

## THREE

# Prayer, Trinity, and Mission

### Contemplation and the Trinity

IN 1968, DANIELOU PUBLISHED a small work titled *La Trinité et le Mystère de l'Existence*, which began with the observation that contemporary society is in desperate need of a reorientation toward contemplation in order that individuals might be able to realize their full stature as human beings made in the likeness of God.<sup>1</sup> This reorientation is necessary because though society seeks to make human fulfillment possible for the members of its society, without a place for contemplation and adoration it only affords its members partial fulfillment through material means. Daniélou contends that for individuals to achieve complete fulfillment contemporary society must provide a space where total human fulfillment is the aim. This milieu is the Church, where the solution to the crisis of the contemporary world, the contemplative posture, is practiced and both contemplation—with all its concomitant practices—and the extension of contemplation are sought. “With temporal engagement assuming an ever more important place in the life of Christians, there is an urgent need for a counterweight in the form of contemplative thinking. Behind all the changes of present day civilization, we can glimpse an obscure search for greater human fulfillment. But this fulfillment cannot be attained at the level of a purely material civilization, or even at the level of a fraternal human society. In the final analysis, it is the search for God that lies at the heart of today’s crisis. We must therefore

1. Daniélou, *Trinité et le mystère de l'existence*, 7–8; ET: *God’s Life in Us*. All subsequent English translations of this text will be Leggat’s translation unless noted otherwise.

strive to make transcendence an integral part of our technical civilization; without it, a true humanism is inconceivable.”<sup>2</sup> Daniélou maintains that contemporary society not only makes the contemplative stance difficult, it makes a concerted effort to minimize or eliminate it from public view as a personal and largely irrelevant aspect of human activity. However, he continues, for a city to be a truly human city there must be a space for adoration, contemplation, and prayer. Though societies, in most cases, seek the good of their individuals, they do so in an incomplete way. The aim of the political is the “temporal common good.”<sup>3</sup> According to Daniélou, political entities seek the common good of their members by means of three objectives: “to make a world in which human relations can flourish in freedom, that is to say, a society in which man does not exploit man, from which racism of every sort is banished, where understanding is open and peace between nations becomes possible.”<sup>4</sup> In his provocative little work *L'Oraison problème politique*, Daniélou contends that

politics limited to these objectives would still not assure a complete temporal good. . . . [T]he true city is that ‘in which [individuals] have their homes and God also has his. . . .’ A city which does not possess churches as well as factories is not fit for [people]. It is inhuman. The task of politics is to assure to [people] a city in which it will be possible for them to fulfill themselves completely, to have full material, fraternal, and spiritual life. It is for this reason that we consider that, in so far as it expresses this personal fulfillment of man in a particular dimension, prayer is a political problem; for a city which would make prayer impossible would fail to fulfill its role as a city.<sup>5</sup>

2. Ibid., 9. “Il s’agit donc de rendre présent au milieu de la civilisation technique la dimension de la transcendance en dehors de laquelle il n’y a pas d’humanisme possible.”

3. Daniélou, *L'Oraison Problème Politique*, 25; ET: *Prayer as Political Problem*. “J’entends ici par politique la sphère du bien commun temporel.” All subsequent English translations of this text will be Kirwan’s translation unless noted otherwise. See also Jean Daniélou, “L’Oraison comme problème politique,” 62–73.

4. Ibid., 26. “La politique a aussi pour but de créer un monde dans lequel les relations entre les personnes puissent s’épanouir librement, c’est-à-dire une société dans laquelle il n’y ait pas d’exploitation de l’homme par l’homme, où les racismes soient bannis, qui tende à la transparence dans les rapports humains, où la paix entre les peuples soit possible.”

5. Ibid., 26–27. “Mais si la politique limitait à cela ses objectifs, elle n’assurerait pas un bien commun temporel total. Je pense avec La Pira, selon une formule que j’ai souvent citée, que la vraie cité est celle «où les hommes ont leur maison et où Dieu a sa maison.» Une cité où il n’y a pas d’églises à côté des usines est une cité inhumaine. Or le rôle de la

Yet, it is the case that the societies in which we find ourselves make contemplation difficult. Daniélou believes that there are three major hindrances to contemplation for the modern individual: the modern rhythm of life, lack of solitude, and general desacralization of society. Daniélou's first point will be admitted by most. In general—and particularly in Western societies—life proceeds at such a frantic pace, with every moment being planned and managed, that there is virtually no time for any contemplation whatsoever. Daniélou writes, “The first thing that strikes one is that our technological civilization brings about a change in the rhythm of human existence. There is a speeding up of tempo which makes it more difficult to find the minimum of freedom on which a minimum life of prayer depends. These are elementary problems, but none the less basic.”<sup>6</sup> The speed of modern society and all its demands requires a monumental act of discipline by the one who has not removed himself completely from society. “Prayer is thus rendered almost impossible for most [individuals], unless they display a heroism and a strength of character of which . . . the majority of men are not capable. If it is only the shelter of a rule which makes possible the flowering of a life of prayer for professed religious, then the laity, without this shelter and with added obstacles, must indeed be in difficulties.”<sup>7</sup>

The second obstacle to contemplation in the modern world is the hypersocialization of individuals to the point that there are few times where one is actually by oneself in solitude. With a lack of solitude, there is a concomitant lack of silence. With the absence of solitude and silence, it is increasingly difficult to be in the presence of God.<sup>8</sup> While one must avoid

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politique est d'assurer une cité dans laquelle il soit possible à l'homme de se réaliser complètement, dans la plénitude de sa vie matérielle, fraternelle et spirituelle. C'est en quoi nous pensons qu'en tant qu'elle exprime cet épanouissement personnel d'une dimension particulière de l'homme, l'oraison est un problème politique, dans la mesure où une cité qui la rendrait impossible trahirait son rôle de cité.”

6. *Ibid.*, 31. “Il est certain tout d'abord que la civilisation technique entraîne une modification du rythme de l'existence humaine, une accélération du temps qui rendent plus difficile à trouver le minimum d'espace dont a besoin un minimum de vie d'oraison. Ces problèmes sont élémentaires et pourtant fondamentaux.”

7. *Ibid.* “La prière est ainsi rendue quasi impossible à la plupart des hommes, en dehors d'un héroïsme, d'une force de volonté dont nous devons reconnaître que la majorité des hommes n'est pas capable. Si pour des religieux le cadre d'une règle rend seul possible l'épanouissement d'une vie d'oraison, qu'en sera-t-il des laïcs, dépourvus de ces appuis et affrontés au contraire à des obstacles?”

8. Bernard McGinn notes the need for solitude and silence in the context of mystical contemplation. McGinn observes that the mystical element of Christianity is “that part of belief or practice that concerns the preparation for, the consciousness of, and

the temptation of radical individualism; one must also avoid the other danger of becoming merely a “unit of collective existence.”<sup>9</sup> Daniélou warns, “even as prayer has need of a certain minimum of time, so also it has a need of a certain minimum of solitude, a minimum of personal life [as contrasted to collective life]. In the actual conditions in which [people] have to live today, this is practically impossible. Urban life sucks people up into a relentlessly collective existence.”<sup>10</sup> And more, Daniélou describes the modern individual as “an alienated creature, one who has lost the possibility of finding himself, who no longer knows who he is, who has to meet this never-ending barrage of demands from outside himself and who has ended by becoming depersonalized.”<sup>11</sup> Without a modicum of silence and solitude, the modern individual is unable to develop his inner self making prayer and contemplation a mere external practice with little to no effect on the fulfillment of a flourishing, true humanity.

A third obstacle to contemplation is that of desacralization. The fact—if not the causes—of secularization is well known. It entails a partitioning of the sacred and the profane, severing the organic bond between the sacred realm and civic culture. “It is evident . . . that technological civilization and the phenomena it brings in its train (urbanization, for instance) break into and overthrow the old social cultures, separate profane culture from religious life, and destroy a certain balance between the social and

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the reaction to what the mystics understand as the direct, immediate, and transformative encounter with the presence of God.” Part of being open to the presence of God is allowing for extended periods of quiet and solitude within the context of the sacred. Bernard McGinn and Patricia Ferris McGinn, *Early Christian Mystics*, 10. This volume is a popular reworking of McGinn’s multivolume work *The Presence of God: A History of Western Christian Mysticism* which contain the following volumes, *The Foundations of Mysticism: Origins to the Fifth Century* (1991), *The Growth of Mysticism: Gregory the Great through the Twelfth Century* (1994), *The Flowering of Mysticism: Men and Women in the New Mysticism—1200–1350* (1998), and *The Harvest of Mysticism in Medieval Germany (1300–1500)* (2005).

9. Daniélou, *L’Oraison Problème Politique*, 32–33. “Il intéresse tout homme, menace de nêtre plus qu’un élément d’une existence collective.”

10. *Ibid.*, 32. “De même que l’oraison a besoin d’un minimum de temps elle a besoin d’un minimum de solitude, d’un minimum de vie personnelle. Or il est certain que, dans le conditions concrètes de l’existence de l’homme d’aujourd’hui, ceci est à nouveau pratiquement impossible.”

11. *Ibid.*, 32. “L’homme d’aujourd’hui est un homme aliéné qui a perdu la possibilité de se retrouver lui-même, qui ne sait plus ce qu’il est, parce qu’il ne fait que répondre perpétuellement à des sollicitations du dehors, et qui finit, par conséquent, par être dépersonnalisé.”

the religious dimensions of life.”<sup>12</sup> Without a provision within societies for the sacred—and this can be dramatically seen in the western Europe of the twenty-first century—those societies are barely sustainable in the long term. Daniélou writes:

We come always back to the same thought. If that dimension remains completely absent from that society, if we accept a complete dissociation of the sacred and profane worlds, we shall make access to prayer absolutely impossible to the mass of [humankind]. Only a few would be able to find God in a world organized without reference to him. Men move not only in their social environment, but in their cultural environment as well. It is through this cultural environment that they can have access to the realities of religion. A world which had built up its culture without reference to God, a humanism from which adoration was completely absent, would make the maintenance of positive religious point of view impossible for the great majority of [people].<sup>13</sup>

Desacralization has served as a major contributing factor toward the erosion of the contemplative stance and providing a society in which crisis of religion becomes more acute.

Monastic institutions are able to create a space for all of the aspects of the spiritual life which makes contemplation attainable (if still difficult). All of these things are present for religious in consecrated communities. Still, not all are able to create a space for contemplation in the way that religious do. Yet, Daniélou notes a further problem when he observes, “If monks feel the need to create an environment in which they will find prayer possible, if they think that prayer is not possible without certain conditions of silence, solitude, and rule, what are we to say of the mass of [humankind]? Should

12. *Ibid.*, 33. “Or il est évident que l’irruption de la civilisation technique, avec les phénomènes qu’elle entraîne, l’urbanisation par exemple, bouleverse les anciennes structures sociales, sépare la culture profane de la vie religieuse, détruit un certain équilibre entre la dimension sociale de l’homme et sa dimension religieuse.”

13. *Ibid.*, 35. “Car—et nous revenons toujours à la même idée—, si cette dimension reste totalement étrangère à cette société, si nous acceptons une dissociation totale entre un monde profane et un monde sacré, nous rendons absolument impossible à la masse des hommes l’accès à l’oraison. Seuls alors quelques-uns pourraient trouver Dieu dans un monde tout entier constitué en dehors de lui. Non seulement les hommes beignent dans un milieu social, mais ils beignent aussi dans un milieu culturel. C’est à travers ce milieu culturel qu’ils peuvent avoir accès aux réalités religieuses. Un monde où la culture se constituerait totalement en dehors de Dieu, un humanisme dont l’adoration serait totalement absente, rendrait pratiquement impossible à la majorité des hommes le maintien d’une certaine attitude religieuse.”

prayer be the privilege of a small spiritual aristocracy, and should the bulk of the Christian people be excluded from it?"<sup>14</sup> The problem is especially acute for the laity because they are unable to rely on the conditions that monastic communities are able to secure for themselves. Thus the modern individual finds himself in the midst of a crisis which disables him from achieving the fullness of his humanity as a creature of God.

In an attempt to provide the laity with a template for the contemplative posture within the context of modern, technological culture, Daniélou writes his small work *La Trinité et le mystère de l'existence*. As a preface to his meditations concerning Trinitarian existence, Daniélou informs his reader of the aim of this small work. He first notes the crises of contemporary life.<sup>15</sup> He then notes that the only real solution—which to some would seem to be more of an escape than a solution—to the crisis is contemplation. "This little book is designed to meet this need. The meditations aim at direct expression of a spirituality for men and women of action who wish to be dedicated to God. They are addressed to all Christians concerned with the place of prayer in a world in which prayer appears to many to be superfluous, in which everything leads away from prayer. I hope they show that prayer is not a luxury for the privileged few, but a vital need for everyone."<sup>16</sup> It is important to take note of a couple of things at this point. When Daniélou provides a solution for contemporary society "for men and women of action," he proposes contemplation. This may seem to be contradictory to some who do not see the active nature of contemplation. It is important to remember that Daniélou highlights the fact that there is no contradiction between the apostolate and contemplation. The false dichotomization of

14. Ibid., 28. "Si les moines sentent la nécessité de se donner des conditionnements pour rendre l'oraison possible, s'ils pensent qu'en dehors de certaines conditions de silence, de solitude, de rythme de vie, l'oraison est impossible, alors qu'en est-il de la masse des homes? L'oraison ne deviendrait-elle pas le privilège d'une petite aristocratie de spirituels, et la totalité de peuple chrétien ne s'en trouverait-elle pas exclue?"

15. Daniélou's corpus is replete with the theme of this crisis. For example, see "Y a-t-il une Crise de la Vie Religieuse?" 1029–31; "In Connection with the Crisis of Religious Life," 53–58; and *La Crise Actuelle d'Intelligence*; ET: *The Crisis in Intelligence*, 75–111.

16. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l'Existence*, 8. "C'est à ce but que veut répondre ce petit livre, qui sera le premier d'une série. Les méditations qui le constituent sont celles d'une retraite qui a été donnée à l'Institut Saint-Jean-Baptiste. Elles cherchent donc directement à exprimer la spiritualité de vies consacrées à Dieu sous une forme contemplative au milieu du monde. Mais elles s'adressent aussi à tous les chrétiens pour qui se pose le problème de l'espace de la prière dans un monde où tout en détourne. Et la prière n'est pas le luxe de quelques privilégiés, mais un besoin vital de tous."

Mary and Martha holds no sway in Daniélou's mind. This is verified by statements such as: "It is essentially through the battles of the spiritual life, through the battles of sanctity, that we contribute to the salvation of the world."<sup>17</sup> Secondly, it is clear that this sort of solution to the problems of contemporary society will not resonate with the society that needs an infusion of contemplation. It is in this regard that Daniélou's often used notion of the "extension of adoration" coordinates with Trinitarian contemplation. This idea is succinctly noted when Daniélou writes, "Prayer is related to mission because it is to the extent that we have discovered who God is and how much a knowledge and love of God is constitutive of a comprehensive humanism and a full and complete existence that we suffer from, and are stuck by, situations in which God is not known or loved."<sup>18</sup> The total fulfillment of humanity must entail contemplation (particularly Trinitarian contemplation) and the extension of contemplation and adoration.

## The Presence of the Holy Trinity

The conception of "presence" plays an important role in Daniélou's thought. He highlights the role of the presence of the Trinitarian God in the life of the believer in contemplation. Prayer, he maintains, "is a drawing near to the Holy Trinity dwelling in our souls. This is a fundamental supposition of Christian prayer; that is, it is no longer the prayer of a creature, but that of a child of God."<sup>19</sup> This presence of God in the soul of the Christian is thoroughly represented in the writings of the Old Testament. In the Old Testament, the presence of God was communicated to the people of God through His presence in the temple.<sup>20</sup> This presence is generally manifested

17. Daniélou, *Contemplation*, 156. "C'est essentiellement à travers les combats de la vie spirituelle, à travers les combats de la sainteté, que nous contribuons à sauver le monde." ET: *Prayer*. All subsequent English translations of this text will be Schindler's translation unless noted otherwise.

18. *Ibid.*, 133–34. "La contemplation est liée à mission, parce que c'est dans la mesure où on a réalisé ceci qu'est Dieu et à quel point le fait de connaître et d'aimer Dieu est constitutif d'un humanisme total et d'une existence complète, qu'on souffre et qu'on est surpris de ce que Dieu ne soit pas connu et ne soit pas aimé."

19. Daniélou, *Contemplation*, 31. "La prière est une approche de la Sainte Trinité demeurant dans notre âme. C'est une donnée fondamentale de la prière chrétienne, c'est-à-dire non plus de la prière de l'homme en tant que créature, mais en tant que fils de Dieu."

20. Daniélou gives a short study of the presence of God in the Old Testament and in the person of Christ in *Le Signe du Temple; ou, de la Présence de Dieu*; ET: *The Presence of God*. All subsequent English translations of this text will be Robert's translation unless noted otherwise.

## Jean Daniélou's Doxological Humanism

in three ways: 1) the presence of God in the universe<sup>21</sup>, 2) the presence of God in the Jewish people and the temple of Jerusalem,<sup>22</sup> and 3) the presence of the Trinitarian God in the members of the body of Christ.<sup>23</sup>

Daniélou begins his small work with an explanation of how the Trinity is present to humanity. First and foremost, the Trinity is the principle and aim of the whole of reality. "In the Trinity, the ultimate depths of the real and the whole mystery of existence are revealed to us. The Trinity is the principle and the origin of Creation and Redemption. Ultimately all things are borne back to it in the mystery of worship and adoration. Above all else, it is what gives substance to all things: everything else flows from it or tends toward it."<sup>24</sup> It is in the light of the presence of the Holy Trinity that the Christian finds his true self. In recognizing the presence of the Trinity within all reality, one is able to move from the external world to the inner reality of all existence. "In the light of the Trinity, we discover our true selves. For the essential conversion is the one that leads us from the visible world with its external temptations to the invisible world which is at once supremely real, since it constitutes the ultimate basis of all reality, and supremely holy and admirable, since it is the source of all bliss and joy."<sup>25</sup> It is the understanding of the Trinity as the basis of all reality that constitutes the beginning of the contemplative conversion which is the solution to the crisis of civilization.

Any progress in our lives, must embody this fundamental conversion of self to ultimate reality. This is what is involved: opening ourselves to the absolute reality of the Holy Trinity, discovering there the fullness of all things, seeking perfect contentment in it and finding in it our life's greatest treasure both now and for eternity. In this sense, contemplation is primarily a way of penetrating reality more deeply. Inversely, sin consists in not opening

21. Daniélou, *Le Signe du Temple*, 9–14.

22. *Ibid.*, 15–19.

23. *Ibid.*, 20–54. See also *Contemplation*, 32.

24. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l'Existence*, 11. "Dans la Trinité se dévoilent à nous les profondeurs dernières de réel, le mystère de l'existence. Elle est le principe et l'origine de la création et de la rédemption; par ailleurs toutes choses lui sont finalement rapportées dans le mystère de la louange et de l'adoration. Elle est, au-delà de tout, ce qui donne à tout sa consistance. Tout le reste en procède et y tend."

25. *Ibid.* "Dès lors la conversion essentielle est cette conversion qui nous fait passer du monde visible, qui nous sollicite de l'extérieur, à ce monde invisible qui est à la fois souverainement réel, puisqu'il constitue le fond dernier de toute réalité, et souverainement saint et admirable, puisqu'il est la source de toute béatitude et de tout joie."



ourselves to what is truly real, in remaining in an outward and superficial world that stems from the life of the self. It is this basic contemplative conversion that we must undertake, striving to open ourselves to the sovereign reality of the Holy Trinity so that our hearts may be filled with its light, turning our souls toward it and leaving all else behind us.<sup>26</sup>

With this in mind, it is important to note how the life of the Trinity is manifested and revealed in the world.

The presence of the Holy Trinity is active throughout all of created reality. To begin with, Trinitarian action is first manifested in its work “in the world, in nature, in the cosmos.” This is most strikingly manifested in the action of the Trinity in the creation of the world.<sup>27</sup> “Creation is presented as the work of the Holy Trinity. Through His Word and His Spirit, God calls forth, breathes life into, orders and guides the universe.”<sup>28</sup> Though many interpretative stances—particularly in modern biblical studies—are inclined to dismiss a Trinitarian reading of creation, Daniélou robustly defends the presence of the Trinity at creation. The initial and primary evidence for the presence of the Trinity at creation comes from Scripture itself. No doubt, many interpreters would anticipate the use of the prologue to the gospel of John at this point. “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was

26. *Ibid.*, 11–12. “Tout progrès de notre vie, il y a cette conversion fondamentale, qui est ouverture à la réalité foncière des Personnes divines, découverte que c’est en elles que réside la plénitude de toutes choses, appel à nous suffire d’elles et à trouver en elles ce qui sera dans le temps et l’éternité le trésor de nos vies. C’est en cela que la contemplation est avant tout une certaine manière de pénétrer plus profondément dans la réalité. Et inversement, le péché consiste à ne pas s’ouvrir à ce qui est vraiment réel et à rester dans un monde extérieur et superficiel, qui relève de notre vie égoïste. C’est dans cette conversion contemplative fondamentale que nous devons entrer en essayant de nous ouvrir à cette réalité souveraine de la Sainte Trinité, de manière à ce que nos cœurs soient remplis de sa lumière, laissant là le reste et tournant nos âmes vers elle.”

27. “Il y a une première chose qui en frappante à travers l’Ancien et le Nouveau Testament, c’est que les Personnes divines nous apparaissent à travers leur action dans le monde, dans la nature, dans le cosmos. Si nous prenons les premières expressions du Mystère de la Trinité dans l’Ancien Testament, nous voyons qu’elles sont en rapport avec le monde de la création. La création apparaît comme étant l’œuvre des Personnes divines. C’est Dieu qui par sa parole et par son Esprit suscite, vivifie, gouverne et conduit l’univers. Il y a là une première approche importante dans la mesure où elle met le mystère trinitaire en rapport avec la réalité même du monde matériel.” Daniélou, “La Trinité dans l’Existence Humaine,” 6.

28. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l’Existence*, 13. “La création apparaît comme étant l’œuvre des Personnes divines. C’est Dieu qui par sa Parole et par son Esprit suscite, vivifie, gouverne et conduit l’univers.”

with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came to be through him, and without him nothing came to be" (John 1:1; NAB). Daniélou contends that in the prologue to the gospel of John, "we have a strikingly fore-shortened image, establishing an immediate link between Jesus of Nazareth, the Jesus whom John claims to have touched with his own hands and seen with his own eyes, and the life-giving Word Himself—that is to say, the divine power which calls all things into being."<sup>29</sup> At every moment, the entirety of existence is upheld by the presence of the Trinity.

A second passage emphasizes the dependency of creation on the Holy Trinity. Daniélou points to Psalm 33 where the Word is again present at the creation of the world. "By the Lord's Word the heavens were made, by the breath of His mouth all their host" (33:6; NAB). It is entirely possible that the author of the Gospel of John was familiar with this passage. In any case, this passage further draws attention to the role of the Word in creation. Daniélou contends that the "Word of God" has "the same meaning that the rest of the Bible gives it, that is, essentially a creative agency and not simply an intellectual concept."<sup>30</sup> Instead, the agency of the Word in creation is achieved by a unity between utterance and accomplishment.

To this point, Daniélou has only made note of the role of the Son in the creative action of the Trinity. But, the same activity can be applied to the Spirit. The first passage in Scripture that comes to mind when speaking of the creative activity of the Spirit is in the first verses of Genesis. "In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters" (Gen 1:1–2; NRSV). Daniélou provides the instructive image of "a bird beating its wings to kindle a spark of life" to illuminate the activity of the Spirit in creation.<sup>31</sup> He draws this image from a passage in Deuteronomy which gives the figure of an eagle beating its wing over its nest in order to provoke its young to flight. The *ruah* rouses the void to life "as an eagle incites its nestlings forth by hovering over its brood" (Deut 32:11; NAB). "The idea here is of *provoking* existence, of wresting

29. Ibid. "Il y a là un raccourci saisissant qui établit une relation immédiate entre Jésus de Nazareth, celui que Jean nous dit avoir touché de ses mains et vu de ses yeux et le Verbe créateur lui-même, c'est-à-dire la puissance divine par laquelle toutes choses ont été suscitées dans l'existence."

30. Ibid., 14. "La parole de Dieu a ici le sens que lui donne la Bible, c'est-à-dire essentiellement celui d'une efficacité créatrice, et pas simplement un contenu intellectuel."

31. Ibid., 15.

movement from inertia. In the same way the Spirit moved over the waters and called forth from primordial nothingness all the species and varieties of Creation.<sup>32</sup> Likewise, the words of the psalmist in Psalm 104 are used liturgically to remember the creation of the Church at Pentecost. However, Daniélou informs his reader that before the text was used to express the role of the Spirit in the institution of the Church, it previously indicated the activity of the Spirit in the Creation of the universe.<sup>33</sup> In the liturgical reading of Scripture one hears, “When you send forth your breath, they are created, and you renew the face of the earth” (Ps 104:30; NAB).<sup>34</sup> Given Daniélou’s reading of Scripture—which is patently typological—it is clear to see that both the Son and the Spirit are agents in the creation and sustenance of the created order by which—in one way—the Trinity is present to all created reality. Importantly, Daniélou concludes his remarks on this subject by writing, “By this means a fundamental relationship is established from the very beginning of the Bible between the Trinity and the world of nature, between the Trinity and the cosmos, so that Redemption comes to mean a recapturing and renewal by the life-giving Trinity of this universe, which is its own because it has created it and can alone lead it to total fulfillment. . . . The origin of the material world lies exclusively in the action of the Holy Trinity. All of it, moreover, is destined to be recaptured and transfigured by the Holy Trinity.”<sup>35</sup>

These thoughts emphasize the religious character of nature. Yet, contemporary thinking seeks to desacralize nature by emphasizing the scientific aspect of the cosmos. In providing a Trinitarian understanding of the natural world Daniélou provides “a primary and radical point of departure” from the

32. Ibid. “Le sens est de provoquer l’existence, de susciter à partir de l’inertie le mouvement. C’est en quoi l’Esprit était porté sur les eaux et suscitait à partir du néant primordial toutes les espèces et toutes les variétés de la création.”

33. Ibid., 15–16.

34. It is interesting that the idea of creation in Psalm 104 is liturgically associated with the creation of the Church at Pentecost. However, the passage retains its general sense of creation as well.

35. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l’Existence*, 15–16. “C’est par là que dès l’origine s’établit dans la Bible une relation fondamentale entre la Trinité et le monde de la nature, entre la Trinité et le cosmos, en sorte que la Rédemption sera la reprise et la ressaisie par la Trinité créatrice elle-même de cet univers qui est sien, parce qu’elle l’a créé, pour le conduire à la plénitude de son achèvement. . . . Le Monde matériel n’a son origine que dans l’action des Personnes divines, et d’autre part, il est tout entier appelé à être ressaisi et transfigure par les Personnes divines.”

prevailing materialization of reality.<sup>36</sup> In further contradiction to this spirit, Daniélou aptly maintains that “this same universe in which science operates is also the mirror through which the Trinity reveals itself to us.”<sup>37</sup>

In light of this discussion, it is important to note the ways in which the Trinity relates to creation. Daniélou draws attention to three ways in which Trinity relates to the cosmos. First, as has been noted in the preceding, the Trinity is the source of all existence. The Trinity is the origin of all things. The material universe “has a relationship with the Trinity in that it exists only through the Trinity, and that at every instant it is enunciated in the Word and called into being by the Spirit.”<sup>38</sup> Second, the material world functions as an immense sign pointing all things back toward its origin. All of creation is a vast sacramental reality where everything is a *signum* pointing to the one true *res* to which these signs are ordered.<sup>39</sup> Third, Daniélou maintains that the natural order is “oriented toward the Trinity, in the sense that it suffers and groans with expectation as it waits for the sons of God to manifest themselves.”<sup>40</sup> Daniélou is, of course, referring to the passage in Romans where Paul writes, “I consider that the sufferings of this present time are as nothing compared with the glory to be revealed for us. For creation awaits with eager expectation the revelation of the children of God; for creation was made subject to futility, not of its own accord but because of the one who subjected it, in hope that creation itself would be set free from slavery to corruption and share in the glorious freedom of the children of God. We know that all creation is groaning in labor pains even until now; and not only that, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, we also groan within ourselves as we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies” (Rom 8:18–23; NAB). Creation waits to “share in the glorious freedom of the children of God” which is Trinitarian life through adoption as co-heirs in Christ. Though the universe anticipates the fullness of Trinitarian existence in this passage, it is also clear that although humanity has not realized Trinitarian life in its fullest manifestation, humankind has been afforded the presence of the Trinity within the human

36. Ibid., 16–17. “La Trinité est un point de départ . . . principalement et radicalement.”

37. Ibid., 17. “C’est ce même univers sur lequel s’exerce la science et qui est le miroir à travers lequel la Trinité se manifeste à nous.”

38. Ibid. “L’univers matériel . . . a une relation à la Trinité dans la mesure où il ne subsiste que par elle et où, à chaque instant, il est proféré par la Parole et vivifié par l’Esprit.”

39. See Augustine, *De doctrina Christiana*, I.2 (PL 34.19–20).

40. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l’Existence*, 18. “Cet univers est orienté vers la Trinité dans la mesure où il gémit en attendant la manifestation des fils de Dieu.”

soul. So the Church awaits the time when the reality of the Trinity within each individual will manifest itself completely in the external world.

At the same time, even though we live in a world “still dominated by death, suffering and striving, and which groans as it awaits a transfiguration,” it is clear that “the world we live in is a world filled with the Trinity” if we can only train our eyes to see the presence of the Trinity.<sup>41</sup> From this point of view, one must realize God’s gratuity in giving. The author of the epistle of James maintains, “all good giving and every perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights” (Jas 1:17; NAB). Daniélou contends that this is all the more clear when one understands the nature of poverty which sees all things coming from God. “In reality, all things are gifts from God. Between God and ourselves there is a perpetual movement of grace. This is the basis of the mystery of poverty, according to which we have nothing which belongs to us, but all things are wonderful gifts from God. And if we were already capable of seeing, we would recognize even more readily the mark of His presence and His love in all that is given to us.”<sup>42</sup> However, the presence of God is not only perceived through the benefits that he lavishes on us. The presence of the Trinitarian God can also be seen in all “created beauty” which is a “reflection of the splendor of the Trinity, a radiation of its glory.”<sup>43</sup> Furthermore, not only is God seen in his gifts and in the beauty of his creation but he is also present to the world in that he is the perpetual impetus behind all things. Or, as Daniélou puts it, “there is nothing to which God’s action does not extend and in which God Himself is not present,” following St. Paul’s words “In him we live and move and have our being” (Acts 17:28; NAB).<sup>44</sup>

For Daniélou, Trinitarian life is the source and summit of all existence. Though this presence is obscured by a variety of phenomena, the Christian

41. Ibid., 19, 21. “Et en même temps il vit dans un monde qui est encore tout entier sous la loi de la mort, de la souffrance, de l’effort et qui gémit dans l’attente d’une transfiguration.” “En réalité, le monde à l’intérieur duquel nous vivons est un monde qui est rempli de la Trinité.”

42. Ibid., 22. “Toute choses en réalité sont des dons qui viennent de Dieu. Il y a entre Dieu et nous comme une perpétuelle circulation de grâces et donc d’action de grâces. C’est le fond même du mystère de la pauvreté, qui fait que nous n’avons rien qui soit à nous, mais que toutes choses sont des dons merveilleux de Dieu. Et si déjà nous savions voir, nous reconnaitrions davantage ainsi, dans tout ce qui nous est donné, la marque de sa présence et de son amour.”

43. Ibid. “Toute beauté créée est un reflet de la splendeur trinitaire.”

44. Ibid., 23. “Il n’y a rien où ne s’étende l’action de Dieu et où Dieu lui-même ne soit présent.”

is able to see through appearances in order to look into and participate in the life of the Trinity.

In truth God is hidden everywhere, but He reveals Himself only to the heart which is capable of discovering Him and converting itself. For the presence of God is coextensive with the totality of beings. There is nothing His gaze does not penetrate. There is nothing in which His action is not felt. Thus we should strive to rediscover ourselves as beings immersed in the life and the light of the Trinity. We should realize—and this is already a form of contemplation—that all things at all times emanate from the Father of light through the Son and through the Spirit; we should therefore dwell in their presence and their radiance. To close ourselves to them is sin. In reality, we live in the brightest light. This light, the light of the Trinity, shines constantly. But it is we who do not let it enter our souls, because the entrance is blocked. Thus we must throw open the entrance to our souls and let the light penetrate them through and through, illuminating, uniting and transforming everything.<sup>45</sup>

## The Trinity and the Soul

While the Trinity is present and to a certain degree accessible through the natural world, Daniélou emphasizes the need to approach the life of the Trinity through the sphere of interiority. Thus, he writes, “Another way to the life of the Trinity is through the experience of our own inner life, since the Trinity is the reality in which we are rooted in our innermost personal lives.”<sup>46</sup> In developing the structure of the Trinitarian nature of our personal

45. *Ibid.*, 24. “En réalité Dieu est caché partout, mais il ne se manifeste qu’au cœur qui sait le découvrir et qui se convertit. Car la présence de Dieu est coextensive à la totalité de l’être. Il n’y a rien où son regard ne pénètre. Il n’y a rien où son action ne soit efficace. Donc déjà nous devons nous redécouvrir comme immergés dans cette lumière et dans cette vie de la Trinité; nous devons réaliser, et c’est déjà un mode de contemplation, que toutes choses et à chaque instant émanent du Père des lumières par le Fils et par l’Esprit et donc vivre dans cette présence et dans cette irradiation. Nous y fermer, c’est le péché. En réalité, nous vivons en pleine lumière. La lumière brille toujours, cette lumière de la Trinité. Mais c’est nous qui ne la laissons pas pénétrer à l’intérieur de notre âme parce que les issues en sont fermées. Il faut donc ouvrir cette issue de notre âme, laisser cette lumière pénétrer partout, tout illumine, tout unifier et tout transformer.”

46. *Ibid.*, 27. “Un second aspect par lequel nous pouvons rejoindre la vie trinitaire est l’expérience de notre propre intériorité, dans la mesure où la Trinité est la réalité dans

lives, Daniélou posits that there are three images helpful for developing our understanding of the Trinity. One can develop his understanding of the Trinity based on the visible world, on the communion between persons, or on the structure of the Spirit itself. Elaborating on this theme Daniélou contends, “One school, that of Saint Augustine, sees the mark of the Trinity in the life of the Spirit, which is at once memory, Word, and love. And Augustine is sure that since we define the second member of the Trinity as the Word . . . , and the third member as Love . . . , then we realize that there may be a certain analogy between the structure of our own spirit’s life and the archetype of all spirits—that is, the life of the Trinity itself.”<sup>47</sup> Based on these reflections, Daniélou maintains that we have our most profound access to Trinitarian life when we enter into the depths of our own souls.

To this point Daniélou again cites the authority of Augustine when he notes the Augustinian contention that there is “one who is in me, more myself than I am.”<sup>48</sup> Daniélou believes that this Augustinian adage points to the Trinitarian basis of every being’s personal and spiritual existence. “In the order of our personal life, in the order of our innermost being, we are at root immersed in the life of the Trinity.”<sup>49</sup> This immersion in the Trinity is not in any way inherent to humanity in itself.<sup>50</sup> Instead, in going within oneself, one goes beyond oneself “into the self-created light which illumines all intelligence.”<sup>51</sup> Daniélou looks further at Augustine for an explanation on what the return into the self reveals about Trinitarian existence. The

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laquelle nous-même, dans notre existence personnelle la plus profonde, nous sommes en quelque sorte enracinés.”

47. Ibid., 27–28. “Or il y a une ligne, celle de saint Augustin, qui voit le premier vestige de la Trinité dans la vie même de l’esprit, qui est à la foi mémoire, verbe et amour. Et il est sûr que dans la mesure où nous définissons la seconde Personne comme Parole . . . , et quand nous définissons la troisième Personne comme Amour . . . , à ce moment-là nous saisissons qu’il peut y avoir une certaine analogie entre la structure même de la vie de notre esprit et ce qui est l’archétype de tout esprit, c’est-à-dire, la vie même de la Trinité.”

48. The reference seems to be to Augustine’s statement in *Confessions* 3.11, which is usually translated into English as “You were more inward to me than my most inward part” (Quelqu’un qui est en moi plus moi-même que moi).

49. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l’Existence*, 28. “Dans l’ordre même de notre vie personnelle, dans l’ordre de notre être le plus personnelle, nous baignons originellement dans cette vie trinitaire.”

50. For Daniélou, there are certain religious practices that are common to all religions centered around certain rites and occasions. Trinitarian life, on the other hand, is a result of revelation and is not basic to humanity in general.

51. Ibid., 29. “Nous devons nous répandre au-delà de nous-mêmes dans cette lumière créée qui éclaire toute intelligence.”

personal inward journey to the Trinity is clearly seen in the Augustinian phrase *in interior homine habitat veritas* ("for the truth dwells in the interior man").<sup>52</sup> This should not be taken as a bland Socratic exhortation to *nosce te ipsum*. Interiority has value only insofar as it reveals the Trinitarian nature of existence. To know oneself in an Augustinian fashion is to know oneself through an interaction with the life of the Trinity within the soul. For Daniélou, "The Trinity is not merely present outside ourselves, but—in a still deeper and more intimate way—inside ourselves, in the sanctuary of the heart. This is the other temple—no longer the temple of the world but the temple of the soul, created in the image of God, where the Trinity is present."<sup>53</sup> Daniélou maintains that it is through the journey of prayer that one most intimately finds oneself. But, even more, as one takes the path of interiority, one must not stop at the self. Instead, the interior individual must press on past the self and "reach that which is beyond us, that which is fixed whereas we are uncertain and shifting, that which is wholly good whereas we are a mixture of good and evil."<sup>54</sup>

It is at this point that one must realize existence only has meaning insofar as it participates in its source and origin. To the extent that the believer is able to draw upon that source and reinvigorate his inner life through contact with the presence of the Trinity within the soul contemplation and prayer are truly Christian in nature. This is the particularly Christian notion of prayer: that whatever methods or forms prayer takes, it must always have as its source and summit the eternal wellspring of the Holy Trinity. Furthermore, "this is why we are never ourselves except when we find ourselves in God. In a sense it is in Him that we live and have our being. It is when we are once again in Him that we find ourselves again. Only there do we discover the truth of what we are."<sup>55</sup>

52. Augustine, *De vera religione* 39 (PL 34.154).

53. Daniélou, *La Trinité et le Mystère de l'Existence*, 29. "Ce n'est pas simplement au-dehors de nous-mêmes que la Trinité est présente, mais d'une manière encore plus profonde et intime à l'intérieur e nous-mêmes, dans le sanctuaire de cœur. C'est là l'autre temple, non plus le temple du monde, mais le temple de l'âme créée à l'image de Dieu, où la Trinité est présente."

54. *Ibid.*, 30. "Mais nous ne pouvons pas nous arrêter à nous-mêmes; au-delà de nous-mêmes nous atteignons ce qui est au-delà de nous, ce qui est stable, alors que nous sommes incertains, ce qui est entièrement bon alors que nous restons mêlés."

55. *Ibid.* "C'est pourquoi nous ne sommes jamais nous-mêmes que lorsque nous nous retrouvons en Dieu. C'est en quelque sort en lui que nous vivons et que nous sommes. C'est quand nous nous retrouvons en lui que nous nous retrouvons nous-mêmes. C'est là seulement que nous retrouvons la vérité de ce que nous sommes."