

Sant' Anselmo Jubilee Presentation to the Faculty **Abbot Jeremy Driscoll, O.S.B.**

It's a strange position I find myself in, offering you reflections that treat sapiential theology at Sant' Anselmo. Two years ago I was your colleague as a faculty member, and I still retain that position, even if I am hard pressed to be able to come here and teach anymore. That is because two years ago, as you know, I was elected abbot of my monastery, Mount Angel Abbey in faraway Oregon USA. And now I'm meant to address you as an abbot of the Benedictine confederation and a member of the newly established Advisory Board convened for the Athenaeum by Abbot Primate Gregory Polan. This Board met for the first time in October 2017. All the abbots of the Confederation are expected to take some responsibility, where possible, for Sant' Anselmo. I do my part in that, still feeling very close to you as a colleague, even if my responsibilities here are different now.

It was at that first meeting of the Advisory Board that members focused on ways in which Sant' Anselmo could highlight and develop and protect and promote what makes Sant' Anselmo unique among the Athenaeums and other theological schools of Rome. Naturally we too seized on the phrase we all use in answering such a question: "sapiential theology." And for each of us something comes to mind when we hear this phrase. I'm sure the different understandings that the term evokes come together and converge toward the same sort of notions. Even so, it probably is not as explicit and intentional as it once was here many decades ago. In some senses Sant' Anselmo still lives on the reputation about sapiential theology that was established here decades ago, and which we declare still to be active and what is distinctive about Sant' Anselmo. But could we not as a faculty perhaps examine our practices and approaches to theology and the teaching of it around some explicitly shared and developed notion of what sapiential theology at Sant' Anselmo has been and what it is for today and for the future? In some sense that is the question that I want to promote in these reflections with you.

But how to proceed? Surely not by giving you a discourse on what I think "sapiential theology" should mean. If I announced that as today's topic, polite listeners would secretly groan inside and think "not another talk on sapiential theology." No, I don't want to offer that. Nor do I want to offer you any thoughts or suggestions about refining and improving specific programs or about reforms of some sort in the curriculums or pedagogical methods, even if that is a question that I think at some point ought to be more deeply engaged by us in the future. Instead, what I want to offer to you today is a sort of bearing witness to what I have seen and experienced here at Sant' Anselmo in the last 40 years, since the time I first came here as a student in 1980. I want to speak, first, of my experience here as a student. Secondly, I will speak of what my experience has been as a professor here during 22 years, which overlaps with 35 years of teaching theology at Mount Angel. For 22 years, I taught one semester here and one

semester at Mount Angel, where we have a large diocesan seminary with 150 students. In speaking of both these topics, without expounding any theories or abstractions, I believe it will be sapiential theology that I will be describing. After I have shared with you, first, something of my experience as a student here at Sant' Anselmo and, second, something of my experience as a professor, I want in the third place to offer you descriptions of sapiential theology from a more distant past. I hope all this might inspire a fresh discussion among us as a faculty of ways of keeping a great Sant' Anselmo tradition alive and doing something new with it for the future.

My Experience at Sant' Anselmo as a Student

For describing what I want to do in this first section I used a phrase that I know from the scriptures. It comes from what the first Christian community was doing with the experience of their encounter with Jesus, crucified and risen. They defined themselves simply as "bearing witness" to their encounter. I want to use the same solemn phrase about the professors I met and interacted with when I came here as a student in 1980. I was 29 years old and had already done my basic course in theology at Mount Angel, so I did not have that part of my experience here at Sant' Anselmo. I was coming for specialized study and already was vaguely familiar with some of the great names of professors at Sant' Anselmo. I was excited to meet them, and I was afraid.

I want now with you to bear witness to what it was like to meet these men and enter into a relationship with them. In speaking of them I will be describing sapiential theology slowly marking my life through their influence. There are so many, and so there is only time to say a sentence or two about men that would require a great deal to bear witness to them adequately. But I want to impress you with what impressed me; namely, the fact of how many there were and of such high caliber. So I shall romp through the names, evoking what Sant' Anselmo once was and wanting to ask, "Is it still?"

When I arrived *Gerard Bekes* was the prior as well as an esteemed professor. He was unfailingly gracious, always concerned and wondering if I was doing okay in my first months. He quickly found out somehow that I wrote poetry and, sharing his own poetry with me, encouraged it as something very good for theology. *Basil Studer* was among the first of those I met, and he was very anxious to meet me, which impressed me because I had heard of his greatness. He wanted to meet me because I was going to study patristics but also because I was from Mount Angel, a daughter house of his own Abbey of Engelberg. He also wanted to meet me because he wanted me to do work for him, which I soon learned was typical of the way he treated his favored students. I didn't mind. I was helping a great and famous theologian! And I learned so much from what he asked me to do. I was a professor's assistant. With *Ghislain Lafont* I eventually formed a deep friendship. Despite the difference in our age, he had and still has a beautiful capacity to meet another person with a profound sense of interest and

respect. He took me so very seriously from the start and invited me to think theologically with him about profound theological questions. Of course it was a teacher-student relationship, but he made it seem like we were both students together. Whatever I said or wrote, he would think about it hard and somehow incorporate it into his own thinking and share that with me.

Magnus Löhrer was rector magnificus when I first arrived. I never had a course from him because I was working in another field, but he was clearly esteemed by so many, and his was another big name for me. Even if I didn't have him in the formal setting of the classroom, I learned from living in this same house with him wonderful lessons about how a great theologian lived the rest of his life. Every morning he would open his window immediately after breakfast and blast Mozart out into the cloister and down the halls. He would appear at the window smiling and welcoming a new day. I used to marvel too how each day at pranzo he expressed himself so pleased to see what the pasta was that day. And he helped himself to more than was healthy for him. He knew it, but, well, he lived life to the full.

Ansgar Chupungco was younger than all these – by about 15 years; he was 42 in 1980 – but he was one among them now as a younger professor whom they had formed as part of their ranks. And it was he who, being closer to my age, took me in among the esteemed professors just to have coffee with them after lunch or to go out for dinner together. I remember within my first months here sitting at coffee with him, *Adrien Nocent*, and *Burkhard Neunheuser*. I was completely overwhelmed by how interested they were in me, interested also in my monastery, interested in my country and the Church in my country. They were primarily focused on learning more about me, but in knowing about me from the perspectives of the theological and liturgical questions that pressed on their minds. I felt myself so lovingly and so naturally being built up by them. I knew that they – and everyone whom I have mentioned so far and will mention still – were immensely more learned and experienced than I. And yet they never pointed their learning at me directly to fill me up with it as you would fill a container. Instead, without my realizing it, their learning was being imparted to me “between the lines” of the things we so naturally talked about. Furthermore, an attitude toward learning was being transmitted to me; namely, that learning is about living, it's about our vocation as monks, it's about life in the Church and so, about life in the world and life for the world. Learning is about others and for others.

I want to mention the name of one other monk from my time as a student here. He was not a professor here, but he himself studied here as a student-monk before going on to become an important influence in liturgical art and architecture. I mean *Frederic Debuyst* from Clerlande in Belgium. He had visited Mount Angel several years before and taught in a summer school program we had there. His teaching had a huge impact on me. When he learned that I was now at Sant' Anselmo, he told me how much he had loved his years here and how formative they were for him. Toward the

end of my first year he wrote me with an offer. He told me that if I had three days free, he would like to walk around Rome with me and show me how to see Rome and how to come to know it. It may perhaps sound like I am saying nothing at all when I express what it was he taught me. He taught me how to walk and how to see. I thought I had been doing so all my life. But no, he brought me to a whole new level of it all. What I was learning in the books did not go all the way in until I developed the habit of walking in this amazing City and seeing all that there is to see in the remarkable arrangements of its buildings and piazzas and streets and the people that still move among them. And you must notice the quality of the light too – always moving, making the buildings and the days different each day.

After that, one fresh October morning I was walking in Trastevere and on entering the church of Santa Maria and seeing the mosaic in the apse of the Lord and his mother seated on a single throne, I realized that for centuries Rome has been attempting to express beautifully “the fruit of her womb.” Rome is the un-self-conscious celebration of an immense history, the un-self-conscious celebration of life itself, the un-self-conscious celebration of the Christian mystery. I understood that because I was a student at Sant’ Anselmo.

Salvatore Marsili frightened me as a student. I know he frightened many. His face was stern and unsmiling, at least as I knew it. I don’t think he felt well in the years that I knew him. But I read him and was curious about him. Once I sat across from him at table during an evening meal in which the community was listening to reading as we ate. I was growing increasingly accustomed to and appreciative of the Italian cuisine. It would never have occurred to me to put olive oil in my soup, obviously a wonderful and sensible thing to do. I saw him do it, and he noted my noting it, understanding that I did not know of such a practice. He simply reached over and poured some into my own soup, keeping his same stern face. He taught me a lot by that act and his style. How we eat and how we appreciate what we eat also affects how we will do theology. This too is sapiential theology. I don’t know why, but I read him with deeper understanding and appreciation after that, and I associate that with the straightforward humanity of his gesture.

I returned to Mount Angel in 1983 with an STL in patristics. I came back to Sant’ Anselmo five years later to begin doctoral studies in the Monastic Institute. I was here for one semester each year and continued teaching at Mount Angel in the other semester. With the help of *Innocenzo Gargano* and *Ghislain Lafont*, I turned myself into someone who knew a fair amount about Evagrius Ponticus, and I wrote a doctoral thesis that had the merit of having made an original discovery of a little-read text of Evagrius, putting into relief the importance of that text in a way that had not been theretofore noticed.

My Experience at Sant' Anselmo as a Professor

The success of this thesis led to something I had never aspired to. *Pius Tragan* and *Pius Engelbert* both pushed very hard for me to come to Sant' Anselmo as a professor. My abbot did not want this because I had been trained precisely to return home and teach in our influential and important regional seminary, which is the major work of my monastic community. The compromise was that I continue the arrangement of one semester here and one semester at Mount Angel, the difference being that here at Sant' Anselmo I would enter the body of professors. This was in 1992. Both *Pius Tragan* and *Pius Engelbert* were so helpful to me in those first years. *Pius Tragan* was rector magnificus. *Pius Engelbert* was dean. What impressed me most about both of them was how anxious they were that I have time to study and to write. They were both so busy with administration, but it was clear that they wanted to protect me and my time to study. And, of course, all this was with a view toward teaching.

I felt very honored and affirmed by seeing how pleased my former professors were to have me now as one of them. As I said, I never aspired to this, never imagined I could do it. But when I stepped into the role, I discovered that I was more prepared for it than I realized. What had prepared me to teach here was not simply all the hard study of the previous years. It was also the whole atmosphere and synthesizing force of the theological and monastic style created by these great men whose role I have tried to evoke. In my teaching I wanted to regard and treat my students with the same nurturing style that had been directed toward me. I continued in this work for the next 22 years, until I was elected abbot 2 years ago.

I hope it is clear that by telling this story I am speaking of sapiential theology at Sant' Anselmo. I am not offering a formula or definition of what it is. I am describing it as something that resides in an individual man or woman, something that resides in teachers and something that is uncovered and built up in students. I love the phrase in Mark's gospel that describes Jesus before he answered the question put to him by the rich young man, a question that we can note is about the meaning of existence and what we should do with our lives. It was a student's question to a master. And the evangelist tells us that before answering "Jesus looked at him and loved him." (Mark 10:21) With that phrase I can summarize what these great professors of Sant' Anselmo did for me. They looked at me and loved me. Of course, it goes without saying that their kind of love involved on the practical level their impressive competence in their fields and the tough love that taught me and demanded of me that I reach for the same. During 22 years as professor here at Sant' Anselmo I too have looked at my students and done my best to love them.

I have been describing sapiential theology in my own nearly 40 years at Sant' Anselmo. I think sapiential theology at Sant' Anselmo was stronger in the decades that

preceded my arrival in 1980. As I look back on my own years as a student, which at the time I experienced as incredibly exciting and fulfilling, I see now many years later that the great men whose names I evoked were in fact, in some ways, the ending of an era that was many decades in the making. I suggested at the beginning of this talk that at Sant' Anselmo today, when we still claim sapiential theology as our distinctive feature, we may be living off the reputation of earlier decades. How could we freshen our own practice of it? Or do we even want to? I think we should raise these questions and see where we want to go next.

I think a lot of what I described above demonstrates that sapiential theology is rooted in the teacher-student relationship. Of course, any kind of teaching at all is concerned with a teacher-student relationship. So, our question would have to be is there something distinctive about the Sant' Anselmo style of teacher-student relationship? If so, is that what could be called sapiential, and does it produce a particular type of theological insight and style?

Exploring a More Distant Past

To explore this let me suggest to you other figures from the past, this time not my past but an earlier period still of Sant' Anselmo. After that I want to evoke figures from the very distant past. I propose this exercise— it is only a brief sketch— not because we need now to live now as in the past, but because the past always raises questions about our present situation and can suggest to us fresh insights or things we might otherwise overlook. The past, of course, is where tradition lies; and sapiential theology lies in the tradition of this house. And that tradition itself is deeply rooted in a monastic past. We can hardly hope to keep sapiential theology alive if we are not acquainted with that tradition and if we do not let ourselves be challenged by it. But tradition as a living and fruitful reality is more than trying to recreate and reproduce something that was appropriate to another time. When we encounter the witness of faith of others from the past, we are challenged to a decision. To what extent ought we to continue in this vein and how? And to what extent ought we to do something new and even break with that past.

In the years 1933 to 1937 Jean Leclercq was a student here at Sant' Anselmo, and Anselm Stolz was his professor. We know that in his short life Fr. Anselm had enormous impact and influence, not only on the relatively few students he taught but even more, he had influence through the several essential, concise and programmatic writings he left. Subsequent professors of Sant' Anselmo emulated and further developed the key ideas of Stolz because they had known this innovative and inspiring teacher, either in person or through his writings. I want to read you a passage from Leclercq's memoirs (*Di grazia in grazia*— in the section called "Roman Walks 1933-1937). I think that Leclercq's description is also an image of sapiential theology at Sant' Anselmo in the same vein of my own teachers that I remembered with you.

Ecco, the teacher-student relationship in this very house in the 1930s: “At Sant’ Anselmo there was a teacher well worth hearing: Father Anselm Stolz, a young theologian about thirty years old. He was a trailblazer but was to die, at age forty-two, from an infection contracted during the [second world] war while he was hearing the confessions of badly-wounded people. Providence willed that he should start with the tract on the Church as I began my theological studies. He directly passed over all apologetics and immersed us in the great dogmatic problems that were discussed by St Paul and all the New Testament authors, as well as the Greek and Latin Fathers. For each topic we soon came, according to chronological order and the development of doctrines, to St Thomas, then to Vatican Council I. Fr Stolz made great use of the patristic themes, at once poetic and rich in content. He was anticipating, what in the following generation, Daniélou and others would reintroduce into common theology. We rose beyond the erudition of specialists who were only patrologists, beyond the artificial ‘theses’ of Thomists who were nothing more than scholastics. Teaching of his kind was truly contemplative, and I was not the only one to leave the classroom in a state of prayer. Every Sunday, I would do my *lectio divina* quietly on the notes that I had taken during those lectures.” (p. 32 in English)

Virtually every phrase of this brief description could suggest a program of renewal for us at Sant’ Anselmo today. It is enough for me to underline some: “immersed in the great dogmatic problems...”, “reintroduce into common theology,” “beyond the erudition of specialists,” “a teaching truly contemplative,” “leave the classroom in a state of prayer,” “every Sunday my *lectio divina*...” Would any suchlike phrases be used by our students today of their experience at Sant’ Anselmo? Perhaps some of you think that such expressions ought not to be a measure or description of what we are aiming at today. Perhaps. But if so, we should note the difference and own up to it. And then what instead would the phrase “sapiential theology” be meant to describe?

It would be a story too long for me to tell if I were to recount what Jean Leclercq did with the foundation he received here at Sant’ Anselmo from Anselm Stolz and other professors he recalls in his memoirs. It is well known in any case. I think I suggest enough if I remind you that the notes that led him to produce his classical, authoritative, extremely influential work, *L’amour des lettres e le désir de Dieu*, were classes given here at Sant’ Anselmo to the generation of young monks that he was assigned to teach. A chain from Anselm Stolz to Jean Leclercq to thousands of others! This is sapiential theology at Sant’ Anselmo and from Sant’ Anselmo.

Exploring a Very Distant Past

I know that I am framing the questions and remember things in a way that probably indicates what I myself think and hope for in the future and present of Sant’ Anselmo. I am describing obliquely what I myself was trying to do in my own 22 years

of teaching here. But to continue sketching such a vision let me now evoke an example from the very distant past. Now let us reach all the way back to Origen at the end of the second century and to a student of his who describes the wonder of Origen's teaching. I am referring to Gregory the Wonder Worker's *Address of Thanksgiving to Origen*.

This was a speech that Gregory gave around the year 230 to honor Origen, his beloved teacher, before departing from Caesarea. In his discourse Gregory offers a captivating and suggestive description of what it was like to study under Origen. He describes how Origen set his heart on fire with a love for Jesus. Gregory's is the oldest account that we have in the history of the Church that describes what we call today, rather simply, studying theology. Let me read to you just a sampling of what in fact is a very long discourse.

"6 (73) He [Origen] took us in hand from the first day, the first real day for me, the most precious of all days for me...(74) he contrived by every strategem to bind us close; he employed every kind of argument, attached every line, and exercised all his powers...(79) for he said that no true piety toward the Ruler of the universe was possible to anyone who did not lead a philosophic life. [translated: no knowledge or contact with God without changing the way you live.] (80) As he poured out more arguments like these one after another, and by his arts brought us in the end to a complete standstill like men under a spell, he was supported in his words, I know not how, by some divine power."

Obviously Origen is preparing the ground in his students, a metaphor that Gregory develops at length in what follows. But the preparation begins in attracting the student by the force of both attitudes and arguments and the launching of a challenge; namely, that theology cannot be studied without a way of life to accompany it, called here by both Origen and Gregory "philosophy."

I suggested at the end of my own memoirs of Sant' Anselmo that sapiential theology has much to do with the student-teacher relationship. Already Gregory is describing that here, but there is more. Listen to the following: "(81) And indeed he sank into us the spur of friendship (not easily resisted but sharp and most effective) and of courtesy and good disposition; his kind attitude toward us showed in his very tones as he addressed us and conversed with us. He was not trying to bewilder us with words anyway; his purpose was honest and benevolent and helpful, to save us and make us participants in the good things of the philosophic life, (82) and even more in ...the saving Word, the Teacher of true piety."

This is a striking and suggestive description. He speaks of Origen's friendship, his courtesy, portrayed as irresistible. He is remembered as honest and benevolent and helpful. Most important of all is the idea that the master teacher was trying to help his

students to become “participants” is the very realities they were studying, namely, a way of life (philosophy) and the “saving Logos” himself.

One way of marking out what Origen was trying to do with his students would be to say that Origen focused, first, on his students. They were not so many passive containers sitting in front of him to be filled up with some objectively conceived content to learn. The subjects themselves had to be considered and first converted. But how do we keep such concern from dominating and overwhelming the teacher’s task? For surely there is an objective content to be learned and mastered. I think Gregory’s description of Origen suggests that the master-teacher has to recognize a connection between objective content and the learners’ own lives. Objective content and much learning can bewilder a student. “He was not trying to bewilder us with words,” Gregory says of Origen. What did he do instead? The connection I’m speaking about between objective content and the subjects learning it is what Gregory depicts when he says, “he made us participants in the good things.”

In the end, the subject has to effect in himself the conversion to goodness and truth – the desire for God, to use Leclercq’s phrase. Then a great deal of content can be imparted. Gregory describes Origen as carefully preparing the student for this and then the shift that can take place. He says, “ (98) When he had brought us to a proper frame of mind and prepared us well to accept the words of truth, (99) only then, as into soft, well-tilled soil, ready to push forth what would come from the seeds, he began to plant lavishly.” Careful preparation and then lavish planting. Is this not sapiential theology?

Gregory’s description goes on and on, as was the custom in those days for such a discourse. It is not a bad text for teachers like us to know, for surely it is difficult to deny the lasting impact still today of what Origen achieved. But that is an impact that began first of all with the actual students who encountered him. Let me remind you of where it went in Gregory.

Gregory returned to his native Cappadocia and became the first bishop of Caesarea, giving Christian faith a firm foundation there. Under his influence there grew up the generations of the amazing saintly family into which Basil the Great was born. This was a family of confessors, martyrs, ascetics, bishops, saints and doctors of the Church. However, they were not born saints. When, for example, one of them, the young Basil, came home from the Academy of Athens, swollen with the pride of his secular learning, his sister Macrina rebuked him in light of the ascetic life to which she had been inspired by her grandmother Macrina, who quite consciously and explicitly spoke of the impact of Gregory the Wonderworker on her own faith. Basil himself, under his sister’s influence, converted to the ascetic life and persuaded his dear friend from Athens, another Gregory (later to become bishop of Nazianzus), to join him. Basil and this Gregory compiled a *Philokalia* of Origen’s writings. Together with Basil’s brother, also named Gregory (later to become bishop of Nyssa), these three

Cappadocians exerted lasting influence on the orthodox theology of the Church, East and West.

Well, you know all this, I know. But I hope I am reminding you that we don't know such things just as some sort of recondite and useless collection of old facts. Knowing these great stories of our Church's past and their impact on the present is to know a pattern of teaching and learning that could be called sapiential theology. And Origen and Gregory the Wonderworker and Basil and the other Cappadocians all funnel directly into St. Benedict through St. Basil, who calls him "our holy father," and urges that monks who follow his rule read Basil as well. They did, of course – all through the centuries. And they do still. The opening lines to the Prologue of Basil's *Longer Rules* can remind us of the spirit of all the rest: "God, who loves the human race and who teaches man knowledge ... commands those to whom he has given the gift of teaching to persevere in teaching, while he also exhorts those who are in need of being built up by the divine instructions, saying 'Ask your father and he will declare it to you, your elders and they will tell you.'" Can Sant' Anselmo continue in this tradition today? Can this be our atmosphere still? Students regarding us as elders of whom they can ask their pressing questions? And we, "elders" with responses to give them that will build them up in "divine instructions"?

So, through Basil and his monasticism we come to Benedict and his. The "school of the Lord's service" that his Rule intends to establish has *lectio divina*, combined with a master-disciple relationship, as some of its chief ingredients. Again, you are well aware of all this. But I would like to share with you a scene from the *Dialogues of St. Gregory* that has always been for me a story that guides me. In a sense I have long let it guide me as a monk and theologian. I will paraphrase the scene of St. Benedict's life that St. Gregory tells. The paraphrase will indicate how it moves in me. This is not a story about the teacher-student relationship that I have emphasized as so important in sapiential theology. It is a story to guide my own time of study, my own *lectio divina*. How do we work in solitude to prepare ourselves to be practitioners of sapiential theology?

The scene which Gregory describes begins with St. Benedict seated quietly at the door of his monastery, absorbed in reading. (*Dialogues* II, 31. I am inspired in part in the following by B. STANDAERT, *Les trois colonnes du monde, carnet de route pour le pèlerin du XXI siècle*, Paris: Desclée 1987.) Suddenly, crashing unexpectedly into the peace of the scene, there comes riding up on a horse a rough-mannered and haughty barbarian, shoving before him a poor peasant, who is bound with ropes. The peasant owes the barbarian money and has claimed that his goods are deposited in the safekeeping of Benedict's monastery. Without any introduction or any attempt at graciousness, the barbarian shouts at Benedict, "Get up! Get up! No tricks, just get me this scum's money, which he says you have." (I am paraphrasing loosely, but I think thus to have captured the feel of the text.) What follows is important for our understanding of the

power of the practice of *lectio*. I would call it a quintessential monastic moment. It is, if you will, the monastic contribution to the world, here represented in one of its unhappier aspects by the barbarian. We are told that, in response to the barbarian's rude and abrupt command, St. Benedict calmly raised his eyes from his reading and looked for a moment at the barbarian. Slowly his gaze turned toward the poor peasant, noting how cruelly he was bound. Here too the task of monastic reading is represented: the monk, looking up from the Scripture, fixes his gaze on the suffering of the world. In that moment in which Benedict's eyes fall on the suffering man – let us call it the moment in which the light of Scripture penetrates the darkness of human suffering and injustice – a tremendous wonder is worked. The knots in the ropes which bound the man suddenly unravel, and he stands there completely free. He, of course, was not displeased; and the barbarian was terribly impressed. This latter in fact threw himself at St. Benedict's feet, asking for his prayers. Benedict effortlessly returned to his reading, ordering several of the monks to prepare some refreshment for the barbarian. As he was about to depart, Benedict simply took the occasion to tell him not to treat others so cruelly. So, how could we describe sapiential theology from this story? In the midst of the massive inhumanity we direct toward one another, to stay calmly anchored in the Word of God and to let its power set us free.

Sapiential theology: the book is in my hand, the Word of God in my hand, I look up from it and see terrible things going on in the world, and I see people all around me, in the Church and outside the Church, completely discouraged and dismayed. From deep inside the book I hold I want to be able to offer a word to this troubled world and Church and return my eyes to the book for further nourishment. A quiet word, an attractive word, a word of power, an effective word, a word that changes things. The world and Church need this kind of word, a “monastic” sapiential word. Given more frequently by us and from a greater depth, it would certainly be a fresh version of sapiential theology for our times. It could certainly be a Sant’ Anselmo contribution to theology and to the New Evangelization.