We recently heard with great sadness the news that Archbishop Józef M. Życiński died unexpectedly in Rome on February 10, 2011. He was Archbishop of Lublin, Poland, Grand Chancellor of the John Paul II Catholic University of Lublin, and was connected to this journal as a member of its editorial board and as the author of “Evolution and Christian Thought in Dialog according to the Teaching of John Paul II” in our Winter 2006 issue (9:1). Archbishop Życiński recently articulated well the larger intellectual purpose served by a journal such as Logos in an interview in Perspectives, published by the Center for Catholic Studies at the University of St. Thomas: “It is important to provide intellectual and cultural alternatives to the ‘dictatorship of relativism’ by presenting contemporary culture with the contributions of Christian thinkers.” He went on to emphasize “the inspiring and transformative Christian role in contemporary debates,” and called upon Logos to do what it could to enhance the possibility of cultural transformation through encounters between the Catholic intellectual tradition and all areas of contemporary culture, and in particular asked us to “continue and expand its engagement in the dialogue with science.”

Preface
Few Church leaders were as well prepared as Archbishop Życiński to exercise leadership in the contemporary dialogue between Catholicism and science, and few have been more effective. The dialogue with science is a central and indispensable component of the larger contemporary dialogue between faith and culture, particularly because the development of modernity is intertwined with the development of modern science and because the technological transformation of the modern world based on science continues to be one of the most obvious features of the contemporary cultural landscape. But this dialogue is especially urgent because a widespread but shallow account of the rise of modernity holds that this development is due to some kind of victory of scientific thinking over religious thinking. Such accounts have been voiced loudly and frequently in recent years.

In his previously mentioned article in *Logos*, Archbishop Życiński developed some of the work of Pope John Paul II to demonstrate the danger posed both by religious fundamentalism in its rejection of science and by scientific fundamentalism in its failure to recognize the legitimacy of a religious understanding and experience of the world. Too often, scientific claims are made in a reductionist mode that inculcate blindness to the depth of human experience through “the attempt . . . to subordinate even the most sublime realms of human experience to uncomplicated mechanisms.” Following John Paul’s lead in this regard, Archbishop Życiński called upon religion and science to enrich and challenge one another in contemporary intellectual life.

The archbishop has left us with a brilliant and extended demonstration of the engagement between Catholic theology and contemporary science in a book translated in 2006, *God and Evolution: Fundamental Questions of Christian Evolutionism.* As he explains in the introduction, interdisciplinary dialogue plays a necessary role in achieving a new understanding of the harmonious relationship between scientific theories of the origin of the human species and Christian faith. The concept of dialogue is understood rigorously
in this context—Życiński is not merely offering admonitions to the world of science that it not overstep its legitimate intellectual bounds when asserting its claims (although such admonitions have a place here) but demonstrating how dialogue in this area must be deeply informed by a strong understanding of modern biology and physics brought into an engagement with the best theological thinking. This concept of dialogue marks the continuation of the long-standing Catholic intellectual tradition in which the best rational understanding of the world that human culture can produce is brought into fruitful engagement with philosophy and Christian revelation and as a result a developed harmonious understanding of culture and faith emerges.

Życiński notes that there are obstacles to such a dialogue that must be addressed and overcome. **Christian fundamentalism** committed to literal interpretations of the biblical account of creation in Genesis marks one persistent cultural strand that must be negated so that faith is prepared to engage openly with the discoveries and insights of science. From the side of science, he offers an important distinction between “methodological naturalism,” which describes the necessary methods of modern scientific inquiry, and “ontological naturalism,” which is the extension of scientific method into the realm of metaphysics and that constitutes fundamentalism on the atheistic side. While knowledge produced by methodological naturalism must be considered and acquired (no small task given the magnificent accomplishments of science), philosophical thinking need not be reduced to the axioms derived from methodological naturalism. Such thinking must recognize the degree of biological determination in the human person, while remaining open to an understanding of the human person that extends beyond a theory of total determinism.

The scope of this preface is not sufficient to permit an adequate account of the intellectual resources brought to bear by Życiński in the effort to develop a philosophical understanding of evolutionism that overcomes the severe limitations imposed by a metaphysics
based on ontological naturalism. The goal of such an approach is to establish a conceptual framework that gives due weight to scientific knowledge about the material and biological determinants of the human person while also acknowledging the legitimacy of categories such as the aesthetic and the moral. One such concept is “supervenience,” through which some properties in a system establish a necessary foundation for properties that emerge at a higher level that are nevertheless irreducible to the lower level of properties from which they have emerged. Życiński, giving credit to the work of Nancey Murphy, offers this important example of supervenience: “Biological and physical categories are a necessary condition for the appearance of moral categories in an evolving nature, but they are not a sufficient condition. The irreducibility of the moral level of existence to its physico-biological foundation is an essential ontic feature of the world” (88).

This brief reference to the concept of supervenience offers only a sampling of the philosophical development brought together in Życiński’s book. Following the elaboration of the dialogue between science and philosophy, Życiński then brings a theological line of inquiry into consideration. He presents concepts such as God’s participation in a “cosmic kenosis,” through which the freedom bestowed by God upon human beings can be understood to be at work in a cosmic order in which God need not exert a constant controlling force but still “draws to Himself an evolving world, acting as a ‘Divine Attractor’ in situations of chaos, bifurcation, and lack of explicit determination” (5–6). Życiński also considers how a theological understanding of original sin can provide illumination of the path that human evolution has followed, and undertakes the speculation that perhaps the biblical account of original sin brings into view an alternative path that human evolution could have followed:

In the vision of existence which God presented to us as a possibility [but was rejected by the fall], there was no suffering, disappointment, or feeling of loss. Perhaps the feeling
of closeness to God known to the great mystics would, in that scenario, have been just as natural as enchantment with a view of the rising sun is for us. Perhaps some of the questions which have troubled our species from the beginnings of rational speculation would have found, in that view, a simpler intuitive solution. (240)

Instead of this possible path, human free choice launched what Zyciński calls an “axiological drama in which man departed from the vision of life proposed by God and decided on his own variant of evolutionary development” (240). This account offers a wise recognition of the nature and status of human experience and accomplishment in the evolutionary path we have followed while also suggesting a profound response to the perennial mystery of human suffering.

In the final pages of the book, Zyciński summarizes the richness of understanding provided by Christian evolutionism, acknowledging both the presence and call of God and the material operation of the evolving world: “A God present in evolutionary development is the ultimate foundation of values and meaning for the transformations that are taking place. He does not, however, explicitly determine future states of the universe, but makes man his trustee, co-responsible for the future state of the work of creation” (245).

As we continue down the path established by the dialogue of faith and science and the broader dialogue between faith and culture, we can only hope to follow the leadership and guidance of the late archbishop. But his loss is all the more palpable as we recognize the exemplary nature in which he himself conducted this dialogue at the highest level.

It might surprise some readers to realize that one area in which new possibilities for a dialogue between faith and philosophy is emerging is in the area of postmodern thinking. The first article in this issue, “The Return of Religion in Europe? The Postmodern
Christianity of Gianni Vattimo,” by Thomas G. Guarino, provides an excellent introduction to the work of a contemporary Italian philosopher and his approach to Christianity. Vattimo’s work is widely discussed in Europe and is becoming increasingly familiar in America in recent years thanks to a series of translations of his work published by Columbia University Press. Guarino offers an account of some of the primary philosophical themes in the work of Vattimo and focuses on his interpretation of Christianity’s contributions to contemporary culture before finally turning to a critical assessment especially of the limitations in Vattimo’s discussion of Christianity. According to Guarino’s insightful reading of Vatimo: “To be sure, Vattimo is no paradigm of Christian orthodoxy—as he willingly admits—offering interpretations deeply incongruous with the God of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Jesus Christ preached by historical Christianity. But his work represents a desire for God, a desire making it difficult for him simply to walk away from religion entirely.”

Yet another surprising territory for dialogue is in the area of psychiatry and Catholic thought. Kevin Majeres in “Terruwe and Baars’s ‘Mortification Therapy’: A Thomistic Approach?” presents an account of the psychiatric work of Drs. Anna Terruwe and Conrad Baars and their attempt to connect the work of St. Thomas Aquinas and Freud’s ego psychology to develop an approach to the alleviation of repression they called “mortification therapy,” an approach developed especially for patients suffering from anxiety concerning religious themes. Majeres offers a critical account of this approach developed especially on the basis of the thought of Aquinas concerning the virtues, pointing out the problems inherent in the therapeutic approach developed by Terruwe and Baars. But Majeres also shows how richly Thomistic thought about the virtues and the emotions can contribute to our efforts to deal with psychological disorders.

In “David Jones’s Blessed Rage for Order: The ‘Will Toward Shape,’” Stephen McInerney examines the “sacramental aesthetic” of the modernist Anglo-Welsh poet. He demonstrates that the pur-
suit of order in the work of Jones was understood on a theological level: “For Jones, a well-shaped artwork—whether a poem, painting, sculpture, or, most supremely, the Eucharist . . . is a participation in the heavenly city.” McInerney explores this aesthetic vision especially as it comes to light in three poems by Jones. The article also draws upon the work of William Lynch and David Tracy concerning the analogical imagination and Catherine Pickstock’s insights concerning the mystery of the Eucharist.

Longtime readers of this journal will, I hope, nod in assent when I refer to our next writer, H. Wendell Howard, as an old friend of *Logos* because of his many splendid contributions to our pages extending back to our first volume. In “Saint Fabiola in Fiction, in History, in Portraiture,” Howard with his characteristic lucidity and charm calls our attention to an admittedly minor saint who came to public attention especially through Cardinal Nicholas Patrick Wiseman’s novel *Fabiola* in 1854. Howard disengages the saint from the historically unsupported elements of the novel and then continues the story with an account of a painting of the saint by French painter Jean Jacques Henner in 1885, which itself had a surprisingly rich historical legacy. Howard points to the significance of Saint Fabiola as an exemplar: “In modern times it is not always easy for ordinary persons to apply Christian teachings to their own circumstances. As a laborer, a mother, a professional, a citizen in a world of disasters and consuming needs, a victim of unprecedented pressures, how does one behave? How does one practice the charity and justice preached by Christ?” That numerous images of Fabiola were produced by amateur artists and served devotional, not artistic, needs is itself the legacy of a saint.

Edward J. O’Boyle in “Social Justice: Addressing the Ambiguity” addresses the difficulties posed by the ambiguities often attached to the language of social justice. O’Boyle demonstrates the importance of achieving a clear understanding of the concepts of commutative justice, distributive justice, and contributive justice and shows that social justice necessarily participates in all three. As
a result of this clarification, a further clarification of charity, social charity, and solidarity is developed. O’Boyle is then prepared to draw upon the work of Pope John Paul II and Pope Benedict XVI to illuminate the basis on which a richer understanding and dedication to the common good in Catholic social thought emerges.

In “Membership and Its Privileges: The Vision of Family and Community in the Fiction of Wendell Berry,” Thomas W. Stanford III guides us through the fictional Port William community created by the writer and examines the deep insights into the concept of the family embedded in the eight novels in which this fictional community is presented. The novels frequently return to characters previously introduced with the result that, in Stanford’s words, in these novels “there are no minor characters, which is to say that there are no minor persons.” Moreover, the community itself achieves a richness of detail through the accumulated artistic techniques and becomes all the more organic in the eyes of the reader because of the many interwoven elements that constitute it. Stanford contrasts the focus on family and community relationships that emerges with such richness and clarity from Berry’s work to the predominant strain of individualism found in our culture.

We return to the topic of the dialogue between faith and science introduced in the beginning of this preface as we preview the next article in this issue. Scott G. Hefelfinger in “Science, Intelligibility, Creation: How the Doctrine of Creation Unites, Delineates, and Ennobles Modern Science” offers the hypothesis that the Christian doctrine of creation “best accounts for and makes sense of the situation found today between departments of science and departments of philosophy and theology: a historically diverging but essentially complementary relationship between ancient and modern science.” Hefelfinger traces what he calls the “accidental occurrence” of a rift between ancient and modern science and proposes that the doctrine of creation enables us to account for the intelligibility of the objects of both ancient natural philosophy and modern science. His account reaches toward this conclusion: “A humble recognition of
the limits and ultimate imperfection of scientific inquiry is a necessity. Once admitted, the disposition of humility leads not to despair in the face of unknowability, but to hope. Things are knowable, even if precisely in the encounter with the knowable we are led to the acknowledgement of the unknowable.”

Patricia Camarero in “The Experience of Beauty” finds a path through a personal story of a friend’s encounter with someone stricken with a dangerous illness to a moment of wonder concerning the power and importance of beauty when it emerges unexpectedly in our lives. The importance of beauty as explored in theological aesthetics is then examined, with an emphasis on the importance of our educating ourselves to recognize and respond to what is truly beautiful more readily in our lives. Drawing upon the work of Hans Urs von Balthasar and Josef Pieper, Camarero assesses the many forms of what is authentically beautiful. The article considers the relationship between beauty and the fullness of being and faces the challenge posed by our encounter with the reality of ugliness. “Beauty is not found in circumstances or sensations, be they pleasant or squalid. It is found by going past the categories of pleasure and pain to discover who we are as human persons, and who we are made for.”

Michael C. Jordan
Editor

Notes