

# The Vital Relevancy



## of Spirituality

FRANK ARUNDELL

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Would it be wrong to say we are essentially spirits? Very knowledgeable people known as determinists or physicalists say we're only matter; made up of many complex elements. Mind, they say, is *only* an interaction of physical activity. It "emerged," or basically came about through chemistry. Exactly how this happened, no less why it happened, has really never been clearly stated nor empirically proven; it's only a probability. It is accepted by a faith not unlike the faith that many indeterminists have in a Deity beyond what we would call common-reality, i.e. beyond our personal experience. So far no scientist has been able to make, create, or produce *life*; though it is true that synthetic organic-substances have been produced from inorganic compounds. "Hans Driesch (1867–1941) interpreted his experiments as showing that life is not run by physicochemical laws. His main argument was that when one cuts up an embryo after its first division or two, each part grows into a complete adult." (Wikipedia)

John Scott Haldane (1860-1936) adopted an anti-mechanist approach to biology and an idealist philosophy early on in his career. Haldane saw his work as a vindication of his belief that *teleology*\* was an essential concept in biology. His views became widely known with his first book *Mechanism, Life and Personality*, (1913). Haldane borrowed arguments from the vitalists to use against mechanism; however, he was not a vitalist. Haldane treated the organism as fundamental to biology: "we perceive the organism as a self-regulating entity",

\* *teleology*: (philosophy) a doctrine explaining phenomena by their ends or purposes.

"every effort to analyze it into components that can be reduced to a mechanical explanation violates this central experience".

“The work of Haldane was an influence on *organicism*. (A holistic theory that the total organization of an organism rather than the functioning of individual organs is the determinant of life processes.)”

“Haldane also stated that a purely mechanist interpretation can not account for the characteristics of life. Haldane wrote a number of books in which he attempted to show the invalidity of both vitalism and mechanist approaches to science. Haldane explained: ‘We must find a different theoretical basis of biology, based on the observation that all the phenomena concerned tend towards being so coordinated that they express what is normal for an adult organism.’” (Wikipedia)

“Some would argue that this dichotomous approach fails to achieve synthesis, in the way of Hegel (monism, all is one). It is commonly accepted physics (and physical chemistry) that the physical laws of the universe naturally drive to both lower energy (absent an energy well.\*), and, at the same time, greater entropy - the natural path of the universe is towards greater entropy, even if energy is not changed (e.g., the classical and empirical maxim that ‘nature abhors a vacuum’, which can be explained via entropy, but not energy). Entropy explains why - all else is equal (especially energy) - the universe drives toward greater chaos. However, in this light, one possible and essential characterization of life remains unexplained: *that life is, in essence, a region (or boundary) of severely reduced entropy in the universe that is devoid of both causality or purpose, which seems to flow against the maxims of physics* (sometimes called ‘negentropy’).” (Wikipedia) \*(A potential well is the region surrounding a local minimum of potential energy. Energy captured in a potential well is unable to

convert to another type of energy (kinetic energy in the case of a gravitational potential well) because it is captured in the local minimum of a potential well. Therefore, a body may not proceed to the global minimum of potential energy, as it would naturally tend to due to entropy.)

So, enter “*emergentism*.” When a system is devoid of both causality and purpose, today’s science will always supply a material answer to the open question since all “spiritual” answers are surely out of the question in today’s climate. “Some aspects of contemporary science make reference to *emergent processes; those in which the properties of a system cannot be fully described in terms of the properties of the constituents. This may be because the properties of the constituents are not fully understood, or because the interactions between the individual constituents are also important for the behavior of the system.*”

According to Claus Emmeche et al. (1997):

“On the one hand, many scientists and philosophers regard emergence as having only a pseudo-scientific status. On the other hand, new developments in physics, biology, psychology, and cross-disciplinary fields such as cognitive science, artificial life, and the study of non-linear dynamical systems have focused strongly on the high level ‘collective behavior’ of complex systems, which is often said to be truly emergent, and the term is increasingly used to characterize such systems.” (Wikipedia)

We feel it’s only proper to give you Claus Emmeche’s pedigree since he is one of those materialists who must and will provide an answer. “Claus Emmeche (1956-) is a Danish theoretical biologist and philosopher. He is associate professor at the University of Copenhagen, and head of the Center for the Philosophy of Nature and Science Studies at the Faculty of

Science (CPNSS, hosted by the Niels Bohr Institute). His research interests are in philosophy of science, especially philosophy of biology, theoretical biology (especially *morphogenesis and evolution*, developmental systems, complex systems), artificial life, bio-semiotics, and other areas within philosophy.”

Bio-semiotics appears to be a philosophical theory dealing with the functions, signs and symbols relating to biology. As a physicalist Claus Emmeche makes his case for emergence, but “any physicalist account of the mind cannot, so far, explain human consciousness. The concept of *emergence* only obscures the problem rather than solving it.”(David Bentley Hart). Professor Hart continues: *From a genuinely “physicalist” perspective, there are no such things as emergent properties in this sense, discontinuous from the properties of the prior causes from which they arise; anything, in principle, must be reducible by a series of “geometrical” steps to the physical attributes of its ingredients. Those who think otherwise are, in most cases, merely confusing irreducibility with identity.*” In other words, the scientists who favor determinism, which is really materialism, identify “life” as the *emergent* result of bio-electro-chemistry since any suggestion of spirituality is strictly verboten. Emergence faithfully fills the explanatory gap until someone comes up with a more convincing scenario in the battle against spirituality. For the hard determinist, if things can’t be proven empirically they simply do not exist.

Now, with all deference to Rene Descartes we *know* we exist, not because we “think” but because *we know we have been thought*.

“Cogito ergo sum,” I think, therefore I am, always gave us the impression that Rene put the cart before the horse. We mean; he

surely had *to be*— to think. Someone must've thought him up, otherwise he would not have been. Let us say, thanks to the enjoyable biology of pro-creation he “emerged” primarily due to the twinkle in his mother’s and father’s eye. “According to Adrien Baillet, on the night of 10–11 November 1619 (St. Martin's Day), while stationed (militarily) in Neuburg an der Donau, Descartes shut himself in a room with an ‘oven’ (probably a Kachelofen or masonry heater) to escape the cold. While within, he had three visions and believed that a divine spirit revealed to him a new philosophy. Upon exiting he had formulated analytical geometry and the idea of applying the mathematical method to philosophy. He concluded from these visions that the pursuit of science would prove to be, for him, the pursuit of true wisdom and a central part of his life's work. Descartes also saw very clearly that all truths were linked with one another, so that finding a fundamental truth and proceeding with logic would open the way to all science.” (Wikipedia). In a way he was one of the first determinists. The world owes him a debt of gratitude regardless of the fact that he has been dissed for supporting “dualism;” the doctrine that reality consists of two basic opposing elements, often taken to be mind and matter (soul and body), or good and evil. A doctrine that doesn’t sit well with most philosophers and particularly with materialists because everything is matter, even the essential machinations of the mind.

*“...Darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good;...”* Not too many people are unaware of the story of Creation given to us by the writer of Genesis in the Bible of the Hebrews. It is thought to be the work of priests of the fifth century BCE; (before the Christian era). Many other creation stories are similar depending on what part of the world they

came from. We don't believe it would be too presumptuous to say that these creation stories have an uncanny similarity to the laws of physics coming out of the Big Bang, corroborated by the Standard Model of Particle Physics continuously being established by science.

When “George Henry Lewes (1817-1878) gave *emergence* a philosophical sense in his 1875 *Problems of Life and Mind*, long before Haldane, we might roughly characterize the shared meaning as follows: *emergent entities (properties or substances) ‘arise’ (interesting word) out of more fundamental entities and yet are ‘novel’ or ‘irreducible’ with respect to them. (For example, it is sometimes said that consciousness is an emergent property of the brain or mind)*. Each of the quoted terms is slippery in its own right, and their specifications yield the many varied notions of emergence. There has been renewed interest in *emergence* within discussions of the behavior of complex systems and debates over the reconcilability of mental causation, intentionality, or consciousness with *physicalism*” as has been stated.

Like Descartes putting the cart before the horse, it would seem to us, in this case, “mind” would need to emerge from the existence of consciousness rather than consciousness from mind. Can consciousness per se be thought of as prebiotic? In other words, in the time before any organisms existed specifically on earth was Creation a “living thing.” Physicist Freeman Dyson believes that “*the Cosmos is suffused with consciousness, from the grandest level to the most minute dimensions.*” Those among us who tend to be reductionists can take that idea right back to  $t=0$  (time equals zero), the beginning of all processes, to the uncaused cause of Aristotle and St. Thomas Aquinas, or the book of Genesis if we're so inclined.



While some may call this “panpsychism” others may call it Spirit or, indeed, the Life of God in Creation. Let’s quote Benedict XVI for a little more clarity in this concept.

“In the writings of Teilhard de Chardin, we find the following ingenious comment on this question: *‘What distinguishes a materialist from a spiritualist is no longer, by any means (as in philosophy, which establishes fixed concepts), the fact that he admits a transition between the physical infrastructure and the psychic superstructure of things, but only the fact that he incorrectly sets the definitive point of equilibrium in the cosmic movement on the side of the infrastructure, that is, on the side of disintegration.’* Certainly one can debate the details in this formulation; yet the decisive point seems to me to be grasped quite accurately: the alternatives are: *materialism or a spiritually defined world view, chance or meaning.* It is presented to us today in the form of the question of whether one regards spirit and life in its ascending forms as an incidental mold on the surface of the material world (that is, of the category of existing things that do not understand themselves), or whether one regards spirit as the goal of the process or, on the other hand, matter as the prehistory of spirit. If one chooses the second alternative, it is clear that spirit is not a random product of material developments, but conversely, ***matter signifies a moment in the history of spirit.*** This, however, is just another way of saying that spirit (life, in my view) is *created* and not the mere product of development even though it comes to light by way of development.”

Now, we will admit that Benedict is referring to the sequencing of human life on earth, “a spiritually defined *world view*,” spirit before matter, rather than the emergence of life as the result of the biochemical synthesis *of* matter upon which science, bases its claim and is currently hanging it’s hat.

Surely, if Darwin is correct, and there is every reason to believe he is, we can extrapolate his “natural selection” theory and take it back into a pre biotic time where continuous-right-choices were being made in a teleological sense, without organic matter being present; bringing us to the creation, preternaturally, of protohuman organisms via many stops and starts along the way. What was becoming “natural” was none-other than the work of the Spirit (the prime mover) in the continuous process of creation by way of a seething soup of electrons, quarks and other particles, producing a super-fast inflation allowing the quarks to clump into protons and neutrons and so forth, all within one second. For those who look closely at nature, particularly scientists and philosophers, it should become perfectly obvious that this cosmic phenomenon could not simply happen by chance. Most of the human race standing in awe of this extravaganza will eventually credit Spirit, from whom our spirit receives its image. We gradually became super-natural selves in the Life of God, by the order and process of evolution. Those who prefer to see this incredible actuality as strictly the result of chance will need to be satisfied with the absence of any order or *meaning* in its happening. Without meaning in the order of creation very little else has purpose, except that which one attributes to it individually, leaving universality a puzzling blip as the human spirit continues to search for meaning in actuality. In other words, why is there anything at all?

“In philosophy, *potentiality and actuality* are principles of a ‘dichotomy’ which Aristotle used to analyze motion, causality, ethics, and physiology in his *Physics*, *Metaphysics*, *Nicomachean Ethics* and *De Anima* (which is about the human psyche).” (Wikipedia) Written in the fourth century BCE, this dichotomy has relevance to our inferences regarding

spirituality. We will use various web sites to carry the basic story since writing it in our own words makes little sense when the web presents many quite scholarly postings and sites. We will try to eliminate any obtuse scientific bias.

“The concept of *potentiality*, generally refers to any ‘possibility’ that a thing can be said to have. Aristotle did not consider all possibilities the same, and emphasized the importance of those that become *real* of their own accord when conditions are right and nothing stops them. *Actuality*, in contrast to potentiality, is the motion, change or activity that represents an exercise or fulfillment of a possibility, when a possibility becomes *real* in the fullest sense”.

“These concepts, in modified forms, remained very important into the middle ages, influencing the development of medieval theology in several ways (Aquinas et al). Going further into modern times, while the understanding of nature (and, according to some interpretations, deity) implied by the dichotomy lost importance, the terminology found new uses, developing indirectly from the old. This is most obvious in words like ‘energy’ and ‘dynamic’ (words brought into modern physics by Leibniz 1646-1716 ) but also in examples such as the biological concept of an ‘entelechy.’”(Wikipedia)

Noun: *entelechy* (Aristotle) *the state of something that is fully realized.* (WordWeb).

Philosophy can be a tricky business, especially if you’re invoking the internet. One never knows what degree of understanding the one whose doing the writing has; accepted authorities are many. We will stick with the common understanding that *philosophy deals with the rational investigation of questions pertaining to existence, knowledge*

*and ethics*, recognizing, full well, that there are more questions than there are satisfying answers. It's also good to remember that philosophy is not theology, but it does include the Deity in its investigations. The concept of God and existence are auto-syncretic. Accessing the web's postings on the subject "Potentiality and Actuality" regarding Aristotle, we will modify our findings for clarity, and add some comments while we're at it. If experience teaches anything at all, over time, we become aware of the fact that *anything is possible* as the purposes of creation are realized, or should we say actualized? "Impossibility" is hardly in the lexicon of either scientist or theologian. For the scientist, the assurance of proving unequivocally what has previously been thought to be impossible is his faith. For the theologian, the intervention of God into the laws of nature can never be thought impossible, since faith tells him God is their Creator. A rational philosopher is somewhere in-between – scratching her head or stroking his beard.

We should get a reasonably good grip on what Aristotle means by *potential* and *actual* before we draw our own conclusions to the "dichotomy" as it applies to our subject of the potentiality/actuality regarding the importance of spirituality in our lives. For this insert we will use a few pages from (Philosophy 320, Univ. Washington, *Grades of Actuality and Potentiality*, Aristotle, by S. Marc Cohen, 2004):

### **Grades of Actuality and Potentiality:**

- 1 "Aristotle distinguishes between two levels of actuality (*entelecheia*). At 412a11 he gives *knowing* and *attending* as examples of these two kinds of actuality. (It has become traditional to call these *first* and *second* actuality, respectively.) At 412a22-26 he elaborates this

- example and adds this one: *being asleep* vs. *being awake*. But he does not fully clarify this important distinction until II.5 (417a22-30), to which we now turn.”
- 2 “At 417a20, Aristotle says that there are different types of both potentiality and actuality. His example concerns different ways in which someone might be described as a *knower*. One might be called a knower in the sense that he or she:
    - a is a human being.
    - b has grammatical knowledge.
    - c is attending to something.”
  - 3 “A knower in sense (a) is someone with a mere potential to know something, but no actual knowledge. (Not everything has this potential, of course. E.g., a rock or an earthworm has no such potential.) A knower in sense (b) has some actual knowledge (for example, she may know that it is ungrammatical to say ‘with John and I’), even though she is not actually thinking about it right now. A knower in sense (c) is actually exercising her knowledge (for example, she thinks ‘that’s ungrammatical’ when she hears someone say ‘with John and I’)”.
  - 4 “Note that (b) involves both actuality and potentiality. The knower in sense (b) actually knows something, but that actual knowledge is itself just a potentiality to think certain thoughts or perform certain actions. So we can describe our three knowers this way:
    - a First potentiality
    - b Second potentiality = first actuality
    - c Second actuality”
  - 5 “Here is another example (not Aristotle’s) that might help clarify the distinction.

- a First potentiality: a child who does not speak French.
  - b Second potentiality (first actuality): a (silent) adult who speaks French.
  - c Second actuality: an adult speaking (or actively understanding) French.”
- 6 “A child (unlike a rock or an earthworm) can (learn to) speak French. A Frenchman (unlike a French infant, and unlike most Americans) can actually speak French, even though he is silent at the moment. Someone who is actually speaking French is, of course, the paradigm case of a French speaker.”
- 7 “Aristotle uses the notion of *first actuality* in his definition of the soul (412a27): *The soul is the first actuality of a natural body that is potentially alive.*”
- 8 “Remember that first actuality is a kind of potentiality - a **capacity** to engage in the activity which is the corresponding *second* actuality. So soul is a capacity - but a capacity to do what?
- 9 A living thing’s soul is its capacity to engage in the activities that are characteristic of living things of its natural kind. What are those activities? Some are listed in DA II.1; others in DA II.2:
- Self-nourishment
  - Growth
  - Decay
  - Movement and rest (in respect of place)
  - Perception
  - Intellect”
- 10 “So anything that nourishes itself, that grows, decays, moves about (on its own, not just when moved by something else), perceives, or thinks is **alive**. And the

capacities of a thing in virtue of which it does these things constitute its soul. The soul is what is **causally responsible** for the animate behavior (the life activities) of a living thing.”

We can simplify #10 by saying what Aquinas gleaned from Aristotle. *The spiritual soul is the life of the body*. Of course, in Cohn’s explanation, Aristotle, is taking about biological entities. Other works of Aristotle treat the potentiality/actuality dichotomy relating to the “four causes” of his philosophy. Just to brush up a bit, those would be:

1. Material Cause: The stuff out of which a thing comes to be.
2. Formal Cause: The idea, the concept, the plan.
3. Efficient Cause: The activity, the work, the making.
4. Final Cause: The sake for which a thing is made, its purpose.

NOTE;

A rock doesn't have a purpose nor a cause of its own, but one cannot say a rock was not itself caused by something. A rock can have a purpose— but only imposed on it by an agent who uses it to break a window or chip flint or obsidian in order to make a spear tip. Actuality, is not attained by the rock itself, since the rock is not a self. With due respect to S. Marc Cohen, an earthworm may be a different story. The earthworm is a biological specimen, and even previous to its birth has the potential of aerating the soil; and a purpose of *actually* feeding a hungry Robin in a larger sense, for what it’s worth.

NOTE:

Sparknotes web site gives computer junkies a very good summery and analysis of Aristotle’s work in Physics and Metaphysics, but it would take us off the subject of this essay and at least a hundred or so pages to explain and analyze their

analysis. The best way to study Aristotle is in his own words, both Greek and English, using the Loeb Classical Library series from Harvard University Press sold at most good book stores, or possibly available at many public libraries' reference shelves. It is a most enjoyable endeavor if you have never taken any philosophy courses. Most of Plato and Aristotle is written in a conversational way that is more understandable than most professors explaining them.

The above few pages should frame the issues regarding our interest for the relevance of spirituality, even if only partially incorporating Aristotle's philosophy of "causality" involving *potentiality* and *actuality* from other sources. So let's carry on from here.

Considering the Big Bang as *the* beginning, or even one of multiple or peculiar beginnings (yet it's the only one we know); can we philosophically ask: was there a *potentiality* before the beginning[s] or *nothing*? (Latin: nihil fit ex nihilo) "Nothing comes from nothing" is a philosophical expression of a thesis first argued by Parmenides (c. 500 BCE). On the other hand, might we not say that before the Cosmos came into existence there was, of necessity, a *potentiality* since we now see the cosmos as an *actuality*. In fact, an infinitesimal speck of it eventually became a biosphere, i.e., the "living" planet Earth. Who knows how many more similar to it are out-there, as suggested by many of our scientists who put forth as one hypothesis, "panspermia"? (the delivery of the "germs" of life to earth from outer-space). Concentrating on the Big Bang itself, Creation, as many of us know it, and which in many ways science seems to agree, can we ask again, was there a *non-existent potential* from which *actuality* came to be, or emerged? Can we say that "potential" was God himself?



Now, the Catholic Catechism to which we heart-fully subscribe puts it this way:

“We believe that God created the world according to his wisdom. It is not the product of any necessity whatever, nor of blind fate or chance. We believe that it proceeds from God's free will; he wanted to make his creatures share in his being, wisdom and goodness: ‘For you created all things, and by your will they existed and were created.’ Therefore the Psalmist exclaims: ‘O LORD, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all’; and ‘The LORD is good to all, and his compassion is over all that he has made.’ God creates ‘out of nothing.’”

“ We believe that God needs no pre-existent thing or any help in order to create, nor is creation any sort of necessary emanation from the divine substance. God creates freely ‘out of nothing’”

“If God had drawn the world from pre-existent matter, what would be so extraordinary in that? A human artisan makes from a given material whatever he wants, while God shows his power by starting from nothing to make all he wants.”

“Scripture bears witness to faith in creation ‘out of nothing’ as a truth full of promise and hope. Thus the mother of seven sons encourages them for martyrdom:” (Maccabees: 7)

“I do not know how you came into being in my womb. It was not I who gave you life and breath, nor I who set in order the elements within each of you. Therefore the Creator of the world, who shaped the beginning of man and devised the origin

of all things, will in his mercy give life and breath back to you again, since you now forget yourselves for the sake of his laws. . . Look at the heaven and the earth and see everything that is in them, and recognize that God did not make them out of things that existed. Thus also mankind comes into being.”

“Since God could create everything out of nothing, he can also, through the Holy Spirit, give spiritual life to sinners by creating a pure heart in them, and bodily life to the dead through the Resurrection. God ‘gives life to the dead and calls into existence the things that do not exist,’ and since God was able to make light shine in darkness by his Word, he can also give the light of faith to those who do not yet know him.”

“God creates an ordered and good world.”

“Because God creates through wisdom, his creation is ordered: ‘You have arranged all things by measure and number and weight.’ The universe, created in and by the eternal Word, the ‘image of the invisible God’, is destined for and addressed to man, himself created in the ‘image of God’ and called to a personal relationship with God. Our human understanding, which shares in the light of the divine intellect, can understand what God tells us by means of his creation, though not without great effort and only in a spirit of humility and respect before the Creator and his work. Because creation comes forth from God's goodness, it shares in that goodness - ‘and God saw that it was good. . . very good’ for God willed creation as a gift addressed to man, an inheritance destined for and entrusted to him. On many occasions the Church has had to defend the goodness of creation, including that of the physical world.”

“God transcends creation and is present to it.”

“God is infinitely greater than all his works: ‘You have set your glory above the heavens.’ Indeed, God’s ‘greatness is unsearchable’. But because he is the free and sovereign Creator, the *first cause of all that exists*, God is present to his creatures’ inmost being: ‘In him we live and move and have our being.’ In the words of St. Augustine, God is ‘higher than my highest and more inward than my innermost self’.

“God upholds and sustains creation.”

“With creation, God does not abandon his creatures to themselves. He not only gives them being and existence, but also, and at every moment, upholds and sustains them in being, enables them to act and brings them to their *final end*. Recognizing this utter dependence with respect to the Creator is a source of wisdom and freedom, of joy and confidence.”

“For you love all things that exist, and detest none of the things that you have made; for you would not have made anything if you had hated it. How would anything have endured, if you had not willed it? Or how would anything not called forth by you have been preserved? You spare all things, for they are yours, O Lord, you who love the living.”

Yes, we can say we are God’s creation: ***“The universe, created in and by the eternal Word, the ‘image of the invisible God’, is destined for and addressed to man, himself created in the ‘image of God’ and called to a personal relationship with God. Our human understanding, which shares in the light of the divine intellect, can understand what God tells us by means of his creation, though not without great effort and only in a spirit of humility and respect before the Creator and his work.”*** In our opinion, the “nothing” to which the catechism refers, that which creation came “out of”, is the

absence of matter, and only the presence of the Infinite Father, the Logos, and the Holy Spirit, eternally existent before creation (what ever eternity is) in whose image we are made by his thought, out of the “mind of God” so to speak, and because of his infinite love which is what gives meaning to creation, particularly to the special-creation of man. The emphasis is on the obvious “*order of creation,*” which reveals itself to be super-natural, establishing the very laws of nature herself, including the phenomenon of “entanglement,” which is being proven scientifically on a continuous basis by the Standard Model of Particle Physics, in conjunction with Quantum Mechanics. Science, in our opinion, will eventually “prove” God to itself. They will find what every true believer has known, “God is Spirit and is Life.”

Can we say that we are spirit? It’s important to dodge a former theological understanding that there is a distinction between body and soul; that they are separate entities, they are not. If the soul and the body are a union “forming a single nature”, when you are looking at a human person, you are looking at a soul in bodily form, not to be confused with Plato’s definition of form where the soul would be the form of the body. Very few have figured out what Plato really meant by form, including Aristotle, who inferred that he didn’t quite know what he was talking about. Plato’s theory of forms can be a bit mystifying. To enjoy a sojourn into Plato’s Theory of Forms, the most simplified site we found was at [anselm.edu](http://anselm.edu)

Is there a distinction though, between soul and spirit? Well, if the soul is spiritual and the soul and body are one that makes the body spiritual too. Number 365 in the Catechism says: “Because of its *spiritual soul* the body, made of matter, becomes a living, human body; spirit and matter, in man, are not two natures united, but rather their union forms a single

nature.” That would favor St. Thomas’ understanding that the spiritual-soul is the *life* of the body. Number 367 of the Catechism continues:

“Sometimes the soul *is* distinguished from the spirit: St. Paul for instance prays that God may sanctify his people ‘wholly’, with ‘spirit and soul and body’ kept sound and blameless at the Lord’s coming. The Church teaches that this distinction does *not* introduce a duality into the soul. ‘Spirit’ signifies that from creation man is ordered to a super-natural end and that his soul can gratuitously be raised beyond all it deserves to communion with God”. According to St. Paul, probably the original theologian, what is to be kept sound and blameless is the “whole person” not just the body of the person, the soul of the person, or the spirit of the person, since all three are one and the same person.

Since Jesus’ Father, i.e., God the Creator, is Spirit, and it is this Spirit who gives life, in a trinitarian sense; our life is from the Life of God. As a matter of fact “grace” is participation in the life of God. It is how God is with us by his works, of which we are one. Humanity being a special creation, rather than all-creation being God as Einstein believed from Spinoza; because we are made in God’s image, which a blade of grass is not. Although every blade of grass, every rock, every earthworm can be credited to initial creation by God. Our life is “of the Spirit,” in which case we can say our life is a spiritual life, and the spirit is immortal.

“It is the Spirit who gives life; the flesh profits nothing; the words that I have spoken to you are spirit and are life.”

True life and its center is its spirituality not its materiality, although its trajectory is corporeal as is all else. The only

emergence that is a reality is the emergence of Creation from the potentiality or omnipotence of God, to the actuality of the Cosmos we are getting to know.

Gospel Matthew 6:24-34

“‘Do not worry about tomorrow.’

Jesus said to his disciples: ‘No one can serve two masters. He will either hate one and love the other, or be devoted to one and despise the other. You cannot serve God and mammon.’

‘Therefore I tell you, do not worry about your life, what you will eat or drink, or about your body, what you will wear. Is not life more than food and the body more than clothing? Look at the birds in the sky; they do not sow or reap, they gather nothing into barns, yet your heavenly Father feeds them. Are not you more important than they? Can any of you by worrying add a single moment to your life-span? Why are you anxious about clothes? Learn from the way the wild flowers grow. They do not work or spin. But I tell you that not even Solomon in all his splendor was clothed like one of them. If God so clothes the grass of the field, which grows today and is thrown into the oven tomorrow, will he not much more provide for you, O you of little faith? So do not worry and say, ‘What are we to eat?’ or ‘What are we to drink?’ or ‘What are we to wear?’ All these things the pagans seek. Your heavenly Father knows that you need them all. But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be given you besides. Do not worry about tomorrow; tomorrow will take care of itself. Sufficient for a day is its own evil.’”

11th Saturday in ordinary time.