

Christian Heritage Centre
'Faith & Reason' Summer 2023

Philosophical Foundations for Sacramentality
Lecture notes by Dr Caroline Farey

'Then the cloud covered the tent of meeting and the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle' Ex 40:34 –

In a sacramental worldview, physical realities **reveal and make present** invisible spiritual (sacra - holy) realities.

'The heavens are telling the glory of God and the firmament proclaims his handiwork.
Day to day pours forth speech and night to night declares knowledge.
There is no speech, nor are there words; their voice is not heard;
Yet their voice goes out through all the earth and their words to the end of the world.' Psalm
19:1-6.

CCC 1115 "What was visible in Christ has passed over into his mysteries' St Leo the Great.

CCC1075 liturgy initiates people 'into the mystery of Christ by proceeding from the visible to the invisible, from the sign to the thing signified, from the sacraments to the mysteries'.

Visible :	- Hand gesture	invisible:	- divine reality, Holy Spirit
Sign:	- Epiclesis	thing signified:	- descent of the Holy Spirit to transform
Sacrament:	- Eucharist	Mysteries:	- transubstantiation

CCC1076 in the age of the church, Christ now lives and acts in and with his church.. he acts through the sacraments... the communication or 'dispensation' of the fruits of Christ's paschal mystery in the celebration of the church's sacramental liturgy'.

CCC 1117 As she has done for the canon of Scripture and for the doctrine of the faith, the Church, by the power of the Holy Spirit who guides her 'into all the truth' (Jn 16:13) has gradually recognised this treasure received from Christ and, as the faithful servant of God's mysteries, has determined its dispensation'.

CCC 1075,1076,

Metaphysics

Metaphysics considers solely what it means *to be*.

It is the study of reality in so far as it *is*;

of reality studied under the aspect of *being*;

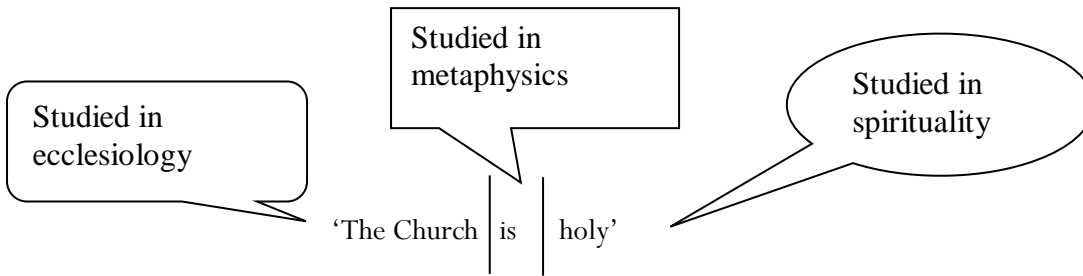
of what is, what is real, what is true.

Metaphysics includes:

1. The primary principles of Being – essence and existence.
2. The transcendental properties of Being - one, true, good and beautiful.
3. 'Being' in the forms in which it presents itself:
 - a. as substantial being and accidental being
 - b. as being in act and being in potency
 - c. as matter and form
 - d. as cause or effect

The verb ‘to be’ – Latin: *esse* – Greek: *ontos*

- What is this verb referring to? What does it mean? Where does its meaning come from? What is there to say about it? Is it just a linguistic mechanism?



- This verb is used in all our statements, we cannot think, speak, read or write, communicate or understand without it. It is important in everything.
- Understanding metaphysics helps you to understand HOW the Church thinks, discerns, acts. The HOW helps you understand the coherence of the faith. Most other courses teach you WHAT.

The meaning of ‘is’

The Church	is	holy	realism
The Church	is ideally	holy	idealism
The Church	seems (not) to be	holy	phenomenology
The Church	is called	holy	nominalism
The Church	is, for me	holy	relativism
The Church	is evidently (not)	holy	scientism

Being is what is fundamental to each thing.

- Being is not just one quality among others. It gives a thing the actuality which separates something from nothing.
- Being is exclusive of and proper to each thing.

Being is always prior to our knowledge/experience of it.

Being is always richer than our experience/knowledge of it.

Being is not to be confused with our knowledge/experience of it.

- Being and knowledge of Being are different.
- In our knowledge we are aware that our knowledge is imperfect.
- Being opens all paths to knowledge.
- Being does not constrict knowledge; it is not a barrier but the foundation and source of knowledge.
- Knowledge is always knowledge *of something*. Experience is always experience *of something*. A concept is always a concept *of something*.
- We are present to an exterior world, not just to an interior, self-constructed world.
- Our concept of Being can be, initially, extremely poor and can always grow richer, fuller. Our minds need to remain ever open, developing, being changed and enriched by the richness of Being.