This introduction provides a comprehensive overview of the development of Catholic ethics in the wake of the Second Vatican Council (1962–1965), an event widely considered crucial to the reconciliation of the Catholic Church and the modern world. Andrew Kim investigates Catholic responses to questions of moral theology in all four principal areas: Catholic social teaching, natural law, virtue ethics, and bioethics. In addition to discussing contemporary controversies surrounding abortion, contraception, labor rights, exploitation of the poor, and just war theory, he explores the historical sources of the Catholic worldview. Beginning with the moral vision revealed through the person of Jesus Christ and continuing with elaborations on this vision from figures such as Augustine and Aquinas, this volume elucidates the continuity of the Catholic moral tradition. Its balance of complexity and accessibility makes it an ideal resource for both students of theology and general readers.

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AN INTRODUCTION TO CATHOLIC ETHICS SINCE VATICAN II

ANDREW KIM

Walsh University
For Caitlin
“Behold, I make all things new.”
Revelation 21:5
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With this book, *An Introduction to Catholic Ethics since Vatican II*, Andrew Kim explodes onto the scene of the discipline of moral theology with a wise, hospitable, and challenging overview of Catholic ethics. The book’s title aptly names two contexts where Kim makes an important and successful contribution, and I’ll allow these to structure my thoughts in this foreword.

“Catholic ethics since Vatican II”: By all accounts, Catholic moral theology was in need of renewal at the time of the Second Vatican Council in the 1960s. The key figure in that post-conciliar renewal is Fr. Servais Pinckaers, O.P. In important ways the ongoing project of renewal is a further execution of the characteristic features of his work. With this book Kim joins the ranks of those of us who seek to join and advance that renewal. Allow me to identify four features of this book that make it exemplary of renewal in Catholic moral theology since Vatican II in the vein of Pinckaers’s work.

First, as explicitly mentioned in the oft-quoted *Optatam totius* no. 16 call for the perfection of moral theology, and as particularly evident in the work of Pinckaers, Catholic ethics must be nourished by Scripture. This is no small task, as it is easy for moralists to merely proof text Scripture to adorn their predetermined conclusions. Not so for Kim. This book is replete with nourishment from Scripture. The chapter on justice, Chapter 7, relies nearly wholly on the Old and New Testaments. At key points in numerous chapters, Scriptural passages play formative roles in the presentation of the topic at hand. Examples include Genesis 18 on war, the Prodigal Son on justice, the Good Samaritan on universal human dignity, Job on suffering, the Magnificat on preferential option for the poor, and, by far my favorite, a reflection on the Annunciation in his treatment of commercial surrogacy. These passages are wonderfully integrated, doing true illuminative work in the analysis at hand. As we in
Foreword

Catholic moral theology await a definitive post-conciliar methodological treatment of Scripture and moral theology, this book serves as an example of what such a method would look like in action.

Second, Optatam totius no. 16 mentions the faithful’s vocation in Christ and their bearing fruit for the world. Balancing these two indicates another crucial theme in the renewal of moral theology, and again one prevalent in the work of Pinckaers and now Kim: attention to how Catholic ethics can account both for how morality is accessible to all in the tradition of natural law and for how it is elevated and supernaturally perfected in the light of revelation. This dual focus dominates Kim’s book. It is methodologically explicit in each of the book’s four parts. It is equally evident in the scattered test cases he treats, which contain conclusions accessible to all and yet further informed by Catholic theological commitments. Similar to Pinckaers, Kim succeeds in hospitably appealing to all, and yet doing so in a manner that refuses to suppress rigorously theological claims.

Third, Kim evidences the stereotypical Pinckaers insistence that rules are important for the moral life, yet they are not ends in themselves. They orient the person to happiness. Absent this orientation toward fullness of life, understood supernaturally yet also in a manner that includes natural flourishing, rules (especially pre–Vatican II) had come to resemble unintelligible taboos. Kim has no problem taking firm stands on matters such as the direct killing of the innocent or unjust labor practices. Yet rules, even the absolute ones, are always explained in a manner that makes them intelligibly oriented toward human flourishing. His readers may agree or disagree with the positions he presents, but they are hospitably invited into and equipped for debate over those rules by his manner of explicating his positions.

Fourth, in the post-conciliar period Catholic moral theologians have become increasingly aware that all ethics is social ethics. Despite a traditional separation of individual and social ethics, evident in how seminarian courses are taught and how faculty are commonly hired, we are increasingly aware of how this dichotomy is false. This point is famously presented in Benedict XVI’s encyclical Caritas in veritate, widely regarded as part of Catholic social teaching and yet addressing “individual” issues such as contraception. Kim’s book also evidences a refusal to perpetuate this dichotomy. Two of the book’s four parts treat, in turn, a traditionally “social” topic (just war) and a traditionally “individual” topic (bioethics). Not only does his book contain both types of issues; Kim manages to treat each in a manner attentive to both refined action theory and more communal considerations.
For these four reasons, Kim’s wonderfully lucid book is rightly understood as part of the ongoing tradition of renewal of “Catholic ethics since Vatican II.” Before turning to the second way that Kim’s book is especially timely, however, it should be noted that Kim does not simply evidence renewal in Catholic moral theology. He also contributes to the ongoing advancement of that project. Once again, Kim joins a cadre of students of Pinckaers who further develop trajectories named by the Belgian Dominican but that were left open for further development. This is particularly evident in Kim’s work on the connection of the virtues. Readers of Pinckaers recall that famous diagram in *Sources of Christian Ethics* where the virtues (along with the gifts) are presented together and described as an organic whole. Kim’s early career research has largely been a plumbing of the wisdom of this insight, especially the way the connectivity of the virtues illuminates how we understand moral development. It is because Kim not only evidences but also contributes to the renewal of moral theology since Vatican II that we will be hearing much more from him in the decades to come.

“An introduction to Catholic ethics”: Kim’s book is best understood not only in the context of renewal of Catholic moral theology in the universal Church since Vatican II; it is also fittingly understood as an introduction to moral theology that is perfectly fit for the context of American Catholic higher education fifty years after that council. In the previous discussion, I placed Kim’s book in the tradition of Servais Pinckaers, O.P. Let me now do the same with one of Kim’s favorite authors, C.S. Lewis. It is no small compliment to say that with his book, *An Introduction to Catholic Ethics since Vatican II*, Kim admirably follows in the footsteps of this twentieth-century giant with a lucid and accessible yet profound introduction to inquiry into the life of discipleship that is Catholic moral theology. Yet that is precisely what he does. Let me once again offer four reasons why Kim’s book is a timely and wise introductory text in the vein of Lewis.

First, Kim’s book joins a growing number of introductory theological texts that have appeared in the last decade. Whence the need for such texts? As any university teacher today knows, even at the collegiate level we find ourselves teaching students who are increasingly unformed in the Christian faith. Whereas a previous generation sought to distance academic theology from more basic catechesis, Kim’s generation rightly recognizes that the former, while distinct from the latter, is also dependent on the latter. Absent a grasp of the basic teachings of Christian morality, any higher-level moral analysis proceeds as incoherently as
Foreword

the post-apocalyptic scientific inquiry in Alasdair MacIntyre's troubling After Virtue thought experiment. Therefore, Kim hospitably welcomes his readers into the tradition of Catholic moral theology in an accessible and engaging manner. He manages to introduce foundational topics such as the soul and the history of virtue in a few short paragraphs each. In Chapter 2 alone he successfully introduces students to topics as basic as natural law, grace perfecting nature, and the role of authority. What makes any introduction successful is not simply accurately describing core themes, but presenting them “coherently,” fitting together as parts of a whole. This Kim achieves masterfully. He even includes helpful pedagogical aids such as a list of prominent figures in the history of moral thought, as well as summary questions and terms. Teachers and students alike will find this an invaluable introductory text in effectively supplying intellectual foundations for theological reflection, which are often missing today.

A second reason why Kim’s text is successful as an introduction is its seamless integration of what I call “cases and bases.” Any teacher knows the challenges of presenting both foundational material and practical examples. Do too much of foundations first and leave the concrete cases to the end, and the former is unclear and easily lost when attending to the latter. Yet without some grasp of the foundational material, examination of cases proceeds blindly. Kim manages to face this challenge by seamless integration of foundational material with test cases, from the start of the book until the end. Cases range from sweatshop labor, to female genital mutilation, to use of drones, to abortion and contraception, to commercial surrogacy. There are a plethora of concrete cases through which to explore the lucid foundational material presented by Kim.

Third, Kim is representative of many in his generation by refusing to rest content in a predictable left-leaning or right-leaning political agenda. The final part on bioethics addresses contraception, abortion, and surrogacy in a manner that would please those on the right. His positions, however, would as frequently please those on the left, as in his treatments of the use of drones, sweatshop labor, and female genital mutilation. It is not merely the positions Kim takes, however, that make him unable to be easily placed on the right or left. It is also his willingness to engage and appeal to the kernels of truth in rival positions. Although firmly positioned, he is not ideological in the sense of predictably standing on one side while unable to see any truth in the other side. This quality makes his introductory text very appealing to his target audience.

Finally, Kim’s book is an effective introduction because it is thoroughly “postmodern.” There are of course many ways to be
“postmodern,” but what they all have in common is a rejection of the axiomatic claim of modernity that moral truths are not only accessible to reason without the aid of authority but can also be presented in a manner that compels assent on the basis of the evidence of the claims themselves. As thinkers ranging from MacIntyre to Stout to Rorty have shown, this Enlightenment project has failed and thus we are “postmodernity.” Of course, different thinkers draw different conclusions from that failure. To some, “postmodern” means that there is no truth. To others, such as Kim who exemplifies a MacIntyrian method of tradition-constituted inquiry, the rightful recognition that modern Enlightenment foundationalism has failed to secure moral truth does not mean there is no truth, but only that it cannot be “secured” in such a manner. Instead, different traditions of thought need to be taken on their own terms and placed in conversation with one another. In such a method people do not comprehend moral truths by inexorable deduction from compelling foundations; rather, people are persuaded of such truths by appealing to the best insights of their own traditions. This approach frees one to be positioned and requires him or her to more humbly engage others on terms accessible to them. This is exactly the method of Kim in his book, accounting for his firmly positioned and yet humbly engaging tone as described in the previous observation.

Kim’s stated task is to “provide a comprehensive introduction to the discipline of moral theology in the post-conciliar period.” In the tradition of Fr. Servais Pinckaers, O.P., Kim exemplifies and advances the project that is the renewal of Catholic moral theology after Vatican II. Similar to his mentor C.S. Lewis, Kim succeeds in providing an effective introduction largely because of his accurate grasp of what readers in his context are yearning for and his uncanny ability to deliver it to them. As I write this week of the Easter celebration of Jesus the Good Shepherd, it fills me with joy and pride to see my former student follow in the footsteps of the Master, Christ the Teacher, and lovingly guide his readers toward the fullness of life to which we are all called.

William C. Mattison III

The Catholic University of America

May 2014
Preface

All this is said simply in order to make clear what kind of book I was trying to write.

C.S. Lewis, Mere Christianity

Throughout this book, I frequently refer to the “Catholic moral tradition,” “Catholic moral theology,” and “Catholic ethics.” However, at no point do I offer a sustained analysis regarding the meanings of these terms or how they relate to each other. Allow me, therefore, to use this preface as an opportunity to address these omissions for the sake of adding clarity to what is contained in the following pages.

With the term “Catholic moral tradition” I have in mind the authoritative moral teachings of the hierarchical Magisterium. These teachings are what they are independent of whether one agrees with them. For example, the Catholic moral tradition holds that one has a moral duty to help the poor. Someone may disagree with this claim, but it remains a Catholic teaching just the same. “Catholic moral theology,” on the other hand, refers to continuous reflection on the contents of the Catholic moral tradition. The job of the Catholic moral theologian is to examine the contents of the tradition in the light of reason and revelation in order to assist in bringing out its interior meaning, beauty, intelligibility, and coherence for the sake of communicating it to a wider audience and applying its insights to particular contexts and cases. Thus, the discipline of Catholic moral theology is deeply rooted in the resources of the Catholic moral tradition. Put negatively, Catholic moral theology divorced from the Catholic moral tradition ceases to be Catholic moral theology.

Finally, “Catholic ethics” refers to the formal academic discipline that puts both the tradition and the reflection on the tradition into sincere and prudent conversation with rival theories and alternative points of view, thus exposing both to external critique. To subject Catholic moral theology to academic scrutiny outside of the tradition, however, does not mean
that the moral theologian must bracket or ignore his or her own faith commitments. To the contrary, these commitments can nourish intellectually rigorous pursuits of truth and robust dialogue; the view that faith is for some reason hazardous to intellectual discourse stems only from a peculiarly modern prejudice against the supernatural.

Hopefully these definitions help explain why in the following pages I refer much more to the “Catholic moral tradition” than to “Catholic moral theology” or “Catholic ethics.” The reason why I do so is because Catholic moral theology and ethics are what the book is doing. I am attempting to articulate key features in the development of the Catholic moral tradition in the post-conciliar period by reflecting on these features in a manner that responds constructively to rival points of view. The term “Catholic ethics” is employed in the title of this book because, as I am defining it, Catholic ethics already entails a grounding in the Catholic moral tradition as approached through the medium of moral theology.

A problem here arises, however, insofar as Catholic moral theologians are not all in agreement with each other relative to the contents or even, in some cases, the authority of the Catholic moral tradition. In response to this problem, I have attempted to cast as wide a net as possible without becoming entangled in the kind of minutiae and technical debates among moral theologians that would detract from the broad strokes presentation a comprehensive introduction requires. Such diversions would also not be of much benefit to the average reader.

At the same time, I do not veil my own positions on disputed matters. I wrote this book out of a desire to introduce the reader to the development of the Catholic moral tradition in the post-conciliar period in a manner informed by the continuity in sanctity that runs through all of the tradition as a kind of golden chord weaving throughout the whole of the Church’s life and binding it all together. It is a golden chord woven by Christ with strands of patience and mercy. I hope this is communicated in the following pages.
Acknowledgments

“What has Athens to do with Jerusalem?” Tertullian’s problem vexes me still, for the fault lines of common sense do seem to demarcate them as rival cities. Athens is the city of questions. Jerusalem is the city of answers. Athens is the city of searching. Jerusalem is the city of finding.

Let us, for the moment, accept the hypothesis that one cannot attain dual citizenship in both cities. If this were true, then I suppose I would need to begin by acknowledging those who helped me learn how to be a citizen of Jerusalem. These are, first and foremost, my parents and first teachers of the faith, Jhin and Becky Kim. My mother taught me the common doctrines of Christianity. My father taught me by his example. During my childhood, neither one of them was Catholic. Indeed, someday I should like to inquire further as to how the children of Baptist ministers and theologians should find and marry each other as Evangelicals and later have an only child who, as an adult, became a Roman Catholic. At any rate, it is from my parents that I received my first catechism, and for this I am grateful.

It was at the age of twenty-seven that I became Roman Catholic. In The Seven Storey Mountain, Thomas Merton wrote of his first experience visiting Corpus Christi Church on 121st Street in New York City. My first experience was similar. For it was at Corpus Christi that I underwent the adult confirmation process while I was an MA student at Union Theological Seminary across the street. My education at Corpus Christi was, in many ways, my first formal introduction to the Catholic faith and the formal study of Catholic theology. The late Fr. William Wizeman introduced me to Catholic spirituality. Msgr. Kevin Sullivan first explained Catholic social teaching to me. Fr. Raymond Rafferty taught my R.C.I.A. class, and he oversaw my confirmation and marriage, and the baptism of my son. I am grateful to these individuals for presenting the faith to me in an accurate and compelling fashion, in both word and deed.
At this point, I should like to acknowledge those who helped form me as a citizen of Athens. When I was an undergraduate, Dr. Ian Lising, Dr. Jason Niedleman, and Dr. Stephen Sayles taught me the skills of rhetoric, critical thinking, and research. When I was an MA student, Dr. Paul Knitter and Dr. John McGuckin helped me learn how to apply these skills to the discipline of theology. The professors at the Catholic University of America, who facilitated my doctoral studies, further developed these skills. In particular, I would like to thank Dr. Joseph Benson, Dr. Joseph Capizzi, Dr. John Grabowski, Fr. Brian Johnstone, Fr. Joseph Komonchak, and Dr. Tarmo Toom. Finally, I wish to thank my colleagues at Walsh University who continue to challenge me and help me grow as a scholar. In particular, I extend my thanks to Dr. Brad Beach, Dr. Koop Berry, Dr. Ann Caplea, Dr. Chad Gerber, Dr. Ty Hawkins, Dr. Ute Lahaie, Fr. Patrick Manning, Dr. Chris Seeman, Rabbi John Spitzer, Dr. Joseph Torma, and Dr. Donald Wallenfang. I would also like to offer my gratitude to Dr. Laurence Bove for his dedication to Gaudium et spes as a cornerstone of the university curriculum. Finally, thanks to Richard and Terry Jusseaume and to the Brothers of Christian Instruction for their commitment to Walsh University and the principles on which it was founded.

I suggested earlier that we accept the hypothesis that one cannot have dual citizenship in both Athens and Jerusalem. Happily, this hypothesis is false. Indeed, all of the people I just listed who instructed me in faith also taught me to think; all those who helped teach me to think also had an impact on my beliefs. This is preeminently true of my doctoral director, advisor, and friend, Dr. William C. Mattison III. By his example I was given a model of how to be a Catholic moral theologian. For this, and for much else, I owe him a tremendous debt of gratitude.

Without the kinds of training and mentoring I received from the people mentioned heretofore, I would not have been able to write this book. Additionally, there are several people whom I should like to thank for contributing to the development of this project. Lt. Col. Donald Bletz, and Uwe and SunHee Gertz have always shown me enormous personal support and have helped form me as a writer and as a scholar; to them I extend my love and gratitude. While on the subject of my writing, this book benefited greatly from the observations of my graduate research assistant, Mallory Slocum. The book also profited from my Theology 203 course at Walsh University who, in Spring 2014, read through the manuscript and offered me feedback. In particular, I would like to thank Ryan Bagley, Thomas Betzler, Sara Bickett, Brook Clark, Jen Harig, Jessica Jewett, Isabelle Lahaie, Morgan McDermott,
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While all of the people recognized heretofore are worthy of my gratitude, there is none more so than my wife, Caitlin, to whom this book is dedicated. Although I am somewhat ashamed to admit it, I suspect that were it not for her presence in my life, the delight I take in writing books, teaching classes, and everything else would quickly vanish. For Aquinas, the virtuous person is capable of discerning the right ways to act across the various domains relevant to the moral life with ease and consistency. This describes Caitlin, who is both my wife and the love of my life; thanks also to our children – Theo, Lucy, Zoë, and Phoebe – who fill our lives with joy.

In closing, while Tertullian’s query still beleaguers me, I have come to think that not only is it possible to have dual citizenship in both Athens and Jerusalem; it actually makes one a better citizen of both. Athens can learn from Jerusalem’s faith; Jerusalem grows by attending to the questions posed by Athens. This book was written with the citizens of both cities in mind. Thank you to the people mentioned earlier for helping me write it.
Abbreviations


CIV Pope Benedict XVI, *Caritas in veritate*, Encyclical Letter addressed by the Supreme Pontiff Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, Men and Women Religious, the Lay Faithful, and All People of Good Will on Integral Human Development in Charity and Truth (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2009).


DCE Pope Benedict XVI, *Deus caritas est*, Encyclical Letter addressed by the Supreme Pontiff Pope Benedict XVI to the Bishops, Priests, and Deacons, Men and Women Religious, and All the Lay Faithful on Christian Love (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 2005).


DM Augustine, *De moribus ecclesiae catholicae et de moribus Manichaeorum* (On the Morals of the Catholic Church
Abbreviations

Against the Manicheans), CSEL 90. J.B. Bauer, ed. (Vienna, 1992).

DP  Ambrose, De Paradiso (On Paradise).


EN  Augustine, Enchiridion (CCEL 78).

EPtr 67  Augustine, Letter 167 to Jerome (CSEL 44).


Abbreviations


HV  Pope Paul VI, Humanae vitae, Encyclical Letter addressed by the Supreme Pontiff Pope Paul VI to His Venerable Brothers, the Patriarch, Archbishops, Bishops, and Other Local Ordinaries in Peace and Communion with the Apostolic See, to the Clergy and Faithful of the Whole Catholic World, and to All Men of Good Will on the Regulation of Birth (Vatican City: Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1968).


LUC  Ambrose, Expositio evangelii secundum Lucam (Commentary on the Gospel according to Luke).


Abbreviations

