

*Joistings 1*  
**Beginagain**

### 1.1 Joists

The odd title to this final series is, I think, catchy, as well as being accurate. Final? Perhaps I should have given the two word title: Beginagain Wake: but I'll get back to that, and to the origins of the title more than a decade ago, and to broader pointings, in section 3. Section 2 is the key central section, where I try to turn us towards a homing in on, an epilodging<sup>1</sup> in, the cultivation of the exigence<sup>2</sup> that is our heartland.

But let me get to an accurate point, beyond Joycean hintings. Joists are the beams that hold up the planks of a floor or the laths of a ceiling. A foundational series then, to do with building, indeed with the building of collaboration. It is a year now since I abandoned my Cantower series, in February 2004 for the purpose of collaboration, "Ongoing Collaboration" as we sloganized in that First International Lonergan Conference in Florida, Easter 1970. A year later I find myself collaborating in rambling fashion with a range of people. The ramblings are regularly beginnings. The initial stimulus towards collaboration was an Australian groups interest in beginning to read page 250 of *Method in Theology*: the result, on my side, was six months work and two hundred pages of typescript. But there have been lesser ventures, and it is with such as these, in their continuation and emergence, that this series is concerned.

But before I get into that I would point to a unity and continuity to my efforts, and I hope yours. That unity and continuity is caught by my noting one strand of my intention: to help create a mood in which the Latin works of Lonergan be read heartily

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<sup>1</sup>The neologism recalls a key context for this drive towards a spirituality of Faith seeking understanding: Cantower 21, paralleling the Epilogue to *Insight*, is titled "Epilodge", and points towards this fostering of a kataphatic contemplation.

<sup>2</sup>I regularly remind readers of the resonances of this word: see *Phenomenology and Logic*, the index under *Exigence*. The fuller, but less mature, reflection of Lonergan is contained in his Latin work, *De Ente Supernaturale*. A translation is available at the Toronto Lonergan Centre.

as they emerge in translation. Charles Hefling, one of the gallant translators, begins a key article - we will get to it in *Joistings 8* - by remarking how Lonergan “downplayed those Latin textbooks”, “practical chores made necessary by an educational scheme of recurrence that no longer survives”. He quotes Lonergan: “There are chunks in those books that I think are permanently valid.”<sup>3</sup>

Yes: this is true, in my view, of massive chunks, but the chunks need a lift of reading-mood, and that lift is a concern of these *Joistings*. What that mood is: that is a matter for a separate section below, a matter for a new culture and ethos. So the named mood, symbolized in the title word (about)<sup>3</sup> of section 2, should strike you as strange, but you may, will?, gradually see that it is the key to a deep future unity and continuity.<sup>4</sup> However, there is the more superficial continuity to be noted. The transposition of the content of those Latin works was to have been central aim of the later Cantowers. Cantowers 42- 69 were to have been a climb through the heuristics of the lower and middle sciences not only towards a transformation of those areas of inquiry but also towards a tolerance of a needed symbolizations in humanities. The task of elaborating such symbolizations was to have been the climb of the year 2008,<sup>5</sup> after which there was to be the adventure of a fresh heuristics for astronomy, anthropology,

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<sup>3</sup>“An interview with Fr. Bernard Lonergan”, *Second Collection*, 212. The interview was edited by me from an event of the Florida gathering of 1970. Since I wrote this *Joistings I* completed a helpful work related to this validity, available now free as a Website book: *ChriSt in History*.

<sup>4</sup>A key piece of the climb is the digestion of a single line of *Topics in Education*, line 16 of page 160. The failed science of Plato and Aristotle and Aquinas can become efficient, beautiful, unified, through humble re-cycling collaboration of the human group in quite new patterns of microautonomy and mesoeconomics.

<sup>5</sup>One may get a glimpse of the project through reflection on Cantower 24's lists and the pointers of the concluding section of Cantower 33.

eschatology, climbing forwards to December 2011 and the final Cantower 117.<sup>6</sup> Within that climb was to have been the topics of Lonergan's Latin works.<sup>7</sup> The present essays, then, are in continuity with that project, ranging round the topics of those later Cantowers. Indeed, as we shall see, we may range round various other topics of those missing Cantowers, and topics quite outside that project.

The ranging, of course, depends on our collaboration, on your suggestions and questions. So far in this I have found an amazing providence: nudges and questions from around the globe open up new twists and turns of meaning. I write this first Joisting only now, after completing the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, and those essays emerged through various ongoing collaborations.<sup>8</sup>

Incidentally, if I mention collaborators by name, as I did in the footnote just now, it is never without their permission: so, if you have some crazy question or interest, your secret is safe with me. Nor are all collaborations grist for such essays as these. My foundational effort - and it is that - is a random reaching towards a quite new operation of what used to be called metaphysics. Gradually there will emerge foundations persons in local communities, persons mediating fantasy, recycling and the

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<sup>6</sup>The last year's Cantowers, 2011, (nos. 106-117) were to have tackled the task of reaching an up-to-date eschatology, integrating Trinitarian theology with front-line astronomy, physics, chemistry, neurodynamics, etc. Some such advance is a desperate Christian need.

<sup>7</sup>The reach of these works would have meshed with the topic of the Cantowers of 2009-10.

<sup>8</sup>I wrote the third essay first, after a day of reflection with Bill Danaher: the focus of attention was on the "what to do?" question as central in management consultations. The fourth essay was stimulated by discussions with Conn O'Donovan and Sean McEvenue and with problems of dialogue with the Muslim tradition (which led to considerations of refinements of neurochemical differentiations due to differences of script etc: far too complex for our brief venture in that essay). The eighth essay also benefitted from discussions with Conn, who had been handling questions in Australia, in the wake of the Gibson film, regarding the Satisfaction of Jesus. But the overall drive of the eight essays is due to collaboration with Sister Kim Theresa Insook, who was moving towards giving a graduate course on spirituality at the Catholic Seoul University.

transformation of street-meaning. But it seems to me that this generations prime task is to reach for a concrete fantasy of this very possibility. Lonergan fantasized, in 1942, about a new foundational local economic presence that would “make the practical economist as familiar a professional figure as the doctor, the lawyer, or the engineer .... The task will be vast, so vast that only the creative imagination of all individuals in all democracies will be able to construct at once the full conception and the full realization of the new order.”<sup>9</sup> I am lifting this task of the new economic order beyond the bewildered effeteness of present metaphysics, foundational theology, beyond present patterns of contemplation and of leadership.

But what could I possibly mean by saying “I am lifting”? It is a lifting of fantasy in my own mind and minding that becomes here and there, with you nowhere, a doctrinal gesture made in a hope that has hung in through decades of staleness. I hear my younger self freshly, a stranger to that earlier self, trying for a lift of your neuron patterns beyond their conventional rhythms of reception. Let us tune in to my younger self.

“Growth of self as bios *theoreticos*, as maturing to *Spoudaios*, to *Sargawit*, yes, that’s the problem: ‘with selves’, yes, that is the problem: the growth of the self may be daily accelerating, and the stranger may not be welcome to other selves. But am I saying more than Lonergan in his late forties, in the powerful appeal and criticism of a single page of *Insight*?<sup>10</sup> The philosopher’s ‘theoretical understanding .... seeks to embrace the universe in a single view’; common sense lauds, teaches, writes, does not lose the common touch, laughs at the improbably - perhaps ‘with sour laughs, deriding the seekers for the fabled thoroughfare,’<sup>11</sup> perhaps with the modest encouraging laugh of a

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<sup>9</sup>Lonergan, *For a New Political Economy*, 37.

<sup>10</sup>Page 417[442].

<sup>11</sup>I quote here a piece of the lead-quote from *The Redress of Poise* chapter 3, “The Arctic Grail”. It seems worthwhile to give the full quotation and its source: “On every side of us are

more subtle busy resentment. At all events, it seems to me that I have sufficiently made my point. What I advocate is a new and desperately needed type of contemplative.<sup>12</sup> For the Christian, that contemplation has the deeper motivation of the unequal unique friendship, one Aristotle struggled to envisage.<sup>13</sup> For, the arctic grail in its fullness is the mind of Christ, peasant and present, the Holy Grail, feebly but most fruitfully<sup>14</sup> echoed in our heuristic reach, "<sup>15</sup>

"Theoretical understanding seeks .... to embrace the universe" and in that embrace to cherish and cultivate local meanings, bringing those local meanings spiral-wised to a redemption of meaning and mystery. Might you, or your children's children, help to build that Tower of Able?

## 1.2 About Turn (about)<sup>3</sup>

It is time now to, turn, return, to the promised consideration of "the new mood". Turn? Return? On the road to this mood I struggled at one stage in and with the strange essay "Turners: Strategists of Survival" which eventually became the middle chapter of *The Redress of Poise*, and in the middle of that chapter there is a middle footnote that holds forth a key element in the turn as I envisaged it then, tadpole to this later frog. "Part of linguistic feedback in the third stage of meaning needs to be an ongoing

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men who hunt perpetually for their personal Northwest Passage, too often sacrificing health, strength, and life itself to the search; and who shall say that they are not happier in their vain but hopeful quest than wiser, duller folks who sit at home, venturing nothing and, with sour laughs, deriding the seekers for that fabled thoroughfare?" (Kenneth Roberts, quoted on the title page of Pierre Berton, *The Arctic Grail. The Quest for the Northwest Passage, 1818-1909*, McKlellan and Stewart, Toronto, 1988.

<sup>12</sup>I spelled out this need first in Cantower 21.

<sup>13</sup>See Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, X,7, 1177b 26 - 1178a 2.

<sup>14</sup>I refer to the statement in the First Vatican Council, DB 1796.

<sup>15</sup>The paragraph is a quotation from *The Redress of Poise*, chapter 3, "The Arctic Grail", at footnote 71.

anamnesis and prolepsis of the intertwining in expression of the gap between expression and expressed.”<sup>16</sup>

But the gap is here, herenow, and stares me down as I peruse that previous book. Did I have readers then for my wild optimism about, (about)<sup>3</sup>, the future? Do I have a reader herenow for what I wrote then of the second time of the temporal subject, a time of luminous hope?

“And Here Comes Everybody , Minding All Along, with a world view that may be little beyond a core vital faith, breeding a cosmogenetic gentleness with nature and with differentiated consciousness. ‘Cosmogenetic gentleness pivots on a contemplative focus on ultimacy mediated by and mediating a world-view that leaves the subject turned in the privacy of God in existential repentant gratitude.’<sup>17</sup> For the Christian that privacy is a real and psychological hiddenness with Christ in God seeding an appreciation of a radical intimacy of friendship beyond all finite friendship, in time and eternity, with an incarnate Divine Love, so that the Cosmos glimpsed in art and science, in war and peace, becomes a personal resonance of eucharistic dimensions, twisting the words of the poet into new meaning: ‘I see the rose within His blood, and in His eyes the glory of the stars’.<sup>18</sup> The sapling of history and the sapling of His life entwine in a subtle lonely calling to creative delicate displacement.<sup>19</sup> The minder is located in the groaning finality of matter’s blossoming: the privacy of the place and time of life

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<sup>16</sup>The text is actually at the middle footnote, 23, of the 45 notes in the middle chapter of *Redress of Poise*, “Turners, Strategists of Survival: The Legacy of Lonergan”. Furthermore the notes correspond strangely in the sense the note 1 + x and note 45 - x refer to each other, so that note 23 turns on itself.

<sup>17</sup>See *Insight* 700[722].

<sup>18</sup>The original lines of the Irish poet, Joseph Mary Plunkett (executed in 1916) were: “I see His blood upon the rose / And in the stars the glory of His eyes”.

<sup>19</sup>See *Insight* 727-8[748-9],

becomes a startling prescience."<sup>20</sup>

Let us pause, at all events, over the title of this section in what I hope is a strategically simple way.

My personal reaching of a inner meaning of "about about about"<sup>21</sup> was the startling achievement of my struggle up from Cantower 21 to those key five Cantowers - Cantowers 27 to 31 - when I put together a new twist on the first five chapters of *Insight*.<sup>22</sup> The idea of that triplicity goes back to early work on the archival material surrounding Lonergan's effort to write a first chapter on Method in spring of 1965, but the most strategic pointer to its meaning for us now comes from the first chapter of *The Redress of Poise*, when I wrote of the "discernment of discernments of discernments", thus hinting at a massive sublation of Ignatian discernment that should eventually find its way into the spontaneity of retreat-givers and retreatants. The new spontaneity would bring theology and spirituality together in a fresh interiority that would be as light to prevalent darkness, where the darkness is described by Lonergan when he writes of "the existence of superficial Jesuits who have learned something about the spiritual life when they were novices, who learnt nothing from their philosophy or theology or tertianship, who think that giving the Exercises is a matter of complementing with stories what they learnt in the noviceship."<sup>23</sup>

Briefly, there is discernment, a spontaneous pattern of operations that occurs in

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<sup>20</sup>The full paragraph quoted is from the concluding pages of *The Redress of Poise*, chapter 2, "Ecological Justice". The section after the first sentence is from chapter 6 of *Process*.

<sup>21</sup>The phrase occurs, for example, in the title of section 5 of Cantower 3, "Some Ramblings about about about Feynman's chapter 3" and nudges the reader back to the beginning of the Cantower, and to subtleties regarding the layers of meaning of the little word **as**.

<sup>22</sup>These Cantowers can serve as an advanced introduction to *Insight*, placing the work in the context of Feynman's Introduction to Physics.

<sup>23</sup>Bernard Lonergan, "Grace and the Spiritual Exercises of St. Ignatius", archival material edited by F.E.Crowe, *Method: Journal of Lonergan Studies*, **21** (2001) 89.

any choice, but given a particular tone when one is thinking of life-searching.<sup>24</sup> To discern that discerning is the challenge of *Insight*, where the focal discerning of discerning is hurried and squeezed horridly into a piece of chapter 18: Aquinas' equivalent of chapter 18 is the *Pars Secunda* of the *Summa Theologica*, and he has a generous set of questions that invite that adventure into the grounding of the transcendental, "Be Adventurous."<sup>25</sup>

But he does not have the "third order of consciousness" of which Lonergan writes. That will require, as Lonergan suspected through those years and later, an "ongoing genesis of methods" that would mediate its own luminousness. Methods emerged, in the centuries after Aquinas, like the post-chemical evolutionary surgings of new organisms, to give data for a new heuristic reaching. So, methodology is to be born, a field of inquiry - indeed I might say an inquiry of the field<sup>26</sup> - that is to methods what zoology is the animals.

All this is very dense and remote in our present culture and the mental stance symbolized by (about)<sup>3</sup> is a distant hope. You may find a larger sense of that shift and that hope through the adventure of Cantowers 22-31. But let us stay with the key starting point, the starting point of a linguistic feedback towards an out-word calling towards an in-word of authentic subjectivity.<sup>27</sup>

This, for example, is symbolized elementarily in the title of *Joisting 6*, and it

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<sup>24</sup>More suggestions in *Joisting 3*.

<sup>25</sup>This is the neglected transcendental, modally different from the transcendental, "Be Intelligent". You would find Appendix A of Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*, useful as a background here. And we will get into the question of neglect in *Joisting 3*.

<sup>26</sup>The meaning of field is that of Lonergan, *Phenomenology and Logic*: see the index under *Field*.

<sup>27</sup>The phrase is Jaspers', the poise can be associated with Augustine's contemplative stance, the task presently centers, for kataphatic contemplatives, on one's own luminous version of page 250 of *Method*.

brings us back to the first steps that I associate with the redemption of the Latin works of Lonergan. “Jesus My Pilgrim Pacemaker” calls out a quite different molecular tone than “On the Incarnate Word”.

There is, of course, much more to be said about - (about)<sup>3</sup> - the impossible task of translating the Latin works: as I worked through those translations recently I realized that there was little the gallant translators could do to get past the traditions of texts and talk that went with that chore of teaching and with that *ethos* of theological pseudo-objectivity. Further, the problem of expression goes way beyond Latin texts. Lonergan wrote, in that powerful final chapter of *Topics in Education*, of “the problem of general history, which is the real catch.”<sup>28</sup> But the catch is a catch in the throat, the grammar, the axial words. He writes, “The contemporary theologian, for example, in handling the question of the divinity of Christ as expressed in the New Testament, will distinguish a series of modes of apprehending the divinity of Christ.”<sup>29</sup> But does this word “handling” not really mean **cherishing**, and will not a contemporary theologian of post-axial authenticity and expression talk within an ethos of listening that gets beyond the catch in the throat and the culture towards a speaking and listening (about)<sup>3</sup> that apprehending and apprehended divinity “that sweeps living human bodies, linked together in charity, to the joyful, courageous, whole-hearted, yet intelligently controlled performance of the tasks set by world order in which the problem of evil is not suppressed but transcended”?<sup>30</sup>

### 1.3 Beginagains Wake

The “new mood” talked of in the previous section and again, below, especially in the first section of *Joistings 6*, was a distant possibility, but not even a dream, when I

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<sup>28</sup>*Topics in Education*, 236.

<sup>29</sup>*Ibid.*, 249.

<sup>30</sup>*Insight*, 724.

first envisaged a series under the title of “Joistings”. I still have those old notes, a few typed pages from the Feast of the Transfiguration of 1991, rambling round possibilities of a series, leaning on Joseph Campbell’s view of Joyce’s “fourth” book to follow *Finnegans Wake*, “short, lucid and about the ocean”. *Process* had been written and printed at my university for use in class: it was too eccentric to be accepted by publishers. At sixty, I was interested in winding down-up my pointings: the efforts of my later economic writings were not then on my horizon much less the Cantower project that bubbled up a decade later. And now, edging towards seventy three, I recall my work with Lonergan, when he was edging towards seventy three in the autumn of 1977. He went on to those relatively fruitless years of teaching economics.<sup>31</sup> Privately, he was pushing forward a dialectic analysis, but the public image was of a reach for a primer in economics. Nine years earlier he had written to me in Dublin asking me to find an economist, and I am still looking: but I see no point in myself adding to what I have written in the primer zone. I see now with ever-deepening (about)<sup>3</sup>ness the need for the dialectic analysis that Lonergan described in what I consider his last best page of writing.<sup>32</sup> I see its need in economics, twined into the full recycling that is functional specialization, and it is with the parallel need in Christology with which this block of *Joistings* ends.

But neither of these needs may be your zone of interest. You may not even share my sense of the desperate need for functional specialization as a turning point of history. But I would like to think that the personal need of Stand seeking

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<sup>31</sup>This seems a strange sad view. Charles Hefling writes of Lonergan in his Preface to volume 15 of the *Collected Works* (p. xix): “towards the end of his life he wrote in a spare and lapidary style that makes every word count”. But “what did Lonergan accomplish by doing what he did?” (*ibid.*, xiii). Lonergan’s letters at the time show that he was aiming at producing an elementary introduction, trying to do so in his classes.. What happened? His magnificent restructuring of economics remains neglected, inoperative.

<sup>32</sup>The page is page 250 of *Method*. You may be crazy enough to follow my paper trail and a year of thinking about it: the 200 pages of SOFDAWARE 1-8; Quodlibet 1-12.

understanding, stand seeking under standing or within standing, would be noticed as a historic need. For the Christian the stand is named Faith, and the vocation is caught in the slogan "Faith seeking understanding". That seeking has a turning point associated with the turning point in history we are identifying here. It is to be a shift of prayer and contemplation desperately needed, especially in those who would lead us into the future.<sup>33</sup> Neither fundamentalist piety nor oriental pausing will do: we need heuristic vision. The Christian reach of Stand seeking understanding is already a vocation of the Abrahamic religions: Jews and Muslims too speak of "the covenant I made with their ancestors the day I took them by the hand out of Egypt."<sup>34</sup> But there is a global pressure in the loneliness of all towards understanding. That loneliness is systematically betrayed by present patterns of education and culture and prayer in west, east and south. Might you step aside from this betrayal and embrace the cosmos with your minding?

It is best for me to end here, abruptly, but still adding a pointer. In a recent volume of *Journal of Macrodynamic Analysis* I made my case for functional collaboration as the central challenge of our time, and I was responded to by a group of contemporaries, among whom was Cathleen Going.<sup>35</sup> I had the privilege of responding to them. You too might respond to my case, to my appeal for collaboration. Then, of course, my particular response to you would be in order. But your response, I hope, would have the context of your struggle with these *Joistings*, even if you are not a Christian. Long before the Galilean, the daughter of Sargon wrote the lonely *Hymn to Inanna*. You have your own hymn, molecules reaching for cosmic rhythms. And, ending

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<sup>33</sup>This is a fantasy about a sublation of metaphysics, already the subject of fantasy as operative locally. See Cantower 14's section on "Founders of Manhattan".

<sup>34</sup>*Jeremiah* 31: 31.

<sup>35</sup>I met the radiant Cathleen Going at the International Lonergan Florida Conference, Easter 1970. In her middle years she reached, I suspect, a life-ambition, in becoming Sister Maria del Salvador.

here though beginning again, there is the possibility that you might read and breath further, joining in “Our Journaling Loneliness”, my response of that odd volume. You are a spirant in a Spirant, with the winged lady of your neurodynamism thirsting fo cosmic liquid, liquidation.<sup>36</sup> So I end with the beginning of that response, an invitation:

*“O winged lady,  
 Like a bird  
 You scavenge the land.  
 Your feet are continually restless,  
 Carrying your harp of sighs,  
 You breath out the music of mourning.”<sup>37</sup>*

I delight in sharing Cathleen Going’s cloistered imaging, ‘singer at the heart of the universe,’ an image teeming with reachings: who is the singer, the sung, the song, what is the heart of the universe? ..... “ And so on.

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<sup>36</sup>I anticipate the final note of *Joistings 4* and Theresa of Liseaux’s remark to her sister, “God will sip you up like a drop of dew”.

<sup>37</sup>It seems appropriate to reproduce the note given in the original text, “Our Journaling Lonelinesses: A Response”, *Journal of Macrodynamical Analysis*, 3(2003), 324, so I thus continue here, pointing towards the challenge of *Joistings 7*.

Extract from *The Hymn to Inanna* by Enheduanna (daughter of the Sumerian king, Sargon, about 2300 B.C.), quoted on page 5 of Jane Hirsfield, ed., *Women in Praise of the Sacred: 43 Centuries of Spiritual Poetry by Women* (New York, Collins, 1994). It seems worthwhile to plunge you immediately into the context of W3 [the Tower diagram of *Joistings 8*] by connecting the three quotations from Hirsfield in the three sections of the text to my comment elsewhere on Hopkin’s *Windhover*: “One glimpses afresh the *Beingstalk*, the hold of all that is holdall understanding; and one may distinguish then *Beings-talk*, the speaking within the understanding that is a twosome resonance, and finally, there is the *Beingst-hawk*, joysticking response to the twotalk.” (*Music That Is Soundless*, (2005), 131. The creative subtlety is a shift in processions-minding to intussusception, a scavenging (Indo-European base: *skeu*, to heed).