

Both Heyne and Waterman utilize the idea of “spontaneous order” that came out of the Scottish Enlightenment as crucial when trying to apply ethical principles to economic life. Modern economic life is impersonal due to the size of the population and the extensive specialization of labor employed. However, biblical ethics are based, for the most part, on personal relationships. Both Heyne and Waterman are critical of pronouncements made by church leaders and theologians who refuse to recognize the difference between the two types of societies; the two societies differ with regard to knowledge that agents have about how and by whom goods and services are produced. Both Heyne and Waterman also treat both the Bible and theology seriously.

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Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in humility regard others as better than yourselves. Let each of you look not to your own interests, but to the interests of others. —Phil. 2:3–4

Christianity and concern with justice came first, economics later. After undergraduate school and before going back for graduate work, my wife and I became very involved in our local parish, particularly in its social ministry. It was then that our Christian faith became revitalized as we came to realize through study of the Bible and Catholic Social Thought

that we all are called to do God's work in this world. To love God is to love neighbor.

The tradition of CST is rooted in a commitment to certain fundamental values—the right to human dignity, the need for human freedom and participation, the importance of community, and the nature of the common good. These values are drawn from the belief that each person is called to be a co-creator with God, participating in the redemption of the world and the furthering of the Kingdom. This requires social and human development where the religious and temporal aspects of life are not separated and opposed to each other.

As a result of these fundamental values, two principles permeate CST. The first is a special concern for the poor and powerless, which leads to a criticism of political and economic structures that oppress them. The second is a concern for certain human rights against the collectivist tendencies of the state and the neglect of the free market.

With this theological and philosophical background, I was drawn into graduate work in economics by my desire to attain a better understanding of the causes of poverty and how to overcome it. Msgr. Ivan Illich invited me to teach at the Catholic University in Puerto Rico. During our stay, he became my mentor and convinced me that I needed to get a PhD in economics before anyone would listen to what I had to say. I accepted an assistantship at the University of Maryland with the intention of concentrating on the problems of development in Third World countries.

At that time, the economics department at Maryland was dominated by Keynesians and even included courses in Institutionalism. However, they were all thoroughgoing secularists. As a Christian, I wanted more. Two sources led me to see how my faith and the economics I was learning could be reinforcing. The early 1960s issues of *The Review of Social Economy* are where I found many articles that connected economics and my Catholic faith. Articles critiquing the economic man idea in light of faith forced me to think creatively. See F. Knox (1960), "The Doctrine of Consumer Sovereignty." Other articles on Joseph Schumpeter's approach opened up new ways of seeing the economy in a more dynamic model.

A second important source for seeing connections between faith and economics was in the History of Thought class I was required to take, where we actually read Adam Smith's *The Wealth of Nations* (1776) and the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* (1759). Doing so was a revela-

tion. At that time, most mainstream economists saw themselves following in his footsteps. However, I found that Smith had much in common with Catholic Social Thought. I came to see that the popular version of Smith's theory—that the so-called invisible hand of the free market converts the self-interest of individuals into the maximum social good—is a caricature of the real Adam Smith. I have come to a fuller understanding of my original impressions through the work of others, particularly Jerry Evensky.

Smith's writings, especially his *Theory of Moral Sentiments*, suggest that he had a much more nuanced understanding of human beings than the one which assumes that individuals are driven solely by self-interest. Although Smith argued that self-interest has a strong influence on people's behavior, he had a pluralist view of human nature, in which empathy—the ability to perceive things from another person's perspective—has an important role.

Moreover, his views on the role of self-interest leading to the common good are not so clear-cut either. He thought that “humanity, justice, generosity, and public spirit, are the qualities most useful to others” (Smith, 1985 [1759], 190), and believed that while self-interest is useful in certain situations, these virtues are useful in other cases.

Especially towards the end of his life, Smith began to have doubts about the role of the invisible hand of competition and self interest in yielding the common good. In his revision of the *Theory of Moral Sentiments* in 1789, he added a new sixth part containing a practical system of morality. He appeals to all people to place the well-being of society as a whole above that of their own factions, and stresses especially the role of statesmen in constructing such a moral society through their actions and by setting examples for others.

For Adam Smith, virtue serves as “the fine polish to the wheels of society,” while vice is “like the vile rust, which makes them jar and grate upon one another” (Smith, 1789, 244). So Adam Smith would be quite comfortable reading in *Laudato Si*, Pope Francis's statement, that “The economy accepts every advance in technology with a view to profit, without concern for its potentially negative impact on human beings... Yet by itself the market cannot guarantee integral human development and social inclusion” (Francis, 2015, 109). Rather, we are called to control the unrestricted pursuit of profit by allowing ethics to guide us as citizens and consumers, so that both the planet and all peoples can thrive.

What would I recommend today for young PhD economists to read? They couldn't go wrong reading Adam Smith, particularly, *The Theory of Moral Sentiments*. Finally, every economist, Christian or not, could benefit from reading the 1986 pastoral letter of the United States Catholic Bishops Conference, *Economic Justice for All*.

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I must have been a strange young man late in high school and in college, because I knew then, in my heart of hearts, that I wanted to be an economist. I entered college committed to the aim of earning a PhD. How crazy is that? I would never recommend that as a career strategy for anyone, but that is the truth of it for me.

I wish I could say that it was deep reading in Aristotle, Augustine, and Aquinas, not to mention John Paul II and Kuyper and Knight and Viner, that set me on the path of Christian ethical reflection in economics for a major part of my professional work. But that would be wrong. Instead, my path began in an extremely mundane way.

In college in the late 1970s, there appeared to me to be essentially no scholarly resources that related the discipline of economics and economic policy to Christian ethical and theological reflection. This was a disappointment. It was also, of course, a sophomoric judgment in all senses of the word. Had I bestirred myself, there was a lot to be found, from Wilhelm Roepke, Dennis Munby, Josiah Stamp, and others from an earlier generation, as well as from the work of a then-emerging generation of