service as well as interdependence. Unlike other Mesopotamian creation myths, in which humanity is created to be a substitute labor force that relieve the gods of their work, here humanity is created to serve the earth.[201] Drawing on the work of Theodore Hiebert, Tucker interprets Genesis 2:5b in terms of interdependence: "The account of the world before the Lord's creative action reveals the interdependence of the earth, humanity, and the deity."[202] Human beings have the role of servant of the land, while God has the role of providing rain. The image of the human being then is one of co-creator rather than steward.[203] Brett argues that the role of service described in Genesis 2:15 is ironic in relation to the role of ruling and subduing the earth in Genesis 1:28, "effectively reversing" the former vocation.[204]

Even so, we might reasonably ask whether the naming of the animals does not rather indicate a role of dominion that is not based in service. Newsom cautions against reading the naming in terms of power since language for the Yahwist author is about identity, and

200. Kahl, "Fratricide and Ecocide: Rereading Genesis 2–4," 54-55. Kahl writes of the earth, "'She' is the reason humankind came into being: to end the desert and help the earth bring forth the life that is in her...." ibid., 55. Brett appears to agree that the narrative prioritizes the needs of the land. See Brett, "Earthing the Human," 80.

201. Kahl, "Fratricide and Ecocide: Rereading Genesis 2–4," 55 Kahl notes that another difference between Genesis 2 and other Mesopotamian creation myths is that God does not mind doing labor for the earth, that "We meet a God who really gets God's hands dirty!" Ibid.

202. Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 8. I recognize that extending the concept of interdependence to God is theologically problematic from a Christian standpoint, yet my aim here is to engage seriously with biblical scholarship rather than impose theologically sanctioned interpretations upon biblical texts.

203. Tucker writes, "Although not a royal steward between God and the (rest of the) world, this creature stands in parallel to God." This creature and God "work together to transform the environment into the real world." Ibid., 9.

204. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 80. This irony is compounded by being made from materials from the earth. Furthermore, he argues that the Genesis 2-3 denies the likeness to God affirmed in Genesis 1 because (1) humans are mortal from the beginning, (2) it was not part of the divine plan for humans to have knowledge of good and evil, and (3) far from even "subduing the land animals" (much less "dominating the seas and the heavens"), the serpent wins out against the human beings, and has wisdom whereas they had to acquire wisdom. Ibid., 82.

further observes that while Adam did not find a special companion among the animals, the text offers no negative evaluation of this fact.[205] Likewise Brett cautions modern readers to remember that naming can serve other social functions in addition to dominance, such as expressing a "fresh experience" (like Hagar's naming of God in Gen. 16:13) or resistance (like Eve's naming of Cain and her claim that she has made *ish*).[206] He concludes that in the second creation story, the naming celebrates diversity. While Fretheim understands the naming the animals in Genesis 2 as part of the human task of dominion, it entails responsibility but not authority.[207]

With respect to the broader sense of relationships between humans and animals, Newsom argues that it was supposed to be one of companionship, but becomes fraught after the humans eat the fruit of the tree and become self-aware and able to evaluate and make choices. She writes, "Where formerly we had talked with the animals, henceforth we wear them."[208] Brett reads human beings and animals in Genesis 2 as members of the same "kinship group" because they both descend from the land, with man and woman differentiated by a special intimacy which is expressed by woman being created from a part of man.[209] Fretheim argues that human beings are not the only creatures with a special vocation. Rather, on the basis of God's action in Genesis 2, he concludes that "the *animals are understood by God to constitute a community that could address the issue of human aloneness.*"[210] Animals also have a vocation, "indeed, a *vocation* in the shaping of the *human* community."[211]

What is the place of human beings in the world according to the second (Yahwist) creation narrative recounted in Genesis 2? Human beings are co-creators with God, exercising

205. Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3," 66.
206. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 81.
207. See Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 693 and discussion in footnote 28.
208. Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3," 71.
209. Brett, "Earthing the Human," 82.
210. Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 693.
211. Ibid., 694.

responsibility but not authority in their role as servants of the earth. Human beings are constitutively relational, most notably and equally with each other. Nonetheless humans are also 1) in solidarity with the Earth, as they are made from the same substance,[212] and 2) in companionship with other animals.[213] Of course, however harmonious the divinely intended relationship between human beings, the earth, and other animals was, it does not correspond to the reality we know (or to any previous era). Subsequent chapters make clear that the human creatures are alienated from the land as well as other creatures.[214]

Concluding Thoughts

While each chapter of Genesis presents a somewhat different image of humanity's place in God's creation, they nonetheless share an attention to the commonalities between humanity and other creatures, what Bauckham calls the horizontal model of human beings' relationship with other creatures.[215] Since I have only considered Genesis 1-2 in this section, and especially in light of the sometimes problematic theme of harmony of creation that surfaced in the previous chapter and is often supported in Catholic episcopal teaching in part by references to Genesis, it is worth mentioning that the covenant with Noah represents a change in the relationship of human beings with animals. The covenant expresses acceptance of the endemic violence in the world, which is characteristic not only of the

212. Here it is interesting to point out that just as there was a word play between the words for human being and for earth in Genesis 2:4b-3 (recall *'adam* and *'adamah*), in English there is a connection between humility and earth. As Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty noted, the Latin root "humus" of the English word "humility" means dirt or earth. See Hinson-Hasty, "Feminist Discussions of Sin," 110

213. Newsom sees in God's original intention for humanity as recounted by Genesis 2-3 as consisting in "that we were created for harmony with the rest of creation; to tend and keep the forest garden; to be related to the Earth, as our name signifies; to see in the other animals potential companions even if not that closest corresponding other." Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3," 72.

214. Tucker argues that the relationship of human beings and the rest of the created world in Genesis 3 is ambiguous due to the cursing of the ground in 3:17, which results in "the estrangement of humanity from nature, even from that life-giving arable soil." Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 9.

215. This is an organizing theme in *Living with Other Creatures* as he argues that both vertical and horizontal models of human relationship to other creatures are found in the Bible but that the horizontal dimension has often been neglected by interpreters. See for example, Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 3-5, 14, 153.

world as we current know it but of the way we know it came to be through evolutionary processes.[216]

Yet importantly for the purposes of humanity's place in creation, this change does not negate the horizontal relationship between human beings and other living creatures, although it certainly weakens it. While human beings are now permitted to eat animals, they still do not have an absolute right of use, as seen in the limitation regarding the life-blood in meat. Furthermore, even after permitting human beings to eat any living creature, the covenant that God makes is not just with human beings, but with "every living creature."[217] This is a unique feature among biblical covenants.[218] Wali Fejo, an Indigenous Australian, notes that the fact God made a covenant with nonhuman creatures is just as important, though much less widely acknowledged, than God's promise never to repeat such an earth-destroying flood. He also writes that the covenant reaffirms, "a close interrelationship between humans and other living things, including the Earth itself."[219] Covenant relationships entail responsibilities, and for Fejo the rainbow is a reminder that human beings are custo-

216. Scholars have noted the tension between the portrayal of the food given to both humans and other animals in Genesis 1:29-30 and the violence endemic to evolution, as well as the tension between natural evil and God's pronouncement of creation as very good. See for example, Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love* (London: Bloomsbury, 2014), 184 and Jenkins, *Ecologies of Grace*, 70-71. Yet as Westermann noted, while Christian traditions and teaching have tended to focus on Genesis 1-3, the primeval history goes through Genesis 11. Westermann, *Creation*. After the expulsion from the garden there is violence, between humans (Cain and Abel), between animals, and between humans and animals. In this context, the killing of animals for food is a concession to the endemic violence of the world, violence perpetrated by humans, but also by other animals. See Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 23-25, 119; Fretheim, "Genesis and Ecology," 697-699.

217. See Ibid., 701; Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 224; Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 18-19.

218. Bauckham sees this as a first step toward renewal of the community of creation and which "secures the earth as a reliable living space for all the creatures of the earth." See Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 224. That this covenant is unique in being with 'every living creature" does not meant it is the only biblical covenant to which non-human creatures are parties. Gene Tucker addresses a similar covenant in Hosea 2:18 [2:2] which is between God, animals, and human beings. Yet in Hosea the focus is on wild animals, birds and creeping things, and Tucker, noting that birds can threaten human agriculture, suggests that "God's promise in Hosea entails only those creatures that pose a threat." Gene M Tucker, "The Peaceable Kingdom and a Covenant with the Wild Animals," in *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner*, ed. William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr. (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000), 224.

219. Wali Fejo, "The Voice of the Earth: An Indigenous Reading of Genesis 9," in *The Earth Story in Genesis* (Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 143.

dians of creation who are called to restore balance.[220] Bauckham also interprets humanity's role in terms of caring responsibility, with Noah as the moral exemplar of the peaceable relationship that was God's creative ideal, and Genesis 9 as a more realistic reformulation of humans' relationships with animals.[221]

While these texts undeniably suggest that humans are in some way special, that we have a vertical relationship with other creatures, our distinctiveness neither places us outside the "community of creation" nor confers unrestricted use of other creatures. Rather, it indicates a special role of service, of caring responsibility toward God's creation. It is evident that how this role is interpreted, especially in Genesis 1, has been influenced by the interpreters' image of God. While the language of subduing remains problematic, the text itself does not support the idea that creation is made for human beings. It is largely consistent with modern calls to be "good stewards" of creation, although these usually gloss over the harshness of some of the language. Yet while Genesis 1-2 suggests that human beings are more important among creatures, elsewhere the Bible offers us an image of more equal status in the community of creation.

Decentering Humanity? Job 38-41

The biblical scholarship surveyed so far shows that there are disagreements regarding the limits to human authority and the distinctiveness of humanity's place in creation found in Genesis 1-2. Unsurprisingly, similar disagreements are also found with respect to God's speeches in the Book of Job. Fretheim identifies three groups of interpretations of God's speeches and Job's responses (Job 38:1-42:7), including (1) God as a judgmental warrior who puts Job down, (2) God as a fundamentally nurturing parent who is disciplining Job, and (3) God as creator and sage who calls Job to carry out the human vocation found in

220. See Fejo, "The Voice of the Earth: An Indigenous Reading of Genesis 9," 145.

221. See Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 23-26. For Bauckham, Genesis 9 does not articulate a new ideal but rather contains a realism that is currently relevant alongside the idealism of Genesis 1-2.

Genesis 1-2 and to reimagine what it means to be a human made in the image of God.[222] Given the focus of this chapter, this section will examine scholarship that falls in that third group. While some scholars, such as Samuel C. Balentine, read the divine speeches as compatible with understanding the human vocation in terms of special responsibility for other creatures, building on Genesis 1-2,[223] this chapter will focus particularly on the literature which interprets God's response to Job as highlighting human limitations and challenging any biblical understanding that human beings are the pinnacle of creation.[224] According to this line of interpretation, the Book of Job offers a fundamentally different perspective on humanity's place in creation,[225] and can serve as a much-needed corrective to our ideas of dominion.[226]

Justice/injustice is a central theme in Job, and the book also belongs to the lament genre. There is widespread agreement that God's response does not directly address Job's complaint of injustice, although scholars are divided as to what extent, if any, God's speeches address justice. For Michael V. Fox, God's speeches do not respond to the claim of injustice, but do respond to the charge that the world is so terrible that death is better than

222. Terence E. Fretheim, "God in the Book of Job," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 26, no. 2 (1999): 90. Fretheim finds the first view insufficiently attentive to other elements also present in the God speeches. He is sympathetic to the second perspective but still thinks it lacks sufficient attention "to the creational and vocational dimensions" (90).

223. Balentine does not read Job 40:7-14 as a simple rebuke. He writes, "Instead, God may be understood as summoning Job to a royal responsibility that represents the apex of his vocational calling to image God." Samuel E Balentine, "What Are human Beings, That You Make So Much of Them?': Divine Disclosure from the Whirlwind:'Look at Behemoth'," in *God in the Fray: A Tribute to Walter Brueggemann*, ed. Tod Linafelt and Timothy K. Beal (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998), 268.

224. See Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 13 and Kathryn Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind: Creation Theology in the Book of Job*, Harvard Theological Studies ; no. 61 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008), 2. See also David J.A. Clines, "The Worth of Animals in the Divine Speeches of the Book of Job," in *Where the Wild Ox Roams: Biblical Essays in Honour of Norman C. Habel*, ed. Alan H. Cadwallader (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013), 104.

225. Kathryn Schifferdecker argues that the divine speeches "offer a view of creation—and of humanity's place in creation—that is fundamentally different from any other theology of creation in the Bible." Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 2.

226. Ibid., 131, Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*.

life.[227] Fretheim suggests that God's focus on creation makes sense in light of the fact that much of Job's suffering, was, from Job's perspective, due to natural evil. He concludes that the design of the created world as presented in God's speeches at least indirectly concerns justice, because while good, "it has the potential of adversely affecting human beings, quite apart from the state of their relationship with God" and God assumes responsibility for this risky world, without explaining why God created the world in this way.[228] The world is fundamentally interrelated in its character, and given this interrelatedness, "Legal categories and justice-oriented thinking are not adequate for thinking about this complex world or its suffering."[229]

As noted (and rejected as inadequate) by Fretheim, one common interpretation of Job is that God is putting (lowering) Job in his place. Yet this interpretation of God as a judgmental warrior crushing an uppity Job is not the foundation for many recent interpretations about how the Book of Job, and the divine speeches in particular, challenge prevailing understandings of the place of humanity in creation as based on human dominion. To begin, the book gives quite a bit of attention to non-human creation.[230] Second, the view of creation has a wide scope.[231] Third, there is much more attention to wild creation than in the

227. See Michael V. Fox, "The Meanings of the Book of Job," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 137, no. 1 (2018): 17. Fox maintains that no rebuttal of Job's charge of injustice is possible since God has caused him unjustified suffering.

228. Fretheim, "God in the Book of Job," 92. Job's questions focused on his own guilt and innocence, which did not actually align directly with his experience. "Job's questions were not attentive to those dimensions of the created order directly related to the sources of Job's actual suffering, mostly 'natural evil.'"

229. Ibid. "Given the communal character of the cosmos - its basic interrelatedness - every creature will be touched by the movement of every other. While this has negative potential, it also has its positive side, for only then is there genuine possibility for growth, creativity, novelty, surprise, and serendipity."

230. Bauckham highlights that Job 38-39 is "the longest passage about the non-human creation in the Bible." Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 7. David J. A. Clines notes that there is more attention to animals in the Book of Job than anywhere else in the Bible, with descriptions of animals constituting over half of Yhwh's response to Job. Clines, "The Worth of Animals in the Divine Speeches of the Book of Job," 101.

231. Tucker notes that Job 38-39 offers a much wider vision of the world than that found in either the Yahwist or Priestly creation narratives. The Yahwist author was writing from the perspective of a farmer or shepherd, and was thereby concerned with cultivated land, and the Priestly author, although having a wider perspective, still shows a "'cyclical' understanding of time linked to the agricultural year," Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 7. Yet the author of Job attends both to undomesticated animals and to places that are uncultivated, uninhabited, and inaccessible to human beings.

two creation accounts in Genesis.[232] While the book maintains a tension between domesticated creation and wild creation, the wilderness and wild animals are described in positive ways in the divine speeches despite the threat they can and do pose to human beings.

Tucker argues that Job 38-39 explicitly includes the wilderness and rejects the idea that creation is designed for the good of human beings.[233] God brings rain upon the desert, where no human beings reside (Job 38:26), and cares for the series of wild animals found in Job 39. All places and all creatures have their place, not just places that benefit humans or animals that humans have domesticated. After all, Tucker notes that, according to Job, the place of human beings in the natural order can include being carrion.[234]

Similarly, Kathryn Schifferdecker reads the divine speeches in Job 38-41 as contrasting with the image of human beings as "the crown of creation" presented in the Priestly Writer's creation account and challenging the concept that human beings have an exalted place in God's creation found in the prologue, Job's speech, and affirmed by Job's three friends.[235] She notes that human beings are the focus of Elihu's speech (Job 32-37), which contains relatively few references to the animal world. By contrast, human beings are mostly absent from the divine speeches. Rather, human beings are just one of many creatures that have a place in God's creation. Furthermore, that a part of this creation is dangerous to human beings in no way detracts from its goodness. For example, instead of defeating the Sea, a symbol of chaos in the ancient Near East, God acts as its midwife and describes it as a

232. While this tension is highlighted in Job 38-41, it is also present from the beginning of the book. For example, to the extent that creation is visible in the Prologue (Job 1-2), it is visible in the form of order and domesticated creatures before the test, with wildness and a lack of order following the test: the wind and fire and two groups of humans outside of Job's social world.

233. See Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 14.

234. Ibid., 15.

235. For an example of the attitude that human beings have an exalted place, she offers that humanity can be, at least potentially in the person of Job, capable of pleasing God and so "a part of creation in which God takes great pride and delight." Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 58. Likewise, Job's three friends affirm the view that righteous people at least have the highest place in creation, though differences remain in whether creation is viewed as inherently corrupted along with human beings or as the mediation of blessings for human beings. Humans are varyingly seen as favored, oppressed, clean, or corrupted, but always as occupying a special place. Schifferdecker writes, "That is, humanity is considered by all participants in the dialogue to be the chief object of God's attention and the most important of God's creatures." Ibid., 61.

rambunctious, though powerful, infant.[236] Indeed, Schifferdecker reads the divine speeches as showing God seemingly taking "special delight precisely in those creatures and forces that are most wild: creatures indifferent towards—and therefore dangerous to—human beings, such as the Sea, the wild animals, Behemoth, and Leviathan."[237] In contrast to Job's speech in which creation is portrayed as in chaos, the divine speeches portray creation as ordered, just not always to humans' benefit. The divine speeches give a place—within limits, but a place—even to chaotic forces or wild animals that threaten humanity.[238] God cares even for the places that Job despises, and provides for the wild animals.

Whether scholars view the divine speeches as challenges to human dominion or guidance in the human vocation of responsibility for other creatures, they agree that God views the wild animals quite differently from Job, and from the conventional understanding Job expresses. Balentine suggests that Behemoth and Leviathan are presented as positive role models for Job, and that far from requiring silence and submission, the divine speeches challenge Job to fulfill human responsibility for their domain of creation.[239] Rather than regarding Behemoth and Leviathan as threats that must be defeated, God celebrates their qualities.[240] When Job compares himself to the ostrich as likewise shunned and banished, "God challenges Job to reconsider the merits of the ostrich...."[241] This celebration of wildness in the divine speeches may also serve a consoling function. Focusing on the Book of

236. Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 69 and Kathryn Schifferdecker, "Of Stars and Sea Monsters: Creation Theology in the Whirlwind Speeches," *Word & World* 31, no. 4 (2011): 361-362.
237. Ibid., 364.
238. Schifferdecker concludes, "In this view of creation, the world is not a 'safe' place for human beings, but it is an ordered place." Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 76. Furthermore, the divine speeches reject the view that procreation mediates blessing or punishment to human beings. Rather, procreation is tied to "the ongoing, inexorable, life-force instilled in *creation*." Ibid., 81. It should be noted that while the Book of Job and the Book of Genesis do provide different images of the place of human beings within creation, this understanding of procreation, at least insofar as it is not just about humanity, is consistent with the conclusions about fruitfulness in Genesis 1 made by Westermann and others.
239. See Balentine, "What Are human Beings, That You Make So Much of Them?': Divine Disclosure from the Whirlwind:'Look at Behemoth'."
240. See Samuel E Balentine, "Ask the Animals, and They Will Teach You," *World & World* Supplement Series 5 (2006): 10.
241. Ibid. Balentine identifies four ways in which God reframes or challenges the conventional understanding of the ostrich, for example, by the more positive appraisal of its sounds as "cries of joy" rather than screeches.

Job as belonging to the genre of lament, Fretheim points out that both Job and the Psalms use images of the wilderness or wild animals to express isolation. He concludes that God's response to Job can be consoling in that God caring for the wild animals shows that "there are no alien creatures, no outsiders" and so God also cares for Job in his disconnectedness.[242]

What then might we conclude about the place of human beings in creation according to the divine speeches in the Book of Job? The order in creation described in the Priestly creation account is present, but the place of humanity is different. Humans are not the center of creation, and are barely mentioned in the divine speeches.[243] There is neither mention of humans being in God's image and likeness nor of any command to subdue or have dominion over other creatures. Nor do human beings have the responsibility to care for God's garden as in the Yahwist creation account. Indeed, far from a harmonious garden or a world in which animals do not eat each other, the world depicted in the divine speeches is full of predation and even dangerous to humanity.[244] Still, the divine speeches are addressed to a human being. Job does have a place, but he needed to learn what it was. Creation is not created for the sake of human beings.[245] Schifferdecker writes, "Job must submit to God and learn to live in the untamed, dangerous, but stunningly beautiful world

242. Fretheim, "God in the Book of Job," 92.

243. Furthermore, only one animal mentioned is useful to humans (the war horse). The word for to laugh or to mock appears six times in the divine speeches, but it is the wild animals and the Leviathan, not humans, who are laughing. The laughter is scornful, associated with superiority, as the wild animals know something about the place of humanity in creation that Job does not. Schifferdecker concludes, "All these wild creatures know what Job has not understood: humanity is only one part of creation and perhaps not even the most important part." Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 86. Laughter is associated with superiority elsewhere in the book of Job: Job smiled or laughed at his neighbors, later the outcasts of society laughed at him, and his friend Eliphaz had promised Job that things would work out in the end such that he would laugh at famine.

244. Tucker notes that both predators and prey have their place and says of Job 38-39 that, "Moreover, the poem not only acknowledges and affirms but also celebrates the world as it is; the world as observed by the ancient poet and his contemporaries. All creatures—including both predators and prey—have their place." Tucker, "Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment," 15. Bauckham notes that the passage in Job 38-39 "begins and ends with the predatory behavior of carnivorous animals." Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 51. Nor is there any hint of a promise of harmony to come: "As already noted, the divine speeches make no such promise of a future harmonious relationship between humanity and the wild animals." Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 99.

245. See ibid., 106.

that is God's creation."[246] This brings freedom, but not control. Rather it is the freedom to be one of God's creatures. In this way, the divine speeches in the Book of Job offer a corrective to the understanding of humanity's relationship with the natural world in terms of stewardship based on Genesis 1:28. For Schifferdecker, one of the ecological implications of the divine speeches in Job is a shift from "stewardship" to "justice." Hence, inactivity and detachment do not constitute the corrective to dominion so much as participation and appreciation.[247]

2.3.2 Humanity's Place in Creation in the Christian New Testament

As with the Christian Old Testament, it is equally impossible to do justice to the entirety of what the New Testament might tell us about the virtue of humility understood as knowing the truth of our place in the world in just a few pages. Recognizing that the selection of texts itself influences both the questions brought to the text as well as the interpretation, I structure this section around two sets of texts. First, I will attend to two related texts that are already frequently associated with humility, specifically with understanding Mary as humble moral exemplar: Luke 1:26-38 (the Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus) and Luke 1:46-55 (the Magnificat). Second, in light of the fundamentally ecological dimension of the virtue of humility for which I argued in the previous section, I will attend to three texts that have been the subject of recent attempts to understand the Scriptures ecologically, including Matthew 6:9-13 (The Lord's Prayer), Matthew 6:25-34 (birds and lilies) and Romans 8:18-22.

246. Schifferdecker, *Out of the Whirlwind*, 125.

247. Ibid., 131. Earlier, Schifferdecker argues that Job's restoration to wealth differs from his original position of wealth in that he manages his world more similarly to the way God governs the cosmos, in celebrating wildness and beauty and giving more freedom to others. In short, "He learns humility while not relinquishing responsibility." ibid., 126. This is evident in that the sacrifices Job offers are now appropriate, since he offers sacrifices for his friends in accordance with God's instructions rather than the previous anxious and preemptive sacrifices that he offered for his children. Whereas his daughters in the Prologue were unnamed in the text, at the end of the book they are not only named, but their names indicate delight in their beauty, and they also are given an inheritance along with their brothers.

Empowering Discipleship: The Annunciation of Jesus' Birth and the Magnificat

Historically the emphasis on Mary's humility represented a shift in attention which had previously focused on her virginity and obedience.[248] Together, these three aspects (humility, virginity and obedience) have frequently contributed to an image of Mary as passive, and so have been critiqued from feminist and postcolonial perspectives even as different images of Mary have been retrieved.[249] Of the few New Testament passages that do refer to Mary the mother of Jesus, her portrayal in the Gospel of Luke, especially Luke 1:38, 46-55 is considered to have contributed significantly to the development of interest in her humility.[250] Mary's statement, "Behold, the handmaid of the Lord. Let it happen to me according to your word" (Lk 1:38), and one line from the Magnificat, "Because He has regarded the low estate of His handmaid" (Lk 1:48a) are particularly salient to this discussion.[251] In this section, I focus on biblical exegesis of these two scenes from the Lucan

248. See Brian K Reynolds, "The Patristic and Medieval Roots of Mary's Humility," in *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, ed. Chris Maunder (2019), doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198792550.013.45.

249. For example, with respect to the situation in Latin America, Ana Maria Bidegain argues that, "Mary has been simplified. She has been the model of self-denial, passivity, and submission as the essential (or worse still, the only) attributes of women." Ana María Bidegain, "Women and the Theology of Liberation," in *Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America*, ed. Elsa Tamez (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 34. Yet Bidegain finds a very different image of Mary, drawing particularly on Luke 1:26-33 and Luke 1:51-53. See Ibid., 35. From an Asian context, Hyun Kung Chung writes that both Protestant tradition and the Catholic church have contributed to the oppression of women through their stance on Mary, which she identifies as elimination and domestication, respectively. Of particular interest here, she identifies Luke 1:38 as showing "the ultimate Catholic male fantasy of 'femininity"' and contributing to an image of Mary as "a symbol of a woman who is domesticated by men" and which "fit the needs of men under colonialism and capitalism." Chung Hyun Kyung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990), 75. Kyung surveys some of the ways that Asian women theologians are retrieving Mary as virgin, mother, co-redeemer, sister, and model for true discipleship. The last two are particularly salient to the discussion here. For an excellent theological treatment of Mary that engages both with feminist and postcolonial critiques as well as biblical scholarship (including the work of Raymond Brown) as well as with the work of feminist and postcolonial theologians around the world, see Elizabeth A. Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints* (New York: Continuum, 2003).

250. See Reynolds, "The Patristic and Medieval Roots of Mary's Humility," 321.

251. These translations were taken from Raymond E. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, New Updated Edition, The Anchor Bible Reference Library (New York: Doubleday, 1993), 286, 330, respectively.

infancy narrative, drawing especially from Raymond E. Brown's careful treatment in *The Birth of the Messiah*.[252]

The Lucan Infancy Narrative

Brown argues that the evidence favors the contention that the Lucan infancy narrative (Lk 1-2) was added later by the author of Luke/Acts as a preface which reflected Luke's theological concerns.[253] There is debate over the extent to which the theology in this preface complements or diverges from the theology of the rest of Luke/Acts. Brown takes the former position, arguing that Luke 1-2 complements Acts 1-2 in terms of elements of structure as well as theology.[254] Conceiving of the infancy narrative as a subsequently added prefix to Luke's Gospel, especially in combination with the other challenges to the historicity of the narrative (see below) may be jarring to Christians accustomed to Christmas traditions based on a more historical interpretation of the events in Luke 1-2 (not to mention a harmonized tradition of the Matthean and Lucan infancy narratives).[255] Yet the sequence of composition is only one piece of the puzzle. When it comes to understanding Mary, the

252. While the term "infancy narrative" is not strictly accurate, I follow the customary usage of the term to refer to the account of Jesus' conception through his childhood found in the beginning of the Gospel of Matthew and the Gospel of Luke. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 25. Similarly, I follow the convention of referring to the author of the Gospel of Luke as "Luke," despite known difficulties with the tradition that the evangelist was Luke, a companion of Paul. See Ibid., 235-236.

253. See Ibid., 240. This is in contrast to the order of the composition of the infancy narrative vis-à-vis the account of Jesus' ministry in the Gospel of Matthew. Note that Brown does not exclude the possibility that Luke always intended to add the birth stories, as opposed to the birth stories being an afterthought. See note 12. Furthermore, within the infancy narrative, some units are considered to have different sources and to have been added later, specifically the canticles and certain passages from chapter 2, including the story of the finding in the Temple. See Ibid., 244. For more on the debate over whether the infancy narrative was in fact added later in the context of understanding Mary, see Raymond E. Brown et al., eds., "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles," in *Mary in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978), 106, notes 216 and 217.

254. The first two chapters of the Gospel of Luke and the first two chapters of Acts both supply transitions, between the story of Israel to the story of Jesus, and the story of Jesus to the story of the Church, respectively. Similarly, both include striking parallelism between two characters: John the Baptist and Jesus in the infancy narrative and the careers of Paul and Peter in Acts. In contrast to the account of Jesus' ministry in the rest of Luke, both Luke 1-2 and Acts 1-2 include angelic appearances and recount the outpouring of the prophetic spirit on persons other than Jesus. Furthermore, Brown argues that the title "Messiah Lord" given in Luke 2:11 recalls the christology in Acts 2:36. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 242-243.

255. For a brief overview of the difficulties in treating the infancy narratives as history, see Ibid., 32-37.

Protestant and Roman Catholic editors of *Mary in the New Testament* give priority to the final form of Luke/Acts.[256] Beverly Roberts Gaventa warns that emphasis on historical questions when approaching the text can negatively affect interpretation, both in terms of tendencies to read the infancy narrative in isolation from the rest of Luke's gospel and the Acts of the Apostles, and specifically regarding Mary, by disproportionately focusing on Mary's statement in Luke 1:38 and giving less weight to the text in Luke 2:41-52.[257]

Still, the substantial challenge to the historicity of Luke 1, that underlies the debates over timing of composition, seem to present difficulties in terms of viewing Mary as a moral exemplar on the basis of what she is recorded to say in either the Annunciation of the Birth of Jesus or the Magnificat. Luke is the New Testament author who gives the most attention to Mary, and most of these references are found in the first two chapters of his gospel.[258] While debates continue regarding the interpretation of the Lucan infancy narrative, there is widespread agreement among biblical scholars today that the narrative is not historical and that it does not generally relate Mary's memoirs.[259] In other words, Mary's well-known question in Luke 1:34 ("How can this be since I have had no relations with a man?") is not biographical, and Mary, the mother of Jesus did not compose the

256. The editors of *Mary in the New Testament* consciously decided to address the passages that relate to Mary in their current sequence despite their awareness that they may have been composed in a different order because they believed that, "primacy should be given to the portrait of Mary in the final form of Luke/Acts preserved for the Christian community - the only form about which we can be certain." Brown et al., "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles," 106.

257. Beverly Roberts Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*, Personality of the New Testament (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999), 50-51.

258. There are only four other references to Mary found in the rest of the Gospel of Luke, and one reference in the Acts of the Apostles. Brown et al., "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles," 105-106. After the infancy narrative, none of the remaining four references in Luke's gospel mention Mary by name, although two refer directly to the mother of Jesus. They include the reference to Jesus as the "supposed" son of Jesus in Luke's genealogy (3:23), the rejection of Jesus at Nazareth (Luke 4:16-30, cf. Mark 6:1-6a; Matt 13:53-58), who is included in the family of Jesus (Luke 8:19-21, cf. Mark 3:31-35; Matt 12:46-50) and the woman in the crowd who says Jesus' mother is blessed (Luke 11:27-28). The reference to Mary in the Acts of the Apostles is by name; she is included in the list of those who had gathered after Jesus' ascension in 1:14.

259. Ibid., 110-111. For a brief treatment of two aspects of Luke's gospel that have been used to support the idea that the infancy narrative was historical, see Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 238-239.

Magnificat.[260] If, as Brown argues, this "prefix" was first structured to highlight parallels between John the Baptist and Jesus, while always presenting Jesus as superior, and subsequently expanded by inserting the canticles (including the Magnificat) and the story of finding Jesus in the Temple,[261] it is difficult to base our understanding of Mary as humble on the frequently offered psychological interpretations of the words attributed to her.[262] I do not argue that interpretations which do not focus on questioning the historicity of the narrative and which include psychological features have no place in a broader project of a Christian "thickening" of the virtue of humility, as it is also important and instructive to attend to the ways in which these texts have in fact been lived out and interpreted in Christian communities.[263] However, in light of Brown's challenge to psychological interpretations of the words attributed to Mary in the Lucan infancy narrative, I do not follow Virginia Rajakumari Sandiyagu's provocative suggestion that Mary experienced a temptation to in-

260. See Brown et al., "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles," 114-115, 137-141.

261. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 248-253.

262. For example, Brown argues against such an interpretation of Mary's response to Gabriel in Luke 1:34, on the basis that her question is a feature (the objection) of the standard structure for angelic visitations and so has a primarily literary explanation. Ibid., 303-309. (Likewise, Brown argues against interpretative attempts to harmonize the infancy narratives of Matthew and Luke by suggesting that Mary's three month stay with Elizabeth was motivated by a desire to conceal her pregnancy. Ibid., 345-346.) This is not to say that Luke 1:26-38 (or even just Lk 1:34-35) ought to be interpreted in a purely literary manner. Rather, Brown notes both that (1) Luke's narrative of the annunciation of Jesus' birth is conditioned by two, linked pre-Gospel traditions: the annunciation of the birth of the Davidic Messiah and christology of divine sonship (see p. 308) and (2) that the annunciation narrative contains elements that are not explained by the standard pattern, particularly the virginal manner of conception, the details of the child's future accomplishments, and how Mary is portrayed in Lk 1:34, 38 (see p. 296). Mary's question also functions to enable Gabriel to "explain God's role and thus highlight the other half of Jesus' identity," that is, that he is also the Son of God. See Raymond E. Brown, "The Annunciation to Mary, the Visitation, and the Magnificat (Luke 1:26-56)," *Worship* 62, no. 3 (1988): 253.

263. Theologians writing from feminist, womanist, and postcolonial perspectives suggest ways in which more historical and psychological interpretations of Mary's words and actions in the Lucan infancy narrative have served to affirm woman's dignity and sustain efforts to continue working to bring about the kingdom of God. Mary's visit to Elizabeth is one text in which such theologians find a life-affirming theme of solidarity among women and mutual empowerment. See Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, 259-263. As another example, Kyung writes that Asian women can relate to Mary as disciple (drawing on her consent in the Annunciation) in part through relating to her pain, suffering, *loneliness, and uncertainty*, and Mary's visit to Elizabeth has been read in terms of solidarity among women and how such solidarity can help *overcome fear* and enable truth-telling and work for social changes. See Kyung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*, 80-83.

tellectual pride during the annunciation of Jesus' birth and later (in her Magnificat) thanked God for making her humble.[264]

Luke 1:38

Yet if we dismiss the suggestion that these pericopes in Luke 1 express Mary's humility as a response to the temptation to the opposing vice of pride, or any similarly psychological interpretation based on her memoirs, how might we then understand it? Brown identifies the content of Mary's final response to Gabriel in Luke 1:38 as one of the three features of the narrative that do not conform to the expected annunciation pattern and which therefore calls for further comment. For Brown, the portrait of Mary as handmaid draws upon the understanding of Mary present in the rest of Luke/Acts. In Acts 1:14, Mary and Jesus' brothers are also present in the community, and Brown argues that Luke 8:19-21 shows Mary as meeting the criterion for discipleship.[265] He then concludes that in portraying Mary as the "handmaid" of the Lord, Luke "is voicing a Christian intuition that the virginal conception of Jesus must have constituted for Mary the beginning of her confrontation with the mysterious plan of God embodied in the person of her son" and that Mary responded as a true disciple.[266] This image of discipleship is reinforced by Mary's haste in visiting Elizabeth.[267] Gaventa reads Luke 8:19-21 as much more ambiguous about the status of Mary as disciple or not, but agrees that Luke 1:38 portrays Mary as disciple, and concludes

264. Virginia Rajakumari Sandiyagu suggests that the Magnificat represents a liberation from pride, focusing on the possibility that since Mary appears to thank God for making her humble, that she had struggled with a temptation toward intellectual pride, seen in her question to the angel Gabriel in Luke 1:34.V. R. Sandiyagu, "Magnificat: Liberation from Pride," *Vidyajyoti* 76, no. 11 (2012): 832–846.

265. In Luke 8:19-21, in response to being told that his mother and brothers are looking for him, Jesus defines family in terms of listening to and obeying God's word. Luke modified the Markan account substantially, with the result, according to Brown, that Jesus' mother and brothers are portrayed as meeting the criterion for discipleship, and so are included among rather than replaced by his disciples. See discussion Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 316-318.

266. Ibid., 319.

267. Obedience to God's word and plan is characteristic of discipleship in Luke, and Mary's obedience is observed in the description of her haste in visiting Elizabeth. This visit constitutes a response to an implicit directive in the Annunciation (i.e., that nothing is impossible for God). Ibid., 341. Brown does not attribute this haste to psychological motivations. See the notes in Ibid., 331. Here again the issue of historicity is relevant. It is probable that John the Baptist and Jesus did not have a familiar relationship. See discussion Ibid., 282-285.

that Luke resolves this tension surrounding Mary's status as insider or outsider in relation to Jesus in Acts 1:14.[268] Whether we understand the portrait of Mary as disciple as uniform across Luke-Acts or as a minor tension that furthers the narrative development, we can read Mary's response to Gabriel in Luke 1:38 as the response of a disciple, of which obedience to God's word is characteristic.

Emphasizing how this text portrays Mary as disciple may provide a starting point for addressing concerns about how this text has been used to support the subjection of women in general to men in general. While Gaventa concedes that in some important respects Luke portrays Mary as passive, she highlights several important limitations of that passivity. First, Luke does not portray Mary as a symbol of all women but rather as a model disciple.[269] Second, Luke's understanding of divine sovereignty means that most characters in Luke-Acts could be described as passive as well.[270] Third, Mary is not a purely passive character both because disciple is only one of the roles she plays and because her responses and actions help shape the narrative.[271] Yet the way that the author of Luke understood discipleship draws on the language of slavery. It is important to address this issue directly, especially in the present study, which is concerned about understanding the truth of Mary's place. Benign translations of *doulϵ* as handmaid or servant risk obscuring the issue.[272]

268. Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*, 74-75.
269. She writes, "With her words of compliance Mary becomes not a model female but a model disciple who consents to what is not yet fully understood." Ibid., 55.
270. See ibid., 74.
271. Of greatest interest here is that Gaventa reads Mary's response to the Annunciation in terms of passivity and submission, but sees that response changing in the Magnificat, and Mary's role changing along with it, from disciple ("slave of the Lord") to prophet. See Ibid., 56-58. However, she also goes on to identify a third role as mother, and argues that the question of Mary's continued discipleship provides a minor narrative tension that is unresolved until Acts 1:14. Furthermore, Mary's actions in passages in Luke 2 function to knit pieces of the narrative together. See Ibid., 73-75.
272. On the term doulϵ, although Brown translates it as "servant" in his notes on Luke 1:38 (see Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 292) elsewhere he translates it as "slave" (see Ibid., 361, and Brown, "The Annunciation to Mary," 256. Gaventa argues, "Mary recognizes with this statement God's selection of her and the compulsion under which her role is to be played. To translate 'servant' is to misconstrue Mary's role as that of one who has *chosen* to serve rather than one who has *been chosen*." Nonetheless, the metaphor, which indicates the authority of God (not men!) and so does not say anything about the relationship between women and men in general, is used elsewhere in Luke-Acts to those who correctly understand and submit to God's authority in their lives,

While Luke 1:38 can be read subversively in light of divine sovereignty and Mary's proper obedience to the word of God as a disciple,[273] and while emphasizing Mary's consent can challenge a reading of Mary as passive,[274] scholars writing from a womanist or feminist theological perspective rightly challenge the suitability of Luke's language of slavery and the use of the master-slave metaphor to understand discipleship today.[275]

Luke 1:46-55

The literary structure of the Lucan infancy narrative also matters for the interpretation of the Magnificat. The Magnificat is one of four canticles, and one of three in which the speaker has already figured in the narrative.[276] While there is debate over whether or not these three canticles were composed by Luke, there is general agreement both that they were not written by the person by whom they are spoken in the text and that they were later additions to the infancy narrative. Brown notes that all three canticles are "highly evocative of OT and intertestamental passages."[277] For example, there are clear parallels with Hannah and Judith. Like Hannah, Mary is spokeswoman of the Anawim, and will, in Luke 2, bring Jesus to the Temple just as Hannah brought Samuel to the Tabernacle of Shiloh. Like Judith, Mary responds to receiving a blessing with a canticle of the oppressed.[278] Just as

---

and actually precludes the possibility of Mary being the slave of another human being. See Gaventa, *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*, 54.

273. From a liberation perspective, Gail O'Day sees Mary's identification as God's slave as a recognition of God's sovereignty that is "the first step in renouncing and thereby transforming the world's standards of power and its categories of the possible." Gail R. O'Day, "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation," *Currents in Theology and Mission* 12, no. 4 (1985): 207-208.

274. For example, Bidegain sees Mary's yes as "free," "responsible" and bold. Bidegain, "Women and the Theology of Liberation," 34. Kyung contrasts Mary's "conscious choice" with "mere obedience and submission to a male God." Kyung, *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women's Theology*, 78.

275. See for example, discussion in Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, 254-258.

276. Brown excludes the Gloria in Excelsis from his discussion due to both its short length and the fact that its speakers, the heavenly host, have not featured in the narrative. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*.

277. Ibid., 348.

278. See ibid., 357.

Luke's account of the annunciation follows a structure of angelic visitation, the Magnificat also has a structure that is similar to hymns of praise found in the Old Testament.[279]

The canticles function to fill in the words of the speakers. With respect to the Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55 gives the words of Mary's greeting of Elizabeth reported in Luke 1:40.[280] Given that the canticles are later additions to the text, it is less surprising to find that while they express the piety that would be expected of the speaker, they do not relate specifically to that speaker. For example, the Magnificat includes a "martial tone" which Brown notes "is scarcely explained by Mary's conception of a child."[281] Furthermore, parts of the Magnificat appear to better suit Elizabeth than Mary, which has led to some historical and scholarly attribution of the canticle to Elizabeth.[282] For example, the reference to "low estate" (Lk 1:48a) better fits a barren woman than a virgin. Yet Brown argues that the term has clear Old Testament echoes and so translations that render it 'humility' are incorrect.[283] Both barrenness and virginity are, for Luke, similar in that they are impossibilities only God can overcome.

The reference to "low estate" as well as the term "handmaid" (which is literally female slave) in Lk 1:48 associate Mary with the Anawim, the "Poor Ones". Brown argues that Mary, the obedient handmaid to the Lord, expresses the piety of the Anawim, a group that originally referred to and continued to include the physically poor but expanded to also include those who had to rely on God, such as the sick, the widows, and the orphans.[284] At the same time, through the Magnificat, Luke reinterprets the Anawim language of God's might, favoring Jesus' "mighty" works over the image of God as a mighty warrior. The sec-

279. This structure includes an introduction that praises God, a body that gives motives of praise, and a conclusion. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 355.
280. See ibid., 347.
281. Ibid., 348.
282. See footnote 46 on Ibid., 334-336 for a detailed overview of the different arguments.
283. While Brown notes that the word *tapeinosis* can also be translated as humility, he goes on to say that, in this context, such a translation would "destroy the OT echoes" that are clearly present. See Ibid., 336, 361.
284. Ibid., 351. See also Brown et al., "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles," 142-143.

ond strophe of the Magnificat offers praise for what God has already accomplished, which was possible "because Luke is interpreting the conception of Jesus in light not only of the post-resurrectional Christology of the Church, but also of post-resurrectional soteriology, particularly of the Jewish Christian Anawim of Jerusalem as described in Acts."[285]

Brown concludes that the poverty, hunger and oppression mentioned in the Magnificat are primarily spiritual, a conclusion with which some scholars take issue.[286] Nonetheless, he highlights how the "emphatic castigation of wealth" is a notable feature of the Lucan gospel and that verses 51-53 of the Magnificat would resonate with the poor in Christian communities. Furthermore, he writes that "the Magnificat anticipates the Lucan Jesus in preaching that wealth and power are not real values at all since they have no standing in God's sight."[287] Gail O'Day argues that understanding the term in the Old Testament "primarily denotes a social situation" and so Mary is expressing solidarity with those who suffer poverty and oppression.[288] While O'Day critiques the approach of Brown and others for spiritualizing the Magnificat, the two authors agree on the point that "low estate" in Lk 1:48 is only mistakenly interpreted in terms of Mary's meekness or humility (which here is evidently understood in terms of lowliness).[289]

While the Magnificat was not composed by the historical Mary, the mother of Jesus, the fact that it was considered appropriate for her to voice gives weight to the position of scholars who argue that knowing Mary's place in terms of her social context is also important to understanding the song. For example, Gale A. Yee reads Mary's Magnificat (along with Hannah's song), as a song of hope for social reversal in the context of dreadful poverty and oppression which can continue to speak to us as we strive to reduce infant mortality and

285. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 363.
286. For example, see O'Day, "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation," 209.
287. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 364.
288. O'Day, "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation," 207.
289. For O'Day's critique of Brown on this point, see note above. For comparable understandings of "low estate" being misinterpreted in terms of humility, see Ibid., 208 and note 284 above.

maternal mortality and increase gender equality.[290] O'Day sees the Magnificat, along with the songs of Miriam and Hannah, as songs of *defiance* and *thanksgiving* which "can only be sung with full impact by people who are not part of the dominant social structure, by people who know what it is to be oppressed and who know that the present social systems are bankrupt of hope."[291]

Conclusions

Scholars and preachers frequently interpret the Annunciation of Jesus' birth and the Magnificat in terms of Mary's willingness to be dependent upon God and to participate in God's plan. Though it should be pointed out that the Magnificat has at times been considered subversive. For example, its public recitation was banned for a period in Guatemala in the 1980s.[292] This dependence and willingness are sometimes interpreted in terms of her self-lowering or self-emptying, and sometimes in terms of discipleship. While these emphases are not mutually exclusive, different images of Mary as humble do arise. For example, Sandiyagu conceives of humility in terms of dependence on and making ourselves available to God, which Mary's statement in Luke 1:38 affirms. She does so in a key of surrender and self-lowering.[293] Her emphasis on Mary's emptiness and total dependence upon God dovetails with the identification of humility in the New Testament as an infused, rather than acquired virtue.[294] It also largely coincides with not only images of Mary and

290. Gale A Yee, "The Silenced Speak: Hannah, Mary, and Global Poverty1," *Feminist Theology* 21, no. 1 (2012): 40–57.

291. O'Day, "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation," 210. O'Day concludes that, "The new vision is not the vision of those in control, for they have too much to lose, but is the vision of those who at best are outside of the dominant order and at worst are victims of that order."

292. Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, 269.

293. Sandiyagu argues that after Mary's statement, "From here on, we find Mary continued to live in total emptiness. This indicates that in her lowliness, she totally depends on God and not on herself." Sandiyagu, "Magnificat: Liberation from Pride," 845.

294. For example, Grant Macaskill's exploration of intellectual humility in the Christian Scriptures does not focus on Mary, but does conclude that humility consists in part in occupying our proper position of dependence on and submission to God. Yet a believer's intellectual humility does not occur through personal moral progress but through the presence of another. Grant Macaskill, "Christian Scriptures and the Formation of Intellectual Humility," *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 46, no. 4 (2018): 249-251. Macaskill states, "To put this slightly differently, the intellectual humility that might come to mark a believer is not something that grows out of the nurturing of who they are, but out of the presence in them of someone else."

conceptions of "feminine" virtues that have been the subject of much critique, but also with the developments in understanding Mary's humility in the Patristic and (western) Medieval period.[295] Yet as we have seen, while scholars who read the Annunciation and the Magnificat more in the key of prophecy and liberation do not tend to utilize the language of humility, here Mary's obedience to God as disciple also features, although other roles for Mary are highlighted.[296]

How then might we understand Mary to be humble according to these two famous passages in Luke 1? Furthermore, what bearing on our ecological relationships might this understanding of humility have? While it is obvious that neither Mary's response to the angel Gabriel nor her Magnificat contain the current formulations of the social and ecological interdependence that have come to pervade Catholic social teaching, there are at least two points of intersection. Based on the above, I argue that the "truth of her place" has two important facets: her place before God (disciple) and her place within society (lowly). First, several scholars have interpreted the visitation and the Magnificat in terms of Mary's (acknowledged) radical dependence on God. Indeed, even though it is presented using the highly problematic language of slavery in Luke 1:38 (and Lk 1:48a), this idea of dependence on God is one way that virtue of humility sketched above can be "thickened" through consideration of both Christian testaments. Knowing the truth of our place in the world,

295. While there are interesting connections between Marian humility and strength, and while Reynolds argues that Marian humility in this period is only erroneously confused with passivity, this strength is premised upon self-emptying. See Reynolds, "The Patristic and Medieval Roots of Mary's Humility," especially the conclusion at page 336.

296. As seen above, Gaventa identifies three interrelated roles for Mary based on Luke-Acts: disciple, prophet, and mother. Robert J. Karris understands Mary to be portrayed as a disciple, strong and independent, not passive. He also connects the Magnificat to the broader theme of reversal in Luke's Gospel, which "sets the tone for what is to follow." Robert J. Karris OFM, "Mary's Magnificat," *The Bible Today* 39 (no. 3 2001): 146-147. Both Shawn Carruth and Elizabeth Johnson highlight the connections between the theme of reversal and prophetic preaching found in the Old Testament as well as how the reversal proclaimed by Mary in the Magnificat anticipates the radical change announced by Jesus in the (Lucan) Beatitudes. See Shawn Carruth, "A Song of Salvation: The Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55," *The Bible Today* 50 (no. 6 2012): 348-349 and Johnson, *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*, 263-271.

will, for Christians, involve knowing the truth of our dependence on God. Acknowledging this truth undercuts the myth of self-sufficiency and so opposes the vice of pride.

Yet acknowledging our dependence on God and our need to obey God need not lead to passiveness in the face of grinding poverty and endemic violence. Mary, as portrayed in Luke 1, occupied a lowly place in society, but actively responded to the invitation of God as disciple. Problematic as the master-slave analogy to discipleship remains, it must at least be recognized that Mary's service in Luke 1 is to God, and only to God. Further, Mary is not presented as a type or symbol for all women, but as a disciple. Liberationist interpretations express this beautifully, and I think the biblical evidence considered above supports Bidegain's understanding of Mary's humility as consisting in "daring" and her consent to be free and responsible, rather than "the yes of self-denial, almost of irresponsibility, as it has been traditionally presented to us."[297] Yet one need not commit to a contemporary hermeneutic of liberation to understand Mary, as portrayed in Luke 1, as the disciple who not only hears and believes God's word, but also acts upon it.[298]

While it can be uncomfortable for those of us who enjoy a disproportionate share of the earth's resources to read, the theme of reversal, complete with attention to material, lived poverty and the castigation of the wealthy all pervade Luke's Gospel. In the words of Robert J. Karris, OFM, Mary's Magnificat "sets the tone for what is to follow."[299] As Brown writes, the Magnificat "anticipates the gospel message, especially the Beatitudes and Woes," which, in Luke's Gospel as opposed to Matthew's, "have no mollifying, spiritualizing clauses."[300] There is also at least one recent attempt to understand the Magnificat

297. Bidegain, "Women and the Theology of Liberation," 34.
298. See Brown's focus on Mary's discipleship. Also, before the birth of modern liberation theology, Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote, "It is also the most passionate, the wildest, and one might almost say the most revolutionary Advent hymn that has ever been sung." Dietrich Bonhoeffer et al., "My Spirit Rejoices: London, Third Sunday in Advent, December 17, 1933," in *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012), 116.
299. Karris, "Mary's Magnificat," 147.
300. Brown, "The Annunciation to Mary," 257.

more ecologically by attending to the voice of the Earth through, among other approaches, recognizing how the capacity of the Earth to sustain us relates to power and wealth.[301]

I suggest then, that even as this section has affirmed traditional elements of Christian humility as including the recognition of our dependence upon God, foregrounding Luke's portrayal of Mary as disciple and avoiding interpreting "low estate" as "humility" in the Magnificat enriches our understanding of Mary's humility as a mean between extremes. There is a reason why in his sermon on the Magnificat, Dietrich Bonhoeffer describes Mary using the language of humility as well as pride,[302] and why the government of Guatemala found the hymn so subversive that it banned its public recitation for a period. In Luke 1, Mary's place in the world socially is very different from her place in God's salvific plan. Yet as a disciple, she knew the truth of her place, both in her society and before God. In this way she connects the true knowledge of one's place in the world with the activity of discipleship, which may include prophesying. As the spokeswoman for the Anawim, Mary occupied a low social location and, far from understanding herself or her community as self-sufficient, recognized her radical dependence upon God. She did not over-estimate her place in the world. Yet neither did she underestimate it. Equally far from denying her unique ability or opportunity to contribute to the good of her community, as a disciple,

301. Anne Elvey rereads the Magnificat with attention to the Earth and argues that readers can attend to an Earth voice through the materiality of the text, the implicit reference to the promised land (thereby invoking "the biblical interrelationship between land, social justice, Torah/law, and God"), and by attending to the breath (and so the human body and the senses) and how the capacity of Earth to sustain us relates to poverty and wealth. Anne Elvey, "A Hermeneutics of Retrieval: Breath and Earth Voice in Luke's Mangificat—Does Earth Care for the Poor?," *Australian Biblical Review* 63 (2015): 67–83. Elvey argues that, "The song is alert to the death-dealing that accompanies the Roman empire" (80). She concludes that, "What the song potentially proclaims, when read in the light of the Lukan Eucharistic feeding and last supper narratives, is a relationship to Earth where the capacity for Earth to sustain human life is received (not taken for profit) as gift. In this grateful receptivity, oriented explicitly to God in the song, is also the fissure: the imperial mode that links land and debt, that denies the gift, with all the potential for exploitation of Earth this might allow." Ibid., 82.

302. Bonhoeffer writes, "This is not the gentle, tender, dreamy Mary as we often see her portrayed in paintings. The Mary who is speaking here is passionate, carried away, proud, enthusiastic." And yet, this is still, "Mary, who was seized by the power of the Holy Spirit, who humbly and obediently lets it be done unto her as the Spirit commands her...." Bonhoeffer et al., "My Spirit Rejoices: London, Third Sunday in Advent, December 17, 1933," 116.

when confronted with a call to participate in God's plan, Mary said yes and hastened to act in accordance with that plan.

This section has focused on how Christians might fill in the outlines of humility as I have defined it in this chapter by approaching a Scriptural text through the lens of exemplary models.[303] In the following section, anticipating questions regarding to what extent the New Testament, as opposed to the Old Testament, can be considered to be concerned with non-human creation, I wish to turn to potential resources for New Testament perspectives on the place of human beings in creation. While this exegesis is not explicitly virtue-based, it nonetheless helps identify resources for understanding humility as a *Christian* virtue that perfects our ecological relationality. Given the relative newness of questions regarding what the Bible might say that is relevant to ecology, in the remainder of this chapter I draw substantially on more recent scholarship, including that of scholars involved in the Earth Bible Project. I begin here with two short passages from the Gospel of Matthew.

Creation Theology Still Applies: Matthew 6:9-13 and 6:25-34

While again, the author of the Gospel of Matthew is unknown, I follow the convention of referring to the author, generally agreed to be a Greek-speaking Jewish Christian, as "Matthew."[304] In contrast to Luke, who was concerned with showing the spread of the Jesus movement from Jerusalem to include Rome and presenting Jesus as the Savior of the world, Matthew was more concerned with presenting Jesus as the fulfilment of Jewish messianic hopes.[305] Biblical scholars who bring ecological concerns to this gospel often point to the

303. Scripture as a source for explicit or implicit moral exemplars is one feature of Lúcás Chan's proposal for appropriately and responsibly interpreting Scripture using the hermeneutics of virtue ethics. See Chan, *Biblical Ethics in the 21st Century*, 107-112.

304. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 45. See also Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel According to Matthew," in *An Introduction to the New Testament*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015), 59.

305. This concern is evident in the infancy narrative. Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 67. As an example, consider the two titles given to Jesus in the annunciation in Luke: Son of David and Son of God. The latter title is more clear/prominent

ways Jesus and his listeners would have been drawing on the Hebrew Bible.[306] Considering the following two pericopes from the Gospel of Matthew will offer two examples that may enrich a Christian understanding of the virtue of humility: creation theology and the understanding of God's kingdom.

In addition to presenting Jesus as the "son of David" and Jewish messiah, another key theme in the Gospel of Matthew is Emmanu-el, God is with us. In her eco-rhetorical reading of Matthew's gospel, Elaine Wainwright points out that what understanding of "us" the reader brings to the text will influence his or her interpretation. Against those who would argue that bringing the concept of deep incarnation (so that God is understood to be with the Earth community and not just with humans) to the text is too much of a stretch, she reminds the reader that there is precedent for expanding our approach such that God is with women and colonized peoples. Furthermore, in an interesting parallel with Fullam's epistemological understanding of the virtue of humility and the calls for attention to different ways of knowing made by some theologians in chapter 1, Wainwright draws attention to how despite Herod's political power, which a reader might expect would give him access to the knowledge he seeks, the early chapters of the Gospel of Matthew utilize alternative ways of knowing as seen in Joseph's dreams (to take Mary as his wife, to flee to Egypt, to return from Egypt) and the experiences of the Magi.

One of Wainwright's key points is that place is significant throughout the gospel, and at different levels. For example, after Jesus is tempted in the wilderness, he moves to

in Luke's infancy narrative. See Brown, *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*, 309-316. In addition, the genealogy in Matthew begins with Abraham and serves the function of showing that Jesus is the Davidic Messiah, whereas the genealogy in Luke (which is placed after the infancy narrative), begins with Jesus and traces his genealogy back through Adam and to God. See Ibid., 84-94. To mitigate the risk of oversimplification, it should be noted here that Matthew was writing for a community that included members of Jewish and Gentile descent. As such, while the emphasis is on presenting Jesus as the Jewish messiah, Matthew is also concerned with the integration of Gentiles into the Christian community.

306. While drawing on the Hebrew Bible is not unique to the Gospel of Matthew, formula or fulfillment citations, which include a citation from the Old Testament along with a specific formula regarding fulfillment, are a particular feature of this gospel, appearing ten to fourteen times. Brown, "The Gospel According to Matthew," 74.

Capernaum, which is a village by the sea and so dependent on fishing. Each "place" is significant. Since Wainwright makes a connection between the Lord's Prayer in Matthew 6 and the temptation of Jesus in Matthew 4, it is worth highlighting a few key points about wilderness. The wilderness extends from west of the lower Jordan and Dead Sea into the hill country. It is a marginal space that is variously conceived of as an escape from oppression (Hagar), a site of divine encounter, a boundary, or uninhabitable. It is where John the Baptist is placed, and his place is interconnected: "He is in place in the complexity of relationships within Earth and its constituents."[307] As the site of Jesus' temptation, it forms in part the "second space" place of divine encounter. Furthermore, Wainwright suggests that one temptation is to circumvent natural processes for personal gain (i.e., turning a stone into bread rather than going through the lengthier agricultural process). Hence, she reads right relationship with the Earth as part of what is at stake in Jesus' temptation in the wilderness.

Matthew 6:9-13

Explicitly using a hermeneutic of ecojustice, Vicky Balabanski explores Matthew's version of the Lord's Prayer. She argues that three rhyming third person petitions in the first section both set up a distinction between heaven and earth (in which the earth is of lesser value) and undermine this distinction by asking God to remove it.[308] The petitions in the second section, made in the second person imperative, all treat daily realities, indicating that "the practical and mundane are worthy of God's attention."[309] Balabanski stresses that the whole earth has a stake in these petitions due to the interconnectedness of the need for

307. Elaine Mary Wainwright, *Habitat, Human, and Holy: An Eco-rhetorical Reading of the Gospel of Matthew* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2016), 58.Wainwright goes on to say that despite John the Baptist's association with Elijah, he is marginal and occupies a marginal location. "Thus, in his person, in relation to TimeSpace, he points to a change in ways of being and living in the Earth community as does the message he preaches. Wilderness holds potential for what is neither idealization nor exploitation." Ibid., 59.
308. Vicky Balabanski, "An Earth Bible Reading of the Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13," in *Readings from the Perspective of Earth*, ed. Norman C. Habel, vol. 1 (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000), 155.
309. Specifically, these daily realities include debt, the need for bread, and "the threat of testing and evil...." See Ibid., 157.

bread, unsustainable farming practices, and the burden of foreign debt. While one of the Greek words in the bread petition remains puzzling, there is a link to the gathering of the manna in Exodus 16, which was gathered each day and could not be hoarded. For Balabanski, the reference to debt shows that we are in debt to God and others, and so, "it is a prayer that asks that our mutual indebtedness may be reciprocal and even-handed, and that we may recognize our interdependency."[310]

Bauckham sees less dualism than Balabanski, reading the combination of 'heaven' and 'earth' as summoning the image of creation in its entirety. He draws attention to the "cosmic scope" of the Kingdom of God, evident in Matthew 6:9-10 (the first petition). While he acknowledges the emphasis is on human beings hallowing God's name and doing God's will, he reminds readers that "in the Hebrew Bible, non-human creatures also do these things, often when humans fail to do so...."[311] Bauckham cautions against reading the Kingdom of God as only concerning the relationship of God and human beings for two reasons. First, there is evidence that "Jesus presupposed the rich creation theology of the Hebrew Bible" and therefore "is unlikely to have isolated humans from their relationships with other creatures."[312] Second, when Jesus uses the term 'Kingdom of God' he does not explain it, suggesting that the term, with its background (especially in the Psalms, which connects God's rule with creation) would be somewhat familiar to his listeners. The coming of the Kingdom on Earth is not to be separated from understanding God as "Creator of heaven and Earth." In other words, the coming of the Kingdom on Earth is not an extraction of purely spiritual people from creation but a renewal of creation in its entirety. Bauckham goes on to point out that Jesus' activities that anticipated the Kingdom were holistic, attending to a person's social relationships and bodily existence in addition to their relationship with God. Therefore, he concludes that the Kingdom of God "is the renewal of all the creatures

310. Balabanski, "An Earth Bible Reading of the Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13," 159.
311. Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 166.
312. Ibid., 164-165.

in their interrelationship and interdependence, what we could call an ecological renewal because it relates to the biblical writers' sense of the interconnectedness and interdependence of God's creatures."[313]

Wainwright focuses on the right ordering of relationships that is characteristic of the kingdom, a right ordering that includes "all realms of the cosmos" and so even relationships within the more-than-human context.[314] She also notes that daily bread points to the mundane material of daily needs and intertextually evokes the manna in Exodus 16, which was the daily sustenance not only of people, but also their livestock.[315] She further points to how "forgive" invokes the jubilee year in Leviticus and Deuteronomy and the restoration of "the right-ordering of all the relationships among the Earth community...."[316] Like Balabanski, and drawing on "the *material* link" proposed by Douglas Oakman, she connects the petition for bread with the subsistence issues that had sociopolitical dimensions, including indebtedness, because indebtedness threatens the availability of daily bread, and so asking for daily bread is asking for a radical restructuring of the social order such that it will consistently meet human needs. She writes, "These were periods in which the right-ordering of all the relationships among the Earth community—human and other-than-human (land, animals, material dwellings and many more) were to be restored."[317] By contrast, "trespass" refers to a violation of a moral debt and the divine-human relationship. Wainwright connects "lead us not into temptation" to the temptation of Jesus in the desert in Matthew 4, and the temptation of breaking away from rightly ordered relationships.[318]

Matthew 6:25-34

Both Bauckham and Wainwright read this pericope of the birds and the lilies as a challenge not to be anxious. The basis of this freedom from anxiety is our dependence upon

313. Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 168.
314. Wainwright, *Habitat, Human, and Holy: An Eco-rhetorical Reading of the Gospel of Matthew*, 88.
315. See ibid., 96.
316. Ibid., 87.
317. Ibid.
318. Ibid., 88.

God. Bauckham concedes that the point of the observation is to be relevant to human beings, according to a lesser to greater methodology in which humans are more valuable than birds. Yet he argues that it depends on the creation theology found in the Old Testament, including the theme of God's provision for all creatures found in Job and a couple of the Psalms. For Bauckham, this line of argumentation only makes sense if other creatures too have intrinsic value, even if there are differences in intrinsic value. He also points out that "Jesus never uses the superiority of humans to animals in order to make a negative point about animals."[319]

Bauckham argues that the new point in Matthew 6:26 (and Luke 12:24) is that the birds (ravens) do not reap or store. Their dependence on God is more obvious than the dependence of human beings, although the day laborers of first century Galilee did not know from day to day if they would have food tomorrow. Indeed, Bauckham argues that Matthew 6:34 creates a link with the Lord's Prayer, since bread was baked daily (and didn't keep long).[320] The text is not presenting the birds and wildflowers as examples of behavior to imitate but rather of the generosity of God in providing for his creatures.[321] Yet in order for those who hear this text to understand its point, that they will be provided for, Bauckham argues that they have to consider themselves fellow creatures.[322]

Wainwright largely follows Bauckham in terms of the precarious situation of the vulnerable poor and especially the day laborers, as well as God's provision and care for all life, but she brings a hermeneutic of suspicion to the way in which humans are valued

319. Bauckham, *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*, 97. Regarding the incident of Jesus driving the demons into the swine Bauckham brings a lesser of evils approach to the interpretation, recalling that the demons begged to be allowed to go into the swine (98). By contrast, Wainwright considers it both uncharacteristic of Jesus' healing ministry so far and even dangerous, calling for a response of mourning on the part of the ecological reader.

320. See Ibid., 143.

321. See ibid., 142.

322. He writes, "Humans can trust God for their basic needs, treating the resources of creation as God's provision for these needs, only when they recognize that they belong to the community of God's creatures, for all of whom the Creator provides." Ibid., 90.

much more than the birds and lilies.[323] Instead, she focuses on Jesus' attentiveness to life and life-processes as an invitation to observe and be attentive to what we eat, drink, and how clothe ourselves—all of which intersect with ecological issues and the understanding of cosmos as gift.[324] She closes with the suggestion to read the text with an awareness of our interconnectedness with other creatures, following the language of 'embeddedness' by Sarah Whatmore.[325]

Conclusions

These short selections from Matthew 6 show how biblical scholars are beginning to attend to ecological dimensions of the gospel, both by drawing the reader's attention to the Old Testament creation theology that underlies and is presumed by the text, and by pointing to the connections between ordinary life activities such as farming and survival. While the New Testament is often understood to pay little attention to nonhuman creation (relative to the Old Testament), in part because Jesus' preaching is frequently understood to be apocalyptic, this understanding is taken too far if allowed to eclipse the creation theology which some of Jesus' parables and preaching presumes. This section also points to some of the interesting ways that further interdisciplinary collaborations, such as with systematic theology (perhaps particularly eschatology), would help thicken a Christian account of humility as governing our ecological relationality.

Interrelated and Sharing a Common Fate: Romans 8:19-23

Although not as pervasively cited as the first two chapters of the Book of Genesis, Roman Catholic teachings related to the environment frequently make reference to at least part of the text of Romans 8:19-22, with its memorable images of creation "groaning" (8:22) and being "subject to futility" (8:20).[326] Romans 8 has also been frequently cited in ecotheolog-

323. See Wainwright, *Habitat, Human, and Holy: An Eco-rhetorical Reading of the Gospel of Matthew*, 89.
324. See ibid., 90.
325. See ibid.
326. The reference to Romans 8:22 appears in the second paragraph of *Laudato Si'*. It was also cited by Pope John Paul II in his "1990 World Day of Peace Message, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility,"

ical literature since the emergence of the field in the 1970s, though some scholars warn that many such citations are brief and ask more of the text ethically than can be supported.[327] As in the Gospel of Matthew, this text relies on themes and passages found in the Old Testament, though there is debate about the specifics. Within the Letter to the Romans, whose Pauline authorship is not disputed, this text appears within the doctrinal section on God's salvation for those justified by faith,[328] and as part of an argument for hope found in Romans 5-8, a hope that confronts the reality of suffering.[329] Within chapter 8 itself, Laurie J. Braaten identifies three major sections, two of which have to do with sufferings with the passage considered here falling into the second section which treats the sufferings of the present time.[330] While Paul's worldview is often considered apocalyptic,[331] it is not anti-material. Romans 8:23 conveys the hope for bodily redemption.[332] Bauckham frames this bodiless of human beings in terms of solidarity with the rest of material creation, and stresses that salvation is redemption of (not from) the body.[333] Biblical scholars disagree

---

secs. 3,4, *Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference, November 14, 1991* (II, B), and *The Cry for Land, Joint Pastoral Letter by the Guatemalan Bishops' Conference, February 29, 1988*, 2.1.6. While only referenced once in *Laudato Si'*, Brendan Byrne argues that Pauline writings, including Romans 8:18-22, can enrich Scriptural citations in exhortations to "care for our common home." Brendan Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," *Theological Studies* 77, no. 2 (2016): 308–327.

327. See Cherryl Hunt, David G. Horrell, and Christopher Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra? Ecological Interest in Romans 8: 19–23 and a Modest Proposal for its Narrative Interpretation," *The Journal of Theological Studies* 59, no. 2 (2008): 550-554.

328. See Raymond E. Brown, "Letter to the Romans," in *An Introduction to the New Testament*, The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library (Yale University Press, 2015), 202.

329. See Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," 320. Here it is also notable that while much attention has been paid to the theme of justification in Paul's writings, attention is now also being paid to participation, which Sigve K. Tonstad argues speaks more to ecological concerns. See Sigve K. Tonstad, *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists* (Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2017).

330. See Laurie Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 28, no. 2 (2006): 155. The first section goes from verses 1-17 and Braaten identifies it as "No condemnation for those who walk according to the Spirit and have been incorporated into God's family" and the third section extends from verses 31-39 and is described as "Conquering the Suffering to Come."

331. Although Braaten argues that Romans 8:22 "is intelligible against a cosmic background which is transparent without reference to apocalyptic." Ibid., 154.

332. See Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 257. This bodiliness of redemption has been neglected at times in the history of its interpretation, including in the first extant commentary (by Origen, who was influenced by Plato). Ibid., 24.

333. See Richard Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," *Review & Expositor* 108, no. 1 (2011): 92.

on many of the exegetical details, and it is neither within my expertise nor necessary for the present discussion to defend a particular interpretation. Rather, here I wish to stress two of the points of agreement (creation as subject and non-human creation and humans sharing a common fate), and sketch what is at stake in two of the points of disagreement.

One key feature of this short passage is that creation is presented as the subject.[334] Bauckham argues that in Romans 8:19-22, creation is the subject of all the important verbs: "the creation waits with eager longing, was subjected to futility, will be set free, has been groaning, has been in travail."[335] He does not find this attention to non-human creation surprising, since Paul is retelling the grand narrative of the Bible, in which non-human creation is one of the three essential characters.[336] Braaten highlights that creation is also "the subject of God's redemptive work along with God's children (Rom 8:21)" and suggests that creation can actually be understood to be a member of God's family, sharing in the "inheritance" of God's promise to Abraham.[337] Tonstad notes that one of the most striking features in Romans 8:22 is that non-human creation speaks as a subject in the text.[338] Having non-human creation speak "as a sentient being that is capable of experiencing suffering and expressing hope" does not express animism but rather serves to raise the standing of non-human creation.[339]

In this passage then, non-human creation is not portrayed as passive, much less inanimate, but shares a common interest with human beings, as well as the language of groaning.[340] I suggest that this presentation of non-human creation, while brief, nonetheless

334. Historically there has been debate on whether Paul is referring here to all creation including human beings, non-human creation, celestial bodies and/or angels, or restricted to human beings. See Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra?," 547-550. Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate identify the current majority position as creation referring to non-human (sometimes termed '*sub*human' creation.)
335. Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," 93.
336. See ibid., 92-93.
337. Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 156-157. See note 60 on page 156 for Braaten's claim that "Paul is broadening the promise to incorporate the entire creation."
338. See Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 242.
339. Ibid., 243.
340. See Ibid.

indicates that non-human creation is a suitable subject for human relationships according to the Christian scriptures. The nature of this relationship even as presented in this passage is, unsurprisingly, contested. Two intriguing possibilities that generally map to the sketch of humanity's place in creation presented in Genesis 1-2 vs. Job 38-41 and the associated image of human beings as stewards or co-community members include human responsibility for the rest of creation as argued by Byrne[341] and as co-mourners whose penitential mourning is necessary before God's intervention and creation's restoration as presented by Braaten.[342]

The second point of agreement I wish to address here is that there is a solidarity, a common experience and fate among human beings and non-human creation. Although they disagree on the Old Testament background and so also on the interpretation of 'groaning' and 'travail,' both Tonstad and Bauckham stress what both characters have in common, in terms of groaning, waiting, suffering, hope, and eventual liberation.[343] Yet, there is more than commonality to this experience; there is also an intertwining of fate, both in terms of the cause of the present suffering and the eventual overcoming of this suffering. I suggest that there are good grounds to see this passage depicting an interrelationship between humans and non-human creation. On the positive side of this interrelationship, non-human creation is hoping for the revealing of the children of God. On the negative side, non-human creation is suffering innocently, due to human sin, whether that sin is traced to Adam and Eve and the "Fall" narrative in Genesis 3 (or the corruption of creation

341. See Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," 325-327.

342. Braaten argues that non-human creation actually leads, since the groaning of God's people is compared to creation's groaning and not vice versa. Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 157. As in Ancient Israelite mourning rites, the process of reincorporating the mourners into the community (and renewing or renegotiating social ties) includes associate mourners. Ibid., 137-139. As in Joel, humans are called to be these associate mourners of creation, and then God will intervene and creation will be restored. Ibid., 157-158.

343. See Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," 93 and Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 255-257. Similarly, Hunt, Horrell and Southgate interpret creation's groaning as "a co-groaning" and the "common vocabularly used to describe creation, humanity, and the Spirit" as indicating "that somehow they are caught up in the same process, yearning for the same outcome..." Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra?," 566.

in Genesis 1-11) or interpreted more in terms of the ongoing sins of human beings that brought devastation to the land and other creatures as expressed by the prophets.

While areas of difference have been referenced in the above discussion of similarities, it is now time to identify two such areas explicitly and sketch what is at stake in the discussion and how that relates to the virtue of humility as defined in this chapter. Here I will consider these differences in order of appearance in the passage. First, what does creation's waiting for the "revelation of the children of God" (Rom 8:19) mean in terms of human activity? Second, more broadly, do we interpret this passage more in light of Genesis, especially Genesis 3, or in light of the prophets, especially Joel? This second point will focus on the significance of "bondage to decay" in Romans 8:21.

Non-human creation is said to be waiting in hope for the revealing of the children of God.[344] Earlier in Romans 8, Paul argues that liberation and possession by the Spirit is needed to become children of God. While the sequence isn't clear, Romans 8:19 suggests a connection between liberated human beings and the liberation of non-human creation *through* liberated human beings.[345] Some scholars suggest that liberated human beings then regain rightful dominion over creation and thereby end the suffering of non-human creation. Tonstad is cautious about the extent to which the children of God bring this liberation about, especially in light of 2,000 years of waiting, writing, "On this point it is more prudent to say that if non-human creation persists in a state of hope, the apocalyptic intervention cannot depend entirely on mediation through human channels."[346]

Yet among the authors considered here, both Tonstad, with his observation that creation's confident expectation somehow goes through the children of God (not directly to God) and his conclusion that Paul's description of the problem was sufficient impetus for

344. According to Tonstad, the 'eager longing' reflects an expectation based on promise, and he sees echoes of the blessing and promise of Genesis 1:22, 28, as well as the vision of Isaiah 11:6-9; 65:25 in the text, and the extension of the paradigm of divine faithfulness characteristic of Paul's message in Romans to non-human creation. Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 245.
345. See Ibid., 246.
346. Ibid., 248.

action,[347] and Byrne, with his emphasis on benign anthropocentrism and Christ's replaying of "Adam's 'subduing' role," would align with understanding the place of human beings in relationship to non-human creation in terms of dominion.[348] Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate are far more reticent to ascribe a role other than waiting to humans on the basis of this text.[349] Bauckham speaks of human beings anticipating the eschatological liberation of creation in terms of having "first fruits of the Spirit" and so sees the avoidance and repair of ecological destruction as the "*practice*" of "the hope that believers share with the rest of creation (v. 21)."[350] To resolve the riddle of how "Humans will lack their full redemption as long as creation is suffering, but creation will not be released from its sufferings until humans are redeemed!" Braaten concludes that humans are to join in creation's mourning, which, since humans are responsible for creation's suffering and corruption, will become penitential mourning.[351] This posits human action as necessary, but the role is that of co-mourner, and so would map more to the community of creation paradigm, rather than the dominion paradigm of human-(non-human) creation relationships. Human action is requisite for God's intervention.[352] Nonetheless, Braaten does not only suggest mourning as the necessary human activity, since, drawing on Romans 6, the becoming co-mourners with non-human creation is preceded by embracing Christ and the repentance needed to die to sin and embrace Christ. As this brief survey shows, the interpretations of creation's waiting for the revelation of the children of God can support different biblical understandings

347. Tonstad does not believe Paul needed to prescribe action because "his *des*cription is in itself the most eloquent *pre*scription and might be less than that if he had tried to go beyond it." Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 256. Tonstad notes the practices of emperors in Paul's day regarding killing animals for celebrations, which he links to modern CAFOs.
348. Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," 325-327.
349. They write, "The narrative in itself primarily encourages them to endure their suffering, a groaning in which the whole of creation shares, because of the certainty of God's final deliverance." Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra?," 572.
350. Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," 96.
351. Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 157.
352. See Ibid., 158.

of human's place in creation, including the dominion/stewardship and the members of the community of creation paradigms.

The role of human beings in the liberation of non-human creation shows one element of what is at stake when this passage is read in light of different sets of texts and themes from the Old Testament. Other key areas of disagreement revolve around how to interpret the "groaning and travail"[353] and the identity of the subduer who subjected creation to futility.[354] Yet given the tension identified in the previous chapter between conceptions of harmony and ecological (and evolutionary) processes, I focus on the debate regarding what is signified by "bondage to decay" in Romans 8:21.

Laura E. Donaldson critiques Paul's "rhetoric of decay," with its association with enslavement, as contributing to an unsustainable view of creation.[355] Indeed, Tonstad identifies the "bondage to decay" as death, which is connected to sin in Paul's writings and is

353. For Tonstad, the imagery of a woman's cry during labor is both found in the Old Testament and adds gravitas to the voice of the non-human creation in this passage. It also echoes Genesis 3:16, the only passage in the Old Testament in which birth pangs and groaning are linked. Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 238, 254-255. For Braaten (and Bauckham), the groaning of creation is not likely to be linked to labor, but rather only to mourning. Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 132-137; Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," note 3 and see discussion on page 95. Furthermore, for Braaten, the birth pang language does not necessarily refer to "an eschatological 'birth of the Messiah"' because it is often used in the Hebrew Scriptures as "a reaction to a theophany." Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 154.

354. There is wide, though not unanimous, agreement among scholars that the passive construction "veils a reference to God" as well as consensus that futility refers to Genesis 3. Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 248-249. Nonetheless, while Byrne reads the passage in light of Genesis and Adamic theology, he sees the subduer as more likely to be Adam, and perhaps to who Adam represents. Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," 323. Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate read the one who subjects creation to futility as God, but note that the evidence of an explicit connection between Romans 8:19-23 and Genesis 3 is inconclusive and posit a Wisdom influence behind Rom 8:20. Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra?," 561-563. Braaten reads the creation's suffering corruption and futility as due to human beings, the "sinful inhabitants" of creation, arguing that Paul is not referring to a one-time sin but to "the ongoing effects of human sin." Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 154. Yet, drawing on Hebrew "deeds-consequence concept," Braaten also sees this suffering as concomitantly due to divine judgement, not in the form of a primeval curse but because creation's corruption becomes God's judgment on sinful human beings. Ibid., 146, 154.

355. Laura E. Donaldson, "Theological Composting in Romans 8: An Indigenous Meditation on Paul's Rhetoric of Decay," in *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, ed. Steve Heinrichs (Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2013), 143-144. She offers Native stories as an alternative in which "decay embodies transformation rather than enslavement, and dynamic law of life rather than an obstacle that humans must overcome" (147).

a problem not only for humans, but also for non-humans.[356] Death frustrates the fulfillment of its purpose. Bauckham disagrees and, based on prophetic portrayals of how the land (and sometimes animals) suffers and even "mourns" as a consequence of God's ongoing judgement on human sin (especially Joel 1:10-12, 17-20), argues instead that it refers to "processes of ecological degradation and destruction that occur frequently and widely where humans live."[357] In this way, rather than mortality as a general feature of existence, it is human sins that frustrate creation's fulfillment.

Conclusions

While several key questions in this text remain debated, there is general agreement that Paul is referring here to non-human creation and that the fate of non-human creation and humanity are intertwined. In the words of Braaten, "God's family includes the community of creation."[358] What we do affects others, including non-human others. In this passage, Paul presents the negative side of this interrelationship (or as Bauckham would call it, solidarity) while signalling that there is reason for hope, that the liberation of human beings and non-human creations is likewise interconnected.

The differences in interpretation regarding to what extent Paul is drawing here on a 'Fall' narrative or a mourning creation motif, with their implications for whether the implied subduer is God or Adam (or human beings), whether creation's groaning is better interpreted in terms of mourning or labor pains, what role human beings are called to play in the liberation of non-human creation from its suffering, and whether the references to decay and futility are primarily to physical death in general or to a thwarting of non-human

356. See Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 252. Byrne uses the term "impermanence." Byrne, "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*," 324. Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate read the reference as including death but suggest that there may be also an allusion to a broader sense of wickedness and corruption. Hunt, Horrell, and Southgate, "An Environmental Mantra?," 561-563, 569.

357. Bauckham, "The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23," 94. Bauckham draws on Braaten, and Braaten also argues that "creation is not redeemed from a fall of nature or a primeval curse on nature by God; rather, she is redeemed from the ongoing effects of human sin." Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 154. See also discussion of "deeds-consequence" as it relates to corruption/decay of the earth in Isaiah 24:1-6. Ibid., 146-147.

358. Ibid., 159.

creation's purpose due to the effects of human sin, can be held together in creative tension. This tension cautions us against either seeing ourselves as the liberators of creation or as needing to do little else besides passively wait for God's salvific action. Too much emphasis on the albeit proper exercise of human dominion risks overestimating one's place in creation relative to non-human creatures and underestimating one's dependence, in this case, upon God's intervention. Too much emphasis on waiting for God's intervention risks underestimating one's place in creation and justifying inaction based on one's perceived inability to repair the damage caused by human sin. It should come as no surprise that Romans 8:19-23 does not give us a universally applicable blueprint for ethical ecological action. Yet it does indicate that our relationship with non-human creation has been broken, and that our hope for the end of our suffering is based on not only a proper relationship with Christ, but also "entails a proper relation with creation."[359]

2.3.3 Conclusion: Stewards vs. Members of the Community of Creation

Anticipating that within Christian circles, the identification of humility as the cardinal virtue governing our ecological relationships might be somewhat a surprise given the frequently cited (and debated) dominion found in Genesis 1:26-28, I have here indicated the contours of a Christian virtue of humility that is accountable to the Scriptures. The concept of human dominion, and the broader understanding of human beings' relationship to non-human creatures in terms of stewardship in particular and responsibility in general has been frequently critiqued. Lynne White's now-famous article has launched decades of debate and, as noted at the outset of this chapter, the field of environmental ethics has historically tended to be wary of anthropocentrism and likewise of any stewardship role for human beings. The response of Christian scholars working in the field of ecological

359. Braaten, "All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources," 159.

theology and ethics has often been to call for a move from anthropocentric or androcentric worldviews to a theocentric (rather than biocentric) one,[360] or to correct misunderstandings of the dominion given to human beings, whether on biblical grounds[361] or by differentiating between kinds of responsibility,[362] although a few are ready to scrap the language of stewardship entirely.[363] Some systematic theologians are starting to give more attention to the community of creation paradigm stressed by Bauckham, and the texts from which he draws, including Job, with the result that there is a greater emphasis on the interdependence and kinship with other creatures.[364] This placement is sometimes accompanied by the language of humility. Thus, for example, Denis Edwards concludes that, “These texts not only bring human beings to cosmic humility but point to humanity’s place before God within the one community of creation.”[365]

The above engagement with biblical scholarship, while necessarily partial, indicated that Christian paradigms of stewardship can be affirmed, nuanced, and critiqued, depending on which biblical passages are consulted and how these passages are interpreted. For Christians, our understanding of humanity’s place is skewed if we only look to the creation

360. See Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 258.
361. Denis Edwards, for example, holds that the dominion in Genesis 1:28 has been misinterpreted (and following Claus Westermann and against Norman Habel, that the dominion/subduing language can be separated from the image of God language in that verse) but nonetheless considers the subduing language too harsh and as needing to be seen as time-conditioned. Denis Edwards, “Humans and Other Creatures: Creation, Original Grace, and Original Sin,” in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 161.
362. See Samuel Ewell and Claudio Oliver, “Aren’t We Responsible for the Environment?,” in *A Faith Encompassing All Creation: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions aout Christian Care for the Environment*, ed. Trip York and Andy Alexis-Baker (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 89–99.
363. For a brief overview of several of the problems with the notion of stewardship, in its economic application as well as ecological extension, see Kelly Johnson, “Aren’t Humans Stewards of God’s Creation?,” in *A Faith Encompassing All Creation: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions aout Christian Care for the Environment*, ed. Trip York and Andy Alexis-Baker, The Peaceable Kingdom Series 3 (Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014), 78–88. She critiques stewardship for its “pernicious forgetfulness” regarding how the property was acquired, for being “perniciously vague,” as paternalistic and with little communal oversight and accountability, and as open to confusing tragic responsibility with hubris. She concludes, “Stewardship fails, both practically and spiritually, to set us in right relationship with God and creation.” Ibid., 83.
364. See for example, Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 260-286.
365. Edwards, “Humans and Other Creatures: Creation, Original Grace, and Original Sin,” 164.

accounts in Genesis 1-2, but can be corrected by drawing on other biblical books such as Job. Nonetheless, the Christian scriptures affirm the location of human beings in God's creation as stewards. The category of stewardship needs rethinking, and possibly new language, but it is one legitimately Christian way of "thickening" the virtue of humility. Yet it is not sufficient.

This chapter prioritized the community in creation understanding of humanity's place in creation because the stewardship paradigm often continues to be held as the operative understanding of the way human beings relate with the rest of the world within Christian circles, and so exercises undue influence on our imagination when it comes to articulating the nature of our relationship with non-human creatures. I agree with Bauckham that "Before we can adequately reconceive the dominion as a distinctive role within the created order, we need to be put back within the created order."[366] At this point then, I do not think it is prudent, much less necessary, to attempt to completely harmonize the different biblical visions of humanity's place and role within creation; confronting unfamiliar, and at times uncomfortable, interpretations is more likely to help us identify the virtuous mean.[367] In addition to sketching out a way that biblical visions both of humans as stewards and humans as fellow creatures can help thicken the virtue of humility in Christian contexts, I also highlighted areas in which understanding our place as disciples can help locate humility as the mean between two extremes.

For Christians then, the major addition to the definition of humility proposed here would be dependence on God, such that the definition might read: humility is the disposition to know and value the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings *who, along with all creatures, are dependent upon God, and whom God holds accountable as disci-*

366. Bauckham, *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*, 37.
367. As Elizabeth Johnson writes of the community of creation paradigm, "Refashioning the idea of human relation to the natural world along these lines not only provides a context for a non-negotiably responsible retrieval of dominion but also opens the imagination to multiple avenues of reciprocal interaction between human beings and other species." Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 267.

ples, which is acquired through the practices of other-centeredness and other-acceptance. Furthermore, I suggest that there are hints in the passages in Job and the Lucan infancy narrative that this virtue could be enabled by the "graces" of self-doubt and self-affirmation.

Chapter 3

Humility Rejects the Isolation that Enables the Sin of Indifference

> When human beings fail to find their true place in this world, they misunderstand themselves and end up acting against themselves
>
> *Laudato Si'*, no. 115

3.1 Introduction

In a Catholic context, it is difficult to speak of humility without also speaking of sin. This can be seen for example in Jorge Mario Bergoglio's writing on humility, which focuses on corruption, sin, and the importance of self-accusation.[1] Humility enables us to acknowledge that we are sinners, and thus is redemptive.[2] Furthermore, in the Christian tradition, the frequent identification of pride as the most serious sin[3] together with the understand-

1. See Jorge Mario Bergoglio (Pope Francis), *The Way of Humility*, trans. Helena Scott (San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014).

2. For Pope Francis, people who are corrupt do not recognize their corruption, in part due to being "so wrapped up in their self-sufficiency that they admit no questioning." Ibid., 12.

3. For instance, Aquinas concludes that while pride is not the most serious of the sins when considered in its material part (i.e., "conversion to a mutable good") it is "the most grievous of sins by its genus," because it is an aversion from God by its nature, rather than in its consequences." See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa II-II* q.

ing of the virtue of humility as primarily opposed to pride,[4] suggests one area in which cultivation of the virtue of humility can promote avoidance of or conversion from sin.

Whereas the previous chapter has proposed an alternative understanding of the virtue of humility in terms of knowing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings, in this chapter I turn to sin. Sin-talk challenges us to attend to our freedom and its limits, to recognize our capacity to choose the good and to hold ourselves accountable when we choose otherwise. While I welcome the general shift from acts to persons in Catholic ethics, I am mindful of Darlene Forzard Weaver's concern about "over-correction,"[5] and have no wish to contribute to the theologically problematic inattention to the reality of sin. Therefore, to develop a Christian account of the virtue of humility that is not only intellectually robust but also responsive to the human situation, this chapter will explore the connections between the virtue of humility and (i) the sins associated with its opposing vices, (ii) sinning out of strength, and (iii) social sin. I expect this reflection to have particular application to the United States context and in the ecological sphere due to the identification in chapter 1 of the reticence surrounding talking about sin with respect to the environmental crisis present in this country.

This chapter will begin with a consideration of ethical perspectives on sin. There are three threads weaving through this section, which loosely reflect the three causes of sin that Aquinas mentions in his treatment of pride: pride (generally considered), weakness, and ignorance.[6] The first thread is that both the excess and the deficiency of humility are sins, and equally so. The second considers indifference or cold-heartedness in terms of sin understood as the "failure to bother to love."[7] The third considers ignorance in light of

162, a. 6. Aquinas also understands pride to be the first sin, and also "more principal than the capital vices." *Summa II-II* q. 162, a. 7-8.

4. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa II-II* q. 162, a. 1, ad. 3.

5. Weaver, "Taking Sin Seriously," 49.

6. Aquinas mentions this trio of pride, weakness, and ignorance in the context of showing that pride is not the only cause of sin or vice. See *Summa II-II*, 1. 162, a. 2, 6.

7. This terminology comes from the work of James Keenan.

sinning out of strength and not bothering to love, suggesting that humility has a role to play in our response to social sin.[8]

Then, in the interest of maintaining the accountability to the Christian Scriptures seen in the previous chapter, I will turn to an in-depth consideration of two biblical passages that shed light on the perspectives on sin considered in the first section. Engaging with the biblical scholarship on Genesis 3-4 will return us to the themes of moral (im)maturity and our culpable failure to exercise the responsibility that corresponds to our true place in creation. Turning to Luke 16:19-31, I suggest that this passage challenges us to realize that our indifference is not excused by our social situation; such "ignorance" would remain, in Thomistic categories, vincible.

Third, I will conclude with some thoughts about the relationship between the virtue of humility and sin. While sinning out of weakness is certainly a part of the Christian tradition, it is hardly the only ethically or biblically supported understanding of sin. I argue that sinning out of strength is made easier not only by a tendency to overestimate our place relative to that of others, but also by a tendency to discount our strengths. This underestimation of the truth of our place in the world, this self-deprecation, amounts to an sinful self-weakening that intersects with sin understood both individually and socially. Humility defined more robustly as a virtuous mean between two extremes aids the effort to move from the morally immature preoccupation with our weakness of the first half of the twentieth century to a more earnest grappling with our sins of strength.

8. The term "social sin" is rather broad, and questions arise surrounding not only its definition but also how social sin is distinguished from "structural sin" and "structures of sin." While this chapter will draw on all of these concepts, my primary focus is how the virtue of humility intersects with social sin broadly considered. In a recent article, Kristin Heyer offers this helpful definition, "In its broadest sense, social sin encompasses the unjust structures, distorted consciousness, and collective actions that facilitate dehumanization." Kristin E. Heyer, "Walls in the Heart: Social Sin in Fratelli Tutti," *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 19, no. 1 (2022): 28.

3.2 Ethical Perspectives on Sin

The concept of sin as an act of a responsible individual agent is pervasive in the history of the Catholic moral tradition. As John Mahoney has argued, the focus on sin in moral theology[9] grew out of the monastic practice of private confessions, and the need to prepare confessors to hear confessions, which in turn led to this branch of theological study being marked by a "preoccupation with sin; a concentration on the individual; and an obsession with the law."[10] This focus culminated in the moral manuals, which by the twentieth century, had effectively "trivialized" or "domesticated" sin,[11] rendering it as something that could be neatly measured using a "sin grid."[12] With few exceptions, moral theology had become a cataloguing of sin that was separated from considerations of grace and growth in discipleship.[13] The content of moral theology had also been narrowed such that it was possible for a moral manual released after the Second World War to focus more on violations of modesty than the use of weapons of mass destruction.[14] In the wake of the Second World War, European theologians grappled with the complicity of Christians in

9. To avoid concerns about anachronistic language, Mahoney notes that moral theology (*theologia moralis*) as a distinct branch of theology only dates to the end of the sixteenth century, but that reflection on Christian moral behavior goes back to the New Testament. John Mahoney, *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*, Martin D'Arcy memorial lectures; 1981-2 (New York: Oxford University Press, 1987), viii.

10. See Ibid., 27-36. This is not to say that the practice of confession and penance has always been private and individual. In the patristic period the practice of confession and penance was much more public. There were strident debates as to whether and under what circumstances a person expelled from the Christian community could be readmitted. Mahoney argues that as result of two factors during this period (reconciliation with the Church could only happen once in a person's lifetime and that the penance before a readmission could be rigorous and complex as well as humiliating), many ordinary Christians put off penance until they were dying. Against this background, the monastic practice of private confession that was repeated was a breakthrough. Ibid., 2-5.

11. Ibid., 32.

12. Seán Fagan, "What Happened to Sin?," *An Irish Reading in Moral Theology* 3 (2016): 404-406.

13. For more on the contributions of some theologians writing before the Second Vatican Council which helped shift the field of Catholic moral theology away from the narrow focus of the moral manuals, see Keenan's treatment of Odon Lottin, Fritz Tillmann, Gérard Gilleman and Bernhard Häring in James F. Keenan, *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: from Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences* (London: Continuum, 2010), 35-98.

14. For an overview of the moral manualists in the twentieth century, see Ibid., 9-34. Keenan specifically compares Heribert Jone's treatment of atomic warfare and modesty. See Ibid., 28-29.

the atrocities committed and turned away from the moral manuals in search of more adequate frameworks for understanding sin.[15] The result was a prioritizing of the freedom and formation of conscience and an emphasis on responsibility instead of obedience.[16]

A focus on the individual was likewise found in Catholic social teaching's concern with injustice, which framed both the source of the problems in terms of greed and selfishness and the solution in terms of widespread, but individual conversion.[17] In the 1960s, theologians from Latin America and Germany began to pay more attention to the social dimensions of sin. In the face of systemic oppression, Latin American liberation theologians called for "conscientization" while in German political theology there was a call for the "'deprivatization' of the Christian message" and more attention to how the good news is not limited to individuals but is also for society as a whole.[18] While the development of liberation theology has been contentious at times,[19] one of its significant contributions to moral theology is the introduction of the category of structures of sin.[20] Around the same time, there were also developments in the understanding of sin based on increased attention to how the experience of men has been normalized while that of women has been ignored. Led by Valerie Saiving's landmark work in 1960, feminist theologians began questioning

15. See James F. Keenan, "To Follow and to Form over Time: A Phenomenology of Conscience," in *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, ed. David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 5-8.

16. See James F. Keenan, "Vatican II and Theological Ethics," *Theological Studies* 74, no. 1 (2013): 164,167-174. Unlike in Europe, theologians in the United States did not turn away from the moral manuals after World War II ends. Rather, the event to spark that shift comes in 1968, after the publication of *Humanae vitae*. See Ibid., 174.

17. See Gregory Baum, "John Paul II on Structural Sin," chap. 9 in *Essays in Critical Theology* (Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1994), 189.

18. See Gregory Baum, "Structures of Sin," in *The Logic of Solidarity: Commentaries on Pope John Paul II's Encyclical On Social Concern*, ed. Gregory Baum, Robert Ellsberg, and Peter Hebblethwaite (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989), 111 and Baum, "John Paul II on Structural Sin," 190.

19. Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith, *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the "Theology of Liberation"* (1984), https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html; Marlise Simons, "Vatican Reported to Have Sought Rebukes for 2 Other Latin Clerics," *The New York Times*, 1984; Gerard O'Connell, "Updated: Gutiérrez: 'The Vatican Never Condemned the Theology of Liberation'," *America*, 2015,

20. For a more complete list of the impact of liberation theology on Catholic moral theology, see Keenan, *A History*, 203.

the premise of pride as the primary sin for all human beings, suggesting that for women, sin more often took the form of too diffuse a self.[21]

Today there is wide consensus among Christian theological ethicists that focusing only on freely chosen, individual acts misses the mark and fails to attend adequately to both Christian scriptures and Christian tradition,[22] even as the tendency to avoid talking about sin in the first place is also morally problematic.[23] Nonetheless, as Darlene Fozard Weaver cautions us, we cannot allow the corrective to the nearly exclusive focus on sins as individual acts lead to a similarly unbalanced treatment of sin that does not attend to sins in the concrete.[24] In addition, while a resurgence of interest in virtue can be traced to Alasdair MacIntyre's landmark work, *After Virtue*, there is not yet an equally apparent correspond-

---

21. See Saiving, "The Human Situation," Susan Nelson Dunfee, "The Sin of Hiding: A Feminist Critique of Reinhold Niebuhr's Account of the Sin of Pride," *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 65, no. 3 (1982): 316–327, Judith Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace: Women's Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich* (Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980). While Saiving's argument was partially based upon biological differences between men and women that have since been strongly challenged, and the question of whose experience counts perdures, she was instrumental in shaping the feminist theological agenda. Her influence on the field was not immediate and her thought changed over the course of her career. For more on Saiving's legacy fifty years later, see Rebekah Miles, "Valerie Saiving Reconsidered," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 79–86; Mark Douglas and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, "Revisiting Valerie Saiving's Challenge to Reinhold Niebuhr Honoring Fifty Years of Reflection on ""The Human Situation: A Feminine View"": Introduction and Overview," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 75–78 and Miguel A. De La Torre, "Mad Men, Competitive Women, and Invisible Hispanics," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 121–126.

22. Jean Porter draws on Anselm of Laon, Hugh of St. Victor, and Abelard to argue that the tension between personal sin as freely chosen actions (sin as crime or transgression) and the "pre-voluntary or non-voluntary aspects of sin" (sin as sickness or misfortune) is fruitful and should be integrated into theological ethics. See Jean Porter, "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression: Medieval Perspectives on Sin and Their Significance Today" (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 117-118. Kenneth Himes argues that we need multiple metaphors for sin, and that no single metaphor, traditional or current, is sufficient on its own. He proposes three for contemporary usage, including: sin as failed relationship, sin as virus, and sin as collective blindness. See Kenneth R. Himes, "Human Failing: The Meanings and Metaphors of Sin," in *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues: Festschrift for James P. Hanigan*, ed. James Keating and James P. Hanigan (New York: Paulist Press, 2004), 147–148, 153–159.

23. See Fagan's call for rehabilitating sin in order to "help us to accept responsibility for our wrongdoing, and enable us to appreciate the incredible, liberating and re-creating gift we have been given in God's forgiveness." Fagan, "What Happened to Sin?," 407. An inadequate understanding of sin weakens our understanding of God's forgiveness. Charles Curran argues that understanding of sin of the moral manuals lives on in contemporary Catholic practices of the sacrament of reconciliation (a sacrament, which has experienced a significant decline in participation among Catholics), and suggests that "Catholics today have lost a true sense of sin and, hence, of reconciliation." Charles E. Curran, *The Development of Moral Theology: Five Strands*, Moral Traditions series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 254-256.

24. See Weaver, "Taking Sin Seriously," 48-49.

ing renewal of interest in vice.[25] Since the Second Vatican Council, there have been several developments in theological understandings of sin. In a recent article, James Keenan identifies four such developments: attention to how we sin out of strength; how sins are against our relational nature; the distinction between goodness and rightness; and attention to structural sin.[26] After attending to the sin of pride, to which humility has long been considered the antidote, and considering the sin of self-deprecation, the remainder of this section will explore how sin understood as the failure to bother to love and the category of vincible ignorance help us understand the relationship between the virtue of humility and sin.

3.2.1 Humility vs. the Sins of Pride and Self-Deprecation

In the previous chapter I identified the two vices opposed to humility: pride and self-deprecation. This section will consider the sins associated with the vice of deficient humility and the vice of excessive humility, respectively. While the former is fairly consistently named pride,[27] the latter has not been so consistently named.[28] Before turning to these spe-

25. Jean Porter expresses this point in "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression." Of course, this does not mean that there is no sustained ethical reflection on vice. See for instance Jana Bennett and David Cloutier, eds., *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices Can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), which uses the seven vices as a framework for an examination of conscience within the context of the sacrament of confession, as well as Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies*, 2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2020) and Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd, eds., *Virtues and Their Vices* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014).

26. See Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin."

27. Since pride is often thought of in terms of making oneself (rather than God) the center of one's life, pride intersects with idolatry. Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty, drawing on Reinhold Niebuhr, suggests that genuine humility is a response to human tendencies toward idolatry rather than pride. Hinson-Hasty, "Feminist Discussions of Sin," 112.

28. Aquinas briefly acknowledges the existence of an excess of the virtue of humility but does not name it. For instance, he cites Psalm 48:13 as a self-lowering that is not done well: "Sometimes, however, this may be ill-done, for instance when man, not understanding his honor, compares himself to senseless beasts, and becomes like to them." See Aquinas, *Summa II-II*, 1. 161, a. 1, ad. 1. Reinhold Niebuhr famously considers two sins as responses to anxiety provoked by the two characteristics of human life (finiteness and freedom): pride and sensuality. This contribution will be considered shortly, but it should be noted that while these sins can be understood to map to the vices contrary to humility as I develop it, this is not the focal point for Niebuhr. Feminist theologians have given more explicit attention to the opposite sin of pride. For example, Valerie Saiving defines it in terms of failing to be a self, and Susan Dunfee names this sin "hiding." See Saiving, "The Human Situation"; Dunfee, "Sin of Hiding."

cific sins contrary to humility however, it is necessary to clarify the terminology of "vice" and "sin."

Vice vs. Sin

While vice and sin overlap, they are by no means identical. Like virtues, vices are character traits, stable dispositions, a "habitual inclination to sin."[29] The distinction between character trait and action is hardly absolute: both virtues and vices are expressed in actions.[30] Yet just as it is difficult to ascertain whether a right action reflects true virtue, so too a sin can occur without the corresponding vicious habit. The risk of course is that sinful acts foster habits which lead to such sins becoming "second-nature" to us, at which point it is more difficult to refrain from such sin in the future. Within the Christian tradition, vice captures some of these pre-voluntary or non-voluntary dimensions of sin.[31] However, it is far too simplistic to align vice with the non-voluntary dimensions of sin and acts with the voluntary dimensions. Porter argues that "both dispositions and acts manifest, in different ways, both freedom and incapacity."[32]

The Sin and Vice of Pride

The identification of pride as a vice and as a sin has been long maintained in the Christian tradition. Referring to Ecclesiasticus (Sirach) 10:15, Augustine held that "pride is the start of all sin."[33] Aquinas considered pride both as a special sin due to its object ("the inordinate desire of one's own excellence") and sinful in a more general manner as giving

29. Bennett and Cloutier, *Naming Our Sins*, 14.

30. Porter argues that "we cannot form a concept of a specific virtue or vice, except in terms of the kinds of actions stemming from it, and it would make no sense to say that a fully functioning rational agent possesses virtues or vices that are never expressed in act." Porter, "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression," 129.

31. Jean Porter argues that both an understanding of sin as sickness or misfortune and as crime or transgression are needed, but that some fruitful medieval contributions to the former understanding are relatively neglected. Drawing on the thought of Anselm of Laon, Abelard, and Hugh of St. Victor, she suggests seeing vice as a symptom of illness (and grace as the remedy). Ibid., 118.

32. Ibid., 129-130.

33. See Augustine, *City of God* [in eng.; lat.], Loeb Classical Library; 411-417 (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957), 12.16, 14.13. Note that the citation may also appear as Ecclesiasticus 10:13 as verse numbers can vary between versions.

rise to other sins.[34] The former may manifest in three ways: boasting of what one does not have, falsely attributing some good to oneself or one's own merits, and what could be termed conceit (i.e. "when a man despises others and wishes to be singularly conspicuous").[35] The latter can occur in two ways: other sins can be directed toward a prideful end (excellence of the self) and pride removes an obstacle to sin, respect for God's law.[36] With respect to this general character, Aquinas understood pride to be prior to even the capital vices as it has "a general influence towards all sins."[37] Nonetheless, while all vices can sometimes stem from pride, Aquinas maintains that they do not always do so, as a person can sin not only through contempt of God but also through ignorance or weakness.[38] Further, Aquinas stresses that pride is only directly contrary to the virtue of humility, even though it is opposed to other virtues because it can make "ill use" of other virtues by finding in them an occasion for pride.[39]

Yet this identification of pride as a vice or sin has come into question. Part of the challenge likely has to do with definitions. In everyday speech the terms "pride" or "proud" can be used to denote an inflated sense of self-importance and an arrogant demeanor or a warranted self-respect.[40] Pride can also refer to something or someone that is cherished, the pleasure taken in doing or having something that reflects well on oneself, and the confident expression of a shared group identity (usually of a socially marginalized group).[41] To

34. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 2.
35. See *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 4.
36. See *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 2.
37. *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 8. He mentions pride as the cause of vainglory and envy in particular, and concludes, with Gregory, that pride is more fundamental ("principal") than the capital vices. See *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 8, ad. 2, 3, respectively. Aquinas cites, without qualification, Gregory's description of pride as "the queen of the vices." Perhaps then pride could be understood to be a metavice, just as humility is, for Fullam, a metavirtue.
38. See *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 2.
39. *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 2, ad. 3.
40. Compare *OED Online*, s.v. "pride, n.1, I, 1a and 2," and *OED Online*, s.v. "pride, n.1, I, 3," Oxford University Press, accessed December 3, 2021. The slipperiness of the word for pride has a long history. Aquinas distinguishes between *superbia* as exceeding the rule of reason (which is a sin) and as simple, "super-abundance." *Summa II-II*, q. 162, a. 1, ad. 1.
41. See *OED Online*, s.v. "pride, n.1, I, 4,", *OED Online*, s.v. "pride, n.1, I, 5," and *OED Online*, s.v. "pride, n.1, I, 6," Oxford University Press, accessed December 3, 2021.

further complicate matters, pride can be a noun or a verb.[42] Hence, pride can refer both to a building up of a disadvantaged group or haughty behavior that demeans others, to the right amount of self-esteem, or excessive self-esteem. Pride is also studied as an emotion that can likewise can take two forms, authentic and hubristic, which are linked to high and low well-being, respectively.[43] As an emotion, at least in some situations, it is thought to contribute to beneficial behaviors and social outcomes such as perseverance or the building up of social capital.[44] Consider that while ethicists may rightly caution against a parent identifying with a child's accomplishments,[45] there is evidence from the social sciences to support that part of good parenting is showing one's child that one is proud of them.[46]

42. For the verb, see also OED Online, s.v. "pride, v.". *OED Online*, Oxford University Press, accessed December 3, 2021. As a note, in this section, I have omitted definitions that are now obsolete, or that do not relate to the question at hand (i.e., a "pride" of lions).

43. For the two forms of pride, see Jessica L. Tracy and Richard W. Robins, "The Psychological Structure of Pride: A Tale of Two Facets," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no. 3 (2007): 506–525. For a look at self-conscious emotions (including these two forms of pride along with shame and guilt) at different points in life, see Ulrich Orth, Richard W. Robins, and Christopher J. Soto, "Tracking the Trajectory of Shame, Guilt, and Pride Across the Life Span," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 99, no. 6 (2010): 1061–1071.

44. See Lisa A. Williams and David DeSteno, "Pride and Perseverance: The Motivational Role of Pride," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94, no. 6 (2008): 1007–1017 and Lisa A. Williams and David DeSteno, "Pride: Adaptive Social Emotion or Seventh Sin?," *Psychological Science* 20, no. 3 (2009): 284–288, respectively.

45. Conflating a child's achievement with one's own would go against the need to respect the child as "other." Even with respect to the passing on of the faith, long viewed as the primary task of Christian parents, Julie Hanlon Rubio has argued that in the current context of rising religious disaffiliation, while parents have "a responsibility to 'rear' our children and orient them to their end in God, we must acknowledge that ultimately, children must decide for themselves what they want to believe and who they want to be." Julie Hanlon Rubio, "Passing on the Faith in an Era of Rising 'Nones': Practicing Courage and Humility," in *Virtue and the Moral Life: Theological and Philosophical Perspectives*, ed. Kathryn Getek Soltis and William Werpehowski (Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014), 108. In such a case, a parent should hesitate to take the credit for even the ultimate "achievement" of a strong faith.

46. Psychologists encourage parents to show their children that they are proud of them. This is considered an "essential good feeling, an anchor that sustains them in moments of discouragement, aloneness, and defeat." See Kenneth Barish, "Understanding Children's Emotions: Pride and Shame," *Psychology Today*, April 2012, `https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pride-and-joy/201205/understanding-children-s-emotions-pride-and-shame`. In the United States, it is widely held to help children develop a healthy self-esteem. See "Your Child's Self-Esteem (for Parents)," *Nemours KidsHealth*, accessed February 15, 2022, `https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/self-esteem.html` Nonetheless, there are cautions regarding how statements of pride can be counterproductive (such as in adolescence). See for instance, Carl E. Pickhardt, "Adolescence and Making Parents Proud," *Psychology Today*, April 2015, `https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201504/adolescence-and-making-parents-proud`.

There have been some calls for considering pride a virtue. In part this is because pride is connected with positive traits such as self-esteem that are conducive to human flourishing and also because it may serve as a necessary corrective to tendencies within the tradition to preach "feminine" virtues to those who are already socially marginalized or oppressed.[47] Some theologians hold that pride can be both virtue and vice or sin. Don Schweitzer argues this position, proposing Christian eschatological hope and the preferential option for the poor as two norms that can distinguish between when pride should be affirmed as virtue and when it warrants critique as sin.[48] Even when there is agreement that pride is a sin or a vice, feminist theologians have critiqued the paramount position it has been given in the Christian tradition as well as the lack of development of its opposing sin even when such a sin is named.[49] I locate my own work within this latter approach.

Today, pride maintains its place as one of the seven capital sins recognized by the Catholic Church[50] and a vice discussed by Christian ethicists.[51] Each of these sins is recognized as causing other sins and vices. As seen in chapter 1, pride is rightly identified as a sin that is one of the sources of the rupture of our relationships with other human beings

47. Mary Daly memorably critiqued the "feminine" morality which "hypocritically" idealizes "some of the qualities imposed upon the oppressed," through a "*theoretical* one-sided emphasis" upon virtues which reinforce rather than challenge the subjection of women, including "charity, meekness, obedience, humility, self-abnegation, sacrifice service." See Mary Daly, *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women's Liberation.* (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973), 100-101. Daly's concern with how the Church has fostered obedience and passivity in women, developed in her landmark work *The Church and the Second Sex* are two concerns that have continued to shape Catholic feminist theological discourse. See Jessica Coblentz and Brianne A. B. Jacobs, "Mary Daly's *The Church and the Second Sex* after Fifty Years of US Catholic Feminist Theology," *Theological Studies* 79, no. 3 (2018): 546-551.

48. Don Schweitzer, "Pride as Sin and Virtue," *Studies in Religion* 29, no. 2 (2000): 167–181. Note that the use of the preferential option for the poor as a norm resonates with Margaret Farley's suggestion that the grace of self-doubt will likely correspond to social location.

49. See for instance, Susan Nelson Dunfee's critique of Niebuhr's development of pride vs. sensuality. Dunfee, "Sin of Hiding."

50. See the list in *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, 2nd ed. / rev. in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II. (Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019), 1866, `https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/`.

51. See for instance, Craig A. Boyd, "Pride and Humility: Tempering the Desire for Excellence," in *Virtues and Their Vices*, ed. Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014), 245–266 and Charles C. Camosy, "Pride," chap. 8 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, ed. Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 146–167.

and with the Earth that results in injustice and ecological degradation. This approach is consistent with the deficiency of the virtue of humility as developed in chapter 2: denying or undervaluing the truth of our interconnectedness by subscribing to a false sense of self-sufficiency leads us to overestimate our place in the world and enables a will-to-power and a greed that causes both horrific injustice to other human beings and the transgression of planetary boundaries.[52] Yet, despite Aquinas's care to say that pride's general character does not mean that it occasions every sin, there is a long-standing strain of the Christian tradition which risks collapsing the distinction between pride as prior to even the capital sins and pride as the fundamental character of sin. In part this can be attributed to pride's association with rebellion against God due to interpretations of the events in Genesis 3.[53] This rebellion is understood to be born of an inordinate desire for one's own excellence,[54] or similarly, a desire to transcend our creaturely finitude and to take the place of God.[55] It also reflects the strain of the Christian tradition which understands sin primarily in terms of freely chosen, individual acts.

52. Since greed is often considered a capital vice in its own right, and pride was just mentioned in this paragraph as occupying a spot on the list of seven capital sins according to the Catholic Church, I want to point to a connection between pride and greed. In discussing the capital vices, Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung holds that self-sufficiency is the end of the sin of greed, "for while money itself is literally only a means, symbolically or representationally money promises self-sufficiency," and human beings find self-sufficiency "end-like and happiness-like enough to stir up great desire and to motivate us... in pursuit of it." See Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth: Three Interpretive Issues," *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 75, no. 1 (January 2011): 46.

53. Augustine identifies pride as the source of the evil will that prompted Adam and Eve to disobey. Augustine, *City of God*, 14.13. Likewise, Aquinas identifies pride as the first sin. See Aquinas, *Summa II-II*, q. 163, a. 1. This sin of pride then resulted in disobedience (II-II, 163, a. 1, ad. 1), and gluttony (II-II, 163, a. q, ad. 2). I would be remiss not to point out that part of pride's preeminence in the Christian tradition is due to its being considered a spiritual rather than a carnal sin. Unlike other sins which involve carnal pleasures, Augustine holds that we know that the devil is guilty of pride, and he understands pride to be the source of the "works of the flesh" listed in Galatians 5:19-21 (here Augustine includes enmity, strife, jealousy, anger, and envy). Ibid., 14.3. The lists of vices made by Cassian and Gregory arrange the vices in order from carnal to spiritual, and pride (superbia) is the last vice on that list.

54. See Aquinas, *Summa II-II*, q. 163, a. 1

55. Niebuhr writes, "The religious dimension of sin is man's rebellion against God, his effort to usurp the place of God." Reinhold Niebuhr, *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation*, vol. I. Human Nature, Gifford Lectures (New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1943), 179. Note that Niebuhr reads Genesis 3 in terms of the temptation that the serpent's interpretation of the human situation occasions. This temptation is "to break and transcend the limits which God has set for him," and so is found in the human "situation of finiteness and freedom." Ibid., 180.

Challenges to the Sin of Pride as Human Beings' Primary Sin

Feminist theologians have succeeded in drawing attention to the limitations of a theological understanding of pride as the primary way in which human beings sin.[56] Much of this initial work was in response to Reinhold Niebuhr's understanding of sin. Niebuhr thought that "the paradox of freedom and finiteness" which characterizes the human condition prompted human anxiety.[57] While that anxiety is not a sin, it tempts a person "either to deny the contingent character of his existence (in pride and self-love) or to escape from his freedom (in sensuality)."[58] Niebuhr identifies both pride and sensuality as the roots of sin, but, drawing on the Bible and the history of Christian thought, considers pride to be more fundamental than sensuality.[59]

In response, Valerie Saiving suggested that for women, the opposite was true, that sin consisted in too diffuse a self, rather than in pride.[60] A generation later, Judith Plaskow saw a tension within Niebuhr's treatment of the sin of sensuality.[61] She argues that Niebuhr does not take his own broader definition seriously, and that by focusing on pride as the fundamental human sin he "violates the symmetry of his account of human nature as creaturely freedom."[62] For Plaskow, pride is one sin, but hardly the only or most primary sin. She writes, "Human nature as finite freedom poses a danger but it also imposes a responsibility.... If pride is the attempt to usurp the place of God, sensuality is the denial of creation in his image."[63] Susan Nelson Dunfee also critiqued Niebuhr for narrowing the scope of the

56. My focus here is on pride, but feminist theologians have certainly also participated in the larger project of considering the social dimensions of sin.

57. See Niebuhr, *Nature and Destiny of Man*, 182.

58. Ibid., 185.

59. See the discussion of the sin of pride in Ibid., 186-207.

60. See Saiving, "The Human Situation." Similarly, Plaskow writes that for women, "The 'sin' which the feminine role in modern society creates and encourages in women is not illegitimate self-centeredness but failure to center the self, the failure to take responsibility for one's own life." Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace*, 92.

61. See ibid., 60. Compare the definitions of sensuality Niebuhr, *Nature and Destiny of Man*, 179, 185 vs. 228. Plaskow argues that broader definition would include "the many more subtle ways human beings have of abdicating their troublesome freedom." Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace*, 60.

62. Ibid., 63.

63. Ibid., 68.

sin of sensuality and subordinating it to the sin of pride.[64] She called this sin of escapism "the sin of hiding," putting the focus "more on the act, or nonact, of escaping rather than on the locus to which one escapes."[65] This identification of sin in terms of a failure to be self has been taken up by theologians writing from other contexts even as they call for greater attention to how this kind of sin intersects with other aspects of one's social location, such as race and socioeconomic class.[66]

Self-deprecation vs. Sloth

So far this discussion shows that pride has been challenged as the primary sin of human beings. Yet my argument is that self-deprecation is a vice opposed to the virtue of humility by way of excess, which does not necessarily follow from the preceding premise. When understood in a virtue framework that considers the virtue as the mean between the extremes of excess and deficiency, and particularly given the history of pride's opposition to the virtue of humility, the displacement of pride as the primary sin suggests that the sin of abdication of moral responsibility identified by Saiving, Plaskow, and Dunfee could be understood as stemming from the excess of humility. Yet both the language of inaction, escapism, or hiding and the fact that Niebuhr's development of the sins of pride and sensuality occurred in the context of consideration of two characteristics of human existence suggest that there might be another option: the vice of sloth.

Though sloth is frequently associated with laziness, the failure to be diligent (or industrious),[67] Aquinas considered the vice of sloth as one of the vices which oppose the

64. See Dunfee, "Sin of Hiding," 320-321.

65. Dunfee is reacting here to Niebuhr's narrowing of the sin of sensuality to bodily escapism. See ibid., 318.

66. For example, Miguel De La Torre argues "that 'sin for Hispanics'—failure to be self—is similar" to Saiving's identification of sin. See De La Torre, "Mad Men, Competitive Women, and Invisible Hispanics," 123. For him this is true for both males and females; all Hispanics "are relegated to the role of passiveness." Ibid., 124.

67. Julie Hanlon Rubio contrasts the "hard work" understanding with the "surrender" understanding. See Julie Hanlon Rubio, "Sloth," chap. 5 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, ed. Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 90. She goes on to argue for the for surrender understanding as the primary one in the Christian tradition, in which sloth is opposed to love not industriousness. Kenneth Himes

theological virtue of charity.[68] When juxtaposed with charity rather than diligence, sloth is considered in terms of an inner resistance to a "person's true identity and vocation in relationship with God."[69] While the view of sloth as counteracting laziness represents a truncated, though common, understanding of the vice of sloth,[70] the richer view of sloth as opposing charity gets at the escapism from moral responsibility pinpointed by Dunfee and others.[71] One sign of sloth, restlessness or "false activity,"[72] seems to map to the concern that people can get lost in meaningless activity.[73] The other sign of sloth, inertia ("false

makes this point in the context of the threat that the vice of sloth poses to the formation of conscience. See Kenneth R. Himes O.F.M., "The Formation of Conscience: The Sin of Sloth and the Significance of Spirituality," in *Spirituality and Moral Theology: Essays from a Pastoral Perspective*, ed. James Keating (New York: Paulist Press, 2000), 64. Christopher Jones and Conor Kelly argue that sloth is a structural vice in the United States. The two understandings of sloth are at work here, since U.S. individualism is often considered to support personal diligence but, the authors argue, results in structural support for the vice of sloth understood as a vice against charity. See Christopher D. Jones and Conor M. Kelly, "Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2017): 117–134.

68. In *Summa II-II*, Aquinas identifies the vices opposed to charity as hatred (q. 34), sloth (q. 35), and envy (q. 36).

69. Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, "The Roots of Despair," *Res Philosophica* 92, no. 4 (2015): 836. Kenneth Himes makes a similar point, writing "Sloth is a capital sin precisely because we are creatures graced with the capability of growth into a deeper and richer participation in life, and sloth undercuts the drive to self-transcendence." Himes, "The Formation of Conscience," 65. Likewise, the remedy for sloth varies depending on whether sloth is viewed as laziness or moral apathy, with the remedy for the former being within our control but the latter is not something we can correct on our own. Ibid., 66.

70. DeYoung notes that it can be challenging to identify sloth when it manifests in the strategy of escapism because it appears active, contrary to our expectations of finding laziness. DeYoung, "The Roots of Despair," 838. Jones and Kelly consider popular and traditional conceptions of sloth in Jones and Kelly, "Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice," 122-127.

71. As Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung shows, for Aquinas, sloth is an aversion to "the spiritual good that is charity - understood as our participation in the divine nature." See DeYoung, "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth," 54. In the context of what Saiving has to say about sin, Hanlon Rubio nuances her surrender understanding of sloth, arguing that "sloth may manifest as self-negation rather than self-assertion," and that feminist theologians rightly remind us "that one must have a strong sense of self before one can authentically give that self away." See Hanlon Rubio, "Sloth," 100.

72. DeYoung identifies "restlessness (false activity) and inertia (false rest)" as "the twin marks of a slothful character" in DeYoung, "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth," 57.

73. Citing Niebuhr, Plaskow states, "The argument then is not that women are more likely than men to "lose themselves in some aspect of the world's vitalities," but that, given society's expectations concerning them, they are more liable to "become lost in the detailed processes, activities, and interests of existence." See Plaskow, *Sex, Sin, and Grace*, 63. This description resonates with the strategy of escapism or distraction that DeYoung discusses in DeYoung, "The Roots of Despair," 838-840. Julie Hanlon Rubio also notes that sloth can manifest as "mindless busyness" and that "avoiding sloth requires directing one's passion and energy to *meaningful* activity." See Hanlon Rubio, "Sloth," 92.

rest"), can manifest as extreme sorrow or despair.[74] In either case there is resistance to the effort (which may be spiritual and/or physical) "that is required to accept and live out her new 'divine' nature."[75] Furthermore, faintheartedness and despair are traditionally counted among the offspring ("daughters") of sloth.[76] Despair (through sloth) has been linked to pride through a rejection of God's assistance as a desirable good.[77] Sloth can also be linked to pride by a false emphasis on laziness vs. industriousness, which in an individualistic society like the United States, is in service of self-sufficiency.[78]

What then is the difference between the vices of sloth and self-deprecation? Both suggest sin in the key of passivity rather than domination. Sloth can be seen in the failure to act in accordance with the demands of love which stem from our relationship with God. I suggest that the difference lies in knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world vs. being willing to put in the effort to act in accordance with that place. In other words, we have to recognize that we are interdependent, relational beings (which pertains to humility) before we can either respond or resist responding to the demands that our interdependence, once acknowledged, places upon us (which pertains to charity).[79] In a sense, this is al-

74. Of sloth manifesting as inertia, DeYoung writes, "The slothful person cannot bear to give up on happiness but she also cannot bear to endure what true happiness requires of her." See DeYoung, "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth," 58.

75. Ibid., 60.

76. This list was developed by Gregory and pronounced "fitting" by Aquinas. See *Summa II-II*, q. 35, a. 4, ad. 2. Despair results in avoidance of the end (which is a spiritual good), while faintheartedness results in "avoidance of those goods which are the means to the end, in matters of difficulty..." For more on sloth's offspring vices, including pusillanimity, see DeYoung's discussion in DeYoung, "The Roots of Despair," 837-844. See the article in its entirety for an argument that despair is the end point of the progression of the vice of sloth.

77. DeYoung notes both that despair conforms to pride (see ibid., 847-849) and that it is difficult to remedy despair through virtuous practices or spiritual disciplines is because "Such activities also imply placing oneself in a position of teachability, receptivity, and even submission, which means their appeal to a pridefully despairing person would likely be severely limited." Ibid., 850.

78. Jones and Kelly note that this promotion of self-sufficiency is in support of the liberal form of individualism rather than republican individualism. While both forms of individualism play a role in U.S. society, the authors argue that currently the individual form eclipses the republican form. See Jones and Kelly, "Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice," 119-121. In their discussion of Karl Barth's treatment of sloth, they note his concern with isolation and self-sufficiency (see ibid., 125). The connection to humility represents my own view, not theirs.

79. I do not argue that the vices of self-deprecation or pride are necessarily prior to sloth, but rather that self-deprecation cannot be simply subsumed under sloth and can, like pride, give rise to sloth.

ready acknowledged to the extent that pride, including its emphasis on self-sufficiency, is considered to be a source of sloth. I simply argue that like pride, self-deprecation, with its self-weakening, can likewise be considered a source of sloth.

Here I differ a bit from the treatment of sloth and solidarity by Jones and Kelly.[80] While I agree with their assessment of an individualistic ethos as characteristic of US culture, and that sloth properly understood as opposed to charity is a structural vice in US society, I think it arises through pride understood as a denial of our interdependence (hence the idealization of self-sufficiency). This pride is a structural vice that then gives rise to another, just as insisting on the self-sufficiency of the individual makes it easier to reduce the (perceived) moral responsibilities of that individual.[81] To that extent I agree that "the idealization of independence masks the realities of human interdependence, creating a myth of autonomy that falsely shrinks one's moral responsibilities,"[82] but I see two vices at work, pride and sloth, in that order. This leaves room for another masking of human interdependence that stems from a self-weakening dependence, that can also lead to the narrowing of one's moral responsibilities and so facilitate sloth or indifference.

We certainly can be guilty of resisting the demands of love, but I suggest that the corollary to recognizing those demands is for us to see our place in the world truthfully as one of interdependence. Yes, we are limited, but we are also capable. We can and do overestimate and inordinately seek our own excellence. We have the tendency to think we are self-sufficient (or at least ought to be), to think we have no need of assistance from and little to nothing to learn from others, and this underlying disposition is expressed in actions and inaction that cause untold suffering, injustice, and ecological degradation. Yet we also can and do underestimate ourselves and weaken ourselves. After all, it is easy not to take

80. See especially the section on sloth as America's structural vice Jones and Kelly, "Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice," 127-130.
81. Jones and Kelly do not mention humility in this discussion, but they do mention interdependence. See ibid., 122.
82. Ibid.

responsibility when we think we are incapable or that it is truly not our place to do so. By contrast, an other-centered valuing of the truth of our interdependence (humility) ought to support our growth in committing firmly to seeking the well-being of others (solidarity).[83] It challenges us to recognize our dependence on others, but also to recognize the ways others depend on us.

This concern that self-deprecation sinfully weakens the self ties into a broader discussion around human freedom, virtue, vice, and sin. A certain degree of maturity is necessary for the acquisition of virtue.[84] With respect to the virtues, Porter argues that "we stand in need of these dispositions because we are incapable of full rational freedom until we develop these dispositions."[85] This means that a degree of maturity is needed in order to exercise human freedom. Porter gives the example of an immature girl:

> An immature girl may well be capable of desire, resolution, and forceful action—we may say that she is determined, or persistent, or perhaps willful. But her choices and activities will lack the hallmarks of true freedom—that is, they will not consistently reflect the commitments of a unified self, someone who can rely on her self and on whom others can rely. We say that she does not

83. The virtue of planetary solidarity has been suggested as the virtue through which we seek the planetary common good. Jame Schaefer argues that humans can seek the planetary common good by committing "in solidarity with one another to function in solidarity with all constituents of Earth." Schaefer, "Environmental Degradation," 84. She identifies three necessary commitments. The first, viewing ourselves "realistically" (85) I think ties into the virtue of humility as developed here.

84. That valuing the truth of our interdependence is connected to our moral maturity resonates with Carol Gilligan's expansion of our understanding of moral development to go beyond basing our identity in separation and isolation (which was frequently reflected in the experience of men) and rather to also include the experience of interconnection in the conception of identity (frequently reflected in the experience of women). This expanded conception of identity is tied to the expansion of the conception of the moral domain to include not only justice but also responsibility and care in relationships. See Carol Gilligan, *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003), 171-173, `https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb32978.0001.001`. It also suggests some of the risks of the two vices opposed to humility. Maturity is to be found neither in an overemphasis on separation that does not attend to the reality of our interdependence nor in an overemphasis on our interconnectedness that leads to a self-deprecation that impedes taking responsibility for who we are and what we do.

85. Porter, "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression," 128.

> yet have command of herself, she is not yet self-possessed or sure of herself and her place in the world.[86]

As will be seen in the following section with respect to sin, the identification of the failure to exercise one's moral responsibility ties into a broader concern with how approaches to sin in the Catholic tradition in the first half of the twentieth century facilitated moral immaturity. Here I wish to simply note that the relationship of the vice of self-deprecation in particular to immaturity is complicated by social sin, which plays a role in cultivating self-deprecation in people who belong to socially marginalized groups.

3.2.2 Sinning out of Strength and Sin as Failure to Bother to Love

The impact of the domestication of sin noted in the beginning of this section included both the narrowing of the ambit of sin and a growing tendency to excuse sinners. According to Aquinas, the scope of moral action was quite large, encompassing "every human action that proceeds from deliberate reason."[87] Yet, with sins against the sixth and ninth commandments coming to become defined as mortal in the seventeenth century, sins related to sex overshadowed other sins and contributed to significant anxiety for Christians until after the Second Vatican Council.[88] The anxiety over this particular set of sins contributed to the efforts of confessors and manualists "to ease the stress of anxious Christians."[89] Combined with the psychology of their day, this likely compassionate motivation led moral manualists such as Slater, Davis, and Jone to identify a growing number of conditions which excused the penitent. In these later moral manuals and a similar "turn to incapacity in the American moralists John Ford and Gerald Kelly," Keenan identifies a trend in which the capability, responsibility, and maturity of the penitent were diminished.[90] Today, the general assump-

86. Porter, "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression," 128.
87. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa* I-II, q. 18, a. 9.
88. See Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," 168-171.
89. Ibid., 171.
90. See ibid., 167.

tion has shifted from "we act with knowledge and consent to the present habit of acquitting one another from culpability by claiming lack of knowledge and consent."[91]

Keenan argues that underlying this diminished moral maturity is an understanding of sin as something we commit out of weakness, which in turn fosters an inaccurate self-understanding. He shows that the tendency to excuse the penitent goes against Franz Böckle's insights that "sin is only possible as a result of human freedom,"[92] and that confession is performative.[93] Confession obligates us to apply freedom to ourselves and to recognize that we could have acted differently; it pushes us to accept responsibility rather than to find reasons to justify what we have done.[94] Building on these insights along with attention to synoptic gospel passages such as Luke 10:25-37, 16:19-31 and Matthew 18:21-35, 25:31-46, Keenan argues for understanding sin as stemming from our strength rather than our weakness:

> Until we have that insight we are trapped by an understanding of ourselves as weak and constrained, a convenient stance that literally keeps us from believing that we need to confess. When we confess, however, we realize that we sinned not out of weakness, but out of strength.[95]

When we think of ourselves as weak, it is easy to think of ourselves as weak and good, rather than to truly face our sinfulness.[96] This is, I think, one risk of an underdeveloped virtue of humility that is viewed primarily in self-lowering, restraining terms: self-

91. James F. Keenan, *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts From the Catholic Tradition*, 3rd ed. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2016), 37.

92. Franz Böckle, "Theological Reflection about Guilt and Sin," in *Fundamental Moral Theology* (New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1980), 88, cited in Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," 172.

93. Keenan prefers "effective" or "illuminative." Ibid., 172. Cf. Franz Böckle, 88.

94. Böckle writes, "He can only make this confession in a meaningful way if he reflects about his action, and he has to tell himself that he might have been able to act differently." Böckle, "Theological Reflection about Guilt and Sin," 89.

95. Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," 172. This is not to say that confession always starts with this realization. Elsewhere Keenan observes that people frequently confess their weakness. See Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 38.

96. "By focusing on our weaknesses, we inevitably believe that we are weak—good, but weak." Ibid., 39.

deprecation can lead us to consider ourselves as weaker than we really are, and considering ourselves incapable risks considering ourselves inculpable.

The effectiveness of confession means that it is through the confessing of our sins that we begin to realize the extent of our sinfulness.[97] Keenan links this insight to "redemptive humility, a humility not burdened with self-deprecation, but rather with an unabashed self-understanding of what grace and freedom are."[98] This self-understanding helps us dispense with the excuses we make and accept moral responsibility for our actions and our failures to act. Facing our sinfulness is profoundly uncomfortable, and it leaves us with a choice: give up in despair or grow in modesty, humility, and gratitude.[99]

Combining the idea that we sin out of strength with developments in the distinction between goodness and rightness, Keenan argues that sin is fundamentally rooted in "the failure to bother to love."[100] This failure "is a failure to strive *as much as one can* for the right."[101] It is a failure to respond to the call of discipleship, and Christian discipleship is demanding, affecting the whole person.[102] So while we may strive and still get it wrong without sinning, the fact that our actions are deemed sufficiently right does not remove the danger of sin.

By framing sin in terms of failing to bother to love, Keenan challenges us to stop excusing ourselves based on our weakness and to pay closer attention to our areas of strength, comfort, and complacency. This is a challenge to acknowledge and live out our moral responsibility rather than to abdicate it or hide from it. It fits within the broader shift toward

97. Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," 172.
98. Ibid., 173.
99. Keenan links this choice to the parable of the rich man in Luke. See discussion Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 49. I also link this to the previous discussion about sloth (of which despair is considered an offspring, although of course despair is also considered a vice opposed to the theological virtue of hope).
100. Keenan, "Raising Expectations on Sin," 177.
101. James F. Keenan, "Can a Wrong Action Be Good?: The Development of Theological Opinion on the Erroneous Conscience," *Église et théologie* 24, no. 2 (1993): 217.
102. Curran identifies four features of Christian discipleship, including its "totality" and "radicality." Charles E. Curran, *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis*, Moral Traditions & Moral Arguments (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1999), 90-91.

considering the person and not just the acts in an attempt to correct the domestication of sin found in the moral manuals of the first half of the twentieth century as well as the effort to better attend to the social dimensions of sin.[103] While we should not ignore our wrong actions, neither should we think that naming them is sufficient. To do so risks domesticating sin, keeping it at arm's length, gutting it of its ability to surprise us.

This attention to how we can find it more comfortable to think of ourselves as sinning out of weakness fits with attention to sin stemming also from the excess of humility rather than only from its deficit. Our areas of strength, comfort, and complacency may certainly be understood in terms of pride, that is, of overestimating our place in the word and underestimating our dependence on others. Belief in the superiority of our place vis-à-vis another paves the way for domination of those we see as other. In terms of interdependence, belief in our self-sufficiency enables us to remain oblivious to the presence and cold-hearted to the struggles of those on whom we actually depend. So far, sin can be fairly easily identified as stemming from our strength, manifested in both sins of commission and sins of omission. Our failure to bother to love shows up in both our domineering of and prideful inattention to others. Returning to the sins identified in chapter 1 as playing a critical role in the current ecological crisis, our failure to bother to love God's creation (including but not limited to our fellow human beings) manifests in the sins of pride and greed and the indifference born of these.

Yet our areas of strength, comfort, and complacency can also be understood in terms of an indifference that stems from underestimating our place in the world, from a self-deprecation that overstates our dependence on others at the expense of recognizing the ways others depend on us. How often do we tell ourselves, I'd love to help, but I do not have the resources? Or, I could have spoken up, but it's really not my place to do so? While we may be correct in a particular case, belief in our weakness paves the way for abdication

103. Keenan argues that defining sin as the failure to bother to love is compatible with the category of social sin. See Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 46-49.

of our moral responsibility. It also supports structural injustice, including lateral violence against those who challenge an unjust status quo. In terms of interdependence, believing ourselves to be utterly dependent enables us to ignore the challenge of discipleship on the grounds that we are incapable of meaningful activity, to drift through life as passive receivers rather than active moral agents.

3.2.3 Sin and Vincible Ignorance

The categories of vincible and invincible ignorance arose with respect to the conscience, and the question of whether a person is obligated to follow their conscience even if it is erroneous.[104] In the *Summa Theologiae*, Aquinas elucidated the categories of vincible and invincible ignorance:

> Now it is evident that whoever neglects to have or do what he ought to have or do, commits a sin of omission. Wherefore through negligence, ignorance of what one is bound to know, is a sin; whereas it is not imputed as a sin to man, if he fails to know what he is unable to know. Consequently ignorance of such like things is called "invincible" because it cannot be overcome by study. For this reason such like ignorance, not being voluntary, since it is not in our power to be rid of it, is not a sin: wherefore it is evident that no invincible ignorance

104. As far as the origins of this debate, Bernard of Clairvaux held that invincible ignorance did not excuse a person from culpability for a wrong act while Peter Abelard prioritized intention such that an act committed with right intention was good. Aquinas maintained that a person could be excused from responsibility for a wrong act even though the act itself remained objectively wrong while Alphonsus Ligouri took it a step further, from simply being excused to viewing the act as good. For an overview of the development of the question of following an erroneous conscience within the Catholic tradition, see Keenan, "Can a Wrong Action Be Good?" For a look at how the categories of vincible and invincible ignorance can be applied to the question of the salvation of non-Christians (or even baptized Christians who have not persevered in the faith), see Stephen Bullivant, "Sine Culpa? Vatican II and Inculpable Ignorance," *Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2011): 70–86. For a brief overview of the history and terminology of conscience, see Elizabeth Sweeny Block, "Conscience," chap. Seven in *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, ed. Tobias Winwright (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 72-73.

is a sin. On the other hand, vincible ignorance is a sin, if it be about matters one is bound to know; but not, if it be about things one is not bound to know.[105]

Invincible ignorance is not within a person's ability to overcome, even with effort, and so is understood to remove culpability for wrong actions. By contrast, failing to know what one is both capable of knowing and bound to know does not remove culpability, and is a sin.

Similarly, in the manualist tradition, ignorance was identified as the cause of an erroneous conscience, and invincible ignorance, unlike vincible ignorance, was considered to remove culpability for wrong actions.[106] The problem here was that over time, an increasing number of obstacles to a true conscience were identified, with the result that lay people were not considered morally responsible and mature.[107] As mentioned above, in the aftermath of World War II, European theologians in particular turned to the importance of conscience formation.[108]

The categories of vincible and invincible ignorance are also associated with the contemporary distinction between goodness and rightness.[109] Currently, with respect to erroneous judgement, the *Catechism of the Catholic Church* holds that a person must always obey his conscience even if it is erroneous (no. 1790), that a person often bears responsibility for the ignorance that leads to erroneous judgement, and so is culpable (no. 1791), but that the ignorance can be invincible, in which case a person is not culpable (no. 1793). Citing

105. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 76, a. 2. On the question of ignorance and the erroneous conscience see also *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 19, a. 6.

106. See James T. Bretzke, "Ignorance," in *Handbook of Roman Catholic Moral Terms* (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013), 119. A third kind of ignorance was identified in the manualist tradition, crass or supine ignorance, but this fell within the category of vincible ignorance.

107. See Keenan, "A Phenomenology of Conscience," 3-5.

108. For example, Odon Lottin and Bernard Häring. See Keenan's treatment of their contributions to developments in theological understanding of conscience in Keenan, "Vatican II and Theological Ethics," 167-174 and James F. Keenan, "Redeeming Conscience," *Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2015): 5-8. For a moral detailed look at the contributions of each of these theologians to moral theology, see Keenan, *A History*, 35-58 and ibid., 83-110, respectively.

109. For another overview of the erroneous conscience, ignorance, and culpability, including an interest in how these intersect with social sin, see Sweeny Block, "Conscience," 361-365.

Gaudium et Spes no. 16, the *Catechism* affirms that vincible ignorance occurs when a person "takes little trouble to find out what is true and good, or when conscience is by degrees almost blinded through the habit of committing sin" (no. 1791).[110]

Yet some scholars question the usefulness of the categories of vincible and invincible ignorance on the grounds of implicit discrimination and unconscious bias.[111] Recent attention to the category of erroneous conscience fits within a broader context of questioning how to understand and counter the corruptive influence of social sin, particularly racism, on conscience formation.[112] Massingale draws attention to the problem that "unconscious racial bias" poses to right formation of one's conscience.[113] Drawing on Bernard Lonergan's definition of culture, Massingale writes:

> As a culture, racism is also *formative*. Racism is a symbol system, a culture operating on a preconscious level, a learned and communal frame of reference that shapes identity, consciousness, and behavior—the way social groups understand their place and worth. Race, in the Western world, tells us who we are.[114]

The damage exceeds what can be attributed to culpable ignorance, and Massingale does not believe the category of invincible ignorance resolves the matter either.[115] Drawing in part on Massingale, Sweeny Block also argues that racism is too pervasive to be properly

110. Given that reference to blindness reflects ableism, in my own writing, I strive to follow Elizabeth Sweeny Block in testing out alternative phrases, such as "moral obliviousness." See Elizabeth Sweeny Block, "White Privilege and the Erroneous Conscience: Rethinking Moral Culpability and Ignorance," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 39, no. 2 (2019): 358, footnote 2.

111. Sweeny Block, "Conscience," 73, 80. For a more in depth treatment of this issue, see Sweeny Block, "White Privilege and the Erroneous Conscience: Rethinking Moral Culpability and Ignorance."

112. In addition to Bryan N. Massingale, "Conscience Formation and the Challenge of Unconscious Racial Bias," in *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, ed. David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 53–68, see Lisa Fullam's use of the social sin of sexism as a test case for her exploration of how virtue ethics can "explain and unmask the influence" of social sin and the identification of practices "that help us to form conscience in a way that resists self-destructive deformation of our moral ideals." See Fullam, "Joan of Arc," 72. See also Keenan, "Redeeming Conscience," 135-138.

113. Massingale, "Conscience Formation."

114. Ibid., 57.

115. See ibid., 64.

understood as falling within the scope of vincible ignorance since unconscious racial bias cannot be removed even with effort, and yet it also precludes the moral innocence that is typically affirmed by the category of invincible ignorance.[116] She resolves the tension by arguing that moral innocence ought not to be the focus of the moral life.[117]

While social sin poses serious problems to the formation of a right conscience, and the authors referenced above indicate that there are limits to the applicability of the category of vincible ignorance, I suggest that there is a role for the cultivation of the virtue of humility in expanding the bounds of what we can and ought to know. In conjunction with an understanding of sin as fundamentally a failure to bother to love, the category of vincible ignorance can help us remove our justifications for our failure to know what we could have and should have known. While our ignorance is not fully voluntary due to the corrosive impacts of social sin on our very identity and our idea of right and wrong, neither is it fully involuntary. This is the aspect I wish to highlight here. I seek not to resolve the tension, but rather to say that one fruit of that tension is to attend to the ways in which our ignorance might be considered vincible.

Social sin, such as racism or sexism, can and does corrode our identity and our grasp of right and wrong. Our decisions are not always fully conscious and intentional. Yet I argue that we know more than we think we do, more than we are willing to recognize. Consider James Baldwin's remark, "Every white person in this country—I do not care what he says or what she says—knows one thing.... They know that they would not like to be black here. If they know that, they know everything they need to know. And whatever else they may say is a lie."[118] While Amy Cooper may have acted out of reflex rather than entirely

116. Sweeny Block maintains that the category of an erroneous conscience "does not sufficiently account for moral obliviousness." See Sweeny Block, "White Privilege and the Erroneous Conscience: Rethinking Moral Culpability and Ignorance," 366.
117. Rather, she argues that we can and should take moral responsibility for our complicity in structural injustices, "even if that responsibility is not always enhanced by liability or guilt." See ibid., 374.
118. James Baldwin, "Speech at the University of California Berkeley," 1979, as cited in Bryan N. Massingale, "The Assumptions of White Privilege and What We Can Do about It: Amy Cooper knew exactly what she was doing. We all do. And that's the problem," *National Catholic Reporter* 56, no. 18 (2020): 1.

consciously, and while she was not taught explicitly, she nonetheless knew what she was doing when she made the decision to call the police on a black man who had politely asked her to follow park rules. Massingale points out that the situation was entirely "legible," and identifies twenty points that she (and Christian Cooper, and in fact all of us in the United States), knew.[119] Amy Cooper knew the advantages that her social location conferred on her, and how she could make life much more difficult for Christian Cooper due to his social location. Here it is worth noting that she was acting out of a place of relative strength, a strength conferred by the privileging of whites in U.S. society.

Consider vincible ignorance and sin as the failure to bother to love in light of another case, the experience of women academics of color in the field of religion. Katie Cannon draws attention to the prevalent problem of microaggressions in the classroom, and she frames these experiences in terms of "mind-boggling arrogance and callous ignorance."[120] Furthermore, with respect to the lack of support from colleagues who are "typically oriented toward justice advocacy," she describes them as "disinterested observers or casual bystanders," who suffer "from inertia," and "seem caught in the muddled middle of fearful ambivalence and apathetic ignorance..."[121] That is, having a commitment to justice does not preclude disinterest with getting involved in a concrete situation of injustice in the classroom. Here again, we are within the realm of vincible ignorance. While engaging in microaggressions would be sin in the key of pride, and "fearful ambivalence" suggests insufficient courage,[122] "apathetic ignorance" suggests a failure to even bother at all.

If humility is, as I argued in the previous chapter, "the virtue characterized by knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings which is acquired through the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance, and enabled by the

119. Massingale, "The Assumptions of White Privilege."
120. Katie G. Cannon, "Eliminating Ignorance," *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 32, no. 1 (2016): 118.
121. Ibid., 119.
122. That growth in the virtue of courage is also needed is unsurprising given that the virtue of humility in recent scholarship is indeed paired with courage.

‘graces’ of self-doubt and self-affirmation,” then cultivation of that virtue will help us in our efforts to inform our conscience by helping us see how the truth of our place in the world is affected by sexism, racism, ableism, clericalism, and so on. Through its practices of other-centeredness, humility will aid in the formation of a socially oriented conscience, one which is not invoked solely to opt out.[123] For instance, to the extent that our examination of conscience ought to include the attempt to see ourselves as others do,[124] a humble person will engage in a more fruitful examination of conscience. While the other-centered aspect of humility means that it will be of service in the resistance to social sin, the focus on interdependence moves us from the strictly human to include the ecological domain.

We will not finish the process of learning the truth of our place through others. We cannot domesticate sin but we can continue to strive to turn away from it. We will still get it wrong sometimes (often) and find more areas in our life in which our hearts surprise us with their coldness. In the next section I will consider the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which shows us how easy it is to unquestioningly accept social situations that are contrary to God’s design. Yet to the extent that we bother to try, that we bother to seek out the ways we fall short, benefit unjustly, can love better, we nonetheless turn away from sin.

3.3 Biblical Perspectives on Sin

Just as the Bible does not portray a single, unified ethic,[125] neither does it present a single, unified understanding of sin. However, sin is a central category in Christian scriptures, both

123. For the difference between a socially oriented conscience and the American tendency to invoke conscience to opt out, see Keenan’s comparison of European and American theological approaches to conscience after the Second World War. Keenan, “Redeeming Conscience,” 133-135.

124. See Maureen H. O’Connell, “Catholics and racism: from examination of conscience to examination of culture,” *National Catholic Reporter*, March 30, 2012.

125. For a brief introduction to the diversity of ethics in the Bible, see Allen Verhey, “Ethics in Scripture,” in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, ed. Joel B. Green et al. (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 5–12. That there is great diversity does not thereby preclude coherency. See James F. Keenan, “Bible and Ethics/Modern Life,” in *The Jerome Biblical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed., ed. John J. Collins et al. (London: Bloomsbury, 2022), 13-14.

in the Old Testament and the New Testament.[126] Hence, the category of sin is necessary to Christian discipleship if that discipleship is to be accountable to the Christian scriptures. Jean Porter puts it nicely when she writes, "Unless men and women have some sense of sin, not as an abstract category or a general condition but a reality in their own day-to-day lives, they will not understand who Jesus is, or why the gospel represents good news for them."[127]

3.3.1 Methodological Considerations

Consulting what the Christian Bible has to say on sin is no straightforward task. First, there is no single word for or simple definition of sin. The Hebrew Bible alone includes over 50 terms for the concept.[128] As Gary Anderson notes, sin is difficult to define and speaking of it inevitably requires the use of metaphor. For this reason, he focuses more on the verb than the noun.[129] Yet just as there is no single term for sin in the Bible, neither is there a single metaphor. Anderson identifies three primary metaphors in the Bible in which the concepts of sin and forgiveness are embedded: sin as stain, sin as burden or weight, and sin as debt, which correspond to forgiveness in terms of cleansing the stain, lifting the burden, and paying off the debt.[130]

From the theological side, metaphors play an essential role in talking about mystery. Human language and understanding are inadequate to the mystery of God and reliance on

126. Marius Nel and Friedrich Wilhelm Horn, "Sin," in *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Ethics* (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015), doi:10.1093/acref:obso/9780199829910.013.0313.
127. Porter, "Sin, Sickness, and Transgression," 116.
128. See Nel and Horn, "Sin."
129. Anderson notes that the noun for sin in the metaphors for sin as stain or burden is the same: *ăwōn* (iniquity). It is the verb that determines the metaphor, *kibbēs* ("wash away") and *nāśā'* ("carry away"), respectively. Yet whereas the stain metaphor is often carried over in translation (i.e., "sins being 'washed away'"), the burden metaphor is often elided by a translation of "to forgive a sin" instead of "to carry away (the weight of) a sin." See Gary A. Anderson, *Sin: A History* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009), 16-17. Translation is a complex task, and in this particular case, the meaning of the idiom can also mean bearing the weight of one's own sin in some contexts. See discussion pages 17-21.
130. See ibid., 4, 12.

a small set of terms, images, and metaphors risks serious distortion of our understanding of God.[131] This use of multiple metaphors or images to preserve mystery is not limited to God-talk but also applies to sin-talk. In a chapter on human failing, Kenneth Himes writes that theology has to use metaphor when speaking of mystery, and the reality of sin is also a mystery "too vast to be captured by any metaphor or short list of metaphors."[132] While some metaphors may be more or less adequate to sin-talk in our time, no single model of sin is adequate in itself.[133] Hence, what the Bible has to say about sin must not be reduced to a single term, metaphor, model, or image.

Secondly, attention to sin is not evenly distributed throughout the Christian Bible. While the abundance of terms denoting sin strongly suggests that sin is an important biblical theme, frequency alone is an insufficient basis for this conclusion. Consider that in the New Testament, Jesus's preaching and the Synoptic Gospels do not contain many references to sin. Rather, the use of sin terminology is concentrated in Romans, John, 1-3 John, Hebrews, and James.[134] Yet few biblical readers, whether approaching the text academically or in a faith setting, would argue that the forgiveness of sin and the inclusion of sinners are not important themes in Jesus's life, preaching, and ministry. Similarly, biblical references to sin are not simply interchangeable. For instance in the Hebrew Bible, Anderson argues that the three metaphors mentioned above reflect linguistic and cultural changes as

131. Feminist theologians have argued this case persuasively with respect to the exclusive use of male pronouns, images, and accompanying concepts. For a brief but good overview of the theological as well as sociological and psychological effects of the exclusive, literal, and patriarchal use of male terms for God, see Elizabeth A. Johnson, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*, 10th anniversary ed. (New York: Crossroad, 2002), 33-41.

132. Himes, "Human Failing," 147, 159-160.

133. For example, Himes argues that one traditional sin metaphor, sin as stain, is inadequate to a robust understanding of moral wrongfulness on the grounds that is does not differentiate between voluntary and involuntary actions, that it neglects to attend to the interpersonal and social dimensions of sin, and teaches people to avoid sin for the wrong reasons (to avoid shame and fear rather than to pursue the good). Ibid., 148. Constructively, he suggests three new, biblically-informed models of sin as failed relationship, virus, and collective blindness. Ibid., 153-159.

134. In the New Testament, sin is most often referenced using derivatives of the root *hamart-*, a root which rarely appears in either the Gospels or Acts. Romans alone contains over a full 48 of the 173 instances of the noun *hamartia* in the New Testament, though that frequency is not seen in the other Pauline (or Deuteropauline) writings. See Nel and Horn, "Sin."

well as the experience of the community over time. Anderson traces a clear trajectory from the primary understanding of sin as weight in First Temple Judaism, to the understanding of sin as debt that emerges in the Second Temple period and becomes dominant.[135]

Third, there are methodological risks involved. Joseph Lam identifies three broad approaches to sin in the Hebrew Bible: terminological approaches, theological approaches, and historical and thematic approaches.[136] Of these, he locates his own work in the third approach, specifically in the role of metaphor in developing a concept of sin. While understanding relevant vocabulary can be helpful, Lam notes that the terminological approach risks an overemphasis on etymologies that conflate the etymologies of relevant terms with the conceptualization of sin in ancient Israel. Furthermore, if the goal is not to recover the ancient Israelite's concept of sin, Lam questions why a terminological approach would be favored over literary interpretation. Yet if the goal is to develop a theological concept of sin based on biblical texts, there is a tendency to harmonize and synthesize at the expense of the real differences in the texts. Lam gives an outline of some of these differences, which include: the basis of sin and whether wrongdoing is understood to be going against divine will or social custom, and further, whether the basis of sin is rational; the relationship between sin, guilt, and sinfulness; whether sin is involuntary or voluntary; and whether sin is understood to be of an individual or a community.[137]

A further challenge faces Catholic moral theologians who wish to live up to the call of the Second Vatican Council's *Optatam Totius*, the Decree on Priestly Training, to draw more upon the Bible.[138] Although biblical ethics is not a new field within the Roman Catholic tradition, there has often been a disconnect between moral theology and biblical scholarship, and the increasing complexity of both fields as well as the fact few scholars are

135. See Anderson, *Sin: A History*, 13, 17.
136. See Joseph Lam, "The Concept of Sin in the Hebrew Bible," *Religion Compass* 12, nos. 3-4 (2018): 1–11, doi:10.1111/rec3.12260.
137. See ibid.
138. See Vatican Council II, *Decree on Priestly Training* (Washington, DC: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1965), no. 16.

competent in both are obstacles to their integration.[139] While this chapter would fall neither within Lúcás Chan's discussion of collaboration nor innovation, I nonetheless strive to attain integration, however modest, between the tasks of exegesis and interpretation that he identified as essential for doing biblical ethics. While the use of Scripture will necessarily be selective, I will seriously engage with biblical scholarship. This "listening" is essential because as a Catholic ethicist, I must be accountable to both Scripture and Tradition, but it is also a methodology that flows from the virtue of humility as developed in the last chapter. The selectivity of texts will be mitigated by using well-known texts that have commonly been interpreted within the Christian tradition as having something to say about sin. Taking heed of Lam's warning against a synthesization that elides differences (or difficult parts), I attend to the particulars of each text. This means that although I will draw on the texts to inform *a* theological concept of sin (rather than recover an ancient conception of sin), I do not attempt to provide *the* biblical perspective on sin. Rather, I will offer *a* biblically grounded facet of the mystery of the reality of sin that relies on the image of "missing the mark" and suggests that sometimes, the reason *why* we miss the mark is not prideful rebellion but a self-weakening abdication of responsibility. In this task, I will not limit myself to the terms or primary metaphors for sin found in the text of the Bible. Just as Elizabeth Johnson has argued that "It is not necessary to restrict speech about God to the exact names that Scripture uses, nor to terms coined by the later tradition,"[140] so I proceed on the basis that neither is it necessary to so restrict sin-talk.

This section will begin with a brief overview of some primary images or metaphors for sin in the Bible. Then, given how many influential interpretations of the sin of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 have understood the root of sin to lie in pride, this chapter will take that text as its starting point for close engagement with biblical scholarship. Here I will offer

139. See Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, "Biblical Ethics: 3D," in *The Bible and Catholic Theological Ethics*, ed. Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James F. Keenan, and Ronaoldo Zacharias, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 17-18.
140. Johnson, *She Who Is*, 7.

an overview of some of the difficulties of the traditional "fall" narrative and consider some alternatives, following Mark Biddle's argument that the passage indicates a fundamental mistrust in God, which can be expressed in two ways: overreach and domination (which I will refer to as in the key of pride) and failure to exercise moral responsibility (what I will call the key of self-weakening). Then I will turn to a well-known passage in the Christian New Testament that suggests that at least some common sins are based in our failure (stemming from our strength) to love our neighbor, specifically in the misuse of wealth: the parable of the Rich Man (Luke 16:19-31).

3.3.2 Primary Images of Sin in the Bible

One common starting point for identifying the primary images of sin in the Bible is comparing the frequency with which different terms for sin are used. In his entry on sin for the *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, Mark Biddle begins with an overview of biblical terminology related to sin, with the caveat that the etymology of a term is secondary to its usage.[141] Here Biddle offers three key terms. The first and most prevalent in both testaments of the Christian Bible is the root *ht'* (Hebrew, 580 times) and the similar Greek term *hamart-* (270 times). This root comes "from the realm of archery" and connotes "the image of 'missing the mark."[142] Typically, this term does not describe willful transgression but something unintentional, due to incapacity or error. For more intentional violations, the Hebrew root *pš'* is used, and its underlying image is the rupture of relationship, often in the context of property crimes or political rebellion. The third term is the Hebrew noun *ăwōn*, whose root signifies "to bend, twist, contort," and which is used to not only describe the act (often translated "iniquity"), but also the condition of the agent (often translated "guilt") and the negative impact the act has on the agent's environment (also translated "guilt").[143]

141. See Mark E. Biddle, "Sin," in *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, ed. Joel B. Green (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011), 730.
142. Ibid.
143. Ibid.

As mentioned above, some biblical scholars are dissatisfied with a terminological approach and argue for focusing on metaphor. Anderson delineates three primary metaphors, with heaviest emphasis on those of sin as "burden" and sin as "debt" (but also including that of sin as "stain"). Lam argues for four metaphorical patterns of sin in the Hebrew Bible: 1) sin as burden; 2) sin in the language of "accounting," where sin corresponds to "entries in an individual's heavenly account" and forgiveness to "an act of 'erasure,"' 3) sin described through "directional" metaphors, and 4) sin as "stain" or "impurity."[144] Of these, the third category of "directional" metaphors is of greatest interest here, as they correspond well to the ethical language of virtue and vice.

As Lam notes, the directional metaphors are especially prominent in the book of Proverbs, which is not surprising since "The language of sin as path or direction is characteristic of moral instruction."[145] While the metaphors in this category all utilize spatial movement in their descriptions of sin, they use it in diverse ways. Sometimes the path is the same for sinners and the righteous, with the difference being that sinners stumble along this road. Other examples utilize distinct paths for sinners and the righteous with the sinner described as 'walking in' sin or 'turning away from' the path of sin. A path may be described as straight or crooked, but the fact that a path is described as "straight" does not identify whether the path is one of sin or righteousness; at different points, both the wicked and the righteous are described in terms of moving along a straight path. Descriptions of sin as a "turning to one's own way" may be made in terms of "willful rebellion" in one context but "aimless wandering" in another.[146]

Likewise, differences in the usage and understanding of sin can be found in the books that constitute the New Testament. Paul's references to sin are generally in the singular, as a personal power that enslaves all human beings, who can only be liberated through

144. Joseph Lam, *Patterns of Sin in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphor, Culture, and the Making of a Religious Concept* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016), 14-15.
145. Ibid., 178.
146. See discussion Ibid., 165-178.

Christ. By contrast, in James, "sin is best understood from its character of action, rather than as human destiny."[147] Furthermore, in the Johannine literature, sin is identified with unbelief, which manifests in hatred, rather than love, of one's brothers and sisters and leads to death.[148] We can also learn something about sin from the particular understanding of Jesus and the challenges to conversion that the gospels offer us.[149] John Donahue shows how each synoptic gospel offers a particular ethical challenge that speaks to the United States context. The Gospel of Mark's reframing of power as liberative challenges "American exceptionalism" and the "pathology to be 'the best.'"[150] Against U.S. individualism (including with respect to religious belonging), the Gospel of Matthew emphasizes the experience of church as a community. It also emphasizes the need for action to accompany words.[151] The Gospel of Luke not only highlights the damaging effects of wealth and greed, but also challenges any narrative of "the others" as marginal and threatening, which impedes true love of God and neighbor.[152]

Before turning to two specific passages, both of which I hope to show retain their ability to surprise us and inform our understanding of sin, I want to gather a couple of threads together from the above discussion. First, if sin can be understood as a walking along a path or direction, the question remains: Why do we start down that path or continue in that direction? One answer that the Christian tradition provides is pride. We sin out of our desire to transgress the boundary between human and divine. Yet the fact that the term 'missing the mark' was specifically associated less with intentionality and willful rebellion

147. Nel and Horn, "Sin."
148. See ibid. In mentioning these differences here, I am not suggesting that they are mutually exclusive. Indeed, as Horn notes, in the Gospel of John, lack of belief in Jesus is also described in terms of slavery (John 8:31-36), but more so in terms of hatred of Jesus and his followers (3:20; 7:7; 15:18-25). Unbelief is also described as blindness (9:39-41), self-love (15:19), and self-honor (5:41, 44; 7:18).
149. For a brief overview of ethics by gospel, see Verhey, "Ethics in Scripture," 7-10.
150. See John R. Donahue, "The Kingdom Proclamation of Jesus in the Gospels: Context and Challenge to North America," in *The Bible and Catholic Theological Ethics*, ed. Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James Keenan, and Ronaldo Zacharias, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017), 246.
151. See ibid., 243, 247.
152. Ibid., 243-247.

and more with error or incapacity prompts me to ask why else, besides pride, might we miss the mark? In light of this question, I will consider Genesis 3, a passage that has long been consulted by Christians looking to understand in what our sin consists and argue that there is a creative tension between sin in the key of pride (overreach) and sin in the key of passivity (failing to reach far enough). Second, my choice to examine a passage from the Gospel of Luke fits with the Lucan emphasis not only on the damaging effects of wealth and greed, which speaks to our current situation of global injustice and ecological destruction, but also the attention to how to perceive "the others," which fits in with humility as a virtue expressed in other-centeredness and other-acceptance.

3.3.3 Genesis 3

The Christian understanding of the root of sin being pride relies on a particular line of interpretation of Genesis 3, evident in the thought of St. Augustine, together with Romans 5.[153] Genesis 3 has come to be called the "fall narrative," and is the scriptural basis for the doctrine of original sin. Some biblical scholars have challenged this reading of the Adam and Eve story as a fall as a misreading of the text.[154] Methodologically, the privileging of Genesis 3 is a theological approach to a biblical understanding of sin, and one which is open to the criticism of "giving primacy to an account that, at minimum, represents an idiosyncratic view of sin within the Hebrew Bible, and that, furthermore, may not concern

153. See Ian A. McFarland, "The Fall and Sin," in *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, ed. Kathryn Tanner, John Webster, and Iain Torrance (Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007), 141. Biddle makes this point in the beginning of his treatment of sin in the Bible. Mark E. Biddle, *Missing the Mark: Sin and its Consequences in Biblical Theology* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005), 1. For an example of Augustine's interpretation, see Augustine, *City of God*, 14.1.

154. See Calum M. Carmichael, "The Paradise Myth: Interpreting without Jewish and Christian Spectacles," in *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, ed. Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyher, Journal for the study of the Old Testament. Supplement series 136 (Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992), 47–63. Carmichael argues that original meaning of this text "perceives God as inimical to the laudable human striving for progress," (48), that Eve's disobedience is not wrong but "akin to that form of commendable action we term civil disobedience," (in contrast to Cain's murder of Abel, which is the first wrongful human action), and that the story of Adam and Eve is better understood as a story about the rise of humanity (with caveats) rather than the fall of humanity (60).

sin at all."[155] Nonetheless, while it is clear that Genesis 3 does not reflect a predominant view of sin within the Hebrew Bible, as a Christian theological ethicist, I am accountable to both Christian scriptures and the Christian tradition, both of which give significant weight to this text. Hence, Genesis 3 is a defensible place to begin, and I will make it a point to avoid easy harmonizations that minimize the challenges this text poses.

Genesis 3 in the Hebrew Bible

Before narrowing the focus to Genesis 3, it is prudent to note a couple general points about the composition and structure of Genesis itself. The Book of Genesis is the first book in both the Jewish and Christian Bibles, and its name underscores one of the central themes in the book, that of origins.[156] While the authors are unknown, it is well-established that the book was composed by multiple authors and in multiple stages over the course of several centuries.[157] Some parts of the book were written by scribes during the monarchies of early Judah and Israel, while others were not written down until after the fall of the monarchy in 586 BCE. For our purposes, it is worth noting that texts attributed to the priestly source, such as Genesis 1-2:3, were written in this later period. These texts were then combined with the earlier writings, mostly likely during the postexilic period, to form the order that we know today, including the adjacent placement of the two creation stories.[158]

Everett Fox identifies YHWH as the main character in Genesis and maintains that the portrayal of God changes over the course of the book in three main ways. Initially, there

155. Lam, "The Concept of Sin in the Hebrew Bible," 3 of 11. Nor is the association of Eve with the entrance of sin into the world found in the Hebrew Bible, though the notion did predate the birth of Christ. As Carol Meyers explains, Eve is not mentioned again in the Hebrew Bible and she is not associated with sin until the second century BCE, when the author of the Wisdom of Ben Sira (a canonical text for Catholics, but not for Jews or Protestants) did so in what was likely to be a minority position at the time, but proved to be an interpretation which endured. See Carol L. Meyers, *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*, Oxford Paperbacks (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991), 10, 74-75.

156. See David Carr, "Genesis," in *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Fully rev. 4th ed.., ed. Michael D. Coogan (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), 7–11.

157. See Dennis T. Olson, "Genesis," in *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*, ed. David L. Petersen, Beverly R. Gaventa, and Lori Colleen Patton (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010).

158. See Carr, "Genesis."

is considerable human contact with the deity (who walks in the garden and converses with the humans). He then becomes more removed, appearing in disguise or in dreams, and by the end of the book (in the Joseph Narrative), has no direct contact or conversation with the protagonist. Furthermore, "By the second half of the book of Genesis, God appears more decisively in control of events..."[159] Lastly, Fox argues that the Book of Genesis offers a "portrait of a deity who acts in human history," whether that is directly as in events of the Primeval History or more discreetly as in the story of Joseph.[160]

Four main sections, each longer than the last, are commonly identified in the Book of Genesis, beginning with the Primeval History, followed by the Abraham Cycle and the (Isaac-) Jacob Cycle, and ending with the Joseph Narrative.[161] In its final form, Genesis can be considered to contain two main sections, the primeval history (1-11) and the ancestral history (12-50).[162] Genesis then puts God's relationship with God's chosen people into a broader context of relationship with humanity and creation.[163]

Despite the many differences between sections, there are parallels between main characters, such as Abraham and Noah, Abraham and Jacob, and Jacob and Joseph.[164] Fox identifies a four-fold significant message that includes the themes of: selection, the favored status of younger sons (contra their inferior position relative to the first-born), conflicts between people living closely together, and threats to the lives of the characters. He condenses this theme into that of "the selection and survival amidst struggle and disaster," and notes that this makes sense if the original audience were experiencing crisis.[165] For Fox, when this theme of selection and survival is considered together with the theme of the promises of land and descendants, "we are left with a text that sends a strong message of

159. Everett Fox, "Can Genesis Be Read as a Book?," *Semeia* 46 (1989): 33.
160. Ibid.
161. See ibid., 32-34.
162. See Olson, "Genesis" and Carr, "Genesis."
163. See Olson, "Genesis."
164. See Fox, "Can Genesis Be Read as a Book?," 35.
165. Ibid., 37.

hope and confidence in the redeeming power of YHWH, as well as a vivid illustration of human difficulties that are encountered along the road to his service."[166]

The so-called "fall" narrative of Genesis 3 is located within the first of two major subsections of the primeval history found in Genesis 1:1-6:4, which deals with the creation of the world and the stories of the first human beings (including violence) and which parallels the second subsection (Gen 6:5-11:9) which treats the flood and re-creation.[167] As accepted in the previous chapter, the Primeval History tells a creation myth, and so its function is not to answer intellectual questions about how the world came to be. Rather, mythic elements (including a talking snake in Gen 3:1) are used "to explore profound and enduring truths about reality and the interactions of God, humans, and the world."[168] The text of Genesis 3 itself "does not so much explain the origins of sin and evil in the world as depict the enduring realities of the human condition," which in Olson's conclusion, is the human desire to transgress our limits and the results of those transgressions.[169]

Genesis 3 should not be read in isolation from Genesis 4 as both are stories of disobedience.[170] There are parallels between the story of Adam and Eve in Genesis 3 and that of Cain and Abel in Genesis 4, including verbal elements (i.e., repeated phrases, God's question of "Where?"), images (both "portray the lure of sin as a crafty animal"), and similarities between characters (both Adam and Cain give in to temptation and try to displace the blame).[171] Nor should Genesis 3 be considered unrelated to the subsequent primeval

166. Fox, "Can Genesis Be Read as a Book?," 37.
167. Carr, "Genesis."
168. Olson, "Genesis."
169. Ibid.
170. Olson identifies both stories as stories of disobedience. Calum M. Carmichael takes a different approach, viewing the material through a lens of acquisition of knowledge and the boundary between human and divine, but also stresses that the two stories should be read together. He writes, "If the important distinction in the Adam and Eve material is that there is a difference in kind between gods and human beings, the visitation of death upon the latter serving to illustrate the difference, the key to an understanding of the Cain and Abel material is that no distinction in kind exists in Cain's relationship to Abel." Carmichael, "The Paradise Myth," 56.
171. See Olson, "Genesis." However, there is a key difference between Adam's passiveness and Cain's aggressiveness. See also Dennis T. Olson, "Untying the Knot? Masculinity, Violence, and the Creation-Fall Story of Genesis 2–4," in *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical*

history; the consequences of Adam and Eve's actions in Genesis 3 reverberate through Genesis 4-11. Olson writes:

> The disobedience of Adam and Eve and their desire to move beyond their human limits 'to be like God' (Gen 3:5) led to the next generation's horror of sibling murder as Cain killed his own brother Abel (4:8). The violence spiraled in Lamech's boast of unrestrained violence against anyone who hurt him (4:23-24)."[172]

He goes on to conclude that human violation of the boundary with the divine leads to human violence, and that God's desire to limit human violence underlies both the sending of the flood (Genesis 6:5-9:29) and the confusing of human language in the story of the tower of Babel (Genesis 11:1-9). The rupture of various human relationships begins in Genesis 3 but continues long past it in the human propensity to violence. Nonetheless, the human condition is not solely characterized by violence, as human culture and vocations also emerge in Genesis 3-4.

A Closer Look at Genesis 3–4

Genesis 3 has been influential in the Christian doctrine of original sin.[173] Understandings of original sin as a historical act (prior to which human beings were immortal) and the bi-

---

Interpretation in Honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld, ed. Linda Day and Carolyn Pressler (Nashville, TN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006), 82.

172. Olson, "Genesis."

173. This is the case despite the fact that neither the Old Testament nor the Gospels refer to Genesis 3 for a foundational sin. (Note, in Rabbinic Judaism, a founding sin is traced to the Golden Calf.) Rather, the doctrine of original sin came through the writings of Paul, specifically Romans 5:12, likely because Paul needed to explain the sinfulness of Gentiles as well as Jews, and the story of the Golden Calf would only apply to Jews. See Gary Anderson, "General Observations," in Gary A. Anderson et al., "Adam and Eve, Story of," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Aaron – Aniconism*, ed. Constance M. Furey et al. (De Gruyter, 2010), 348. While the Gospels do not explicitly refer to a fall, they are predicated on human beings' need for salvation, and may implicitly refer to a fall (such as in John 8:44). The most direct references to a fall in the New Testament are found in Romans 5:12-21 and 1 Corinthians 15:21-22, and there are allusions in 2 Corinthians 11:3 and First Timothy 2:14. See Gerhard H. Visscher, "New Testament," in Geoffrey Dennis et al., "Fall of Humankind," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Essenes – Fideism*, ed. Constance M. Furey et al. (De Gruyter, 2010), 752-753.

ological transmission of original sin from Adam to his descendants have been challenged on the grounds of anthropology or evolutionary science.[174] Some claims, such as that of original human immortality and the transmission of the fallen state to all of Adam's descendants, have also been challenged on scriptural grounds.[175] One popular interpretation, that the serpent is Satan, is simply not supported by the text, and Claus Westermann argues that the position of the narrator is that we cannot "come to terms with the origin of evil."[176]

Given our interest here in what Genesis 3 might say about sin, one question to ask the text is whether the original state of Adam and Eve in the garden is better characterized as perfection or naive innocence. While the traditional doctrine of original sin has tended to assume the former, an alternative reading of Genesis 3 posits an "interrupted or perverted maturation" rather than a fall from some perfection.[177] Westermann argues against any conception of the state of Adam and Eve in the garden before eating from the tree as one of perpetual bliss, in part because humans are expected to labor in the garden.[178] Work implies

174. See McFarland, "The Fall and Sin," 143. McFarland writes, "It is now beyond dispute that there was no point where human existence was characterized by immunity from death, absence of labour pains, or an ability to acquire food without toil. Nor are the facts of evolutionary biology consistent with the descent of all human beings from a single ancestral pair (monogenesis)." The lack of a single ancestral pair conflicts with any understanding the universality of original sin in terms of biological transmission to the descendants of Adam and Eve. Systematic theologian Elizabeth Johnson notes that taking evolution seriously precludes an understanding of an original state of existence free from death. Death, including extinction, cannot be excised from the evolutionary process. Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*, 184-186.

175. I will consider the question of the loss of immortality shortly. Here I simply want to note that this is not the only aspect of some Christian interpretation of Genesis 3 that has been questioned on the grounds of the text itself. For instance, there is evidence to question the premise that the "fallen" state of human nature, which consists in a corruption or total loss of the image of God, becomes the state of nature that is transmitted to the next generation. Biddle notes that in Genesis 5:3, "the text employs the same language used to describe humankind's created godlikeness to describe the generation born *after* the 'fall'." Furthermore, the interpretation of Romans 5:12 most favorable to the thesis that all human beings inherit the guilt of Adam relies on a mistranslation. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 4.

176. Westermann, *Creation*, 92.

177. Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 5. Still other scholars advocate for taking shame and fear more seriously as an interpretive key to this passage. See for instance, Simon Cozens and Christoph Ochs, "'Have You No Shame?' An Overlooked Theological Category as Interpretive Key in Genesis 3," *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 13, no. 2 (2019): 186–199.

178. Westermann writes, "The idea of a Paradise which is a perpetual state of bliss is quite foreign to the Old Testament. This idea belongs to an understanding of man which puts a very low value on manual labor, and which is preoccupied with the spiritual, with contemplation or mere bliss as the only thing worth striving for in life." Westermann, *Creation*, 81.

growth. Westermann also argues that the biblical text does not support an interpretation of human beings "falling" to a lower state, but rather that human beings were created as defective in a way from the beginning, a part of creaturehood.[179] Biddle argues that a reading of interrupted maturation has the advantages of not conceiving of a state of perfection that does not include moral self-awareness, of not limiting the Incarnation to God's reaction to human sin, and as making Christlikeness rather than prelapsarian perfection the authentic and original goal of humanity.[180] This view takes the text seriously in areas where it may disagree with conventional interpretation (see the discussion below on immortality). However, this concern with maturity is one view and not indicative of a broad consensus in the field.[181]

A second question involves the change of status of Eve and Adam after they ate the forbidden fruit. There is a line of interpretation within the Christian tradition that understands the status of human beings as changing from immortal to mortal,[182] but there are suggestions in the text that Adam and Eve were already mortal. The tree of life was not included in the prohibition in Genesis 2:17, and is not mentioned until Genesis 3:22, after Adam and Eve eat the fruit of the tree of knowledge in Genesis 3:6. After Adam and Eve clothe themselves in the garments God made them, the text turns towards the Lord's thoughts: "Then the LORD God said, 'See, the man has become like one of us, knowing good and evil; and now, he might reach out his hand and take also from the tree of life, and eat, and live forever'—therefore the LORD God sent him forth from the Garden of Eden, to till the ground from which he was taken" (Gen 3:22-23, NRSV). Of the tree of life, Biddle writes,

179. Westermann, *Creation*.

180. Biddle notes the former as required for "perfection" and identifies the last two explicitly as contributions to Christian christology and anthropology. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 4-6.

181. For instance, Gary Anderson agrees that Genesis 3 is not sufficient on its own to form the basis of a doctrine of "the Fall," yet he is wary of interpretation in terms of maturation rather than fall, which he argues is close to ancient Gnosticism. Anderson interprets Genesis 3 in terms of the construction of the Tabernacle and the larger theme of "the *immediacy* of human disobedience." See Gary A. Anderson, "Original Sin: The Fall of Humanity and the Golden Calf," chap. 4 in *Christian Doctrine and the Old Testament: Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017), 59-71.

182. For instance, see Augustine, *City of God*, 12.22; 14.1.

"There is no prohibition pertaining to its fruit, but after Adam and Eve gain the forbidden knowledge, God, acknowledging that they have, indeed, become more godlike, chooses to prevent them from gaining yet another degree of deity by means of the tree of life."[183] Here it is worth noting that according to the first creation story (in the Priestly tradition, found in Genesis 1:1-2:3), while each part of creation was pronounced "good," and the interdependent whole was later pronounced "very good," creation is still not portrayed as a paradise entirely free of the threats of chaos and disorder. As Olson notes, the waters of chaos were moved (Gen 1:6-7) not eliminated, and will return later in the primeval history in the flood narrative.[184]

While one might object that Adam and Eve participated in immortality by being in the vicinity of the tree of life, and so that death was a consequence of expulsion from the garden, I find Biddle's interpretation more convincing given that the text presumes that Adam and Eve had not yet eaten of the fruit of the tree of life and suggests that to eat of the fruit only once would grant them immortality, which is directly associated with the divine rather than the creature.[185] Even if one wishes to draw the possibility of human immortality from the absence of a prohibition against eating the fruit from the tree of life, human immortality in the garden of Eden remains just that, a possibility, not something

183. Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 11. Mark G. Brett agrees that the text supports the interpretation that the first humans are mortal from the moment of their creation. He sees a difference between the two creation narratives in that the first affirms a likeness to God whereas the second denies it. He writes, "although the tree of life introduced in Gen. 2.9 receives hardly any attention at all, it appears again in Gen. 3.22 when God contemplates the possibility that an evil humanity might *acquire* immortality. This can only mean that death was part of the original created order, and in this sense the humans are clearly unlike God." See Brett, "Earthing the Human," 82. Westermann argues that while humans are held responsible for their action, death is a condition of human existence not a punishment. See discussion in Westermann, *Creation*, 99-109. In his overview for *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*, Olson does not directly address the point, but writes that "God imposes a limit on the length of human life by sending the humans forever out of the garden of Eden lest they eat of the other tree, the tree of life, and live forever (3:22-24)." See Olson, "Genesis."

184. See ibid.

185. The idea that human beings had an opportunity for immortality can be found in the notes on this verse in study Bibles, "As elsewhere in the ancient Near East, humans here are depicted as having a brief opportunity for immortality." See Michael D. Coogan, Marc Z. Brettler, Carol Newsom, and Pheme Perkins, eds., *The New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010).

already acquired. Furthermore, given the deity's concern that humans might eat from the tree of life (even if that tree's fruit was not part of the original prohibition), the text hardly lends much support to the idea that the achievement of immortality was part of God's original plan for human beings.

Contrary to popular piety, according to the text itself, it is not clear that the serpent lied. Adam and Eve *did* acquire more knowledge and they *did not* die, at least not right away.[186] The death penalty in Genesis 2:17 is best interpreted as immediate,[187] and the immediate result of their action is damage to their relationships, not death. Some scholars conclude that the serpent spoke the truth.[188] Others read the absence of immediate death as a sign of God's mercy.[189] I find the former more convincing, yet agree with Biddle that even if the serpent did not lie, neither did he tell the whole truth. While Adam and Eve do not die immediately, there are serious and lasting effects; their relationships are damaged and they are expelled from the garden.[190]

Clearly in the text, human nature is marked by finitude, creatureliness. As far as I am aware, this is not a point of contention between traditional Christian and alternative understandings of the so-called "fall" narrative, although the traditional understanding of the "fall" as the entry point of death into the world certainly downplays the original distance between Creator and creature. Also, unless we wish to accept an interpretation of God as inimical to human progress, the text indicates that Adam and Eve overreached, in an attempt to transcend their finitude.[191] The traditional understanding of the primal sin as pride

186. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 13, emphasis mine.
187. Westermann says that the threatened penalty of death does not occur, and God continues to care for and bless the man. See Westermann, *Creation*, 109.
188. For example, see Brett, "Earthing the Human," 82. Likewise, Carmichael holds that "The serpent instructed Eve that the tree was not death-bringing, and her eyes were opened." See Carmichael, "The Paradise Myth," 55-56.
189. For example, Olson concludes that "God rescinds the immediate death penalty," which, like God's creation of clothing for the pair, is a sign of God's mercy. See Olson, "Genesis."
190. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 13.
191. For instance, Claus Westermann argues that Genesis 3 shows that human beings are limited, both in relationship to God and in relationship to other humans. He identifies this limitation or defect in terms of overreaching. "In both cases the defect consists in overstepping man's limitations. In both cases the human

captures this aspect of the narrative,[192] even as scholars writing from feminist, liberation, and ecological perspectives nuance that perspective by drawing attention to the themes of domination and violence.[193]

However, this traditional, sin-as-overreaching understanding is not the only aspect of sin for which there is evidence in the text. Biddle argues that Eve's deliberation indicate that her intentions were to achieve a good (the fruit was desired for its nutrition, pleasing appearance, and offering wisdom) rather than to rebel.[194] We might ask, especially in the context of the dominion granted in Genesis 1:28 and Adam's role in naming the animals in Genesis 2:20: Is there something in addition to a rebellious overreaching occurring here? Why didn't Eve resist the serpent? Why did Adam go along so willingly with Eve's decision?

Westermann argues that by this point in the text, the narrator has illustrated the positive side of community, and now offers us the negative counterpoint. Complicity, including our failure to decide and instead leave the decisions to others, is one way we are involved in wrongdoing.[195] In a study of Genesis 3-4, Olson argues that Adam's silence at Eve's side during her conversation with the serpent indicates a failure to live in the mutuality envisioned in Genesis 2. Preceding the act of willful disobedience is a failure to act; Adam does not speak up. Olson writes, "Just as in Gen 2 it was 'not good that the *man* should be alone' and just as the *man* needed' a helper as his partner,' so too it is not good that the

---

state is characterized as being-in-the-world within certain limitations which alone make possible the true human state." See Westermann, *Creation*, 26. This does not mean that the divine command not to eat that fruit was reasonable. Westermann argues it can only be obeyed and opens the possibility of relationship. He writes, "It is only when man is confident that he who commands has the good of man at heart that man will observe the command." Ibid., 89. As seen previously, Dennis Olson sees the story as one in a sequence of human attempts to overreach their finitude, with disastrous results. Olson, "Genesis."

192. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 11.

193. See for example Phyllis Trible, *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*, Overtures to Biblical Theology 2 (Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978), 72-143; Olson, "Untying the Knot"; Newsom, "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3"; Justo L. González, *Mañana* (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990), 134-137.

194. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 12. Biddle writes, "In that moment of deliberation, Eve expresses not even a hint that a spirit of rebellion motivates her. Her intentions are only good, however ill-conceived."

195. See Westermann, *Creation*, 94.

woman is alone in speaking and debating with the serpent in Gen 3."[196] This failure to speak up indicates a failure to take responsibility, which is a theme that plays out throughout Genesis 3 and 4. Just as Eve and Adam attempt to evade responsibility by shifting it to someone else in Genesis 3, Cain also "externalizes the problem" and "refuses to accept his own responsibility" in Genesis 4, trying to put the responsibility for his brother on God.[197] Biddle attends to Adam's failure to even "deliberate" in Genesis 3. While Eve chose wrongly, her deliberation before making a choice in Genesis 3:6 contrasts with Adam's silent complicity with her choice.[198]

Yet it is not only Adam and Cain who fail to act responsibly in the two disobedience stories found in Genesis 3-4. There is good cause to interpret both Eve's and Adam's listening to the serpent in Genesis 3 as a failure to exercise their responsibility and live out their particular place in creation. Both Adam and Eve are co-creators with the Lord. This is seen explicitly in Adam's naming of the animals in Genesis 2:19-20 and in Eve's birth to Cain with God's assistance in Genesis 4:1.[199] Further, this story has been placed after the creation account in Genesis 1, which included the granting of dominion to the human beings over other creatures (Gen 1:28). What can we make then of Adam's passivity and the fact Eve listens to the serpent over whom she has authority?

Ethical Significance of Genesis 3

This survey of Genesis 3 and 4 certainly does not invalidate the claim that pride, or overreaching, constitutes an important aspect of human sin. For those who read the text in light

196. Olson, "Untying the Knot," 79.
197. See Ibid., 81. Olson notes that in a biblical context, God is often described as the one to "keep" or "protect" humans, whether individually or in community. Hence, Cain's response, 'I do not know; am I my brother's keeper?' is in effect saying that Abel's well-being is God's responsibility.
198. See Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 52.
199. Olson draws this parallel in Olson, "Untying the Knot," 80, and notes a couple pages prior that "Naming is a significant act in the ancient biblical world" that "involves shaping and defining the character of the one named" (77).

of a faith commitment in a benevolent God,[200] Adam and Eve's disobedience was clearly linked to trying to push the boundary between human and divine, with disastrous results that disrupted their relationships—with God, with each other, and with the earth. This theme of transgressing the boundary between the human and the divine appears throughout the primeval history in the Eden story, the giants before the flood, and the Babel story. It is also linked to domination and increasing violence: Adam only names and so exercises authority over his partner after God pronounces their punishments; Cain kills Abel; Lamech boasts of vengeance.

Nonetheless, the warning against overreaching is not the only salient point. Willful disobedience is preceded by a failure to act: Adam *failed* to speak up; he *failed* to even deliberate. Furthermore, there is reason to believe both he and Eve should have been able to resist the serpent's temptation: after all, within the same narrative Adam is the one who named the serpent and, when read alongside the creation narrative in Genesis 1:28, human beings are called to have dominion over all the beasts, including "all the living things that crawl on the earth." In allowing the serpent to persuade her to disobey, Eve failed to exercise her God-given responsibility as co-creator (Genesis 2) or steward (Genesis 1). In his silent acquiescence, Adam does the same (and also violates mutuality). Afterwards, Adam and Eve refuse to take responsibility, first hiding, and then when confronted, shifting the blame to someone else (like Cain after them).

Biddle argues that Genesis 3 is best read as showing "that the *seed* of the first sin was neither sloth nor defiance, but mistrust."[201] This mistrust was a fear that God had not provided the best. Biddle writes, "At root, the human compulsions either to supplant

200. It is important to note that this faith commitment is arguably read into this particular text. Carmichael argues that Genesis 3, like the Babel story in Genesis 11, originally "perceives God as inimical to the laudable human striving for progress," but the interpretation changed "once biblical material was perceived as unitary work of God-given instruction and guidance..." Carmichael, "The Paradise Myth," 47. Furthermore, as discussed above, it is not clear whether the character God told the truth about the consequences of eating the fruit of the tree. Some interpreters argue that God showed mercy and mitigated the judgment. Others point out that the serpent spoke the truth and suggest that the character God was the one who lied.

201. Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 12. Note that Westermann also brings trust into the discussion of God's command. See Westermann, *Creation*, 91. He writes, "The woman moves outside her relationship of trust

God or to acquiesce to less than full humanity arise from the human fear that God has not, cannot, or will not do for humanity what is best."[202] Regardless of whether we accept his proposal that mistrust of God was the seed of the first sin,[203] I hold that there are sufficient grounds in the text to argue that the sin of Adam and Eve did not wholly consist in willful disobedience. While Adam and Eve violated the truth of their place in the world by trying to become more like God, this act of prideful disobedience was preceded by another violation of the truth of their place in the world: failure to live out their God-given responsibility as co-creators with respect to the serpent.[204]

Biddle notes that liberation and feminist theologians attend to this failure or "refusal to claim the full stature of humanity in an *appropriate* godlikeness as the sin of sloth."[205] Yet recalling the previous discussion of self-deprecation versus sloth, here too there are signs that this failure might not only stem from the vice of sloth but also have something to do with the excess of humility. For instance, while Justo González favors the interpretation of the creation narrative in Genesis 2 as indicating that our place in creation is as a part of it, he does see Adam's naming of the animals as an indication of authority over them.[206] He understands sin as the "violation of God's image in us, which is precisely the image of God's for-otherness."[207] While González thinks "wrongful dominance" is the "more com-

---

to God so as to become wise, she no longer hears in the command him who commands, who up to that very moment has carried and preserved her in existence." Westermann, *Creation*, 93-94.

202. Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 13.

203. I find the idea compelling, though this is tempered by the realization that based on the text alone, the character God may not be deserving of such full trust.

204. In seeking the original significance of the story of Adam and Eve, Carmichael focuses on the unreal aspects of the time prior to the acquisition of the knowledge of good and evil, including that the serpent was, at first, "a creature higher than the animals (and higher in the sense of more God-like because of its awareness of good and evil than the woman and the man in their primitive, animal-like state)...." Carmichael, "The Paradise Myth," 49. While his intent is not to show a failure of Adam and Eve's exercise of their God-given responsibility, the fact remains that even read from a completely different perspective, the serpent in Genesis 3 seems to occupy a higher place in creation than Adam and Eve.

205. Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 12. Biddle cites Dunfee's identification of the "sin of hiding," which was discussed in the previous section.

206. See González, *Mañana*, 131-134. He notes that this authority is one in which the woman presumably shared, as the man does not claim dominion over her through naming her until Genesis 3:20.

207. Ibid., 137.

mon form of sin," he recognizes that members of oppressed groups especially are tempted by "a more insidious form" of sin, a denial of "our for-otherness by false humility."[208] He suggests interpreting Genesis 3 in light of the narratives in Genesis 1 and 2, including the dominion that human beings have over animals, as indicating "inordinate humility based in a lack of trust" rather than inordinate pride, a refusal to "stand up as 'others' before the tempter and a refusal "claim their godlikeness."[209]

This failure of Adam and Eve to assert their superior position vis-à-vis the serpent is not unambiguous from an environmental ethics perspective as it feeds into an image of human as co-creator or steward that presupposes a hierarchy of creatures. Nonetheless, attending to this aspect of the text offers a still-needed corrective to how Christians have tended to think of sin. In the previous chapter, I argued that a Christian account of humanity's place in the world needed to hold in tension the biblical images of steward and member of the community of creation. Likewise, to the extent that Christians find the story of Adam and Eve to illuminate something about what sin is (as opposed to only its effects),[210] I argue that we need to hold in tension the conception of sin in the key of pride (overreaching, trying to be more than human, dominating others) and sin in the key of passivity (failing to reach far enough, a shirking of our responsibility to live out the truth of our place as humans). With this tension in mind, I will now turn to a well-known passage in the New Testament.

208. González, *Mañana*, 137.

209. Ibid., 138. Most of the paragraph is quoted at length in Biddle, *Missing the Mark*, 12.

210. This distinction can be slippery. Ian McFarland argues that tying the content of sin to original sin in such a way as to identify a foundational sin is itself a sin. Original sin ought to be understood ontologically. All human beings have the same need for redemption, and identifying certain sins as more original than others risks that understanding, often with disastrous social consequences. See McFarland, "The Fall and Sin." Nonetheless, given the extensive history of interpreting the sin of Adam and Eve as a sin of pride, I am convinced that attending to the elements of the text that suggest there was also a culpable refusal to exercise their human responsibility remains a worthwhile corrective.

3.3.4 Luke 16:19-31

Biblical Scholarship

The Parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man Lazarus is unique to the Lukan gospel.[211] Within the Gospel of Luke, this parable takes place within the journey to Jerusalem section of Jesus's ministry.[212] The story fits into the well-known Lukan theme of the reversal of fortunes seen in the previous chapter in the discussion of The Magnificat (1:46-55).[213] As François Bovon notes, this theme is seen in the beatitudes and woes in Luke 6:20-26, the Christian ideal of relinquishing riches in the travel narrative found in Luke 12:33-34; 14:33, and the parable of the rich man in 12:16-21. Within Luke 16, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus is preceded by a parable upholding generosity in verses 1-9, mention of the greed of the Pharisees' (Lk 16:14), and the maxims of Jesus, including one "which reminds us that the divine scale of values is contrary to human conceptions."[214] The parable is directed to the Pharisees rather than to Jesus's disciples.[215] The Pharisees dismiss Jesus' teachings about wealth, and "Jesus tells a parable that enacts the role reversal announced by Mary's

211. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31)," in *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, ed. Helmut Koester, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1985), 1125.

212. John T. Carroll outlines the gospel in terms of Preface (1:1-4), I. Beginnings (1:5-4:13), II. Ministry (4:14-19:27), and III. The Final Days (19:28-25:53). Within this schema, the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus falls within the ministry portion, which in turn is subdivided into Galilean Ministry (4:14-9:50) and the Journey to Jerusalem (9:51-19:27). See John T. Carroll, "Luke," in *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*, ed. David L. Petersen, Beverly R. Gaventa, and Lori Colleen Patton (Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010).

213. François Bovon, "The Parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man Lazarus (16:19-31)," in *Luke 2: A Commentary of the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, ed. Helmut Koester (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 474.

214. See ibid. Here Bovon is referring to Luke 16:15. While Bovon does not explicitly address Luke 16:10-13 here, it is worth noting that the warning that no person can serve two masters (God and wealth), occurs in Luke 16:13.

215. See Fitzmyer, "Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," 1125. While chapter 16 opens with Jesus addressing his disciples, the Pharisees "who were lover of money" mock Jesus in 16:14 and Jesus addresses them in 16:15. After this parable of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus returns to addressing his disciples in Luke 17:1.

song (Luke 1:53) and his earlier pronouncement of blessing for the poor and woe for the rich (6:20, 24)."[216]

It is a parable that should be very disquieting for those of us who live in relative comfort.[217] In this section I focus on the question of the relationship between poverty and piety, wealth and punishment.[218] The primary concern of the parable is not to describe what happens to human beings after death but rather with the issue of wealth and poverty.[219] Bovon puts this issue as follows: "Was Lazarus consoled because of his poverty or because of his piety? Conversely, was the rich man punished for being rich or because of his lack of charity?"[220] While biblical scholars and ethicists alike have often tended to answer the second question in terms of the behavior of the rich man rather than the fact of his wealth,[221] such a response must be nuanced by wrestling with the connection between the mere wealth of the rich man and his fate that is necessitated by close attention to the biblical scholarship.

216. Carroll, "Luke."

217. It was a key biblical text during the so-called Social Gospel Movement, and is also credited as the text which prompted Albert Schweitzer to leave a successful career and start a missionary hospital in present-day Gabon. See Outi Lehtipuu, "II. Christianity," in Rhonda Burnette-Bletsch et al., "Lazarus and Dives," in *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Kalam–Lectio Divina*, ed. Constance M. Furey et al. (New York: De Gruyter, 2010), 1091-1092.

218. Bovon notes that other jarring aspects of the story including Abraham's severity compared to Christian pity and the issue of whether the description of life after death is normative. See Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 473. There is also discussion regarding the sources of the story (was it original or a well-known folktale), whether verse 31 refers to the resurrection of Jesus, whether this story was told by the historical Jesus or inserted later, whether the story is best read as one unit or in two parts, and why the poor man is named but the rich man is not.

219. For those interested in the question of the depiction of life after death, Bovon and Bauckham take different approaches to this issue. Bovon draws attention to the expectations of Jews of a period of waiting for the end-time after death but before the final judgment, and locates the experiences of Lazarus and the unnamed rich man as occurring in this place. Lazarus's waiting for the end-time is certainly much more pleasant than the rich man's and the separation between the two is intentional and unbridgeable, but this does not necessarily mean that it is indicative of the eternal situation post-judgement. See ibid., 481-82, 484. Bauckham cautions readers against taking the description of post-mortem justice literally rather than recognizing that it is "a popular way of thinking which the parable uses to make a point" and indicates that "Jesus was close both to the religious folklore and the concerns of ordinary, poor people" Richard Bauckham, "The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Parable and the Parallels," *New Testament Studies* 37, no. 1 (2018): 233.

220. Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 473.

221. For examples from biblical scholarship, see note 234 with respect to the work of Fitzmyer, Knight, and Byrne. For an example from theological ethics, see James F. Keenan, *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010), 39. Keenan cites this parable in the context of a discussion of sinning out of strength vs. out of weakness. For our purposes here, the point is that the rich man sinned, and his sin was one of omission (not doing what he could have done).

First, a brief overview of the parable itself is in order.[222] The intended readers were wealthy Gentiles.[223] Second, according to Bovon, the parable does not draw upon a single source but upon traditional materials from Egypt, Greece, and Palestine that focus on the differences in the deaths of two men as well as the differences in their fates after death, the geography of the land of the dead, and the possibility of communication between the dead and the living.[224] Third, the parable of the rich man and Lazarus in Luke 16:19-31 has a distinct structure. It begins with a description of the situation of the living, first the rich man (v. 19) and then Lazarus (vv. 20-21). It then addresses the deaths of these two men, starting with the poor man Lazarus (22a) and then the rich man (v. 22b). The third section focuses on the dead rich man in his misfortune and his conversation with Abraham. Here the rich man sees the good fortune of the poor man (v. 23) and makes his first request (v. 24), which is denied by Abraham (vv. 25-26). The rich man then makes a second request (vv. 26-28), which is likewise denied (v. 29), and a third request (v. 30) which is also refused by Abraham (v. 31).[225]

The details that fill out this structure help us make sense of the story. The first three verses make a sharp contrast between the situation of the rich man, who is unnamed,[226] and Lazarus, who, while poor, has a name (which means "God helps.").[227] The wealth of the rich man is excessive: he dresses in purple and fine linen and feasts daily.[228] The "purple"

222. While widely discussed as a parable, it should be mentioned that it is widely accepted that this story is not technically a parable but rather a story that has an evident yet implicit moral. See Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 475. While Fitzmyer considers this story as a parable according to form-criticism, he agrees that more precisely, it is an "example." Fitzmyer, "Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," 1125-1126.

223. See Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 475-76.

224. As briefly noted in footnote 214, the source(s) of the story is itself debated. The scholars cited throughout this section do not all agree. Here I accept Bovon's conclusion that there were multiple sources. Ibid., 476.

225. See ibid., 475.

226. In English, the rich man's name has at times been misunderstood to be "Dives," but this reflects the Latin translation for "rich," not a proper name. See Burnette-Bletsch et al., "Lazarus and Dives," 1089.

227. Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 480.

228. It should be noted that this claim is not unchallenged. Even in the recent history of scholarly interpretation, the wealth of the rich man was discarded as a possible reason for his judgment. See discussion in Ronald F. Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus: Greco-Roman Backgrounds to Luke 16: 19-31," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 3 (1987): 453.

here refers to the purple dye that came from a sea snail and to outer garments that were dyed in that warm color. The color purple is also associated with royalty; in rabbinic literature it is only used for kings and God whereas in the Roman (and later, Byzantine) empire it became the color of emperors. The rich man not only has lavish outergarments, but his undergarments are made of "fine linen" which refers to a type of linen from Egypt and India and later came to refer to the undergarments themselves.[229] This lavish way of dressing is typical for the rich man. This is not an occasional dress for very special occasions, but his habitual way of dress, as indicated to the use of the imperfect tense in Greek. As Bovon notes, this confirms that the rich man is "scandalously rich."[230] Furthermore, not only does the rich man feast every day, but he does so "sumptuously," the only use of that adverb in Greek in the entire New Testament.[231] By contrast, Lazarus is socially marginalized and very vulnerable. Not only is he poor, but also likely physically disabled,[232] covered with sores,[233] and dependent on the mercy of others.[234]

How then, ought we answer Bovon's question: "Was Lazarus consoled because of his poverty or because of his piety? Conversely, was the rich man punished for being rich or because of his lack of charity?" The answer appears to be poverty in Lazarus' case and both in the case of the rich man. I see little evidence of Lazarus' piety or an exhortation to imitate him in the biblical scholarship,[235] though some etymological interpretations of Lazarus's

229. Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 478-479. As Bovon notes, the colors of the "fine linen" would have complemented the purple of the outer garments.
230. Ibid., 479.
231. See ibid., 479, footnote 45.
232. Bredenhof notes that the term 'thrown down' suggests physical disability. See Reuben Bredenhof, "Looking for Lazarus: Assigning Meaning to the Poor Man in Luke 16.19–31," *New Testament Studies* 66, no. 1 (2020): 52.
233. Within the Christian tradition, these sores were often understood to be leprosy, and so the name Lazarus came to be associated with a leper-house. See Lehtipuu, "II. Christianity," in Burnette-Bletsch et al., "Lazarus and Dives," 1091. However, Bredenhof questions whether Lazarus can be understood to have leprosy on the basis that he is permitted to beg publicly. Bredenhof, "Looking for Lazarus: Assigning Meaning to the Poor Man in Luke 16.19–31," 53. Nonetheless, the sores likely indicate social marginalization as they would have been painful and unattractive.
234. Bredenhof writes that Lazarus "is an obvious object of charity." Ibid., 54.
235. Bredenhof stresses the passivity of Lazarus throughout the parable and also notes that there is no exhortation to imitate Lazarus, whose abject poverty could be perceived as divine punishment. See ibid. Bovon's

name have been used to support the idea.[236] Instead, with Bauckham,[237] I conclude that Lazarus benefits from the reversal of the fortunes of the wealthy and the poor that is found throughout Luke. His abject poverty was not willed by God. However, in the case of the rich man, the answer is both. While the parable can be read in light of the theme of the proper use of material possessions that Fitzmyer identifies as a particular theme in chapter 16,[238] and it can also be argued that wealth implies sin,[239] this parable itself does not say anything about the *use* of possessions.

---

commentary on Lazarus also paints him as a passive character. Bovon writes that the Greek term for "throw" imparts a negative connotation and together with the description "covered with sores" concludes, "Lazarus was not therefore in control of his destiny; like a piece of wreckage tossed about by the waves, he finally washed up at the door of the rich man." François Bovon and Donald S. Deer, "The Parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man Lazarus (16:19-31)," in *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27* (Minneapolis, MN: 1517 Media, 2013), 480. Bovon does think that the parable offers an invitation "to do good and to imitate Lazarus, to repent and to follow the ethical example of Jesus' earliest disciples," but acknowledges that this is implicit. See ibid., 473, 483. This relates to the difficulty in classifying the genre, since the ending of this story does not contain a moral or an exhortation to imitation (such as in Luke 12:21 or 10:37, respectively). Ibid., 476.

236. For an overview of the various approaches to interpreting the significance of the name Lazarus in this parable, see Bredenhof, "Looking for Lazarus: Assigning Meaning to the Poor Man in Luke 16.19–31." Bredenhof favors the approach of the name as characterization. Like Bredenhof, I find the link between the etymology of the name Lazarus and the implication that this name was intended to impute piety to Lazarus, tenuous. See ibid., 58. Likewise, Bovon concludes that "Luke is scarcely interested in the etymology of proper names." Bovon and Deer, "The Parable of the Rich Man," 481.

237. Brown also excludes Lazarus's virtue as the reason for his fate. Raymond E. Brown, "The Gospel According to Luke," in *An Introduction to the New Testament: The Abridged Edition* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016), 86. Also Hock notes that Lazarus's judgment is not based on his faith, although unlike Bauckham, Hock links poverty to piety in the sense that it precludes the opportunity and means for sin. See Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus."

238. See Joseph A. Fitzmyer, "The Parable of the Dishonest Manager (16:1-8a)," in *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, ed. Helmut Koester, The Anchor Bible (Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1985), 1094. Of this particular parable, Fitzmyer writes, "It further illustrates the teaching of the Lucan Jesus about the prudent use of material possessions and gives new meaning to the 'dwellings that are everlasting' (v. 9)." Fitzmyer, "Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," 1127. For an example of a scholarly reading of this parable in terms of the "stewardship of life's opportunities" see George W. Knight, "Luke 16:19-31: The Rich Man and Lazarus.," *Review and Expositor* 94, no. 2 (1997): 277–283. Byrne agrees that both this parable and the opening parable of Luke 16 ("The Rogue Steward") illustrate "the right use of wealth," although one does so positively and the other negatively. See Brendan Byrne, "Forceful Stewardship and Neglectful Wealth: A Contemporary Reading of Luke 16," *Pacifica* 1, no. 1 (1988): 2. However, for Byrne, the unifying theme of Luke 16 is not simply the right use of wealth, but that the Rogue Steward's "unscrupulous casualness with respect to wealth" is the model of stewardship against which the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus is juxtaposed. Ibid., 3-4, quote page 4.

239. Hock argues that the wealth of the rich man indicates both what he failed to do and "what he habitually did, that is, live hedonistically and immorally." Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus," 462.

First, no judgment of the rich man's behavior is stated. In fact, in Abraham's response in 16:25, both the rich man and Lazarus are portrayed passively as recipients of blessing and misfortune, respectively.[240] However, many scholars find an element of reward/retribution in the afterlife based on one's conduct here and now.[241] Fitzmyer notes that the lack of concern of the rich man for the poor is only "implied," but nonetheless concludes on the basis of the contrasts between the two men's situation on earth and their post-mortem destinies, that "the first part of the parable inculcates that there is a reward-aspect to human conduct and that Christian disciples are called upon to recognize it."[242] Fitzmyer agrees with prior scholarly assessments that the parable is a warning to people like the brothers of the rich man, rather than a commentary on a social problem.[243] Similarly, Bovon notes that the parable does not express the guilt of the rich man, but nonetheless concludes it is inaccurate to therefore say that it offers no criticism of wealth.[244] Bovon concludes (aligning himself with Hock) that "What the rich man did wrong was not just that he did not take care of the poor man Lazarus, but that he also lived in excessive luxury."[245]

240. Here I draw from Fitzmyer's translation in Fitzmyer, "Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," 1125. The New Revised Standard translation uses the terms "good things" and "evil things," but the portrayal of the men as recipients rather than moral agents remains: "But Abraham said, 'Child, remember that during your lifetime you received your good things, and Lazarus in like manner evil things; but now he is comforted here, and you are in agony."

241. See ibid., 1129. Hock notes that scholars tend to discount Lazarus' poverty or the rich man's wealth as the reason for their post-mortem fates, and instead conclude that the rich man neglected Lazarus (based on "at best from the position of Lazarus outside the rich man's gate" or on "the presumed content of Moses and the prophets, which the rich man, like his brothers, was supposed to have heeded") and that Lazarus was pious based on the etymology of his name. See Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus," 453-454. In part this interpretation relies on a division of the parable into two parts and the acceptance that verses 19-26 draw on an Egyptian folktale, a widely-held but not unchallenged position. See ibid., 448-451. Whereas Bauckham (see following paragraph), argues that the Lucan passage differs from the Egyptian folktale (and Jewish stories) in its lack of explaining the differing fates of the two men as flowing from their deeds in this life, Hock argues that the extrabiblical parallels should be extended to include Greco-Roman literature. For the latter, see ibid., 456, ff.

242. Fitzmyer, "Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus," 1128, 1129, respectively.

243. See ibid., 1128.

244. See Bovon, "Parable of the Rich Man," 479, footnote 46. Here, Bovon has in mind the many scholars that Hock calls out for ruling out wealth as a factor in the rich man's judgement in Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus," 453. Bovon agrees with scholars who maintain that both Jewish and Gentile listeners would know that the rich man behaved wrongly (based on the call to mercy in the Laws and Prophets, and exhortation to moderation, respectively).

245. Bovon and Deer, "The Parable of the Rich Man," 479.

By contrast, Bauckham explicitly challenges scholars who would locate the explanation of the rich man's fate in his moral deeds or omissions, noting that unlike parallel Egyptian and Jewish stories, the passage in Luke gives no information about either the good deeds or bad deeds of either the rich man or the poor man.[246] Rather, Bauckham forces us to contend with the ordinary folklore and religious understanding of the incompatibility of the juxtaposition of luxury and destitution with God's justice.[247] We do not need to look outside of the text for an explanation of the reversal of fortunes; the explanation is supplied in Abraham's response to the rich man in verse 25.[248] As Brown writes, "The different fates are based not on vice versus virtue but rather on comfort versus misery (16:25)."[249] This is an explanation which may make us squeamish, and send us searching for other explanations,[250] yet Bauckham's analysis is convincing enough to warrant hesitation before we jump to the implicit judgment of the rich man, especially in light of the fact that not long ago, much scholarship on this passage sought to justify the wealth of the rich man.

The Ethical Significance of the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus

In a 1932 sermon on this passage, Dietrich Bonhoeffer warned against spiritualizing this passage into a moral tale about how the rich should help the poor.[251] Against those who would object that one's interior attitude towards wealth is what matters, and that "It's not just simply the physically poor who are blessed and the physically rich who would be

246. See Richard Bauckham, "The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Parable and the Parallels," *New Testament Studies* 37, no. 2 (1991): 228.
247. See ibid., 228-234.
248. See ibid., 232.
249. Brown, "The Gospel According to Luke," 86.
250. As some preachers have pointed out in support of the interpretation that it is misuse of wealth not wealth itself that warrants the rich man's fate, Abraham was a wealthy man for his day. See for instance, Wade P. Huie, "The Poverty of Abundance: From Text to Sermon on Luke 16:19–31," *Interpretation* 22, no. 4 (1968): 416. Huie in no way denies that the parable is a warning to the "haves," but rather is concerned with mistakenly basing salvation on status or deeds.
251. See Dietrich Bonhoeffer, "Lazarus and the Rich Man: Berlin, First Sunday after Trinity, May 29, 1932 (?)," in *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, ed. Isabel Best (Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2012), 35.

damned," Bonhoeffer questions where in this story anyone can locate commentary about the inner attitude of the poor man or the soul of the rich man.[252] He says, "That is precisely the frightening thing about this story—there is no moralizing here at all, but simply talk of poor and rich and of the promise and threat given to the one and the other."[253]

As Bonhoeffer noted in his homily, although we are all Lazarus before God, it is deceptively easy for us to view ourselves as Lazarus before other human beings as well and so avoid wrestling with the implications of identifying with the rich man. Discipleship is costly and the wealthy frequently do not want to hear Jesus' challenge to them. Yet, if we have the courage to see ourselves in the rich man, rather than Lazarus, Luke's gospel gives us reason to hope. After discussing Jesus' countercultural advice to a host to invite those who cannot reciprocate the hospitality (Lk 14:13), Carroll notes, "There is hope for persons with wealth, it seems, if they share generously with those in need, joining Jesus in 'bring[ing] good news to the poor' (4:18; cf. 6:20; 7:22)."[254] Likewise, although the wealthy man in Luke 18:18-23 is saddened after his exchange with Jesus, as he does not wish to give up his wealth, and although Jesus says, "Indeed, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for someone who is rich to enter the kingdom of God" (Lk 18:25), he also tells those present that God can do what humans cannot (Lk 18:26).[255]

For the purposes of this chapter, it is not necessary to resolve the question of why Lazarus enjoyed blessing and the rich man suffered torment in the next life. While contra the many scholars critiqued by Hock and like Bovon, I accept the interpretation of the rich man as "scandalously rich,"[256] the remaining two views of the rich man and Lazarus having behaved in a way to merit their post-mortem destinies[257] and the contrary view that

252. Bonhoeffer, "Lazarus and the Rich Man: Berlin, First Sunday after Trinity, May 29, 1932 (?)," 36-37.
253. Ibid., 37.
254. Carroll, "Luke."
255. See ibid.
256. See Bovon and Deer, "The Parable of the Rich Man," 479.
257. This appears to be favored by more scholars currently, see above citations in Bovon, Carroll, Fitzmyer, and Hock.

their earthly situations, rather than their behavior, provide the rationale for their respective fates in the afterlife[258] create a productive tension for contemporary Christians. While I think Bauckham has a point that the parable itself explains the rich man's fate in terms of his wealth rather than the use of that wealth (an idea I will return to shortly), the Lucan context[259] bolsters Fitzmyer's claim that the stark contrasts between the situations of the two men both before and after death imply that there is an element of reward and retribution in the next life based on one's actions in this life, which is to say, that our actions here on Earth somehow matter in a real way. Both of these views alert us to the hiddenness of sin, albeit in different ways.

Hiddenness is a quality of sin and we should not dismiss it too readily, whether that dismissal stems from confidence that we have identified (i.e., domesticated) sin or from a feeling of helplessness before the sinful human situation (i.e., despair). Bovon, Fitzmyer, and Hock challenge us to see that the rich man was unaware of his sinfulness and likewise believes that his brothers are unaware and need a warning. Yet his request to warn his brothers is denied. Rather, the rich man is told that his brothers have enough resources to know better, just as he did.[260] We too have enough resources to identify our sins of omission (i.e., failure to act with charity toward our vulnerable neighbor) as well as our sins of commission (i.e., sins committed either in the acquisition or maintenance of our social status or wealth, or, in Hock's view, those sins enabled by the latter).

258. See especially Bauckham, but also Brown.
259. Here I am thinking of the Parable of the Rich Fool in Luke 12:16-21, warnings against greed (12:15), and the impossibility of serving both God and wealth (16:13), call to invite the poor to feasts (14:13-14), Zacchaeus giving half of his possession to the poor (19:8), and telling the rich young ruler to sell his possessions and give the proceeds to the poor (18:22).
260. In his conclusion, Bovon writes, "The narrator and the reader in his wake understand that they have in hand what they need to know about the problem, as well as the keys to paradise. Bovon and Deer, "The Parable of the Rich Man," 488. On his commentary of the last two verses of this parable (Lk 16:30-31), he writes, "The risen Christ does not allow human beings access to God without their practicing obedience and love of neighbor any more than Moses and the prophets did." Ibid., 485.

While the Gospel of Luke portrays Jesus as in some conflict with the Pharisees as far as interpretation of the law,[261] the law continues to be valid. Of the final part of the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, Carroll writes:

> The realm of God, including resurrection, does not nullify God's claim on human obedience, as expressed in law and prophets alike. Jesus did not invent the call to generous sharing of resources with the poor; it is a profound biblical them. He does, however, give the theme radical expression as he embodies God's upside down realm: 'Blessed are you who are poor.... But woe to you who are rich, for you have received your consolation' (6:20, 24)."[262]

Similarly, Donahue notes that this parable challenges any members of Luke's community who might have thought that belief in the resurrected Jesus was a sufficient faith response. He writes, "But the one risen from the dead who offers salvation today is the same Jesus who listened to the voice of Moses and the prophets and offered love and acceptance to the marginalized of his day, while uttering sober warnings to the proud and prosperous."[263]

Applying ethical categories to the situation of the rich man, we might call his sin the sin of indifference and his lack of awareness "vincible ignorance." His coldheartedness, what Keenan identifies his underlying failure to bother to love and the acts of omission of charity which manifest that failure, may be easy for us to see, but it was hidden to him (and likely also to his brothers). Likewise, coming from a virtue perspective, we can legitimately read this parable as illustrating the moral obliviousness produced by vice; the rich man became

261. For instance, there is controversy over observance of the Sabbath, see the two vignettes regarding plucking grain and healing a man with a withered hand in Luke 6:1-11, the second healing on the Sabbath recounted in Luke 13:10-21 (a crippled woman), and another in Luke 14:1-24 (a man with dropsy). These are not the only instances of conflict between Jesus and the Pharisees over Jesus. Other areas include practices of fasting and hospitality as well as the authority to forgive sins, not to mention the interpretation of the commandment to "love your neighbor as yourself."

262. Carroll, "Luke."

263. Donahue, "Jesus in the Gospels," 245.

habituated to excess.[264] He chose to serve wealth rather than God (cf. Lk 16:13),[265] and his actions and omissions reflected that fundamental choice. From either approach, this parable offers us a warning about the hiddenness of sin that resists our very identification of it. In turn, this difficulty in identifying sin smooths the way toward both indifference to the suffering on our doorstep and obliviousness to our capacity and obligation to address it. It is perhaps easier than we think to develop vicious habits and character traits. And yet, like the rich man, we may seek to displace the burden of our ignorance, to implicitly argue that we (or others like us) could not reasonably be expected to recognize this sin by advocating for yet further warning rather than accepting that we already have all the resources we need to identify sin. Here it should be noted that while the rich man does not interact with Lazarus and never helps him in life, he nonetheless knows his name in death, suggesting that he knew Lazarus had been at his gate.[266] We are capable, but do we exercise our capability or seek to excuse our indifference?

What does the challenge of Bauckham and Brown add to this analysis? I suggest that it helps us to expand our focus from acts and omissions to our way of being in the world. The hiddenness of sin is pervasive and can distort the very process of identification, both of the suffering of others and our capacity to address it. How is it the rich man could know Lazarus's name but never have helped him although he was at his gate? In the story of

264. Pope Francis's remark about the need to not be indifferent to human suffering after consideration of the Parable of the Good Samaritan would also seem to apply to the coldheartedness seen in the Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus. Pope Francis writes, "We cannot be indifferent to suffering; we cannot allow anyone to go through life as an outcast. Instead, we should feel indignant, challenged to emerge from our comfortable isolation and to be changed by our contact with human suffering." Francis, *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship* (2021), no. 68, `https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html`.

265. Jocelyn McWhirter makes this point in Jocelyn McWhirter, "Between Text and Sermon: Luke 16:19-31," *Interpretation* 69, no. 4 (2015): 464. She includes both interpretations in her article. As far as the interpretation that the rich man sinned, she cites Deuteronomy 15:7-9 and Isaiah 58:6-9, and reminds readers that in Luke, "Like Moses and the prophets, Jesus advocates almsgiving—the almsgiving of one who serves God, not wealth." (465).

266. See Hock, "Lazarus and Micyllus," 62. Hock argues that the rich man "displays audacity in requesting Abraham to send the beggar whose name he knew but whom he never helped."

the Rich Man and Lazarus, the scandalous inequality that should have served as a warning sign, a challenge to look more closely, was passively accepted. While the rich man knew who Lazarus was, he did not truly see him. While we ought not to despair that we enjoy too much social advantage to enter the Kingdom of God (as God can accomplish what human beings cannot, cf. Lk 18:27), we neither should let ourselves off the hook right away by not identifying with the rich man, focusing on any differences in our behavior and ignoring any similarities in our socioeconomic situation. After all, Jesus' teaching on wealth in Luke does not easily align with the interpretation that *how* we use our wealth matters more than *how much* wealth we have.[267]

Where then does that leave us? What measures can we take to address our indifference? While Bonhoeffer locates the answer to the question of what the rich man should do in the story of the Good Samaritan in Luke 10:25-37, when speaking of the parable here, his suggestion is *to see*, "We should see—see poor Lazarus in his full frightening misery and behind him Christ, who invited him to his table and calls him blessed. Let us see you, poor Lazarus, let us see you, Christ, in poor Lazarus. Oh, that we might be able to see."[268] I argue that cultivating the virtue of humility as outlined in the previous chapter aids our endeavor to see more clearly. We cannot truly listen to others in complete isolation from them. And if we listen to others, allowing their insights to help us identify the truth of our place in the world, we are much more likely to see our own situation more clearly, and so see Lazarus at our gate.

267. See Luke 12:33, 14:12-13, and 18:22. While 14:12-13 refers to inviting the poor to a meal, the other two speak of selling one's possessions and giving the proceeds to the poor. Raymond Brown notes that "The instruction 'Sell your possessions and give alms' (12:33) is very Lucan in its outlook." Brown, "The Gospel According to Luke," 84.

268. Bonhoeffer, "Lazarus and the Rich Man: Berlin, First Sunday after Trinity, May 29, 1932 (?)," 40.

3.4 Conclusions: Humility and Identifying Sin

Knowing our place in the world through others helps us name sin. Naming sin is an act of maturity that helps us turn away from that sin, to convert.[269] Confession readies us for conversion, helping us to recognize and accept that we could have acted differently.[270] We have to be able to name sin in order to accept its consequences and acknowledge how we could have acted differently. In this last section of this chapter I argue that cultivating the virtue of humility helps us become better at identifying sin in two main ways. First, it helps us recognize how both pride and self-deprecation can lead to indifference, to a failure to bother to love that stems from our strength. Second, humility understood in terms of valuing our interdependence also rejects the isolation that enables indifference. In the United States context, attending to the connections between humility understood in terms of interdependence and indifference that stems from our strength also appears likely to challenge current attitudes towards independence understood in terms of self-sufficiency, but this is an area for further exploration.[271]

269. Jana Bennett and David Cloutier argue that an inability to name sin is a major obstacle to participation in the sacrament of Confession by American Catholics. See Bennett and Cloutier, *Naming Our Sins*, 3-15.

270. In the words of Franz Böckle, "The person confessing declares when he confesses, that he is ready to be converted. In other words, he turns his gaze from the past to the future. In his confession, his sin is not simply finished by his acceptance of guilt. The condition for its overcoming is also created." See Böckle, "Theological Reflection about Guilt and Sin," 90.

271. As a preliminary note, consider that there is a positive correlation between wealth and individualism. In economically good times, American adults tend to value independence more highly than in economic difficulty. For instance, during periods of higher unemployment, American parents tend to value the characteristic of helping others more in children more than during good economic times. See Emily C. Bianchi, "American Individualism Rises and Falls with the Economy: Cross-Temporal Evidence that Individualism Declines When the Economy Falters," *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 111, no. 4 (2016): 573-574. Furthermore, financial affluence, or even the perception of abundance (without individual financial gains) is linked both to increased independence and decreased other-centeredness, with the latter including a reduction in attunement to others, compassion, empathy, desire to help and desire to socialize. See ibid., 569. High valuation of self-sufficiency may be linked to the tendency to moralize poverty and distinguish between the deserving and undeserving poor. For a brief overview of the historical roots of the category of the undeserving poor, see Michael B. Katz, "The 'Underclass' Debate: Views from History," in *The 'Underclass' Debate* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018), 5-10. While much of this appears to connect to the American vice of sloth as developed in Jones and Kelly, "Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice," I see suggestions that an unrealistic expectation of self-sufficiency is also at work. For instance, sober family men who were out of work were occasionally seen as deserving poor, but Katz notes that there was suspicion regarding their failure to save for periods of dependence. Katz, "The 'Underclass' Debate," 10. A link between

Attending to the voices of scholars outside of what is commonly called the First World context enables those of us located in privileged contexts to better see our strength vis-à-vis the climate crisis and its impact on people who are poor or otherwise vulnerable. Our failure to attend to our ecological relationships is a sin that intersects with the sin of failing to bother to attend to our relationships with other human beings. Sins identified in chapter 1 as root causes of the current ecological crisis include not only pride, but also greed and thoughtlessness. In either case, the sin stems from our strength. We are strong enough to take more than our share, and in many cases, not even realize it because we are strong enough to be personally insulated from the costs of this greed.[272] As David Cloutier has noted, little attention has been paid to the vice of luxury in the theological literature,[273] and as Erin Lothes Biviano argues, we have trouble even identifying our excess as excess.[274] Yet if we are thoughtless or indifferent, we are "failing to bother to love."[275] This failure stems from our strength, as we do not yet experience much of the impact of climate change first-hand and so can "afford" to ignore it.

self-isolation and lower levels of solidarity is suggested by evidence that Americans' participation in political, civic, and religious life has not only declined, but that this decline has been more pronounced among cooperative forms of behavior and active forms of participation rather than individual forms of behavior and passive observation. See chapters two through nine in Robert D. Putnam, *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000), 31-148.

272. In a recent treatment of the vice of greed, Nichole Flores notes that a capitalist economy tends to promote greed as part of the good life, and it becomes difficult to identify ourselves as greedy as well as to identify both how the flourishing of "often-invisible others" is negatively affected. See Nichole M. Flores, "Greed," chap. 4 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, ed. Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 74-75, 81-85. Notably, she thinks the way forward includes "recognizing the interpersonal implications of greed, identifying the ways in which greed can harm our communities" (77). It seems to me that knowing our place in the world through others and valuing our interdependence will help us begin to recognize these implications, as we start to listen to those who grow our foods and produce and sell our goods.

273. See David Cloutier, "The Problem of Luxury in the Christian Life," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32, no. 1 (2012): 3-20. For more on the vice of luxury, with substantial attention to the U.S. context, see David Cloutier, *The Vice of Luxury: Economic Excess in a Consumer Age*, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015).

274. See Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 87-91. Note that more attention to the theme and language of the vice of luxury can be applied to questions about identifying excess. For more on the definition of luxury, what is enough, what is excess, and who has more than enough, see part two of Cloutier, *The Vice of Luxury*, 177-272.

275. Keenan, *Moral Wisdom*, 57.

3.4.1 Pride and Self-weakening Can Both Lead to Indifference

As seen in the quote that opens this chapter, we act against ourselves when we do not find our true place in the world. This can happen through the sin of pride and its accompanying domination, a theme explored in some depth in *Laudato Si'*, but it can also happen through the sin of indifference, which is named only a handful of times.[276] Here I wish to connect the sin of indifference or thoughtlessness to the vice of excess that is opposed to humility: what I have termed self-deprecation.

First, I contend that indifference may be either prideful or self-weakening. When we overestimate our place in the world, we detach ourselves from others by putting ourselves on a higher level, which can manifest not only as outright domination, but also the insidious thinking that can underpin both domination and prideful indifference: that we are self-sufficient and invulnerable,[277] that we have all the answers such that others need to learn from us but have nothing to teach us. When we underestimate our place in the world and belittle our abilities, gifts, capacities, and *strengths*, we detach from others in a way that violates the flip side of the truth of our interconnectedness: that we have a contribution to make as well as to receive. Our place in creation, whether understood in terms of steward or member of the community of creation, is accompanied by responsibilities. Both prideful domination and self-deprecating passivity fail as ways of interacting with the world around us, including as responses to the various ecological crises we face. Both lead to a form

276. Francis, *Laudato Si'*, nos. 14, 25, 52, 92, 115, 232, and 246. Paragraph 92 connects indifference to other creatures to indifference to humans, paragraph 232 ties indifference to consumerism, and paragraph 246 pleads for enlightenment to avoid the sin of indifference.

277. Here my project to develop the vices opposed to humility in relationship to indifference resonates with the work of Lisa Tessman on what she calls the "ordinary vices of domination." For that term, see Lisa Tessman, *Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 54. For instance, she argues, "Not only do members of dominant groups experience widespread intersubjective agreement about what the good life is, but this agreement has a certain character to it. The ideology that undergirds this conception of the good life is one that promotes meritocracy and competitive individualism and sees 'success' as the attainment of self-interested rather than collective goals." Ibid., 76. Note that this intersubjective agreement (as well as the ability to think of oneself as morally good) is predicated on what Tessman calls "an epistemic isolation." See ibid., 79. In other words, while one can look to others for knowledge, those others must be located in similarly-situated privileged groups. Such an isolation directly goes against the virtue of humility as I have defined it here.

of self-isolation, and both can lead to indifference, understood as a failure to even bother to love. Given the enormity of the problem of climate change, I think indifference is a particular risk, in both its prideful and self-weakening varieties.

Here we can see what is at stake in the effort to rehabilitate humility as a mean between two extremes, and not a virtue that in practice, only opposes pride. On the one hand, conceiving of humility in terms of self-lowering opens the door to regarding people humble even if they perpetuate structures of sin. Consider Katie Grimes' argument that the sainthood of Peter Claver, S.J., and Martin de Porres, both lauded for their "countercultural humility" actually affirms rather than subverts white supremacy.[278] An other-centered virtue of humility grounded in interdependence rather than self-lowering can better resist being coopted into perpetuating a double-standard.[279]

On the other hand, just as the moral manuals, influenced by trends in psychology, tended to diminish culpability and so responsibility, the psychological assumption that humans tend more toward a deficiency of humility (pride) rather than an excess (self-deprecation) also diminishes moral responsibility. While viewing ourselves in isolation from others in a superior sense can lead to pride, and pride perfects sin, viewing ourselves in isolation from others as inferior, in a self-weakening way, can also perfect sin. Seeing ourselves as having nothing of worth to contribute or as incapable of changing "the way things are" habituates us toward indifference. Consider that Saul Alinsky identifies giving "the people the feeling that they can do something" as one of the most important jobs of community organizers[280]

278. Katie M. Grimes, "Racialized Humility: The White Supremacist Sainthood of Peter Claver, SJ," *Horizons* 42, no. 2 (2015): 295–316. Of Claver she writes, "When a white man playacts the degraded status of a slave, we honor him as a saint. When black women and men languish as true slaves, we disregard them." Ibid., 308. Of Martin de Porres, the only American saint of African descent recognized by the Church, she says, "Prevalent notions of humility seemed to convince de Porres that his racially subordinate status qualified as a blessing and pathway to piety rather than an injustice." Ibid., 312.

279. Grimes writes,"In light of the church's racially specific standards of humility, white people appear saintly when they descend below the racially pristine status automatically accorded them, while people of color appear saintly only when they embrace the racial limits imposed upon them." Ibid., 312-313.

280. Saul Alinsky writes, "The organizer knows, for example, that his biggest job is to give the people the feeling that they can do something, that while they may accept the idea that organization means power, they have to experience this idea in action. The organizer's job is to begin to build confidence and hope in the idea

or that Srdja Popovic closes his book, *Blueprint for Revolution* with a chapter titled "It Had to Be You," with attention to more "humble" and local kinds of "heroes" making a difference through neighborhood activism.[281]

Cultivating the virtue of humility so understood helps us identify both our weaknesses and our strengths. To the extent that we are mindful that we often do sin out of strength, our growth in humility will correspond to a growth in our capacity to identify and turn away from our sins. The fact that we are interdependent indicates that we are both limited and capable, in need of receiving and capable of giving. When we overestimate or overvalue our place in the world and underestimate our interdependence, we sin in the key of pride. When we underestimate or undervalue our place in the world and overestimate our dependence on others, we underestimate our capacity, weaken ourselves, and sinfully withhold our contributions from the world.[282]

Conflating the absence of pride with the presence of humility obscures the damage done when we still view ourselves as isolated rather than interconnected but in a self-weakening way, a way which allows us to mask our refusal to act, our refusal to bother, as, if not piety (because we are not seeking inordinate self-elevation), at least morally neutral. I argue that

---

of organization and thus in the people themselves..." Saul D. Alinsky, *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals* (New York: Vintage Books, 1989), 113-114.

281. After giving two examples, Popovic writes, "The ideas in this book are just a practical framework; they're useless without a mind determined to make a difference and heart that believes making a difference is possible. Speaking from personal experience, and on behalf of all the nobodies who followed this sensible path to spectacular results, I swear that there is no more fulfilling or happier way to live than to take a stand for something you think is right. Even the smallest creatures have the power to change the world." Srdja Popovic and Matthew Miller, *Blueprint for Revolution: How to Use Rice Pudding, Lego Men, and Other Nonviolent Techniques to Galvanize Communities, Overthrow Dictators, or Simply Change the World* (New York: Random House, 2015), 249-250. I am neither suggesting that a community organizer or neighborhood activist only need to be humble, nor that all types of community organizing and activism are in line with Christian values. Rather, I draw on these activist examples to show that the vice of self-deprecation presents an obstacle to responding to the call to build up the Kingdom of God.

282. This can be tricky to assess precisely because of the influence of social sins such as but not limited to racism, sexism, and classism. It is because of these positions of relatively less social power that I proposed the grace of self-affirmation in the previous chapter. However, this does not mean that the grace of self-doubt is never needed by people who display a vicious excess of humility; we can think of possible situations in which one might resist considering the perspective of another who tells us our place is "higher" than we think or how it is possible for members of a marginalized group to participate in forms of lateral violence.

the tendency to dismiss the excess of the virtue of humility as some theoretical exercise that has little application in the real world among real, sinful human beings, diminishes human capacity by conflating a virtuous acknowledgement of human limitations with a vicious self-weakening that leads to a refusal to heed the call to discipleship and, fundamentally, to bother to love.

3.4.2 Humility Rejects the Isolation that Enables Ignorance

If Fullam is correct that humility's mode is other-centeredness, and if I am correct that a key characteristic of humility is acknowledging the webs of interdependence within which each of us is located, then being humble entails a rejection of isolation. Hence, cultivating the virtue of humility has a particular bearing on the identification of structures of sin. As Kristin Heyer outlines in the context of migration, isolation enables us to ignore.[283] Isolation is also related to the temptation to exclude others, which stems from the idolatries of security and invulnerability.[284] It is linked with limited participation. Acknowledging our vulnerability and capacity, our interdependence, opens the door for us to acknowledge (or learn) the impact on others of the socioeconomic or sociopolitical structures in which we participate, which in turn makes it possible for us to respond appropriately to social sin through mourning and acting in solidarity. I argue that the virtue of humility rejects the isolation that enables our ignorance such that we sin out of strength by "failing to bother to love."

As seen in the previous section on vincible ignorance, structures of sin are formative and they damage our ability to rightly form our conscience. Yet it is my belief that the disposition to know and value the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings, which is acquired through the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance, can still

283. Kristin E. Heyer, "Internalized Borders: Immigration Ethics in the Age of Trump," *Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2018): 161. That Heyer's insights also apply to this ecological crisis is unsurprising given that climate change and migration are related.
284. See ibid.

help us to begin to identify the less-voluntary dimension of social sin. The virtue of humility helps us pierce what Gregory Baum summarized as "the blindness produced in persons by the dominant culture... that prevents them from recognizing the evil dimension of their social reality."[285] Humility as an other-centered way of knowing our place in the world, along with the graces of self-doubt and self-affirmation, helps us remove "ideological blinders," identify individual and structural sin, and "deglamorize lethal lifestyles."[286]

Other-centered knowing helps us develop the capacity of our conscience as well as undertake the communal discernment needed to face the most pressing ethical issues of our times, including the climate crisis and racism.[287] As seen in the previous chapter, Farley argued the grace of self-doubt fights the temptation for certitude by helping keeping one's mind open. This in turn means that we may have to rethink our conclusions, because self-doubt "is a grace for recognizing the contingencies of moral knowledge when we stretch toward the particular and the concrete. It allows us to listen to the experiences of others, take seriously reasons that are alternative to our own, rethink our own last word."[288] Discernment is an ongoing process. As the scholars in chapter 1 repeatedly reminded us, discerning how we as individuals and communities are called to respond to the ecological crisis is inextricably linked to the gross injustices of extreme poverty for many and extreme wealth for a few. With its awareness of the interdependence of all creation, humility expands the circle of concern, of listening not only to our fellow human beings from other contexts, but also to other creatures within the community of creation.[289] Likewise,

285. Baum, "Structures of Sin," 113.

286. The term "deglamorize lethal lifestyles" comes from Lothes. In her introduction, she notes the problem of "self-conscious ecocide," how "society is able to persist in conscious folly, glamorize lethal lifestyles, and coopt discussion." Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, xxvi.

287. Keenan identifies these issues as the "climate crisis and its impact on the poor and marginalized," "the tragic banality of contemporary political leadership," and "racism and antiblackness." James F. Keenan, "Prophetic Pragmatism and Descending to Matters of Detail," *Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2018): 128-145.

288. Farley, "Grace of Self-doubt," 69.

289. Laura E. Donaldson critiques deep ecologists for not listening sufficiently, writing, "Instead of speaking for the rest of Mother Earth, Deep Ecologists might spend more time listening to her." Donaldson, "Convenanting Nature," 110-118. For an example of recent theological efforts to listen to non-human creation, see Johnson, *Ask the Beasts*.

a humble person who knows the truth of his or her place in the world as interdependent in an other-centered way will be more ready to cultivate the virtue of vigilance which resists voluntary ignorance.[290] In this way, the virtue of humility helps us form and inform our conscience by piercing our indifference and increasing our capacity to overcome voluntary ignorance.

It remains true that we will not remove our unconscious biases by ourselves. Nonetheless, having been alerted to their existence, we can choose to grapple with them instead of remaining indifferent or complacent. There is no shortage of people trying to communicate the truth of their place in the world with us, and while disinformation complicates matters, information is still abundant and accessible. Given that we are interdependent and social beings, we have every reason to expect that the truth of their place in the world affects the truth of our place in the world, even if we may not want to hear that we are privileged, or may not initially understand how that can be the case. As we become people who seek out the voices of others and allow them to challenge how we view our own place in the world, we become better at knowing and valuing that place, at understanding how we participate in sinful social structures, and at identifying ways in which we can act well in accordance with our place.

3.4.3 Humility as the Bridge to Solidarity?

Even as a shift in the use of the category of social sin can be identified in the recent writing of Pope Francis,[291] solidarity has long been noted as key to the response to social

290. The virtue of vigilance is defined by O'Connell as "an epistemological virtue that resists the voluntary ignorance of whiteness about our own racial identities as whites." See Maureen H. O'Connell, "After White Supremacy?: The Viability of Virtue Ethics for Racial Justice," *Journal of Moral Theology* 3, no. 1 (2014): 101.

291. As Kristin Heyer notes, "Whereas John Paul II forwarded the virtue of solidarity as an antidote to structural sin, the social face of Christian love, Francis's focus on the ideological dimensions of social sin prompt him to spotlight encounter and discernment." Heyer, "Walls in the Heart," 38-39. This emphasis on encounter and discernment does not replace or exclude solidarity. In *Fratelli Tutti*, Pope Francis dedicates four paragraphs to the "value of solidarity." See Francis, *Fratelli Tutti*, nos. 114-117.

sin. In *Sollicitudo Rei Socialis*, Pope John Paul II advocated solidarity and mourning as the responses to social sin.[292] Drawing on that encyclical, Gregory Baum has argued that "readiness to mourn" and a "keener sense of personal responsibility," are the appropriate spiritual responses to social sin.[293] Mourning prepares us to participate in social and political action.[294] The fittingness of mourning or lament and solidarity as responses to social sin have been taken up by other theologians in the context of migration,[295] "planetary sin,"[296] and the "triple cries" of the poor, women, and the earth.[297] Massingale identifies authentic interracial solidarity as key to forming consciences in a context of unconscious racial bias.[298]

Solidarity is often proposed as a virtue which can help rehabilitate the conscience,[299] along with vigilance.[300] I suggest that humility helps form the bridge to solidarity. Consider the social sin of racism. Cultivating the virtue of humility gives us a path to the "first step" toward "being able to name the privileges our skin color awards us and denies to others" that Maureen O'Connell suggests.[301] I suggest that this step comes before applying the principle

292. See Gregory Baum's analysis Baum, "Structures of Sin," 119-122. Here Baum notes that overall the call to action in that encyclical is much weaker than its analysis, and is primarily directed to those living in the global North.
293. Baum, "John Paul II on Structural Sin," 201.
294. See ibid., 200-201.
295. See Kristin E. Heyer, "Social Sin and Immigration: Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors," *Theological Studies* 71, no. 2 (2010): 435.
296. In her extension of the category of social sin to be more inclusive of the damage sin does to the entire created world, Jame Schaefer proposes solidarity as integral to seeking the "planetary common good." Schaefer, "Environmental Degradation," 79-84.
297. See Astorga, "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth." Recall that for Astorga the three-fold solution included prophetic lament as well as gender resistance and ecological kinship.
298. Massingale, "Conscience Formation," 65. In another piece on cultured indifference to the poor, Massingale identifies the need for prophetic denunciation as well as authentic interracial solidarity. See Bryan N. Massingale, "The Scandal of Poverty: 'Cultured Indifference' and the Option for the Poor Post-Katrina," *Journal of Religion & Society* 10 (2008): 55–72.
299. See discussion in Keenan, "Redeeming Conscience," 138-139. The practice of solidarity is also identified by both Massingale and Fullam as helpful for resisting the effects of social sin on conscience. Massingale argues that both "authentic interracial solidarity and transformative love (compassion)" are necessary. See Massingale, "Conscience Formation," 64-68. Fullam includes solidarity as the first of the six practices she identifies for aiding conscience formation. See Fullam, "Joan of Arc," 80.
300. Vigilance is one of three "cardinal virtues of anti-racist racists" identified by Maureen O'Connell, along with counter-framing and sitting-with-it. See O'Connell, "After White Supremacy?"
301. See O'Connell, "Catholics and racism," 100-102. O'Connell is writing after the killing of Trayvon Martin. After noting that Catholic social teaching fails to examine racism as a root cause of injustice, O'Connell

of solidarity, another resource O'Connell identifies within the Catholic tradition.[302] Yet humility is not often discussed by name in the context of structures of sin, perhaps because it can be a "burdened" virtue in contexts of oppression.[303]

Naming the truth of our place in the world is hardly limited to the privileges due to skin color in a racist society; it also extends to other privileges as well as liabilities due to gender, sexual orientation, (dis)ability, etc. Fullam connects solidarity and humility in the first practice she identifies for resisting the corrosive effects of social sin, such as internalized sexism. While Fullam defines humility somewhat differently from what I do here, she nonetheless connects the practice of solidarity with the other with humility in the sense of utilizing a "preferential option for the strange" with respect to challenges to "fundamental conceptions of what a good person should be."[304] More generally, in her work on the virtue of humility, Fullam also makes this connection between the virtue of humility and solidarity, writing, "Humility opens the door to solidarity with humanity."[305]

Given humility's connection with solidarity, perhaps we should not be surprised that the virtue of humility is often paired with the virtue of courage.[306] There is a reason why Farley closes her essay with the suggestion that the grace of self-doubt is paired with courage of

---

offers some other resources for whites and Euro-Americans, including the Ignatian tradition which encourages "us to use our imaginations in prayer, not only to better into contemplative encounters with the Divine, but also to stand in others' shoes and perceive ourselves as they do."

302. Ibid. As a third resource, O'Connell also names Dorothy Day, Flannery O'Conner and St. Katherine Drexel as prophetic figures worth emulating because they "did not shy away from taking responsibility for their white privileges."

303. The term "burdened virtue comes from Lisa Tessman. Humility as I have developed it would tie in with self-regarding virtues. She writes, "Racism, gender subordination, and class divisions (accompanied by elitism) do serious damage to those of the self-regarding virtues that are largely about the way the subordinated self views her/his own capacities; in a society that sees one as inferior, it is difficult not to come to see oneself this way too and to question one's capacities, one's worth, or even one's beauty." Tessman, *Burdened Virtues*, 64. For an example of the damage that can be done, see Grimes' treatment of two Catholic saints known for their humility. Grimes, "Racialized Humility."

304. Fullam, "Joan of Arc," 80.

305. Fullam, *Virtue of Humility*, 161.

306. For an example from daily family life, see how Julie Hanlon Rubio pairs the two virtues with respect to Christian parents passing on the faith in a social context marked by increasing non-affiliation. Hanlon Rubio, "Passing on the Faith," 95-112, at 108. Here the humility is constituted, in part, by a recognition that a child is other, and so ultimately, the decision about what to believe and what kind of person to be will rest with the child, not the parent.

conviction.[307] It takes humility to keep one's mind open and to be willing to revise our conclusions, and it takes courage to speak provisionally when necessary on some questions, rather than assuming a false certitude or avoiding speaking on urgent and complex issues for which we are still very much in the process of communal discernment.

In Conclusion

Knowing our place in the world through others helps us identify sin and sinful social structures. Drawing on a view of sin as a failure to bother to love that stems from our strength, I have argued that cultivating the virtue of humility is a form of resistance to both the idolization of self-sufficiency and the dependency and deferring of decisive action to others that can develop in the face of overwhelmingly large and complicated problems, such as the transgression of planetary boundaries. As seen in chapter 1, both recent Catholic social teaching on the environment and the work of theologians from a variety of contexts have emphasized the disproportionate harm done to the earth and to human beings by a few relatively wealthy and politically strong countries, including the United States. This reality points to a need for identifying and responding to sinful social structures, and it is here that I believe a more robust understanding of the virtue of humility can help. Given humility's connections with isolation, ignorance, and indifference, I have also suggested that the virtue of humility helps form the bridge to solidarity, the virtue that is pervasively recommended as the response to social sin.

307. See Farley, "Grace of Self-doubt."

Chapter 4

Humility in Practice in the United States: Acknowledging Our Interdependence at the Table

4.1 Introduction

This dissertation will conclude by sketching one image of the cardinal virtue of humility in the U.S. context: the adoption of a plant-based diet. Having argued for the need for humility as a fifth cardinal virtue that governs our ecological relationality and thickened it in a Christian context in chapter 2, here I am proposing one practice to live out that virtue in the contemporary United States context. Since humility was developed in chapter 2 in terms of ecological relationality, and human-induced climate change is one of the biggest threats to our ecological relationships, this chapter will focus on one area that both contributes to and is impacted by climate change: food. Specifically, I will argue that increasing plant-based food consumption is a practice which we can expect to foster the virtue of humility in individuals living in the United States and other wealthier nations with high rates of meat consumption.

Since the focus is on a specific action or practice to cultivate the virtue of humility rather than taking counsel with moral exemplars,[1] this project is thus broadly within the discovery mode of virtue action guidance identified by Daniel J. Daly.[2] This mode "begins with deliberation with the virtues and generates actions that enact the virtues" and is helpful in times when we are seeking to identify what we should do if we want to live out a virtue.[3] Nonetheless the focus remains on dietary practices considered holistically, not on individual actions of eating or not eating a particular food considered in isolation. While I maintain that what we eat is a moral concern, this virtue approach to the place of animal products in the daily eating of people living in the United States (and other countries with high consumption of animal products) views that concern in light of what overall dietary practice is good, better, or best, and not whether any individual action of consuming animal products is right or wrong.[4]

As will be seen in the first section, on a societal level, our choices and practices around how and what food is produced significantly contribute to greenhouse gas emissions. At the

1. For an example of an article that approaches meat eating from within a virtue framework and appeals to moral exemplars, see Beth K. Haile, "Virtuous Meat Consumption: A Virtue Ethics Defense of an Omnivorous Way of Life," *Logos* 16, no. 1 (2013): 83–100. Here Haile suggests Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall (a chef, writer, and farmer) as an exemplar of someone who chooses to eat meat and whose life appears oriented toward the good. See ibid., 87-88.

2. Daly identifies a multimodal methodology for arriving at moral judgments within a virtue framework. The two primary modes are taking counsel with exemplars and taking counsel with the virtues. Within the former category are three submodes: the dialogical mode, emulation mode, and substituted judgment mode. The latter category consists of two submodes, the interrogative (which evaluates a planned action in light of the virtues) and the discovery, which looks for ways to enact the virtues. See Daniel J. Daly, "Virtue Ethics and Action Guidance," *Theological Studies* 82, no. 4 (2021): 565–582.

3. Ibid., 578.

4. Daly notes that one advantage of a virtue methodology towards action guidance is that it is agent-specific in terms of absolute and relative moral excellence. Regarding the latter, many moral concerns are better understood as questions of what is good, better, or best rather than what is right or wrong. See ibid., 579. This moral gradation is also relevant to sociostructural issues. For example, Daly makes this point in the seventh chapter of his recent book when considering minimally, ordinarily, and exemplarily ecologically just decisions faced by an individual considering commute options. Daniel J. Daly, "The Output Power of the Structures of Virtue and Vice," in *The Structures of Virtue and Vice* (Georgetown University Press, 2021), 195-219, at 214.

same time, climate change poses a significant threat to food security, and by extension, to our current dietary patterns and food choices. Yet when focusing on our carbon footprints, there are other possible starting points, including in the energy or transportation sectors. Therefore, the first section of this chapter is devoted to the twin questions of why focus on food and, given the focus on food, why focus on the consumption of animal products. Points addressed under the first question include the broader applicability of food, the frequency of its consumption, and the larger-than-expected impact of food production on the environment. For example, every person needs to eat, but not everyone owns a car or has access to air travel. Furthermore, eating is a daily activity, ideally more than once per day, providing multiple opportunities to develop a new habit. The second part of this section addresses the fact that the impact of high consumption of animal products is greater than we tend to think, both as far as our own household's environmental footprint as well as the potential for collective action to decrease greenhouse gas emissions.

The second section will develop adopting a plant-based diet as a practice to cultivate the virtue of humility in the United States. Though my focus is on the United States, given similarities between dietary choices among high-income nations, I expect that this particular way of cultivating the virtue of humility will have broader, though not universal, applicability. Here one challenge will be defending the focus on the role that lifestyle changes and individual or household practices can play when responding to a global problem. After making the case that adopting a plant-based diet is conducive to human flourishing and can be expected to have an impact on our character, I will close this section by distinguishing how this proposed practice will cultivate the virtue of humility as opposed to temperance.

The third section will move the focus from the household level to that of a structural practice by considering how the Catholic Church might help foster the virtue of humility in the United States. Here I take up calls to rethink the Lenten practice of abstinence from meat on Fridays and argue that this practice can be reinvigorated when understood not only in terms of penance but also as a way to cultivate the virtue of humility in an era marked by climate change.

4.2 Background: The Global Food System and the Climate Crisis

4.2.1 Why focus on food?

Food production, distribution, and consumption are both justice issues and ecological issues. From a justice perspective, food is an urgent issue because a significant percentage of the world population continues to suffer food insecurity and malnutrition. Almost twelve percent of the world population was food insecure in 2020, and three billion people could not afford a healthy diet in 2019.[5] According to some measures, progress in food security and nutrition is backsliding. In 2020, the slow rise of moderate or severe food insecurity seen since 2014 accelerated, undernourishment increased for the first time in five years, the gender gap in moderate or severe food insecurity increased to ten percent (from six percent in 2019), and the percentage of children under five who are affected by stunting and wasting is expected to be even higher than estimated due to the COVID-19 pandemic.[6]

Key drivers of food insecurity and malnutrition include climate variability, conflict, economic downturns, and unaffordable healthy diets, all of which are exacerbated by underlying poverty and inequality.[7] Yet the problem goes even beyond variability in crop yields and unequal access to the food that is produced; there is a fundamental mismatch between global food production and nutrition. If we could somehow ensure the just distri-

5. FAO et al., *In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021: Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all* (Rome, 2021), 5, doi:`https://doi.org/10.4060/cb5409en`.

6. Ibid., 5, 18. An estimated 22 percent of children are estimated to be affected by stunting, and 6.7 percent by wasting.

7. Ibid., 12.

bution of the food currently produced, there would be sufficient calories for each person but not adequate nutrition because we currently produce an excess of grains, fats, and sugars and a deficiency of fruits, vegetables, and proteins.[8]

We are currently in the midst of a particularly challenging time for the global food system. Those of us in high-income countries were accustomed to decades of low food prices, but there is ample cause for concern about food security in the first half of the twenty-first century.[9] Even before the pandemic, serious challenges to food security were identified on both the demand side and the supply side.[10] The former includes a growing population and an increased demand for foods that require more resources, particularly meat, due to an increase in average wealth.[11] On the supply side, issues include growing competition for freshwater, the direct and indirect needs for energy, and the challenge of climate change.[12] Globally, the demand for food is increasing due to population growth and changing patterns of consumption even as the growth in agricultural yields is decreasing.[13]

8. Krishna Bahadur K.C. et al., "When Too Much Isn't Enough: Does Current Food Production Meet Global Nutritional Needs?," *PloS one* 13, no. 10 (2018): 1–16, doi:https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205683. The baseline used for caloric and nutritional needs is from 2011.

9. H. C. J Godfray et al., "The Challenge of Feeding 9–10 Billion People Equitably and Sustainably," *The Journal of Agricultural Science* 152, no. S1 (2014): 2–8.

10. There was already more attention to food security due to the spike in prices in 2007/2008. See ibid., S2. While the impacts of COVID-19 are still being studied, estimates suggest that global hunger will affect thirty million more people in 2030 than it would have without the pandemic. See discussion FAO et al., *In Brief 2021*, 18-23. This is not to say that the pandemic completely reversed progress toward 2030 goals or that we were likely to fully meet those goals if not for COVID-19. The pandemic exacerbated already problematic trends and one hundred million fewer people are still expected to suffer from hunger in 2030 than in 2020.

11. Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S3. This article was published in 2014, but note that five years later, the United Nations is still projecting the global population to grow to 9.7 billion in 2050. See Department of Economic United Nations and Social Affairs Population Division, *World Population Prospects 2019: Ten Key Findings*, 2019, 1.

12. Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S3. Human needs for freshwater will grow because of population growth, while land productivity will be negatively impacted due to currently unsustainable irrigation. Hence, just because land devoted to agricultural use now is productive, it does not follow that it will continue to be productive in the future. This challenge is exacerbated by the fact that the previous method of producing more food by increasing the land used for cultivation is no longer viable given that further land conversion would result in increased greenhouse gas emissions. Ibid., S4.

13. The *growth* in yields is slowing. So for instance, a study published in 2013 found that the yield of maize, rice, wheat, and soybean has continued to grow at rates of 1.6 percent, 1.0 percent, 0.9 percent, and 1.3 percent, respectively. The issue is that this growth is below the 2.4 percent yearly increase that is needed to double crop production by 2050. See Deepak K. Ray et al., "Yield Trends Are Insufficient to Double Global Crop Production by 2050," *PloS one* 8, no. 6 (2013): 1–8, doi:https://doi.org/10.1371/

Climate change already contributes to food insecurity and food production is a key contributor to climate change. The number of extreme climate-related disasters has doubled over the period 1990-2016.[14] Climate changes are negatively affecting wheat, rice, and maize production in some regions, and these effects are expected to worsen.[15] Droughts, dry spells/low rainfall, floods, seasonal variability, and storms all contributed to food crisis situations in 2017.[16] Climate variability and extremes affect food security and nutrition both directly and indirectly. For example, a drought can have the direct impact of reducing crop yields and the indirect effect of increasing prices (since reduced crop yields can cause prices to rise).[17]

Our food system accounts for about a fourth of global greenhouse gas emissions.[18] This may come as a surprise, given that the energy sector accounts for the largest share of greenhouse gas emissions (73.2 percent),[19] but the emissions of the food system go beyond those directly accounted for by the agriculture, forestry, and land use sector because they include post-farm processes, such as food processing and distribution.[20] Just the direct emissions of the agricultural sector alone are slightly higher than the transportation sector's

journal.pone.0066428. This is a global trend, with some countries on track to double their production by 2050 while others are experiencing declines in yields. To see how crop yields are changing by country see Ray et al., "Yield Trends," Figure 2. Even within a country, the picture can vary by crop and region. For instance, in the United States maize yields are increasing on average (but decreasing in some areas) and most (but not all) areas have increased yields for soybeans whereas it is the reverse for wheat. See discussion of North and Central America in ibid.

14. See *Figure 15: Increasing Number of Extreme Climate-Related Disasters, 1990–2016*, FAO et al., *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018: Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition.* (Rome, 2018), 39.

15. Ibid., 39, 62. About one-third of the variability in crop yields for four major crops (wheat, maize, rice, and soybean) can be attributed to climate factors.

16. See *Table 7: Climate Shocks Were One of the Leading Causes of Food Crisis Situations in 2017*, Ibid., 59.

17. Ibid., 61.

18. Hanna Ritchie, "Food Production is Responsible for One-quarter of the World's Greenhouse Gas Emissions," https://ourworldindata.org/food-ghg-emissions, *Our World in Data*, 2019,

19. Hanna Ritchie and Max Roser, "CO2 and Greenhouse Gas Emissions," *Our World in Data*, 2020, https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions.

20. Hence, drawing on J. Poore and T. Nemecek, "Reducing Food's Environmental Impacts through Producers and Consumers," *Science* 360, no. 6392 (2018): 987–992, Ritchie takes into consideration both the direct impacts of the agricultural sector as well as the post-farm processing of food, including distribution.

(17 percent vs. 16.2 percent).[21] Nor is food production's negative environmental impact limited to greenhouse gas emissions. Agriculture covers over 40 percent of the world's ice-free and desert-free land and irrigation is responsible for an estimated two-thirds of freshwater withdrawals.[22] Food production creates almost a third ($\sim$32 percent) of global terrestrial acidification and over three-quarters ($\sim$78 percent) of eutrophication.[23]

Proposed solutions to the challenges facing food security include increasing agricultural production, increasing the efficiency of the food system (including by using nitrogen more efficiently and reducing food waste), and encouraging changes in dietary habits, particularly among those living in wealthier countries.[24] While all of these proposed solutions are important and deserving of attention, the ones related most directly to agricultural processes are not as well-suited for the general-population-level virtue approach I am taking here. For example, while nitrogen plays an integral role in any approach to food security and sustainable food production since it is key both for plant growth and to environmental

21. Note that the emissions from transportation are considered under the energy sector. See Ritchie and Roser, "CO2 and Greenhouse Gas Emissions." The agriculture, forestry, and other land use sector accounts for around seventeen percent of total global emissions. See Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, "Emissions Due to Agriculture: Global, Regional and Country Trends 2000–2018," *FAOSTAT Analytical Brief Series*, no. 18 (2020): Figure 1. Note that although the emissions due to agriculture as a percentage of all emissions were lower in 2018 than in 2000 (17 percent vs. 24 percent in the 2000s), this is not because emissions related to livestock and crops declined, but rather is due to a combination of decreases in deforestation which decreased emissions due to land use, and the fact that emissions from other sectors increased relatively more quickly. While the emissions due to land use have decreased since the beginning of the twenty-first century, the emissions due to producing crops and livestock have increased by fourteen percent. Ibid. Based on 2016 data, Our World in Data estimates the direct contributions of the Agriculture, Forestry, and Land Use (not including post-farm process) sector to be 18.4 percent. Ritchie and Roser, "CO2 and Greenhouse Gas Emissions."

22. Note that agricultural land use here does not only reflect that used for food. Thirteen percent is used for non-food production including biofuels, textiles, wool, and leather. Poore and Nemecek, "Reducing Food's Environmental Impacts," 987.

23. Ibid. Terrestrial acidification affects the ph balance of the soil and leads to decreased biodiversity. See Ligia B. Azevedo et al., "Global Assessment of the Effects of Terrestrial Acidification on Plant Species Richness," *Environmental Pollution* 174 (2013): 10–15. Eutrophication is a process in which there is too much nutrient enrichment in the environment and results in algal blooms, dead zones, and low-oxygen waters that can kill fish and seagrass. National Ocean Service, "What Is Eutrophication?," accessed March 18, 2022, https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/eutrophication.html.

24. Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S4-S5.

pollution,[25] few people in the United States are directly involved in the use of nitrogen in agriculture and researching how to use nitrogen more efficiently is likewise outside of the expertise and experience of the majority of the population.[26] This is not to say that the more efficient use of nitrogen is not deserving of ethical attention. I maintain that it is, due to its crucial role in producing enough food for the human population, its multi-faceted environmental impact, issues of access to better methods as well as incentives of fertilizer application, and the fact that both high-technology and low-technology research is needed but high-technology research is more appealing to private companies due to its generation of intellectual property.[27]

Technological solutions can be glamorous, but on their own, they are unlikely to be so successful that changes in dietary habits will become unnecessary.[28] Technological ad-

25. See discussion Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S4-S5. The use of nitrogen in food production leads to water contamination by nitrates, and to ammonia and other nitrogen compounds being released into the atmosphere and finding their way to natural habitats.

26. Whereas in 1840 seventy percent of the labor force in the United States worked in agriculture, only 10.3 percent of jobs in the U.S. in 2020 were related to the agricultural and food sectors, and this includes food service (which held the largest share), food and beverage stores, food and beverage manufacturing, fishing, etc. Only 1.4 percent of U.S. employment that year was "on-farm." See Ezra Klein and Susannah Locke, "40 Maps that Explain Food in America," *Vox*, June 9, 2014, `https://www.vox.com/a/explain-food-america` and U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, "Agriculture and its related industries provide 10.3 percent of U.S. employment," accessed March 18, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=58282`, respectively. As far as research, the Agricultural Research Service (ARS) of the U.S. Department of Agriculture employs 8,000 people, a quarter of whom are scientists and postdocs. See Agricultural Research Service, "About ARS," https://www.ars.usda.gov/about-ars/.

27. For example, with respect to using nitrogen more efficiently, see Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S5-S6.

28. Godfray et al take a both/and approach, concluding that "Demand will need to be moderated, waste reduced, and the governance of the food system will need to be improved, but in addition more will need to be grown with less effect on the environment." See ibid., S7. Poore and Nemecek consider mitigating negative environmental impacts through both producers and consumers. While both have a role to play, they observe that there are limits to mitigating the impact of some products, especially animal products (and especially barring "major technological changes" that "disproportionately target" those products), which have a greater impact no matter the method of production. See Poore and Nemecek, "Reducing Food's Environmental Impacts," 990-991. They go on to say, "Today, and probably into the future, dietary change can deliver environmental benefits on a scale not achievable by producers." See ibid., 991. When considering nutritional needs and not just calories for a growing population, Bahadur K.C. et al conclude that "The data suggest that adopting nutritionally balanced diets that involve a greater consumption of fruits and vegetables, plus lower consumption of grains, fats, and sugars, along with developing proteins that require less land to produce should help to ensure sustainable and balanced diets through the coming decades." See Bahadur K.C. et al., "When Too Much Isn't Enough," 12 of 16.

vances may help us increase yields, but too much focus here may be overly optimistic. The situation is such that not only do we need to find ways to increase yields (without converting more land to agriculture), but further research is also necessary simply to maintain our current yields.[29] Like more efficient use of nitrogen, technological solutions to increase agricultural production is not a practice accessible to a large percentage of the U.S. population but rather targeted toward producers and researchers.[30] My primary focus in this chapter is the formative aspect of food-related practices on character development. Focusing on technology without focusing on a corresponding role for individuals is thus tangential to the virtue approach used here. From a theological perspective, it also risks feeding into the 'technocratic paradigm' that Pope Francis has identified as part of the root cause of the current ecological crisis.[31] That leaves reducing food waste and dietary changes, both of which have been held up recently as the most important measures individual households can take.[32] Indeed, according to a 2018 analysis by the conservation nonprofit Rare, of the thirty behavioral mitigation strategies they identified, reducing food waste and switching to a plant-based diet had the greatest reduction in global emissions.[33]

29. Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S5.

30. This is not to say that there is no role for the wider population, as the best technological solutions could potentially still change the cost or availability of certain agricultural products and/or rely on some changes in dietary or purchasing habits.

31. Francis, *Laudato Si'*, nos. 101-136.

32. Annie Lowrey, "Your Diet Is Cooking the Planet," *The Atlantic*, April 6, 2021. Martha Henriques and Zaria Gorvett, "The Climate Benefits of Veganism and Vegetarianism," *BBC*, May 1, 2022, accessed May 4, 2022, https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220429-the-climate-benefits-of-veganism-and-vegetarianism.

33. These strategies were ranked #3 and #4, respectively. The two top-ranked solutions were not in the realm of behavioral change (i.e., refrigerant management and wind turbines). Katie Williamson et al., "Climate Change Needs Behavior Change: Making the Case for Behavioral Solutions to Reduce Global Warming," *Rare*, 2018, 44, https://rare.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2018-CCNBC-Report.pdf.

4.2.2 U.S. food practices and habits

The U.S. context is one of heavy meat consumption and high rates of food loss and waste. Over one-third of all available food is not eaten,[34] and for a household of four, the average economic impact of food loss is 1,500 USD.[35] Compared to the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, people in the United States on average overconsume in the two categories of a) meat, eggs, nuts, and seeds and b) grains, and do not consume sufficient vegetables, dairy, or fruit.[36] Two general notes here are warranted. First, with respect to the protein group, intake is much higher for meat and eggs than for nuts and seeds.[37] Second, while most people living in the United States fall short of U.S. recommendations for dairy intake, these recommendations are notably higher than the dairy recommendations of other countries.[38] The majority of U.S. adults also exceed the recommended intake of added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.[39] In this section I will note the following aspects

34. U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Food Loss and Waste*, accessed March 31, 2022, `https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/consumers`.

35. Ibid.

36. Consumption of fruit and vegetables has increased between 1970 and 2018 but remains well short of recommended amounts. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, *U.S. Diets Are Out of Balance with Federal Recommendations*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=58334`.

37. About 75 percent of people in the U.S. meet or exceed recommendations for meat, poultry, and eggs, but over half do not eat as many nuts and seeds as recommended. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*, 9th ed. (December 2020), 34, `DietaryGuidelines.gov`. While legumes are considered under both the vegetable and the protein categories, they are typically addressed under vegetables unless the diet under consideration is explicitly vegetarian.

38. For example, the USA recommendation of three servings of dairy per day is three times that recommended by the WHO healthy diet, and also higher than that recommended by India, Germany, Canada, and China, though similar to the recommendation of Australia. This affects the greenhouse gas emissions of the recommended U.S. dietary guidelines, as within those guidelines, the recommended portions of dairy constitute the largest contributor of greenhouse gases. Hannah Ritchie, David S. Reay, and Peter Higgins, "The Impact of Global Dietary Guidelines on Climate Change," *Global Environmental Change* 49 (2018): 50. In another study that compared the dietary guidelines of seven countries, including four not considered in the study mentioned above (i.e., Oman, The Netherlands, Thailand, and Uruguay), the recommendations for servings of dairy foods was highest in the United States. Brittany Kovacs et al., "The Carbon Footprint of Dietary Guidelines Around the World: A Seven Country Modeling Study," *Nutrition Journal* 20, no. 1 (2021): 5 of 10. See Table 1 and discussion. The protein recommendation was second-highest in the United States, with 156 grams per day, compared to 168 grams a day in Oman. The carbon footprint of the U.S. basic guidelines (i.e., not the U.S. vegetarian guidelines) was the highest of all countries considered.

39. The percentages vary by age and sex but the trend holds. See USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 97, 99.

of dietary practices in the United States: consumption of fruits and vegetables relative to current U.S. dietary guidelines, consumption of meat relative both to dietary guidelines and global consumption, how much U.S. adults spend on food and how much time we spend preparing and eating food, and trends in eating food at home vs. eating food away from home.

Fewer than one out of every two adults (42 percent) in the United States reported eating any fruit during the day (though half all adults age 60 and older did),[40] and while the number is higher for vegetables (six out of every ten adults), the most frequently reported vegetable consumed was potatoes, which were primarily fried.[41] Depending on caloric requirements, the 2020-2025 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommend one-and-one-half to two-and-one-half cup-equivalents of fruits and two to four cup-equivalents of vegetables per adult per day.[42] On average, only ten percent of adults meet the recommended daily vegetable intake and just twelve percent meet the guidelines for daily fruit consumption.[43] Perceived barriers to the consumption of fruits and vegetables include issues of cost, availability, and access.[44]

While U.S. experts recommend that people increase their consumption of foods from several food groups, including fruits and vegetables, insufficient protein levels are not a

40. Katherine M. Hoy, John C. Clemens, and Alanna J. Moshfegh, "Intake of Fruit by Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2017-2018," *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 37 (June 2021): 1, accessed March 31, 2022, https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/37_Fruit_consumption_adults_1718.pdf. Note that fruit juice is not counted as a fruit here.

41. See Katherine M. Hoy, John C. Clemens, and Alanna J. Moshfegh, "Intake of Vegetables by Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2017-2018," *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 39 (June 2021): 1,3, accessed March 31, 2022. On a given day, twenty-six percent of adults reported eating potatoes, followed by 18 percent reporting eating salad.

42. USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*. Table 4-1 identifies food group or subgroup needs for six different calorie levels or patterns. Note that recommendations are different for children and for women who are pregnant or lactating.

43. These percentages vary by state, age, sex, household income, and race/ethnicity. See Seung Hee Lee et al., "Adults Meeting Fruit and Vegetable Intake Recommendations - United States, 2019," *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 71, no. 1 (2022): 3-8.

44. See ibid., 5.

public health concern.[45] However, many U.S. Americans do not meet the guidelines for the intake of specific protein subgroups.[46] The recommended protein intake in the United States is higher than in many other countries,[47] and in the United States, we get most (two-thirds) of our protein from animal sources.[48] Simply put, we eat a lot of meat. Polling indicates that only five percent of people in the United States consider themselves to be vegetarian,[49] and only two or three percent describe themselves as vegans.[50] Daily, per capita meat consumption in 2013 was 315.46 grams (11.1 ounces), nearly a 30 percent increase since 1961 and currently the fourth highest in the world.[51]

45. Rather the focus is on increasing the consumption of fruits and vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat/non-fat dairy. See the implications listed in Shanthy A. Bowman, John C. Clemens, and James E. Friday, “Food Pattern Group and Macronutrient Intakes of Adults: WWEIA, NHANES 2003-2004 to 2017-2018,” *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 35 (April 2021), accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/35_Trend_Analysis_of_Adults_Macronutrient_and_Food_Pattern_Food_Intakes_0318.pdf.

46. Seafood is a recommended protein subgroup for which the vast majority (90 percent) of U.S. Americans do not meet the recommended intake, and over half do not meet the recommendation for nuts, seeds, and soy products. USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 34. Under current guidelines, beans, peas, and lentils can be considered both a vegetable and a protein food. See ibid., 31.

47. The recommended protein intake is twice as high in the United States as in India and is also higher than those of Germany, The Netherlands, Thailand, and Uruguay. Kovacs et al., “The Carbon Footprint of Dietary Guidelines Around the World,” 5-6 of 10.

48. Katherine M. Hoy, John C. Clemens, and Alanna J. Moshfegh, “Protein Intake of Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2015-2016,” *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 29 (January 2021), accessed March 23, 2022, https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/29_Protein_Intake_of_Adults_1516.pdf. Note that animal sources of protein here include dairy products, which, when excluding mixed dishes, accounted for 14 percent of animal protein intake. Likewise, plant sources of protein included not only soy products, nuts, and legumes, but also grains (which, excluding mixed dishes, contributed to 24 percent of the plant-based protein intake, the largest category). See Katherine M. Hoy, John Clemens, and Alanna Moshfegh, “Estimated Protein Intake From Animal and Plant Foods by U.S. Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES, 2015–2016,” *Current Developments in Nutrition* 5, no. Supplement 2 (2021): 133–133.

49. This percentage has remained relatively stable over time. See Zach Hrynowski, “What Percentage of Americans Are Vegetarian?,” *Gallup*, accessed March 25, 2022, https://news.gallup.com/poll/267074/percentage-americans-vegetarian.aspx. The likelihood of identifying as vegetarian varies according to race, political leanings, and age. Nonwhite U.S. Americans are more likely to identify themselves as vegetarian than their white counterparts (nine percent vs. three percent), self-identified liberals are more likely than conservatives or moderates (eleven percent vs. two percent and three percent), and adults over the age of 55 are less likely (two percent) than either 18- to 34-year-olds (eight percent) or 25- to 54-year-olds (seven percent).

50. RJ Reinhart, “Snapshot: Few Americans Vegetarian or Vegan,” *Gallup*, accessed March 25, 2022, https://news.gallup.com/poll/238328/snapshot-few-americans-vegetarian-vegan.aspx.

51. In the United States, daily per capita meat consumption in 1961 was 242.9 grams, meaning that there has been a 29.87 percent increase between then and 2013. The three countries with higher daily per capita

Food spending as a percentage of one's budget in the United States has decreased steadily since 1960. In 2020, food spending averaged 8.6 percent of disposable personal income.[52] The most pronounced annual decline was between 2019 and 2020, from 9.6 percent to 8.6 percent.[53] However, food prices are rising, with historically significant increases in 2021 and so far in 2022.[54] For 2022, these increases are expected to be highest for beef and lowest for vegetables.[55]

As far as food production, an increasingly small percentage of working adults in the United States are involved in farming.[56] This is one trend that has prompted some theologians to remark on the disconnect between people consuming food and understanding where it comes from.[57] Time allocation surveys suggest that spending more time in meal preparation and sharing meals is associated with healthier outcomes, and that feel-

---

meat consumption include Australia (318.47 grams), Macao (327.29 grams), and Hong Kong (419.55 grams). See the table listing countries, per capita meat consumption, and year at "Food Balance Sheets: Meat - Food supply quantity (kg/capita/yr) (FAO (2017))," *Our World in Data*, `https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/daily-meat-consumption-per-person?tab=table`. For a visual representation of how meat consumption in the United States compares to that in other countries, see the map based on the same data, "Daily meat consumption per person, 2013," *Our World in Data*, `https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/daily-meat-consumption-per-person`.

52. See U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, *Food Prices and Spending*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/food-prices-and-spending/`.

53. Ibid.

54. In 2021, food-at-home prices rose by 3.5 percent compared to 2020. This increase is 75 percent above the average (for the past twenty years, food inflation has been 2.0 percent per year. See ibid. These increases are expected to continue through 2022, with an estimated increase of before three and four percent for food-at-home prices and between 5.5 and 6.5 percent for food-away-from-home prices. As a recent report from the Economic Research Service of the United States Department of Agriculture concludes, "Price increases for food away from home are expected to exceed historical averages and the inflation rate in 2021." See U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, *Summary Findings: Food Price Outlook, 2022*, accessed April 1, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-price-outlook/summary-findings/`.

55. A recent NPR article lists the increases for twelve categories, which range from 4.3 percent increase for fresh vegetables to 16.2 percent for beef and veal. Vanessa Romo, "Food prices are going up - and at levels Americans haven't seen in decades," *NPR*, March 31, 2022.

56. See Klein and Locke, "40 Maps that Explain Food in America." Recall that only 1.4 percent of U.S. employment in 2020 was "on-farm." See U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, "Agriculture and its related industries provide 10.3 percent of U.S. employment."

57. For instance, see Wirzba, *Food and Faith*, 3-4.

ing rushed is negatively associated with participation in these practices.[58] Yet the trend in the United States has been a decrease in the number of adults who cook each day and the time they spend in food preparation, particularly from 1965 to 1992.[59] Only slightly more than half of U.S. adults cook each day, and in general, they appear willing to spend an hour per day cooking, leading some researchers to suggest focusing on time limits as a significant obstacle to efforts to promote healthy eating.[60] However, there are suggestions that home-cooking in the United States is increasing, especially among men with a college education.[61]

Food obtained away from home tends to have fewer vegetables and fruit and more calories, fat, and sodium than food prepared at home.[62] Each day, a quarter of U.S. adults consume at least one food and/or beverage from a convenience store, representing about 19 percent of their energy intake for that day.[63] Overall, there has been a trend toward more people consuming food outside the home, although this trend did not hold for the recession

58. These findings are tentative and are influenced by gender, race and ethnicity, and socioeconomic status. See Barbara H. Fiese, "Time Allocation and Dietary Habits in the United States: Time for Re-evaluation?," *Physiology & Behavior* 193, no. Pt B (2018): 205–208.

59. In a comparison of time use studies and national nutrition surveys from 1965-1966 to 2007-2008, Lindsey Smith et al. found the largest decreases in daily energy consumed from food at home and the time spent preparing food in this period before leveling off. See Lindsey P. Smith, Shu Wen Ng, and Barry M. Popkin, "Trends in US Home Food Preparation and Consumption: Analysis of National Nutrition Surveys and Time Use Studies from 1965-1966 to 2007-2008," *Nutrition Journal* 12, no. 1 (2013): 45–45.

60. Ibid., 5-7 of 10. Note that this is from the first decade of the twenty-first century and will not reflect any recent changes. See the next footnote for some evidence of increases between 2003 and 2016. Given the increase in food consumed at home seen as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, it is possible that cooking at home also increased recently.

61. Lindsey Smith Taillie, "Who's Cooking? Trends in US Home Food Preparation by Gender, Education, and Race/ethnicity from 2003 to 2016," *Nutrition Journal* 17, no. 1 (2018): 41–41. Note that there were variations by educational attainment and race/ethnicity and that while the increases among men cooking were the highest, this was neither across the board (lower-educated men were among those less likely to cook at home) nor indicative that men do more cooking overall, as the study found that women are more likely to cook and to spend more time cooking.

62. Michelle J. Saksena et al., "America's Eating Habits: Food Away From Home," *Economic Information Bulletin*, no. 196 (September 2019): viii, accessed March 31, 2022, https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/90228/eib-196.pdf?v=5202.5.

63. See Suzanne Morton, Donna G. Rhodes, and Alanna J. Moshfegh, "Convenience Stores: Source of Food/Beverages among Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2013-2016," *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 27 (June 2020): 4, accessed March 31, 2022, https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/27_Convenience_Stores_Food_and_Beverages_among_Adults_1316.pdf.

of 2008-2009.[64] It has likewise been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. For instance, for every dollar spent in 2020 on food produced in the United States, over a quarter (27.9 cents) went to food service establishments, which represented a decrease after nine consecutive years of increases.[65] Similarly, the amount of spending on food at home increased in 2020 while food-away-from-home spending decreased, and 2020 was the first year since 2008 when food-at-home spending accounted for over half of food spending (51.9 percent).[66] Nonetheless, that still means that close to half of food spending in the United States is on food obtained away from home, which is significant when considering that this food tends to be less nutritious.

Before turning to the question of why focus on animal products, one further note is needed. Christian evaluations of U.S. food and farming policies conclude that current policies are neither just nor ecologically sustainable.[67] Some U.S. theologians such as Kenneth Weare and Mark Graham have responded with a substantial focus on locally sourcing our food.[68] Others have included eating locally as part of their thinking about eating justly.[69] Since both Graham and Julie Hanlon Rubio include reducing meat consumption in their proposals for guidelines for a Christian food ethic, one might wonder why then I do not

64. See the Report Summary in Saksena et al., "America's Eating Habits," viii-ix.

65. USDA, *Food Prices and Spending*.

66. Ibid.

67. See Mark E. Graham, "The Unsavory Gamble of Industrial Agriculture," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church 3 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 105–116; Mark E Graham, *Sustainable Agriculture: A Christian Ethic of Gratitude* (Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2005); Julie Hanlon Rubio, "Toward a Just Way of Eating," in *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, ed. Tobias L Winright (Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2011), 360–378; Kenneth M. Weare, "Can Agriculture Be Sustainable in the United States?," in *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, ed. Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, vol. 3, Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church 3 (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 31–51; Wirzba, *Food and Faith*.

68. Weare proposes Community Supported Agriculture (CSA) as a model solution for a just and sustainable agriculture. See Weare, "Can Agriculture Be Sustainable in the United States?," 52. Of the four points for a Christian food ethic that Graham proposes, half are related to locally sourcing one's food, either through growing it oneself or buying locally. See Graham, "The Unsavory Gamble of Industrial Agriculture." The other two points are to think about food morally and to eat low on the food chain.

69. For instance, eating locally is the fifth of five guidelines Julie Hanlon Rubio offers for families. See Hanlon Rubio, "Toward a Just Way of Eating." However, she notes that food miles is not a helpful category in general. Also, reducing meat and animal products is the third guideline.

likewise consider eating locally as a candidate for a food-related virtuous practice of humility, especially since it comes up at least in passing in discussions of other vices, such as greed.[70] While I do not deny that practices of eating locally may help foster appreciation for where our food comes from and thereby aid in the cultivation of the virtue of gratitude, local sourcing of food is not the focus here because, as I will show in the following paragraphs, it is less accessible and has a more limited environmental impact than reducing meat consumption, and yet consumers tend to express more willingness to eat locally or seasonally than to eat less meat.

The concern with eating locally relates to that of eating seasonally,[71] which is a strategy that tends to have considerable appeal to consumers but fewer benefits to the environment than other behaviors, including eating less meat.[72] Eating locally also ties into a broader focus on the role of food self-sufficiency (FSS). For instance, a 2014 study that examined food self-sufficiency globally, concluded that all continents except Africa and Asia can currently achieve it, and that closing yield gaps might enable Africa and Asia to also achieve

70. Flores mentions the possibility of only putting tomatoes on sandwiches seasonally to illustrate her point that "our desires for these things and so many others at the cheapest cost with little consideration of moderation...is in fact what drives the way the commodities are produced." Flores, "Greed," 85.

71. Jennie I. Macdiarmid, "Seasonality and Dietary Requirements: Will Eating Seasonal Food Contribute to Health and Environmental Sustainability?," *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* 73, no. 3 (2014): 368–375. The term seasonality is associated with locally produced food at the consumer level but can refer to either local seasonality, where food is produced and consumed in season, or global seasonality, which refers to food that is produced in season but may be transported before consumption. The transportation of food requires less energy than producing it, and while seasonality may have a positive impact on water-scarcity, there are other tradeoffs as far as nutrition, food system resilience, and labor.

72. A survey conducted in Switzerland found that of six food consumption patterns considered—avoiding food products with excessive packaging, buying regional food, avoiding food that was imported by airplane, eating only seasonal fruits and vegetables, buying organic food, and eating less meat (1-2x per week maximum)—respondents perceived avoiding excess packaging to be most beneficial (closely followed by buying regional food) and eating less meat to be the least environmentally beneficial. Respondents were also less willing to reduce meat consumption (or buy organic food) whereas a majority reported already buying regional food and seasonal produce. See Christina Tobler, Vivianne H.M. Visschers, and Michael Siegrist, "Eating Green. Consumers' Willingness to Adopt Ecological Food Consumption Behaviors," *Appetite* 57, no. 3 (2011): 674–682. Similar results were obtained in a survey conducted in New Zealand, with buying food with less packaging considered by respondents to be the most helpful (followed closely by eating seasonal fruits and vegetables and buying locally sourced foods) and eating less meat perceived to be the least environmentally beneficial of the six. Garrett Lentz et al., "Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours: Meat Consumption and Potential Reduction," *Appetite* 127 (2018): 234-235.

it.[73] Nonetheless, the same study identified consumer changes in behavior, specifically "toward sustainable consumption based on local and regional food with a lower share of animal products" as an underlying issue for food security and self-sufficiency at local, regional, and global levels.[74]

Yet the environmental impact of food production far outweighs that of food transportation.[75] The term "food miles" has been taken out of its original context and coopted into serving as a measurement of environmental impact.[76] Environmental considerations aside, on the one hand, buying locally is advertised as supporting local farmers and growers, but it may also increase the seasonality of labor requirements and so decrease employment stability for field-grown produce.[77] From the consumer perspective, buying locally can place a heavy time and preparation burden on individuals, equivalent to a part-time job.[78] This alone raises questions of access and practicality.[79] Furthermore, depending on where you live and your definition of local, it may not currently be possible for all residents to meet

73. Prajal Pradhan et al., "Food Self-sufficiency across Scales: How Local Can We Go?," *Environmental Science & Technology* 48, no. 16 (2014): 9463–9470.

74. Ibid., 9469.

75. Growing crops and raising livestock "is the primary driver of environmental impacts, as opposed to later stages such as transport and processing." Lukasz Aleksandrowicz et al., "The Impacts of Dietary Change on Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Use, Water Use, and Health: A Systematic Review," *PloS one* 11, no. 11 (2016): 9 of 16, doi:`TheImpactsofDietaryChangeonGreenhouseGasEmissions,LandUse,WaterUse,andHealth`.

76. Macdiarmid, "Seasonality and Dietary Requirements: Will Eating Seasonal Food Contribute to Health and Environmental Sustainability?," 370.

77. See ibid., 372.

78. For example, the Nutrition Society noted that the founders of the 100 Mile Diet in Vancouver did achieve their goal, but described the time needed to do so as equivalent to a part-time job. Ibid., 373. News coverage of the 100 Mile Diet noted that participants (who could participate at three levels, from 50-100 percent local) had trouble finding local produce in November and December, and needed to rely on food preservation techniques such as dehydrating, canning, freezing, and root cellaring. See "'Locavores' meet the 100 mile challenge," *The Morning Star*, January 19, 2010, 00b7. Some participants found this practice worthwhile and noted that it increased their awareness and appreciation. However, it is difficult to imagine that such practices could be currently widely accessible to people living in the United States, due to constraints in time, knowledge, and funds.

79. Debra Dean Murphy notes that the locavore and slow food movements, while movements of economic and moral resistance, "has largely been ethics for elites" both because of the cost of organic foods and access to sufficient leisure time to prepare healthy meals. Debra Dean Murphy, "Just Eating? Bodies, Gifts, and Daily Bread," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, ed. Tobias Winright (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 432, doi:`http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9780567677204`.

recommended nutritional intake solely through locally produced food.[80] In any case, buying 100 percent locally affects one's personal/household carbon footprint less than does a 21-24 percent reduction in consumption of red meat.[81] This suggests that more attention is needed to what we eat, not only where it comes from, especially when we consider that many consumers think that eating locally or seasonally has more environmental impact than reducing their consumption of animal products.

4.2.3 Why focus on animal products?

Both reducing food waste and encouraging consumer behavioral changes with respect to dietary choices are candidates for an individual or household-focused, character-forming approach based on the power of habits. While both have the potential for virtuous habit formation that is widely accessible to individuals living in the United States, I focus on dietary change because it is less intuitive and more controversial. With food wastage, it is easier to identify the excess as excess. While there is good reason to suspect that social structures play a role in conditioning us to normalize excess or to have difficulty implementing strategies to reduce food waste, such as meal planning, when we find ourselves throwing away food, we nonetheless have good reason to know that we acquired too much. Nor are

80. See for example the comparison of agricultural production and dietary requirements for the population of the highly productive Willamette Valley. Katy J. Giombolini et al., "Testing the local reality: does the Willamette Valley growing region produce enough to meet the needs of the local population? A comparison of agriculture production and recommended dietary requirements," *Agriculture and Human Values* 28, no. 2 (2010): 247–262. The authors found that the region did not meet the dietary needs of the population in any category, but especially oils (produced 0 percent of dietary recommendations) and vegetables (produced only 10 percent). While the reasons for this are complex and increased demand for locally produced food may lead to agricultural and economic changes (for instance, much of the land is currently dedicated to non-edible crops and much of the production goes to national and international exports), such changes take time, and there are still questions of the impact of fluctuations in yields on meeting dietary recommendations. At the very least, this test case, done in an area known to be very productive, complicates the picture of the viability of eating locally. This is not to say that I do not think it can be a worthwhile practice in terms of cultivating awareness and gratitude among individuals and perhaps, if demand is high enough, prompting some transitions in land use that will be beneficial on multiple fronts, including reducing the environmental impact.

81. Christopher L Weber and H. Scott Matthews, "Food-Miles and the Relative Climate Impacts of Food Choices in the United States," *Environmental Science & Technology* (Washington, DC) 42, no. 10 (2008): 3508–3513.

calls to reduce food waste generally challenged on the grounds of being morally irrelevant or unhealthy. By contrast, challenging the amount of meat in our diets tends to evoke a wide range of responses - from agreement to the assertion that what we eat is morally neutral, to concerns that our health will suffer if much less meat is consumed. Hence, there is more agreement surrounding reducing household food waste than reducing household consumption of animal products.

What we eat in higher-income countries matters. Animal products tend to be very resource intensive. For instance, of the land used for agriculture, over three-quarters (77 percent) is used for livestock, with the remaining twenty-three percent used for crops. Yet considered globally, livestock produces less than a fifth of the calories (eighteen percent) and less than two-fifths (37 percent) of the world's protein.[82] Not only is the average per capita meat consumption of individuals in the United States one of the highest in the world, compared even to the turn of the century, but U.S. adults are also getting even more of our protein from animal sources than plant sources.[83]

Calls for dietary changes as a part of the necessary response in the face of the threat of climate change and in order to ensure food security are widespread. Changing consumer behavior regarding dietary patterns (along with strengthening food environments) is one of the six pathways the FAO identifies for food systems transformation.[84] These calls include a focus on reducing animal products (especially beef) and substituting foods that have a lower impact on the environment.[85] Given that reducing animal products has multiple

82. See Hanna Ritchie, "Half of the world's habitable land is used for agriculture," *Our World in Data*, November 11, 2019, `https://ourworldindata.org/global-land-for-agriculture`. Note that the 77 percent figure includes pasture lands for grazing livestock and the land used to grow crops for animal feed.

83. In 2017-2018 compared to 2003-2004, U.S. adults ate about 3.5 times more protein foods of animal versus plant origin. These foods include meat, poultry, and seafood. Bowman, Clemens, and Friday, "Food Pattern Group and Macronutrient Intakes of Adults: WWEIA, NHANES 2003-2004 to 2017-2018."

84. See FAO et al., *In Brief 2021*, 33-35.

85. Given that current food production does not provide adequate nutrition, plant-based sources of protein have a role to play in saving pastureland and reducing greenhouse gas emissions. See conclusions in Bahadur K.C. et al., "When Too Much Isn't Enough."

environmental benefits (reducing land use, emissions of greenhouse gases, acidification, eutrophication, and scarcity-weighted freshwater withdrawals), Poore and Nemecek write, "Today, and probably into the future, dietary change can deliver environmental benefits on a scale not achievable by producers."[86] The impact is particularly notable for the United States, where individuals eat three times as much meat as the global average and where dietary change could reduce food emissions by 61 to 73 percent.[87] In high-income countries, consumer behavioral changes that resulted in a shift away from current diets and toward more sustainable ones would have significant environmental benefits, and these benefits "are largely proportional to the magnitude of meat (particularly from ruminants) and dairy reduction."[88]

Should we all be vegans?

Generally speaking, switching from a standard Western diet to a vegan, vegetarian, or pescatarian diet would have the greatest reduction in the environmental impact of our food system.[89] Nonetheless, in this chapter I do not advocate for the complete elimination of animal products for the following five reasons: methodology, necessity, social concerns (including hospitality and issues of diet culture), the pervasiveness of inequality in the United States, and the need to account for the complexity of the issue.[90]

86. Poore and Nemecek, "Reducing Food's Environmental Impacts," 991.

87. Ibid.

88. Aleksandrowicz et al., "Impacts of Dietary Change," 10 of 16.

89. These three diets were named as having "the largest environmental benefits across indicators" of the fourteen proposed sustainable dietary patterns proposed in ibid., 5 of 16. With respect to United States dietary guidelines, the greenhouse gas emissions associated with the regular U.S. guideline are more than double that of the U.S. vegetarian guideline. Kovacs et al., "The Carbon Footprint of Dietary Guidelines Around the World," 7 of 10.

90. For an introduction to Christian perspectives on vegetarianism, see David Grumett and Rachel Muers, eds., *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, T & T Clark theology (New York: T & T Clark, 2008). This is not to say that there are no theological risks to eliminating meat from one's diet. For instance, Norman Wirzba argues that vegetarians risk denying the death that is a fundamental aspect of sourcing our food and so also risk contributing to the disconnect between most of us and our food. See Wirzba, *Food and Faith*.

First, methodologically, a more flexible approach fits better with the approach of virtue ethics. Beth Haile begins with the following question in her defense of an omnivorous way of life: "From the perspective of virtue ethics, the question is not about whether any specific act of consuming meat is ethical or not, but rather about how meat consumption may or may not fit into a life oriented toward the good."[91] Here the question is similar: What role does the production and consumption of plant-based and animal-based foods play in the pursuit of the good life? Furthermore, the mean in virtue theory is not an arithmetic mean that holds for all but instead is relative to the agent. As Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman note, the virtuous agent chooses "the mean that is appropriate and proportionate for this particular person, on this occasion, and for the right reason."[92] The tension should be great enough to prompt change but not so great it is currently impossible for us to achieve or harmful.[93] While switching to a vegetarian or vegan dietary pattern may well be the mean that produces sufficient tension for growth for some individuals in the United States, there are a variety of ways that one might increase the plant products and decrease animal products in one's diet and still experience the benefit to one's character of the tension between extremes, while modeling dietary changes that on a large scale would result in significant decreases to greenhouse gas emissions (and other environmental impacts) and without simultaneously resulting in significant harms such as imposing a heavy financial (or time) burden or eliminating food-related practices that help build-up and transmit cultural

91. Haile, "Virtuous Meat Consumption," 86. I do not see my response as necessarily in conflict with Haile's, since I am not proposing here the complete elimination of meat and Haile includes moderation (temperance) in her article. Nonetheless, we each stress a different aspect of eating in the question focus on different virtues.

92. Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman, "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian," *Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (2013): 445.

93. Aristotle gave the example of athletic training to illustrate how the mean is relative to us. See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 6 as found in W. D. Ross and J. O. Urmson, *Nicomachean Ethics*, rev. ed., ed. Jonathan Barnes (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984), 1747. Scholars today continue to draw on this parallel between physical exercise and virtue when explaining the virtuous mean. Both physical exercise and virtue require us to challenge ourselves, and both also require knowledge of our limitations. See for example Keenan, "7 Reasons," 7.

identity).[94] Approaching dietary choices in a virtue setting rather than whether specific acts of consumption are ethical honors the growing awareness that eating is a moral issue,[95] in a way that puts the focus primarily on the persons who eat, rather than simply the foods they consume.[96]

Second, from the perspective of reducing global greenhouse gas emissions, neither vegetarianism nor veganism is currently necessary. Less radical changes would still have a significant impact.[97] Indeed, researchers express skepticism that a more radical shift is doable or that the complete elimination of animal products is desirable from either a health or environmental perspective.[98] Advocating for drastic changes may both discourage consumers from making any changes and have undesirable effects, such as a rebound effect.[99] From the perspective of galvanizing meaningful change, widespread, smaller changes are more important than localized, larger changes.

94. Note, I do not say that this will be a process without conflict. Given current U.S. cultural norms, I expect even smaller shifts to result in some conflict, but that is a point that will be addressed in the next section.

95. For instance, Debra Dean Murphy writes, "For Christians, therefore, the Eucharist implicates all our eating and informs the food-related moral questions of this and every age." Murphy, "Just Eating?," 427.

96. The character of the person is the primary, not the sole focus. As Daniel Daly has recently noted, for virtue ethics, "moral character is a relevant moral reality *in addition* to action, not instead of it...Actions emerge from and form moral character." Daniel J. Daly, "Virtue Ethics," in *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, ed. Tobias Winright (London: T&T Clark, 2021), 59.

97. A study published in 2017 estimated that if all people living in the U.S. replaced their beef consumption with beans, they could achieve from 46 to 74 percent of the reductions needed to meet the 2020 GHG target for the United States while also freeing up a lot of land. Helen Harwatt et al., "Substituting Beans for Beef as a Contribution toward US Climate Change Targets," *Climatic Change* 143, nos. 1-2 (2017): 261–270. While a review article showed that reductions of 70 percent in greenhouse gas emissions and land use, and 50 percent reduction in water use was possible by "shifting typical Western diets to more environmentally sustainable dietary patterns," the medians were still significant, between 20–30 percent. Aleksandrowicz et al., "Impacts of Dietary Change," 7 of 16.

98. Ibid., 9-10 of 16. Here the authors note that further study is needed concerning children and women of child-bearing age. Furthermore, in some areas, raising livestock has benefits such as being a food source from non-arable land or using crop residences and food waste.

99. Here the rebound effect refers to an increase in meat consumption following the implementation of a strategy to reduce it. See Joop de Boer, Hanna Schösler, and Harry Aiking, "'Meatless Days' or 'Less but Better'? Exploring Strategies to Adapt Western Meat Consumption to Health and Sustainability Challenges," *Appetite* 76 (2014): 126. The researchers also note that protein deficit is a possible though unlikely effect of focusing on drastic meat reduction strategies. In their conclusion, they also caution against focusing too dogmatically on meat or on meat for its own sake on the grounds that such an approach may decrease the likelihood that nonvegetarians would be willing to try gradual meat reduction strategies. See ibid., 127.

Third, food plays an integral role in cultural identity and celebrations, and, as such, there are risks to prescribing absolute elimination of any category, particularly with respect to cultural identity and the practice of hospitality. Parsing these issues is beyond the scope of this chapter.[100] Other cultural considerations include that advocating a specific diet risks both feeding into diet culture and supporting pseudo-scientific claims. As Haile has noted, in the United States we "moralize eating in very strong ways."[101] There is a problematic tendency to label both foods and diets as good or bad, and then define a person as bad or good based on the evaluation of the food one consumes. Haile includes plant-based diets on this list, categorized on the "good" side.[102] Her concern with moralizing food choices relates both to accuracy (what society labels as "good" and "bad" foods is frequently mistaken) and to misconceptions that such choices are simply matters of willpower and so independent of structural factors of access, time, and money.[103] This concern will be revisited later in this chapter. Here, let me raise two points. First, I think the risk of feeding into diet culture is higher with well-established diets. While increasing consumption of plant-based foods and restriction of at least some animal products is a common theme among many diets currently labeled "good," unlike "Vegetarian Diet" or "Vegan Diet," "Plant-based Diet" does not appear on a recent ranking of the 40 best diets in the United States. Rather "plant-

100. However, I do allude to some of the issues surrounding cultural identity under "Eating and Interdependence" in the following section, and I offer a note on how focusing on eating plant-based foods one day a week might affect hospitality in the third section.
101. Beth K. Haile, "Gluttony," chap. 2 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, ed. Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019), 30.
102. Ibid., 32.
103. Ibid., 32-33.

based" is a category of diet preference that applies to 14 of these diets.[104] Second, Haile's concern relates to structural issues of access, which I address in the following point.

Fourth, food is not immune from the inequality that plagues so many social dimensions of life in the United States.[105] As mentioned earlier, the cost of food is rising.[106] Nineteen million people in the United States (about six percent of the population) were estimated to be living in food deserts in 2020, meaning that they live relatively far from a supermarket (over one mile in urban settings and over ten miles in rural settings).[107] Twice that number used SNAP benefits in 2019, with an average monthly benefit of 129 USD per household member.[108] Spending less on groceries tends to require additional time and is also affected by location and access to transportation as well as knowledge and skills relating to choosing, planning, and preparing foods that are both nutritious and fall within budgetary limits.[109] The United States Department of Agriculture's Thrifty Food Plan (which is used as the basis for SNAP benefits) has an implicit requirement of a minimum of 80 minutes

104. I do not cite this ranking as evidence that these are the healthiest or otherwise best diets, but rather as evidence that "The Plant-Based Diet" does not yet exist in a culturally recognizable fashion even though "plant-based" is considered a diet category. See U.S. News & World Report, *Best Diets Overall 2022*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://health.usnews.com/best-diet/best-diets-overall`. This remains true even if one looks at all 52 diets that are searchable on this page. Other lists of "best" diets similarly include "plant-based" in the description but not as a diet itself. See for instance Sarah Berger, ed., "Best Diets of 2022," *Forbes Health*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://www.forbes.com/health/body/best-diets/`.

105. For an excellent theological treatment of inequality in the U.S. context, see Kate Ward and Kenneth R. Himes, "'Growing Apart': The Rise of Inequality," *Theological Studies* 75, no. 1 (2014): 118–132.

106. In 2021, food-at-home prices rose by 3.5 percent compared to 2020. This increase is 75 percent above the average (for the past twenty years, food inflation has been 2.0 percent per year. USDA, *Food Prices and Spending*. Substantial increases are also expected for 2022. USDA, *Summary Findings: Food Price Outlook, 2022*.

107. See Christianna Silva, "Food Insecurity In the U.S. By The Numbers," *NPR*, September 27, 2020. As of 2015, about 2.1 million U.S. households had no access to a vehicle and were considered to live in a food desert. The costs of food for people living in food deserts can also be higher.

108. Ibid.

109. See Shelley McGuire, "IOM (Institute of Medicine) and NRC (National Research Council). 2013. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Examining the Evidence to Define Benefit Adequacy. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013," *Advances in Nutrition (Bethesda, Md.)* 4, no. 4 (2013): 477–478. The full report also notes that equipment to store and prepare food is a factor. See chapter four in Julie A. Caswell and Ann L. Yaktine, eds., *Committee on Examination of the Adequacy of Food Resources and SNAP Allotments; Food and Nutrition Board; Committee on National Statistics; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council* (Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2013).

per day in food preparation, which seemed to work for low-income households with either two adults or a single head of household working fewer than 35 hours a week, but did not work for low-income women who worked full-time.[110]

Nonetheless, the cost of meat is higher than many (but not all) non-meat protein options,[111] especially beans,[112] and the cost of meat is rising faster than food costs overall in the United States.[113] There is also evidence that suggests that self-identified vegetarians

110. See chapter four in Caswell and Yaktine, *Adequacy of Food Resources and SNAP Allotments*.

111. Note that recommended protein needs for adults in the United States range from 5-7 ounce equivalents, with some differences between men and women as well between age-ranges. See U.S. Department of Agriculture, *MyPlate: Protein Foods*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/protein-foods`. An ounce-equivalent may consist of an ounce of meat, poultry, or fish, one egg, one tablespoon of peanut butter, half an ounce of nuts or seeds, or a quarter cup of cooked beans. As of February 2022, an ounce equivalent of ground beef would cost about 29 cents, an ounce of ham would cost just over 25 cents, but an egg (which is an ounce equivalent of protein) would cost just under 17 cents. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, *Retail prices for beef, pork, poultry cuts, eggs, and dairy*, accessed March 23, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/meat-price-spreads/`. (Note, prices were calculated by taking the per pound price and dividing by 16, or in the case of eggs, the price per dozen and dividing by 12.) While eggs are cheaper than beef or pork, an ounce of cheddar cheese would cost more than the equivalent ounce of ground beef. See the following footnote for a comparison of the cost of a serving of a plant-based protein.

112. The beans, peas, and lentils group is a bit different because these foods can be counted both under the protein category and the vegetable category. See https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/protein-foods/beans-and-peas. While U.S. dietary guidelines for vegetarians include dairy and eggs, compared to the standard guidelines it is higher in soy products, beans, peas, lentils, nuts, seeds, and whole grains. USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 33. In February 2022, ground beef cost an average of 4.627 USD per pound in the United States; for dried beans, that was 1.546 USD. See Bureau of Labor Statistics, *Average Retail Food and Energy Prices, U.S. and Midwest Region*, accessed March 31, 2022, `https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/averageretailfoodandenergyprices_usandmidwest_table.htm`. As seen in the previous note, that would be almost 29 cents for an ounce-equivalent of beef (dividing the per-pound price by 16 ounces in a pound). For beans, the calculation is slightly more complicated. One pound of dried great northern beans, for example, would be about 12 servings, considered at a half a cup each. See U.S. Department of Agriculture, *Beans, Great Northern, Dry*, March 2014, accessed April 4, 2022. However, a half-cup serving is the standard for measuring servings of fruits and vegetables, but for the protein group, it would be two ounce-equivalents. So, we can expect one pound of dried beans to yield 24 protein ounce-equivalents, putting the cost per ounce-equivalent at 6.4 cents.

113. In general, for 2022, prices for meat, including beef and veal (16.2 percent), pork (14 percent), and poultry (12.5 percent) are expected to increase the most, followed by fats and oils (11.7 percent), eggs (11.4 percent), fresh fruits (10.6 percent), and fish and seafood (10.4 percent). An increase of seven percent or more is expected for sugars and sweets, processed fruits and vegetables, and cereals and bakery products, while dairy products are expected to rise by 5.2 percent, the second-lowest rate of increase after fresh vegetables (4.3 percent). See Romo, "Food prices are going up - and at levels Americans haven't seen in decades." Among food prices in 2021 compared to 2020, meat prices rose the most (9.3 percent for beef and veal, 8.6 percent for pork, 5.4 percent for fish and seafood, and 5.1 percent for poultry). By contrast, the increases in the costs of dairy products and fresh vegetables were lower than average. As a note, the cost of fresh fruit also increased substantially (5.5 percent), though still less than beef and pork. USDA, *Food Prices and Spending*.

spend a little less on groceries than their meat-eating counterparts,[114] and that substantial reductions in household spending on red meat reduces that household's food-related greenhouse gas emissions and improves the nutritional quality of the diet without raising the cost.[115] Hence, I maintain that reducing meat consumption is widely doable,[116] but recognize that fully eliminating meat may pose a significant financial or time burden for many individuals[117] or increase the risk of nutritional deficits in some situations.[118] Likewise, this chapter specifically advocates for an increasingly plant-based diet rather than a pescatarian diet that is light on meat but draws amply on fish and seafood. While fish and seafood contribute fewer greenhouse gas emissions than livestock,[119] in the United States, these

114. Jayson L. Lusk and F. Bailey Norwood found that "true vegetarians" (i.e., those who identified as vegetarian and did not report eating or buying any meat) reported spending 19.23 USD a week less at the grocery store than meat eaters. Since about half of this difference is due to demographic factors (vegetarians are more likely to be women and have smaller household size), the authors caution against concluding that meat eaters could save that full amount on their grocery bill simply by replacing meat with vegetables. Jayson L. Lusk and F. Bailey Norwood, "Some Vegetarians Spend Less Money on Food, Others Don't," *Ecological Economics* 130 (2016): 238-239. For those wondering which vegetarians did not spend less on groceries, the authors also noted that some people who described themselves as vegetarians still reported eating and buying meat and that members of this group, which they called "partial vegetarians" tended to spend more on groceries (and in other categories, as well as be wealthier) than either true vegetarians or meat eaters. In any case, while the study shows that demographic factors have a significant impact on grocery bills, the data nonetheless suggest a small savings on food expenditures when fully eliminating meat. ibid., 239. This in turn suggests that reducing meat is not necessarily more expensive.

115. This was true for the quintile of households with the lowest spending on red meat. Rebecca Boehm et al., "Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Total Food Spending and Diet Quality by Share of Household Food Spending on Red Meat: Results from a Nationally Representative Sample of US Households," *Public Health Nutrition* 22, no. 10 (2019): 1794–1806.

116. Another data point that suggests that reducing meat intake does not mean prohibitive cost of food increases is that a greater percentage of U.S. Americans earning less than 30,000 USD per year describe themselves as vegetarian (nine percent) than those who earn more (five percent of those earning 30,000-74,999 USD annually, and four percent of those earning over 75,000 USD). See Reinhart, "Snapshot: Few Americans Vegetarian or Vegan."

117. For instance, in needing to learn to prepare entirely new meals.

118. My consideration of this risk is warranted by the fact that the FAO identifies four alternative diet patterns as examples to identify hidden health and climate-change costs to current dietary patterns, but does not endorse a particular pattern since "not all are the most healthy and appropriate diets for all population groups" and that diets that entirely exclude animal products can risk nutritional inadequacies in some settings. FAO et al., *In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020: Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all* (Rome, 2020), 30, doi:`https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9699en`. This concern will be addressed in more depth in the next section's consideration of whether a plant-based diet is conducive to human flourishing.

119. Bahadur K.C. et al., "When Too Much Isn't Enough," 7 of 16.

products tend to be more expensive overall.[120] Further, more study is needed about how to reconcile recommended fish intake with issues of the fragility of many wild-catch fishers and currently unsustainable aquaculture practices.[121]

Fifth, a reduction instead of elimination of animal products better accounts for the variability between the ecological impacts of different food groups. As noted with fish and seafood above, carbon emissions are not the only consideration when assessing the environmental impact of the cultivation and production of different foods. This is also the case for plant-based foods. The study by Poore and Nemecek considered greenhouse gas emissions, land use, acidifying emissions, eutrophying emissions, and freshwater use weighted by local water scarcity.[122] This data is presented in a series of visually appealing charts through Our World in Data, with the option to compare specific food categories, and the general trend is very clear. Greenhouse gas emissions are highest for beef and lowest for citrus fruit, with animal products tending to produce more than plant products. However, there are some exceptions. For instance, dark chocolate's greenhouse gas emissions are second only to beef's, and cheese has greater emissions of this type than farmed fish, pork, poultry, or eggs. Yet rice and cane sugar both have higher emissions than dairy milk, even though milk has higher emissions than maize, wheat, fruits, vegetables, and soymilk. Hence it is possible to envision vegetarian changes to one's diet, such as substituting cheese for poultry meat, that would increase the greenhouse emissions of one's diet, even if in general, substituting cheese for meat would likely lead to a lower overall ecological impact.[123]

120. Fish and seafood is one category (behind meat) that saw higher increases in cost in 2021 compared to 2020. Whereas food-at-home prices rose by 3.5 percent overall (which was 75 percent above average), fish and seafood prices increased by 5.4 percent. USDA, *Food Prices and Spending*. As noted above, that increase is expected to be 10.4 percent in 2022.

121. Aleksandrowicz et al., "Impacts of Dietary Change," 9 of 16.

122. See Figure 1 for the impact of various foods on each area, grouped by food category. Poore and Nemecek, "Reducing Food's Environmental Impacts," 988.

123. While the greenhouse gas emissions for cheese are relatively high at 23.88 kg of carbon dioxide equivalents per kilogram, they are still much lower than those of beef (beef herd beef produces 99.48 kg of carbon dioxide equivalents per kilogram), lamb or mutton (39.72 kg), beef (dairy herd, 33.3 kg), or farmed prawns (26.87 kg). Cheese also ranks third highest for land use per kilogram of food product, but its 87.79 square meters pales in comparison to the 369.81 needed for lamb and mutton or the 326.21 needed for beef (beef herd).

Other food categories score very well on greenhouse gas emissions but not as well as on the other measures. For instance, of the 38 food categories considered, nuts come in third-to-least in greenhouse gas emissions (tied with apples), ninth highest in land use (though it should be noted, a fraction of what is used for lamb, beef, cheese, and dark chocolate), but second only to cheese in freshwater withdrawals, and highest overall when that water use is scarcity-weighted. So, substituting nuts for animal products would clearly lower greenhouse gas emissions, but increases in nut intake are more complicated from the perspective of water use.[124] Still, as far as kinds of milk, any plant-based milk will have a lower overall environmental impact than dairy milk.[125] While the environmental impact of any particular food can be complex, the general trend that animal products are more resource-intensive than plant products is well-established.

4.3 The Case for Adopting a Plant-based Diet to Cultivate the Virtue of Humility

The previous section has made the case that, if adopted on a large scale, adjustments to our dietary patterns can play a role in responding to both food insecurity and ecological degra-

Its water use is the highest, but its scarcity-weighted water use is well-behind that of nuts, and its contribution to water pollution through eutrophying emissions is high, but well behind beef and farmed fish, and less than that of coffee. Compare the charts "Greenhouse gas emissions per kilogram of food product," "Land use per kilogram of food product," "Freshwater withdrawals per kilogram of food product," "Scarcity-weighted water use per kilogram of food product," and "Eutrophying emissions per kilogram of food product" at Hanna Ritchie, "Environmental Impacts of Food Data Explorer," *Our World in Data*, accessed April 4, 2022, `https://ourworldindata.org/explorers/food-footprints`.

124. As seen in the chart "Food: greenhouse gas emissions across the supply chain," nuts currently have negative greenhouse gas emissions due to the fact that nut plantations have often replaced grasslands or abandoned pastureland, and the trees sequester carbon dioxide. Available at https://ourworldindata.org/explorers/food-footprints when selecting that chart.

125. Hanna Ritchie, "Dairy vs. plant-based milk: what are the environmental impacts?," *Our World in Data*, January 19, 2022, accessed April 4, 2022, `https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impact-milks`. See also Julia Moskin et al., "Your Questions About Food and Climate Change, Answered," *The New York Times*, April 15, 2022, which shows how rice, soy, oat, and almond milks each use less land and water and contribute fewer greenhouse gas emissions per liter than cow milk, but also notes that almonds' comparatively high-water needs has posed a problem in places like California.

dation, including climate change. Specifically, more than where our food comes from, what we eat (and what we waste) is relevant to considerations of food security and ecological health. Put another way, what we eat pertains to how we relate impartially and ecologically and so is a suitable subject for virtue ethics. In this section, I will build on the growing interest in the ethical considerations of eating to place individual dietary pattern choices within a virtue framework.

It is clear that the proposed practice of adopting a plant-based dietary pattern is a beneficial one from the perspective of the health of planet Earth; current meat-intensive dietary patterns like those found in the United States are unsustainable. Likewise, there is an evident connection to justice since current dietary patterns in wealthy countries like the United States use disproportionate resources and cannot be easily reconciled with food security for a growing population. Yet to make the case that this practice is a *virtuous* one and further, one that specifically cultivates the virtue of humility, the following points must be addressed.

First, is a plant-based diet conducive to human flourishing? While human flourishing in virtue ethics is understood as corporate,[126] virtue ethics is oriented toward the flourishing of the individuals-in-community. If a plant-based diet is generally detrimental to individual human flourishing, then it will be more difficult to argue that it is part of the good life.[127]

Second, the practice must show some suggestion of flowing from our character and having a formative influence on the character of the individual. To this end, I will first consider some of the obstacles to adopting a plant-based diet to show that while there are considerations of access, the primary factor is our preferences. That our preferences are

126. James Keenan identifies that the virtues are fundamentally social as one of seven reasons for doing virtue ethics. No one virtue can stand on its own, and virtues and their practices have a social function and goal. The flourishing of human beings in virtue ethics is not conceived of in purely individual terms as moral formation relies on moral exemplars and our identity is shaped by our membership in a community. Human beings are relational creatures, and human flourishing is found in "shared activities and relationships." Keenan, "7 Reasons," 15.

127. I do not, however, hold that such an argument would be impossible given the enormous detrimental impact of the transgression of planetary boundaries, including climate change, on human beings.

oriented so heavily toward meat and the underlying thinking bear on the first two questions of virtue ethics: who am I? Who am I to become?[128]

Having addressed these two considerations, I will make the case that changing one's dietary patterns by increasing plant-based sources and decreasing animal-based ones is a practice that can help cultivate the virtue of humility in the United States context because it fosters our appreciation of our interdependence, allows for the practice of prudence in setting the mean that provides sufficient tension for growth, and is sufficiently disruptive to open the space for conversion. In short, some changes to our dietary patterns can indeed help us with the third question of virtue ethics: How am I to get there? I then conclude the section with consideration of one objection: that the virtue in question is better identified as temperance than as humility.

4.3.1 Is a plant-based diet conducive to human flourishing?

It is beyond the scope of this chapter to delve into the particular role meat plays in every individual's health and cultural identity. The role of meat in cultural celebrations was noted in the previous section as one reason I am focusing here on increasing plant-based foods rather than eliminating meat or animal products. A celebration rhythm would allow for meat to continue to be a part of cultural celebrations while still reducing intake in daily, ordinary life.[129] Yet one of the most frequent justifications for eating meat is that meat plays an irreplaceable role in nutrition and that without it, human health would suffer.[130] I do not deny that eating animal products can be part of a healthy diet. Instead, I wish to

128. These questions come from Alasdair C. MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981).

129. Julie Hanlon Rubio makes this point when discussing her third suggested guideline for just eating in a familial context, which is eating less meat and fewer animal products. While she refers to meat as a luxury, she notes that we make room for other luxuries in life as well and that celebration is part of the good life. Hanlon Rubio, "Toward a Just Way of Eating," 373.

130. More attention to the justifications for eating meat and obstacles to decreasing meat consumption will be considered shortly. Here, consider that in a survey that asked participants to list three reasons why they think it is okay to eat meat, 42 percent of the responses were coded as "necessary," the largest grouping of responses. Jared Piazza et al., "Rationalizing Meat Consumption: The 4Ns," *Appetite* 91 (2015): 117.

challenge the sometimes-implicit corollary claim that dietary patterns that have fewer or no animal products are not healthy. Despite the popularity of protein-heavy diets in the United States, switching to a primarily or increasingly plant-based diet is not itself detrimental to human health.

While this chapter does not advocate for the elimination of meat or animal products, the fact that dietary patterns that do (i.e., vegetarian and vegan) can be healthy at every stage of life and including for athletes[131] is one strong indication that reducing consumption of animal products in favor of products of plant origin itself does not pose a risk to the health of human beings. This is especially the case when, as seen in the previous section, we consider how in the United States, protein deficiency is rare while the majority of people here do not come anywhere close to meeting the guidelines for fruit or vegetables each day. Furthermore, a 2017 study found that the leading dietary risk factor for deaths and disability-adjusted-life-years in the USA was low consumption of whole grains.[132]

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025 state that a vegetarian dietary pattern can be healthy when it incorporates plant-based proteins,[133] though they note that supplementation, particularly for iron and vitamin B12, may be needed for toddlers or women who follow vegetarian or vegan dietary patterns during pregnancy and lactation.[134] Given the potential need for supplementation in certain cases, some people might question whether a meat-based diet that does not require supplementation would be healthier. Here there are

131. The American Dietetic Association considers "appropriately planned vegetarian diets, including total vegetarian or vegan diets" to be "healthful, nutritionally adequate, and may provide health benefits in the prevention and treatment of certain diseases." Winston J. Craig and Ann Reed Mangels, "Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian Diets," *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 109, no. 7 (2009): 1266.

132. See Ashkan Afshin et al., "Health Effects of Dietary Risks in 195 Countries, 1990–2017: A Systematic Analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017," *The Lancet* 393, no. 10184 (2019): 1963. Globally, over half of diet-related deaths can be attributed to just three dietary risks: high sodium intake and low intake of whole grains and fruits. Together, these three dietary risk factors are estimated to have contributed to 8 million deaths and also the majority (two-thirds) of disability-adjusted-life-years.

133. USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 33. This dietary pattern is also recognized as a healthy one for children, see table A3-3 for ages 12 through 23 months and Table A3-4 for ages two and older at ibid., 147-148.

134. Ibid., 67,116.

three points. First, supplementation recommendations are not unique to those following a dietary pattern that excludes meat or animal products and the two groups noted, young children and pregnant women, may need more supplementation in general.[135] For instance, all pregnant women are advised to take a prenatal vitamin daily[136] and a folic acid supplement is already recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for all women of reproductive age.[137] Second, for the purposes of the argument advanced by this chapter, supplementation for iron and vitamin B12 would be less likely to be necessary since it does not posit the elimination of any food category.[138] Third, the tendency to focus on the possible risks of a diet low in animal protein can mask both the benefits of such diets and the risks associated with diets high in animal protein. While vegetarians and especially

135. For young children, recommendations vary. For instance, the National Health Service (NHS) in the United Kingdom recommends daily vitamin supplements for vitamins A, C, and D for all children aged six months to five years except for babies who consume more than 500ml of infant formula daily. See NHS, "Vitamins for Children," https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/weaning-and-feeding/vitamins-for-children/, accessed June 22, 2022. Breastfed infants are recommended to be given a vitamin D supplement from birth. The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) also recommends that breastfed infants receive a vitamin D supplement. See Healthychildren.org, "Vitamin D: On the Double," https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Vitamin-D-On-the-Double.aspx, accessed June 22, 2022. However, they do not recommend vitamin supplements for all children. See Healthychildren.org, "Where We Stand: Vitamins," https://www.healthychildren.org/English/healthy-living/nutrition/Pages/Where-We-Stand-Vitamins.aspx, accessed June 22, 2022. Note that the website www.healthychildren.org is the parenting website of the AAP.

136. The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG)'s webpage for Frequently Asked Questions about nutrition during pregnancy includes taking one prenatal vitamin daily. See ACOG, "Frequently Asked Questions: Nutrition during Pregnancy," https://www.acog.org/womens-health/faqs/nutrition-during-pregnancy, accessed June 22, 2022. This recommendation is for all pregnant women and not only those following a vegetarian or vegan dietary pattern. Notably, the iron requirements for pregnant women are higher than for women who are not pregnant (27 mg vs. 18 mg per day).

137. For the recommendation, see Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, "Folic Acid," https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/folicacid/about.html, accessed June 22, 2022. "The CDC urges all women of reproductive age to take 400 micrograms (mcg) of folic acid each day, in addition to consuming food with folate from a varied diet, to help prevent some major birth defects of the baby's brain (anencephaly) and spine (spina bifida)." This recommendation is supported in part by reference to "Recommendations for the use of folic acid to reduce the number of cases of spina bifida and other neural tube defects," *MMWR Recommendations and Reports* 1992; 41(RR-14):1–7.

138. The recommended iron intake for vegetarians is 1.8 times higher than that for nonvegetarians due to the lower bioavailability of plant-based iron. This intake can be met without supplements. Craig and Mangels, "Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian Diets," 1268. The levels of calcium and vitamin B12 are more of a concern for those following a vegan dietary pattern that excludes dairy and eggs, so fortified foods or supplements may be beneficial in these cases. See ibid., 1269.

vegans may have to pay special attention to their intake of iron and vitamin B12,[139] vegetarian diets have been associated with lower cholesterol[140] and blood pressure.[141] Vegans and vegetarians have a lower risk for ischemic heart disease and cancer than those following a nonvegetarian dietary pattern.[142]

Conversely, there are also known health concerns with respect to meat consumption, particularly red and highly processed meats. For instance, increased consumption of red meat has been linked to an increased risk of type 2 diabetes mellitus with reductions in consumption associated with reductions in risk.[143] In October 2015, after considering more than 800 studies investigating the link between meat consumption and cancers, the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC) classified processed meat (such as hot dogs, ham, sausages, corned beef, and beef jerky) as "carcinogenic to humans" and red meat as "probably carcinogenic to humans."[144] Subsequent studies and reviews have supported these classifications, although work remains to be done to fill in gaps such as establishing

139. See the note above on following a vegetarian or vegan dietary pattern during pregnancy and lactation in USDA, *Dietary Guidelines for Americans*, 116. Other nutrients that may warrant special attention include choline, zinc, iodine, and EPA/DHA. See also Craig and Mangels, "Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian Diets," 1268-69.

140. Fenglei Wang et al., "Effects of Vegetarian Diets on Blood Lipids: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials," *Journal of the American Heart Association* 4, no. 10 (2015): 1–14, doi:`https://doi.org/10.1161/JAHA.115.002408`.

141. Yoko Yokoyama et al., "Vegetarian Diets and Blood Pressure: A Meta-analysis," *JAMA Internal Medicine* 174, no. 4 (2014): 577–587, ISSN: 2168-6106.

142. A meta-analysis published in 2012 involving studies from four countries found that the risk of ischemic heart disease for vegetarians was 29 percent lower than for nonvegetarians and that their overall cancer risk was 18 percent lower. See Tao Huang et al., "Cardiovascular Disease Mortality and Cancer Incidence in Vegetarians: A Meta-Analysis and Systematic Review," *Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism* 60, no. 4 (2012): 233–240.

143. An Pan et al., "Changes in Red Meat Consumption and Subsequent Risk of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: Three Cohorts of US Men and Women," *JAMA Internal Medicine* 173, no. 14 (2013): 1–8.

144. The link was between processed meat and colorectal cancer, and while the authors noted that the individual risk is small, it increases with the amount of processed meat consumed. Each 50-gram portion (approximately 1.76 ounces) of processed meat consumed daily was associated with an eighteen percent elevation of colorectal cancer risk. See "IARC Monographs Evaluate Consumption of Red and Processed Meat," *World Food Regulation Review* 25, no. 6 (2015): 30. The evidence for the carcinogenicity of red meat was more limited, but there were positive associations between its consumption and colorectal, pancreatic and prostate cancers, and the mechanistic evidence was strong. See Véronique Bouvard et al., "Carcinogenicity of Consumption of Red and Processed Meat," *Lancet Oncology* 16, no. 16 (2015): 1599–1600.

the mechanisms and the influence of cooking, and exploring whether the consumption of white meat has a positive or negative association with an increased risk for cancers.[145]

While the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations does not endorse any of the four alternative healthy diet patterns they analyzed (a predominantly plant-based flexitarian diet, a pescatarian diet based on sustainable aquaculture, a vegetarian diet, and a vegan diet), this is to allow for the variation in personal and local circumstances that could make a particular dietary pattern less appropriate for people in those circumstances, not because these diets that are relatively low in animal products are generally unhealthy.[146] Here we would do well to recall Aquinas's caution about the exercise of practical reason as we descend into the particulars:

> The practical reason, on the other hand, is busied with contingent matters, about which human actions are concerned: and consequently, although there is necessity in the general principles, the more we descend to matters of detail, the more frequently we encounter defects...[147]

The FAO report refrains from endorsing a particular dietary pattern because the authors know that while these dietary patterns are generally healthy, they will not be healthy for every person in every particular circumstance.[148] Likewise, in this chapter I do not advocate for one particular dietary pattern but rather for the common thread that undergirds all four:

145. José L. Domingo and Martí Nadal, "Carcinogenicity of Consumption of Red meat and Processed Meat: A Review of Scientific News Since the IARC Decision," *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 105 (2017): 256–261. Note that in some of the studies reviewed, there was no increase of cancer risk found with the consumption of pork or poultry. See ibid., 257.
146. FAO et al., *In Brief 2020*, 30.
147. *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 94, a. 4.
148. As with any general rule, I expect a descent to the particular to yield some exceptions. The report notes that the two diets that exclude meat (and for vegans, all animal products) may not be healthy for people who already have nutrient deficiencies, who have different nutrient requirements such as young children or pregnant or lactating women, or in settings with low overall dietary quality. See FAO et al., *In Brief 2020*, 30. In addition to the factors noted by the FAO, extensive food allergies or diseases that are managed by diets low in some plant-products (such as whole grains), could impact the practicality of a diet that excluded all meat or all animal products for an individual.

a reduction in meat and animal products relative to the current average intake of people living in the United States.

For the purpose of defending an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern as consistent with the flourishing of human individuals, I think that it is sufficient to note that there is substantial overlap between nutritious dietary patterns and ones that have a lower carbon footprint, with the latter relying less on animal protein intake. A study based in the United States found that while people who ate a diet that produced high greenhouse gas emissions (which tended to be diets with higher protein intake in general and higher animal protein foods) had a higher consumption of vegetables, diets that had lower emissions were healthier overall (and included more whole fruit, whole grains, seafood, and plant proteins, and lower amounts of fatty acids and sodium).[149] Furthermore, there is evidence that bringing global meat consumption to a proposed goal of 90 grams (3.17 ounces) per person per day would not harm human health but rather would be expected to result in health benefits for both high-income and low-income countries.[150] For high-income countries, anticipated health benefits include lowering the risk of colorectal cancer and ischaemic heart disease.[151] In another study, the global adoption of a healthy and sustainable reference diet with a slightly lower average daily intake of meat (3.03 ounces combined for beef, lamb, pork, and poultry) was estimated to prevent about 11.1 million deaths a year, reducing premature mortality by nineteen percent.[152]

In addition, the broader context of health should be considered as nutrition is important to human health but not uniquely so. While reducing animal product intake is generally

149. Donald Rose et al., "Carbon Footprint of Self-selected US Diets: Nutritional, Demographic, and Behavioral Correlates," *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 109, no. 3 (2019): 532.
150. Anthony J. McMichael et al., "Energy and Health 5 Food, Livestock Production, Energy, Climate Change, and Health," *Lancet* 370, no. 9594 (2007): 1260-1261.
151. See sidebar on ibid., 1254.
152. The authors used three separate approaches to estimate the impact of adopting this diet on mortality. The cited number reflects the first approach. The second and third approaches found a decrease of 10.9 million deaths per year and 11.6 million deaths per year, for a reduction of 22.4 percent and 23.6 percent of mortality among adults, respectively. Walter Willett et al., "Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT–Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems," *Lancet* 393, no. 10170 (2019): 460.

conducive to the health of individual humans, should such a practice be undertaken on a larger scale, it would have additional positive benefits on human health. As seen in the first section of this chapter, a society-wide reduction in animal product intake has the potential to mitigate the effects of climate change. Climate change itself is disastrous for human health due to air pollution[153] as well as heat waves, floods, droughts, extreme weather events, infectious diseases, reduced air and water quality, and threats to food safety and mental health.[154] Other health considerations of a plant-based dietary pattern include that reducing livestock production would reduce the contact that human beings have with new infectious agents as well as the pollution of freshwater sources.[155]

Before proceeding, one last point regarding a plant-based diet and human flourishing needs to be addressed, given that the practice under consideration involves food, and particularly because it includes the word "diet," a word that is implicated in all sorts of social problems that threaten human flourishing. In the United States, diet is often closely associated with weight loss, with the weight loss and diet control market valued at a record 78 billion USD in 2019.[156] According to a 2020 report for the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders and the Academy for Eating Disorders, an estimated six percent of females and four percent of males in the United States had experienced an eating disorder, with an estimated 1.66 percent of people living in the United States experiencing

153. See C.G Nolte et al., "Air Quality," in *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, ed. D.R. Reidmiller et al. (Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2018), 512–538, doi:10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH13.

154. See K.L. Ebi et al., "Human Health," in *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, ed. D.R. Reidmiller et al. (Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2018), 539–571, doi:10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH14. These impacts will not be felt uniformly across the United States. For a more regional perspective, see Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health, *Preparing for the Regional Health Impacts of Climate Change in the United States* (July 2020), accessed April 27, 2022, https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/docs/Health_Impacts_Climate_Change-508_final.pdf.

155. McMichael et al., "Energy and Health," 1261.

156. Due to the Covid-19 pandemic and recession, this market experienced a twenty-one percent decline in 2020. Research and Markets, "United States Weight Loss & Diet Control Market Report 2021-2025," March 26, 2021, accessed April 25, 2022, https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/03/26/2199945/28124/en/United-States-Weight-Loss-Diet-Control-Market-Report-2021-2025.html?msclkid=a373a169c4b211ec86a472d4fe8873ae.

such a disorder in 2018-2019.[157] Some scholars have questioned whether restrictive diets, such as vegetarianism, amount to socially-acceptable ways to mask restrained eating, but the studies have been mixed.[158] The results of at least one study of college females indicated that vegetarians were less restrained than semi-vegetarians and that flexitarians were more restrained than omnivores.[159] However, these results correlated with differences in dietary motivations. Specifically, semi-vegetarians and flexitarians reported more concern about weight control and fewer ethical concerns (animal welfare) than other sub-groups of vegetarians (including pescatarians).[160]

My response is two-fold. First, this is one example of the role that motivation can play in virtue formation and the difficulty of distinguishing between a practice that is truly virtuous and one which bears the simulacrum of virtue. A virtuous practice is one done in the right circumstances for the right reasons. In the study noted above, any dietary practice chosen out of motivations for weight-control would not be considered an authentically humble practice according to the argument developed in this chapter. Reducing the consumption of animal products is not in itself humble. Rather, what makes such a practice humble is that it is done out of an awareness of our interdependence which has led us to recognize that high consumption levels threaten our planetary boundaries.

Second, this example points to the need for the exercise of the virtue of prudence. I recognize that a plant-based diet, with its restraint towards animal products, may not be conducive to the flourishing of the estimated 30 million people in the United States struggling with an eating disorder and for whom any restriction based on food groups may indeed be

157. Deloitte Access Economics, "The Social and Economic Cost of Eating Disorders in the United States of America: A Report for the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders and the Academy for Eating Disorders," June 2020, 14, `https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped/report-economic-costs-of-eating-disorders/`.

158. See discussion in Catherine A. Forestell, Andrea M. Spaeth, and Stephanie A. Kane, "To Eat or Not to Eat Red Meat: A Closer Look at the Relationship between Restrained Eating and Vegetarianism in College Females," *Appetite* 58, no. 1 (2012): 319-320.

159. Ibid., 323.

160. Ibid.

detrimental to their individual flourishing.[161] One of the advantages of virtue theory is that the mean is agent-specific,[162] and the same goes for virtue-based action guidance.[163] As I have developed the virtue of humility within the framework of cardinal virtues proposed by James Keenan, in which virtues perfect not capacities we have but ways in which we are relational, and within which conflicts between the virtues are expected,[164] I anticipate that there will be some individuals for whom a plant-based dietary pattern would not currently constitute an appropriate mean in the enacting of the virtue of humility as it would conflict with the virtue of self-care. The virtue of prudence plays an indispensable role in this framework, as it integrates the other cardinal virtues and "helps each virtue to shape its end as more inclusive of the other two."[165] However, given the connection between dietary motivations and dietary practices which restrict one or more groups of animal products, I maintain the defensibility of adopting an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern[166] as a virtuous practice (when done out of a recognition of our interdependence and as a response to climate change or other threats to our ecological relationships), as likely suitable for a large percentage of the U.S. population.

4.3.2 Why don't people adopt a plant-based diet?

Having established that a dietary pattern that draws more on plant-based foods than does the current standard Western diet is conducive to flourishing at the planetary, global human population, and individual levels, the next question is why people have not already

161. Eating disorders, along with other health issues, is outside my area of expertise and I encourage anyone struggling with an eating disorder to seek support from those with expertise and relevant experience, such as their health care providers. One additional resource is the nonprofit ANAD, https://anad.org/.

162. Michael G. Lawler and Todd A. Salzman put it well when they talk about choosing "the mean that is appropriate and proportionate for this particular person, on this occasion, and for the right reason." Lawler and Salzman, "Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian," 445.

163. Daly, "Virtue Ethics and Action Guidance," 579.

164. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 722-723.

165. Ibid., 722, 728. By adding humility as a fifth cardinal virtue, prudence would then help each of the four remaining cardinal virtues be more inclusive of the other three.

166. Given the connotation of "diet," I strive to use the term dietary pattern, taken from the FAO report, throughout this chapter.

made changes to their dietary patterns. To the extent that the obstacles are structural, an individual virtue approach is less fitting. While virtue ethicists recognize that virtue is fragile and that failure in the moral life is inevitable, virtue ethics is sometimes critiqued for portraying too optimistic an account of the moral journey that fails to adequately attend to human fragility.[167] Considered in light of the philosophical term "moral luck," if we conclude that the choice to change one's dietary pattern is so significantly constrained by structural factors that it effectively depends on the social location of the moral agent, we might conclude that it is a practice (albeit a good one) which cannot currently be attained in any meaningful way or which is restricted to a narrow group of people.[168] In such a case, it might even mistakenly elevate the practices of a socially privileged group as virtuous without recognizing how they contribute to vice. Consider that the acquisition of food falls within the ambit of ethical consideration of consumption, and as Cristina Traina has shown, ethical attention to consumption has tended to uncritically accept the consumption practices of the upper-middle and upper classes as virtuous.[169] Yet as will be shown below, while there are structural factors that pose limitations, many of the obstacles are at the level of individual preference and habit, suggesting that choices of individuals and households to increase plant-based foods and decrease animal products, when done for the correct reason, can aid in the cultivation of virtue in an individual.

As a preliminary note, one reason that people who are concerned about the environment[170] may not try to reduce meat consumption is a lack of awareness of the influence of

167. For an overview of the issue of virtue ethics considered in light of human fragility and some responses to these concerns informed by work being done on moral luck, moral injury, and disability, see Kate Ward, "Virtue and Human Fragility," *Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2020): 150–168.

168. See Ward's discussion of moral luck in ibid., 156-159.

169. See Cristina L.H. Traina, "The Vice of "Virtue": Teaching Consumer Practice in an Unjust World," *Journal of Moral Theology* 7, no. 1 (2018): 13–27. Here Traina draws heavily on Lisa Tessman's development of "burdened virtues."

170. Of course, this is not to say that all people are concerned about the environment. Clearly, those who are not would be unlikely to either advocate for changes in law and policy or to make changes to their lifestyle out of that motivation. Hence, the focal point of this section is people who identify as concerned about environmental issues but generally follow a meat-and-animal-product-intensive dietary pattern.

meat consumption on climate change.[171] For instance, a survey of college students found that while most recognized driving as a behavior that contributes to global warming, they underestimated the impact of eating meat and adjusting the thermostat, with fewer than ten percent of respondents identifying the latter two as contributing factors.[172]

However, the link between awareness of the environmental impact and the practice of reducing the consumption of meat and other animal products is complicated. First, just because we know that a given practice is bad for the environment does not mean that we are necessarily open to changing that practice.[173] Second, motivations can be mixed. Indeed, people who have switched to vegetarian diets often cite health reasons rather than environmental impact as a primary motivating factor.[174] The motivations of those who were more willing to reduce their meat consumption were often a mix of concerns for health, sustainability, and the suffering of animals.[175] Third, one's level of meat consumption itself

171. A perception that reducing meat would not mitigate climate change was identified as one barrier to reducing meat consumption. See João Graça, Cristina A. Godinho, and Monica Truninger, "Reducing Meat Consumption and Following Plant-based Diets: Current Evidence and Future Directions to Inform Integrated Transitions," *Trends in Food Science & Technology* 91 (2019): 385. A recent review article found that only between 23 and 35 percent of consumers in Belgium, Finland, Germany, the Netherlands, Portugal, and the United States were aware of the environmental impact of meat production. Ruben Sanchez-Sabate and Joan Sabaté, "Consumer Attitudes Towards Environmental Concerns of Meat Consumption: A Systematic Review," *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 7 (2019): 3 of 37.

172. Heather Barnes Truelove and Craig Parks, "Perceptions of Behaviors that Cause and Mitigate Global Warming and Intentions to Perform these Behaviors," *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 32, no. 3 (2012): 251-252. As a note here, the term global warming was used instead of climate change in part because it was the terminology used in a previous study and in part because public perceptions of global warming (vs. climate change) are more likely to be associated with concern, human causes, and individual actions. See Ibid., 246, note 1.

173. With respect to meat consumption, in one study, participants who identified that they had duties towards preserving the environment (as well as promoting public health and animal welfare) were nonetheless resistant to the idea of reducing their own meat consumption and utilized strategies consistent with moral disengagement such as justification, displacing personal responsibility, downplaying the negative impacts of meat production, and active avoidance or dissociation. See João Graça, Maria Manuela Calheiros, and Abílio Oliveira, "Moral Disengagement in Harmful but Cherished Food Practices? An Exploration into the Case of Meat," *Journal of Agricultural & Environmental Ethics* 27, no. 5 (2014): 760-761.

174. One recent study found that health motives were the most common reason people considered switching to a vegetarian diet. Christopher J. Hopwood et al., "Health, Environmental, and Animal Rights Motives for Vegetarian Eating," *PloS one* 15, no. 4 (2020): 13 of 20, doi:`https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230609`.

175. Graça, Godinho, and Truninger, "Reducing Meat Consumption," 385.

may influence how one interprets the evidence of the negative impact that current levels of livestock production have on the planet.[176]

A recent review of studies predominantly reporting data from European and North American countries looked at four kinds of variables to identify barriers and enablers for reducing meat consumption and following a more plant-based diet: sociodemographic variables, capability variables, opportunity variables, and motivational variables.[177] While differences by age were not consistent, higher education and living in urban areas were positively correlated with following a plant-based diet. However, the clearest difference was according to gender, with males more likely to report higher levels of both meat consumption and unwillingness to eat more plant-based meals.[178] I will return to this point soon. As far as capability variables, the most commonly identified barriers were difficulty in accessing reliable information and lack of cooking skills to prepare new meals.[179] Among opportunity variables barriers included the perception of meat as socially central. One study also identified the experience of prejudice for avoiding animal products as a barrier.[180] Higher meat prices and recalls (i.e., of beef for E.coli contamination) were asso-

176. A 2015 study found that not only did participants in both the Netherlands and the United States tend to underestimate the effectiveness of eating less meat to mitigate climate change (with twelve percent and six percent of participants, respectively, recognizing its outstanding effectiveness), but also that "regular meat eating was specifically negatively associated with the perceived effectiveness of the less meat and the organic food option." See Joop de Boer, Annick de Witt, and Harry Aiking, "Help the Climate, Change Your Diet: A Cross-sectional Study on How to Involve Consumers in a Transition to a Low-carbon Society," *Appetite* 98 (2016): 24. Similarly, some surveys indicate that people already following plant-based diets are much more likely to recognize the evidence of the link between diet and climate change than were people following meat-based diets. See the IZA Discussion Paper, Neha Bose, Thomas Hills, and Daniel Sgroi, "Climate Change and Diet," *IZA Discussion Paper*, 2020, For a brief overview, see Thomas Hills, "Climate Change and Diet," *Psychology Today*, October 11, 2018, https://www.psychologytoday.com/intl/blog/statistical-life/201810/climate-change-and-diet.

177. Graça, Godinho, and Truninger, "Reducing Meat Consumption." The authors note the following breakdown of studies by geographical region: 61 percent European, 35.5 percent North American, 9 percent Asian and/or 5.5 percent Australisian. See Ibid., 383.

178. Ibid.

179. Ibid. Note that there was one physical barrier in this category, that of sensitivity to bitter tastes, which correlated with less positive attitudes towards plant-based dishes and more positive attitudes towards animal-product heavy dishes.

180. Ibid. The anticipated experience of stigma has also been noted in focus groups of undergraduate students, with vegans accurately anticipating the negative perceptions of both vegetarians and omnivores, vegetarians anticipating that the negative reactions they experience from others would be even greater if they

ciated with reducing meat (or beef) consumption.[181] The influence of others could go either way, with household members who refuse cited as an obstacle to reducing meat consumption but the encouragement of others playing a supportive role in the decisions of those who had reduced meat consumption.[182]

While more research for all four categories of variables is needed, the research concerning motivational variables is more established. Barriers in this category included a perceived lack of responsibility to change, a lack of environmental concern, meat attachment, lack of familiarity with plant-based meals or meat substitutes, health concerns with diets lower in meat, the habit of eating meat often, hedonic feelings towards meat consumption, and following unhealthy lifestyles.[183] Here, the researchers conclude, "Taken as a whole, the findings reviewed reinforce the notion that eating meat frequently, as well as holding positive entrenched attitudes and beliefs with regard to meat consumption, are important motivational barriers to change. These habits, attitudes and beliefs seem to feed a pattern of attachment to meat consumption..."[184] Conversely, concern with health, sustainability, and/or animal ethics played an enabling role in reducing meat consumption, but not a standalone one. Other key enablers included the perception of the convenience and positive taste experiences of, and familiarity with, plant-based meals, an interest in trying new foods, and having had a close relationship with a pet.[185]

A couple of terms in the paragraph above, including meat attachment and hedonic feelings towards meat, warrant further explanation. Researchers have recently designed a questionnaire to measure meat attachment (the MAQ) using four subscales: hedonism, affinity,

---

eliminated all animal products, and those who were not vegans distancing themselves socially (both physically and verbally) from vegans. Kelly L. Markowski and Susan Roxburgh, ""If I became a vegan, my family and friends would hate me:" Anticipating vegan stigma as a barrier to plant-based diets," *Appetite* 135 (2019): 6-7.

181. Graça, Godinho, and Truninger, "Reducing Meat Consumption," 384.
182. Ibid., 383.
183. See Table 1 for a full list in ibid., 384.
184. Ibid., 387.
185. Ibid. See also Table 1 on page 384.

entitlement, and dependence.[186] Here is an example of a survey question from each subscale, with respondents rating their agreement on a scale of 1 to 7: "A good steak is without comparison" (hedonism subscale); "By eating meat I'm reminded of the death and suffering of animals" (affinity subscale, reverse coded); "According to our position in the food chain, we have the right to eat meat" (entitlement subscale) and "Meat is irreplaceable in my diet" (dependence subscale).[187] As expected, meat-attachment differs by gender, with women having a lower meat-attachment score on average than men,[188] and men tending to score higher on all four dimensions of meat attachment.[189]

Likewise, another study found that the rationalizing of meat consumption could be largely classified according to the four Ns: natural, normal, necessary, and nice.[190] Natural refers to biology, normal to social reasons, and necessary to the view that consuming meat is essential for one's health. Omnivores endorsed these four reasons more than restricted omnivores, vegetarians, or vegans.[191] The difference in endorsement between those following an omnivore dietary pattern and those following a restricted omnivore or vegetarian dietary pattern was greatest for nice.[192] Again, men endorsed these four Ns more strongly than did women.[193] This series of studies also found that people who reported an omnivorous dietary pattern included fewer animals in their circle of moral concern, were less likely to attribute mind to cows, were more likely to score higher on social dominance (i.e., to justify social inequalities), and were more likely to choose food out of familiarity whereas

186. The MAQ was developed in 2015. See João Graça, Maria Manuela Calheiros, and Abílio Oliveira, "Attached to Meat? (Un)Willingness and Intentions to Adopt a More Plant-based Diet" [in eng], *Appetite* 95 (2015): 113–125. It was used in a study in New Zealand published in 2018. See Lentz et al., "Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours."
187. See Ibid., 233.
188. Ibid., 236.
189. Graça, Calheiros, and Oliveira, "Attached to Meat?," 119.
190. Piazza et al., "Rationalizing Meat Consumption: The 4Ns." The authors build upon the work of Joy in 2010 with the first three Ns, which they note are not limited to meat eating, and add "nice" as a fourth that is specific to meat eating.
191. Ibid., 119.
192. Ibid.
193. Ibid., 120. The differences were found in the normal and nice subscales, not the natural or necessary.

individuals who rejected these four reasons tended to report more ethical motivations for their food choices.[194]

To conclude this section, a further note is needed regarding the link between meat and masculinity. Meat consumption is one of the four primary food practices connected to masculinity in the late 20th and early 21st centuries in the Global North.[195] More consumption of meat was linked to masculinity as measured by the Male Role Norms Scale.[196] Television advertisements have not only linked meat, particularly beef, to masculinity but have portrayed meat consumption as a means of responding to a presumed crisis in masculinity.[197] Conversely, fruit, vegetables, sweet foods, and dairy products are viewed as more feminine foods.[198]

Given that meat is frequently viewed as a masculine food in the United States, it is perhaps not surprising that male and female undergraduate students tend to use different reasons to justify meat eating. The male justification strategies (which include pro-meat

194. Piazza et al., "Rationalizing Meat Consumption: The 4Ns," 119-123.

195. Michelle Szabo, "Masculinities, Food and Cooking," in *Routledge International Handbook of Masculinity Studies*, ed. Lucas Gottzén, Ulf Mellström, and Tamara Shefer (Abingdon, U.K: Routledge, 2019), 405-406. The other three food behaviours include unhealthy eating, being the recipient rather than the producer of meals at home, and cooking in the professional sphere.

196. Hank Rothgerber, "Real Men Don't Eat (Vegetable) Quiche: Masculinity and the Justification of Meat Consumption," *Psychology of Men & Masculinity* 14, no. 4 (2013): 366-370.

197. For an in-depth consideration of three different advertisements from Burger King, DelTaco and Hummer in the U.S. context, see Richard A. Rogers, "Beasts, Burgers, and Hummers: Meat and the Crisis of Masculinity in Contemporary Television Advertisements," *Environmental Communication* 2, no. 3 (2008): 281–301. For a brief overview of how meat advertising in Britain uses gendered discourse and tends to target men, see discussion in Erika Cudworth, "Seeing and Believing: Gender and Species Hierarchy in Contemporary Cultures of Animal Food," in *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, ed. David Grummet and Rachel Muers, T&T Clark Theology (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 174.

198. In a recent study of college students in Turkey and the United States, steak, chicken wings, and hot dogs were considered to be the most masculine foods while salads, chocolate, sushi, and ice cream were considered to be the most feminine foods. Ceren Ekebas-Turedi et al., "A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Gender-Based Food Stereotypes and Consumption Intentions among Millennial Consumers," *Journal of International Consumer Marketing* 33, no. 2 (2021): 214. The perception of gender-based stereotypes varied by country for some foods, such as hamburger, which was perceived as masculine in the United States but as gender neutral in Turkey. For more on the gender-based stereotypes of various foods, see the literature review in ibid., 211. Note here that while meat in general is associated with masculinity, there is some evidence that this is stronger for steak and hamburgers rather than fish or chicken. However, this may be influenced by cultural factors. For instance, in this study, fish was perceived as a masculine food by Turkish students and as a feminine food by United States students.

attitudes, denial of animal suffering, that animals are lower in the hierarchy, and religious and health justifications) are linked to increased meat consumption while the female justification strategies (which include dissociating food from animals and not thinking about how animals are treated) are associated with less meat and more vegetarian food consumption.[199] Compared to women, men may be more likely to regulate everyday decisions, including food choices, so that they conform to gender norms.[200] In short, eating or not eating meat is about more than the status of animals or the relationships between human beings and animals. As Erika Cudworth concludes, "By not eating meat, humans call into question not only the ontology of species, but ontologies of gender, sexuality and other complex social differences as well."[201]

Some studies have shown that men who are described as vegetarians are perceived as less masculine than men described as omnivores.[202] However, there is a question over whether this perception endures for male vegetarians and vegans, or if it is primarily associated with vegans.[203] Some studies suggest that men who choose not to follow meat-intensive dietary patterns challenge and may potentially help modify traditional masculine food behaviors. For instance, vegan men challenge the norms of eating meat and unhealthy

199. Rothgerber, "Real Men Don't Eat (Vegetable) Quiche."

200. David Gal and James Wilkie, "Real Men Don't Eat Quiche: Regulation of Gender-Expressive Choices by Men," *Social Psychological & Personality Science* 1, no. 4 (2010): 298. Consideration of this finding must not ignore the fact that there is a good amount of research that shows that females face more pressure around their food choices, with one difference being that masculine identity is built up by what he eats whereas feminine identity depends on what she refrains from eating. See discussion Ekebas-Turedi et al., "A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Gender-Based Food Stereotypes," 211.

201. Cudworth, "Seeing and Believing," 179.

202. Matthew B. Ruby and Steven J. Heine, "Meat, Morals, and Masculinity," *Appetite* 56, no. 2 (2011): 450. Three points should be noted here. First, the authors controlled for healthiness of diet (since people whose diets are perceived to be healthy are also perceived to be more moral). Second, both omnivore and vegetarian participants perceived vegetarians to be more virtuous than omnivores. In the case of vegetarian men, these two perceptions coexist: a vegetarian man is perceived to be more moral but less masculine than his omnivorous counterpart. Third, this study was conducted at the University of British Columbia, which has a reputation as fairly liberal and is located in a city (Vancouver) where vegetarianism is relatively common.

203. A 2016 survey found that vegetarianism is no longer correlated with lower perceptions of masculinity, though that veganism is, particularly if following a vegan diet is by choice and not a medical necessity. See Margaret A. Thomas, "Are Vegans the Same as Vegetarians? The Effect of Diet on Perceptions of Masculinity," *Appetite* 97 (2016): 85.

eating.[204] There are also suggestions that there are differences based on what kind of masculinity men identify with, with greater identification with nontraditional or new forms of masculinity associated with a weaker attachment to meat, a more positive view of vegetarians, and a greater tendency to reduce meat intake.[205] Given what we know about the differences between how men and women in the United States currently perceive and justify meat eating, I suspect that my proposal to cultivate the virtue of humility through practicing a plant-based dietary pattern may be met, in general, with more resistance among men than women.[206] Nonetheless, there is no single, fixed conception of masculinity, the intersections between meat and gender are complex and dynamic, and such intersections reflect only one aspect of how our social location may affect our willingness to make changes to our consumption of animal products.

In summary, the reasons why people in the United States do not adopt a plant-based diet are varied and complex. There are structural factors that pose limitations and the preferences and habits of individuals also play a large role. Of course, it would be overly simplistic to say that the enjoyment of and commitment to meat and difficulty of giving up eating meat are isolated from structural factors. As just one example, there is evidence to suggest that meat imagery in advertising may influence consumer desire to eat meat and

204. Kadri Aavik and Marta Velgan, "Vegan Men's Food and Health Practices: A Recipe for a More Health-Conscious Masculinity?," *American Journal of Men's Health* 15, no. 5 (2021): 12, doi:`https://doi.org/10.1177/15579883211044323`.

205. Charlotte De Backer et al., "Meat and Masculinities: Can Differences in Masculinity Predict Meat Consumption, Intentions to Reduce Meat and Attitudes Towards Vegetarians?," *Appetite* 147 (2020): 104559–104559. The new masculinity referred to in this study comes from a New Masculinity Inventory developed in 2017 which includes aspects such as "holistic attentiveness, questioning male norms, authenticity, domesticity and nurturing, and sensitivity to male privilege." Ibid., 3.

206. In other words, gender dynamics (among other structural factors), affect our social location. Given that I have defined humility in terms of knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings, it is unsurprising to me that the specific practice I argue for in this chapter (humbly adopting a plant-based dietary pattern) intersects with gender and conceptions of masculinity in the contemporary United States context. Just as I argued in chapter 2 that the graces of self-doubt or self-affirmation can be generally expected to correlate with positions of relative power or powerlessness but the same person may need both graces in differing contexts, in the following section I offer an example of how both graces may assist in the practice of other-centeredness in the context of changing one's dietary patterns.

behavior.[207] Yet although social structures and individual preferences cannot be considered in total isolation from each other, the latter, when viewed from a virtue approach which both recognizes the distinction between acts of virtue that are minimal, ordinary, and exemplary and aims for an agent-specific mean, suggests that there is indeed ample room for individuals and households to intentionally choose to increase their consumption of plant-based foods and decrease their consumption of animal products without being obligated to take heroic action to combat what amounts to a structural vice.[208]

4.3.3 Who am I? Who ought I to become?

Considering the above section in light of the first question of virtue ethics, "Who am I?"[209] shows that the difficulty in giving up meat includes but is not limited to structural factors. Surveys suggest that the enjoyment of eating meat and the difficulty of giving it up are the primary obstacles to transitioning to a plant-based diet. A recent review article concluded, "It has been confirmed by numerous studies that excessive commitment to eating meat and the difficulty in giving it up are of prime importance among the potential barriers to changing dietary patterns."[210] While these obstacles may not be entirely within our control,

207. Specifically, exposure to fast food advertisements with meat imagery was associated with an increased desire to eat meat and a reduction in willingness to make incremental dietary changes (i.e., a meatless day). Morgan E. Ellithorpe et al., "I'm Lovin' It: How Fast Food Advertising Influences Meat-Eating Preferences," *Journal of Health Communication*, 2022, 8. Earlier, the authors note that a person living in the United States is exposed to an average of seven television advertisements a day with meat imagery, not including advertising from other sources such as YouTube. See ibid., 2.

208. The identification of the practice of high meat consumption as a structure of vice will be revisited in this chapter. For now, I am simply addressing the feasibility of growth in individual virtue by arguing that structural obstacles do not amount to obligatory heroism. Here I follow the insight of Kenneth Himes that "A person ought not to be required to sacrifice friendship, family, or life to oppose the accepted custom of a group." See Kenneth R. Himes, "Social Sin and the Role of the Individual," *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* (Dallas, TX) 6 (1986): 205. While decreasing meat consumption in favor of plant-based foods may provoke tension between friends or family members, tension does not equal sacrifice, and is, on the virtue approach, necessary for moral growth.

209. This and the following three paragraphs will use as a framework the three key questions of virtue ethics: 'Who am I?' 'Who ought I to become?' 'How am I to get there?' See Keenan, "Virtue Ethics," 84. This set of questions comes from MacIntyre, *After Virtue*.

210. András Fehér et al., "A Comprehensive Review of the Benefits of and the Barriers to the Switch to a Plant-Based Diet," *Sustainability* 12, no. 10 (2020): 9-11 of 18.

neither are they entirely outside of our control. The domain of the enjoyment of temporal goods has long been considered to be properly governed by the virtue of temperance, and persevering despite difficulty has also been described in virtuous terms such as fortitude.[211] In the United States (and other wealthy countries), meat eating is part of our identity. We like meat, we are in the habit of eating meat, we feel entitled to eat meat,[212] we have trouble imagining meals without meat, and we have a commitment to eating meat.

I suggest that this approach to meat in the United States reflects a national structural vice of pride in that it is one way in which a preoccupation with self-sufficiency and independence that ignores the reality of our place in the world is expressed in our ordinary lives. It is no coincidence that vegetables and dairy are viewed as feminine foods and that women are much more likely than men to identify as vegetarian in the U.S. (and British and Australian) context.[213] As seen above, there is a clear association between meat eating

211. Thomas Aquinas considered temperance and fortitude to be the virtues that put the passions under the order of reason, in the modes of restraint and strengthening, respectively. See Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 61, a. 2. While it is true that Aquinas considered fortitude primarily in terms of fear of death, writing, "The good of being firm in holding to the good defined by reason, against the impulse of passion, is found chiefly in perils of death, which are most difficult to withstand" (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 61, a. 3), he does ascribe to fortitude the counteracting of "the passions withdrawing us from following the dictate of reason, e.g. through fear of danger or toil..." (*Summa Theologiae*, I-II, q. 61, a. 2). On a first look, temperance then would restrain passions urging us to eat more meat than is reasonable because we enjoy it, while fortitude would animate us to act in accordance with reason despite the difficulty. The counterargument that switching to an increasingly plant-based diet is a practice of the virtue of temperance (which Aquinas did define as chiefly found in the restraining of the pleasures of touch) rather than of the virtue of humility will be considered later in this section.

212. For one recent, real-world example, consider the political controversy generated over a suggestion that Americans eat fewer hamburgers. The fear that one political party plans to take away hamburgers has been played up and persists despite being baseless. David Bauder and Ali Swenson, "How a nonsense story about Joe Biden taking your hamburgers away became red meat for conservatives," *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 2021, accessed July 27, 2022, `https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-biden-false-meat-story-20210428-eurrx7fqabet3kztw4mypn52ei-story.html`. Here we can see how a sense of entitlement to eating any meat in any quantity can be triggered and politicized by irresponsible (mis)use of academic studies that show decreasing red meat consumption would result in a decrease in greenhouse gas emissions. For an even more recent example, consider the responses to the news that a restaurant added a vegetarian sausage to their menu. Tim Carman, "Cracker Barrel faces blowback after adding Impossible sausage to menu," *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), August 3, 2022, accessed August 9, 2022, `https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/cracker-barrel-faces-blowback-after-adding-impossible-sausage-to-menu/ar-AA10hjKt`.

213. For a brief overview of some of the literature on this point, see Rothgerber, "Real Men Don't Eat (Vegetable) Quiche," 364. A recent Gallup poll indicates that while only about five percent of U.S. adults identify as vegetarian, a greater percentage of women than men do so: six percent vs. four percent. Hrynowski, "What

and masculinity, including in countering perceived threats to masculinity that stem from too much feminine influence.

Feminist scholars have challenged the dualisms that define female in opposition to male, such that maleness is identified with humanity and femaleness becomes perceived as "other." For instance, it is as other-than-normatively-human that female has been associated with both a) being emotional, as opposed to rational, and b) with nature, which is to be dominated, rather than with the scientific expertise that allows humans to control or dominate nature.[214] In these dualisms, male is associated with independence, power over others, and self-sufficiency, while female is associated with dependence and passivity. Ecofeminists in particular have linked the oppression of women to the exploitation of nature and have paid attention to how dualisms have put women and nature on the same side, feminizing nature and animalizing women in the process of opposing both to culture.[215] I argue that sexism and patriarchy, which dehumanize all people, including men, facilitate the vices of pride and self-deprecation as defined in the previous chapter not only by bolstering dynamics of domination and subjugation but also by holding up the impossible norm of self-sufficiency.[216] As Anne Clifford notes, "Patriarchy, with its dominance and submission dynamics, is a barrier to interdependence and mutuality that can guide the vision of a holistic and egalitarian society in multiple ways."[217]

Percentage of Americans Are Vegetarian?" For a couple of examples of how some animal foods have been feminized in a British context, see Cudworth, "Seeing and Believing," 175.

214. For a brief overview in the context of feminist theology, see Anne M. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001), 6-21.

215. Cudworth, "Seeing and Believing," 170-172.

216. For one Christian ethicist who has written on the negative impact of sexism and patriarchy on men, see the work of the late James B. Nelson. For instance, he connects the opposition between the erotic and manliness to an emphasis on both self-sufficiency and rational control, in a way in which masculinity serves to make a man invulnerable. See James Nelson, "On Doing Body Theology," *Theology & Sexuality* 1, no. 2 (1995): 48. Nelson contends that the power revealed by the cross is a vulnerable power and that vulnerability is difficult for men and connects the issues of power, fear and vulnerability to male homophobia as well as violence, racism, and environmental degradation. See ibid., 52-55. With respect to the latter, he writes, "Remember: a man's reliance on Mother Nature can remind him of his early dependence on his own human mother." Ibid., 45.

217. Clifford, *Introducing Feminist Theology*, 21.

There is likewise a clear association between meat consumption and wealth, with increased wealth correlating with an increased demand for meat.[218] Christian theologians writing on food have also noted the connection between meat eating and wealth.[219] Here it should be noted that the impact of abstaining from meat can also be and historically was mitigated by wealth.[220] In the United States, as in other developed countries, meat is a significant part of the diet, although by 1961 meat consumption in the United States was almost twice as high as that of the developed world as a whole.[221] Within the United States, meat consumption almost doubled over the course of a century (1909-2007), with the lowest consumption during the 1930s and the highest in the final decade of the period under consideration.[222] The increase in total meat consumption in the United States is explained by the combination of the increased incomes of consumers and the affordability of meat, although individual consumption may level off or decrease among those who are best off socio-economically.[223]

Hence, I argue that the prominence of meat-heavy dietary patterns in the United States reflects a position of both economic strength as well as subjective notions of power. In-

218. One challenge to the food system on the demand side is that as average wealth increases, the demand for more resource-intensive foods, including several types of meat, increases. Godfray et al., "Feeding 9–10 Billion People," S3. See also Carrie R. Daniel et al., "Trends in Meat Consumption in the USA," *Public Health Nutrition* 14, no. 4 (2011): 575. As meat consumption increases, it appears to take the place of foods of plant origin such as cereals.

219. For example, Michael Northcott notes that before the 20th century, daily meat consumption in Caucasian societies in Europe would have been only possible for the wealthy. Michael S. Northcott, "Eucharistic Eating and Why Many Early Christians Preferred Fish," in *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, ed. David Grummet and Rachel Muers, T&T Clark Theology (London: T&T Clark, 2008), 233.

220. For instance, among the reasons cited by Reformation theologians such as Martin Luther and Huldrich Zwingli, who challenged fasting practices, was a concern that it was a hardship for the poor while the rich could continue to eat sumptuously, in part by turning to alternatives such as fish. See discussion in David Grumett and Rachel Muers, *Theology on the Menu: Asceticism, Meat and Christian Diet* (New York: Routledge, 2010), 53-57.

221. Daniel et al., "Trends in Meat Consumption in the USA," 575-576.

222. Ibid., 576. The fact that meat was scarce during the World Wars also contributed to its position as a status symbol. See Marta Zaraska, "This is Why Vegetarianism Didn't Catch on Until Recently," *Time*, February 23, 2016, 1, accessed July 8, 2022, https://time.com/4220270/vegetarianism-history-meathooked/.

223. Daniel et al., "Trends in Meat Consumption in the USA," 579-580.

dividuals living in the United States are influenced by the relative economic strength of the country, in which historically consumers have benefited both from increasing incomes and the affordability of meat. Within the United States, men are more attached to meat than women, and meat eating is associated with a conception of masculinity based on independence and power over others (including nonhuman others) rather than alternative understandings of masculinity based on authenticity and nurturing and that are sensitive to male privilege.

Yet just because this is a part of who we are now, it does not follow that we must always be this way. We can change our habits, gradually reducing our meat consumption out of an appreciation for our interdependence, until an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern becomes second nature to us.[224] In terms of who we ought to become, I suggest that the first section of this chapter presents a compelling case for the conclusion that we ought to become people who are more aware of the role that our lifestyle and ordinary habits, including our dietary patterns, play in our ecological relationships and who are willing to make changes in our lifestyles based on that awareness considered in light of our recognition of our interdependence.

4.3.4 How do we get there?

In the current U.S. context, levels of meat consumption are environmentally unsustainable, and eating meat is less about survival and improving health outcomes than about wealth, privilege and habit.[225] If the virtue of humility is, as argued in the chapter 2, the disposition

224. The obstacle of the enjoyment of meat suggests that cultivating the virtue of temperance may also be relevant so that we can take the proper pleasure in eating meat. However, the relationship of temperance to this question will be discussed later in this chapter.

225. As shown earlier in this chapter, per capita meat consumption has increased within the United States over the last century and is currently one of the highest in the world, protein deficiency is rare in the United States, and the cost of meat is higher than of many protein alternatives, including plant-based alternatives as well as eggs. Nonetheless, according to the USDA, 10.5 percent of U.S. households in 2020 were food-insecure. U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service, *Food Security in the U.S.: Key Statistics & Graphs*, accessed July 11, 2022, `https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-`

to know and value the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings which is acquired through the practice of other-centeredness and other-acceptance, and enabled by the 'graces' of self-doubt and self-affirmation, in the U.S. context, the practice of reducing our consumption of animal products, especially meat, and increasing the role of plant-based foods in our dietary habits will help cultivate humility.

Eating and interdependence

First, the fact we need to eat and our inability to produce food on our own is a point of commonality we share with all creatures and one which belies any claim of self-sufficiency. As noted in the first section, only a tiny percentage of the workforce in the United States is involved in agricultural work. The number of people in the United States who grow some of their own food through gardening is higher,[226] and the COVID-19 pandemic was associated with a resurgence of interest in gardening.[227] Yet as Debra Dean Murphy notes, even those who grow their food are dependent on "the gifts of sun, soil, seed, and rain" and most people in industrialized countries do not grow any of their own food and so "are dependent in additional ways."[228] Murphy notes that acknowledging dependence is difficult for those who are affluent and that those of us living in the United States are habituated to value independence and tend to view dependence in terms of weakness.[229]

---

nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/key-statistics-graphics/#insecure.

226. One study of community and home gardens in San Jose, California indicates that 42 million households in the United States grew some of their own food as of 2013, representing an increase of seventeen percent compared to 2008. Susan Algert et al., "Community and Home Gardens Increase Vegetable Intake and Food Security of Residents in San Jose, California," *California Agriculture* 70, no. 2 (2016): 82.

227. For example, news coverage in the United States in the spring of 2020 indicates that demand for seeds had increased such that seed companies were struggling to keep up. See Aimee Picchi, "Seed Companies Can't Keep Up as More Americans Turn to Growing Their Own Food," *CBS News. Moneywatch*, April 14, 2020, https://www.cbsnews.com/news/coronavirus-seeds-americans-grow-food/. Researchers have also traced a renewal of interest in gardening, in line with the history of Victory Gardens, among some parts of the population in Canada, although without the support of local governments. Janet Music et al., "Pandemic Victory Gardens: Potential for Local Land Use Policies," *Land Use Policy* 109 (2021): 1.

228. Murphy, "Just Eating?," 428.

229. Ibid.

Another challenge is to see the webs of interdependence that make possible an activity we might take for granted. For instance, sociology professor Lisa Graham McMinn used to ask her students whether they could make a hamburger without any help to challenge them to begin to recognize their interdependence.[230] Disruptions to the supply chain and shortages of common items during the COVID-19 pandemic made the fact that being able to eat a meal depends on more than our ability to afford foods and prepare them more visible. Eating is an action that expresses our dependence on others and calls for a response of gratitude. As Norman Wirzba writes, "Though eating can be among our most pleasurable acts, it is also inherently troubling because we know that we will have to eat again."[231]

Yet eating is not just about our dependence and vulnerability, although it certainly is about these. Just as we depend on others to eat and so to continue living, so do others depend on us to eat and to continue living.[232] Eating is a daily affirmation of our interdependence. Wirzba expresses it as follows: "To be a creature is to benefit from the help and nurture of others and, in turn, to be a help and source of nurture in return. As long as we care to live, there is no release from our shared life. Eating is the daily confirmation of that fact."[233] Although he does not use the term interdependence here, this theological understanding of food challenges us to recognize our place in the world, a place that is marked by interdependence.

As seen in the first section of this chapter, current U.S. dietary patterns are unsustainable. Viewed theologically, I argue that these dietary patterns exhibit a deficiency of

230. See Lisa Graham McMinn, *To the Table: A Spirituality of Food, Farming, and Community* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016), 24. McMinn taught sociology for 20 years and is now the spiritual director and caretaker of Fern Creek.

231. Wirzba, *Food and Faith*, 29.

232. This could be due to care-giving relationships, our employment (i.e., agriculture or food service), or our participation in the economy. These others include non-human animals, such as pets we may have, livestock we may be responsible for, and also the animals who rely on us not to eliminate their habitat or poison their food chain through our activities. Of course, it is not only other people or other animals who depend on us. Our activities affect biodiversity, the health or disease of entire ecosystems, and as the discussion of planetary boundaries shows us, the ability of the earth to continue to sustain life.

233. Wirzba, *Food and Faith*, 34.

humility which denies or undervalues our interdependence. In order to recognize their unsustainability, we need to practice other-centeredness. The fact that most people in the United States do not recognize the role of food production, particularly of animal products, in climate change, combined with evidence that when presented with this information people often try to downplay the negative impact of livestock production on the environment, suggests that the contemporary practice of other-centeredness in the United States context may be assisted by the grace of self-doubt. Self-centeredness truncates the truth of our place in the world; just because we personally enjoy animal products and can afford them does not mean that animal-product intensive dietary patterns are just or sustainable. Yet it is also possible that the practice of other-centeredness and the proper valuation of our interdependence may be assisted by what I have called the grace of self-affirmation, particularly if one is part of a community that is "othered" in the United States. As a very partial list, here we can think of vegan men who challenge the connection between meat-eating and masculinity,[234] communities that counter the dietary and health impacts of the history of colonization in part by preserving local food cultures,[235] and people of color who challenge the lack of visibility of the role of plant-based dietary patterns in their communities and histories.[236]

234. See Thomas, "Are Vegans the Same as Vegetarians? The Effect of Diet on Perceptions of Masculinity" and Aavik and Velgan, "Vegan Men's Food and Health Practices," which were both cited earlier in this chapter.

235. For an overview of the impact of colonization on the food system of small island developing states and how efforts to achieve food sovereignty can be supported by reclaiming local food cultures (which tend to be largely plant-based) and food production methods, see Abrania Marrero and Josiemer Mattei, "Reclaiming Traditional, Plant-based, Climate-resilient Food Systems in Small Islands," *Lancet. Planetary Health* 6, no. 2 (2022): e171–e179. Reclaiming traditional foods has been advocated in a North American context as necessary for the healing of indigenous communities who have suffered from colonization and as a response to food-and-colonization-linked health problems that disproportionately affect those communities. See Monica Bodirsky and Jon Johnson, "Decolonizing Diet: Healing by Reclaiming Traditional Indigenous Foodways," *Cuizine: the Journal of Canadian Food Cultures* 1, no. 1 (2008). While the focus here is on the impact of colonization on indigenous people and their health, it is worth noting that while traditional foodways include meat (in the form of game), many other staples are plant-based. This article gives the examples of wild rice, corn, beans, squash, and berries.

236. For example, in a recent article on eater.com (a food website owned by Vox Media), Amirah Mercer, who identifies as both Black and vegan, discusses her journey from the meat-intensive diet of her childhood to a plant-based diet. Here she touches on several themes including how and whether her food choices were connecting or disconnecting her from the traditions of her family and her ancestors, the invisibility of the history

Finding the mean between the extremes

What might this cultivation of humility look like in the concrete? In Aristotelian virtue ethics, each virtue is a mean between two extremes.[237] Aquinas follows this logic for the acquired virtues (moral and intellectual),[238] but notes that with respect to the theological virtues, it depends on whether we are talking about the measure from the nature of the virtue (in which case the good of the theological virtues does not consist in the mean) or in reference to human beings, in which case, the virtues of hope and faith do observe the mean.[239] Yet we have also seen that the mean is highly sensitive to the individual, determined in accordance with prudence such that it is challenging enough to prompt growth but not so challenging as to be impossible. What might such a mean look like with respect to the consumption of animal vs. plant products in the contemporary U.S. context?

A starting point for answering this question can be found in a 2007 paper by Anthony McMichael, John Powles, Colin Butler, and Ricardo Uauy. The authors propose a working goal of 90 grams of meat per person per day, a little below the global consumption of 100 grams per day, just to stabilize greenhouse gas emissions from the livestock sector based on not letting agricultural emissions in 2050 exceed 2005 levels.[240] This is a little over three ounces per day (with not more than 50 grams or approximately 1.75 ounces coming

of plant-based eating in Black American culture, the ways in which slavery and sharecropping shaped Southern cooking, how the recent promotion of plant-based eating has tended to ignore the existence of vegans who are Black, Indigenous or people of color, how food is political and how patterns of eating can be adopted as self-care in response to discrimination, and debates around the role of meat in soul food. See Amirah Mercer, "A Homecoming," *Vox*, January 14, 2021, https://www.eater.com/22229322/black-veganism-history-black-panthers-dick-gregory-nation-of-islam-alvenia-fulton, accessed August 9, 2022.

237. For example, see *Nicomachean Ethics*, II, 3, 1104a and II, 6, 1106b-9. Aristotle, *A New Aristotle Reader*, ed. J. L. Ackrill (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987), 378, 382-87. Although this 'doctrine of the mean' has featured in my development of the virtue of humility, it does not feature in all contemporary virtue discourse. Julia Annas notes that the neo-Aristotelian account of virtue is not committed to this doctrine of the mean, among other features. Julia Annas, "Applying Virtue to Ethics," *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 32, no. 1 (2015): 2.

238. See Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae I-II*, q. 64, a. 1-3.

239. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae I-II*, q. 64, a. 4. For example, the theological virtue of hope is located between the extremes of despair and presumption, while the virtue of faith is located between opposing heresies. *Summa Theologiae I-II*, q. 64, a. 4, ad.3. Note that the theological virtue of charity has no excess.

240. McMichael et al., "Energy and Health," 1254.

from red meat), substantially (71 percent) lower than the current U.S. average daily intake of over two-thirds of a pound (11.12 ounces).

Three ounces of meat per person per day (not including eggs or fish) may sound shockingly low, but it is likely the upper limit for a dietary pattern to be sustainable in the current context. Climate change is not the only threat to planetary health. Using the planetary boundaries framework, the EAT-*Lancet* Commission established a healthy reference diet with targets that would meet the nutrition needs of human beings and be environmentally sustainable. While there are ranges for each food category, the upper bound of the range of animal protein products including beef and lamb (14 grams), pork (14 grams), poultry (58 grams), eggs (25 grams), and fish (100 grams) is a total of 211 grams (7.44 ounces), and only 86 grams (3.03 ounces) when excluding eggs and fish.[241] The authors note that while this diet may strike some readers as extreme, it is consistent with several traditional diets, such as the Mediterranean diet and the traditional diets found in Indonesia, Mexico, India, China, and West Africa.[242]

Perhaps it will help us if we view this call to reduce our consumption of animal products within the strand of Christian tradition which considers dietary practices in light of local conditions or the pursuit of other goods. The Rule of Saint Benedict for example, prescribed a general abstention from the meat of four-footed animals, but made exceptions for the sick and very weak as well as for children and the elderly.[243] While the reasoning has since been turned on its head, given that now meat is associated with an irreplaceable source of strength rather than a concession for weakness, the rule was not absolute or universal but rather predicated upon local conditions. Similarly, while Saint Francis is often remembered as not eating meat, he actually sometimes did eat meat out of concerns related

241. Note that this diet is based on a total caloric intake of 2,500 kcal/day. Willett et al., "Food in the Anthropocene," 451.
242. Ibid., 545, Panel 2.
243. Abbot of Monte Cassino Benedict Saint, *RB 1980: the Rule of St. Benedict in English* [in eng] (Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982).

to hospitality.[244] Like the Rule of St. Benedict, sickness was also a reason for the disruption of normal dietary practices for the Franciscan order, which called for fasting (which included abstention from meat) before Christmas, during Lent, and on Fridays. Furthermore, St. Francis opposed pushes for a more rigid abstention from meat which might confuse the new religious order with heretical sects or prevent social engagement.[245] As seen in the first section of this chapter, today's local conditions include the awareness that the animal-product-intensive diets of many wealthy Western nations, including the United States, are already contributing and will continue to contribute both to food insecurity and climate change. While the local conditions of Benedict's or Francis's day prompted them to make exemptions to practices of meat abstention, and in Francis's case, allow for much greater flexibility in eating meat, today's local conditions challenge us to become people who are not so attached to meat and other animal products that we can envision and begin living out alternative, more plant-based dietary patterns.

Plant-based dietary patterns and character formation

Moving towards a plant-based dietary pattern points to an alternative way of being in the world that now seems a necessary adaptation to climate change. Yet I suggest that it is also theologically significant because it can help form our character and can facilitate conversion. Change is disruptive, and Sallie McFague argues that conversion "involves a disorientation, a disruption, a shock."[246] In a country in which an individual eats, on average, eleven ounces of meat daily, even a relatively modest reduction in meat consumption will likely be experienced as quite disruptive, at least at first. This disruption has formative potential for the individual because it brings with it the possibility of forming new habits

244. David Grumett, "Vegetarian or Franciscan? Flexible Dietary Choices Past and Present," *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1, no. 4 (2008): 451-55.
245. Ibid., 455-56, 459-60, 464.
246. Sallie McFague, *Blessed are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint* (Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013), 34.

out of new motivations. Recall that in the focus groups that Erin Lothes Biviano conducted with people who participated in faith-based environmental action, lifestyle changes were considered both a matter of integrity and of empowerment to expand their efforts.[247] In addition to contributing to the flourishing of individuals, animals, and the earth, adopting an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern is one way to pierce our indifference, which stems from a place of relative strength. Yet recognizing this potential for character formation requires grappling with a long strain within the Christian tradition of seeing the food we eat as entirely morally neutral.

Aquinas distinguished between immanent and transient activities, identifying virtuous and vicious activities as belonging to the former category. For Aquinas, an immanent activity perfects the agent and does not result in a product.[248] Immanent activities relate to doing, whereas transient activities relate to things we make.[249] Immanent activities shape the agent, so that "We become what we do."[250] Immanent actions then are moral actions, actions that transform ourselves, whereas transient actions transform something else.

In this framework, eating can be a tricky case. Indeed, Keenan gives the example of making dinner as a transient activity but the way we take breakfast as an immanent one.[251] Marie George classifies the activity of nutrition as transient according to Aquinas's framework. Aquinas's examples of transient activities result in a product external to the agent,[252] and she argues that the activity of nutrition clearly fits the "transient" category

247. See chapter 1, p. 68, cf. Lothes, "Worldviews on Fire," 509 and Lothes, "Working Together to Address the Climate Crisis," 242.

248. Marie I. George, "On the Meaning of "Immanent Activity" According to Aquinas," *The Thomist* 78, no. 4 (2014): 548.

249. Drawing on Aristotle, Aquinas distinguishes two categories of activity: action (which remains in the moral agent) and making (which occurs when an operation goes into external matter. See Thomas Aquinas, "I Nicomachean Ethics, lecture 1," in *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993), no. 13. Also see discussion Keenan, "7 Reasons," 7.

250. Keenan, "7 Reasons," 2014, 7.

251. Keenan, "7 Reasons," 7.

252. See George, "On the Meaning of "Immanent Activity" According to Aquinas," 554.

because it results in a product, and it is that product, not the activity itself, that perfects the living thing's substance.[253]

I think there is a productive tension here. On the one hand, eating involves a product. When I prepare a meal, I am transforming something else, and when I eat food, my body incorporates it into itself. If eating meals is simply a transient activity, we can expect what we choose to eat to be largely outside the realm of moral action. And indeed, there is a strong strand within the Christian tradition that denies the consumption of meat can be considered always wrong.[254] Consider Romans 14:2, which states, "Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables."[255] Those in the community who eat anything are portrayed as having the stronger faith (see Romans 14:1)[256] and are implied to have the correct understanding.[257] Augustine downplayed the role of dietary disciplines and viewed refraining from the consumption of meat is a matter of spiritual indifference, although his approach to food must be considered against the backdrop of Manichaeism and his previous involvement in that community.[258] One benefit of this approach is that it resists absolute rules regarding dietary choices that can both feed into destructive moralizing about food

253. George, "On the Meaning of "Immanent Activity" According to Aquinas," 546.

254. Romans 14 will be considered briefly. As John Berkman has noted, whatever our thoughts about its current interpretation, an influential interpretation within the Christian tradition, including those of Augustine and Aquinas, "have understood St. Paul to be denying in principle objections to all consumption of animal flesh" even while they have defended the temporary fasting from meat. John Berkman, "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition," *Logos* 7, no. 1 (2004): 178.

255. Here Paul offers unity in diversity, rather than persuasion, as the solution. See Tonstad, *Paul among the Ecologists*, 337. While it is better to be strong than weak, Paul is concerned with adapting to the needs of others. For Tonstad, this food dilemma is part of the mediation between the weak and strong in Romans which begins "with an appeal to let 'the mercies of God' find embodiment in the believing community (12.1-2), and it ends by an appeal to the Old Testament scriptures and its witness to 'the God of steadfastness and encouragement' (15.4-5)." See ibid., 357.

256. See note on Romans 14:1–2, Leander E. Leck, "Romans," in *The Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version Including Apocryphal Deuterocanonical Books*, rev. ed., ed. Harold W. Attridge (New York: Oxford University Press, 2006), 1928.

257. See also Romans 14:14-15. Nonetheless, the strong still have a responsibility for the weak. See note on Romans 14:13–23, ibid.

258. See Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 89-94.

(and judgments about the people who eat that food) and also cause harm by failing to adequately attend to the competing goods that dietary choices involve.[259]

On the other hand, we clearly make choices about the way we eat, and these choices proceed from deliberate reason and so are human actions. The tradition has long held that the circumstances in which we eat are morally significant. For example, consider how Paul treats food in 1 Corinthians in the context of concerns over Christian identity and idolatry. There was conflict within the community over whether or not Christians could participate in feasts offered by family members or friends who had sacrificed the animal whose meat was featured on such occasions to a god in a pagan temple.[260] John Barclay concludes that "what concerns Paul is what we might call the *orientation* of the food and of its consumption."[261] Such an orientation should not only be understood individually but also from a perspective of concern for unity within the community. Richard B. Hays considers this problem of idol meat found in 1 Corinthians 8:1–11:1 to be a test case of a particular working out of Paul's call for unity within the church community found in 1 Corinthians 1–4.[262] Rather than simply judge in favor of one side in the dispute, Paul asks

259. As will be seen shortly, for Paul, dietary choices were accountable to the overall unity of the community. Augustine criticized the food practices of the Manichaens for encouraging overindulgence as well as for being based on an underlying reasoning that would show more mercy to a vegetable than to a human being. Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 90, 92. Today, some of these competing goods might include health, hospitality, cost, access, and ease of preparation. Eliminating specific foods may contribute to oppression, as in the case of colonization, and eliminating categories of foods could be dangerous for people with allergies, who struggle with or are recovering from an eating disorder, or for those who already struggle to get sufficient nutritional intake due to other factors. Likewise, the time spent sourcing and preparing a meal may conflict with other goods such as other care-giving responsibilities, paid work, education, socializing, and sufficient sleep. Nonetheless, it can also be argued that the absolutizing of the freedom to eat anything plays a negative role in Christian responses to contemporary ethical issues around factory farming and climate change. Grumett and Muers argue that "By presenting dietary discipline as marginal to Christian life and doctrinally ambiguous, Augustine played a significant part in sidelining it as a matter for serious theological debate and spiritual reflection, presenting arguments the force of which was still felt many centuries after Manichaeism had ceased to exist. Ibid., 94.

260. See Richard B. Hays, "Ecclesiology and Ethics in 1 Corinthians," *Ex Auditu* 10 (1994): 37.

261. See John M.G Barclay, "Food, Christian Identity and Global Warming: A Pauline Call for a Christian Food Taboo," *Expository Times* 121, no. 12 (2010): 587-88. Barclay draws here on 1 Corinthians 6.13, 8.8, and 10.25-26, 30-31. Note that later in the article he also considers Romans 14—15.

262. Against interpretations that focus on the individual, Hays argues that Paul "sees the church as inheriting the corporate vocation of God's covenant people, Israel" and that "The community is the primary addressee of God's imperatives." See Hays, "Ecclesiology and Ethics in 1 Corinthians," 31, 33.

those in the community who, secure in their knowledge that there are no idols and so see no harm in participating in such meals, "to act in loving acknowledgment of their familial interdependence with their brothers and sisters in the community who do not share their convictions."[263] This passage gives an example of how food choices are not only a matter of acting in accord with our individual convictions[264] but that we may be called to forgo eating certain foods out of a concern for the good of the community.

The vice of gluttony in the Christian tradition offers another example of how the circumstances in which we eat are morally significant. While gluttony may first bring to mind simple overeating, it is more fundamentally about deriving inordinate pleasure from the food we eat and may appear not only in the mode of overconsumption but also those of pickiness or sloppiness.[265] Snacking may not be a habit we think twice about, and yet it may be an indication of hasty eating.[266] When done habitually, snacking may privatize eating and interfere with communal life.[267] The way I go about preparing a meal may also give me practice in growing in patience, fidelity, and hospitality or, conversely, practice in being impatient or rude.[268]

263. Hays, "Ecclesiology and Ethics in 1 Corinthians," 37. Hays ties this appeal to make sacrifices out of concern for the spiritual well-being of others in the community to Paul's self-surrendering behavior which he models on the example of Christ. See ibid., 38.

264. Hays observes that those who have doubts cannot participate in the meals without harm to their spiritual well-being, writing: "Others, however, whom Paul calls 'the weak' (8:7) are scandalized by this behavior or—what Paul considers worse—drawn by the example of the 'strong' to join in such temple meals despite their own scruples (8:7, 10; cf. Rom 14:23: 'Those who have doubts are condemned if they eat, because they do not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin')." See ibid., 37.

265. Haile, "Gluttony," 29.

266. Konyndyk DeYoung identifies hastily as one of five forms of gluttony and identifies the "sneaky snacker" in this context. Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung, *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies* (Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2009), 144.

267. Haile, "Gluttony," 48.

268. Imagine that I patiently involve my young children in the process of preparation, approaching that meal's preparation in a way that provides opportunities for them to develop competence in a skill (meal preparation) that can be put in the service of virtues (such as hospitality) while cultivating an awareness of safety and nutrition (self-care) and a sense of belonging and contributing to the good of the family (fidelity). Then imagine that I prepare the meal impatiently, grumbling the entire time about something that angered me that day, and then slapping the plates down on the table when it's ready. While the first may not be practical on a daily basis, it is the more virtuous of the two.

The question of what we eat might be a bit harder to see as a moral one at first. Is not *what* we eat different from the *way* we eat? Yes, and no. Going back to gluttony, it is not so simple to separate what we eat from how we eat. For instance, if we derive too much pleasure from the quality of food, we may choose to prepare or procure foods that promote the gluttony of delicacy[269] even if our consumption of those foods is moderate in quantity. While the virtue approach can be helpful in avoiding absolute rules about what we ought to eat or not which may not adequately attend to the fact that eating involves competing goods,[270] it also attends to the fact that the choices we make about what foods to eat have ramifications that extend past our own bodily health or household dynamics. For example, when Hanlon Rubio looked at the question of how people eat, she noted that most Christians eat in the context of a family or household, but often not together, relying more on processed foods than meals made from scratch and consuming more meat (especially chicken) and dairy.[271] In turn, these trends support the dominant model of farming practices in the U.S. which are fossil-fuel intensive, damage soil quality, and pollute the land and waters.[272] In response she suggests not only prioritizing family meals and cooking more from scratch (which would align more closely with *the way* we make and eat a meal) but also reducing our consumption of meat and animal products and increasing our consumption of organic and local or seasonal produce (which align with *what* we eat).[273]

269. Haile identifies the gluttony of delicacy in Haile, "Gluttony," 41-46.
270. Since this paragraph will refer to Julie Hanlon Rubio's work as an example, it is worth mentioning here that she frames her guidelines for just eating in a familial context in terms of suggestions rather than absolute rules because she recognizes that dietary choices involve competing goods. Hanlon Rubio, "Toward a Just Way of Eating," 36. Hence, for instance, while buying more organic produce and more local and seasonal produce are both named as suggestions, Hanlon Rubio recognizes that it is difficult to feed a family foods that are both, not only due to the expense of buying a share in a local Community Support Agriculture but also that the foods children are more likely to eat are rarely included and that imposing the sacrifice of living within the limits of what the local area produces on children is in conflict with their nutritional needs. See ibid., 374.
271. Ibid., 366-367.
272. Ibid., 368.
273. Ibid., 371-376.

Even granting that what we eat is not necessarily morally neutral, one might still question if the practice of reducing meat consumption can be expected to have any impact on one's character or the way one views the world. Yet there is evidence from survey data that the motivation for meat reduction varies by eating habits. People who are skeptical about climate change report less willingness to follow a more plant-based dietary pattern.[274] In the United States, surveys suggest that people not only tend to underestimate the impact of reducing meat on carbon emissions, but also that openness to such information varies by diet itself, with people already following plant-based diets much more likely to recognize the evidence of the link between diet and climate change than were people following meat-based diets.[275] In a survey of New Zealand consumers, the high cost of meat and health concerns were the strongest motivating factors for individuals who reported either consuming the standard amount of meat or that they had reduced their meat intake. However, for the latter, while cost and health were the primary factors, these were supported by ethical motivations (i.e., concerns about animal welfare and impact on the environment). For individuals who reported abstaining from meat, the ethical motivations were the strongest (animal welfare followed by environmental concerns), though motivations of health and taste also played a role.[276] Here we see a progression of motivation that varies by the meat-eating practices of individuals: cost and health are primary factors for those eating the standard amount of meat, are primary but buttressed by ethical motivations for those who report reducing their meat intake, and play a supporting role in the motivations of those who have chosen not to eat meat. Taken together, while the above does not prove that choosing to reduce meat and animal products will change individuals' motivations for continuing to do so, it does suggest that our level of meat consumption influences our openness

274. Graça, Godinho, and Truninger, "Reducing Meat Consumption," 385.
275. Bose, Hills, and Sgroi, "Climate Change and Diet."
276. Lentz et al., "Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours," 235-238.

to and perception of information relevant to climate change as well as our motivations for the food choices that we make.

4.3.5 Humility vs. temperance

A final note is needed to address why a practice that centers on food is being developed within the context of the virtue of humility, and not that of temperance. After all, one of the vices which oppose temperance, the vice of gluttony, concerns eating, and the corresponding virtue is fasting, which includes abstinence from meat, and in some cases, animal products.[277] While popular perceptions that gluttony is primarily concerned with the quantity of food consumed persist, the more fundamental concern is whether the pleasure taken in eating is rightly ordered.[278] Reducing meat consumption could be interpreted as a form of fasting to remedy what Haile calls gluttony of delicacy,[279] or what Rebecca Konyndyk DeYoung identifies as the two forms of gluttony that deal with *what* we eat: eating fastidiously or sumptuously.[280] After all, while DeYoung does not attend to the ecological implications of the typical U.S. diet, she does observe that it is built on the same principle of pleasure as the eating sumptuously form of gluttony, in part due to its reliance on animal products (she identifies beef, butter, and cream sauces), which promise a feeling of sati-

277. Thomas Aquinas gives a sustained treatment of the virtue of temperance in *Summa Theologiae*, II-II q. 141-170. Abstinence from food and drink in one part of temperance (q. 146) and the act of abstinence is fasting (q. 147). Furthermore, abstinence is opposed to the vice of gluttony (q. 148). Thomas attends to which meats fasting abstains from (and the fact that the Lenten fast also abstains from eggs and dairy) in *Summa Theologiae*, II-II q. 147, a. 8.

278. DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*, 139-157, at 141. DeYoung identifies five aspects of the vice of gluttony, fastidiously, ravenously, excessively, sumptuously, and hastily, which she refers to with the acronym FRESH. Eating excessively does pertain to overeating due to taking excessive pleasure taken in the food, but this is only one aspect of gluttony and she is careful to note that gluttony goes well beyond "guilty pleasures" in part because food is good, and we correctly derive pleasure from eating and drinking. See ibid., 147. Similarly, Beth Haile argues that gluttony is "best understood as inordinate or disproportionate pleasure in relation to the food consumed." Haile, "Gluttony," 29. She identifies three modes: overconsumption, pickiness, and sloppiness.

279. Ibid., 41-46. Haile defines this form of gluttony in terms of a disproportionate relationship between "pleasure and *quality* of food." See ibid., 41.

280. DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*, 142-143.

ety.[281] Haile goes further, specifically connecting gluttony of delicacy (and singling out the meat-intensive diets of U.S. Americans) to ecological and environmental harms that raise questions about whether current meat consumption levels are excessive.[282]

Why then not propose a shift to an increasingly plant-based diet as a practice to cultivate temperance rather than humility? As a preliminary note, it should not surprise us that a sphere of human life would come under the domain of more than one virtue, particularly given that the virtue of humility has traditionally been placed in opposition to the vice of pride, and the primacy that the vice of pride has played in the Christian tradition.[283] The fasting proposed as a remedy for gluttony has not only the effect of increasing our appreciation for material goods, but also of increasing our awareness of our dependence on God and reminding us that we are not self-sufficient, are not in fact completely in "control over our own ability to be happy and full, and do not, as the Scriptures tell us, "live by bread alone" (Matt. 4:4)."[284] To the extent that temperance helps us realize that we are not self-sufficient, it can aid us in recognizing our interdependence and identifying habitual ecocidal excess in daily lives, and so may support the cultivation of the virtue of humility.

Yet viewing the practice of shifting "our daily bread" away from meat and animal products solely in terms of temperance risks missing the way that it affects our interdependent relationality since treatments of the vice of gluttony for instance tend to focus on the impact on individual health and interpersonal relations.[285] Reducing our meat consumption can

281. DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*, 143.
282. Haile, "Gluttony," 45-46.
283. DeYoung notes that like other capital vices, gluttony stems from pride. DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*, 156.
284. Ibid., 155-157. Aquinas argues that the act of fasting is directed to a three-fold purpose, including "in order that the mind may arise more freely to the contemplation of heavenly things..." Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 147, a. 1. The other purposes to which the act of fasting is virtuously directed are to counter lust (note that in his thinking, the consumption of meat leads to an increase in the production of semen, (see ibid., a. 8) and as penance for our sins.
285. I do not intend to argue that such a practice does not impact the other kinds of relationality that Keenan attends to his rethinking of the cardinal virtues. Following Augustine, DeYoung delineates how gluttony can be opposed to self-love by harming individual health, harmful to our relationships with others, and an obstacle to fulfilling our Christian vocation. In her examples, we see both relationships that would fall under the virtue of self-care (i.e., concern for bodily health) and fidelity in Keenan's framework (i.e., concerns with hospitality or with parents giving their children unhealthy food because they cannot resist that food themselves). As far

certainly be fruitfully approached from a more general ethical concern with consumerism, including virtue approaches that tend to converge on the virtue of temperance.[286] While how we relate interdependently is certainly connected to how we relate impartially, as recent Catholic social teaching on the environment has stressed that ecology and justice are two sides of the same coin,[287] it is nonetheless with the former aspect of relationality that this chapter is principally concerned. As Kenneth Himes notes, the fundamental papal critique of consumerism is one of human anthropology and a concern with what constitutes human well-being.[288] Here I want to maintain the focus on how acknowledging our interdependence, particularly as understood in ecological terms, is necessary for human flourishing.

These two points are supported by the auxiliary role that the virtue of temperance has played in Thomas Aquinas's development of the cardinal virtues. As Keenan has argued, Thomas's own framework of the cardinal virtues is hierarchical: "temperance is subordinate to fortitude and then to justice..."[289] According to Thomas, the subjective parts of a virtue are drawn from its species, which is defined in terms of its matter. For the virtue of temperance, the matter is "the pleasures of touch" which fall into two categories: the pleasures from nourishment and the pleasures of procreation. Since this chapter concerns food,

---

as justice, the concern for others could be expanded to justify, for example, restricting meat consumption to a level attainable by everyone on the planet, at least in terms of what Earth could sustain at current population levels, an approach that is at minimum suggested by Haile's treatment of gluttony mentioned above.

286. For an overview of theological and ethical concern with consumerism, see Kenneth R. Himes, "Consumerism and Christian Ethics," *Theological Studies* 68, no. 1 (2007): 132–153. Two virtue-based responses Himes discusses include the frugality of James Nash, which he frames as a subspecies of the virtue of temperance, and the retrieval of asceticism by Maria Antonaccio, the latter which Himes maps to the "virtuous middle of temperance." See ibid., 145-147, quote on page 147.

287. For instance, Pope Francis writes, "Today, however, we have to realize that a true ecological approach *always* becomes a social approach; it must integrate questions of justice in debates on the environment, so as to hear *both the cry of the earth and the cry of the poor*." Francis, *Laudato Si'*, no. 49.

288. Himes writes: "Consistently we see that modern Catholic social teaching develops its critique of consumerism on the basis of an anthropological claim about what constitutes the genuinely human and what values and practices serve authentic development. While not overlooking other forms of criticism such as care for the poor or environmental sustainability, the conviction about what constitutes human well-being is what generates the strongest papal criticism of consumerism." See Himes, "Consumerism and Christian Ethics," 153.

289. Keenan, "Proposing Cardinal Virtues," 719.

I mention here that pleasures derived from nourishment are divided into the categories of food and drink which are directed by abstinence (from meat) and sobriety (drinking properly), respectively.[290] The contrary vices to these parts are gluttony and drunkenness, respectively.[291]

Turning to the vice of gluttony gives us an illustration of how temperance continues to play a supporting role in developing what Keenan has identified as the cardinal virtues of justice, fidelity, and self-care. For instance, DeYoung draws on Augustine's advice, summarizing his position as "what or how much food we eat makes no difference whatsoever when it comes to virtue, as long as we are eating in a way that is appropriate to our health, the people we live with, and our vocation."[292] While DeYoung is not looking at the cardinal virtues here, these three categories roughly correspond to Keenan's virtues of self-care, fidelity, and justice, with some overlap between justice and fidelity in the categories of "the people we live with" and "vocation." DeYoung notes that eating cannot interfere with our health and be virtuous,[293] and that it is a social act and so "[h]ow and what and why we eat should reflect what is appropriate given the needs of others in our family and our community."[294] Underneath her identification of our willingness to deprive others for the sake of our pleasure as a possible symptom of gluttony[295] is the insight that the virtue of temperance plays a supporting role to the virtue of justice.[296] Similarly, Haile notes that the different modes of gluttony can negatively affect others in our community in a variety of ways. The gluttony of excess can impede ecological flourishing and excessive atten-

290. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 143, a. 1.
291. Thomas Aquinas treats abstinence from food and drink in *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 146, the vice of gluttony in q. 148, and the vice of sobriety in q. 149.
292. DeYoung, *Glittering Vices*, 150.
293. See ibid. Here she also notes that what is healthy will vary by person, and so cannot be determined simply by looking at the quantity or frequency with which a person eats. She gives the examples of a woman pregnant with twins, a professional athlete vs. a nonathlete, and a person who is diabetic vs. one who is hypoglycemic.
294. Ibid., 151.
295. Ibid.
296. She writes, "keeping our desires for this pleasure in order is necessary for keeping our relationships to God and other people in order." Ibid., 154.

tion to food can mean neglect of more important duties.[297] The gluttony of delicacy can threaten the flourishing of the community, including by directly conflicting with hospitality and by allocating disproportionate resources to the pleasure of eating relative to more important goods.[298] The gluttony of consumption can affect justice (i.e., not waiting to have seconds to be sure everyone has their fair share), negatively affect communal life (i.e., poor table manners or snacking in inappropriate circumstances), and undermine the community-building aspects of a shared meal (i.e., excessive snacking in private and not participating in shared meals).[299]

Following Keenan, I maintain that rather than identifying temperance itself as a cardinal virtue, the virtue of temperance is better understood as playing a supporting role in the cultivation of the cardinal virtues. Therefore, I find it unsurprising the temperance plays a role in supporting any practice undertaken to grow in the cardinal virtue of humility as argued in this dissertation. The inordinate pleasure taken in eating food, in this case meat, roughly corresponds to one reason people continue to eat high levels of meat discussed in the above section, whether because it is "nice"[300] or whether measured in the hedonism subscale of the meat attachment questionnaire.[301] It is supported by practices such as representations of food that have been described as "pornographic" due to how they are designed to arouse physical desire (for food) and, in some cases, have been sexualized.[302] Note that in this virtue framework, taking pleasure in eating meat is not wrong. The issue occurs when that pleasure is inordinate, leading us to continue to eat meat in quantities that are not in accordance with right reason. Given the role of livestock cultivation in greenhouse gas emissions and use of natural resources, I argue that any pleasure in eating animal products

297. Haile, "Gluttony," 40.
298. Ibid., 43-44.
299. Ibid., 47-49.
300. Recall Piazza et al., "Rationalizing Meat Consumption: The 4Ns."
301. The four questions of this subscale include: "A good steak is without comparison," "To eat meat is one of the good pleasures in life," "I love meals with meat," and "I'm a big fan of meat." Lentz et al., "Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours," 233.
302. Cudworth, "Seeing and Believing," 173-177.

which leads to eating unsustainable quantities of those products is disproportionate in an era of climate change.

Thus far, the virtue of temperance seems appropriate to govern the extent to which our dietary patterns include animal products versus plant products. However, inordinate pleasure taken in eating meat or other animal products does not seem to correlate as well with either the other "Ns" (necessary, normal, natural) or the other subscales of the meat attachment questionnaire,[303] much less with the fact that willingness to reduce meat consumption very clearly varies by gender. When applied to the current discussion, the entitlement subscale with its statements on our position in the food chain and right to eat meat pertains more directly to the truth of our place in creation than to the pleasure we do or do not derive from eating meat.[304] Some of the statements that comprise the dependence subscale could relate to the pleasure found in eating meat.[305] However this is hardly evident in each statement.[306] The final statement in this subscale, "If I couldn't eat meat I would feel weak"

303. In my estimation, the affinity subscale is not as relevant to this discussion, but for the sake of thoroughness, that subscale consists of four statements, all reverse coded for analyses (since greater agreement with the statement would indicate less attachment to meat). Those statements include: "I feel bad when I think of eating meat," "To eat meat is disrespectful towards life and the environment," "Meat reminds me of diseases," and "By eating meat I'm reminded of the death and suffering of animals." Lentz et al., "Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours," 233. Though the first statement indicates a lack of pleasure in eating meat, in general the first two seem to better correspond more to a framework in which any act of eating meat is considered wrong, perhaps on the grounds of animal rights, than the virtue framework being developed here. However, they certainly could be interpreted through the lens of the kinship of creation paradigm discussed in chapter 2. Similarly, the last statement tends in the direction of animal rights, although such an awareness could be argued to be part of the virtue of humility as knowing and valuing the truth of our place in the world (or conversely as an indication that the person has not accepted the place of death in our interdependent world). The statement relating to diseases pertains more to individual health concerns than either pleasure taken in eating meat or knowing the truth of our interdependence.

304. The three statements of the entitlement subscale are: "According to our position in the food chain, we have a right to eat meat," "To eat meat is an unquestionable right of every person," and "Eating meat is a natural and indisputable practice." ibid. These roughly correspond to the "natural" category of the four "Ns" as argued by Piazza. While this chapter has not argued that the act of eating meat is morally wrong, it has argued that meat eating needs to be considered in light of local (which in this case are global) conditions, which would place limits on the rights presented here.

305. For example, we might infer that someone who agrees with the statement "I would feel fine with a meatless diet" may not take much pleasure in eating meat, and conversely, someone who agrees that "If I was forced to stop eating meat I would feel sad" does take at least some pleasure in eating meat.

306. For instance, a person could agree that "Meat is irreplaceable in my diet" or "I can't picture myself not eating meat regularly" out of concerns for the pleasure found in eating meat, or for other concerns brought up in the previous section including difficulty learning to cook new recipes, issues of convenience or habit, the

is interesting both because it suggests pride and because such a statement, while commonplace in current U.S. culture, is by no means a given across time since the monastic view that meat was to be reserved for the sick and weak.

In short, while cultivating the virtue of temperance may help us discipline our desires, including the desire to eat meat, and assist us in identifying excess consumption, it does not address other obstacles to reducing our attachment to meat that are based more on our understanding of our place in the world including the naturalness of eating meat, the fact that eating large quantities of meat is considered socially normal in contemporary U.S. society, and the misconception that meat-intensive diets are necessary to human health. I agree that we need to become people who are more temperate in our consumption of animal products and that such temperance will aid any effort to become more just and more humble. Yet the fact that we tend to consider ourselves both dependent on meat and entitled to eat it in quantities that are clearly unsustainable (with little awareness that this is so) indicates that, more fundamentally, we do not adequately know and value the truth of our place in the world as interdependent beings.

4.4 Retrieving Friday Abstinence

The previous section focused on the cultivation of the cardinal virtue of humility at the individual level through the daily practice of eating. I have presented the adoption of a plant-based diet within a virtue framework, with anticipated benefits to character formation, rather than as a "solution" to climate change. Nonetheless, when it comes to national or global issues, neither individual lifestyle changes nor individual virtue replace the need to advocate for changes at the national and international levels.[307] From a virtue perspective,

influence of the preferences of others with whom one lives, health concerns, the concern about experiencing social prejudice, or the general perception that meat is socially central.

307. This theme came up in chapter 1. See for instance the concern of Teresia Hinga, Edward Obi, and Erin Lothes Biviano with energy poverty. Of the six principles from the United States Bishops' 1981 statement "Reflections on the Energy Crisis," the first three are more targeted toward the individual level, including

there are also remaining questions about how, in the absence of universally-applicable rules (i.e., in this case, do not eat red meat), to foster the prudence needed to discern an agent-specific mean. Hence one remaining issue is: even if we grant that making lifestyle changes may help form the character of the individual making them such that they become more aware and more willing to take other actions (including advocacy), we can still ask: how might the humble practice of a plant-based dietary pattern play out in a community setting?

As with the question of where to begin when considering ways to reduce our carbon footprint, so too there are multiple starting points for considering how to tie a humbly adopted, individually practiced, plant-based dietary pattern to a larger community. With a view to a Christian "thickening" of the cardinal virtue of humility, in this section, I intentionally focus on building upon resources within the Christian, particularly Roman Catholic, community. Nonetheless, there are other possible starting points. One worth mentioning that is not tied to a faith community and so may be suitable for "thickening" the cardinal virtue of humility in a secular U.S. context is Meatless Mondays. This campaign started in 2003 and offers free resources to support people in a variety of settings (including at home or school, at hospitals or in restaurants) in their efforts to cut out meat one day a week for reasons of individual health and sustainability.[308]

a commitment to the right to human life, a sense of responsibility towards the whole of creation, and a willingness to make sacrifices in our lifestyle. The second three move far beyond the level of the individual, including (1) a concern with justice that plays out at the structural level that (2) prioritizes the needs of the poor (involving not only private agencies but also federal, state and local authorities) and (3) enables broader participation in the decision-making process. See United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, "Reflections on the Energy Crisis, A Statement by the Committee on Social Development and World Peace," April 2, 1981, accessed August 3, 2022, https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/moral-principles-from-1981-energy-statement.pdf. Another way of approaching this issue is from the perspective of Catholic social ethics. Given that "Any adequate social ethic calls for a change of heart and a change of institutions," both structural change and change in individual practices are needed for Catholics to adequately respond to contemporary social problems. See Kristin E Heyer, Moral Traditions Series (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006), 95. Having analyzed the approaches of both J. Bryan Hehir and Michael J. Baxter, C.S.C., Heyer concludes that neither is sufficient on its own, nor admits of drawing simplistic correlations such as those between structural efforts and co-optation and individual efforts and countercultural witness.

308. See Meatless Monday, https://www.mondaycampaigns.org/meatless-monday.

I see untapped potential to bring Christians together for communal action, a point to which this section will shortly turn. It may not be immediately evident how a lifestyle change such as a shift in dietary habits would connect to the work of Christian social movements in building what Kevin Ahern calls "structures of grace,"[309] at least in the "public style" of action that works towards long-term goals within existing social structures[310] that might result in changes to the food system and consumer behavior on an international (or national) level. Nonetheless, when lifestyle changes are made after discernment and in collaboration with others, I think that they have the potential to "begin to create the alternative economy envisioned by the Christian utopia of grace."[311] In a culture where heavy meat consumption is the norm, those who go against this norm may be viewed as disruptive. This disruption can be not only beneficial to the conversion of the individual, but may also begin to show that an alternative is possible. Without denying that an individual's change in practice can have an influence on others,[312] this possible alternative is strengthened when individuals join together to create practices at various levels of community. As the previous section noted, the influence of others could either encourage or inhibit individuals attempting to reduce their meat consumption.

309. Ahern situates Christian social movements as an often-overlooked part of the Church's public engagement that can be understood as a response to the "globalization of indifference" condemned by Pope Francis, and can be understood as structures of grace. See Kevin Ahern, *Structures of Grace: Catholic Organizations Serving the Global Common Good* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015), 3-8.

310. Ibid., 18. Here Ahern is drawing on the distinction between public and prophetic styles of Christian collective action, cf. Heyer, *Prophetic and Public*. For an analysis of two contemporary representations of these two approaches that both notes the tensions and the ways each approach can inform the other, see Heyer, *Prophetic and Public*, 59-99.

311. See Jenkins, *The Future of Ethics*, 259.

312. Sallie McFague argues that the disconnection between right belief and right action is "radical disorientation" which can be taught in several ways, but especially through the lives of the saints. McFague, *Blessed are the Consumers*, 36. She lifts up the lives of John Woolman, Simone Weil, and Dorothy Day as examples. Aside from the general role that moral exemplars play in virtue ethics, recall from the previous section that the influence of others, such as other members of one's household, is one of the factors in a person's adoption (or not) of a plant-based diet. Here we might point to the formative potential for eating meals as a family. Julie Hanlon Rubio identifies the family or household as the context in which most Christians eat and posits "regular, shared evening meals" as her first guideline for a practice of just eating in the familial context. Hanlon Rubio, "Toward a Just Way of Eating," 371.

Second, one of the points that came up in the previous section was that the obstacles to adopting a humble, plant-based dietary practice include structural factors. While the previous section argued that these factors are not such that they preclude an individual from making progress in the adoption of this practice, this section returns to the theme of the fragility of virtue. Since structural factors mitigate the extent to which any individual can cultivate virtue in general, we can expect these factors to also negatively impact the cultivation of the virtue of humility through the practice of choosing to adopt a plant-based dietary pattern. Some of the factors identified in the second section that would fall into this category include the perception of meat as socially central and a lack of cooking skills to prepare new meals that do not center around meat. The influence of advertising was also noted,[313] and to that we could add the broader impact of consumerism as a way of life in the United States, which shapes choices and culture.[314]

Current meat consumption in the United States can be considered a structure (of vice) both because exceptionally high average meat consumption is an existing practice and because there is a value-laden narrative that supports this practice (recall the association of

313. For an additional example of how advertising and the food environment can affect individual food choices, see Peter Browning, "The Global Obesity Epidemic: Shifting the Focus from Individuals to the Food Industry," *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 1 (2017): 167-168. While Browning's concern here is not with meat, his argument from a liberationist perspective that calls for personal responsibility with respect to food choices (in this case consumption of foods that lead to higher-than-average weight) are unjust because they do not attend to economic forces (among other reasons) would also be expected to resonate with other food choices, such as the choice of meat in a social context that is marked by opportunity and incentive to eat meat.

314. For an overview of consumerism and Christian ethics, see Himes, "Consumerism and Christian Ethics." See especially pages 136-140 for social science perspectives on consumerism (understood as a way of life) in the United States. Some developments that are particularly relevant here include the increased presence of advertising and marketing in public spaces, the fact that food preparation and grocery shopping, among other areas, have experienced increased commodification, the recognition that goods can help people relate to each other, and the symbolic importance of different goods (and the practice of branding). Also, since dietary patterns overlap with health concerns, it is worth mentioning that one trend identified in the late twentieth century is a focus on an individual's well-being, particularly framed in terms of health and fitness. See p. 141, cf. Matthew Hilton, "The Legacy of Luxury: Moralities of Consumption since the 18th Century," *Journal of Consumer Culture* 4 (2004): 118. Also, there is now growing attention to the connections between consumption and the environment.

meat with wealth, masculinity, and independence).[315] As Daly concludes at the end of his recent book, Catholic organizations both have resources to dedicate to transforming structural vices and the obligation to do so.[316] There is a benefit to being part of a community that encourages each other, and we could think of ways in which a community that intentionally decenters meat could help begin to address some of these structural issues, such as by sharing knowledge and equipment or by offering spaces in which meals are shared that are not based around meat.

In this section then, the focus moves from the individual (or potentially household) level to that of a structural practice within a community of faith, for reasons that are both practical and in keeping with a balanced approach to virtue that recognizes its limits. Keeping the focus on dietary patterns, I now address the question: how might the Catholic Church help foster the virtue of humility in the United States? Specifically, I take up calls to rethink the Catholic penitential practice of abstaining from meat on Fridays. First, I look at relatively recent shifts in the practice of abstaining from meat in the contemporary U.S. context. Second, I address the fact that abstaining from meat has long been part of the Christian tradition. I conclude by suggesting that the practice of Friday abstinence has the potential to be reinvigorated when understood not solely in terms of penance but also as a way to cultivate the virtue of humility in an era marked by climate change.

315. For the underlying definition of a structure, which can be of vice or of virtue, of which these two aspects (practice and value-laden narrative) are part, see Daniel J. Daly, "Structures of Virtue and Vice," *New Blackfriars* 92, no. 1039 (2011): 355.
316. Daly, "The Output Power of the Structures of Virtue and Vice," 212.

4.4.1 Abstaining from meat in the United States Catholic context

While the decline in participation in the sacrament of penance is frequently mentioned,[317] the decline of other penitential practices popular in the United States into the 1960s receives comparatively little attention.[318] Yet periodic abstinence from meat remains a precept of the Catholic Church and is codified in Canon Law.[319] According to the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: "The fourth precept ('You shall observe the days of fasting and abstinence established by the Church') ensures the times of ascesis and penance which prepare us for the liturgical feasts and help us acquire mastery over our instincts and freedom of heart" (no. 2043). With respect to Canon Law, the yearlong practice of fasting and abstinence on Fridays is treated in canons 1249-1253.[320] Canon 1249 treats the need for some common penitential observance and 1250 identifies Fridays and the season of Lent as the penitential days and times in the Church. Canon 1251 states "Abstinence from meat, or from some other food as determined by the Episcopal Conference, is to be observed on all

317. This has been a concern of the global Catholic Church for decades. For example, in his 1984 post-synodal apostolic exhortation *Reconciliation and Penance*, John Paul II expresses concern that the sacrament of confession is being undermined by multiple factors. See John Paul II, *Reconciliation and Penance* (December 2, 1984), no. 28. Far from being a phenomenon of "lapsed" Catholics, in the United States, this decline is evident among Catholics that regularly attend Mass. A survey in the Washington archdiocese in 1987 revealed that only 25 percent of respondents (97 percent of whom reported attending Mass at least weekly) participated in the sacrament of confession more than once or twice a year. See Marjorie Hyer, "Sharp Decline Found Among Catholics Here Going to Confession," *The Washington Post*, 1987. According to a 2015 Pew Research report on Catholic attitudes to non-traditional families, fewer than half (43 percent) of Catholics go to confession at least once a year, broken down as follows: seven percent at least once a month, fourteen percent several times a year and twenty-one percent once a year. See Pew Research Center, *U.S. Catholics Open to Non-Traditional Families* (February 9, 2015), 45.

318. Maria C. Morrow both notes this relative inattention and argues that other popular penitential practices, especially abstinence from meat on Fridays and fasting throughout Lent, offered social support for the sacrament of penance and so it is not surprising that both declined concurrently. Maria C. Morrow, *Sin in the Sixties* (Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016), 4-12.

319. There are five precepts of the Church, which are "meant to guarantee to the faithful the very necessary minimum in the spirit of prayer and moral effort, in the growth in love of God and neighbor" (*Catechism of the Catholic Church*, no. 2041). The first three precepts include attending Mass on Sundays and holy days of obligation, yearly confession of sins, and yearly reception of the Eucharist during Easter (no. 2042). The fifth precept is assisting with the needs of the Church (no. 2043). Fasting and abstinence fall under the fourth precept.

320. These canons constitute chapter two (titled "Days of Penance") under "Sacred Times" (which is found in the third part of Book IV: Function of the Church). Unless otherwise stated, all references to Canon Law in this chapter are taken from *The Code of Canon Law* (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983), `https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html`.

Fridays, unless a solemnity should fall on a Friday." The same canon also preserves the need to fast and abstain on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday. Canon 1252 identifies who is bound by the laws of abstinence and fasting,[321] and canon 1253 outlines the discretion of local episcopal conferences.

In the United States, the decline of the once common, yearlong practice of abstinence from meat on Fridays can be directly traced to events that occurred in 1966. On February 17 of that year, recognizing the need for reform in the area of penitential practice, Pope Paul VI issued *Paenitemini*, an apostolic constitution on penance. In this document, penitential practice was affirmed to be obligatory but was largely placed under the guidance of the bishops of a country.[322] Later that year, the National Conference of Catholic Bishops (NCCB) in the United States issued their *Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence*. This statement affirms that all Christians are sinners and have an obligation to do penance and identifies the three liturgical seasons of penance as Advent, Lent, and the vigils of certain feasts.[323] However, of these, the bishops noted that only Lent has "retained its ancient appeal to the penitential spirit of our people."[324] In light of *Paenitemini*, the bishops of the United States "preserve" the tradition of not eating meat on Fridays during Lent[325] and maintain that abstinence from meat (along with fasting in quantity of food consumed)

321. Abstinence from meat is considered obligatory for those who are fourteen years old and older. Fasting is considered obligatory from the ages of eighteen to sixty.

322. Pope Paul VI writes, "To recall and urge all the faithful to the observance of the divine precept of penitence, the Apostolic See intends to reorganize penitential discipline with practices more suited to our times. It is up to the bishops—gathered in their episcopal conferences—to establish the norms which, in their pastoral solicitude and prudence, and with the direct knowledge they have of local conditions, they consider the most opportune and efficacious." Paul VI, *Paenitemini: Apostolic Constitution on Fast and Abstinence* (February 17, 1966), III, C. However, this episcopal discretion is bounded. The constitution affirms for example that there is an obligation to penance for all the faithful and that Lent remains a penitential season with a special emphasis on Fridays and Ash Wednesday. However, local conferences of bishops can substitute the practices of abstinence and fasting (partially or completely) with other forms of penance. Ibid., VI, B.

323. See National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence (November 27, 1966)* (Washington, DC: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1996), nos. 1, 4.

324. Ibid., no. 10. In the section on Advent, the bishops note that in practice the season of Advent had become less penitential and now anticipates the joy of Christmas (nos. 5-9). With respect to the vigils of feasts, they note that there is no longer an obligation to fast, but still encourage voluntary preparation through self-denial, prayer, and fasting (no. 17).

325. Ibid., no. 13.

is gravely binding on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday.[326] For other Lenten weekdays, the bishops recommend a series of voluntarily chosen practices, including self-imposed fasting, daily Mass attendance, giving to the poor, study of Scripture, acts of mercy, traditional Lenten devotions such as the Stations of the Cross and the rosary, and self-denial.[327] Furthermore, while the U.S. bishops reaffirm Friday as "a special day of penitential observance throughout the year,"[328] they "terminate the traditional law of abstinence binding under pain of sin, as the sole prescribed means of observing Friday," although they list that practice as one they hope will continue to be practiced freely.[329]

The U.S. bishops' expression of "hope that the Catholic community will ordinarily continue to abstain from meat by free choice as formerly we did in obedience to Church law"[330] did not come to fruition as Catholics largely abandoned the practice and further, did not substitute other penitential practices on Fridays.[331] Morrow concludes that in part this was due to the erosion of social support for penitential practices. She writes:

326. NCCB, *Penance and Abstinence*, no. 12. There was confusion at the time as to whether abstaining from meat on Fridays during Lent was still considered obligatory under pain of mortal sin. For an example of contrasting positions taken in *America Magazine* by the editors in the Current Comment section on December 10, 1966 and a response in Letters to the Editor on January 7, 1967, see Morrow, *Sin in the Sixties*, 179. While the U.S. bishops preserved the tradition of abstinence from meat on Fridays during Lent, there are nonetheless subtle differences in how this topic is treated compared to the abstinence and fasting of Ash Wednesday. The fast and abstinence of Ash Wednesday and Good Friday is identified as an "obligation," whereas the abstinence from meat on Fridays during Lent is described as a traditional practice from which the bishops express confidence that "no Catholic Christian will lightly hold himself excused" (no. 13). While individuals cannot easily excuse themselves from the practice, this does not preclude dioceses from offering dispensations in exceptional circumstances, as the Archdiocese of Boston did for Good Friday in 2020 for those who were not able to acquire meat-free foods due to hardships imposed by the COVID-19 pandemic. Other dioceses also offered dispensations from the requirement to abstain from meat on Lenten Fridays during this time. See Catholic News Agency, "Amid Coronavirus Outbreak, Dioceses Permit Meat on Fridays During Lent," *National Catholic Register*, March 27, 2020, accessed July 18, 2022, https://www.ncregister.com/news/amid-coronavirus-outbreak-dioceses-permit-meat-on-fridays-during-lent.

327. National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Penance and Abstinence*, nos. 14-15.

328. Ibid., no. 22

329. Ibid., no. 24

330. Ibid.

331. Morrow, *Sin in the Sixties*, 184-86. While such a development may seem unsurprising from our standpoint, Morrow helpfully points out that the statement was issued in a context of "the close-knit Catholic community" in which "the penitential dimension of Catholic life was firmly established" and amid theological concerns with freedom and the responsibility and maturity of the laity, along with changes to the liturgy which the bishops thought would renew the sense of penance. See ibid., 167. The changes were noted outside the Catholic community as well; within two years, there were concerns that these statements by the Pope and

> The move to make penance depend upon the choice of the individual diminished the context of community solidarity and social support, hence relying upon a person's intention and willpower to execute on the intention of making satisfaction for sin. Furthermore, the reduction of penitential days lessened the habitual nature of fast and abstinence. Penance like that associated with Ash Wednesday or Good Friday now stood out as unusual, rather than as one of many penitential days of the Catholic year.[332]

Whereas Friday abstinence had been a marker of Catholic identity, now Friday abstinence became associated with Lent.[333] While this shift may be considered detrimental from a perspective of cultivating the penitential dimension of Catholic life, it remains a popular practice among Catholics. A 2008 survey by The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA) showed that a majority (60 percent) of Catholics refrain from eating meat on Lenten Fridays.[334]

Recently, the morality of consuming meat has not only been explored from a Christian perspective in academic circles,[335] but calls for questioning whether Christians should

---

the U.S. bishops were having a negative economic impact on the commercial fishing industry. See Frederick W. Bell, "The Pope and the Price of Fish," *The American Economic Review* 58, no. 5 (1968): 1346–1350.

332. Morrow, *Sin in the Sixties*, 189.

333. Ibid., 170.

334. As with many other practices, there is variation based on the frequency of Mass attendance. However, in this case, the difference between weekly attenders and at least monthly attenders is not pronounced (89 percent vs. 81 percent) vs. 41 percent of those who attend a few times a year. The Center for Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), *Most Catholics Abstain from Eating Meat on Fridays During Lent*, March 11, 2008, 2 of 4. A 2015 report by Pew Research Center did not ask about abstinence from meat in particular but revealed that almost half of Catholics and a full third of cultural Catholics reported giving something up or doing something extra for Lent. See Pew Research Center, *U.S. Catholics Open to Non-Traditional Families*, 46.

335. For instance, see David L. Clough, "Consuming Animal Creatures: The Christian Ethics of Eating Animals," *Studies in Christian Ethics* 30, no. 1 (2017): 30–44, or the discussion prompted by Barclay, "Food, Christian Identity and Global Warming: A Pauline Call for a Christian Food Taboo." See David Grumett, "Eat Less Meat: A New Ecological Imperative for Christian Ethics?," *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 54–62, Tim Gorringe, "Rise Peter! Kill and Eat: A Response to John Barclay," *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 63–69 and John M.G. Barclay, "Meat, a Damaging Extravagance: A Response to Grumett and Gorringe," *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 70–73.

rethink how much meat they eat have appeared in Christian magazines.[336] The Catholic Climate Movement challenged Catholics to try to eat only plant-based meals or add a day of plant-based meals during Lent 2019 and identified eating more plant-based food as one of several healing actions in their Lenten Reflection 2020.[337] The Laudato Si' Action Platform, a joint effort of the Vatican and several international Catholic organizations, offers seven goals for action guidance.[338] Increasing the consumption of plant-based foods and decreasing meat consumption appears under "sustainable dietary practices" under the goal of adopting sustainable lifestyles.[339] Bryan Cones and Doug Girardot go further, suggest-

336. John W. Miller, "Is It Time for Catholics to Stop Eating Meat?," *America Magazine*, December 7, 2021. Miller notes that the context for this rethinking is largely related to questions of ecology and food system sustainability, and that Catholic approaches to the question vary, with some more concerned with animal rights and current meat production methods, others framing it in terms of Christian pacifism, and still others primarily as a response to environmental concerns regarding climate change and water use. See also Stephanie Clary, "Can One Person's Dietary Decisions Affect the Common Good?," *U.S. Catholic*, June 8, 2020, accessed July 18, 2022, `https://uscatholic.org/articles/202006/should-catholics-eat-less-meat/`. In 2019, the editors of The Christian Century drew attention to the practice of burning Amazonian rainforests to clear land for beef production and to the fact that current beef consumption levels are unsustainable. "Amazon Burns to Feed the World's Beef Habit," *The Christian Century* 136, no. 20 (2019): 7. While not advocating for a particular food rule, David Grumett does lift up the potential of food rules in general to help us recognize the links between food practices and the common good as well as our relationship with God. He also notes that abstention challenges the logic of consumption. David Grumett, "A Christian diet: The Case for Food Rules," *The Christian Century* 127, no. 7 (2010): 36-37.

337. See the Eating Simply Lent 2019 campaign, https://catholicclimatemovement.global/lent-2019/. Eating more plant-based food appeared as an option for taking healing action both as part of cultivating the ecological virtue of humility in response to the ecological sin of pride in week one, and as part of cultivating the ecological virtue of temperance in response to the ecological sin of gluttony in week four. See their Lenten Reflection 2020: *Repenting of Ecological Sin and Cultivating Ecological Virtues* in Google Docs https://drive.google.com/file/d/15YBNBoguXqRJEkdCmT0pYPGjtY09OVER/view.

338. See their website, https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/laudato-si-goals/, accessed July 18, 2022. For a brief overview of its origins and its potential to create "structures of solidarity" see Daly, "The Output Power of the Structures of Virtue and Vice," 214.

339. See https://laudatosiactionplatform.org/laudato-si-goals/. More generally, "sustainable agriculture" is noted under the goal of responding to the cry of the Earth. Among the multimedia resources offered by the site are several having to do with food, including reports calling for paradigm shifts in both food and energy systems and suggestions for houses of worship and religious communities. For instance: Giulia Bondi and François Delvaux, *The Climate Urgency: Setting Sail for a New Paradigm* (Brussels: CIDS, 2018); Stacey Kennealy, *Repairing Eden: Sustainable, Healthy Food Opportunities for Religious Institutions*, (Highland Park, NJ: Green Faith, 2009); Australian Religious Response to Climate Change, *Food - A Gift from Mother Nature* and Joshua Karliner and Robin Guenther, The Global Green and Healthy Hospitals, *A Comprehensive Environmental Health Agenda for Hospitals and Health Systems Around the World*, October 12, 2011. There are also at least two YouTube videos listed: Global Footprint Network, *Food and the Ecological Footprint*, July 31, 2018, and Sisters of St. Joseph of Peace, Care of Creation & Climate Change Core Group, *Carbon Part Two*, Part Two of the Carbon Footprint 101 movie, March 31, 2010.

ing that it is time for Catholics to once again abstain from all animal products throughout the 40 days of Lent,[340] and arguing that we should resume the practice of abstaining from meat every Friday,[341] respectively.

4.4.2 The case for revitalizing the Friday fast

Before closing this chapter with the suggestion for a revitalization of the Friday fast, I wish to make a couple of caveats. First, I am not interested in evaluating the U.S. bishops' decision to remove the obligation to Friday abstinence in 1966. There were legitimate critiques of penitential practice at the time as overly legalistic and too focused on exterior actions without awareness or attention either to interior dispositions or other important aspects of the faith, like the call to love one's neighbor.[342] Second, I am not arguing for a simple retrieval of the practice as found in the United States prior to 1966. The practice at that time was understood almost exclusively in terms of penance, whereas here I will argue for a more inclusive understanding. Third, there are reasons for the U.S. bishops and other pastoral leaders to exercise caution around how they promote dietary-related practices. For instance, practices of fasting can obscure harmful eating patterns that are complicated by diet culture,[343] and the application of the vices of gluttony and sloth may

340. Bryan Cones, "Fast Break: Stop Eating the World for Lent," *U.S. Catholic*, February 23, 2009, accessed July 19, 2022, `https://uscatholic.org/articles/200902/fast-break-stop-eating-the-world-for-lent/`.

341. Doug Girardot, "It's Time for Catholics to Go Back to No Meat on Every Friday (Not Just During Lent)," *America Magazine*, August 23, 2021. For an example of a similar call that appeared in a Catholic magazine that tends more conservative, see Brian A. Graebe, "An Examination of Friday Penance," *New Oxford Review* 76, no. 7 (2009): 26. Here the concern is developed in terms of penance and Catholic identity rather than in response to the ecological crisis.

342. Maria Morrow identifies some of the contemporary critiques as well as major shifts in theological focus at that time, mentioning Bernard Häring, John Ford, and Gerald Kelly. For broader theological trends, see Morrow, *Sin in the Sixties*, 175-77, 187. For some examples of the criticisms that a focus on abstaining from meat on Fridays diverted attention from neighbor love, see ibid., 181-184. While Morrow notes that Ford and Kelly didn't explore penance specifically, my own view would draw from Häring's work, with his concerns about obedience and his emphasis on freedom and the maturity of the lay Catholic (vs. a freedom found through obedience).

343. Jessica Coblentz, "Diet Culture Complicates Lenten Fasting," *U.S. Catholic*, February 17, 2021, accessed July 18, 2022, `https://uscatholic.org/articles/202102/diet-cultures-complicates-lenten-fasting/`.

encourage discrimination based on body size while simultaneously and incorrectly placing the burden of change on individuals rather than the food industry.[344]

Abstinence from meat in the Catholic tradition

While Christians have often connected the willingness to eat any food to orthodoxy in doctrine,[345] and have also been willing to modify food restrictions based on concerns about hospitality or in response to local conditions,[346] food restrictions in terms of kind or quantity of food, as well as the circumstances (time or place) of eating also have deep roots in the Christian tradition, with red meat the most commonly restricted food.[347] David Grumett and Rachel Muers identify abstention from red meat as a key component of early Christian discipline, writing, "Yet the developments which occurred during the first millennium established a distinctive Christian dietary discipline, the key requirements of which were abstention from red meat and general moderation."[348] Abstinence from meat continues today primarily during Lent.[349]

344. See Browning, "The Global Obesity Epidemic."

345. See "Community, Orthodoxy and Heresy," chapter five in Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 89-106. Permitting or requiring the eating of meat was often practiced in a context of opposition to sects such as the Manicheans, Pythagoreans, Eustathians, Priscillianists, or later in the medieval period, Cathars. For example, Augustine was vulnerable to critiques of being a Manichaean due to his past involvement in that sect and there are reports of permitting or even obliging bishops and monks in the 380s to eat meat on Sundays to root out followers of Manicheanism. See ibid., 88-95. While Origen argued that Christians ought not to eat meat, he was careful to show that his reasoning wasn't Pythagorean (as the Pythagoreans abstained from meat but also believed in reincarnation). See ibid., 95. Later, during the Spanish Inquisition, people who observed dietary rules consistent with Jewish dietary rules were considered 'Judiazers' and sheriffs could enter houses to check that food was being prepared with lard (typically made from pork fat) rather than oil. See ibid., 102-03. See also Teresa Shaw, "Vegetarianism, Heresy, and Asceticism in Late Ancient Christianity," in *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, T&T Clark theology (London: T&T Clark, 2008), who argues that by the fourth century, the distinction between heresy and appropriate abstinence from foods had hardened into rhetorical categories that are still reproduced today.

346. See notes 242-244.

347. David Grumett, *Christian Food Restrictions*, 2015, page 2 of 4.

348. Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 35.

349. As noted previously, Roman Catholics are expected to abstain from meat on Lenten Fridays. However, Wednesdays and Saturdays have also been traditional days of abstinence, with Orthodox Christians sometimes refraining from eating meat on Wednesdays. Furthermore, there are four seasons of abstinence recognized by Orthodox Christians. Grumett, *Christian Food Restrictions*, 2 of 4.

While abstaining from consuming meat (or animal products) has long been tied to penance, that connection is only part of the Catholic tradition. As mentioned in the previous section, influential Catholic thinkers such as Aquinas tied the act of fasting (as the act of the virtue of abstinence) not only to penance but also to both avoiding sin (by combating lust) and to raising the mind to the contemplation of God.[350] John Berkman identifies three categories of reasons that Catholics have traditionally abstained from meat: medicinal, ascetic, and eschatological.[351] In the early Church, abstinence from meat was considered helpful in resisting two major sins: gluttony and lust.[352] Yet the practice also developed with a view toward the prelapsarian, Edenic state and the realization of the Kingdom of God.[353] Here it is worth noting that while early Christian eucharistic meals did include some variety (such as oils, vegetables, salt, honey, olives, and milk), there is no indication that they included meat.[354] As Michael Northcott notes, in the early Church, "The Eucharist was a vegetarian meal."[355] Nor does the celebration of the Eucharist today include meat; to imagine otherwise would be jarring.[356]

350. Aquinas, *Summa Theologiae* II-II, q. 147, a. 1. For the previous mention see note 279.
351. Berkman, "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition."
352. Ibid., 176-179. See also Shaw, "Vegetarianism, Heresy, and Asceticism."
353. See Berkman, "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition," 179-182. While linking vegetarianism to an Edenic diet is sometimes criticized as a denial of or escape from embodiment and the reality of death, Grumett and Muers caution that such is not necessarily the case. Rather there are different ways of being embodied and of living out our relationships with nonhuman creation, and discernment makes the difference between a premature attempt to initiate the eschaton and obedient, if countercultural witness. See Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 137-138.
354. Berkman, "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition," 181-182.
355. Northcott, "Eucharistic Eating," 241. Note both that the Eucharist was a meal in which the poor were to be welcomed along with the wealthy and that sacrifice of animals was understood to end with the crucifixion of Christ. Northcott also draws attention to the fact that many early Christians also avoided wine, which was associated with wealth in imperial Rome, and centered the Eucharist around bread and water. The custom of mixing water with wine emerged after Constantine. See ibid., 238-241.
356. Stephen Webb points out that while the Last Supper was a Passover meal, there is no record in the gospel that lamb was served, that while vegetarian, the food of the eucharist still "embodies the theme of dying and rising" and suggests that more attention to the absence of meat in the Eucharist would have theological implications in terms of challenging us to live more peacefully and in anticipation of the Kingdom of God without compromising the theme of Christian freedom. See Stephen H. Webb, "Whatever Happened to the Sin of Gluttony? Or: Why Christians Do Not Serve Meat with the Eucharist," *Encounter* 58, no. 3 (1997): 248-250.

Furthermore, fasting and the practice of abstinence from meat have long been associated with charity.[357] This understanding continues in the United States today. For example, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has run CRS Rice Bowl since 1975, encouraging Catholics to unite the practices of fasting and abstinence from meat, prayer, and almsgiving in a concrete way.[358] Specifically, participants are encouraged to donate the money saved from not eating meat on Fridays (estimated at 3 USD per person per meal).[359] To encourage participation, they offer resources including meatless recipes from around the world which are linked to solidarity.[360]

Friday abstinence to cultivate humility

I suggest that retrieving a practice of year-round Friday abstinence from meat can be helpful both from the perspectives of acknowledging sin and cultivating the virtue of humility. By linking the practice more specifically with "an inner attitude of 'conversion,' that is to say of condemnation of and detachment from sin and of striving toward God,"[361] abstaining from meat on every Friday of the year would provide multiple opportunities for us to recognize how our sins, including our greed and indifference, are harming God's good creation.

357. Pope Paul VI notes that in the Old Testament, "One goes without food or gives away his property (fasting is generally accompanied not only by prayer but also by alms) even after sins have been forgiven and independently of a request for graces." See Paul VI, *Paenitemini*, I. Physical discipline, including fasting, has several ends: self-incrimination, humility with respect to God, turning toward God, greater understanding of the divine, or preparing oneself to pray or to encounter God. Paul VI goes on to link penance to the kingdom of God proclaimed by Jesus Christ, noting that entering the kingdom requires "metanoia" and that this "change of heart" is all-encompassing, an "intimate and total change and renewal of the entire man—of all of his opinions, judgments and decisions—which takes place in him in the light of the sanctity and charity of God, the sanctity and charity which were manifested to us in the Son and communicated fully." Ibid.

358. See https://www.crsricebowl.org/about/ricebowl-faq, accessed July 18, 2022. They estimate that 14,000 parishes and schools in the United States participated in the program in 2020.

359. See their website: https://www.crsricebowl.org/recipe, accessed July 18, 2022.

360. For instance, the website reads, "Preparing meatless meals—like the ones we collect from countries around the world—is a great Lenten activity for families, offering an experience of global solidarity." https://www.crsricebowl.org/how-to-practice-lent, accessed July 18, 2022. Other resources include the cardboard box to collect donations, a calendar for families, and encouraging stories from CRS's efforts around the world.

361. Paul VI, *Paenitemini*, I.

Building on the links between abstaining from meat and charity and solidarity, I suggest that it is also appropriate to connect meat abstention to the virtue of humility.[362]

Here I do not argue that we ought to do away with the penitential dimension of abstinence from meat entirely. As noted in chapter 1, the sins of indifference or thoughtlessness as sources of the ecological crisis tend to be identified more frequently by theologians writing outside of a dominant-culture North American context. I remain concerned that in the United States, we both disproportionately focus on weakness rather than our capacity in response to climate change and that our bishops tend to elide the themes of sacrifice or sin when discussing the ways Catholics relate and ought to relate to creation or respond to current ecological crises.[363] In light of my concern about how the sins of pride and self-deprecation can lead to indifference and my argument that the cardinal virtue of humility can assist us in both identifying indifference and rejecting the isolation that enables it,[364] I am hopeful that a renewed practice of regular abstention from meat can prompt reflection upon how the ecological problems we are now facing and will soon face stem from our position of relative strength. This position of strength includes a lifestyle in which daily meat consumption is the norm, and demands an acknowledgment of the ways in which our relationships with others, including non-human others, are harmed by our sins.

However, I do not suggest simply reinstating the practice of Friday abstinence that was prevalent in the mid-twentieth century in the United States. Even were such an idea feasible, this practice was understood almost exclusively in terms of penance. The obligation was abolished in a pastoral statement that linked penance and abstinence from its title and in a section dedicated to why Catholics have set aside Friday specifically for penitential practices that identifies participating in the sufferings of Christ as "the heart of the tradition

362. Given the way in which meat eating has been sexualized, there may also be a role for revisiting the connection between meat abstention and combating lust, but that is beyond the scope of this chapter.
363. See chapter 1, pages 13-14, 17-19.
364. See chapter 3, pages 276-284.

of abstinence from meat on Friday."[365] In practice, it was also frequently associated with the consumption of fish rather than plant-based foods.[366]

I argue that solely focusing on the penitential aspect of abstaining from meat is problematic from pragmatic, historical, and virtue perspectives. Pragmatically, if adopting a plant-based diet never becomes easier, it will be more difficult to sustain. An exclusive focus on the hardship of refraining from eating meat obscures the benefits one may experience over time. Historically, abstaining from meat in the Christian tradition has been done not only for penitential reasons but also for reasons of Christian identity and discipline, as well as expressing an eschatological hope and anticipation of the realization of the Kingdom of God in which "the wolf shall live with the lamb."[367] While this last rationale has not been treated in any depth in this chapter, I do not want to lose the connection between turning *away* from sin and turning *toward* God, whether that connection emphasizes the radical peace of the Kingdom of God or focuses more on the opportunities meat abstention brings for practicing solidarity, charity, and humility today. While acknowledgment of sin is key to the cultivation of a Christian "thickening" of the cardinal virtue of humility, it is not sufficient to cultivate the virtue. Hence, I maintain that any retrieval of Friday absti-

365. The title of the fourth section is "Christ Died for Our Salvation on Friday" and the first paragraph in this section reads: "Gratefully remembering this, Catholic peoples from Catholic peoples from time immemorial have set apart Friday for special penitential observance by which they gladly suffer with Christ that they may one day be glorified with Him. This is the heart of the tradition of abstinence from meat on Friday where that tradition has been observed in the holy Catholic Church." National Conference of Catholic Bishops, *Penance and Abstinence*, no. 18.

366. The abstinence from meat during Lent continues to be associated with fish. See for example Patti Maguire Armstrong, "Lent on the Menu: What Catholic America's Having for (Friday) Dinner," *National Catholic Register*, February 28, 2020, accessed August 9, 2022, https://www.ncregister.com/features/lent-on-the-menu-what-catholic-america-s-having-for-friday-dinner. Armstrong notes, among other things, that the Filet-O-Fish sandwich was created for Catholics in 1963. Other national chains (such as A & W Restaurant and Arby's) have also added fish options, at least during Lent, as have many local restaurants. As noted in section one, increasing fish consumption is not the focus of this chapter, in part because of questions of sustainability as well as access. For a recent treatment on how fish consumption may or may not support a simplicity that is open to charity, see Jim McDermott, "Catholics: Stop eating fancy fish on Fridays during Lent," *America Magazine*, March 4, 2022, accessed August 9, 2022, https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2022/03/04/lent-catholic-fish-sacrifice-242497.

367. See Berkman, "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition," 181, cf. Isaiah 11:6-9.

nence from meat as a humble practice in the U.S. today needs to account for how meat consumption influences our ecological relationships.

From a virtue perspective, while reducing our consumption of animal products to a more sustainable level may be extremely difficult and uncomfortable in the short term, and while I have argued that there is potential for that discomfort to prompt conversion, my argument has rested in part on the premise that a mostly plant-based diet is generally conducive to human flourishing. Part of the challenge then is decoupling relatively recent trends in high meat consumption (which I argue would fall under Biviano's term "ecocidal excess"[368] and are part of a glamorized but ecologically "lethal lifestyle"[369]) from our vision of the "good life" such that refraining from consuming animal products does not automatically and always feel like a deprivation or sacrifice.

Here a note is needed about hospitality, the concern for which has tempered practices that involve food restriction from early in the Christian tradition. Just as it is time to re-envision the "good life" as not predicated on high levels of meat consumption, I suggest that it is likewise time to separate our practice of hospitality from an underlying mindset that meat is always necessary to fulfill the fundamental components of hospitality: welcome and generosity.[370] First, we may find that plant-based options will be welcomed by our guests. For example, offering meatless options is a simple way to be more welcoming to guests who follow kosher or halal dietary rules. Given the history of how Christians have tried to eliminate Jewish food practices from the public sphere, have at times used food rules to not only socially and economically isolate Jews but also to perpetuate the idea that the Jewish people were unclean, and how pork consumption was framed in Nazi

368. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 89.
369. Ibid., xxvi.
370. Lúcás Chan identifies welcome and generosity as the basic components of hospitality and the fourth quality of hospitality as exercised by Boaz in the Book of Ruth. See Lúcás Chan SJ, "The Hebrew Bible and the Discourse on Migration: A Reflection on the Virtue of Hospitality in the Book of Ruth," *Asian Horizons* 8, no. 4 (2014): 674.

ideology,[371] we should consider how removing meat may foster inclusion and incorporation,[372] in a religiously plural society in which non-Christians are often marginalized and threatened.[373] Second, even if our guests may be surprised or disappointed that meat is not served (or our hosts surprised by us not eating meat), absent other considerations, this is insufficient to deem the serving or consumption of plant-based foods inhospitable. The virtue of hospitality is understood to be risky for both host and guest, an encounter across difference.[374] Serving simpler (less resource intensive) and less expensive fare could be seen as

371. See Grumett and Muers, *Theology on the Menu*, 100-105. The authors also note that in the late twelfth century, Christians began considering Muslims (then known as Saracens) "Judaizers" in part because they observed food rules.

372. This terminology comes from James Keenan's analysis of Jesuit hospitality, which is practiced in "its sending and not in its receiving," which stems from a self-image that includes being called to welcome others, and which finds its model in a refugee camp rather than a monastery. He writes, "We want those on the margins to be incorporated, those excluded to be included, those perishing to be rescued." James F. Keenan, "Jesuit Hospitality?," in *Promise Renewed: Jesuit Higher Education for a New Millennium* (Chicago, IL: Jesuit Way, 1999), 240. Chan also identifies incorporation as the goal of hospitality (and one of seven qualities of Boaz's hospitality) in Chan, "Hospitality in the Book of Ruth," 673.

373. For one example of the marginal or precarious status of non-Christians in the United States today, consider that over half (54 percent) of religiously-motivated hate crimes in 2020 were against Jews (who make up 2.4 percent of the U.S. population). For religiously-motivated hate crime statistics, see Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Hate Crime in the United States Incident Analysis*, 2020, accessed August 5, 2022, `https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime`. The percentage was calculated by dividing the 683 anti-Jewish hate crimes by the 1,244 total hate crimes motivated by religious bias. In 2020, religiously-motivated hate crimes made up 15 percent of total hate crimes, and anti-Jewish hate crimes accounted for eight percent of total hate crimes reported. For the percentage of the United States population that is Jewish, which includes those who identify as Jewish by religion (1.7 percent) and Jews of no religion (0.6 percent), see Pew Research Center, "Jewish Americans in 2020," May 11, 2021, accessed August 5, 2022, `https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/the-size-of-the-u-s-jewish-population/`. Note that this report also found that about sixty percent of Jews reported a direct experience with anti-Semitism in the past year. The next largest category of hate crimes motivated by religious bias was anti-Islamic, with 110 cases (8.8 percent of the total hate crimes motivated by religious bias). See Federal Bureau of Investigation, *Hate Crime in the United States Incident Analysis*. For context, about 1.1 percent of people living in the United States identify as Muslim. See Besheer Mohamed, "New estimates show U.S. Muslim population continues to grow," January 3, 2018, accessed August 5, 2022, `https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/03/new-estimates-show-u-s-muslim-population-continues-to-grow/`.

374. Drawing from feminist scholars, Kate Ward notes that hospitality is risky to both host and guest and "by definition is practiced across boundaries of difference." Kate Ward, "Jesuit and Feminist Hospitality: Pope Francis' Virtue Response to Inequality," *Religions* 8, no. 4 (2017): 5 of 11. While Ward develops the virtue of hospitality in a feminist and Jesuit key in the context of inequality, here I simply wish to point out that choosing to exercise hospitality without relying on meat could be considered consistent with viewing hospitality as risky and as embracing difference. Taking risks is also the sixth element of Boaz's hospitality that Chan identifies. See Chan, "Hospitality in the Book of Ruth," 675.

undercutting alternative models of hospitality that tie generosity to superiority, coziness, or ease.[375] It could also be seen as in line with self-awareness (which Lúcás Chan both identifies as one aspect of Boaz's hospitality and links to humility in the use of resources), awareness of the vulnerable other, and with creativity and prudence in action.[376] Here too it is helpful to recall that I am suggesting that an ordinary and limited practice of revitalizing a tradition of Friday abstinence from meat does not preclude the exercise of hospitality, and not arguing that participation in hospitality should never include animal-based foods.

What might this retrieval of Friday abstinence in the United States context look like in practice? Perhaps it would build on the CRS Rice Bowl model for Lent to include an all-year campaign in which Catholic parishes and schools could encourage participation. It might manifest in decisions made at the institutional level in Catholic religious orders, schools, non-profit organizations, parishes, and universities to not serve meat on Fridays, whether for communal dining offerings or business-related lunches. It could potentially provide additional inspiration or theological support for Catholic families and institutions seeking to implement the Laudato si' Action Platform. It might look like higher profile Catholics (whether bishops, parish priests, program directors, bloggers, etc.) adopting the practice themselves to lead by example and to help raise awareness of how this practice can be faith-based and faith-nurturing.

375. See Ward, "Jesuit and Feminist Hospitality," 4 of 11.

376. See Chan, "Hospitality in the Book of Ruth," 673-674. In the case of self-awareness and resources, Chan mentions the understanding that resources are loaned to us by God and are to be given to those in need. The virtue of humility, as I have developed it, brings an additional layer to that self-awareness with clear implications for our contemporary use of resources. With respect to awareness of the stranger, Chan's emphasis is on Ruth's status as a Moabite. Yet in this case, Ruth's status as a stranger meant she was marginalized within the community. Attention to the poor today involves attending to the intersections between environmental degradation and justice, which are normalized if not "glamorized" in the United States by "lethal lifestyles," of which I have argued our high per capita meat consumption is a part. With respect to prudence, Chan argues that Boaz was both creative and eager but still guided by prudential judgment. In that case, the tensions Chan identifies include welcoming a foreigner and safeguarding identity and "between generosity and limited nature of the resources." The second tension clearly applies today when thinking about the role that meat ought to play in hospitality in the U.S. context of normalized unsustainable meat consumption, and the first could be thought of in terms of the tension between switching to more sustainable dietary patterns and honoring cultural heritage or family traditions.

This list is not meant to be exhaustive or prescriptive. Rather, I hope it helps stimulate thinking about the ways that the actions of others and the norms of our environment influence us. Consider just one example of a participant in a focus group, Seth, who upon reflection (which he credited to his church involvement) decided to stop cooking meat at home and ordering it at restaurants.[377] By joining with others, we have more opportunities to challenge current ways of thinking and forge new habits with the support of others.[378] It is time to look to see which practices of meat abstention already long present in the Catholic and Christian tradition may be ready to be renewed.

4.5 Conclusion

The fact is that our current way of eating in the United States (and other, wealthier countries) contributes to climate change even as climate change itself threatens the global food supply. Our global food production system is increasingly recognized to be unsustainable, accounting for about one-quarter of greenhouse-gas emissions worldwide. While saving the planet will certainly require new laws, regulations, and corporate practices, it will also require changes in the behavior of individuals, including eating behaviors. A plethora of suggestions for eating more greenly, or more justly, have been offered, including eating locally, eating organic, avoiding processed foods, reducing food waste, and eliminating meat. Recently, consensus is building that these latter two have the greatest environmental impact.[379] If attained on a national scale, such changes would have a measurable impact on climate change. While one person reducing their meat consumption makes little impact on the greenhouse gas emissions of the food production sector, it remains one of the primary ways an individual can reduce their ecological footprint.

377. Lothes, *Inspired Sustainability*, 179.
378. Recall from chapter 1 that the interest in environmental issues by participants in faith-based groups was sustained by congregational leadership and "upward peer pressure." See page 68, cf. ibid., 38-52.
379. See for example Lowrey, "Your Diet Is Cooking the Planet" and Moskin et al., "Your Questions About Food and Climate Change, Answered."

Yet this chapter has not argued for a switch to a plant-based dietary pattern based primarily on the effectiveness of such action (as a response to the question of how Christians living in the U.S. ought to respond to climate change) but rather has responded to the question of what the virtue of humility looks like in a contemporary U.S. context and what practices will foster it. When approached in the key of virtue, we can better see how individual (or small community) lifestyle changes are worthwhile even if they do not gain the traction of a nationwide movement, because they shape our character and so help us respond to the call of discipleship. In the case of dietary changes in particular, I argue that switching to an increasingly plant-based dietary pattern is one practice that can help us not only identify excess as excess (by cultivating temperance) but also to recognize and appropriately value our interdependence (thereby cultivating humility). Dietary choices are ordinary, and yet no less a thinker than Thomas Aquinas argued that every human act is a moral act. More recently, Christina Astorga reminds us of the need "to live the ordinariness of our lives with a profound sense of transcendence" aware that our moral choices "enter into the shaping of the fundamental orientation of our entire lives."[380]

Mindful of the limits that structural factors place on an individual's cultivation of virtue, as well as the fact that climate change remains a pressing ethical issue which does demand a coordinated response, the latter part of this chapter began the task of connecting the case for individuals humbly adopting a plant-based dietary pattern to the practices of larger communities. Here I have suggested that retrieving the Catholic practice of abstinence on Fridays is a way to form members individually and as a community, who can show that an alternative to the daily, meat-heavy diet typical in the United States is not only possible, but is also part of the "good life," and who encourage each other both to recognize the pressing ecological effects of human sin and to grow in the virtue of humility.

380. She goes on to note that since "our lives are so deeply intertwined with other lives, our choices have far-reaching consequences." Christina A. Astorga, *Catholic Moral Theology and Social Ethics: A New Method* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014), 233.

Bibliography

Aavik, Kadri, and Marta Velgan. “Vegan Men’s Food and Health Practices: A Recipe for a More Health-Conscious Masculinity?” *American Journal of Men’s Health* 15, no. 5 (2021): 1–14. doi:https://doi.org/10.1177/15579883211044323.

Abraham, Kochurani. “Resistance: A Liberative Key in Feminist Ethics.” In *Feminist Catholic Theological Ethics: Conversations in the World Church*, edited by Linda Hogan and Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, 97–107. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014.

Afshin, Ashkan, Patrick John Sur, Giannina Ferrara, Joseph S. Salama, Erin C. Mullany, Kalkidan Hassen Abate, Cristiana Abbafati, et al. “Health Effects of Dietary Risks in 195 Countries, 1990–2017: A Systematic Analysis for the Global Burden of Disease Study 2017.” *The Lancet* 393, no. 10184 (2019): 1958–1972.

Ahern, Kevin. “Magnanimity: A Prophetic Virtue for the Anthropocene.” In *Turning to the Heavens and the Earth: Theological Reflections on a Cosmological Conversion: Essays in Honor of Elizabeth A. Johnson*, edited by Julia Brumbaugh and Natalia Imperatori-Lee, 106–126. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, a Michael Glazier Book, 2016.

———. *Structures of Grace: Catholic Organizations Serving the Global Common Good*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Aleksandrowicz, Lukasz, Rosemary Green, Edward J M Joy, Pete Smith, and Andy Haines. “The Impacts of Dietary Change on Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Land Use, Water Use, and Health: A Systematic Review.” *PloS one* 11, no. 11 (2016): 1–16. doi:TheImpactsofDietaryChangeonGreenhouseGasEmissions,LandUse,WaterUse,andHealth.

Algert, Susan, Lucy Diekmann, Marian Renvall, and Leslie Gray. “Community and Home Gardens Increase Vegetable Intake and Food Security of Residents in San Jose, California.” *California Agriculture* 70, no. 2 (2016): 77–82.

Alinsky, Saul D. *Rules for Radicals: A Practical Primer for Realistic Radicals*. New York: Vintage Books, 1989.

Alva, Reginald. “*Laudato Si’* Challenges Irrational Rationalization.” *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 709–723.

Anderson, Gary A. “Original Sin: The Fall of Humanity and the Golden Calf.” Chap. 4 in *Christian Doctrine and the Old Testament: Theology in the Service of Biblical Exegesis*, 59–74. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2017.

———. *Sin: A History*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2009.

Anderson, Gary A., Silviu N. Bunta, Lee M. Jefferson, Bernard McGinn, Gordon Nickel, Nils Holger Petersen, S. Brent Plate, Anthony Swindell, and Howard N. Wallace. "Adam and Eve, Story of." In *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Aaron – Aniconism*, edited by Constance M. Furey, Joel Marcus LeMon, Brian Matz, Thomas Chr. Römer, Jens Schröter, Barry Dov Walfish, and Eric Ziolkowski. De Gruyter, 2010.

Annas, Julia. "Applying Virtue to Ethics." *Journal of Applied Philosophy* 32, no. 1 (2015): 1–14.

Applied Research in the Apostolate (CARA), The Center for. *Most Catholics Abstain from Eating Meat on Fridays During Lent*, March 11, 2008.

Aquinas, Thomas. "I Nicomachean Ethics, lecture 1." In *Commentary on Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics*, 1–6. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1993.

Aristotle. *A New Aristotle Reader*. Edited by J. L. Ackrill. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987.

———. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Translated by Roger Crisp. Cambridge Texts in the History of Philosophy. Cambridge, U.K. and New York: Cambridge University Press, 2000.

Armstrong, Patti Maguire. "Lent on the Menu: What Catholic America's Having for (Friday) Dinner." *National Catholic Register*, February 28, 2020. Accessed August 9, 2022. `https://www.ncregister.com/features/lent-on-the-menu-what-catholic-america-s-having-for-friday-dinner`.

Astorga, Christina A. *Catholic Moral Theology and Social Ethics: A New Method*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2014.

———. "The Triple Cries of Poor, Women, and the Earth: Interlocking Oppressions in the Christian Context." In *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, edited by Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James F. Keenan, and Shaji George Kochuthara, 250–262. Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 2016.

Augustine. *City of God* [in eng.; lat.]. Loeb Classical Library; 411-417. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1957.

Austin, Michael W. "Defending Humility: A Philosophical Sketch with Replies to Tara Smith and David Hume." *Philosophia Christi* 14, no. 2 (January 2012).

Azevedo, Ligia B., Rosalie van Zelm, A. Jan Hendriks, Roland Bobbink, and Mark A.J Huijbregts. "Global Assessment of the Effects of Terrestrial Acidification on Plant Species Richness." *Environmental Pollution* 174 (2013): 10–15.

Bahadur K.C., Krishna, Goretty M. Dias, Anastasia Veeramani, Clarence J. Swanton, David Fraser, Dirk Steinke, Elizabeth Lee, et al. "When Too Much Isn't Enough: Does Current Food Production Meet Global Nutritional Needs?" *PloS one* 13, no. 10 (2018): 1–16. doi:`https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0205683`.

Balabanski, Vicky. "An Earth Bible Reading of the Lord's Prayer: Matthew 6:9-13." In *Readings from the Perspective of Earth*, edited by Norman C. Habel, 1:151–161. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Balentine, Samuel E. "Ask the Animals, and They Will Teach You." *World & World* Supplement Series 5 (2006).

Balentine, Samuel E. “What Are human Beings, That You Make So Much of Them?’: Divine Disclosure from the Whirlwind:‘Look at Behemoth’.” In *God in the Fray: A Tribute to Walter Brueggemann*, edited by Tod Linafelt and Timothy K. Beal, 259–78. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1998.

Barclay, John M.G. “Food, Christian Identity and Global Warming: A Pauline Call for a Christian Food Taboo.” *Expository Times* 121, no. 12 (2010): 585–593.

———. “Meat, a Damaging Extravagance: A Response to Grumett and Gorringe.” *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 70–73.

Bardsley, Karen. “Mother Nature and the Mother of All Virtues: On the Rationality of Feeling Gratitude toward Nature.” *Environmental Ethics* 35, no. 1 (2013): 27–40.

Barish, Kenneth. “Understanding Children’s Emotions: Pride and Shame.” *Psychology Today*, April 2012. https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/pride-and-joy/201205/understanding-children-s-emotions-pride-and-shame.

Barry, Brian. “Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice.” In *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, edited by Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, 19:487–499. Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Bauckham, Richard. *Bible and Ecology: Rediscovering the Community of Creation*. Sarum Theological Lectures. Waco, TX: Baylor University Press, 2010.

———. *Living with Other Creatures: Green Exegesis and Theology*. Waco, Tex.: Baylor University Press, 2011.

———. “The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Parable and the Parallels.” *New Testament Studies* 37, no. 2 (1991): 225–246.

———. “The Rich Man and Lazarus: The Parable and the Parallels.” *New Testament Studies* 37, no. 1 (2018): 225–246.

———. “The Story of the Earth According to Paul: Romans 8: 18–23.” *Review & Expositor* 108, no. 1 (2011): 91–97.

Bauder, David, and Ali Swenson. “How a nonsense story about Joe Biden taking your hamburgers away became red meat for conservatives.” *Chicago Tribune*, April 28, 2021. Accessed July 27, 2022. https://www.chicagotribune.com/nation-world/ct-aud-nw-biden-false-meat-story-20210428-eurrx7fqabet3kztw4mypn52ei-story.html.

Baum, Gregory. “John Paul II on Structural Sin.” Chap. 9 in *Essays in Critical Theology*. Kansas City, MO: Sheed & Ward, 1994.

———. “Structures of Sin.” In *The Logic of Solidarity: Commentaries on Pope John Paul II’s Encyclical On Social Concern*, edited by Gregory Baum, Robert Ellsberg, and Peter Hebblethwaite, 110–126. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989.

Bell, Frederick W. “The Pope and the Price of Fish.” *The American Economic Review* 58, no. 5 (1968): 1346–1350.

Benedict, Abbot of Monte Cassino, Saint. *RB 1980: the Rule of St. Benedict in English* [in eng]. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 1982.

Bennett, Jana, and David Cloutier, eds. *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices Can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019.

Berger, Sarah, ed. "Best Diets of 2022." *Forbes Health*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.forbes.com/health/body/best-diets/.

Bergoglio (Pope Francis), Jorge Mario. *The Way of Humility*. Translated by Helena Scott. San Francisco: Ignatius Press, 2014.

Berkman, John. "The Consumption of Animals and the Catholic Tradition." *Logos* 7, no. 1 (2004): 174–190.

Bianchi, Emily C. "American Individualism Rises and Falls with the Economy: Cross-Temporal Evidence that Individualism Declines When the Economy Falters." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 111, no. 4 (2016): 567–584.

Biddle, Mark E. *Missing the Mark: Sin and its Consequences in Biblical Theology*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2005.

———. "Sin." In *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, edited by Joel B. Green, 730–733. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.

Bidegain, Ana María. "Women and the Theology of Liberation." In *Through Her Eyes: Women's Theology from Latin America*, edited by Elsa Tamez, 15–36. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1989.

Böckle, Franz. "Theological Reflection about Guilt and Sin." In *Fundamental Moral Theology*, 87–124. New York: Pueblo Publishing Company, 1980.

Boden, T.A., G. Marland, and R.J. Andres. "Global, Regional, and National Fossil-Fuel CO2 Emissions." 2011. Accessed January 31, 2019. doi:10.3334/CDIAC/00001_V2011.

Bodirsky, Monica, and Jon Johnson. "Decolonizing Diet: Healing by Reclaiming Traditional Indigenous Foodways." *Cuizine: the Journal of Canadian Food Cultures* 1, no. 1 (2008).

Boehm, Rebecca, Michele Ver Ploeg, Parke E Wilde, and Sean B Cash. "Greenhouse Gas Emissions, Total Food Spending and Diet Quality by Share of Household Food Spending on Red Meat: Results from a Nationally Representative Sample of US Households." *Public Health Nutrition* 22, no. 10 (2019): 1794–1806.

Boer, Joop de, Hanna Schösler, and Harry Aiking. "'Meatless Days' or 'Less but Better'? Exploring Strategies to Adapt Western Meat Consumption to Health and Sustainability Challenges." *Appetite* 76 (2014): 120–128.

Boer, Joop de, Annick de Witt, and Harry Aiking. "Help the Climate, Change Your Diet: A Cross-sectional Study on How to Involve Consumers in a Transition to a Low-carbon Society." *Appetite* 98 (2016): 19–27.

Bong, Sharon A. "Not Only for the Sake of Man: Asian Feminist Theological Responses to *Laudato Si'*." In *Planetary Solidarity: Global Women's Voices on Christian Doctrine and Climate Justice*, edited by Grace Ji-Sun Kim, 81–96. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2017.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. “Lazarus and the Rich Man: Berlin, First Sunday after Trinity, May 29, 1932 (?)” In *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, edited by Isabel Best, 33–40. Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2012.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich, Douglas W. Stott, Anne Schmidt-Lange, Scott A. Moore, and Claudia D. Bergmann. “My Spirit Rejoices: London, Third Sunday in Advent, December 17, 1933.” In *The Collected Sermons of Dietrich Bonhoeffer*, 115–122. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2012.

Bose, Neha, Thomas Hills, and Daniel Sgroi. “Climate Change and Diet.” *IZA Discussion Paper*, 2020.

Bouma-Prediger, Steven. *For the Beauty of the Earth: A Christian Vision for Creation Care*. Engaging Culture. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2001.

Bouvard, Véronique, Dana Loomis, Kathryn Z. Guyton, Yann Grosse, Fatiha El Ghissassi, Lamia Benbrahim-Tallaa, Neela Guha, et al. “Carcinogenicity of Consumption of Red and Processed Meat.” *Lancet Oncology* 16, no. 16 (2015): 1599–1600.

Bovon, François. “The Parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man Lazarus (16:19-31).” In *Luke 2: A Commentary of the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, edited by Helmut Koester. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.

Bovon, François, and Donald S. Deer. “The Parable of the Rich Man and the Poor Man Lazarus (16:19-31).” In *Luke 2: A Commentary on the Gospel of Luke 9:51-19:27*, 470–488. Minneapolis, MN: 1517 Media, 2013.

Bowman, Shanthy A., John C. Clemens, and James E. Friday. “Food Pattern Group and Macronutrient Intakes of Adults: WWEIA, NHANES 2003-2004 to 2017-2018.” *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 35 (April 2021). Accessed March 23, 2022. `https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/35_Trend_Analysis_of_Adults_Macronutrient_and_Food_Pattern_Food_Intakes_0318.pdf`.

Boyd, Craig A. “Pride and Humility: Tempering the Desire for Excellence.” In *Virtues and Their Vices*, edited by Kevin Timpe and Craig A. Boyd, 245–266. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Braaten, Laurie. “All Creation Groans: Romans 8:22 in Light of the Biblical Sources.” *Horizons in Biblical Theology* 28, no. 2 (2006): 131–159.

Bredenhof, Reuben. “Looking for Lazarus: Assigning Meaning to the Poor Man in Luke 16.19–31.” *New Testament Studies* 66, no. 1 (2020): 51–67.

Brett, Mark G. “Earthing the Human in Genesis 1-3.” In *The Earth Story in Genesis*, edited by Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst, 73–86. The Earth Bible. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Bretzke, James T. “Ignorance.” In *Handbook of Roman Catholic Moral Terms*, 119. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013.

Broom, Catherine. “Exploring the Relations between Childhood Experiences in Nature and Young Adults’ Environmental Attitudes and Behaviours.” *Australian Journal of Environmental Education* 33, no. 1 (2017): 34–47.

Brown, Raymond E. “Letter to the Romans.” In *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 201–209. The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library. Yale University Press, 2015.

Brown, Raymond E. "The Annunciation to Mary, the Visitation, and the Magnificat (Luke 1:26-56)." *Worship* 62, no. 3 (1988): 249.

———. *The Birth of the Messiah: A Commentary on the Infancy Narratives in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke*. New Updated Edition. The Anchor Bible Reference Library. New York: Doubleday, 1993.

———. "The Gospel According to Luke." In *An Introduction to the New Testament: The Abridged Edition*, 75–97. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2016.

———. "The Gospel According to Matthew." In *An Introduction to the New Testament*, 58–74. The Anchor Yale Bible Reference Library. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2015.

Brown, Raymond E., Karl P. Donfried, Joseph A. Fitzmyer, and Reumann John, eds. "Chapter Six: Mary in the Gospel of Luke and the Acts of the Apostles." In *Mary in the New Testament: A Collaborative Assessment by Protestant and Roman Catholic Scholars*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1978.

Browning, Peter. "The Global Obesity Epidemic: Shifting the Focus from Individuals to the Food Industry." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 1 (2017): 161–178.

Bullivant, Stephen. "Sine Culpa? Vatican II and Inculpable Ignorance." *Theological Studies* 72, no. 1 (2011): 70–86.

Bureau of Labor Statistics. *Average Retail Food and Energy Prices, U.S. and Midwest Region*. Accessed March 31, 2022. `https://www.bls.gov/regions/mid-atlantic/data/averageretailfoodandenergyprices_usandmidwest_table.htm`.

Burnette-Bletsch, Rhonda, Thomas W. Hudgins, Outi Lehtipuu, Marie Nuar, Martin O'Kane, and Anthony Swindell. "Lazarus and Dives." In *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Kalam–Lectio Divina*, edited by Constance M. Furey, Joel Marcus LeMon, Brian Matz, Thomas Chr. Römer, Jens Schröter, Barry Dov Walfish, and Eric Ziolkowski. New York: De Gruyter, 2010.

Byrne, Brendan. "A Pauline Complement to *Laudato Si'*." *Theological Studies* 77, no. 2 (2016): 308–327.

———. "Forceful Stewardship and Neglectful Wealth: A Contemporary Reading of Luke 16." *Pacifica* 1, no. 1 (1988): 1–14.

Cafaro, Philip. "Environmental Virtue Ethics." Chap. 31 in *The Routledge Companion to Virtue Ethics*, edited by Lorraine L. Besser and Michael Slote, 427–444. London: Routledge, 2015.

———. "Gluttony, Arrogance, Greed, and Apathy: An Exploration of Environmental Vice." Chap. 9 in *Environmental Virtue Ethics*, edited by Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro, 135–158. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.

Cahill, Lisa Sowle. *Family: A Christian Social Perspective*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2000.

Camosy, Charles C. "Pride." Chap. 8 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, edited by Jana M. Bennett

and David Cloutier, 146–167. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019.
Campos, Clement. "*Laudato Si'*: An Indian Perspective." *Theological Studies* 78, no. 1 (2017): 213–225.
Cannon, Katie G. "Eliminating Ignorance." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 32, no. 1 (2016): 114–120.
Carbon Dioxide Information Analysis Center, U.S. Department of Energy, Oak Ridge National Laboratory. "CO2 emissions (metric tons per capita)." Accessed January 31, 2019. https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/EN.ATM.CO2E.PC.
Carman, Tim. "Cracker Barrel faces blowback after adding Impossible sausage to menu." *The Washington Post* (Washington, DC), August 3, 2022. Accessed August 9, 2022. https://www.msn.com/en-us/news/us/cracker-barrel-faces-blowback-after-adding-impossible-sausage-to-menu/ar-AA10hjKt.
Carmichael, Calum M. "The Paradise Myth: Interpreting without Jewish and Christian Spectacles." In *A Walk in the Garden: Biblical, Iconographical and Literary Images of Eden*, edited by Paul Morris and Deborah Sawyher, 47–63. Journal for the study of the Old Testament. Supplement series 136. Sheffield, UK: JSOT Press, 1992.
Carr, David. "Genesis." In *The New Oxford Annotated Bible: New Revised Standard Version with the Apocrypha*, Fully rev. 4th ed.., edited by Michael D. Coogan, 7–11. New York: Oxford University Press, 2010.
Carroll, John T. "Luke." In *The New Interpreter's Bible One-Volume Commentary*, edited by David L. Petersen, Beverly R. Gaventa, and Lori Colleen Patton. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010.
Carruth, Shawn. "A Song of Salvation: The Magnificat, Luke 1:46-55." *The Bible Today* 50 (no. 6 2012): 345–349.
———. "The Monastic Virtues of Obedience, Silence and Humility: A Feminist Perspective." *The American Benedictine review* 51, no. 2 (2000): 121–147.
"Carta pastoral sobre la relación del hombre con la naturaleza" [in spa]. In *Documentos de la Conferencia del Episcopado Dominicano (1955- 1990)*, 593–611. Colección Quinto centenario. Serie Documentos 2. Santo Domingo, República Dominicana: Comisión Dominicana Permanente para la Celebración del Quinto Centenario del Descubrimiento y Evangelización de América, 1990.
Caswell, Julie A., and Ann L. Yaktine, eds. *Committee on Examination of the Adequacy of Food Resources and SNAP Allotments; Food and Nutrition Board; Committee on National Statistics; Institute of Medicine; National Research Council*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press, 2013.
Catholic Bishops Commission for Social Affairs, Canadian Conference of. *Our Relationship with the Environment: The Need for Conversion*. Accessed September 2, 2022. https://www.cccb.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/08/enviro_eng.pdf.
Catholic Bishops of Northern Italy. "Ecology: The Bishops of Lombardy Address the Community (September 15, 1988)." In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology*

and the Environment, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer, 295–307. Washington, DC, 1996.

Catholic Bishops of the Philippines. “What is Happening to Our Beautiful Land?: A Pastoral Letter on Ecology from the Catholic Bishops of the Philippines (January 29, 1988).” In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer, 309–318. Washington, DC, 1996.

Catholic Bishops’ Conference of Japan. “Reverence for Life: A Message for the Twenty-First Century from The Catholic Bishops of Japan (January 1, 2001).” Accessed January 14, 2019. https://www.cbcj.catholic.jp/2001/01/01/2700/.

Catechism of the Catholic Church. 2nd ed. / rev. in accordance with the official Latin text promulgated by Pope John Paul II. Washington, DC: United States Conference of Catholic Bishops, 2019. https://www.usccb.org/sites/default/files/flipbooks/catechism/.

Catholic News Agency. “Amid Coronavirus Outbreak, Dioceses Permit Meat on Fridays During Lent.” *National Catholic Register*, March 27, 2020. Accessed July 18, 2022. https://www.ncregister.com/news/amid-coronavirus-outbreak-dioceses-permit-meat-on-fridays-during-lent.

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Environmental Health. *Preparing for the Regional Health Impacts of Climate Change in the United States*. July 2020. Accessed April 27, 2022. https://www.cdc.gov/climateandhealth/docs/Health_Impacts_Climate_Change-508_final.pdf.

Chan, Lúcás, SJ. *Biblical Ethics in the 21st Century: Developments, Emerging Consensus, and Future Directions*. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2013.

———. “The Hebrew Bible and the Discourse on Migration: A Reflection on the Virtue of Hospitality in the Book of Ruth.” *Asian Horizons* 8, no. 4 (2014): 665–679.

Chan, Yiu Sing Lúcás. “Biblical Ethics: 3D.” In *The Bible and Catholic Theological Ethics*, edited by Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James F. Keenan, and Ronaoldo Zacharias, 17–33. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017.

Chidi Nwachukwu-Udaku, Benedict. “The Problem of Economic Sustainability in Nigeria: A Call for a New Paradigm.” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:39–42. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Church, Ian M. “The Doxastic Account of Intellectual Humility.” *Logos & Episteme* 7, no. 4 (2016): 413–433.

Clary, Stephanie. “Can One Person’s Dietary Decisions Affect the Common Good?” *U.S. Catholic*, June 8, 2020. Accessed July 18, 2022. https://uscatholic.org/articles/202006/should-catholics-eat-less-meat/.

Cleveland, Lindsay K. “A Defense of Aristotelian Magnanimity Against the Pride Objection with the Help of Aquinas,” 88 (2014): 259–271.

Cleveland, W. Scott, and Robert C. Roberts. “Humility from a Philosophical Point of View.” In *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, edited by Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook, 49–62. New York: Routledge, 2016.

Accessed February 5, 2019. https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch2.

Clifford, Anne M. *Introducing Feminist Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2001.

Clines, David J.A. “The Worth of Animals in the Divine Speeches of the Book of Job.” In *Where the Wild Ox Roams: Biblical Essays in Honour of Norman C. Habel*, edited by Alan H. Cadwallader, 101–13. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2013.

Clough, David L. “Consuming Animal Creatures: The Christian Ethics of Eating Animals.” *Studies in Christian Ethics* 30, no. 1 (2017): 30–44.

———. *On Animals: Volume I: Systematic Theology*. Vol. 1. London and New York: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2012.

Cloutier, David. “The Problem of Luxury in the Christian Life.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 32, no. 1 (2012): 3–20.

———. *The Vice of Luxury: Economic Excess in a Consumer Age*. Moral Traditions Series. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2015.

Coblentz, Jessica. “Diet Culture Complicates Lenten Fasting.” *U.S. Catholic*, February 17, 2021. Accessed July 18, 2022. https://uscatholic.org/articles/202102/diet-cultures-complicates-lenten-fasting/.

Coblentz, Jessica, and Brianne A. B. Jacobs. “Mary Daly’s *The Church and the Second Sex* after Fifty Years of US Catholic Feminist Theology.” *Theological Studies* 79, no. 3 (2018): 543–565.

Cones, Bryan. “Fast Break: Stop Eating the World for Lent.” *U.S. Catholic*, February 23, 2009. Accessed July 19, 2022. https://uscatholic.org/articles/200902/fast-break-stop-eating-the-world-for-lent/.

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. *Instruction on Certain Aspects of the “Theology of Liberation”*. 1984. https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19840806_theology-liberation_en.html.

Conor Friedersdorf. “The Audacity of Talking About Race With the Ku Klux Klan.” *The Atlantic*, March 27, 2015, 1. Accessed May 7, 2019. https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2015/03/the-audacity-of-talking-about-race-with-the-klu-klux-klan/388733/.

Cozens, Simon, and Christoph Ochs. “‘Have You No Shame?’ An Overlooked Theological Category as Interpretive Key in Genesis 3.” *Journal of Theological Interpretation* 13, no. 2 (2019): 186–199.

Craig, Winston J., and Ann Reed Mangels. “Position of the American Dietetic Association: Vegetarian Diets.” *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* 109, no. 7 (2009): 1266–1282.

Crasta, John. “The Chotanagpur Tribes As Agents of Environmental Redemption in the Context of the Current Ethical Debate on the Ecological Crisis.” In *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, edited by James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara, 223–236. Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2016.

Cudworth, Erika. “Seeing and Believing: Gender and Species Hierarchy in Contemporary Cultures of Animal Food.” In *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, edited by David Grummet and Rachel Muers, 168–183. T&T Clark Theology. London: T&T Clark, 2008.

Curran, Charles E. *The Catholic Moral Tradition Today: A Synthesis*. Moral Traditions & Moral Arguments. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 1999.

———. *The Development of Moral Theology: Five Strands*. Moral Traditions series. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013.

———. “Virtue: The Catholic Moral Tradition Today.” In *Virtue*, edited by Lisa Fullam and Charles E. Curran, 16:51–78. Readings in Moral Theology. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011.

Daly, Daniel J. “Structures of Virtue and Vice.” *New Blackfriars* 92, no. 1039 (2011): 341–357.

———. “The Output Power of the Structures of Virtue and Vice.” In *The Structures of Virtue and Vice*, 195–220. Georgetown University Press, 2021.

———. “Virtue Ethics.” In *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, edited by Tobias Winright, 59–70. London: T&T Clark, 2021.

———. “Virtue Ethics and Action Guidance.” *Theological Studies* 82, no. 4 (2021): 565–582.

Daly, Mary. *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1985.

———. *Beyond God the Father: Toward a Philosophy of Women’s Liberation.* Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1973.

———. *The Church and the Second Sex.* New York: Harper & Row, 1968.

Daniel, Carrie R., Amanda J. Cross, Corinna Koebnick, and Rashmi Sinha. “Trends in Meat Consumption in the USA.” *Public Health Nutrition* 14, no. 4 (2011): 575–583.

Davis, Don E., Everett L. Worthington Jr., and Joshua N. Hook. “Humility: Review of Measurement Strategies and Conceptualization as Personality Judgment.” *The Journal of Positive Psychology* 5, no. 4 (2010): 243–252. Accessed May 16, 2019. `https://doi.org/10.1080/17439761003791672`.

Davis, Don E., Vanessa Placeres, Elise Choe, Cirleen DeBlaere, David Zeyala, and Joshua N Hook. “Relational Humility.” In *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, edited by Everett L Worthington, Don E Davis, and Joshua N Hook, 105–118. New York: Routledge, 2016. Accessed May 15, 2019. `https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch7`.

De Backer, Charlotte, Sara Erreygers, Charlotte De Cort, Frederic Vandermoere, Alexander Dhoest, Jules Vrinten, and Sofie Van Bauwel. “Meat and Masculinities: Can Differences in Masculinity Predict Meat Consumption, Intentions to Reduce Meat and Attitudes Towards Vegetarians?” *Appetite* 147 (2020): 104559–104559.

De La Torre, Miguel A. “Mad Men, Competitive Women, and Invisible Hispanics.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 121–126.

Deane-Drummond, Celia. “*Laudato Si’* and the Natural Sciences: An Assessment of Possibilities and Limits.” *Theological Studies* 77, no. 2 (2016): 392–415.

Deloitte Access Economics. "The Social and Economic Cost of Eating Disorders in the United States of America: A Report for the Strategic Training Initiative for the Prevention of Eating Disorders and the Academy for Eating Disorders," June 2020. https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/striped/report-economic-costs-of-eating-disorders/.

Dennis, Geoffrey, Matthew Goff, Christine Johannes Helmer Schwanke, Dolores G. Kamrada, Sandra Toenies Keating, Paul Kolbet, Anton Karl Kozlovic, et al. "Fall of Humankind." In *Encyclopedia of the Bible and Its Reception Online: Essenes – Fideism*, edited by Constance M. Furey, Joel Marcus LeMon, Brian Matz, Thomas Chr. Römer, Jens Schröter, Barry Dov Walfish, and Eric Ziolkowski, 752–778. De Gruyter, 2010.

DeYoung, Rebecca Konyndyk. "Aquinas on the Vice of Sloth: Three Interpretive Issues." *The Thomist: A Speculative Quarterly Review* 75, no. 1 (January 2011): 43.

———. "Aquinas's Virtues of Acknowledged Dependence: A New Measure of Greatness." *Faith and Philosophy* 21, no. 2 (2004): 214–227.

———. *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2009.

———. *Glittering Vices: A New Look at the Seven Deadly Sins and Their Remedies*. 2nd ed. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, a division of Baker Publishing Group, 2020.

———. "The Roots of Despair." *Res Philosophica* 92, no. 4 (2015): 829–854.

Dillon, Robin S. "Feminist Approaches to Virtue Ethics." In *The Oxford Handbook of Virtue*, edited by Nancy Snow. Oxford Handbooks Online. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. Accessed February 5, 2019. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199385195.013.15.

Domingo, José L., and Martí Nadal. "Carcinogenicity of Consumption of Red meat and Processed Meat: A Review of Scientific News Since the IARC Decision." *Food and Chemical Toxicology* 105 (2017): 256–261.

Donahue, John R. "The Kingdom Proclamation of Jesus in the Gospels: Context and Challenge to North America." In *The Bible and Catholic Theological Ethics*, edited by Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan, James Keenan, and Ronaldo Zacharias. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017.

Donaldson, Laura E. "Convenanting Nature: Aquacide and the Transformation of Knowledge." *Ecotheology: Journal of Religion, Nature & the Environment* 8, no. 1 (2003).

———. "Theological Composting in Romans 8: An Indigenous Meditation on Paul's Rhetoric of Decay." In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs. Waterloo, ON: Herald Press, 2013.

Douglas, Mark, and Elizabeth Hinson-Hasty. "Revisiting Valerie Saiving's Challenge to Reinhold Niebuhr Honoring Fifty Years of Reflection on ""The Human Situation: A Feminine View"": Introduction and Overview." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 75–78.

Dunfee, Susan Nelson. "The Sin of Hiding: A Feminist Critique of Reinhold Niebuhr's Account of the Sin of Pride." *Soundings: An Interdisciplinary Journal* 65, no. 3 (1982): 316–327.

Ebi, K.L., J.M. Balbus, G. Luber, A. Bole, A. Crimins, G. Glass, S. Saha, M.M. Shimamoto, J. Trtanj, and J.L. White-Newsome. "Human Health." In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, edited by D.R. Reidmiller, C.W. Avery, D.R.. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock, and B.C. Stewart, 539–571. Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2018. doi:10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH14.

Edwards, Denis. "Humans and Other Creatures: Creation, Original Grace, and Original Sin." In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:159–170. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Ehrlich, Carl Stephan. "Humanity's Place in the Scheme of Creation: A Contextual and Gender Sensitive Reading of the Creation Accounts in Genesis." In *Ein Leben fur die judische Kunst: Gedenkband fur Hannelore Kunzl*, edited by Michael Graetz, 49–68. Schriften der Hochschule für Jüdische Studien Heidelberg, Bd. 4. Heidelberg: Winter, 2003.

Ekebas-Turedi, Ceren, Zuhal Cilingir Uk, Cigdem Basfirinci, and Musa Pinar. "A Cross-Cultural Analysis of Gender-Based Food Stereotypes and Consumption Intentions among Millennial Consumers." *Journal of International Consumer Marketing* 33, no. 2 (2021): 209–225.

El Episcopado Guatemateco. *El Clamor por la Tierra, Carta Pastoral Colectiva del Episcopado Guatemateco (29 de febrero de 1988)* [in spa]. 1988. Accessed September 2, 2022. http://www.iglesiacatolica.org.gt/19880229.pdf.

Ellithorpe, Morgan E., Geraldine Zeldes, Elizabeth Dorrance Hall, Manuel Chavez, Bruno Takahashi, Amy Bleakley, and Julie Plasencia. "I'm Lovin' It: How Fast Food Advertising Influences Meat-Eating Preferences." *Journal of Health Communication*, 2022, 1–11.

Elvey, Anne. "A Hermeneutics of Retrieval: Breath and Earth Voice in Luke's Mangificat—Does Earth Care for the Poor?" *Australian Biblical Review* 63 (2015): 67–83.

Eric Wagner. "The Great Flathead Fish Fiasco." *High Country News News*, February 3, 2014, 1. Accessed May 14, 2019. https://www.hcn.org/issues/46.2/the-great-flathead-fish-fiasco.

Ewell, Samuel, and Claudio Oliver. "Aren't We Responsible for the Environment?" In *A Faith Encompassing All Creation: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions aout Christian Care for the Environment*, edited by Trip York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 89–99. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014.

Fagan, Seán. "What Happened to Sin?" *An Irish Reading in Moral Theology* 3 (2016): 401–408.

FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. *In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2020: Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all*. Rome, 2020. doi:https://doi.org/10.4060/ca9699en.

———. *In Brief to The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2021: Transforming food systems for food security, improved nutrition and affordable healthy diets for all*. Rome, 2021. doi:https://doi.org/10.4060/cb5409en.

FAO, IFAD, UNICEF, WFP, and WHO. *The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World 2018: Building climate resilience for food security and nutrition.* Rome, 2018.

Farley, Margaret A. "Ethics, Ecclesiology, and the Grace of Self-doubt." In *A Call to Fidelity: On the Moral Theology of Charles E. Curran*, edited by James J. Walter, Timothy E. O'Connell, and Thomas A. Shannon, 55–75. Moral Traditions Series. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2002.

———. *Just Love: A Framework for Christian Sexual Ethics*. New York: Continuum, 2006.

Federal Bureau of Investigation. *Hate Crime in the United States Incident Analysis*, 2020. Accessed August 5, 2022. https://crime-data-explorer.fr.cloud.gov/pages/explorer/crime/hate-crime.

Fehér, András, Michał Gazdecki, Miklós Véha, Márk Szakály, and Zoltán Szakály. "A Comprehensive Review of the Benefits of and the Barriers to the Switch to a Plant-Based Diet." *Sustainability* 12, no. 10 (2020): 4136.

Fejo, Wali. "The Voice of the Earth: An Indigenous Reading of Genesis 9." In *The Earth Story in Genesis*, 140–146. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Fiese, Barbara H. "Time Allocation and Dietary Habits in the United States: Time for Re-evaluation?" *Physiology & Behavior* 193, no. Pt B (2018): 205–208.

Fitzmyer, Joseph A. "The Parable of the Dishonest Manager (16:1-8a)." In *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, edited by Helmut Koester, 1094–1104. The Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1985.

———. "The Parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus (16:19-31)." In *The Gospel According to Luke (X-XXIV)*, edited by Helmut Koester, 1124–1135. The Anchor Bible. Garden City, NY: Doubleday & Company, 1985.

Flores, Nichole M. "Greed." Chap. 4 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, edited by Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier, 73–88. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019.

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. "Emissions Due to Agriculture: Global, Regional and Country Trends 2000–2018." *FAOSTAT Analytical Brief Series*, no. 18 (2020).

Forestell, Catherine A., Andrea M. Spaeth, and Stephanie A. Kane. "To Eat or Not to Eat Red Meat: A Closer Look at the Relationship between Restrained Eating and Vegetarianism in College Females." *Appetite* 58, no. 1 (2012): 319–325.

Fox, Everett. "Can Genesis Be Read as a Book?" *Semeia* 46 (1989): 31–40.

Fox, Michael V. "The Meanings of the Book of Job." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 137, no. 1 (2018): 7–18.

Francis. *Fratelli Tutti: On Fraternity and Social Friendship*. 2021. https://www.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20201003_enciclica-fratelli-tutti.html.

Francis. *Laudato Si': On Care for Our Common Home*. 2015. http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/en/encyclicals/documents/papa-francesco_20150524_enciclica-laudato-si.html.

Frasz, Geoffrey B. "Environmental Virtue Ethics: A New Direction for Environmental Ethics." *Environmental Ethics* 15, no. 3 (1993): 259–274.

———. "What is Environmental Virtue Ethics that We Should Be Mindful of It?" *Philosophy in the Contemporary World* 8, no. 2 (2001): 5–14.

Fredericks, Rachel. "Courage as an Environmental Virtue." *Environmental Ethics* 36, no. 3 (2014): 339–355.

Fretheim, Terence E. "Genesis and Ecology." In *The Book of Genesis: Composition, Reception, and Interpretation*, edited by Craig A. Evans, Joel N. Lohr, and David L. Petersen, 152:683–706. Boston: Brill, 2012.

———. "God in the Book of Job." *Currents in Theology and Mission* 26, no. 2 (1999): 85–93.

Fullam, Lisa. "Humility and Its Moral Epistemological Implications." In *Virtue: Readings in Moral Theology*, edited by Charles E. Curran and Lisa A. Fullam, 250–274. Mahwah, NJ: Paulist Press, 2011.

———. "Humility and Magnanimity in Spiritual Guidance." *Reflective Practice: Formation and Supervision in Ministry* 32 (2012): 36–47.

———. "Humility: A Pilgrim's Virtue." *New Theology Review* 19, no. 2 (2006): 46–53.

———. "Joan of Arc, Holy Resistance, and Conscience Formation in the Face of Social Sin." In *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, edited by David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer, 69–82. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. "Teresa of Avila's Liberative Humility." *Journal of Moral Theology* 3, no. 1 (2014): 175–198.

———. *The Virtue of Humility: A Thomistic Apologetic*. Lewiston, NY: Edwin Mellen Press, 2009.

Gal, David, and James Wilkie. "Real Men Don't Eat Quiche: Regulation of Gender-Expressive Choices by Men." *Social Psychological & Personality Science* 1, no. 4 (2010): 291–301.

Gambrel, Joshua Colt, and Philip Cafaro. "The Virtue of Simplicity." *Journal of Agricultural and Environmental Ethics* 23, nos. 1-2 (2010): 85.

Gaventa, Beverly Roberts. *Mary: Glimpses of the Mother of Jesus*. Personality of the New Testament. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 1999.

Geng, Liuna, Jingke Xu, Lijuan Ye, Wenjun Zhou, and Kexin Zhou. "Connections with Nature and Environmental Behaviors." *PLoS One* 10, no. 5 (2015).

George, Marie I. "On the Meaning of "Immanent Activity" According to Aquinas." *The Thomist* 78, no. 4 (2014): 537–555.

Gerber, Lisa. "Standing Humbly Before Nature." *Ethics & the Environment* 7, no. 1 (2002): 39–53.

Gilligan, Carol. *In a Different Voice: Psychological Theory and Women's Development*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. `https://hdl.handle.net/2027/heb32978.0001.001`.

Giombolini, Katy J., Kimberlee J. Chambers, Sheridan A. Schlegel, and Jonnie B. Dunne. "Testing the local reality: does the Willamette Valley growing region produce enough to meet the needs of the local population? A comparison of agriculture production and recommended dietary requirements." *Agriculture and Human Values* 28, no. 2 (2010): 247–262.

Girardot, Doug. "It's Time for Catholics to Go Back to No Meat on Every Friday (Not Just During Lent)." *America Magazine*, August 23, 2021.

Godfray, H. C. J, Catherine Watson, Owen Fenton, and Karl Richards. "The Challenge of Feeding 9–10 Billion People Equitably and Sustainably." *The Journal of Agricultural Science* 152, no. S1 (2014): 2–8.

Goh, Jeffrey. "The Place of the Poor in *Laudato Si'*." *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 645–658.

González, Justo L. *Mañana*. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 1990.

Gorringe, Tim. "Rise Peter! Kill and Eat: A Response to John Barclay." *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 63–69.

Graça, João, Maria Manuela Calheiros, and Abílio Oliveira. "Attached to Meat? (Un)Willingness and Intentions to Adopt a More Plant-based Diet" [in eng]. *Appetite* 95 (2015): 113–125.

———. "Moral Disengagement in Harmful but Cherished Food Practices? An Exploration into the Case of Meat." *Journal of Agricultural & Environmental Ethics* 27, no. 5 (2014): 749–765.

Graça, João, Cristina A. Godinho, and Monica Truninger. "Reducing Meat Consumption and Following Plant-based Diets: Current Evidence and Future Directions to Inform Integrated Transitions." *Trends in Food Science & Technology* 91 (2019): 380–390.

Graebe, Brian A. "An Examination of Friday Penance." *New Oxford Review* 76, no. 7 (2009): 26.

Graham, Mark E. *Sustainable Agriculture: A Christian Ethic of Gratitude*. Cleveland, OH: Pilgrim Press, 2005.

———. "The Unsavory Gamble of Industrial Agriculture." In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:105–116. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church 3. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Grimes, Katie M. "Racialized Humility: The White Supremacist Sainthood of Peter Claver, SJ." *Horizons* 42, no. 2 (2015): 295–316.

Grumett, David. "A Christian diet: The Case for Food Rules." *The Christian Century* 127, no. 7 (2010): 34.

———. *Christian Food Restrictions*, 2015.

———. "Eat Less Meat: A New Ecological Imperative for Christian Ethics?" *Expository Times* 123, no. 2 (2011): 54–62.

Grumett, David. “Vegetarian or Franciscan? Flexible Dietary Choices Past and Present.” *Journal for the Study of Religion, Nature and Culture* 1, no. 4 (2008): 450.

Grumett, David, and Rachel Muers, eds. *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*. T & T Clark theology. New York: T & T Clark, 2008.

———. *Theology on the Menu: Asceticism, Meat and Christian Diet*. New York: Routledge, 2010.

Guatemalan Bishops’ Conference. “The Cry for Land, Joint Pastoral Letter by the Guatemalan Bishops’ Conference (February 29, 1988).” In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer, 275–293. Washington, DC, 1996.

Habel, Norman. “Geophany: The Earth Story in Genesis 1.” In *The Earth Story in Genesis*, edited by Norman C. Habel and Shirley Wurst, 34–48. The Earth Bible. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Haile, Beth K. “Gluttony.” Chap. 2 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, edited by Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier, 29–51. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019.

———. “Virtuous Meat Consumption: A Virtue Ethics Defense of an Omnivorous Way of Life.” *Logos* 16, no. 1 (2013): 83–100.

Hanlon Rubio, Julie. “Passing on the Faith in an Era of Rising ‘Nones’: Practicing Courage and Humility.” In *Virtue and the Moral Life: Theological and Philosophical Perspectives*, edited by Kathryn Getek Soltis and William Werpehowski, 95–112. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014.

———. “Sloth.” Chap. 5 in *Naming Our Sins: How Recognizing the Seven Deadly Vices can Renew the Sacrament of Reconciliation*, edited by Jana M. Bennett and David Cloutier, 89–105. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2019.

———. “Toward a Just Way of Eating.” In *Green Discipleship: Catholic Theological Ethics and the Environment*, edited by Tobias L Winright, 360–378. Winona, MN: Anselm Academic, 2011.

Hannis, Mike. “The Virtues of Acknowledged Ecological Dependence: Sustainability, Autonomy and Human Flourishing.” *Environmental Values* 24, no. 2 (2015): 145–164.

Harrington, Daniel J., and James F. Keenan. *Jesus and Virtue Ethics: Building Bridges between New Testament Studies and Moral Theology*. Lanham, MD: Sheed & Ward, 2002.

Hart, Chief Lawrence. “The Earth is a Song Made Visible: A Cheyenne Perspective.” In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 153–161. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.

Harwatt, Helen, Joan Sabaté, Gidon Eshel, Sam Soret, and William Ripple. “Substituting Beans for Beef as a Contribution toward US Climate Change Targets.” *Climatic Change* 143, nos. 1-2 (2017): 261–270.

Hays, Richard B. “Ecclesiology and Ethics in 1 Corinthians.” *Ex Auditu* 10 (1994): 31–43.

Henriques, Martha, and Zaria Gorvett. "The Climate Benefits of Veganism and Vegetarianism." *BBC*, May 1, 2022. Accessed May 4, 2022. https://www.bbc.com/future/article/20220429-the-climate-benefits-of-veganism-and-vegetarianism.

Heyer, Kristin E. Moral Traditions Series. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2006.

———. "Internalized Borders: Immigration Ethics in the Age of Trump." *Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2018): 146–164.

———. "Social Sin and Immigration: Good Fences Make Bad Neighbors." *Theological Studies* 71, no. 2 (2010): 410–436.

———. "Walls in the Heart: Social Sin in Fratelli Tutti." *Journal of Catholic Social Thought* 19, no. 1 (2022): 25–40.

Hill, Thomas E. "Ideals of Human Excellence and Preserving Natural Environments." *Environmental Ethics* 5, no. 3 (1983): 211–224.

Himes, Kenneth R. "Consumerism and Christian Ethics." *Theological Studies* 68, no. 1 (2007): 132–153.

———. "Human Failing: The Meanings and Metaphors of Sin." In *Moral Theology: New Directions and Fundamental Issues: Festschrift for James P. Hanigan*, edited by James Keating and James P. Hanigan, 145–161. New York: Paulist Press, 2004.

———. "Social Sin and the Role of the Individual." *Annual of the Society of Christian Ethics* (Dallas, TX) 6 (1986): 183–218.

Himes, Kenneth R., O.F.M. "The Formation of Conscience: The Sin of Sloth and the Significance of Spirituality." In *Spirituality and Moral Theology: Essays from a Pastoral Perspective*, edited by James Keating, 59–80. New York: Paulist Press, 2000.

Hinga, Teresia M. *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017.

———. "Of Empty Granaries, Stolen Harvests, and the Weapon of Gain: Applied Ethics in Search of Sustainable Food Security." In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:94–104. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. "The Food-Energy-Water Nexus in the Age of Climate Change: (Afro)Faith Responses to the Ethical Challenges and Imperatives." In *African, Christian, Feminist: The Enduring Search for What Matters*, 119–130. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2017.

Hinson-Hasty, Elizabeth. "Revisiting Feminist Discussions of Sin and Genuine Humility." *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 108–114.

Hock, Ronald F. "Lazarus and Micyllus: Greco-Roman Backgrounds to Luke 16: 19-31." *Journal of Biblical Literature* 106, no. 3 (1987): 447–463.

Hopwood, Christopher J., Wiebke Bleidorn, Ted Schwaba, and Sophia Chen. "Health, Environmental, and Animal Rights Motives for Vegetarian Eating." *PloS one* 15, no. 4 (2020): 1–20. doi:https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0230609.

Horner, David. "What It Takes to Be Great: Aristotle and Aquinas on Magnanimity." *Faith and Philosophy* 15, no. 4 (1998).

Hoy, Katherine M., John C. Clemens, and Alanna J. Moshfegh. "Intake of Fruit by Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2017-2018." *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 37 (June 2021). Accessed March 31, 2022. https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/37_Fruit_consumption_adults_1718.pdf.

———. "Intake of Vegetables by Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2017-2018." *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 39 (June 2021). Accessed March 31, 2022.

———. "Protein Intake of Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2015-2016." *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 29 (January 2021). Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/29_Protein_Intake_of_Adults_1516.pdf.

Hoy, Katherine M., John Clemens, and Alanna Moshfegh. "Estimated Protein Intake From Animal and Plant Foods by U.S. Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES, 2015–2016." *Current Developments in Nutrition* 5, no. Supplement 2 (2021): 133–133.

Hrynowski, Zach. "What Percentage of Americans Are Vegetarian?" *Gallup*. Accessed March 25, 2022. https://news.gallup.com/poll/267074/percentage-americans-vegetarian.aspx.

Huang, Tao, Bin Yang, Jusheng Zheng, Guipu Li, Mark L. Wahlqvist, and Duo Li. "Cardiovascular Disease Mortality and Cancer Incidence in Vegetarians: A Meta-Analysis and Systematic Review." *Annals of Nutrition and Metabolism* 60, no. 4 (2012): 233–240.

Huie, Wade P. "The Poverty of Abundance: From Text to Sermon on Luke 16:19–31." *Interpretation* 22, no. 4 (1968): 403–420.

Hunt, Cherryl, David G. Horrell, and Christopher Southgate. "An Environmental Mantra? Ecological Interest in Romans 8: 19–23 and a Modest Proposal for its Narrative Interpretation." *The Journal of Theological Studies* 59, no. 2 (2008): 546–579.

Hyer, Marjorie. "Sharp Decline Found Among Catholics Here Going to Confession." *The Washington Post*, 1987.

Indigenous Peoples' Global Summit on Climate Change. "The Anchorage Declaration." 2009. Accessed April 24, 2009. https://indigenousclimate.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=58&Itemid=58&lang=en.

Jenkins, Willis. "After Lynn White: Religious Ethics and Environmental Problems." *Journal of Religious Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2009): 283–309.

———. "Atmospheric Powers, Global Injustice, and Moral Incompetence: Challenges to Doing Social Ethics from Below." *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 34, no. 1 (2014): 65–82.

———. "Ecological Management, Cultural Reform, and Religious Creativity," 2010.

———. *Ecologies of Grace: Environmental Ethics and Christian Theology*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2013.

Jenkins, Willis. “Feasts of the Anthropocene: Beyond Climate Change as Special Object in the Study of Religion.” *South Atlantic Quarterly* 116, no. 1 (2017): 69–81.

———. “Is Plutocracy Sinful?” *Anglican Theological Review* 98, no. 1 (2016): 33.

———. *The Future of Ethics: Sustainability, Social Justice, and Religious Creativity*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2013.

———. “The Mysterious Silence of Mother Earth in *Laudato Si'*.” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 46, no. 3 (2018): 441–462.

———. “The Turn to Virtue in Climate Ethics: Wickedness and Goodness in the Anthropocene.” *Environmental Ethics* 38, no. 1 (2016): 77–96.

John Paul II. *1990 World Day of Peace Message, The Ecological Crisis: A Common Responsibility*. https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/messages/peace/documents/hf_jp-ii_mes_19891208_xxiii-world-day-for-peace.html.

———. *Reconciliation and Penance*. December 2, 1984.

Johnson, Elizabeth A. *Ask the Beasts: Darwin and the God of Love*. London: Bloomsbury, 2014.

———. *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse*. 10th anniversary ed. New York: Crossroad, 2002.

———. *Truly Our Sister: A Theology of Mary in the Communion of Saints*. New York: Continuum, 2003.

Johnson, Kelly. “Aren't Humans Stewards of God's Creation?” In *A Faith Encompassing All Creation: Addressing Commonly Asked Questions aout Christian Care for the Environment*, edited by Trip York and Andy Alexis-Baker, 78–88. The Peaceable Kingdom Series 3. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2014.

Jones, Christopher D., and Conor M. Kelly. “Sloth: America's Ironic Structural Vice.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 37, no. 2 (2017): 117–134.

Kahl, Brigitte. “Fratricide and Ecocide: Rereading Genesis 2–4.” In *Earth Habitat: Eco-Injustice and the Church's Response*, edited by Dieter Hessel and Larry Rasmussen, 40–58. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2001.

Kallhoff, Angela, and Maria Schörgenhumer. “The Virtues of Gardening: A Relational Account of Environmental Virtues.” *Environmental Ethics* 39, no. 2 (2017): 193–210.

Karris, Robert J., OFM. “Mary's Magnificat.” *The Bible Today* 39 (no. 3 2001): 145–149.

Katz, Michael B. “The ‘Underclass’ Debate: Views from History.” In *The ‘Underclass’ Debate*, 3–24. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2018.

Kawall, Jason. “A History of Environmental Ethics.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, edited by Stephen M. Gardiner and Allen Thompson. Oxford University Press, 2015. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941339.013.6.

———. “Environmental Virtue Ethics.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, edited by Nancy E. Snow. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199385195.013.24.

Keenan, James F. “7 Reasons for Doing Virtue Ethics Today.” In *Virtue and the Moral Life: Theological and Philosophical Perspectives*, edited by Kathryn Getek Soltis and William Werpehowski, 3–18. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014.

Keenan, James F. *A History of Catholic Moral Theology in the Twentieth Century: from Confessing Sins to Liberating Consciences*. London: Continuum, 2010.

———. "Bible and Ethics/Modern Life." In *The Jerome Biblical Commentary for the Twenty-First Century*, 3rd ed., edited by John J. Collins, Gina Hens-Piazza, Barbara Reid OP, and Donald Senior CP. London: Bloomsbury, 2022.

———. "Can a Wrong Action Be Good?: The Development of Theological Opinion on the Erroneous Conscience." *Église et théologie* 24, no. 2 (1993): 205–219.

———. "Jesuit Hospitality?" In *Promise Renewed: Jesuit Higher Education for a New Millennium*, 230–244. Chicago, IL: Jesuit Way, 1999.

———. *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts from the Catholic Tradition*. 2nd ed. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield, 2010.

———. *Moral Wisdom: Lessons and Texts From the Catholic Tradition*. 3rd ed. Rowman & Littlefield, 2016.

———. "Prophetic Pragmatism and Descending to Matters of Detail." *Theological Studies* 79, no. 1 (2018): 128–145.

———. "Proposing Cardinal Virtues." *Theological Studies* 56, no. 4 (1995): 709–729.

———. "Raising Expectations on Sin." *Theological Studies* 77, no. 1 (2016): 165–180.

———. "Redeeming Conscience." *Theological Studies* 76, no. 1 (2015): 129–147.

———. "The Virtue of Self-Esteem." *Church* 9 (1993): 37–38.

———. "To Follow and to Form over Time: A Phenomenology of Conscience." In *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, edited by David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer, 1–13. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. "Vatican II and Theological Ethics." *Theological Studies* 74, no. 1 (2013): 162–190.

———. "Virtue Ethics." In *Christian Ethics: An Introduction*, edited by Bernard Hoose, 84–94. London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998.

———. "Virtues for Civil Society: Humility." *Commonweal*, June 2016. `https://www.commonwealmagazine.org/virtues-civil-society-humility`.

———. "What Does Virtue Ethics Bring to Genetics?" In *Genetics, Theology, and Ethics*, edited by Lisa Sowle Cahill, 97–113. New York: Crossroad Publishing Company, 2005.

———. "Whose Perfection Is It Anyway?: A Virtuous Consideration of Enhancement." *Christian Bioethics* 5, no. 2 (1999): 104–120.

Keenan, James F., and Thomas R. Kopfensteiner. "Moral Theology out of Western Europe." *Theological Studies* 59, no. 1 (1998): 107–135.

Kellenberger, James. "Humility." *American Philosophical Quarterly* 47, no. 4 (2010): 321.

Klein, Ezra, and Susannah Locke. "40 Maps that Explain Food in America." *Vox*, June 9, 2014. `https://www.vox.com/a/explain-food-america`.

Knight, George W. "Luke 16:19-31: The Rich Man and Lazarus." *Review and Expositor* 94, no. 2 (1997): 277–283.

Knox, Peter. "*Laudato Si'*, Planetary Boundaries and Africa: Saving the Planet." In *The Church We Want: African Catholics Look to Vatican III*, edited by Agbonkhianmeghe E Orobator, 239–242. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016.

Knox, Peter. “Planetary Boundaries: Africa’s Vulnerabilities and Resilience.” Chap. 7 in *Fragile World: Ecology and the Church*, edited by William T. Cavanaugh, 5:112–125. Studies in World Catholicism. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018.

———. “Sustainable Mining in South Africa: A Concept in Search of a Theory.” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:117–130. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. “Theology, Ecology, and Africa: No Longer Strange Bedfellows.” In *Reconciliation, Justice, and Peace: the Second African Synod*, edited by Agbonkhianmeghe E. Orobator, 159–170. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.

Koterski, Joseph. “Thomas More and the Prayer for Detachment”.” *Moreana* 52 (Number 199-200), nos. 1-2 (2015): 61–82. doi:10.3366/more.2015.52.1-2.6.

Kovacs, Brittany, Lindsey Miller, Martin C. Heller, and Donald Rose. “The Carbon Footprint of Dietary Guidelines Around the World: A Seven Country Modeling Study.” *Nutrition Journal* 20, no. 1 (2021): 15–10.

Kyung, Chung Hyun. *Struggle to Be the Sun Again: Introducing Asian Women’s Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1990.

Lam, Joseph. *Patterns of Sin in the Hebrew Bible: Metaphor, Culture, and the Making of a Religious Concept*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016.

———. “The Concept of Sin in the Hebrew Bible.” *Religion Compass* 12, nos. 3-4 (2018): 1–11. doi:10.1111/rec3.12260.

Lane, Belden C. “Desert Attentiveness, Desert Indifference: Countercultural Spirituality in the Desert Fathers and Mothers.” *Cross Currents* 44, no. 2 (1994): 193–206.

Lawler, Michael G., and Todd A. Salzman. “Virtue Ethics: Natural and Christian.” *Theological Studies* 74, no. 2 (2013): 442–473.

Lebacqz, Karen, and Shirley Macemon. “Vicious Virtue? Patience, Justice and Salaries in the Church.” In *Conscience and Calling: Ethical Reflections on Catholic Women’s Church Vocations*, edited by Anne E. Patrick, 280–292. London: Bloomsbury T&T Clark, 2013.

Leck, Leander E. “Romans.” In *The Harper Collins Study Bible: New Revised Standard Version Including Apocryphal Deuterocanonical Books*, rev. ed., edited by Harold W. Attridge, 1909–1931. New York: Oxford University Press, 2006.

Lee, Elizabeth. “The Virtues of Humility and Magnanimity and the Church’s Response to the Health Care and Gay Marriage Debates.” In *Religion, Economics, and Culture in Conflict and Conversation*, edited by Laurie M. Cassidy and Maureen H. O’Connell, 32–47. *Annual Publication of the College Theology Society; v. 56*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2011.

Lee, Seung Hee, Latetia V. Moore, Sohyun Park, Diane M. Harris, and Heidi M. Blanck. “Adults Meeting Fruit and Vegetable Intake Recommendations - United States, 2019.” *MMWR. Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report* 71, no. 1 (2022): 1–9.

Lentz, Garrett, Sean Connelly, Miranda Mirosa, and Tim Jowett. “Gauging Attitudes and Behaviours: Meat Consumption and Potential Reduction.” *Appetite* 127 (2018): 230–241.

Lisa Damour. “Why Girls Beat Boys at School and Lose to Them at the Office.” *The New York Times*, February 7, 2019, 1.

Los Obispos de Bolivia. “El Universo, Don de Dios Para La Vida: Carta Pastoral sobre Medio Ambiente y Desarrollo Humano en Bolivia.” Accessed January 14, 2019. `http://historico.cpalsj.org/wp-content/uploads/anos_anteriores/CartaPastoralObisposBoliviaEcologia.pdf`.

Lothes Biviano, Erin. “By Night in a Pillar of Fire: A Theological Analysis of Renewable Energy.” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:234–249. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. *Inspired Sustainability: Planting Seeds for Action*. Ecology & Justice. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2016.

———. “Working Together to Address the Climate Crisis.” In *The Theological and Ecological Vision of Laudato Si’: Everything is Connected*, edited by Vincent J. Miller, 235–251. London: Bloomsbury, 2017.

———. “Worldviews on Fire.” *CrossCurrents* 62, no. 4 (2012): 495–511.

Lothes Biviano, Erin, David Cloutier, Elaine Padilla, Christiana Z. Peppard, and Jame Schaefer. “Catholic Moral Traditions and Energy Ethics for the Twenty-First Century.” *Journal of Moral Theology* 5, no. 1 (2016): 1–36.

Lott, Micah. “Does Human Nature Conflict with Itself?: Human Form and the Harmony of the Virtues.” *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly* 87, no. 4 (2013): 657–683.

Lowrey, Annie. “Your Diet Is Cooking the Planet.” *The Atlantic*, April 6, 2021.

Lushombo, Léocadie. “Deforestation in the Democratic Republic of Congo and Climate Change: An Ethical Analysis in Light of *Laudato Si’*.” *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 724–740.

Lusk, Jayson L., and F. Bailey Norwood. “Some Vegetarians Spend Less Money on Food, Others Don’t.” *Ecological Economics* 130 (2016): 232–242.

Macaskill, Grant. “Christian Scriptures and the Formation of Intellectual Humility.” *Journal of Psychology and Theology* 46, no. 4 (2018): 243–252.

Macdiarmid, Jennie I. “Seasonality and Dietary Requirements: Will Eating Seasonal Food Contribute to Health and Environmental Sustainability?” *Proceedings of the Nutrition Society* 73, no. 3 (2014): 368–375.

MacIntyre, Alasdair C. *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory*. Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame Press, 1981.

Mahoney, John. *The Making of Moral Theology: A Study of the Roman Catholic Tradition*. Martin D’Arcy memorial lectures; 1981-2. New York: Oxford University Press, 1987.

Marcellus, Lindsay M. “The Emerging Vocation of a Moral Theologian: Commonalities across Contexts.” In *The Catholic Ethicist in the Local Church*, edited by Antonio Autiero and Laurenti Magesa, 6:293–312. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2018.

Margaret, D.J. “Interrelated Option for the Poor and the Earth.” *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 658–669.

Markowski, Kelly L., and Susan Roxburgh. "“If I became a vegan, my family and friends would hate me:” Anticipating vegan stigma as a barrier to plant-based diets." *Appetite* 135 (2019): 1–9.

Marrero, Abrania, and Josiemer Mattei. "Reclaiming Traditional, Plant-based, Climate-resilient Food Systems in Small Islands." *Lancet. Planetary Health* 6, no. 2 (2022): e171–e179.

Massingale, Bryan N. "Conscience Formation and the Challenge of Unconscious Racial Bias." In *Conscience and Catholicism: Rights, Responsibilities, and Institutional Responses*, edited by David DeCosse and Kristin E. Heyer, 53–68. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

———. "The Assumptions of White Privilege and What We Can Do about It: Amy Cooper knew exactly what she was doing. We all do. And that's the problem." *National Catholic Reporter* 56, no. 18 (2020): 1.

———. "The Scandal of Poverty: 'Cultured Indifference' and the Option for the Poor Post-Katrina." *Journal of Religion & Society* 10 (2008): 55–72.

McDermott, Jim. "Catholics: Stop eating fancy fish on Fridays during Lent." *America Magazine*, March 4, 2022. Accessed August 9, 2022. `https://www.americamagazine.org/faith/2022/03/04/lent-catholic-fish-sacrifice-242497`.

McFague, Sallie. *Blessed are the Consumers: Climate Change and the Practice of Restraint*. Minneapolis, MN: Fortress Press, 2013.

McFarland, Ian A. "The Fall and Sin." In *The Oxford Handbook of Systematic Theology*, edited by Kathryn Tanner, John Webster, and Iain Torrance. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2007.

McGuire, Shelley. "IOM (Institute of Medicine) and NRC (National Research Council). 2013. Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program: Examining the Evidence to Define Benefit Adequacy. Washington, DC: The National Academies Press, 2013." *Advances in Nutrition (Bethesda, Md.)* 4, no. 4 (2013): 477–478.

McKay, Stan. "An Aboriginal Perspective on the Integrity of Creation." In *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, edited by David G Hallman, 213–217. Maryknoll, NY: WCC Publications; Orbis Books, 1994.

———. "Together We Share." In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 47. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.

———. "When Earth is Property, Where is Covenant?" In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 32. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.

McMichael, Anthony J., John W Powles, Colin D Butler, and Ricardo Uauy. "Energy and Health 5 Food, Livestock Production, Energy, Climate Change, and Health." *Lancet* 370, no. 9594 (2007): 1253–1263.

McMinn, Lisa Graham. *To the Table: A Spirituality of Food, Farming, and Community*. Grand Rapids, MI: Brazos Press, 2016.

McWhirter, Jocelyn. “Between Text and Sermon: Luke 16:19-31.” *Interpretation* 69, no. 4 (2015): 463–465.

Meyers, Carol L. *Discovering Eve: Ancient Israelite Women in Context*. Oxford Paperbacks. New York: Oxford University Press, 1991.

Miles, Rebekah. “Valerie Saiving Reconsidered.” *Journal of Feminist Studies in Religion* 28, no. 1 (2012): 79–86.

Miller-McLemore, Bonnie J. *Let the Children Come: Reimagining Childhood from a Christian Perspective*. San Francisco: Jossey-Boss, 2003.

Miller, John W. “Is It Time for Catholics to Stop Eating Meat?” *America Magazine*, December 7, 2021.

Minteer, Ben A. “Environmental Ethics, Sustainability Science, and the Recovery of Pragmatism.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Environmental Ethics*, edited by Stephen M. Gardiner and Allen Thompson. Oxford University Press, 2015. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199941339.013.46.

Mohamed, Besheer. “New estimates show U.S. Muslim population continues to grow,” January 3, 2018. Accessed August 5, 2022. https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2018/01/03/new-estimates-show-u-s-muslim-population-continues-to-grow/.

Morrow, Maria C. *Sin in the Sixties*. Washington, DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2016.

Morton, Suzanne, Donna G. Rhodes, and Alanna J. Moshfegh. “Convenience Stores: Source of Food/Beverages among Adults, What We Eat in America, NHANES 2013-2016.” *Food Surveys Research Group Dietary Data Brief*, no. 27 (June 2020). Accessed March 31, 2022. https://www.ars.usda.gov/ARSUserFiles/80400530/pdf/DBrief/27_Convenience_Stores_Food_and_Beverages_among_Adults_1316.pdf.

Moskin, Julia, Brad Plumer, Rebecca Lieberman, and Eden Weingart. “Your Questions About Food and Climate Change, Answered.” *The New York Times*, April 15, 2022.

Murphy, Debra Dean. “Just Eating? Bodies, Gifts, and Daily Bread.” In *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, edited by Tobias Winright, 427–436. London: T&T Clark, 2021. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.5040/9780567677204.

Murphy, Jeffrie G. “Humility as a Moral Virtue.” In *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, edited by Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook, 19–32. New York: Routledge, 2016. Accessed May 15, 2019. https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch1.

Music, Janet, Erica Finch, Pallavi Gone, Sandra Toze, Sylvain Charlebois, and Lisa Mullins. “Pandemic Victory Gardens: Potential for Local Land Use Policies.” *Land Use Policy* 109 (2021): 105600.

Muyebe, Alex, and Peter Henriot. “What *Laudato Si’* Means to Malawi.” *Asian Horizons* 9, no. 4 (2015): 741–747.

Narayanan, Vasudha. “Ecology and Religion: Ecology and Hinduism.” In *Encyclopedia of Religion*, 2nd ed., edited by Lindsay Jones, 4:2620–2624. Detroit, MI: Macmillan Reference USA, 2005.

National Conference of Catholic Bishops. *Pastoral Statement on Penance and Abstinence (November 27, 1966)*. Washington, DC: National Conference of Catholic Bishops, 1996.

National Ocean Service. "What Is Eutrophication?" Accessed March 18, 2022. https://oceanservice.noaa.gov/facts/eutrophication.html.

Nel, Marius, and Friedrich Wilhelm Horn. "Sin." In *The Oxford Encyclopedia of the Bible and Ethics*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2015. doi:10.1093/acref:obso/9780199829910.013.0313.

Nelson, James. "On Doing Body Theology." *Theology & Sexuality* 1, no. 2 (1995): 38–60.

"Your Child's Self-Esteem (for Parents)." *Nemours KidsHealth*. Accessed February 15, 2022. https://kidshealth.org/en/parents/self-esteem.html.

New Zealand Catholic Bishops' Conference. "Statement on Environmental Issues." Accessed January 14, 2019. https://www.catholic.org.nz/about-us/bishops-statements/statement-on-environmental-issues/.

Newsom, Carol A. "Common Ground: An Ecological Reading of Genesis 2-3." In *The Earth Story in Genesis*, 2:61–72. Sheffield, England: Sheffield Academic Press, 2000.

Niebuhr, Reinhold. *The Nature and Destiny of Man: A Christian Interpretation*. Vol. I. Human Nature. Gifford Lectures. New York: C. Scribner's Sons, 1943.

Nisbet, Elizabeth K., John M. Zelenski, and Steven A. Murphy. "The Nature Relatedness Scale: Linking Individuals' Connection With Nature to Environmental Concern and Behavior." *Environment and Behavior* 41, no. 5 (2009): 715–740.

Nolte, C.G, P.D. Dolwick, N. Fann, L.W. Horowitz, V. Naik, R.W. Pinder, T.L. Spero, D.A. Winner, and L.H. Ziska. "Air Quality." In *Impacts, Risks, and Adaptation in the United States: Fourth National Climate Assessment, Volume II*, edited by D.R. Reidmiller, C.W. Avery, D.R.. Easterling, K.E. Kunkel, K.L.M. Lewis, T.K. Maycock, and B.C. Stewart, 512–538. Washington, DC: U.S. Global Change Research Program, 2018. doi:10.7930/NCA4.2018.CH13.

Northcott, Michael S. "Eucharistic Eating and Why Many Early Christians Preferred Fish." In *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*, edited by David Grummet and Rachel Muers, 232–246. T&T Clark Theology. London: T&T Clark, 2008.

Nussbaum, Martha C. "Non-Relative Virtues: An Aristotelian Approach." *Midwest Studies in Philosophy* XIII (1988): 32–53.

O'Connell, Gerard. "Updated: Gutiérrez: 'The Vatican Never Condemned the Theology of Liberation'." *America*, 2015.

O'Connell, Maureen H. "After White Supremacy?: The Viability of Virtue Ethics for Racial Justice." *Journal of Moral Theology* 3, no. 1 (2014): 83–104.

———. "Catholics and racism: from examination of conscience to examination of culture." *National Catholic Reporter*, March 30, 2012.

O'Day, Gail R. "Singing Woman's Song: A Hermeneutic of Liberation." *Currents in Theology and Mission* 12, no. 4 (1985): 203–210.

Obi, Edward Osang. "Creational Solidarity Strengthens the Weakest Link: Energy Ethics and Climate Change in Sub-Saharan Africa," 2016, 1–12. Accessed August 31, 2022.

https://drive.google.com/file/d/1jBwLcfLqEqQfmITFUVG5UQC4muc7xwdv/view.

Obi, Edward Osang. “Fragile Ecosystems and the Pressures of Anthropogenia: Recovering a Theo-ethic of Relationality in Our Common Home.” In *Fragile World: Ecology and the Church*, edited by William T. Cavanaugh, 5:175–191. Studies in World Catholicism. Eugene, OR: Cascade Books, 2018.

———. “The Exploitation of Natural Resources: Reconfiguring Economic Relations Toward a Community-of-Interests Perspective.” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:223–233. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Okano, Haruko K. “Theological Ethics in Relation to Japanese Religions Regarding Moral Responsibility.” In *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, edited by James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara, 194–204. Bangalore, India: Dharmaram Publications, 2016.

Olson, Dennis T. “Genesis.” In *The New Interpreter’s Bible One-Volume Commentary*, edited by David L. Petersen, Beverly R. Gaventa, and Lori Colleen Patton. Nashville, TN: Abingdon Press, 2010.

———. “Untying the Knot? Masculinity, Violence, and the Creation-Fall Story of Genesis 2–4.” In *Engaging the Bible in a Gendered World: An Introduction to Feminist Biblical Interpretation in Honor of Katharine Doob Sakenfeld*, edited by Linda Day and Carolyn Pressler, 73–86. Nashville, TN: Westminster John Knox Press, 2006.

Orth, Ulrich, Richard W. Robins, and Christopher J. Soto. “Tracking the Trajectory of Shame, Guilt, and Pride Across the Life Span.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 99, no. 6 (2010): 1061–1071.

“Daily meat consumption per person, 2013.” *Our World in Data*. https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/daily-meat-consumption-per-person.

“Food Balance Sheets: Meat - Food supply quantity (kg/capita/yr) (FAO (2017)).” *Our World in Data*. https://ourworldindata.org/grapher/daily-meat-consumption-per-person?tab=table.

Pakaluk, Michael. “The Meaning of Aristotelian Magnanimity.” *Oxford Studies in Ancient Philosophy* 26 (2004): 241–275.

Pan, An, Qi Sun, Adam M. Bernstein, JoAnn E. Manson, Walter C. Willett, and Frank B. Hu. “Changes in Red Meat Consumption and Subsequent Risk of Type 2 Diabetes Mellitus: Three Cohorts of US Men and Women.” *JAMA Internal Medicine* 173, no. 14 (2013): 1–8.

Paul VI. *Paenitemini: Apostolic Constitution on Fast and Abstinence*. February 17, 1966.

Peppard, Christiana Z., Julia Watts Belser, Erin Lothes Biviano, and James B Martin-Schramm. “What Powers Us?: A Comparative Religious Ethics of Energy Sources, Power, and Privilege.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 36, no. 1 (2016): 3–25.

Pew Research Center. “Jewish Americans in 2020,” May 11, 2021. Accessed August 5, 2022. `https://www.pewresearch.org/religion/2021/05/11/the-size-of-the-u-s-jewish-population/`.

———. *U.S. Catholics Open to Non-Traditional Families*. February 9, 2015.

Piazza, Jared, Matthew B. Ruby, Steve Loughnan, Mischel Luong, Juliana Kulik, Hanne M. Watkins, and Mirra Seigerman. “Rationalizing Meat Consumption: The 4Ns.” *Appetite* 91 (2015): 114–128.

Pickhardt, Carl E. “Adolescence and Making Parents Proud.” *Psychology Today*, April 2015. `https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/surviving-your-childs-adolescence/201504/adolescence-and-making-parents-proud`.

Pieper, Josef. *The Four Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, Temperance*. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1965.

Plaskow, Judith. *Sex, Sin, and Grace: Women’s Experience and the Theologies of Reinhold Niebuhr and Paul Tillich*. Washington, DC: University Press of America, 1980.

Policy, Development, Analysis Division of the Department of Economic, and Social Affairs of the United Nations Secretariat. “Country Classification: Statistical annex to *World Economic Situation and Prospects*.” 2014. Accessed September 3, 2022. `https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/wesp/wesp_current/2014wesp_country_classification.pdf`.

Poore, J., and T. Nemecek. “Reducing Food’s Environmental Impacts through Producers and Consumers.” *Science* 360, no. 6392 (2018): 987–992.

Popovic, Srdja, and Matthew Miller. *Blueprint for Revolution: How to Use Rice Pudding, Lego Men, and Other Nonviolent Techniques to Galvanize Communities, Overthrow Dictators, or Simply Change the World*. New York: Random House, 2015.

Porter, Jean. “Sin, Sickness, and Transgression: Medieval Perspectives on Sin and Their Significance Today,” 115–131. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2014.

———. “The Unity of the Virtues and the Ambiguity of Goodness: A Reappraisal of Aquinas’s Theory of the Virtues.” *The Journal of Religious Ethics* 21, no. 1 (1993): 137–163.

Pradhan, Prajal, Matthias KB Lüdeke, Dominik E. Reusser, and Juergen P. Kropp. “Food Self-sufficiency across Scales: How Local Can We Go?” *Environmental Science & Technology* 48, no. 16 (2014): 9463–9470.

Putnam, Robert D. *Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community*. New York: Simon & Schuster, 2000.

Raluto, Reynaldo D. “The Intersection of Historical Injustices and Ecological Destruction in Asia: Enriching Catholic Social Teaching on Indigenous Peoples.” *Landas* 31, no. 1 (2017): 101–129.

Ray, Deepak K., Nathaniel D. Mueller, Paul C. West, and Jonathan A. Foley. “Yield Trends Are Insufficient to Double Global Crop Production by 2050.” *PloS one* 8, no. 6 (2013): 1–8. doi:`https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0066428`.

Regan, Tom. “Animal Rights: What’s in a Name?” In *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, edited by Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, 19:65–73. Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Reinhart, RJ. “Snapshot: Few Americans Vegetarian or Vegan.” *Gallup*. Accessed March 25, 2022. https://news.gallup.com/poll/238328/snapshot-few-americans-vegetarian-vegan.aspx.

Research and Markets. “United States Weight Loss & Diet Control Market Report 2021-2025,” March 26, 2021. Accessed April 25, 2022. https://www.globenewswire.com/news-release/2021/03/26/2199945/28124/en/United-States-Weight-Loss-Diet-Control-Market-Report-2021-2025.html?msclkid=a373a169c4b211ec86a472d4fe8873ae.

Reynolds, Brian K. “The Patristic and Medieval Roots of Mary’s Humility.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Mary*, edited by Chris Maunder. 2019. doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780198792550.013.45.

Richards, Norvin. “Is Humility a Virtue?” *American Philosophical Quarterly* 25, no. 3 (1988).

Ritchie, Hanna. “Dairy vs. plant-based milk: what are the environmental impacts?” *Our World in Data*, January 19, 2022. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://ourworldindata.org/environmental-impact-milks.

———. “Environmental Impacts of Food Data Explorer.” *Our World in Data*. Accessed April 4, 2022. https://ourworldindata.org/explorers/food-footprints.

———. “Food Production is Responsible for One-quarter of the World’s Greenhouse Gas Emissions.” Https://ourworldindata.org/food-ghg-emissions, *Our World in Data*, 2019.

———. “Half of the world’s habitable land is used for agriculture.” *Our World in Data*, November 11, 2019. https://ourworldindata.org/global-land-for-agriculture.

Ritchie, Hanna, and Max Roser. “CO2 and Greenhouse Gas Emissions.” *Our World in Data*, 2020. https://ourworldindata.org/co2-and-other-greenhouse-gas-emissions.

Ritchie, Hannah, David S. Reay, and Peter Higgins. “The Impact of Global Dietary Guidelines on Climate Change.” *Global Environmental Change* 49 (2018): 46–55.

Roberts, Michelle Voss. “Retrieving Humility: Rhetoric, Authority, and Divinization in Mechthild of Magdeburg.” *Feminist Theology* 18, no. 1 (2009): 50–73.

Roberts, Robert Campbell, and W. Jay Wood. “Humility.” Chap. 9 in *Intellectual Virtues: An Essay in Regulative Epistemology*, 236–256. Oxford and New York: Clarendon Press; Oxford University Press, 2007.

Rogers, Richard A. “Beasts, Burgers, and Hummers: Meat and the Crisis of Masculinity in Contemporary Television Advertisements.” *Environmental Communication* 2, no. 3 (2008): 281–301.

Rolston III, Holmes. “Feeding People versus Saving Nature.” In *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, edited by Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, 19:451–461. Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Romo, Vanessa. “Food prices are going up - and at levels Americans haven’t seen in decades.” *NPR*, March 31, 2022.

Rose, Donald, Martin C. Heller, Amelia M. Willits-Smith, and Robert J. Meyer. “Carbon Footprint of Self-selected US Diets: Nutritional, Demographic, and Behavioral Correlates.” *American Journal of Clinical Nutrition* 109, no. 3 (2019): 526–534.

Ross, W. D., and J. O. Urmson. *Nicomachean Ethics*. Rev. ed., edited by Jonathan Barnes, 1729–1867. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1984.

Rothgerber, Hank. “Real Men Don’t Eat (Vegetable) Quiche: Masculinity and the Justification of Meat Consumption.” *Psychology of Men & Masculinity* 14, no. 4 (2013): 363–375.

Ruberton, Peter M., Elliot Kruse, and Sonja Lyubomirsky. “Boosting State Humility via Gratitude, Self-Affirmation, and Awe.” In *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, edited by Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook, 260–272. New York: Routledge, 2016. Accessed May 10, 2019. `https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch18`.

Ruby, Matthew B., and Steven J. Heine. “Meat, Morals, and Masculinity.” *Appetite* 56, no. 2 (2011): 447–450.

Ruether, Rosemary Radford. *Sexism and God-Talk*. 159–192. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1983.

Saiving, Valerie. “The Human Situation: A Feminine View.” *The Journal of Religion* 40, no. 2 (1960): 100–112.

Saksena, Michelle J., Abigail M. Okrent, Tobenna D. Anekwe, Clare Cho, Christopher Dicken, Anne Effland, Howard Elitzak, et al. “America’s Eating Habits: Food Away From Home.” *Economic Information Bulletin*, no. 196 (September 2019). Accessed March 31, 2022. `https://www.ers.usda.gov/webdocs/publications/90228/eib-196.pdf?v=5202.5`.

Sanchez-Sabate, Ruben, and Joan Sabaté. “Consumer Attitudes Towards Environmental Concerns of Meat Consumption: A Systematic Review.” *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 16, no. 7 (2019): 1220.

Sandiyagu, V. R. “Magnificat: Liberation from Pride.” *Vidyajyoti* 76, no. 11 (2012): 832–846.

Schaefer, Jame. “Environmental Degradation, Social Sin, and the Common Good.” In *God, Creation, and Climate change: A Catholic Response to the Environmental Crisis*, edited by Richard W. Miller II. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2010.

Schifferdecker, Kathryn. “Of Stars and Sea Monsters: Creation Theology in the Whirlwind Speeches.” *Word & World* 31, no. 4 (2011): 357.

———. *Out of the Whirlwind: Creation Theology in the Book of Job*. Harvard Theological Studies ; no. 61. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2008.

Schweitzer, Don. “Pride as Sin and Virtue.” *Studies in Religion* 29, no. 2 (2000): 167–181.

Shaw, Teresa. “Vegetarianism, Heresy, and Asceticism in Late Ancient Christianity.” In *Eating and Believing: Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Vegetarianism and Theology*. T&T Clark theology. London: T&T Clark, 2008.

Silva, Christianna. “Food Insecurity In the U.S. By The Numbers.” *NPR*, September 27, 2020.

Simkins, Ronald A. “Work and Creation.” *Bible Today* 47 (2009): 225–231.

Simons, Marlise. “Vatican Reported to Have Sought Rebukes for 2 Other Latin Clerics.” *The New York Times*, 1984.

Singer, Peter. “The Place of Nonhumans in Environmental Issues.” In *Environmental Ethics: An Anthology*, edited by Andrew Light and Holmes Rolston III, 19:55–64. Blackwell Philosophy Anthologies. Malden, MA: Blackwell, 2003.

Smith, Lindsey P., Shu Wen Ng, and Barry M. Popkin. “Trends in US Home Food Preparation and Consumption: Analysis of National Nutrition Surveys and Time Use Studies from 1965-1966 to 2007-2008.” *Nutrition Journal* 12, no. 1 (2013): 45–45.

Snow, Nancy E. “Humility.” *The Journal of Value Inquiry* 29, no. 2 (1995): 203–216.

South African Catholic Bishops’ Conference. “Pastoral Statement on the Environmental Crisis (5 September 1999).” Accessed September 1, 2022. `https://web.archive.org/web/20050225010631/https://sacbc.org.za/environmentalcrisis.htm`.

Sweeny Block, Elizabeth. “Conscience.” Chap. Seven in *T&T Clark Handbook of Christian Ethics*, edited by Tobias Winwright, 71–82. London: T&T Clark, 2021.

———. “White Privilege and the Erroneous Conscience: Rethinking Moral Culpability and Ignorance.” *Journal of the Society of Christian Ethics* 39, no. 2 (2019): 357–374.

Szabo, Michelle. “Masculinities, Food and Cooking.” In *Routledge International Handbook of Masculinity Studies*, edited by Lucas Gottzén, Ulf Mellström, and Tamara Shefer, 404–413. Abingdon, U.K: Routledge, 2019.

Taillie, Lindsey Smith. “Who’s Cooking? Trends in US Home Food Preparation by Gender, Education, and Race/ethnicity from 2003 to 2016.” *Nutrition Journal* 17, no. 1 (2018): 41–41.

Takeuchi, Osamu, SJ. “Nature, Human Beings, and Nuclear Power in Japan.” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:23–26. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Tessman, Lisa. *Burdened Virtues: Virtue Ethics for Liberatory Struggles*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2005.

“Amazon Burns to Feed the World’s Beef Habit.” *The Christian Century* 136, no. 20 (2019): 7.

The Code of Canon Law. Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1983. `https://www.vatican.va/archive/cod-iuris-canonici/cic_index_en.html`.

The Dominican Episcopal Conference. “Pastoral Letter on the Relationship of Human Beings to Nature (January 21, 1987).” In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology and the Environment*, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter E. Grazer, translated by Sr. Helen Philipps MM, 259–274. Washington, DC: United States Catholic Conference, 1996.

The Morning Star. "'Locavores' meet the 100 mile challenge." January 19, 2010, 00b7.

Thomas, Margaret A. "Are Vegans the Same as Vegetarians? The Effect of Diet on Perceptions of Masculinity." *Appetite* 97 (2016): 79–86.

Timpe, Kevin, and Craig A. Boyd, eds. *Virtues and Their Vices*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Tinker, George E. "An American Indian Theological Response to Ecojustice." *Ecotheology*, no. 1 (2 1997): 85–109.

———. "Creation as Kin: An American Indian View." In *After Nature's Revolt: Eco-Justice and Theology*, edited by Dieter T Hessel, 144–153. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1992.

———. "Ecojustice and Justice: An American Indian Perspective." In *Theology for Earth Community: A Field Guide*, edited by Dieter T Hessel, 176–185. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.

———. "Native Americans and the Land: The End of Living, and the Beginning of Survival." *Word & World* 6, no. 1 (1986): 66–75.

———. "The Full Circle of Liberation: An American Indian Theology of Place." In *Ecotheology: Voices from South and North*, edited by David G Hallman, 218–224. Maryknoll, NY: WCC Publications; Orbis Books, 1994.

———. "The Integrity of Creation: Restoring Trinitarian Balance." *The Ecumenical Review* 41, no. 4 (1989): 527–536.

Tinker, Tink. "Towards an American Indian Indigenous Theology." *The Ecumenical Review* 62, no. 4 (2010): 340–351.

———. "Why I Do Not Believe in a Creator." In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 167–179. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.

Tobler, Christina, Vivianne H.M. Visschers, and Michael Siegrist. "Eating Green. Consumers' Willingness to Adopt Ecological Food Consumption Behaviors." *Appetite* 57, no. 3 (2011): 674–682.

Tonstad, Sigve K. *The Letter to the Romans: Paul among the Ecologists*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2017.

Tracy, Jessica L., and Richard W. Robins. "The Psychological Structure of Pride: A Tale of Two Facets." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 92, no. 3 (2007): 506–525.

Traina, Cristina L.H. "The Vice of "Virtue": Teaching Consumer Practice in an Unjust World." *Journal of Moral Theology* 7, no. 1 (2018): 13–27.

Trible, Phyllis. *God and the Rhetoric of Sexuality*. Overtures to Biblical Theology 2. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1978.

Truelove, Heather Barnes, and Craig Parks. "Perceptions of Behaviors that Cause and Mitigate Global Warming and Intentions to Perform these Behaviors." *Journal of Environmental Psychology* 32, no. 3 (2012): 246–259.

Tucker, Gene M. “The Peaceable Kingdom and a Covenant with the Wild Animals.” In *God Who Creates: Essays in Honor of W. Sibley Towner*, edited by William P. Brown and S. Dean McBride Jr., 215–225. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 2000.

———. “Rain on a Land where No One Lives: The Hebrew Bible on the Environment.” *Journal of Biblical Literature* 32, no. 1 (1997): 3–17.

U.S. Department of Agriculture. *Beans, Great Northern, Dry*, March 2014. Accessed April 4, 2022.

———. *Food Loss and Waste*. Accessed March 31, 2022. https://www.usda.gov/foodlossandwaste/consumers.

———. *MyPlate: Protein Foods*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/protein-foods.

U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025*. 9th ed. December 2020. DietaryGuidelines.gov.

U.S. Department of Agriculture Economic Research Service. “Agriculture and its related industries provide 10.3 percent of U.S. employment.” Accessed March 18, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=58282.

———. *Food Prices and Spending*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/ag-and-food-statistics-charting-the-essentials/food-prices-and-spending/.

———. *Food Security in the U.S.: Key Statistics & Graphs*. Accessed July 11, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/topics/food-nutrition-assistance/food-security-in-the-u-s/key-statistics-graphics/#insecure.

———. *Retail prices for beef, pork, poultry cuts, eggs, and dairy*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/meat-price-spreads/.

———. *Summary Findings: Food Price Outlook, 2022*. Accessed April 1, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-price-outlook/summary-findings/.

———. *U.S. Diets Are Out of Balance with Federal Recommendations*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/chart-gallery/gallery/chart-detail/?chartId=58334.

U.S. News & World Report. *Best Diets Overall 2022*. Accessed March 23, 2022. https://health.usnews.com/best-diet/best-diets-overall.

United Nations, Department of Economic, and Social Affairs Population Division. *World Population Prospects 2019: Ten Key Findings*, 2019.

United States Catholic Conference. *Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991)*. 1991. Accessed September 2, 2022. https://www.usccb.org/resources/renewing-earth.

———. “Renewing the Earth, A Pastoral Statement of the United States Catholic Conference (November 14, 1991).” In *And God Saw That It Was Good: Catholic Theology* *and the Environment*, edited by Drew Christiansen and Walter E Grazer, 223–243. Washington, DC, 1996.

United States Conference of Catholic Bishops. “Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence and the Common Good.” Accessed January 14, 2019. http://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/global-climate-change-a-plea-for-dialogue-prudence-and-the-common-good.cfm.

———. “Reflections on the Energy Crisis, A Statement by the Committee on Social Development and World Peace,” April 2, 1981. Accessed August 3, 2022. https://www.usccb.org/issues-and-action/human-life-and-dignity/environment/upload/moral-principles-from-1981-energy-statement.pdf.

Vatican Council II. *Decree on Priestly Training*. Washington, DC: National Catholic Welfare Conference, 1965.

Verhey, Allen. “Ethics in Scripture.” In *Dictionary of Scripture and Ethics*, edited by Joel B. Green, Jacqueline E. Lapsley, Rebekah Miles, and Allen Verhey, 5–12. Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Academic, 2011.

Wainwright, Elaine Mary. *Habitat, Human, and Holy: An Eco-rhetorical Reading of the Gospel of Matthew*. Sheffield, UK: Sheffield Phoenix Press, 2016.

Wang, Fenglei, Jusheng Zheng, Bo Yang, Jiajing Jiang, Yuanqing Fu, and Duo Li. “Effects of Vegetarian Diets on Blood Lipids: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis of Randomized Controlled Trials.” *Journal of the American Heart Association* 4, no. 10 (2015): 1–14. doi:https://doi.org/10.1161/JAHA.115.002408.

Ward, Kate. “Jesuit and Feminist Hospitality: Pope Francis’ Virtue Response to Inequality.” *Religions* 8, no. 4 (2017): 71.

———. “Virtue and Human Fragility.” *Theological Studies* 81, no. 1 (2020): 150–168.

Ward, Kate, and Kenneth R. Himes. “‘Growing Apart’: The Rise of Inequality.” *Theological Studies* 75, no. 1 (2014): 118–132.

Weare, Kenneth M. “Can Agriculture Be Sustainable in the United States?” In *Just Sustainability: Technology, Ecology, and Resource Extraction*, edited by Christiana Z. Peppard and Andrea Vicini, 3:31–51. Catholic Theological Ethics in the World Church 3. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 2015.

Weaver, Darlene Fozard. “Taking Sin Seriously.” *Journal of Religious Ethics* 31, no. 1 (2003): 45–74.

———. *The Acting Person and Christian Moral Life*. Moral Traditions Series. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2011.

Weaver, Jace. “From I-Hermeneutics to We-Hermeneutics: Native Americans and the Post-Colonial.” *SEMEIA*, 1996, 153–176.

———. “Introduction: Notes from a Miner’s Canary.” In *Defending Mother Earth: Native American Perspectives on Environmental Justice*, 1–28. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.

———. “Misfit Messengers: Indigenous Religious Traditions and Climate Change.” *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 83, no. 2 (2015): 320–335.

Weaver, Jace. “Triangulated Power and the Environment: Tribes, the Federal Government, and the States.” In *Defending mother earth: Native American perspectives on environmental justice*, 107–121. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1996.
Webb, Stephen H. “Whatever Happened to the Sin of Gluttony? Or: Why Christians Do Not Serve Meat with the Eucharist.” *Encounter* 58, no. 3 (1997): 243.
Weber, Christopher L, and H. Scott Matthews. “Food-Miles and the Relative Climate Impacts of Food Choices in the United States.” *Environmental Science & Technology* (Washington, DC) 42, no. 10 (2008): 3508–3513.
Wensveen, Louke van. “Cardinal Environmental Virtues: A Neurobiological Perspective.” Chap. 11 in *Environmental Virtue Ethics*, edited by Ronald Sandler and Philip Cafaro, 173–196. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2005.
———. *Dirty Virtues: The Emergence of Ecological Virtue Ethics*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books, 2000.
Westermann, Claus. *Creation*. Philadelphia, PA: Fortress Press, 1974.
White, Lynn. “The Historical Roots of Our Ecologic Crisis.” *Science* 155, no. 3767 (1967): 1203–1207.
Wildcat, Daniel R. “Just Creation: Enhancing Life in a World of Relatives.” In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 295–309. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.
Willett, Walter, Johan Rockström, Brent Loken, Marco Springmann, Tim Lang, Sonja Vermeulen, Tara Garnett, et al. “Food in the Anthropocene: The EAT–Lancet Commission on Healthy Diets from Sustainable Food Systems.” *Lancet* 393, no. 10170 (2019): 447–492.
Williams, Lisa A., and David DeSteno. “Pride and Perseverance: The Motivational Role of Pride.” *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 94, no. 6 (2008): 1007–1017.
———. “Pride: Adaptive Social Emotion or Seventh Sin?” *Psychological Science* 20, no. 3 (2009): 284–288.
Williamson, Katie, Aven Satre-Meloy, Katie Velasco, and Keven Green. “Climate Change Needs Behavior Change: Making the Case for Behavioral Solutions to Reduce Global Warming.” *Rare*, 2018. https://rare.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/2018-CCNBC-Report.pdf.
Wirzba, Norman. *Food and Faith: A Theology of Eating*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011.
Woodley, Randy. “Early Dialogue in the Community of Creation.” In *Buffalo Shout, Salmon Cry: Conversations on Creation, Land Justice, and Life Together*, edited by Steve Heinrichs, 92–103. Harrisonburg, VA: Herald Press, 2013.
“IARC Monographs Evaluate Consumption of Red and Processed Meat.” *World Food Regulation Review* 25, no. 6 (2015): 30.
Worthington, Everett L. “Political Humility: A Post-Modern Reconceptualization.” In *Handbook of Humility: Theory, Research, and Applications*, edited by Everett L. Worthington, Don E. Davis, and Joshua N. Hook, 76–90. New York: Routledge, 2016. Accessed May 15, 2019. https://www.routledgehandbooks.com/doi/10.4324/9781315660462.ch5.

Xalxo, Prem. "Alarming Situation of the Tribals and Indigenous Peoples Today." *Jeevadhara: A Journal of Christian Interpretation* XLVI, no. 274 (2016): 9–24.

———. "God-Centered Approach to Creation: A Need of the Hour." *Jeevadhara* XLII, no. 252 (2012): 462–476.

———. "Poor, Periphery and Ecological Concerns in *Laudato Si'*: A Moral-Pastoral Appraisal." In *Doing Asian Theological Ethics in a Cross-Cultural and an Interreligious Context*, edited by James F. Keenan Yiu Sing Lúcás Chan and Shaji George Kochuthara, 237–249. Bangalore: Dharmaram Publications, 2016.

———. "Responses to Ecological Challenges: An Indian Perspective." In *New Horizons in Christian Ethics: Reflections from India*, edited by Scaria Kanniyakonil, 461–482. Bangalore: Association of Moral Theologians of India, 2014.

Yee, Gale A. "The Silenced Speak: Hannah, Mary, and Global Poverty1." *Feminist Theology* 21, no. 1 (2012): 40–57.

Yokoyama, Yoko, Kunihiro Nishimura, Neal D Barnard, Misa Takegami, Makoto Watanabe, Akira Sekikawa, Tomonori Okamura, and Yoshihiro Miyamoto. "Vegetarian Diets and Blood Pressure: A Meta-analysis." *JAMA Internal Medicine* 174, no. 4 (2014): 577–587. ISSN: 2168-6106.

Zaraska, Marta. "This is Why Vegetarianism Didn't Catch on Until Recently." *Time*, February 23, 2016, 1. Accessed July 8, 2022. `https://time.com/4220270/vegetarianism-history-meathooked/`.

Zelenski, John M., and Elizabeth K. Nisbet. "Happiness and Feeling Connected: The Distinct Role of Nature Relatedness." *Environment and Behavior* 46, no. 1 (2014): 3–23.