

**„STATUS NATURAE LAPSAE SIMUL ET REDEMPTAE” (Gen 3)
IN MAN AND WOMAN HE CREATED THEM:
A THEOLOGY OF THE BODY BY JOHN PAUL II**

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Abstract: In this article, my intention has been to emphasize the role of the postlapsarian protology (*Gen 3*) in the anthropology enlightened by the mystery of Christ (*status lapsae simul et redemptae*). I considered the disastrous consequences of original sin, the perspective of death, the appearance of shame, the change in the meaning of nakedness – a change generated by the triple concupiscence in the human heart, the deformation of the spousal meaning of the human body and the disorder produced in the *communio personarum*, as they are presented in the catecheses of *Man and Woman He Created Them: A Theology of the Body* by John Paul II. Finally, from the perspective of the *protoevangelium* (cf. *Gen 3:15*), I examined protology and anthropology in the light of Christology, because in Christ it has been historically manifested and eminently revealed who man is and what is his fulfillment.

Keywords: creation, man, woman, theology, body, Genesis.

Introduction

Status naturae lapsae simul et redemptae is contained in the theology of the body by John Paul II that takes into account the original state, original sin, and salvation of man in Christ. These are the three stages that indicate the roots of the *ethos* for *communio personarum*, as well as the three temporal dimensions – past, present and future – reconciled and united in a theological synthesis. After presenting the creation of man in the preceding articles, it is my aim in this present article to highlight these three aspects of the human existence redeemed in Christ as they are exposed within the interpretation that John Paul II proposes for *Gen 3*.

1. Original sin and its consequences

Original sin occurs in the will and conscience of man and appears as an act of disobedience. This disobedience is the principle of all other sins. In this sin begins the *mysterium iniquitatis*; but, only with reference to this

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mystery of evil, the redeeming power of *mysterium pietatis* becomes particularly clear and efficient¹.

1.1. *Sin and the perspective of death*

Man, as a subject of the alliance, is placed in front of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. If he eats of it, he will die (cf. *Gen* 2:16-17). In the words “to die” – this perspective is presented to man as a radical antithesis to what he was intended to be. The tree of Eden presents a clear symbolism: man was not allowed to change the meaning of what is good and what is evil, but he should have appealed to a superior principle². Therefore, the word of God suggests that the human being depends on divinity, by a dependence, which makes man a limited creature susceptible to non-being. Still, the postulate of death is conditional: “if you eat”. By listening to God’s command, man understands that the tree in Eden had roots not only in the garden soil but also in his humanity, in his heart and freedom³. This freedom would find its full realization precisely in obedience⁴. The moment when God asks man not to eat from the interdicted tree it is connected to that of man’s choice and self-determination, that is, that of exercising free will⁵. Here, the law of God and of human freedom meet and are called to interpenetrate mutually⁶. From the perspective of the possibility of this interpenetration, the hagiographer presents the human person endowed with his own subjectivity.

Gen 3:1-5 reports the key moment in which the gift of God’s love is put under doubt by the heart of man. In so doing, man turns his back on God. In a certain sense, he takes God out of his heart⁷, goes far away from him, closes his freedom to God and opens it to the Father of lies. Immediately we can notice the consequences of anti-Word, of anti-truth, of the falsification of the truth about God. The Creator is suspected and accused in the mind of the creature and so for the first time there appears the perverse genius of suspicion⁸.

¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Dominum et vivificantem* (18 May 1986) 33: AAS 9 (1986) 845-846.

² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Fides et ratio* (14 September 1998) 21: AAS 1 (1999) 22.

³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, , Città Nuova, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1987², 52.

⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor* (6 August 1993) 35: AAS 12 (1993) 1161-1162.

⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 48.

⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor* (6 August 1993) 41: AAS 12 (1993) 1165-1166.

⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 123.

⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Dominum et vivificantem* (18 May 1986) 37: AAS 9 (1986) 850.

The adverb “now” in *Gen* 3:7 suggests the emergence of a new phase following the break of the first alliance, a phase that follows the first “obedience” test, that is, the invitation to obey the word of Truth and accept Love according to the fullness of the Creator’s will⁹. The negative effect of disobedience is confirmed by the evidence of it on the whole of human history. The horizon of death extends over the whole perspective of human life on earth: man who breaks the alliance with God is cut off from the tree of life (cf. *Gen* 3:22). In this way, man’s life on earth is framed between certain limits, between birth and death¹⁰.

1.2. *The change of the meaning of the original nakedness*

After sinning, the first two people opened their eyes and saw that they were naked, and therefore they were ashamed. The first phrase of the Yahwiste account of man’s after-sin situation shows the new state of human nature. Man is trying to cover his own shame by showing its effect, but not the cause. His nakedness, in the *status naturae lapsae*, probably does not have a literal meaning, it does not refer strictly to the body, but it shows that man, created to be a gift for others, interrupted his participation to his Gift, by getting closed to the love of God and was deprived of the supernatural gifts. Man, Adam and Eve, lost what did not belong strictly to nature: *integritas, sanctitas, inocentia*¹¹. His *liberum arbitrium* has not been taken away, but just weakened¹².

The sin of man and woman also consists in not having affirmed their control over their sexuality and, in so doing, in not having seen the other’s person identity apart from his body. This lack of awareness also disturbs one’s own person¹³. Before original sin, the body was a clear component of the reciprocal gifts in the *communio personarum*. But now *Gen* 3:10 reports the appearance of a change: man loses the original confidence of being a image of God, an image also expressed through his body. He loses the sense of his right to examine and master the world. The words “I was afraid” (*Gen* 3:10) confirm the dissolution of the original understanding of the body as a sign of the person and the visible world as God’s gift. *Gen* 3:10 expresses the consciousness of self-finitude, the sense of insecurity of his own somatic structure facing the natural processes operating with an inevitable determinism¹⁴.

⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 66-67.

¹⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 103.

¹¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 125-126.

¹² CONCILIUM TRIDENTINUM, *Decretum De justificatione*, I, DS 1521.

¹³ Cf. C. CAFFARRA, “Il magistero di Giovanni Paolo II su Matrimonio e Famiglia”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia*, 2 (20005) 33.

¹⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 127.

We can easily notice how the very meaning of the material world and work was changed: “By the sweat of your face will you earn your food, until you return to the ground, as you were taken from it. For dust you are and to dust you shall return” (*Gen* 3:19)¹⁵.

1.3. *The anthropological relevance of the original shame*

Concupiscence is a state of the person, considered in her entire subjective-objective dimension, which tries to impede the realization of the whole truth of the human being. Speaking of concupiscence, John Paul II opposes within this context the notion of “original nakedness” and “original shame”. Nakedness before original sin expressed the free dimension of the mutual gift. Shame, on the other side, shows that this original quality had been corrupted¹⁶: *Gen* 3:7 indicates the mutual shame of the first people as a symptom of the *status of natural lapsae*. Here, shame reaches its highest degree, resonating in the very layers of human existence. This shame is immanent and relational: it manifests itself in the dimension of human inwardness, and at the same time, it refers to another. We can also talk about a “cosmic” shame – the man, *imago Dei*, created to master the earth, is subject to the hostile action of the earth¹⁷. Thus, shame reveals a specific difficulty in perceiving the human essence of one’s own body because of the rupture of man’s original spiritual and somatic unity¹⁸.

Sin has corrupted man’s relationship with woman and introduced shame into the world, because the ambition of self-sufficiency stops the access to the Trinitarian mystery of unity, purity, and love. Man becomes incapable of recognizing the other as an *alter ego*, and of transposing himself to the other person, and therefore incapable of giving to each other in order to participate in a life that is more than the sum of two isolated lives¹⁹.

¹⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Sollicitudo rei socialis* (30 December 1987) 30: AAS 5 (1988) 551-552.

¹⁶ Cf. A. MATTHEEWS, “De la Bible à *Humanae vitae*. Les catéchèses de Jean Paul II”, in *Nouvelle revue théologique* 111 (1989) 232.

¹⁷ 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 effects of the original sin on the life of the family: “Nor can we overlook the social degeneration brought about by sin, as, for example, when human beings tyrannize nature, selfishly and even brutally ravaging it. This leads to the desertification of the earth (cf. *Gen* 3:17-19) and those social and economic imbalances denounced by the prophets, beginning with Elijah (cf. *1Kg* 21) and culminating in Jesus’ own words against injustice (cf. *Lk* 12:13; 16:1-31)”, *Amoris Laetitia* 26.

¹⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 128-129.

¹⁹ Cf. A. VINGT-TROIS, „Un Pape philosophe et théologien”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia*, 2 (2005) 63.

For the first time people realize that, their body ceased to reach the strength of the spirit, which directs him/her to the face of God. Shame bears the sign of a specific humiliation mediated by the body, the humiliation of instrumentalization²⁰. Shame also contains such accurate self-knowledge as to create a fundamental unrest in all human existence. Shame has also a sexual character²¹. The man proved that through his sexual body he ceased to be placed over the *animalia*. He experienced the fracture of the personal integrity of his own body, especially in what determined his sexuality. The simplicity and purity that facilitated a singular fullness in the mutual communication of oneself disappeared. Gender diversity was suddenly perceived as an element of mutual counter-argument²² that caused loneliness²³.

2. The theological character of concupiscence

Concupiscence is the consequence of breaking the alliance with God. This rupture takes place primarily in the heart of man²⁴ and has direct effects on it: it disturbs the spousal significance of the body and hurts *communio personarum*. Concupiscence is not a sin, but a disordered tendency of sensitivity and sentiment, orientated to evading the judgment of reason, by considering the person in himself and in others not as a goal but as an instrument of pleasure²⁵.

²⁰ Cf. J. NORIEGA, *Destinul erosului: perspective de morală sexuală*, Galaxia Gutenberg, Târgu-Lăpuș 2011, 97. Pope Francis reintroduces and develops this teaching in *Amoris Laetitia*: “Modesty is a natural means whereby we defend our personal privacy and prevent ourselves from being turned into objects to be used. Without a sense of modesty, affection and sexuality can be reduced to an obsession with genitality and unhealthy behaviours that distort our capacity for love, and with forms of sexual violence that lead to inhuman treatment or cause hurt to others” (AL 282). 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.

²¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 130.

²² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 129.132-133; N. MARTIN – R. MARTIN, “Einleitung”, în JOHN PAUL II, *Die menschliche Liebe*, Patris Verlag, Vallendat-Schönstatt 1985, 35.

²³ În *Reflection on Fatherhood*, K. Wojtila summarizes the message of the whole piece *Radiation of Fatherhood*: Adam, after sin, experiences loneliness, but also the desire to enter into communion, to be groom and father. Cf. M. WALDSTEIN, “The Hearts of Father and The Teenager: Communicating the Faith in the Context of Modern Culture”, *Famiglia e vita. Rivista quadrimestrale di Pontificio Consiglio per la Famiglia* 3 (2006) – 1 (2007) 66.

²⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 121.

²⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 496.

2.1. *Concupiscence affects communio personarum*

The concupiscent man is looking at woman to desire her (cf. *Mt* 5:27-28). In this looking at her, which transforms woman into an object, it is encountered in the manifestation of the triple concupiscence, of the flesh, of the eyes and the pride of possession: “because everything there is in the world – disordered bodily desires, disordered desires of the eyes, and pride in possession – is not from the Father but is from the world. And the world, with all its disordered desires, is passing away. But whoever does the will of God remains forever” (*1Jn*: 2:16-17)²⁶.

The concupiscent man loses the capacity of a full reciprocal *communio*. He loses his original certainty that the human body, through femininity and masculinity, is precisely that substrate of the *communio personarum*, that it expresses this *communio*, and it serves its fulfillment. The consciousness of this loss is like a second discovery of his own sex, which in the biblical narrative clearly differs from the first discovery, because concupiscence brings a constitutive difficulty of immediate relationship with one’s own body. Concupiscence works not only in the consciousness of one’s own subjectivity, but also in relation to the subjectivity of the other human beings²⁷.

The history of human consciences and of souls has always confirmed the words of *Genesis* 3:16: “I shall give you intense pain in childbearing; you will give birth to your children in pain. Your yearning will be for your husband, and he will dominate you”. These words concern not only the moment of the union between the woman and the man, but also the wider context of the collateral relationships generated by the conjugal union. For the first time here, the man is defined as “husband”. Within the context of the Jahwist narrative, *Gen* 3:16 suggests a lack, namely the loss of personal communion, because the original and beatific union has been distorted by concupiscence present in the heart of man: concupiscence divided dramatically the first people and even puts them in opposition because of the sexual differentiation.

The same ideas are underlined by Pope Francis in *Amoris laetitia* 19, when he states:

The word of God constantly testifies to that sombre dimension already present at the beginning, when, through sin, the relationship of love and purity between man and woman turns into domination: *Your desire shall be for your husband, and he shall rule over you* (*Gen* 3:16).

Woman, whose instinct moves her towards her husband, and man who responds to his instinct – “Your yearning will be for your husband, and he

²⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 122.

²⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 133-134.

will dominate you”, form undoubtedly the same human pair of *Gen* 2:24. However, now they are different. They are affected by the insatiability of union, which does not cease to attract man and woman²⁸. Their body does not cease to stimulate the desires of the personal union, because the contracted concupiscence leads, even if in its own way, to these desires. But these desires by themselves are incapable of promoting union as *communio personarum*. Concupiscence does not unite, but tries to possess people as if they were objects. Desire becomes the updating of concupiscence, whereby the other person is reduced to an object of profit. The act of following the voice of concupiscence is an intentional reduction, a restriction or a closing of the horizon of mind and heart. This intentional reduction has an axiological dimension, ruining the hierarchy of values that had ordained the former attraction between woman and man²⁹.

The communion of loving persons is usually expressed by the word “mine”, *my* wife, *my* husband. These are pronouns which, in their material significance, describe ownership, and in our case, the personal analogy of this relationship. As any analogy, it includes similarity, but also differentiation. This difference consists in the fact that, in the original sense, of possession, belonging involves only the relation between an object and a subject, in the language of authentic love, “mine” contradicts radically this connotation, which is constitutive to concupiscence³⁰.

2.2. Concupiscence deforms the spousal meaning of the human body

Since man dominates woman (cf. *Gen* 3:16), in the *communio personarum* it steps into a movement contrary to human nature, that is, a relationship of possession of the other as if he/she were just an object. This is also one of the great problems of modernity. It is due to a dualist vision of man: the opposition between self-reflexive identity and human corporality³¹. This is the meaning of limiting the spousal relationship which is caused by concupiscence³². This limitation does not change the reality itself, because the human body does not cease to be sexual – the significance of the body is, in a certain sense, “ahistorical”, or beyond-historical and beyond-cultural. However Pope John Paul II, in his reflection, takes into account the human historicity according to biblical doctrine. But concupiscence refers to the

²⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 135-136.

²⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 170-71.

³⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 146-147.

³¹ Cf. D. MIETH, *Die Diktatur der Gene. Biotechnik zwischen Machbarkeit und Menschenwürde*, Herder, Freiburg im Breisgau 2001; trad. italiană, *La dittatura dei geni*, Queriniana, Brescia 2003, 163-164.

³² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 139.

inner dimension, which is missed by the external criteria of historicity, but which can still be considered “historical” because it is at the basis of all the elements constituting the history of man, and thus it reveals the depth and root of historicity³³.

The spousal meaning of the body is not totally suffocated by concupiscence, but only limited and so the heart of man has become the theatre of fights between true love and concupiscence. The more concupiscence dominates, the more the spousal meaning of the human body is clouded. Concupiscence restricts the capacity of man’s self-governance, which makes the inner freedom of self-giving impossible³⁴. Concupiscence undermines the true value of giving and thereby depersonalizes man, depriving him from the dignity of the true gift, turning him into an object for the other. Man becomes an object for man. He loses his true subjectivity and is taken over by the uncontrolled objectivity of the body³⁵. Moreover, the concupiscence casts doubt that the other is willed for himself/herself by the Creator.

Pope John Paul II uses mainly the term “the meaning of the body”, desiring to avoid any subjectivist meaning, as if the body would not in itself have an objective significance, but only the significance attributed to it by the person’s consciousness. However, in the history of individuals and of mankind, the two moments, both the objective and the subjective one, are indissoluble³⁶. But concupiscence that “comes from the world” limits and deforms this objective way of the existence of the body. And it is the “heart” of man that experiences the degree of this limitation and distortion. In the new state of the *naturae lapsae*, the natural and somatic substrate of sexuality manifests itself as a quasi-autonomous force, marking a certain “constraint of the body”, operating on its own dynamics, limiting the expression of the spirit and the human experience of exchanging the mutual gift³⁷.

2.3. *Concupiscence in the perspective of salvation in Christ*

Christ’s words about concupiscence are radical: “You have heard how it was said, You shall not commit adultery. But I say this to you, if a man looks at a woman lustfully, he has already committed adultery with her in

³³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 140.

³⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 144.

³⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 143. The same ideas are underlined several times by Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia*: “It is, after all, a fact that sex often becomes depersonalized and unhealthy; as a result, it becomes the occasion and instrument for self-assertion and the selfish satisfaction of personal desires and instincts”(153) But also in our own day, sexuality risks being poisoned by the mentality of use and discard” (155).

³⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 141, footnote 1.

³⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 142.

his heart” (*Mt* 5:27-28). Christ asks man to be fully conscience of his own acts, and especially of inner acts, in the sphere of relationships with a person of another sex, to have the consciousness of the inner impulses of the heart, to personalize and analyse them maturely. The words of Christ require that in this sphere, which seems to belong exclusively to the body and senses, ie to the exterior man, the Christian is to know how to truly be an interior man, masterful of his impulses and his own corporality, in order to discover the spousal meaning and beauty of the human body³⁸.

The judgment that Christ makes on concupiscence differs from that proposed by the Manichaeon ontology. While for the Manichaeon mentality, body and sexuality are anti-values; from the very beginning, for Christ the body was called to become a manifestation of the spirit. This is especially accomplished by the spousal union when the two spouses “become one flesh” (*Gen* 2:24). Christ thus defends the inviolable rights of this union between man and woman, that in the light of the history of salvation assumes the value of a sacramental sign³⁹.

In the light of Christ’s words, we affirm that the triple concupiscence does not destroy the possibility to analyse the language of the body and its spousal meaning. If concupiscence, by itself, generates numerous mistakes in discerning the language of the body, and thereby produces sin, i.e. the evil opposite to purity, yet within the sphere of the ethos of salvation there always remains the possibility of passing from error to truth: although man is under the influence of concupiscence, he is “called” to the reality of salvation in Christ (*simul lapsus et redemptus*)⁴⁰. The ethos of salvation taught by Christ is accomplished by temperance, continence of desires, self-control, life in the Spirit, by purity⁴¹: “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” (*Gal* 5:17). Sin did not completely deprive Adam and Eve of the possibility of living a “beautiful love”⁴² in marriage. Marriage, as a sacrament born of the mystery of salvation, reborn by the spontaneous love between Christ and his Church, is an effective expression of the saving power of God, who

³⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 198-199.

³⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 187-188.

⁴⁰ The Scolastics wrote a lot about the *status naturae redemptae*. Although the Council does not often use this word, it still refers to it in many places. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 408-409; JOHN PAUL II, *Memoria e identità*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 2005, 33.

⁴¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 203.207.219.

⁴² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Letter to Families *Gratissimam sane* (2 February 1994) 20: AAS 86 (1994) 915.

realizes his eternal plan despite man's sin, despite the triple concupiscence generated in the heart of man and women. As a sacramental expression of this salvific power, marriage becomes an exhortation to dominate the concupiscence⁴³ through temperance and chastity. Chastity not only fights against concupiscence, it also supports the freedom of self-giving, the freedom of loving⁴⁴. Love, because it is eminently human, a person-to-person act, and encompasses the good of the whole person and can endow with special dignity the modes of expression of the body and the soul⁴⁵.

So, in the design of salvation of the whole man, soul and body, Christ addresses the concupiscent man, the contemporary man who, in the depth of his person keeps the original sign and the genetic dowry of the "beginning". Sin did not destroy the image of God imprinted in the human person, that's why man can find and realize the value of his body by opening himself to the Holy Spirit⁴⁶.

3. *Protoevangelium* and its fulfillment in Christ

Even before sin, man wore the fruit of the eternal choice in Christ⁴⁷. He, the new Adam, reveals man to man, and renders his resemblance to God, which was deformed by the first sin, and Christ recreates it⁴⁸. As in him, human nature was assumed without being destroyed, through this very fact it was also exalted in us to a sublime dignity⁴⁹.

3.1. *Protoevangelium* (Gen 3:15) – the promise of the Saviour

The *protoevangelium* is the beginning of a new hope, the first announcement of salvation. The salvation of the body is connected, cf. *Rom*, to this hope in which "we were saved" (8:24). Through this hope that appeared at the dawn of mankind, the salvation of the body acquires an anthropological dimension: it was the salvation of the whole man. At the same time, this salvation exposes all creation to brilliant radiation, which, from the beginning, had been subordinated to man (cf. *Gen* 1: 28-30). *Protoevangelium* is therefore good news for the whole cosmos⁵⁰. Through the fulfillment of

⁴³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 389.

⁴⁴ Cf. P.B. DE MALHERBE, „*Humanæ vitæ: l'espérance de l'amour en Dieu qui nous aime*”, 139.

⁴⁵ Cf. N. MAREȘ, *Papă pentru milenul al III-lea*, N.M. Colosseum, București 2000, 135.

⁴⁶ Cf. A. MATTHEEUWS, „De la Bible à *Humanæ vitæ*. Les catéchèses de Jean Paul II”, 233.

⁴⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 374.

⁴⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor hominis* (4 March 1979) 10: AAS 4 (1979) 274.

⁴⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Redemptor hominis* (4 March 1979) 8: AAS 4 (1979) 270.

⁵⁰ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 334.

this *evangelium*, *good news*, the original goodness and worth of “being human” is not lost, thanks to the metaphysical principle of creation, but also to the promise of redemption issued immediately after the fall⁵¹.

When Jesus, in *Mt* 19, recalled “the beginning”, he did not refer only to the original innocence, but to the whole history of salvation. This is why in the Jahwist account of *Genesis* 2-3 we are already witnessing the fact that fallen man receives the promise of salvation by a word considered *protoevangelium* (cf. *Gen* 3:15) and begins to live in the theological perspective of salvation. Already *LXX* interprets *Gen* 3:15 in a messianic sense, applying the masculine pronoun *autòs* to the neuter Greek noun *sperma* (*seed*, in *Vulgata*). The Jewish tradition continues this interpretation. The Christian exegesis, starting with St. Irenaeus⁵², proposes this text as the *protoevangelium*, which predicts the victory borne by Christ over Satan. Although in the last few centuries the Scriptures’ scholars have interpreted this pericope differently, yet, more recently, it returned to the Messianic interpretation⁵³.

3.2. Jesus Christ – the Redeemer of the whole man

The New Testament presents the fulfillment of protology in a Messianic perspective: Jesus is the Messiah, the descendant of David (cf. *Rom* 1:3, *2Tim* 2:8), “born of a woman” (*Gal* 4:4), the new Adam and the new David, cf. *Rom* 15), who must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet (*1Cor* 15:25). *Rev* 12:1-10 also shows the final fulfillment of the prophecy of *Genesis* 3:15 which, although not a very clear and immediate announcement of Jesus as the Messiah of Israel, nevertheless leads to him through the royal and Messianic tradition that unites the Old to the New Testament⁵⁴.

Christ speaks in the name of hope planted in the heart of man by *protoevangelium*. Christ fulfills this hope through both his words and the testimony of his glorious and salvific death and resurrection. Through these, the salvation of the body has already been fulfilled in Christ. It was confirmed in him the hope that we “were saved” (*Rom* 8:24)⁵⁵. Thanks to Christ, every man has received again a renewed body, by God’s grace. Christ has printed within the body of every man a new dignity, which generates a new obligation: the holiness of a life in the Spirit and the purity that glorifies God⁵⁶. We have been bought at a high price (cf. *1Cor* 6:20), because our body was assumed by Christ and has become the body of One

⁵¹ Cf. J. NORIEGA, *Destinul erosului: perspective de morală sexuală*, 47.

⁵² Cf. IRINEU DE LYON, *Adversus haereses*, III, 23,7: *SCh* 211,465-466.

⁵³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 41.

⁵⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 41, footnote 1.

⁵⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 334-335.

⁵⁶ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 229.

who is true God and true Man. The salvation of the body includes that the body is called to a new measure of holiness through the participation to Christ's life and redeeming power⁵⁷.

Salvation means a new creation, the assumption of everything that has been created, to express the fullness of grace, justice, equity and holiness in creation and especially in man. The last expression of salvation is the resurrection⁵⁸. In the resurrection, the eschatological man will be free from the body-soul fight, and will experience perfect unity and harmony with the soul. The spiritualization of the body does not mean that the spirit will dominate the body, but that it will penetrate the energies of the body. It is not a disincarnation or dehumanization of man, but on the contrary, it is its perfect fulfillment. This new spiritual state will be the fruit of grace, that is, of the communication of God not only to the soul but also to the whole psychosomatic subjectivity of man⁵⁹.

3.3. *The relationship between protology, christology and eschatology*

God's plan for the human person has been inscribed in the human being's state of orientation towards the other. In order to know this plan, man has to be reminded of his own and his fellow man's identity. Only in this *anamnesis* can one realize the knowledge of the events from the beginning (protology) and to the end (eschatology)⁶⁰.

The progress of cultures shows that there is something in man that transcends cultures. This is precisely the nature of man. To consider it, at the urge of Jesus, we must return "to the beginning" (cf. *Mt* 19:19-19), to the account of creation. In the same sense, the Church asserts that beyond all the present changes, there are many things that do not change and which have their ultimate foundation in Christ, who is the same today as he was yesterday and as he will be forever (cf. *Heb* 13:8). He is the Beginning, *Alpha*, who, assuming human nature, permanently illuminates it in its constitutive elements and in the dynamism of his love to God and to the fellow man⁶¹.

The reality of the creation of the prelapsarian man bears the mark of the perennial choice of man in Christ: man is called to holiness through the grace of the adoption to be God's son⁶². Salvation, on the other hand,

⁵⁷ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 226.

⁵⁸ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 230.

⁵⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 267-268.

⁶⁰ Cf. S. GRYGIEL, "Amore e lavoro si sono ammalati", *Nuntium* 9 (1999) 137.

⁶¹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, Encyclical Letter *Veritatis splendor* (6 August 1993) 53: AAS 12 (1993) 1176.

⁶² Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 374.

must become the source of the supernatural coating by grace of the postlapsarian man⁶³. The supernatural grace given to man before sin announced the Incarnation and anticipated Jesus’s coming into the world. Through Incarnation, Christ ingrained into the human body a new dignity and oriented it towards the eschatological fullness of the redeemed man⁶⁴.

“The revelation of the sons of God” in Christ is definitely directed to that freedom and glory in which the sons of God must participate. “Salvation of the body” is also something that we expect. Through it we understand Christ’s eschatological victory over death, for which Christ gave supreme witness through his resurrection⁶⁵. In the light of this theology, according to *The beginning and Salvation*, Pope John Paul II approaches the topic of the eschatological event in the third cycle of catechesis. In this itinerary, John Paul II presents the full extent of theology of the body. The man destined to resurrection is the same who in the beginning was created in God’s likeness and image, who sinned in paradise and needs Redeemer. This dual reference to the origin and to the end, characteristic of the Pope’s method, impregnates the approach to the reality of the history and to the man of today⁶⁶.

In the classic dogmatic theology, protology indicated the chapters *De Deo creante*, *De Deo elevante* and *De peccato originali*⁶⁷. The connection between protology and eschatology involves two paradigms: the infralapsarian state, that is, from creation to the fall, for which eschatology is understood as a new creation. The postlapsarian state, following the failure of sin, for which *eschaton* represents the final restoration of fallen creation. In both cases, *πρῶτα* are interpreted within the light of *ἔσχατα*. This connection can not be perceived outside of Christology, outside the theology of the Word that was at the beginning: “In the beginning was the Word: the Word was with God and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things came into being, not one thing came into being except through him” (*Jn* 1:1-3), cf. Anselm of Canterbury, Thomas of Aquinas, Teilhard de Chardin)⁶⁸. Actually, salvation, the price that had to be paid for sin, brings with it a new discovery, a re-creation of all that had already been created “in the beginning”⁶⁹.

⁶³ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 226.

⁶⁴ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 227-228.

⁶⁵ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Uomo e donna lo creò*, 334-335.

⁶⁶ Cf. A. MATTHEEUWS, “De la Bible à *Humanae vitae*. Les catéchèses de Jean Paul II”, 233.

⁶⁷ Cf. K. RAHNER, “Protologia”, in *Sacramentum mundi*, VI, Morcelliana, Brescia 1976, 565.

⁶⁸ Cf. H. WAGNER, “Protologie”, in *Lexikon für Theologie und Kirche*, Herder, Freiburg-Basel-Viena 2009, 668-669.

⁶⁹ Cf. JOHN PAUL II, *Dono e mistero*, Libreria Editrice Vaticana, Vatican 1996, 92.

If Christology is the radical and supreme measure of anthropology⁷⁰, after the incarnation, anthropology must always be read as an incomplete Christology, and Christology as the purpose and foundation of anthropology⁷¹, because in Christ it has been manifested historically and eminently revealed who man is. It follows that an appropriate protology is only possible in an eschatological dimension and proceeding from Christ. In fact, as the beginning is an open, goal-oriented principle, updated in its conclusion, protology and eschatology present a reciprocal intrinsic relationship. The progressive and inchoative presence of the *eschaton*, accomplished within Christ, that is active in a veiled form in the self-fulfillment accepted by man, includes also the presence of *the beginning*. Therefore, the “beginning”, as a sustainable determination of man, is accessible only in a retrospective way of etiology, that starts from that salvific situation. Through this, the progress of the history of salvation is in fact the progress of protology, in the ascending going from its starting point⁷².

Like Saint John Paul II, Pope Francis in *Amoris Laetitia* 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.

Conclusion

Status naturae lapsae simul et redemptae is the fundamental concept of John Paul II's anthropology and cristology because, in John Paul II's view, *mysterium pietatis* can not be fully understood except in the light of the protological *mysterium iniquitatis*, described by *Gen 3*. In this perspective, the history of salvation, leading to the final fulfillment in the *eschaton*, is the assumption of the beginning of man: creation, sin, and the complete and definitive restoration in Christ. The relationship between creation and the fall refers also to the contemporary man and contains the doctrine

⁷⁰ For John Paul II, “anthropology is linked to a double thread to the centrality of Christology: anthropology depends on it, it is fulfilled in it”. R. FISICHELLA, “Un magistero fondato nella Trinità”, *Communio* 190-191 (2003) 25.

⁷¹ The anthropology from *Uomo e donna lo creó* is actually the echo of the theology of the Encyclical Letter *Redemptor hominis*, where Christ is presented as the center of the cosmos and of history, and of the theology from the Encyclical Letter *Dives in misericordia*, where Christ is presented as the incarnation of God's mercy. Cf. N. MARTIN – R. MARTIN, “Vorwort”, 18-19.

⁷² Cf. K. RAHNER, “Fondazione generale della protologia e dell'antropologia teologica”, in *Mysterium salutis, Grundriss heilsgeschichter Dogmatik*, Benziger Verlag, Einsiedeln 1967; trad. into Italian, *Mysterium salutis, IV, La storia della salvezza prima di Cristo*, ed. J. Feiner – M. Löhrer, Queriniana, Brescia 1970, 27-28.

of the creatural situation of the present world, the world being the human environment and the context of the history of salvation, including the restoration of man in 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 in his most genuine truth. The theological themes of *Gen* 1-3 form a unit, but they are only part of anthropology. The other part is enlightened by Incarnation, forgiveness in Christ, and soteriology, because a complete theology about man addresses also the theme of salvation. Protology is possible only with Christ and in Christ.