

FAITH AND COGNITION IN THE ENCYCLIC *FIDES AND RATIO*

Ivan Tadić

UDK 215 "Fides et ratio"

Before I start discussing this subject, here are a few words about the encyclic. Although this encyclic makes a bridge between theology and philosophy, it is, regarding its statement, more philosophical than theological, but also, it is theological. Its philosophical tenet is multiple: ontological and metaphysical, because it points out the truth about being and its foundation, than, it is existentialistic, and that is Christian-centric existential, because it searches for the answers to the questions about the meaning of human life and finds it in Jesus Christ. As for cognition, the encyclic clearly emphasizes that man is capable of knowing the truth. Apart from that, the encyclic is stated a sort of criticism of some schools of modern and contemporary philosophy: nihilism, neo-positivism, agnosticism and partly idealism.

Encyclic states that modern philosophy made a great contribution for directing its attention to man, but it forgot to direct its research to being. And, that modern philosophy is directing its research to human cognition, instead of confirming that man is capable of knowing truth, it gave advantage to emphasizing the boundaries and conditions of cognition.¹

That produced various forms of agnosticism and general relativism, including some sciences, which tend to undermine those truths that man has been sure he achieved.²

Although the encyclic is more philosophical than theological it is written in an understandable way, so that it can be understood by those to whom it is directed, including all of those who understand some of the philosophical terminology. I believe that this is an advantage of the encyclic, not a disadvantage.

The intention of this encyclic was not Heraclitian,³ to be as difficult to understand as possible but to be as understandable as possible. Anyway, the purpose of philosophy, in essence, is to clear up the reality, and the clearing

1 Cf. IOANNIS PAULI PP. II, *Litterae encyclicae. Fides et ratio*, Vatikan 1998, No. 5, Further in the notes we will refer to this encyclic as FR.

2 Cf. FR, No 5.

3 Diogenes Laertius informs us that Heraclitus wrote the book *On Nature* (ascribed to him) imprecisely in order to make it understandable only to those who can really understand it.

should not stay within some language that would be understandable only to the one who speaks it, but also to those who read it or listen to it. Anyway, the language that would not be understandable to anybody except the one that speaks it, or reads it would lose any sense.

1. *Human Reason*

For philosophic terminological exactness, it should be mentioned, and I believe it is important, that the Pope in the encyclical does not make some speculative differentiation between reason and mind.⁴ In this encyclical, he simply uses the terms reason (intellectus)⁵, mind (ratio)⁶, and even sense (mens)⁷ as synonyms. In this exposition, I will follow to the encyclical.

The title of the encyclical says enough about how ratio is important for the man of faith. That what makes man a philosopher is exactly his reason. It represents here one unavoidable wing which human spirit, along with the fold of faith, elevates towards the contemplation of truth, which the Pope picturesquely said in the beginning of the encyclical. In the relation between the reason and belief unavoidably is that “*et*” which constitutively connects one wing with the other in searching for and finding truth.

It is interesting that in the history of the philosophical thought, there were those who doubted in the existence of everything and then there were those

Cf. D. LAERTIJE, *Životi i mišljenja istaknutih filozofa (Lives and Thoughts of Important Philosophers)*, Beograd 1973, IX, 6.

4 In philosophy, reason is usually differentiated from mind. Reason (intellectus, Verstand), if defined according to the Latin word, it designates the ability of direct understanding, which enables indirect understanding, which is a property of mind (ratio, Vernunft). However, explaining these terms is not unambiguous. So, for example in St. Thomas, reason (intellectus) and mind (ratio), although they are not different powers, get their name from different activities: “Intellectus enim nomen sumitur ab intima penetratione veritatis; nomen autem rationis ab inquisitione et discursu.” *Summa Theologiae*, II-II, q 49, a 5 ad 3. “Respondeo dicendum quod ratio et intellectus in homine non possunt esse diversae potentiae. Quod manifeste cognoscitur, si utriusque actus consideretur. Intelliger enim est simpliciter veritatem intelligibilem apprehendere; rationari autem est procedere de uno intellecto ad aliud, ad veritatem intelligibilem cognoscendam.” *Op. cit.* I, q 79, a 8. In Kant’s terminology, reason (Verstand) means the power to reason, i. e., the power of unity of phenomena by means of rules. It refers to experience, and mind (Vernunft) is the power of unity of the rules of reason and principles. Mind never refers first to experience, but to reason. “Der Verstand mag ein Vermögen der Einheit der Erscheinungen vermittelst der Regeln sein, so ist die Vernunft das Vermögen der Einheit der Verstandesregeln unter Principen.” I. KANT, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, A 302, B35, Stuttgart 1989, Reclam, p. 384.

5 Cf. for example FR, No. 30.

6 Cf. for example FR, No. 4.

7 Cf. FR, No. 7.

who denied any possibility of cognition or who tried to termine its boundaries. Yet as far as I know nobody radically denied the possibility of thought, speculation, i. e., the basic fact of thought, while thinking. The fact of speculation, which belongs to human reason, is undoubtedly the foundation of all philosophical systems. Descartes probably took the thought, *cogito*⁸ as a starting foundation for proving its own existence, for *sum*. Moreover, if man speculates, than we could *post factum establish the claim that he is capable of speculation*.

That is why the Pope emphasizes exactly this unquestionable fact concerning reason and it is that man is essentially capable of speculation, which belongs to human intellect, and by means of that activity, man achieves systematic knowledge.⁹

He exceptionally invites philosophers not to lose belief in the capabilities of human mind,¹⁰ however, this human mind is nevertheless wounded and weakened by sin, from what follows that not even one form of philosophy can claim the ability to understand all the truth, or to fully interpret man, the world, and the human relation to God.¹¹

That is why the Pope does not dogmatize any philosophy, although he exemplifies certain Christian philosophers that, in their research, reached certain horizons of clearing up being, by harmonizing reason and belief, among the church fathers: St. Grgur Nasian, St. Augustine, and among the teachers of the Middle Ages, St. Anselm, St. Bonaventura, St. Thomas and among recent thinkers J. H. Newman, A. Rosmini, J. Martain, E. Gilson, E. Stein and others.¹²

The intellect must search what it likes, and as St. Anselm emphasizes, that which it likes especially, it especially likes to know about.¹³ This search is not without a theme, but is directed towards truth, and that longing for truth urges the mind always to go further. Here we would add that it is the ontological constitution of reason, and its only task is to think, search and find truth, critically examine it and on that certain truth build the building of its new knowledge, and if necessary, a new search. Reason has no other purpose. Man wishes to achieve the certainty of truth and its absolute value.¹⁴

8 Descartes' *cogito* does not mean only thinking, but "all that happens in our consciousness, if we are aware of it. So, not only understanding, wanting, imagining, but also here is sensing the same as thinking." R. DESCARTES, *Osnovi filozofije (Basis of Philosophy)*, 9, Zagreb 1951, p. 67.

9 Cf. FR, No. 4.

10 Cf. FR, No. 56.

11 Cf. FR, No. 51.

12 Cf. FR, No. 74.

13 Cf. FR, No. 42.

14 Cf. FR, No. 27.

The encyclic emphasizes that substance of philosophical conceptions can be spotted in history, such as the principle of non-contradiction, finality, causality, the understanding of a person as an intelligent and free subject along with its possibility to know God, truth, and the good. These conceptions should form a standpoint for various philosophical schools.¹⁵

The vulnerability of human mind and its limitations do not mean that reason must stay within a constant doubt, or direct its research only within the limits of consciousness. Contrary to that, the Pope claims that in spite of its vulnerability, man can nevertheless, by the ability of his mind, rise above the contingent towards transcendence. This ability to rise above the contingent is not something man acquired by chance, or something that arose incidentally, but is present in the prime plan of creation, this ability of mind to rise above the perceptual world to understand the source of everything, the Creator.¹⁶

We could add here that exactly this simultaneously united bipolarization, on one side, the limitation and vulnerability and, on the other side, the transcendental possibility of mind forces mind to go further in its research. Namely, if mind were only limited and wounded but without its transcendental ability, than it would never be able to go further. This and a simultaneous sense of direction is not only some regulative principle of mind, but also its ontological constitution.

It is clear that this transcendental ability of mind has a potential character, it is the ability that should be actualized. However, the instability of heart accompanied with the limitations of mind can cloud and turn man away from that search.¹⁷ When mind is not turned towards truth and the search for the Absolute, than its dignity is shadowed.¹⁸

In order not to fall into some insecurity regarding the mind, its abilities and limitations, the Pope considered it necessary to define what *recta ratio* is. "Once reason successfully intuits and formulates the first universal principles of being and correctly draws from them conclusions which are coherent both logically and ethically, then it may be called right reason or, as the ancients called it, ἡρθύς λόγος, *recta ratio*."¹⁹ It means that *recta ratio* is the reason that reflects upon truth.²⁰

15 Cf. FR, No. 4.

16 Cf. FR, No. 22 and 24. This transcendental ability of human reason is also emphasized in constitution *Gaudium et spes* of the Second Vatican Council. Cf. GS 15 and 16.

17 Cf. FR, No. 28.

18 Cf. FR, No. 47.

19 "Quotiens ratio percipere valet atque exprimere prima et universalia vitae principia indeque recte conscentaria propria deducere ordinis logici et deontologici, totiens appellari potest ratio recta sive, quemadmodum antiqui loquebantur, ἡρθύς λόγος"FR, No 4.

20 Cf. FR, No. 50.

Exactly this correct and cleared reason can be elevated to the highest levels of reflection, thus giving them the foundation of understanding the transcendental and absolute being. In that way, both the Eastern and Western Fathers tried to prove in what way reason, freed from outside bindings, opens to transcendence the best way.²¹

However, human reason may be closed to metaphysics and philosophy when limited to the horizons of utilitarian research. This may unfortunately lead to man's destruction, and that way to the self-destruction of reason. Exactly some forms of utilitarian rationality are present in the contemporary culture, where all philosophical knowledge is marginalized so that today's man is threatened by its own products and even more by its own reason.²²

By these statements the Pope does not undermine the achievements of the modern culture, but invites man to open to metaphysics with all of its reason and all of its being, i. e., to direct its reason not only to the utilitarian research.

2. *Truth*

Human reason, as we have seen, is only partially directed towards searching for the truth. The wish to perceive truth belongs to human nature, i. e., this characteristics belongs to human reason.²³

Unlike those who think that truth is reached by some consensus, the Pope points out the cognition of objective truth through agreement of things and mind *adaequatio rei et intellectus*, as St. Thomas²⁴ and St Bonaventura²⁵ said.

The Pope does not keep so much on a philosophical analysis of the definition, although he mentions it twice.²⁶ He probably does it for two reasons. The first reason is because he accepts that definition as a result of philosophical thinking of and thinking through, and not as a starting definition for a critical analysis, and the other reason is in the fact that the goal of this encyclic

21 Cf. FR, No. 41.

22 Cf. FR, No. 47.

23 Cf. FR, No. 3.

24 St. THOMAS AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 16, 1.

25 Cf. St. BONAVENTURA, *Coll. in Hex.*, 3, 8, 1

26 Cf. Fr, No. 56 and 82. Heidegger, analyzing this traditional concept of truth says: "The term is *true*, it means: it reveals a being by itself. It expresses, it shows, it 'enables to see' (ἀποφάν-σις) the entity in revealed state. The *truthfulness* (truth) of a term must be understood as *to be revealing*. Therefore, truth does not have the structure of some correspondence between cognition and the object in the sense of appearance of some entity (subject) to some other (object) in any way. M. HEIDEGGER, *Bitak i vrijeme (Being and Time)*, Zagreb 1988, p. 249

is not the writing of a speculative, abstract, critical and cognitive treatise on truth, but to show how truth does have a cognitive importance for man, and even more to show that truth has the existential meaning for man. It is clear that there is no existential basing without the preceding cognitive and objectively cognitive basing.

Let us add here our reflection that truth can be approached without asking about truth itself, and that does not mean asking about the relationship of thought and reality, but about the relationship of truth and man, i. e., by asking about who perceives or who made a cognition, and who possesses truth. This question can generally be asked in sociological or inter-religious observations, but also in critical questioning of certain philosophical directions. So, for example, certain life views that originated in the East, consider that truth comes about in the same way, even in sciences that are contrary to each other, what the Pope disagrees with, because everything then comes down to an opinion.²⁷

Here is the answer to the posed question. The one who perceives truth, he somehow possesses. The following should be differentiated here: if it is about the truth that is known only to an individual man, about so called personal truths, that truth is only his and only he knows the truth about himself or only he has that truth about himself, but somebody else can have that truth as well, only if he is told. However, the entrusted or said truth, is the truth based on a belief, i. e., on the trust in the one who confided that truth. This entrusted or said truth is based here on trust, but it, if it is true, has its basis in the reality of that person who is expressing that truth to somebody else. The encyclical emphasizes that this cognition, on one hand, looks like a form of imperfect cognition which must be gradually improved with evidence which is achieved individually, while on the other hand, this trust or belief is humanly speaking much richer than simple evidence is, because it includes interpersonal relationship. However, this cognition through belief is not unrelated to truth, because man by believing entrasts in truth that the other one shows him.²⁸

When we speak of other truths concerning extra-mental reality, everybody has the possibility to perceive that reality, and so possess the truth about that reality. The truth about that reality may be mine and under no circumstances only mine, if others experience or can experience the same reality, i. e., taste that reality. Exactly, the possibility of the accessibility of truth to the others enables critical examination of my truth.

27 Cf. FR, No. 5.

28 Cf. FR, No. 32.

Therefore, it would be philosophically wrong, if we excluded the subject that had cognized some truth and detach him from the perceived truth, and the truth that a particular subject perceived is the truth of that subject. Therefore, we cannot detach the man who perceived truth from that truth as if he had not perceived it. If the subject were detached from the truth then we would not be able to say that he had perceived it. In other words, then we would not be able to speak of any correspondence (*adaequatio*) because we would be missing *intellectus* as the important element of that correspondence (*adaequatio*). If we stated that man in no way perceives or could not perceive even one truth then we would fall into skepticism, and that is philosophically unacceptable.

The Pope just beautifully expressed this transsubjectivity and transtemporality of the objective truth by the statement that what is true must be true for all and for all times.²⁹

In order to prevent this research from remaining in abstractly speculative limits, the Pope, quoting Aristotle's *Metaphysics*,³⁰ that all people long for knowledge, continues that the object of this longing is truth and man accepts that what is true and rejects that that is false.³¹ Therefore, truth stands as the foundation of man's existence and behavior. Namely, man could never base his life on doubt, on insecurity or falsity, because life would be filled with fear and anxiety. That is why man can be defined as the one that seeks truth.³²

To avoid a misunderstanding here, it should be emphasized that the Pope, even though he defines man as a searcher of truth, under no circumstances claims that he is *only* a searcher for truth, he is also the one that perceives truths, if he were not perceiving some basic truth he would not be able to be a searcher for truth. That is why the Pope adds that searching for truth cannot be useless and empty. In this context, we could mention Wittgenstein's assertion that a question can exist only where the answer exists,³³ i. e., what Heidegger says: "Every searching gets its a priori direction from that what it searches."³⁴

The sole ability of searching for truth and making questions implicates the first answer. Only the possibility that the answer can be reached may lead to the first step. This usually happens in scientific research as well.³⁵ But also,

29 Cf. FR, No. 27.

30 Cf. ARISTOTLE, *Metafizika (Metaphysics)*, I, 980 a.

31 Cf. FR, No. 25.

32 Cf. FR, No. 28.

33 Cf. L. WITTGENSTEIN, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, pass. 6. 51, Sarajevo 1987, p. 187

34 M. HEIDEGGER, *op. cit.*, p. 4.

35 Cf. FR, No. 29.

man searches not only in order to search, but he searches for that absolute which provides the answer and gives sense to his whole search, something final, i. e., he searches for the last explanation, after which there are no questions, nor there can be any questions.³⁶ “The Encyclical gives different types of truth. The most numerous are those that are based on immediate evidence, or are proved by experiments. These are the truths of everyday life and scientific investigations”. In the second form are philosophical truths that man reaches through the speculative ability of his mind; and in the third form are religious truths.³⁷

Continuing in the encyclical existential hermeneutics, he asserts that in human life the truths that are simply believed remain more numerous than those that are attained by personal verification. Who can, by himself, control the countless results of science that modern life is based on, who can control all the information that is accepted as true? That is why the Pope does not only define man as the one who searches for truth, but also as the one who lives on faith.³⁸

Unlike the truths that come from the effort of our thought, i. e., our reason, the encyclical especially speaks about the truth we perceive through Revelation, and that truth is not a fruit of our thought, i. e., it is not built on reason.³⁹

Although the Pope admits that searching for truth is often shadowed in our time,⁴⁰ he stresses that the truth of Christian Revelation invites man to open to the transcendental.⁴¹ That truth urges reason to open to it and to understand its deeper sense, and considering that man completely depends on God who made him, reason that is also made is dependent on unmade truth, as the First Vatican Synod says.⁴² Revelation brings the general and the last truth which challenges human reason to never cease, urges it to broaden its own knowledge.⁴³

Although the revealed truth is not a product of our thought, not made of reason, it is the truth that is at the same time understood in the light of reason.⁴⁴ The truth that God reveals to us in Jesus Christ is not contradictory to the truth reached by philosophizing. On the contrary, two layers of cognition lead to the fullness of truth. The unity of truth is the basic postulate of human

36 Cf. FR, No. 27.

37 Cf. FR, No. 30.

38 Cf. FR, No. 31.

39 Cf. FR, No. 15.

40 Cf. FR, No. 5.

41 Cf. FR, No. 15.

42 Cf. *Dei Filius*, III.

43 Cf. FR, No. 14.

44 Cf. FR, No. 34.

reason, expressed in the principle of non-contradiction. Revelation provides security to that unity, showing that God the creator is also God the savior.⁴⁵

Therefore, that for what the human mind searches “without knowing it,” it can only find through Jesus Christ, and that which is revealed in him is the full truth.⁴⁶

Revealed truth offers the fullness of light on being, starting with the radiance that comes from *Esse subsistensa*, enlightens the way of philosophical reflection.⁴⁷

That is why the Pope emphasizes that both the eastern and western Fathers, living their faith, reached the deepest forms of speculation, because they accepted reason opened to the Absolute accepting the richness coming from Revelation. It must be clear all that here is nothing like some transposition of faith into philosophical categories. They did much more than that.⁴⁸

3. *Self-Cognition*

The starting point of philosophical reflection of this encyclical is exactly the warning of the temple in Delphi Γνῖθι σεαυτόν — know yourself! This knowledge of yourself does not have the meaning of Descartes *cogito*, nor do we speak here about understanding of our psychological states, our fragility, but we are talking about self-cognition. However, this self-awareness horizon of consciousness includes perception of things, the world and self-consciousness/perception of yourself in its unity. Exactly this cognition of himself qualifies man as man, and this self-awareness differentiates him from all other beings.⁴⁹ This self-awareness is the starting point for asking questions about the meaning of everything, and especially about the meaning of one's own existence.

The question about the meaning of our life the Pope specially treats in this encyclical and tries to find the answer to that question.

The Pope does not discuss the meaning of human life in terms of some unreal optimism, but on the contrary, he tries to view the reality of life, and from that reality he tries to find the meaning of life.

He emphasizes that, at first, personal existence could be presented as having no sense, especially in everyday experience, personal suffering or suffers of others, as well as death. In these life situations, man wonders about the

45 Cf. FR, No. 34.

46 Cf. FR, No. 34.

47 Cf. FR, No. 79.

48 Cf. FR, No. 41.

49 Cf. FR, No. 1.

meaning of life, and nobody can escape these questions, while the whole life depends on the answers to these questions.⁵⁰

The Pope rightly emphasizes that it is characteristic of philosophy to ask “why?” about things and their purposes, as is about the meaning of life. Exactly this is the beginning of philosophy. However, philosophy tries to answer these posed questions.⁵¹

However, he emphasizes as if philosophical reflections want to develop some existential, hermeneutic or linguistic observations that are alienated from the basic question about the truth of human life and the existence of God himself. That is why it can be observed in modern man, and not only in some philosophers, as if he lost his trust in human cognitive abilities, satisfying himself with provisional and partial ones, as if he no longer tries to ask questions about the meaning and foundation of human life.⁵²

The Pope tries to return the trust in human reason to modern man, and emphasizes that man is capable of knowing truth with his own reason, and especially the truth about the meaning of his own life. The Pope values human reason but he does not overrate it, because man, with its own reason can perceive the truth about the meaning of his own existence if he is enlightened with faith, and then he not only perceives the meaning of his own existence but the existence of everything.⁵³

Man searches for the last explanation, he searches for the truth that is recognized as the last, which gives security, and to that truth man wishes to anchor his existence, and that truth cannot be put to doubt.⁵⁴

This cognition of the meaning of one’s own existence must be observed in terms of the perception of the last truth that explains the meaning of life, and that truth cannot be reached only by rational means, but also through confidential surrendering to other persons that can guarantee security and the authenticity of truth.⁵⁵ That person, and that truth, is Jesus Christ. Man finds his last sense of his life only in Jesus Christ, and outside that perspective of the Christ-centric existentialism, for the Pope, the mystery of personal existence remains an insolvable puzzle.⁵⁶ Exactly, in the mystery of resurrection the Church received the last truth about human life.⁵⁷

50 Cf. FR, No. 26 and 27.

51 Cf. FR, No. 3.

52 Cf. FR, No. 5.

53 Cf. FR, No. 20.

54 Cf. FR, No. 27.

55 Cf. FR, No. 33.

56 Cf. FR, No. 12.

57 Cf. FR, No. 2.

4. *Harmony of Cognition*

In the encyclical, the Pope obviously follows Plato's⁵⁸ and Aristotle's⁵⁹ assertion, although he does not quote it, that the basic philosophical items of cognition come from wonder. Without wonder, man's life would fall into repetition.⁶⁰

The encyclical claims the same thing that the First Vatican Synod already confirmed, that apart from philosophical cognition there is the second layer of cognition, i. e., it claims that there are two layers of perception, which are different not only in their principle, because we philosophically perceive with our natural mind, and in faith we cognize through the divine faith, they also differ in their object, because apart from the truth we can cognize with our mind we are provided the secrets that are hidden in God which are not perceivable if not revealed from above. Therefore, faith is different from philosophical cognition that rests on perception of senses, on experience, and moves in the light of the intellect alone.⁶¹

The encyclical refutes the criticism of the rationalists that deny any cognition that would not be a fruit of the natural abilities of reason. However, apart from the acts of cognition which are natural to human reason, which is naturally capable of reaching its Creator, there is another cognition which is natural to faith, and that cognition is based on God who reveals himself. That is the most certain truth, because God does not cheat, nor he wishes to cheat.⁶² In other words, the encyclical emphasizes that they were censured, rationalism and ontologism on one side, because they ascribe to the natural reason that what is perceivable only in the light of faith, and on the other side, fideism and radical traditionalism, because of their lack of trust in natural abilities of reason.⁶³ Therefore, according to the encyclical, neither faith alone, nor reason alone, but instead, exactly what the title says *faith and reason*. Faith without reason is in danger of turning into a myth or superstition, and the same goes for reason without a developed faith, which cannot perceive novelties and the radicalism of being.⁶⁴

58 "This mental state is exactly characteristic of philosophers, i. e., wonder. Because there is no other beginning of philosophy than this one..." PLATO, Teetet 155 d.

59 "Because of wonder people are beginning to be concerned with wisdom..." ARISTOTLE, *Metafizika (Metaphysics)*, I, 2, 982 b.

60 Cf. FR, No. 4.

61 Cf. FR, No. 9.

62 Cf. FR, No. 8.

63 Cf. FR, No. 52.

64 Cf. FR, No. 48.

Man, observing the nature, can know God with his own reason. A man need not automatically reach that cognition, because of his sin and free will.⁶⁵

However, such a cognition that we have about God is always marked by its fragmentary nature and the limits of our cognition, and only faith can lead us into the mystery.⁶⁶ It is very important that reason is not denied if it goes with faith⁶⁷ On the contrary, the encyclic emphasizes that a believer's mind has natural awareness, true and coherent, of made things, the world and man that is a part of God's revelation. Even more, he must be capable of articulating that cognition in a conceptual and argumentative way.⁶⁸

Faith is what challenges reason to get out of every isolation. So, philosophy becomes enriched with the word of God, because reason here discovers new and unexpected horizons.⁶⁹ Therefore, for example, the embodiment of the Son of God presents the truths which human intelligence would never be capable of understanding: Eternity penetrates time, Everything is hidden in a fragment, and God takes human appearance.⁷⁰

In the same way as faith does not deny reason, the cognition of faith does not deny the mystery, but it makes it more evident and shows it as an important act for human life.⁷¹

Reason cannot drain the mystery of God, but only take and accept it in faith. Reason is in no way limited in front of the endless mystery of God, but only by its own limitedness.⁷²

Reason cannot empty the mystery of love shown by the Cross, and the Cross provides the ultimate answer for which reason searches. As the criterion for truth and salvation, St. Paul does not put the wisdom of words, but the word of wisdom.⁷³

Man should open the path for reason towards mystery with their reflection following certain rules, as the chosen people did. These rules are: (a) man's cognition is the way without rest, (b) one must be aware that not everything is the fruit of his achievement on that way, (c) reason should recognize unequalled transcendence. When man distances himself from those rules, he finds himself in the "state of the fool." The fool fantasizes in its illusion that

65 Cf. FR, No. 19.

66 Cf. FR, No. 13.

67 Cf. FR, No. 43.

68 Cf. FR, No. 66.

69 Cf. FR, No. 73.

70 Cf. FR, No. 12.

71 Cf. FR, No. 13.

72 Cf. FR, No. 14.

73 Cf. FR, No. 23.

he will get to know many things, but in reality it is not capable of seeing those that are important.⁷⁴

There is a deep relationship between the cognition of faith and the cognition of reason,⁷⁵ and that relationship has its basis in the Bible. Although there is, and should be a deep relationship between faith and reason, the encyclical emphasizes that faith is not philosophy.⁷⁶ This confirms what Scholastics emphasized, that the natural cognition of God and Revelation are mutually inseparable, but that also they cannot be reduced to one another.⁷⁷

Not only that faith is not philosophy, but also to avoid putting philosophy to be a servant to theology, in the sense of a functional dependency, although that term the Pope interprets as a necessary dependence of theology and philosophy on each other, and also the impossibility of their denying each other.⁷⁸ The Pope emphasizes that philosophy should follow its methods and rules, because philosophy would be of little use if it, in the light of reason, did not follow them.⁷⁹ However, history shows that philosophical thought, especially modern, has made certain deviations and mistakes. That is why philosophy should be directed towards theology.

It is interesting that the encyclical considers that it is justified to speak about a Christian philosophy. However, the term *Christian philosophy* is not assumed as if it were the official philosophy of the Church but a Christian philosophizing, understood in a living union with faith. In other words, the term encompasses all major developments in the philosophical thought, which would never have been possible without Christian faith.⁸⁰

There are two forms of Christian philosophy: one is subjective, based on purifying reason with faith up to thoughtfulness, because a philosopher, by being humble, gains the power to be able to approach the problems with which he would have difficulties dealing if he did not accept Revelation, e. g., the problem of evil, suffering, the meaning of life. In other words, he would not at all be able to answer Leibniz's, and in other words Heidegger's radical metaphysical question "why at all something is?" The other form of Christian philosophy is objective, because Revelation suggests some truths, which reason, if it were left to itself, would never discover. For example, the truths of

74 Cf. FR, No. 18.

75 Cf. FR, No. 16.

76 Cf. FR, No. 76.

77 Cf. FR, No. 53.

78 Cf. FR, No. 77.

79 Cf. FR, No. 49.

80 Cf. FR, No. 76.

a personal and free God the Creator, the reality of sin, understanding of the person as a spiritual being is also an exceptional novelty of faith.⁸¹

These themes widen the area of intelligence with new truths, it could be said that without that incentive the Word of God as a part of modern and contemporary philosophy would not exist at all.⁸²

This encyclical does not advocate the separation of faith and religion, which can be observed, for example, in Tertulian's words "What Athena and Jerusalem have in common? What the academy have in common with the Church?"⁸³ or in Kant, in the area of pure reason, who, in the introduction to the second edition of his *Critique of Pure Reason*, said: "I had to exclude knowledge in order to have a place for faith."⁸⁴

We can say that this encyclical obviously has the intention of proving the ages old harmony of faith and reason, which can be observed in St. Augustine, St. Thomas and others.

Faith is not afraid of reason, on the contrary it needs it and has confidence in it. It assumes it and improves it.⁸⁵ Faith includes thought, because "who believes, he thinks, he both believes by thinking and thinks by believing (...). Faith if not thought, is nothing,"⁸⁶ St. Augustine said.

It seems to me that this harmony of faith and reason can be in the best way expressed by two chapters of the encyclical, in the Augustinian spirit: "Credo ut intellegam" and "Intelligo ut credam" — I believe to know and I know to believe.

This encyclical again returned the basic agreement between the philosophical cognition and the cognition of faith: "faith asks that its subject should be understood with a help of reason, and at the summit of its searching reason acknowledges that it cannot do without what faith presents."⁸⁷

The encyclical shows that Christian faith is not something irrational or anti-rational, i. e., in the temple of faith the Christian not only must never cast away reason, but he must use it, if he wishes to believe correctly. Because God has not given reason to renounce it but that we can understand Revelation with it, which reveals to us the secrets we can never reach with reason alone.

81 Cf. FR, No. 76.

82 Cf. FR, No. 76.

83 TERTULIAN, *De praescriptione haereticorum*, VII, 9.

84 "Ich musste also das Wissen aufheben, um zum Glauben Platz zu bekommen" I. KANT, *Kritik der reinen Vernunft*, B XXX, Stuttgart 1989, Reclam, p. 38.

85 Cf. FR, No. 43.

86 Cf. St. AUGUSTINUS, *De praedestinatione sanctorum*, 2, 5: PL 44, 963.

87 Cf. FR, No. 42.