

**THE LOGIC OF THE “ADEQUATE” ANTHROPOLOGY
IN MAN AND WOMAN HE CREATED THEM:
A THEOLOGY OF THE BODY BY JOHN PAUL II
AND REINTRODUCED IN AMORIS LAETITIA
BY POPE FRANCIS**

*Iulian Gabriel ROBU**

Abstract: This article presents a general introduction to the anthropology of the Pope John Paul II treaty of *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*, describing the ecclesial context, the author, its philosophical and cultural formation, the method and content of the treaty, and in the second part the fundamental concepts of the “adequate” anthropology of the Pope as well as the function of the protology for anthropology in general, and for theology of the body in particular. A special place is dedicated both for indicating the implications of the theology of the body and to illustrate its relationship with the Pope’s “adequate anthropology”, and for showing how, like Saint John Paul II, Pope Francis connects the protology with eschatology in a Christological key. Christ is the way to understand both the beginning of mankind and his end. For both popes, Christ is the full man and he is the way that shows man how he/she can truly find personal and mutual fulfillment in married life.

Keywords: anthropology, man, woman, creation, Christ, John Paul II.

Introduction

In recent years, the topic of the family has often been present on the agenda of Western European politicians. The traditional family is faced with solid disapprovals and is attacked at the core of its existence, that is why it is going through a crisis that are causing suffering and agonising questions. “The joys and the hopes, the griefs and the anxieties of the men of this age, especially those who are poor or in any way afflicted, these are the joys and hopes, the griefs and anxieties of the followers of Christ” (*Gaudium et spes* 1), that is why this essential theme has been sited at the heart of several recent Magisterium documents.

The Post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope Francis *Amoris Laetitia*¹ speaks of the gift of family, defends the institution of marriage, makes

* University Lateranum of Rome, Italy.

¹ POPE FRANCIS, Post-synodal Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* (19 March 2016): AAS 108 (2016) 1-325. I shall abbreviate it *AL*.

an analysis of the current situation of families throughout the world. It provides solutions for the pastoral care of families in crisis by proposing the teaching of Sacred Scripture with regard to the family. The reference to that *in principio* (*Genesis* 1) and to the family as it is presented by the Holy Scriptures has guided the Church as a beacon of light for centuries, appears in the very first lines of the first chapter of the apostolic exhortation mentioned above: “The Bible is full of families, births, love stories and family crises. This is true from its very first page, with the appearance of Adam and Eve’s family with all its burden of violence but also its enduring strength (cf. *Gen* 4) to its very last page, where we behold the wedding feast of the Bride and the Lamb (*Rev* 21:2, 9). Jesus’ description of the two houses, one built on rock and the other on sand (cf. *Mt* 7:24-27), symbolizes any number of family situations shaped by the exercise of their members’ freedom (*AL* 8)²”.

What surprised me most in these lines is the triple reference to 1) *the beginning* of mankind, 2) to her end, which the wedding of the Lamb. Central to all this is 3) Christ in whom everything was created and who reveals the fulfillment of man and creation. This triple reference to protology, eschatology, and focused on Christology can also be seen in the catecheses about the theology of body that John Paul II delivered at the general audiences on Wednesdays during the first four years of his pontificate. Starting with these close connections, we can find many other similarities and common ideas in *Amoris Laetitia* and in the catechesis of John Paul II. Pope Francis repeatedly quotes texts of this catechesis and shows his thoughtful appreciation for John Paul II, for his teachings and the support he offered to families:

Saint John Paul II devoted special attention to the family in his catechesis on human love, in his Letter to Families *Gratissimam Sane* and particularly in his Apostolic Exhortation *Familiaris Consortio*. In these documents, the Pope defined the family as ‘the way of the Church’. He also offered a general vision of the vocation of men and women to love, and proposed basic guidelines for the pastoral care of the family and for the role of the family in society. In particular, by treating conjugal love, he described how spouses, in their mutual love, receive the gift of the Spirit of Christ and live their call to holiness (*AL* 69).

Noticing these clear connections between the teachings of these popes, in a series of three articles: 1) “The Logic of the *Adequate* Anthropology in

² “Sacra Biblia familiis, generationibus, amoris familiarisque discriminis narrationibus inde a prima pagina replentur, quam Adam Evaeque familia occupat, violentiae suum exhibens onus ac vim pariter vitae quae producitur (cfr *Gn* 4), usque ad postremam paginam ubi Sponsae et Agni nuptiae demonstrantur (cfr *Apc* 21, 2.9). Duae domus, quas commemorat Iesus, supra petram aedificatas aut supra arenam (cfr *Mt* 7, 24-27) tot familiares condiciones manifestare possunt, quas illarum incolae libertate fruentes ferunt”.

Man and Woman He created them: A Theology of the Body by John Paul II, and reintroduced in *Amoris Laetitia* by Pope Francis”, 2) “The interpretation of the *status naturae integrae* (Gen 1-2) within the Adequate Anthropology of John Paul II”, and 3) “The *status of naturae lapsae simul et redemptae* (Gen 3) in *Man and Woman He created them: A Theology of the Body* by John Paul II”, I intend to highlight the role that *Genesis* 1-3 plays in the *adequate* anthropology of John Paul II and how his teaching is reintroduced and developed with a new language and in a new style by Pope Francis. Illuminated by the teachings of these two popes, the Church looks with confidence at the future of the family, at the World Meeting of Families in Ireland, Dublin (21-26 August 2018). Its theme, chosen by Pope Francis, is: “The Gospel of the Family: Joy for the World”. This title points to the Apostolic Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia*, the document which guides the preparation for this World Meeting of Families and offers the ideas which will be articulated during the different moments of this assembly.

The teachings of Pope John Paul II, which are reintroduced in *Amoris Laetitia* by Pope Francis, are always relevant to contemporary man who is affected by many crises that baffle him, where he finds it difficult to define his relationship with creation, with his fellow men and with God. Within this context and following the teachings of these two popes, we need to go back to “the beginning” (*Mt* 19:4), to understand man as God created him. Our guides in this article are the Post-synodal Exhortation *Amoris Laetitia* and the book *Uomo e donna lo creò: catechesi sull'amore umano*³ by John Paul II, translated into English as *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body*. The book contains 133 catecheses that John Paul II pronounced starting on Wednesday, the 23rd of September 1979, at his general audience.

My motivations for addressing this issue (in a series of three articles) are many. First of all, I intend to pay simple homage to John Paul II, who loved Romania so much, that he tenderly named it the “Garden of the Virgin Mary”. It is because of this that I will put forth several arguments of the theological contributions of some Romanian authors. Then, there is a theological and anthropological motivation, because I aspire to know more clearly God’s plan for man, in order to be able to respond to the current challenges and objections regarding the dignity and integrity of the human person. Finally, there is a pastoral motivation, in the sense that I aim to identify the current doctrine given by Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis for an efficient and correct pastoral care in the service of the contemporary man.

³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò: catechesi sull'amore umano*, Città Nuova, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1987².

The method I have used in this article is specific to dogmatic theology. It is guided by faith and reason, inspired by the revelation and by the current teaching of the Church's Magisterium and the postulates of John Paul II's personalism, the article intends to present some aspects of the theology of the body found in the above-mentioned work, and in particular, the contribution of the biblical protology to the development of the theological anthropology. That is why in my research it is my intention to use the discoveries of biblical and anthropological sciences to show the discoveries that Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis exposed in their works.

1. *Man and Woman He Created Them:* *A Theology of the Body. General presentation*

The book of John Paul II contains a profound and enduring theology. In order to understand it, it is necessary to know the context of the catechesis, as well as the challenges they responded to, and the method and purpose for which they were written.

1.1. The ecclesial context

The profound mutations in society and the Church during the controversial year of 1968 called for a response from the Church's Magisterium. This answer came in that year from Pope Paul VI through the Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae*⁴. This document sparked heated and challenging discussions among Catholics⁵, as Paul VI himself had predicted⁶. Many saw in it a "cold shower" given to the Catholic world, which, after Vatican Council II, was believed to have closed its accounts with modernity⁷. Some Catholics, infected by a "culture of absolute subjectivity"⁸, rejected this

⁴ Cf. PAUL AL VI-LEA, The Encyclical Letter *Humanae vitae* (25 iulie 1968): *EncVat* 3/587-617.

⁵ Paul VI had long analyzed the issue of *Humanae vitae*: "I trembled before the dilemma of a slight acceptance of current opinions, or of a hard-line sentence to be borne by today's society". PAUL AL VI-LEA, "La premessa, i motivi, le finalità dell'Enciclica *Humanae vitae*", in *Insegnamenti di Paolo VI*, VI, Tipografia Poliglotta Vaticana, Vatican 1968, 871.

⁶ Cf. *Humanae Vitae* 18; D. MIETH, "*Humanae vitae* compie quarant'anni", *Concilium* 1 (2008) 161; I. ENĂȘOAE, "Spiritul creștin și profetic al Enciclicei *Humanae vitae*", in *Humanae vitae. Între actualitate și provocare: un răspuns modern la o întrebare multiseclară*, ed. I. Enășoae, Sapientia, Iași 2009, 57; I. CHINEZ, "Paternitatea responsabilă în *Humanae vitae*", in *Humanae vitae. Între actualitate și provocare: un răspuns modern la o întrebare multiseclară*, ed. I. Enășoae, Sapientia, Iași 2009, 55.

⁷ Cf. E. DUMEA, "Evoluția istorică a învățăturii creștine din enciclica *Humanae vitae*", in *Humanae vitae. Între actualitate și provocare: un răspuns modern la o întrebare multiseclară*, ed. I. Enășoae, Sapientia, Iași 2009, 37.

⁸ F. CHOMALI, "*Humanae vitae*: la respuesta a graves problemas", *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 82.

message of Paul VI, considering that “the council and the encyclical letter do not really take account of the difficulties present in life today”⁹, and from that year on whatever the Church said about morality was held by these people with suspicion or even hostility¹⁰.

In this tempestuous context and after all these events, in 1979, Pope John Paul II began a series of 133 catechesis of Wednesdays dedicated to the theology of the body¹¹. The last 21 catecheses in this series are a conclusion of the entire work, but also an explicit commentary of *Humanae vitae*¹². Gradually the encyclical of Paul VI was recognized more and more as prophetic by many people. The Synod of Bishops of 1980, the episcopates, the movements in favour of life and the researchers from different regions of the world¹³ also sustain its prophetic logic. John Paul II himself proposes to reread *Humanae vitae*¹⁴, “this significant document”, in light of the divine plan and Christ’s teaching, to show that this doctrine can also answer the questions of people today¹⁵. In addition, his catecheses also aims to accompany closely the preparatory work of the 1980 Synod, not directly touching its subject, but directing its attention to the deeply anthropological roots of its themes¹⁶.

⁹ JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 460.

¹⁰ Cf. C. CAFFARRA, “*Humanae vitae*, quarant’anni dopo: abbozzo di una riflessione”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2008) 63.

¹¹ At the general audiences on Wednesday, Paul VI usually held a homily, which he carefully prepared. John Paul II resumed this tradition and renewed it, developing a single theme in 133 catechesis. Cf. Aa. Vv., “Avertissement”, in *À l’image de Dieu homme et femme*, Les Éditions du Cerf, Paris 1980, 7-8.

¹² In his catecheses, the Pope gave also an anthropological explanation about how the contraception violates the truth of the body language. Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 453-496; A. MATTHEEWS, “De la Bible à *Humanae vitae*. Les catéchèses de Jean Paul II”, *Nouvelle revue théologique* 111 (1989) 228-229; R.L.G. VALENZOLA, “Christian Family – Gift and hope”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 3 (2006) – 1 (2007) 303.

¹³ Cf. A. PERCĂ, “Actualitatea enciclicei *Humanae vitae*”, in *Humanae vitae. Între actualitate și provocare: un răspuns modern la o întrebare multiseclară*, ed. I. ENĂȘOAE, Sapienția, Iași 2009, 21-22.

¹⁴ Cardinal Wojtila himself had been summoned for the major commission responsible for drafting the document on responsible paternity, but he could not attend the meetings. However, the young Polish Cardinal might have influenced the way in which Paul VI presented his teaching. Cf. G.B. RE, “Paolo VI e l’*Humanae vitae*”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 27-28; P.J. ELIOT, “*Humanae vitae*: Personal recollections”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 112.

¹⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 453-459.

¹⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 31-32.496.

1.2. Author and topic

John Paul II was the 263th successor of St. Peter. One of the unifying aspects of his magisterium was the truth of man, man's mystery that is fully manifested in the light of the incarnate Word¹⁷, the one who entered singularly, uniquely and unrepeatably into the mystery of man and into his heart¹⁸. With his experience as a shepherd of Krakow and his vast accumulation of knowledge, he was well prepared to interact with different cultures. These gifts coupled with his openness to the truth of man inspired hope, not only through the abundance of his writings, but also through his "personal potentialities"¹⁹ and his physical presence²⁰. His pastoral testimony and care gave a new impetus to the Church in this vital field of anthropology²¹.

For four years in his general audiences, the Pope developed the theme he had first proposed in *Love and Responsibility*²²: namely, that human sexual love holds a profoundly religious sense²³, it being an image of the intimate life of the Triune God²⁴. His catechesis also refers to another of his works, *Person and act*²⁵. It is the apogee of the entire Wojtyła's philosophical

¹⁷ Cf. *Gaudium et spes* 22: *EncVat* 1/1385-1390.

¹⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, The Encyclical Letter *Redemptor hominis* (4 March 1979) 8: AAS 4 (1979) 270.

¹⁹ Cf. H. JEGOU, "Le charisme médiatique de Jean Paul II. Comment mettre Dieu dans la circulation de pensée du monde", *Lumière et vie* 257 (2003) 7.

²⁰ Cf. A. SOFRI, "All'appuntamento con Papa Wojtyła", *Nuntium* 9 (1999) 85.

²¹ Cf. A. TRUJILLO, "La familia en el Pontificado de Juan Pablo II", *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 2 (2005) 7-8.

²² Cf. K. WOJTYŁA, *Iubire și responsabilitate*, ed. C. Geambașu, M.C., București 1999. The purpose of this work, which transpires in *Uomo e donna lo creò*, is to discover and explain how it is possible to relate sexually to another person without instrumentalizing neither him/her nor the sexuality itself. Cf. J.E. SMITH, "Responsible Parenthood as conscious Parenthood", *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 146.

²³ Cf. G. WEIGEL, *Witness to hope*, Harpers Collins Publishers, New York 1999; translated into Romanian, *Un martor al speranței*, tr. R. Vasile, Galaxia Gutenberg, Târgu Lăpuș, București 2007, 391; K. WOJTYŁA, *Iubire și responsabilitate*, 38-39.

²⁴ For Pope Francis, as for John Paul II, family is a mirror and an icon of the Holy Trinity. The unity between man and woman provides a testimony to the intimate life of the Holy Trinity and of the unity of the Three Divine Persons. *Amoris Laetitia* 11, quoting John Paul II, states: "Saint John Paul II shed light on this when he said, *Our God in his deepest mystery is not solitude, but a family, for he has within himself fatherhood, sonship and the essence of the family, which is love. That love, in the divine family, is the Holy Spirit*. The family is thus not unrelated to God's very being". And AL 29: "With a gaze of faith and love, grace and fidelity, we have contemplated the relationship between human families and the divine Trinity. The word of God tells us that the family is entrusted to a man, a woman and their children, so that they may become a communion of persons in the image of the union of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Begetting and raising children, for its part, mirrors God's creative work".

²⁵ Cf. K. WOJTYŁA, *Persona e atto*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1982.

creation²⁶, which echoes the philosophical foundations of Vatican II’s teachings, as well as his own Thomistic formation and his attention to the phenomenological method, especially to Scheler’s philosophy²⁷ and the moral theology²⁸. In the whole of John Paul II’s personalism, we actually discover a veiled theology²⁹, which tries to give an answer to the challenge of the Hegelian totalitarianism in Poland, as well as to the danger of Nietzschean ideology (national-socialism) and Marxist thought (Lenin-Communism)³⁰.

The Pope’s catecheses are not easy to understand when reading or listening to them. It will take a long time for the Church and the world to assimilate the theology of the body exposed in these catecheses. This theology represents the decisive *momentum* for the exorcism of the Manichaeian demon that haunts some contemporary moral assessments³¹. That is why his work is a kind of a “theological time bomb”, whose explosion can produce many consequences in the third millennium³².

The doctrine contained in these catecheses is so vast and complete that it constitutes a doctrinal corpus comparable to *Summa Theologiae* of Thomas of Aquinas³³. Only that, for Thomas the concept of *bonum commune* plays an axial role, for Pope John Paul II this role is taken over in this book by the concept of “gift”³⁴. But, going beyond these comparisons,

²⁶ Cf. C. TĂMAȘ, “Introducere”, in T. ROSTWOROWSKI, *Din gândirea filosofică a Papei John Paul II*, Ars Longa, Iași 1994, 18.

²⁷ Cf. K. WOJTIŁA, “Prefazione dell’autore all’edizione anglo-americana di *Persona e atto* nella serie *Analecta Husserliana*”, in K. WOJTIŁA, *Persona e atto*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1982, 13-14; J. RATZINGER, “La filosofia di Karol Wojtila”, in *La famiglia cristiana nell’insegnamento di Giovanni Paolo II*, Famiglia cristiana, Milano 1988, 188.

²⁸ A. RIGOBELLO, “Introduzione all’edizione italiana”, in JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1982, 5.

²⁹ Consistent with his vision of the human person, the Pope sustained “man’s faith is profoundly anthropological, radicated into co-existence, in communion with the eternal You”. E. FERENȚ, “Crainicul misterului lui Hristos în lumea de astăzi”, *Altarul Banatului* 1-3 (1997) 172. For the Pope, a coherent personalism can not be atheist. The value of the human person is derived from the fact that he is the image of God. And “if God is to be loved *propter se ipsum*, then it follows that his image and likeness, man-person *est afirmanda propter se ipsam*”. E. KOWALSKI, “Fondamento della norma morale dell’atto coniugale nell’*Humanae vitae*”. Rilettura ed approfondimento dell’Enciclica secondo Giovanni Paolo II”, *Studii franciscane* 8 (2008) 87.

³⁰ Cf. T.D. WILLIAMS, “What is Thomistic Personalism?”, *Alpha Omega* 2 (2004) 172.

³¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 60, footnote 2; 184-187.307-308.322.331.

³² E. FERENȚ, *Frumusețea vieții creștine*, Sapientia, Iași 2009, 402.

³³ Cf. J.M. CASTELLVÍ, “El papel de los médicos católicos en la aplicación de la *Humanae vitae*”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 206.

³⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 71-73.77.80.84-86.316.319.420-423; M. WALDSTEIN, “The Common Good in St. Thomas and John Paul II”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1-2 (2004) 188; P. FEDORYKA, “The concept of Gift as hermeneutical key to the Dignity of Human Person”, *Logos* 11 (2008) 49-69. Reading the catechesis of Pope John Paul II and the exhortation of Pope Francis, one can

we must sadly acknowledge that the pope's teachings did not receive the audience they deserved or appropriate feed-back from the media. The weekly rhythm probably dispersed the attention of some of the direct listeners who did not notice the value and compactness of this condensed text³⁵.

1.3. Method and content

The Pope's method of catechesis is one of dogmatic theology: *fides quaerens intellectum*. The theoretical course of this method takes into account the extraordinary richness of the brilliant theology of the Old and New

observe the continuity and harmony between the teachings of both Popes regarding the institution of the family. It is worth noting that the concept of "self-giving" occupies an important place both in the adequate anthropology of Pope John Paul II and in Pope Francis's doctrine on the family. The term *self-giving*, that appears nine times in *Amoris Laetitia*, is a key concept for possibly reading the whole document in light of the hermeneutics of gift. We also find the term "gift", in both the singular and plural form, appear 55 times throughout the exhortation. Life is a gift (AL 178), love is always a gift of God (AL 228), freedom is itself a great gift (AL 262), the law is a gift of God which points out the way, a gift for everyone without exception (AL 295). "The marital union is thus evoked not only in its sexual and corporal dimension, but also in its voluntary self-giving in love. The result of this union is that the two *become one flesh*, both physically and in the union of their hearts and lives, and, eventually, in a child, who will share not only genetically but also spiritually in the *flesh* of both parents" (AL 13). For an integral and generous gift of self that will be expressed, following a public commitment, in the gift of their bodies. Sexual union in marriage will thus appear as a sign of an all-inclusive commitment (AL 283). For Pope Francis, family is a gift for the Church (AL 5); from this standpoint, reflecting on the interplay between the family and the Church will prove a precious gift for the Church in our time (AL 87). Children are a gift for the parents and society. Each one is unique and irreplaceable (AL 14, AL 170) that why it is important to accept that child as a gift from God (AL 166), for "he or she is not something owed to one, but is a gift" (AL 81), a wonderful gift from God (AL 222). Marriage is "a gift" from the Lord (1 Cor 7:7) and this divine gift includes sexuality (AL 61). All this brings us to the sexual dimension of marriage. God himself created sexuality, which is a marvellous gift to his creatures. If this gift needs to be cultivated and directed, it is to prevent the "impoverishment of an authentic value" (AL 150). Through love the human person becomes a gift (AL 151) and the spouses, in their mutual love, receive the gift of the Spirit of Christ and live their call to holiness" (AL 69). Marriage is a gift given for the sanctification and salvation of the spouses (AL 72), who, by manifesting their consent and expressing it physically, receive a great gift. Their consent and their bodily union are the divinely appointed means whereby they become "one flesh" (AL 75). The beauty of this mutual, gratuitous gift, the joy which comes from a life that is born and the loving care of all family members – from toddlers to seniors – are just a few of the fruits which make the response to the vocation of the family unique and irreplaceable", both for the Church and for society as a whole (AL 88). The gift of God's love poured out upon the spouses is also a summons to constant growth in grace (AL 134). Within family, masculinity is a gift, (AL 177), adoption is a gift (AL 179). People with disabilities are a gift for the family and an opportunity to grow in love, mutual aid and unity (AL 47).

³⁵ Cf. A. VINGT-TROIS, "Un Pape philosophe et théologien", *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 2 (2005) 61.

Testaments³⁶. His theological and narrative approach, supported by a solid exegetical and symbolic reasoning, has also philosophical consequences, thus exceeding the classical course of theology courses where, for some scholars, philosophy – *ancilla theologiae* was used as a propaedeutic instrument³⁷. By analyzing the biblical aspects³⁸, it is indicated how to base the doctrine of revelation proclaimed by the contemporary Church. This biblical foundation³⁹ is open to the questions raised by man today and therefore serves as an instrument of modern science and contemporary culture. In this sector, the intense development of philosophical (and moral) anthropology in a personalistic key met with queries from theological ethics⁴⁰.

This method avoids the risk of immanentism, the risk of reducing faith to reason, due to the two points that prevent this fall. The first is the gnoseological realism (the Pope had been formed according to the thomistic method)⁴¹, which impedes the reductivist definition of the experience (contraposition) and the deduction of the transcendence of truth based only on the conformity with human thinking (against historicist and relativistic idealism). The second point is fidelity to the revealed Scriptures, the humility to be available to the truth: the Pope is free in truth because he is its servant. Although the Pope always refers to objective truth, anthropology removes the risk of extrinsicism due to the starting point: which is the essentially human experience⁴². As one can notice, Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis do not regard the family as abstract and separate from the current situation in which people live. Both popes make an analysis of the situation of the family of today, not just about who a family should be, but also about the wounds of the family, the presence of concupiscence and sin in families, about divorce and the desire to possess the other.

Like John Paul II, Pope Francis is aware of anthropological and cultural changes that influence family life. Any form of theology wishing to reach peoples' lives must be attentive to the cultural and social conditions in which they live and where they can encounter God.

³⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 31.39.

³⁷ Cf. P.R. SINDONI, “Simbolica dell’umano ed ermeneutica del femminile. Il contributo di Karol Wojtila all’antropologia filosofica”, *Communio* 190-191 (2003) 42.

³⁸ The Pope easily reconciled philosophy to the Bible, because for him metaphysics must be encouraged precisely on the basis of the faith in creation. Cf. J. RATZINGER, “Le 14 Encicliche di Giovanni Paolo II”, *Communio* 190-191 (2003) 14.

³⁹ Cf. C. CAFFARRA, “Introduzione generale”, in JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò: catechesi sull’amore umano*, Città Nuova, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1987², 11.

⁴⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 495-496.

⁴¹ Cf. M. MAGAGNA, “*Homo Veritatem perscrutatur*. La dignità dell’esperienza umana nelle riflessioni di Giovanni Paolo II”, *Rivista teologica di Lugano* 3 (2006) 505-518.

⁴² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 42-43, footnote 2; C. CAFFARRA, “Introduzione generale”, 12

Yet another challenge is posed by the various forms of an ideology of gender that “denies the difference and reciprocity in nature of a man and a woman and envisages a society without sexual differences, thereby eliminating the anthropological basis of the family (*Amoris Laetitia*, 56).

New forms of ideologies, which have recently taken place in contemporary society, attack the family in the essential points that define it. “Anthropological and cultural changes in our times influence all aspects of life and call for an analytic and diversified approach” (*Amoris Laetitia* 32), and the principal tendencies in anthropological-cultural changes” are leading individuals, in personal and family life, to obtain less and less support from social structures than in the past.

The “catechesis” of John Paul II belong to a literary genre different from that of apostolic Exhortation. We say the same about their purpose and authority. However, their depth does not cease to surprise and manifest the same care of the Universal Shepherd⁴³. These 113 catecheses are extremely dense theological and philosophical meditations, on the body theology, Christian celibacy, and marriage⁴⁴. The first catechism cycle, “Il principio”, contains 23 catechesis held between 23.09.1979 – 2.06.1980. Here, “the beginning” is individualized by the commentary on *Mt* 19:3-10 by means of the Genesis creation. The second cycle, “La redenzione del cuore”, comprises 40 catecheses and is a commentary on the words of Jesus in *Mt* 5:27-28. These catecheses were delivered between 6.04.1986-06.05.1981. The series of catecheses was interrupted by the 13.05.1981 attack. The third catechism series, “La risurrezione della carne”, is a commentary on Jesus’ answer to the Sadducees who asked him about the resurrection of the body (cf *Mt* 22:24-30). It includes 9 catechesis, delivered between 11.11.1981-10.02.1982. The fourth series, “La verginità cristiana”, analyses the evangelical text of Jesus’ dialogue with the Pharisees (*Mt* 19:1-10). These catecheses were delivered between 10.03.1982-21.07.1982. The fifth catechism cycle, “Il matrimonio Cristiano”, deepens the doctrine of the marriage sacrifice of *Eph* 5. The catechesis was delivered 28.07.1982-09.02.1983. The sixth cycle, “Amore e fecondità”, is an ample commentary on *Humanae vitae*⁴⁵ and includes the catecheses from 23.05.1984 to 28.11.1984. The central

⁴³ Cf. A. MATTHEEUWS, “De la Bible à *Humanae vitae*. Les catéchèses de Jean Paul II”, 246.

⁴⁴ With the help of the theology of the body, following the trajectory of the Council, John Paul II researches the theme of vocation to the mutual sanctification of spouses within the Christian family. Cf. R. MARX, “Lebensschutz als Einsatz für die Menschenwürde”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 39.

⁴⁵ The Pope’s reflection is inspired by this encyclical and so developed his thought of making a philosophical demonstration of genitorial ethics. Thanks to the philosophical basis, it is easier to understand that man, male and female, can become a creative and moral subject of procreation. Cf. *Gaudium et spes* 51: *EncVat* 1/1481-1484; J. BAGDA, “Una Enciclica

theme that goes through all these catechetical cycles is the theological anthropology. In the following section, my intention is to present some aspects of this systematic anthropology.

2. The theological or “adequate” anthropology

Christian anthropology is the domain of dogmatic theology that studies what we are in the light of Jesus Christ, the revealer of God⁴⁶. This discipline, developed and proposed in a personal key, John Paul II named “adequate anthropology”.

2.1. What is “adequate” anthropology?

The adequate anthropology is the understanding and interpretation of man in what is essentially human. This discipline that starts from the essential human experience is opposed to the naturalistic reductionism influenced by evolutionary theory about the origin of man. The biblical texts contain the essential elements of such anthropology, which develops on human pre-history⁴⁷, especially on the basis of the truth of the anthropological dignity of being in the “image of God”. This concept comprises the root of the understanding about man, revealed by Christ through that “beginning” of *Mt* 19:3-9, as presented in the account of human’s creation as man and woman.

The adequate theology presents the features of a personalist metaphysics, based, on the one hand, on the concept of the person’s integrity⁴⁸ and, on the other hand, on the need to weld consciousness and being human. Integrity involves the existence of a unifying centre, the human ontological status that makes its transcendence transparent in relation to the act⁴⁹. So, such an anthropological conception is based on metaphysics, that is, on a philosophy that integrates the contributions of the classical philosophy⁵⁰. There are important statements for this anthropology: it postulates the existence of a human experience called “essentially human experience”⁵¹.

in difesa dell’uomo”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1 (2009) 209-222.

⁴⁶ Cf. L.F. LADARIA, *Antropologia teologica*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1992, 11-13.

⁴⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 77, footnote 1.

⁴⁸ If the classical theological approach intended to distinguish between what is legitimate or morally illicit, the new approach of the Pope is focused on highlighting the decisive points for the harmony and integrity of the human person. Cf. C. DE MARCELLUS DE VOLLMER, “Sex education 1994-2004. Problems and Progress”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 1-2 (2004) 179.

⁴⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, 217-993.

⁵⁰ Cf. G. PIANA, “De la phénoménologie à métaphisique. La pensée philosophique de Jean Paul II”, *Lumière et vie* 257 (2003) 41-42.

⁵¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 68,77,198.

From this comes the adequate anthropology. Then, the principle of “reduction,” fundamental to its comprehension, does not just mean “not to confuse,” but behaving as a paradox opposes totally the reductionist process⁵². All these terms will be explained later.

2.2. “A theology of the body”?

The current state of Western reflection on the body theology, not exclusively Christian, is of unprecedented extent⁵³. However, if we think of a science that studies the human body, we certainly would not consider theology. We would think of anatomy, psychology, medicine, but not theology. “Theology” is the science of God, and God is spirit, so he does not have body or flesh. So, for many, the body is not only a theological feature, but even an *anti*-theological aspect, especially if it misrepresents the text of *Gal 5:16-24*⁵⁴:

Instead, I tell you, be guided by the Spirit, and you will no longer yield to self-indulgence. The desires of self-indulgence are always in opposition to the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are in opposition to self-indulgence: they are opposites, one against the other; that is how you are prevented from doing the things that you want to. But when you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law. When self-indulgence is at work the results are obvious: sexual vice, impurity, and sensuality, the worship of false gods and sorcery; antagonisms and rivalry, jealousy, bad temper and quarrels, disagreements, factions and malice, drunkenness, orgies and all such things. And about these, I tell you now as I have told you in the past, that people who behave in these ways will not inherit the kingdom of God. On the other hand, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, trustfulness, gentleness and self-control; no law can touch such things as these. All who belong to Christ Jesus have crucified self with all its passions and its desires.

Then how can we talk about a theology of the body?

The theology of the body is grounded on the creation of man in the image and likeness of God. The classical theology postulates that *imago Dei* refers to human reason⁵⁵. John Paul II postulates that this is not the whole truth. Our resemblance to God does not refer exclusively to the non-bodily part,

⁵² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 72.118, footnote 1.

⁵³ Cf. F.L. SEBASTIANI, *Morale personale*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1991, 105.

⁵⁴ Cf. T.D. WILLIAMS, “Theology of the Body and *Humanæ vitæ*”, *Alpha Omega* 3 (2008) 366-367.

⁵⁵ St. Thomas wrote “Ad secundum dicendum quod homo dicitur esse ad imaginem Dei, non secundum corpus, sed secundum id quo homo excellit alia animalia, unde, Gen. I, postquam dictum est, faciamus hominem ad imaginem et similitudinem nostram, subditur, ut praesit piscibus maris, et cetera. Excellit autem homo omnia animalia quantum ad rationem et intellectum. Unde secundum intellectum et rationem, quae sunt incorporea, homo est ad imaginem Dei”. THOMAS OF AQUINAS, *Summa Theologiae*, I, 3,1, ad 2.

to the soul⁵⁶, because a soul-body dualism would not justify the goodness of God’s creation, denied by contemporary Manichaeism⁵⁷. For Pope John Paul II, the whole man is the result of an explicit act of God’s will. The whole man is a window to God. And if there are many biblical images in which the attributes of God are anthropomorphic, this is because this is the way we can think of God. The cause is therefore deeper: not that God is anthropomorphic, but we are theomorphic⁵⁸. It can be objected that God is a pure spirit and that is why the body has no theological importance. The human body does not indicate that God would have ten fingers in his hands. Although it seems strange, we learn more about God from our sexual nature than from other systems of our organism. Human sexuality is a language⁵⁹ of communion⁶⁰; through it, the human person manifests the creative and unifying qualities of God⁶¹.

Pope Francis also speaks of the gift of sexuality. The body of man and his sexuality, with which God has endowed it, is not a negative aspect or parts of his individuality that must cause him to feel ashamed. Man is body, and the body is a gift. Sin has brought concupiscence into the body of man, and its painful effects, but Christ assumed the body of man in order to redeem the whole man, including his body. Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis oppose a negative view of the human body, which shows the body, its desires and passions as obstacles on the way to salvation, and elements that harm man from which he must be freed. *Amoris Laetitia* 150, quoting John Paul II, states:

God himself created sexuality, which is a marvelous gift to his creatures. If this gift needs to be cultivated and directed, it is to prevent the *impoverishment of an authentic value*. Saint John Paul II rejected the claim that the Church’s teaching is a *negation of the value of human sexuality*, or that the Church simply tolerates sexuality *because it is necessary for procreation*. Sexual desire is not something to be looked down upon, and *there can be no attempt whatsoever to call into question its necessity*.

Quoting again the catechesis of John Paul II, *Amoris Laetitia* states:

⁵⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 34-35.

⁵⁷ Cf. T.D. WILLIAMS, “Theology of the Body and *Humanae vitae*”, 369; *CBC* 364; *Gaudium et spes* 14; *EncVat* 1/1363-1364.

⁵⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor* (6 August 1993) 48: AAS 12 (1993) 1171-1172.

⁵⁹ The idea that sexuality can be considered a “language” had already been proposed by other authors, for example by P. RICOEUR, “Wonder, Eroticism and Enigma”, *Cross Currents* 14 (1964) 133-141, and A. GUINDON, *The sexual language. An essay in Moral Theology*, University of Ottawa, Ottawa 1976.

⁶⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 58-61.

⁶¹ Cf. T.D. WILLIAMS, “Theology of the Body and *Humanae vitae*”, 371.

In his catecheses on the theology of the body, Saint John Paul II taught that sexual differentiation not only is *a source of fruitfulness and procreation*, but also possesses *the capacity of expressing love: that love precisely in which the human person becomes a gift* (AL 151).

That is why “a healthy sexual desire, albeit closely joined to a pursuit of pleasure, always involves a sense of wonder, and for that very reason can humanize the impulses” (AL 153).

For both popes, the body is a value and not an object. In their teachings, the other person can never be reduced to an object of consumption or a tool of pleasure. Because man is created in the image and likeness of God and has been saved by Christ the incarnate Word, he must never use another as an object of desires.

Theology of the body is based on one of the fundamental truths expressed by *Gaudium et Spes* 24⁶²: the image of man as a gift is the reflection of the perichoretic life of the Holy Trinity, the source of self-giving and the perfect reception of love⁶³. From this perspective, the human person, man and woman, represents the primordial sacrament understood as a sign that transmits life⁶⁴ and the effective instrument of the mystery of love between Christ and his Church, love which, in turn, is the reflection of the mystery hidden in God Trinity-Communion of persons. The unity of man and woman reflects this mystery of holiness, truth, and love. With the creation of the human person, this mystery shines in the world, and so the mystery of the human comes from the divine sphere of holiness and is ordained for holiness⁶⁵.

Perhaps the novelty of the theology of body proposed by John Paul II is present more in form than in substance. Many of its potentials are actually anticipated by the doctrine of *Gaudium et spes* 49⁶⁶. Since the cultural situation after the Council has changed, it was necessary for John Paul II to propose this doctrine more recently⁶⁷.

2.3. The Key Concepts of John Paul II's Adequate Anthropology

The fundamental category of the adequate anthropology is “the principle of reduction” because it is the foundation that establishes that way of thinking through which is attained the vision of the integrity of the human

⁶² Cf. *Gaudium et spes* 24: *EncVat* 1/1395.

⁶³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 59.306; E. FERENT, *Frumusețea vieții creștine*, 7.

⁶⁴ Cf. S. DZIWIŚ, “Juan Pablo II, el Papa de la familia y de la vida”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 3 (2006) – 1 (2007) 108.

⁶⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 91.

⁶⁶ Cf. *Gaudium et spes* 49: *EncVat* 1/1475-1477.

⁶⁷ Cf. S. SPINSATI, *Il corpo nella cultura contemporanea*, Queriniana, Brescia 1983, 118.

person. Usually reduction is a key category that designates a process in which the richness or plurality of the dimension of an object, of a reality, is, consciously or not, diminished, limited, or eventually denied⁶⁸. But, in order to define positively this cognitive process, it is necessary to use the concept of induction with which it is correlated. The process of induction is the procedure by which the intellect receives, intuits the substantial identity and unity that is signified in the multiplicity and complexity of experienced phenomena. Induction is not an impoverishment of experience, but its unification; it is enrichment, because what was just given before in multiplicity is now understood in its identity. To suggest this idea, the Pope uses the expression "consolidation of the experience". That is, the object of the experience does not remain vague, dispersed in the ocean of multiplicity and complexity, but becomes fixed in its permanent identity.

Induction opens the gate of the true and useful reduction⁶⁹. Experience can only lead us to the plurality of facts⁷⁰. However, the complexity of experience, once we enter its intrinsic unity, urges the intellect to understand and explain this unity, to comprehend that it is necessary to return to the cause, to the appropriate foundations, to realize the presence of the one whose experience I have, which in its substantial identity is suggested to me by induction⁷¹. The induction asks to become reduction, in the sense that only through the process of reduction there is an adequate vision of the object, that is, a perspective of its identity by taking over all the aspects related to the object, all the fundamental and essential structures, in their unity, and thus I realize the centre of what I'm really experiencing. After all, reduction is an "exploration of the experience"⁷². Its application palette is the *humanum*: the integrity of the human person⁷³.

Reduction, therefore, does not mean either diminution or limitation, but orientation to valid reasons and foundations, to clarify the acts of experience, to interpret its complexity, to reveal its internal unity⁷⁴, and ultimately to assert the "irreducible transcendence of the human person"⁷⁵.

The harmony between this "adequate" anthropology and the theology of the body is created by the closeness to the texts of *Genesis*, which presents the essential characteristics of personal existence in the theological

⁶⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, 33-37.

⁶⁹ Cf. C. CAFFARRA, "Introduzione generale", 7.

⁷⁰ JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, 33-34.

⁷¹ JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, 36.

⁷² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 34.

⁷³ Cf. C. CAFFARRA, "Introduzione generale", 8.

⁷⁴ Cf. A. RIGOBELLO, "Introduzione all'edizione italiana", 7.

⁷⁵ Cf. A.T. TYMIENIECKA, "Introduzione redazionale all'edizione anglo-americana", in JOHN PAUL II, *Persona e atto*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1982, 18.

prehistory of man. Although the return “at the beginning” might encounter resistance from the evolutionist mentality, it would be erroneous to ignore the fact that the *Book of Genesis* mirrors not only the primary original dimension of man’s existence, but also the exemplary one⁷⁶.

3. The place of protology in anthropology

For John Paul II, the texts of Genesis do have a theological character and contain a dense metaphysical weight. Rather than answering the question: “Historically and chronologically, where is man coming from?”, the biblical text wants to answer another: “What is the significance of man’s existence within the created reality?”⁷⁷

3.1. A possible definition of protology

Protology is the doctrine of the origin of the world and of man. This branch of theology is correlated with Christology and Eschatology, since the beginning of God’s project is enlightened by its finality⁷⁸. In the logic of the salvific economy, there is a strong connection between all the aspects. Therefore, protology also involves etiology, that is, a search for causes, starting from the present realities. Thus, the first three chapters of the *Book of Genesis* can be considered a retrospective prophecy, because they make the protology up to Gen 11 understandable, but also show the whole path of salvation begun with Abraham and fulfilled in Christ, the new Adam⁷⁹, and the present condition of man. The purpose of *Genesis* is not a historic or archaeological one, but a theological and soteriological one: these are the ways to formulate fundamental truths about man’s origin and his dignity as God’s image⁸⁰.

The same ideas are underlined several times by Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia*.

Natural marriage, therefore, is fully understood in the light of its fulfillment in the sacrament of Matrimony: *only in contemplating Christ* does a person come to know the deepest truth about human relationships. “Only in the mystery of the Incarnate Word does the mystery of man take on light... Christ, the new

⁷⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 77, footnote 1.

⁷⁷ Cf. G. RAVASI, *Questioni di fede. 150 risposte ai perché di chi crede e di chi non crede*, Arnoldo Mondadori, Milano 2010; translated into Romanian, *Întrebări privitoare la credință*, Humanitas, București 2011, 184.

⁷⁸ Cf. G. O’COLLINS – E. G. FARRUGIA, “Protologia”, in *Dizionario sintetico di teologia*, ed. G. O’COLLINS – E. G. FARRUGIA, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1995, 239.

⁷⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 373-382.

⁸⁰ Cf. G. MONDIN, “Protologia”, in *Dizionario enciclopedico di filosofia, teologia e morale*, Massimo, Milano 1989, 603-604.

Adam, by the revelation of the mystery of the Father and his love, fully reveals man to himself and makes his supreme calling clear” (*Gaudium et Spes*, 22). It is particularly helpful to understand in a *Christocentric key*... the good of the spouses (*bonum coniugum*) (*AL* 77).

Jesus, who reconciled all things in himself and redeemed us from sin, not only returned marriage and the family to their original form, but also raised marriage to the sacramental sign of his love for the Church (*AL* 71).

In conclusion, for the both Popes, the theological themes in *Gen* 1-3 form a unit, but they are only part of anthropology. The other part develops in the light of incarnation, forgiveness and soteriology, because a complete theology about man comprises also the theme of salvation⁸¹.

In contemporary theology, Karl Rahner pointed out the relevance of protology in the search of theology to find a deeper understanding of man, showing that protology is possible only with Christ and from Christ. In different terms, in the catechetical explanations of John Paul II, a true *Defensor hominis*, we find this theme of *the beginning* as a hermeneutical key for an authentic comprehensibility of God’s original plan, always present in man’s history⁸² and his most genuine truth⁸³. The resonances of this teaching are found in *Redemptoris Mater* (1987)⁸⁴ and *Mulieris dignitatem* (1988)⁸⁵.

3.2. *The relevance of the body for the protology*

The text of Genesis is the starting point for the theology of the body. On the other hand, the fact that theology is interested in the human body does not have to irritate any of those who are aware of the implications of the mystery of Incarnation. By the fact that the Word became flesh, the body entered the gate of theology, the science that studies divinity. Although contemporary bio-anatomy can provide much information about the human body, the source of the full truth about is to be found in the Word of God, which leads our attention to the truth of the beginning, *in principio* (cf *Mt* 19:3)⁸⁶.

⁸¹ Cf. K. RAHNER, “Protologia”, in *Herders Theologisches Taschenlexikon*, VI, ed. K. Rahner, Herderbücherei, Freiburg im Breisgau, 1973, 109-111.

⁸² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 32.65.107.373-379; A. LOBATO, “La familia cristiana: identidad y misión”, in PONTIFICIO CONSIGLIO PER LA FAMIGLIA, *La famiglia: Dono e impegno speranza dell’umanità*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1998, 327.

⁸³ Cf. E.C. RAVA, “Protologia”, in *Lexicon. Dizionario teologico enciclopedico*, Piemme, Casale Monferrato 1993, 840-842.

⁸⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptoris Mater* (25 March 1987): AAS 4 (1987) 361-433.

⁸⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Apostolic Letter *Mulieris dignitatem* (15 August 1988): AAS 13 (1988) 1653-1729.

⁸⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 107.

Protology presents man who, through the consciousness of his own body, distinguishes himself from the animal and separates from it. Paradoxically, the body, although it resembles itself visibly and externally with the animal, becomes a factor bearer of the transcendent and the personal subjectivity of man⁸⁷. The body assumes a double meaning: it expresses the person, it reveals Adam, the “Man” being understood in the biblical language as *pars pro toto*⁸⁸, and, on the other hand, the person can communicate and express themselves through the body. Man agrees that the body speaks “for him” and “on behalf of him”⁸⁹. The language of the body becomes the prophecy of the body⁹⁰, and in this context, we are talking about the objective and the subjective sense of body language, respectively⁹¹.

The protological revealed truth offers ways of understanding the human being. It is an *interior intimo meo* truth because it is *superior superiori meo*. Between God’s revelation and man’s knowledge and self-consciousness there is no juxtaposition, no identification, but integration. Integration is a process in which the essentially human experience is correlated to the truth of faith, and, by this respectful relationship, fully discloses its objective content.

The theology of the body contained in *Genesis* 1-3, though it is concise and punctuated, however, expresses essential, primary and definitive contents⁹². The human experiences of *Genesis* belong to the prehistory of man and his theological archaeology, but they always remain at the root of any human experience. Therefore, the protological experiences are lived also in daily events, in our daily activities and inner states of mind, even though they are not found to be extraordinary. Only what we initially called the “body revelation” helps us to discover the extraordinary aspects in daily life. This is possible because the revelation considers precisely these primordial experiences, in which the absolute originality of the human being appears in the quasi-complete way⁹³.

3.3. *The Importance of Protology for the Theological Anthropology*

The protological state is the original status understood as the theological prehistory of each historic man. The theological content, constitutive of

⁸⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 49-50.

⁸⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 60.

⁸⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 406.

⁹⁰ Cf. M. SERRETTI, “Indice dei concetti principale”, in JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò: catechesi sull’amore umano*, Città Nuova, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1987², 510.

⁹¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 401.

⁹² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 97.

⁹³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 65.

this original state, is analysed and ordered in terms of the development of a theology of the body in its original state. The *principium*, the protology has a particular incidence on the anthropological theology, especially on the theology of the body in general⁹⁴. In other words, the historical man is rooted in the theological prehistory narrated by the first three chapters of Genesis⁹⁵.

By basing his research on the Bible sources (*Genesis*), Pope John Paul II responded personally to the invitation of the Council to return to origins and to develop a useful model to overcome the overflowing rationalism in the pre-conciliar theology⁹⁶. By analysing the biblical texts, his theology reaches a point where anthropology can be called theology of the body⁹⁷. Promoting it, the Pope is aware of the advances made by biophysiology and biomedicine, but notes that such science, by itself, does not develop explicitly the knowledge of the body as a sign of the person⁹⁸, as a manifestation of the spirit, and may slip to harmful manipulations for present day man⁹⁹. The answer Christ gave to the Pharisees (cf. *Mt* 19:3) and also gives to the people of our time: *ite ad fontes*. Christ makes the appeal to the biblical “beginning” of protology, especially since the contemporary man’s situation seems to have forgotten the biblical image of the beginnings of *Genesis*.

The same idea is underlined by Pope Francis when he states: Adam and Eve

embody the primordial divine plan clearly spoken of by Christ himself: *Have you not read that he who made them from the beginning made them male and female?* (*Mt* 19:4). We hear an echo of the command found in the Book of Genesis: *Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, and they shall become one flesh* (*Gen* 2:24) (*AL* 9).

Together with the two Popes, we affirm that it is necessary to review the mystery of the “beginning” to elucidate current behaviours¹⁰⁰. For example, understanding the fundamental meanings revealed by the creation act is essential today for the human *ethos*¹⁰¹. Even today, in the perspective

⁹⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 35. 32, footnote 1.

⁹⁵ Cf. J. NORIEGA, *Destinul erosului: perspective de morală sexuală*, Galaxia Gutenberg, Târgu-Lăpuș 2011, 47.

⁹⁶ Cf. T.D. WILLIAMS, “Theology of the Body and *Humanae vitae*”, 385.

⁹⁷ Cf. N. MARTIN – R. MARTIN, “Einleitung”, in JOHN PAUL II, *Die menschliche Liebe*, Patris Verlag, Vallendat-Schönstatt 1985, 35.

⁹⁸ Cf. R.L. LUCAS, “Cuerpo humano y visión integral del hombre”, *Gregorianum* 1 (1995) 125-146.

⁹⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 235-236.

¹⁰⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 79.88.107.373-382; JOHN PAUL II, *Scrisoarea către familia Gratissimam sane* (2 februarie 1994) 7: AAS 86 (1994) 874-875.

¹⁰¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 88.

of one's own history, the human, male and female, can recognize the nuptial significance of his own body. Although this significance has suffered multiple discussions and litigations especially in the Western society, it is kept at its most profound level and requires its manifestation in its simplicity and purity as a sign of the "image of God".

At the same time, the words of Jesus referring "in the beginning" allow us to find in man a continuity and connection between the two primal states of the human being: *status naturae integrae* and *status naturae lapsae simul et redemptae*. The state of sin is part of the reality of the historical man, to which Mt 19 refers, that is the life of the potential current or future interlocutor of Jesus. This state, present in every person, remembers the "theological prehistory" and the state of the original innocence. *Gen 2-3*, the creation, the fall, and the promise of the Saviour, not only presents the *historia dramatis personae* of the first two people Adam and Eva, but also the entire course of human existence.

Conclusion

In this study, I intended to illustrate that in *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* and *Amoris Laetitia*, protology, although etymologically referred only to the first chapters in the *Book of Genesis*, is intrinsically related to Christology and Eschatology. These connections have a theological foundation, that is, the reality of man's creation bears the mark of his eternal choice in Christ, who through his incarnation, has enlightened a new dignity for the human body, while also directing it to the eschatological fullness of the redeemed human person. The theological themes in *Gen 1-3* form a unit but they are only a part of anthropology. The other part develops itself in the light of incarnation, forgiveness and soteriology, because a complete theology about man also comprises the theme of salvation. Protology is possible only with Christ and thanks to Christ.

The theme of the beginning is a hermeneutical key for an authentic comprehensibility of God's original plan, always present in man's history, and of his most genuine truth. In this perspective, the history of salvation, leading to the final fulfillment in the *eschaton*, is the assumption of the beginning: creation, sin, and the complete and definitive restoration in Christ. The relationship between creation and falling has a strong rapport with the contemporary man, it contains the doctrine of the situation of the present world, the world being the human environment and the argument that makes the history of salvation possible, including the restoration of man in Christ.

John Paul II's theological anthropology reflects his philosophical and cultural formation, but also his loyalty to the truth of man revealed by Holy Scripture and reaffirmed by the Tradition of the Church. All these elements generate a balanced vision of man, freed from dual-body soul, man-woman duality, and one in accordance with God's "in the beginning" plan described by *Genesis* 1-3. Reading the catechesis of Pope John Paul II and the exhortation of Pope Francis, one can observe the continuity and harmony between the teachings of both Popes regarding the institution of the family. For Pope Francis, as for John Paul II, family is a mirror and an icon of the Holy Trinity. The unity between man and woman provides a testimony to the intimate life of the Holy Trinity and of the unity of the Three Divine Persons. John Paul II and Pope Francis speak of the gift of sexuality. The body of man and his sexuality, with which God has endowed it, is not a negative aspect or parts of his individuality that must cause him to feel ashamed. Man is body, and the body is a gift. Sin has brought concupiscence into the body of man, and its painful effects, but Christ assumed the body of man in order to redeem the whole man, including his body. Both Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis oppose a negative view of the human body, which shows the body and man's desires and passions as obstacles on the way to salvation, and elements that harm man from which he must be freed.

What then is our idea about the life of the Church? What is our idea about the Magisterium of the Church? Is it a museum or an exhibition of fossilized teachings, now presented in a new form? Or it is the living breath of the Holy Spirit? The Magisterium of the Catholic Church is a living organism, animated by the Holy Spirit that address as a fresh and authentic message to the contemporary family. Magisterium and the Church cannot be separated, the documents of the Magisterium and the life of today's Church are intimately linked. Pope Francis, in his teachings, reintroduces and develops both the catechesis of John Paul II present in *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* and his other teachings about families. Certainly, we encounter an innovative look in Pope Francis' teachings and a new style of teaching this message¹⁰². Nevertheless, in the teaching of the two popes we must note the harmony and uninterrupted vitality of the same Spirit that constantly blows into the Church of Christ.

¹⁰² For example, Severino Dianich speaks about the ongoing life of the Magisterium. Cf. S. DIANICH, *Magistero in movimento. Il caso papa Francesco*, EDB, Bologna 2016.