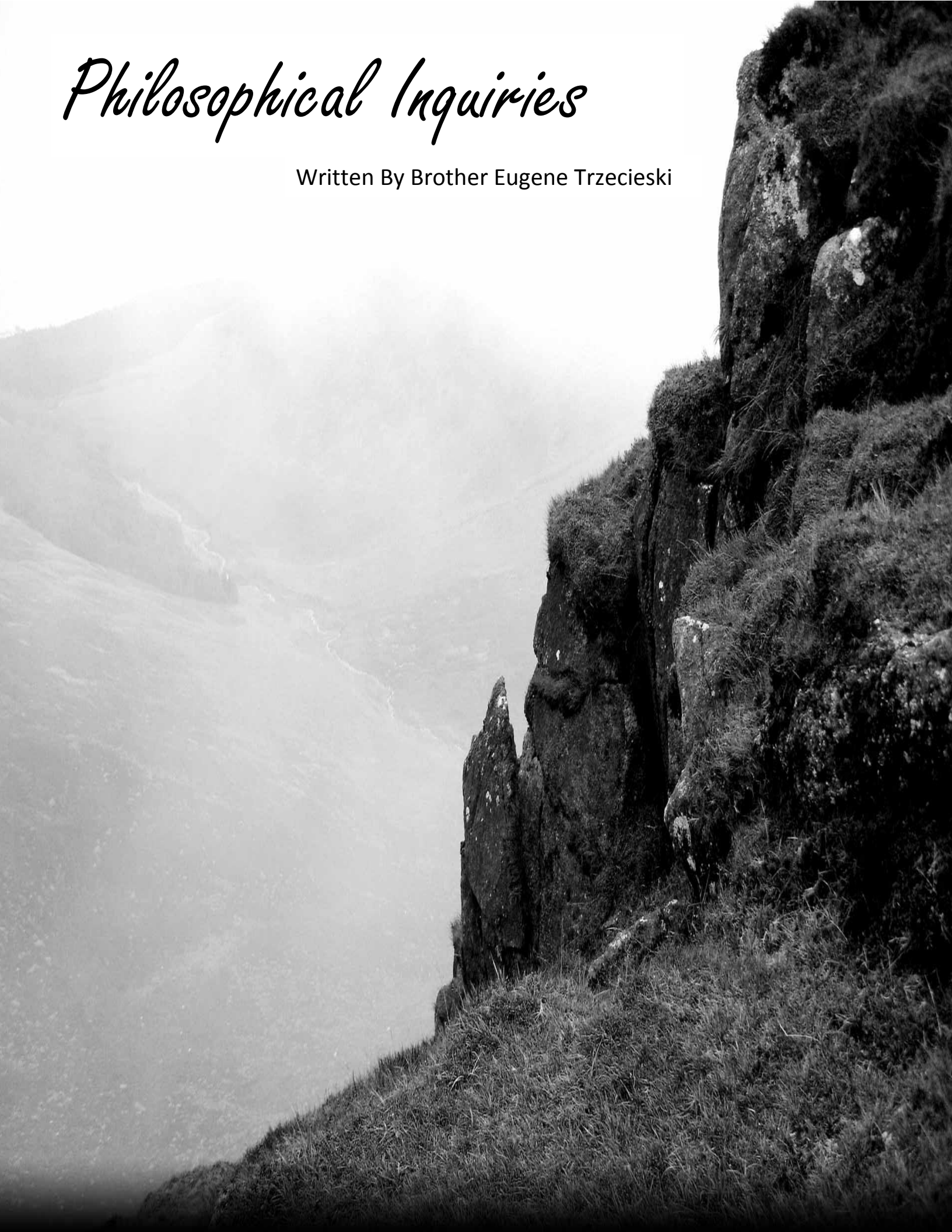


# *Philosophical Inquiries*

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## **Table of Contents**

INTRO .....	3
THE BEING "I" .....	4
THOUGHTS ON BEING.....	6
UNDERSTANDING BEING .....	7
THE QUESTION OF AWARENESS .....	8
CHANGE - BECOMING .....	11
CHANGE AND FREEDOM .....	12
ANXIETY AND FEAR .....	13
ISOLATION AND ALIENATION.....	14
THE CONCEPT OF THE DIVINE .....	16
THE INVISIBLE CONCEPT .....	18
THE CONCEPT OF "NOTHING" .....	19
SOME METAPHYSICAL POINTS.....	20
About Brother Eugene Trzeczieski.....	22

## INTRO

The ideas presented in this pamphlet are designed to inspire the reader to think, to question and to consider profound thoughts that have been perplexing man for centuries.

All the material requires serious and deep concentration. There are no quick and easy answers. The fundamental attitude is an open and receptive mind. Question not to deny but to understand.

The ultimate goal is to search for **truth and beauty**. May these notes help the reader seek this magnificent goal.

- Brother Eugene

## THE BEING "I"

1. To search for the defining of a real being.
2. The beginning of the ability to BE frequently means to persons the harmony between the body, the feelings and the thoughts.
3. This is an **active being** -- active because it is always awake, being because it is independent of all suggestions and relies entirely on the conscious.
4. The real being, which is an immense knowledge going back into the light of time, to those remote appearances which are in the inward being, is hidden from the active externals. It is the inward **hope** of this real being to express itself.
5. The **active being is a pseudo-man**. The real being is the inward consciousness of that being.
6. A person is constantly saying "I" - but this I does not represent what he really is. It is a prey of partial, superficial "I", constantly changing to whatever circumstances are around. The essence of "I", the wholeness of self, rarely manifests itself.
7. Contemporary man has degenerated, has lost contact with his real essence, his consciousness of himself; he "is not".
8. His thoughts, his feelings, his organism have developed in a kind of anarchy, full of contradictions, continually wasted his energies without any connection with his true individuality. He is only an automation.
9. He is a "being-duty".
10. We know ourselves thinking; or in an emotion, or in a movement, but these thoughts, emotions, movements are all transitory, temporary.
11. What is really "I"? That which exists beyond and above all these temporalities, these constant changing uncontrollables?
12. Under these conditions, how can man ever find truth or even attempt looking for it?
13. He tries to remember himself, to see his true nature but cannot because there is the constant change and he is powerless to control or understand it.
14. Know thy self. But how?
15. Are there, then, any values, any beings, that are? Is everything illusory, changing, and so there is no truth? And if that is the case, then am I "I"?
16. Can there be truth or beauty?

17. Is it possible for a being to look beyond the visible, the external, the physical and see another world - a greater world, a world not limited by the clock, by chronological time?

18. Is there, in this world, a possibility of a constant, a concept of unity, of truth, consequently, of beauty?

19. Is there an "I", an intellect that is not facts and figures, but concepts and ideas which has the real understanding of "I" - that is beyond and above reason, that completely transcends reason?

20. Is real knowledge illuminative of perception that unites the object-known with the "I" in a single flash of certitude that admits of no doubt or hesitation and that engenders a luminous peace-unity in the psychic (soul) and thus it becomes an awareness - or faith?

21. This knowledge cannot be reached through merely reasoning. Reasoning by its very nature is limited and functional and constricted to within the elements of time. Rationality proceeds from reasoning. This is activity that is functional. It actually prevents the being from seeing the essence of his being.

22. That is why it is so difficult to understand the concept of the Divine. That which shows you the existence of His Omnipotence is that He veiled you from Himself by what has no existence along side of Him. Reason - The Divine does not think. This shows limitations. The Divine is aware. This is this reality. Reality has no limitations. Reason does. The intellect does. Awareness or faith does not. Hence the insistence by the Divine on faith.

23. When we attribute thinking to the Divine, we use our norms, our conditions of humanity. We cannot conceive of any other way in which reason takes place. And this is the reason we attribute to the Divine. We limit the Divine by our limitations.

24. The infinitude of the Awareness rules out the possibility of a limited, finite mind grasping the Infinite. The Divine awareness moves on the plane of ontological awareness towards the consciousness of man, transcending the reason-intellect and penetrating into the essence of that being - man. Man has faith. That is why faith defies all comprehension or articulated analysis.

25. The powers of man, therefore, are ontological dependent upon the transcendent mind (reason-intellect) for functioning through the body. But the essence of man transcends this function in its totality and becomes aware of that which is as it is in the manner in which it is in the reality of faith. Here there is no limitations and it is timed in accordance with the Divine. That is why man is immortal.

## THOUGHTS ON BEING

1. A person and the world are a unitary, structural whole. The phrase **being in the world** expresses precisely that. Self implies the world and world self. There is neither without other.
2. **Isolation** and **alienation** reflect the state of a person whose relation to the world has become broken. These persons are detached, unrelated, lacking in affect, tending towards depersonalization and covering up their problems by means of intellectualization and technical formulations.
3. When humanistic and Hebrew-Christian values disintegrated along with the cultural phenomena we can clearly see, the inherent implication of a situation emerges: God is dead. They have removed God from themselves and the world.
4. In the modern western world, the concern about being has been repressed. The sense of the **being** is lacking. Modern man is in this condition. We have subordinated existence to function: a man knows himself not as a man or self but as a token seller in a subway, a grocer, a professor, a vice-president, a ball-player.
5. This loss of the sense of being is related to the mass collectivist trends and widespread conformist tendencies in our culture.
6. **Being** is a category which cannot be reduced to introjections of social and ethical norms. To the extent that my sense of existence is authentic, it is precisely **not** what others have told me I should be but what I should be judged to be.
7. Compulsive and rigid moralism arises in given persons precisely as a result of a lack of a sense of being. Rigid moralism is a compensatory mechanism by which the individual persuades himself to take over the external sanctions because he has no fundamental assurance that his own choices have any sanction of their own.
8. The **sense of being** gives a person a basis for self-esteem which is not merely the reflection of others' views about him. For if self-esteem must rest in the long run on social validation, one has not self-esteem but a more sophisticated form of social conformity. The sense of one's own existence is not the product of social forces.

## UNDERSTANDING BEING

1. The full meaning of the term **human being** will be clearer if it is kept in mind that **being** is a participle, a verb form implying that someone is in the process of **being something**.
2. Unfortunately, when used as a general noun in English, the term being connotes a static substance, and when used as a particular noun, such as **a being** it is usually assumed to refer to an entity, such as a soldier to be counted as a unit.
3. **Being** should be understood, when used as a general noun, to mean **potentia**, the source of potentiality. Being is the potentiality by which the acorn becomes the oak or each of us becomes what he truly is.
4. When used in a particular sense, such as a human being, it always has the dynamic connotation of someone in process, the person being something.
5. We can understand another human being only as we see what he is moving toward, what he is becoming, and we can know ourselves only as we **project our potentia in action**.
6. The significant tense for human beings is thus the **future** - that is to say, the critical question is what I am pointing toward, what I will be in the immediate future.

## THE QUESTION OF AWARENESS

1. Awareness is in the human soul. It is not experience.
2. Experience is found through consciousness and will show itself to be an essential part of the integral description of that self-conscious existence which constitutes the human person.
3. The case of conscience is an immersing reflection upon experience.
4. Experience is the whole stream of personal life which each mind bears witness for itself having at least a general awareness of "I". It is the whole ongoing process of human existence as far as it is "living through" by the subject. It comprehends all the elements that originate and are somehow carried on within the process of living. There is a perception of a surrounding world of things and persons. There is a consciousness of our doings and undergoings with the dialogue of our life with those surroundings.
5. There is also an awareness of a mystery in and beyond all this which may take various forms of consciousness but not awareness.
6. Cognitive, emotional and volitional moments of life are part of experience. These form together the present moment of our existence, a moment of a certain pattern.
7. The connection is in time - between the successive stages of experience. There is room for change, dissonances, multiplicity and alternations. All are terminal. All are an integral part of time. There is a movement toward unity of composition - a composition that endeavors to stem from the depth of the person.
8. The process of experience is largely unawareness. Man is constantly in the experience stage - and the notion of consciousness has to be specified. Conscious are those elements of experience which at any moment are actually perceived by the mind. However, the things we are actually conscious of are not all perceived with equal clarity, intensity or degree. The focus varies.
9. Particular trend of experience leading towards a new conviction may originate and go on in the depth of the inner "I" beyond the area of distinct consciousness, Its conclusion may be reached and worked out in the depth of the awareness of the being without the process being noticed by the person.
10. Only a very little part of our thinking is the result of intentional application of this concept. Thinking is in the first place a spontaneously ongoing process of the mind. It is hidden from the spotlight of awareness.
11. Convictions, slowly matured and shaped in the depth of the inner "I" may eventually be lighted in the self-consciousness and still remain unperceived by the intellect. They may suddenly break into the conscious mind under specific situations.



12. There are privileged moments in the course of experience when the person, as in a flash of light, discovers himself a full-grown person, which he was unaware of before, although it was imbedded there for many years.

13. This is not reflection. Awareness is not reflection. Reflection is the aspect of mental activity in experience.

14. Reflection: a datum of whatever kind of interpreted and consequently assimilated or integrated experiences have been personalized.

15. These may be (a) common sense interpretations (b) poetical imaginations (c) scientific designs.

16. Spontaneous thought or methodical elaboration by conceptual analysis and synthesis is the basis for reflection. All reflection does is analyze, clarify, verify, enlarge or develop. It always remains in the realm of the intellectual.

17. Reflection is closely allied with experience. Experiences are happenings which result in a process of contacts with the world of other beings. These experiences gradually mature, penetrate into the mind, are accompanied by specific emotions and volitional appropriations. They add to man's consciousness and subsequently to his awareness.

18. Consciousness is the closest step towards awareness of the being. Consciousness implies by its very nature a certain awareness of the being of its "**living**". There tends to be a certain objectiveness which is not created by the decision of the being. It reaches out to the objectiveness - to the nature of what is.

19. The difficulty is that the subjectivity of the person and the objectivity of the reality are realities that become intellectually realized. The experiential and the objective become one. And this is the crux of the problem.

20. A full sense of the depth of the being is not realized because of this complexity. Limitations of experience and ontological awareness are considered the same. This tends to place limitations on the being "I".

21. Such a sense or experience of origination implies a sense of dependency on a rule which is not grounded in the decision of the free concept of man. Therefore there is a freedom which beings to exist in time and cannot begin to know the fullness of self. It has placed limitations on itself and cannot sense the ontological freedom as an objectivity over which it has no command and consequently denies that it is.

22. That is why to say that something is right simply because I will it, whatever it may be, is to proclaim that absoluteness of self void of objectivity, ontological awareness, and the reality that "that which is - is".

23. If the question, then, is asked, why is the life of man so strikingly characterized by an unhappiness which bears no proportion to his having or lacking the means of enjoying all the pleasures of life - the answer should be obvious.

24. Why the general restlessness? Why the fundamental but often unheeded feeling of despair which is the token of man's greatness? Why the dumb sense of boredom? of rising irritation concealed under the noisy show of artificial laughter?

25. Is it because man is, essentially, alienated from his true self, his inner "I"? He has a sham of an awareness of who he is, why he is, and his relationship to other beings.

26. Is man alienated from his real inner "I" because he is also alienated from other beings, including the Divine? Is he so incurably egotistic that he is dis-united from the principle of unity and therefore terribly alone - and not aware of this concept?

27. Is this why man longs for freedom and can never experience it? Does freedom imply participation in the ultimate summum bonum which has as its unifying force love?

28. The truth of the being "I" - the awareness of the being "I" precisely consists in acquiring the concept of unity of other beings which is the love of that which is.

29. One of the major outcomes of the above is the being's expression of himself through that which is called conscience. It is the primordial element within the great stream that constitutes the life and development of the person. The doings and undergoings of the daily existential dialogue with the world of things and persons, out of which our personality with its proper individual characteristics gradually emerges, the voice of conscience echoes the mysterious source of man's substantial freedom.

**30. Conscience is the inner objective rule of freedom predicated upon the concept of the infinite eternal and identical with His boundless love and in which the finite freedom participates to love.**

31. Conscience has a perception of the supreme Ruler in his rule as an experiential manifestation and counterpart of the ontological participation of finite freedom in an originating freedom which is the love that **Moves All - The Divine.**

32. That is why conscience is considered as an immortal and celestial voice, sure guide of a being, ignorant and limited but intelligent and free; infallible judge of good and evil making man like unto the Divine - without which man is at the same level as beasts.

33. It is the voice of man's true self - his inner I expressing itself upon the existentialistic concepts of man. It is, therefore, universal encompassing all beings and predicated upon the fundamental principle of unity - and movement towards it.

34. The greater the awareness a being has of itself - the greater is the sensitivity of that being to other beings and its primary source of expression via the medium of conscience.

## CHANGE - BECOMING

1. Man is essentially a nature in the process of becoming.
2. The process of becoming, to which man is present, implies change. If this is true, then how can anyone honestly say, "I am"? The quoted statement is static, unchanging, and consequently negates becoming. Is the statement valid?
3. There is one law regarding change in the process of becoming which will be established as a premise in this discussion: The presence of the process of becoming is preserved despite change. Another way of saying this is: the presence **change** is constant throughout change. Change, in the process of becoming, derives from the presence of **change** which does not itself change during change.
4. There is, then, a difference between change (the act) and **change** (the constant upon which the act derives its evolution. When anyone (honestly) says, "I am", he is referring to **change** which does not change. Thus, "I am change". In this context the statement "I am" is valid.
5. What is change? There are two types of change. Existential change is an alteration or matter-energy in space-time. Essential change - not to be confused with a change in essence, which is contradictory - is change produced, derived, or accepted by an essence.
6. While existential change is a cosmic manifestation of essential change, essential change is the ontological development of change. The reality (presence) of essential change confirms the dependence of **change (the being I) upon a "non-I" for the being's development**. The being I is thus said to be **incomplete in itself** even though it is constantly the being I.
7. Freedom intrinsically implies incompleteness and, therefore, man's free nature is involved in an open process of development.
8. **Change** is fulfilled through (Essential change will be implied throughout the discussion). Unfulfilled in itself, change relies upon change, which is derived, produced, or accepted by, change, in order for change to develop or be fulfilled.
9. Due to this condition of change, man (essentially, **change**), is said to be incomplete, meaning that change can produce, derive or accept change without exhausting the possibility for greater change. Thus, no matter how much change **change** is exposed to change. **Change** is free to develop (produce, derive, accept) change; **change** (man) thus possesses that freedom. Development is an "open process" because change is always "open" to the development of change or maturity.

## CHANGE AND FREEDOM

1. Man can never be finished or completed.
2. **Change** (again the essence of man) is "open" to change. Again, this is not to be confused with a change of the essence of **change**, which is contradictory to the definition of essence. If it be assumed that **change** is **always** "open" to change, then it cannot be supported that change can be finished (closed to further change and therefore lose freedom).
3. By the very fact of recognizing that he is free, we have defined him as not yet developed, not yet complete.
4. Had we defined man as not free, he would not be a becoming entity; rather, he would be either a non-essential existence (an animal) or the Divine. The Divine is complete and thus not free (because change and change are one in him). As for animals, which have no essence, becoming and unity have no essence.
5. Man, as a becoming entity, relates to Unity through change, which brings change close to **change** - change total identification (Unity or the Divine). Without a purpose to the change development of change, **change** would not develop essential change, which intrinsically relates to an intrinsic purpose in **change** - to become (approach change) change total identification.
6. That is why freedom is so strongly linked to the concept of the understanding of eternity (Divine) and its understanding of eternity (Divine) and its understanding is so vital to man's relationships to other realities.
7. Eternity which is the presence of the present (**change**) to the totality of the present change - **change** total identification, relates time or becoming which is man (**change**) to both the Divine (eternity) and other realities.
8. Freedom and change are two names for the same thing. Due to the reality that change is contingent on the **change** - change total identification to which change relates to support its reality (purpose or raison d'etre) without which change would have no valid reality, freedom is contingent on the Divine. Without the Divine, freedom makes no sense except as a synonym for liberty.
9. Freedom and love (relationship) means essentially the same thing. Thus, love is change. Love, which is relationship to either another change (non-I) or **change** - change (the Divine) itself, is contingent on change-change (the Divine). Love is freedom; freedom is change, change is real because **change**-change is. Thus, love is contingent on the Divine. Any relationship (change) which is becoming, in essence, relates to Unity. Without a first ontological principle, a second makes no sense. The latter exists only in relationship to the former.

## **ANXIETY AND FEAR**

1. The understanding of anxiety as ontological illuminates the difference between anxiety and fear. The distinction is not one of degree nor of the intensity of the experience.
2. The anxiety a person feels when someone he respects passes him on the street without speaking is not as intense as the fear he experiences when the dentist takes the drill to attack sensitive teeth.
3. As soon as he steps out of the dentist chair the feeling of fear, though quantitatively is greater, is gone. The anxiety about his friend not greeting him strikes at the central core of his self esteem and his sense of value as a self.
4. Anxiety overwhelms the person's discovery of being, blots out the sense of time, dulls the memory of the past, erases the future, which is perhaps the most compelling proof of the fact that it attacks the center of one's being.
5. Anxiety is hard to bear - anxiety is ontological. Fear is not. Fear can be studied as an affect among other affects, a reaction among other reactions.
6. Anxiety can be understood only as a threat to being itself.
7. Anxiety always involves inner conflict. It is a conflict between what is called being and nonbeing.
8. Anxiety occurs at the point where some emerging potentiality or possibility faces the individual, some possibility of fulfilling his existence, but this very possibility involves the destroying of present security, which thereupon gives rise to the tendency to deny the new potentiality.

## ISOLATION AND ALIENATION

1. Isolated, lonely and alienated people are more and more found in our society. That trend has been increasing as a whole in our society for the past several decades.
2. People have only a **technical** communication with their world. People have only a technical, an outer-directed relationship with others. Everything is **technical, external**.
3. Dehumanization arising out of the tendency in modern capitalism to value everything in external, object-oriented terms of money. Man is a stranger in his world, a stranger to other people whom he seeks or pretends to love. He moves about in a state of homelessness, vagueness and haze as though he had no direct sense of connecting him with his world. He is in a foreign country where he does not know the language, and has no hope of learning it but is always doomed to wander in quiet despair, incommunicado, homeless and a stranger.
4. The problem is how **we understand the other person's world**. It cannot be understood as an external collection of object which we view from the outside, nor by sentimental identification. It does no good for we fail to preserve the reality of our own existence and that of the other person. We fail to see the real being (soul) of ourselves and the other person. We fail to see the real being (soul) of ourselves and the other person.
5. In the Middle Ages, the being or soul was considered to be really related to the world. Men experienced the world about them as directly real and the body as immediate and real. Since Descartes, the soul and body have had nothing to do with each other. Nature belongs exclusively to the realm of **res extensa**, to be understood mathematically.
6. Man is trying to rediscover the interrelated unity between body and soul; his world and the outer world as meaningfully together. Man is not **in his world** as some kind of spatial relationship. To speak of man is **in** his home or **in** his office implies something more than just spatial relationship.
7. A person whose relation to the world has become broken lives in isolation and alienation. Such people are detached, unrelated, lacking in affect, tending towards depersonalization, and covering up their problems by means of intellectualization and technical formulations.
8. The **faith** that is needed - that there is a common world of beings and the res extensa - is essential to understanding the full self.
9. When the humanistic and Hebrew-Christian values disintegrated along with the cultural phenomena, the inherent implications of his situation emerged.
10. The odd belief prevails in our civilization that a thing or experience is not real if we cannot make it mathematical or technical, and somehow it must be real if we reduce it to numbers or a machine.

11. But this means making it an abstraction for both mathematics and technical items are not living and as a consequence are not real in the sense of living.

12. Man has, therefore, alienated himself from himself and as a consequence has become lonely.

## THE CONCEPT OF THE DIVINE

1. God - "that than which no greater can be conceived" - I am who AM. There never was a time when the Divine was not and will never be a time when he is not. The Divine is the unlimited state of being.
2. Because the Divine is pure being, there are no limits to its capacity to be or act. It is the plenitude - a completeness. There is no lack. There is total unity. The Divine cannot be added to (increased) or subtracted (diminished).
3. The essence of sacrifice is unity. Love is the uniting force among beings, and sacrifice is the essential expression of that unity (hierophany). One can define love without sacrifice but not sacrifice without love. Sacrifice is essentially an act of unity among persons.
4. The essence of love - a complete unity with the one loved.
5. Since the Divine is love, it is united to all creatures or beings by His love. The love of the Divine's creatures for Him increases the creatures but does not increase the Divine. The Divine's love for us is complete and constant.
6. Nothing beings can do will increase or decrease the love of the Divine for us.
7. The lack of love for the Divine diminishes the beings for it impedes their full unity with him. The free love of beings for the Divine enriches the beings. Failure on their part merely diminishes the beings.
8. Unity in love does not imply strict identity. Individuals or beings are clearly and obviously distinct beings although they are united by love.
9. The being's love for the Divine increases the possible unity between the being and the Divine. As the being's love for the Divine increases, the unity between the two is increased but only on the part of the being, not the Divine.
10. The nature of the Divine can never be known fully precisely because it is unlimited.
11. Man's understanding of reality is incomplete. The reality is always only partially known. And thus man's understanding of the Divine is only partially known.
12. The Divine exists in reality and not in the mind alone. Man tends to think and consider the divine in the mind **only**.
13. Any being which exists in the understanding alone is not that than which no greater can be conceived for a being which exists both in the understanding and in reality would be greater than one which existed in the understanding alone.



14. Anything can be thought of as not existing (as being contingent) if we can think of all things as not existing, we can imagine a time when no thing existed.

15. Since nothing can come from nothing, if there was a time when no thing existed, there would be no thing now existing. However things do not exist. Therefore, there could never have been a time when no things existed.

16. Therefore, there must **have been some thing which always existed - and that thing is the Divine.**

17. There is a tremendous difference between what we know and what we believe. What we believe has no rational justification.

18. Man has no experience of the Divine at all, no matter how limited. Then why does man believe that the Divine exists?

19. Does existence predicate itself upon knowledge itself? Or can things exist without knowledge? Is experiential data the only valid proof for reality? Or is it possible that man can accept reality despite the lack of knowledge or experiential data?

20. Does man tend for the unknown, the perfect, the limitless, the eternal even though he cannot explain it? Does the subjective seek the objective in the timelessness of his being? If so, then man can accept the Divine. If not, there is no reason for anything.

## THE INVISIBLE CONCEPT

1. Beauty stops motion.
2. Invisibility perplexes us. We consider as a major governing principle that **whatever exists, exists in some quantity and therefore can be measured.**
3. There is a passion to cage the invisible by visible methods. This is promoted by our strong sense of the power of science. Science has long since given up the search for the soul in various body parts and systems.
4. When the searchers of science failed to find the soul in the places where they were looking, they gave up on the idea of a soul.
5. Even in our modern day thinking, we consider the soul in two forms: the animus and the anima - male and female.
6. What is the relation between the visible and the invisible world? Is there an invisible world? Our religious beliefs separate heaven and earth, this life and the afterlife. We cut apart mind and matter. We create a chasm. How to bridge the chasm. What means are there for transporting the unseen into the seen? Or the seen into the unseen?
7. So enchanted are we by this mystery that we transpose the mystery into systems and we mistake the systems for the mystery. We fail to see that the systems are only indications pointing towards the mystery.
8. Beauty has been defined by the Platonists as invisible presence in visible form and the divine enhancement of earthly things. It offers no structure and no permanence.
9. We cannot search for the invisible by familiar facts. The invisible shows no facts.
10. We live among a throng of invisibles: family values, personal happiness, hope, friendship, grace, modesty, faith, trust, truth, love.
11. We are also very concerned about time. Have you ever seen time? Myths? they never happened but always are. We want the invisible to be visible.
12. We believe that reason will bring the invisible to the realm of the visible. Reason expands slowly - step by step. It is encased in objects and details. That is why it cannot grasp a myth, a metaphysical truth. When did this occur? What is the origin? How did it develop? Don't they result from historical events?
13. It is in this manner that we try to explain God, the soul, that which is beyond the visible.

## THE CONCEPT OF "NOTHING"

1. Does **nothing** exist?
2. What is nothing? It is usually defined as the absence or negation of that which is - any existence **is**.
3. If **is** does exist, then nothing does not.
4. Further, if nothing is the total absence of existence then it actually exists. Nothing exists and therefore it is.
5. Thus, nothing negates or rather confirms that something does exist. By nothing is not meant the absence of that which is physical. In the realm of the physical, nothing in terms of matter or energy may not be present at all - therefore there is nothing.
6. In the realm of the metaphysical, laws of the physical nature do not apply. If a concept exists, then nothing does not. Further, if nothing is a concept, then it exists.
7. It is possible for nothing to exist on a subjective level but not on a universal level. Subjectively, it is possible for a specific condition to be of such a nature that there is nothing.
8. The idea of the Divine automatically rejects the possibility of nothing to be. Nihilism, therefore, seems totally illogical.

## **SOME METAPHYSICAL POINTS**

1. All men by nature desire to have knowledge. Experience is knowledge of individuals whereas art is knowledge of universals, and all activities and processes have to do with individuals.
2. Nonetheless, we do regard knowledge and understanding as belonging more to art than to experience; and we regard those possess an art as wiser than those who just have experience, on the grounds that in every case wisdom follows on knowledge. We have this attitude because those who possess art know causes, whereas the others do not. Men who have experience know that a thing is so, but not why it is so; those who know why a thing is so also know its cause.
3. Everyone regards what he calls wisdom as being concerned with first causes and principles. Wisdom is a science that is concerned with certain principles and causes. A science that studies causes is more informative than any other, since the people who really give us information about anything are those who tell us its causes.
4. It is of ultimate causes that we must obtain knowledge, since it is when we think that we have grasped its first cause that we say that we know a thing.
5. Causes are talked of in four different ways:
  - a) being and essence of a thing
  - b) thing's matter and substratum
  - c) source of its movement
  - d) purpose of a thing and its good
6. It is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same instant and time. Further, it is altogether impossible for there to be proofs of everything; if there were, one would go on to infinity, so that even so one would end up without a proof. The phrase "to be" or "not to be" means something definite, so that not everything can be both in a given state and not in a given state.
7. It is not possible to think without thinking of some single things.
8. What is losing anything still retains something of what is being lost and when a thing is coming into being something of it must already be there. If something perishes, there will still be something left which "is" and if something is coming into being there must be something from which it comes and by which it is generated.
9. The most indisputable of all beliefs is that it is not possible for contradictions to be true at the same time. Also, it is not possible for there to be any intermediate between contradictory assertions; any one thing must either be asserted or denied of any other.
10. A vital law to remember is the **Law of Intended Consequence**. This is a fundamental principle in both the physical and metaphysical world.

11. Philosophy is the effort of our human mind to know itself and take stock of the universe and our place in it.

12. There is something humanly deeper than philosophy - and that is religion. Philosophies of our modern epoch -of the so-called 'death of god' - have had continuously to traffic with the religious issue, if sometimes mainly by way of separating themselves from all ties with religion. The religious question is ultimately at the center of all philosophy, even if it be by way of rejection. That some contemporary philosophers have reached the point where they never enter into the question, where the philosopher never seems even to be troubled by the word "god" is itself a profound sign of the state of our culture. It took an immense amount of philosophical thinking and unthinking to prepare the human psyche for this matter-of-fact state of godlessness. Perhaps it is a harbinger of the future at which the human species – all of us - will someday arrive. But perhaps not; and certainly not yet.

13. Scientific materialism - the pervasive current that flows around all modern philosophizing. That materialism need not be explicitly professed as a creed; it becomes the de facto philosophy of an era reaping great triumphs in the physical sciences and in technology and pushing more and more of its energies into those fields. The achievements in the physical sciences and technology become the invisible standard - and sometimes not altogether invisible - by which to measure thinking in all domains.

14. Can mind be reduced to matter? This has been a common and terse way of putting the question of materialism. The materialist, then, would be someone who answers this question in the affirmative: the ultimate constituents of the world are bits of matter in motion, and what we call mind is really the outcome of such forces. This may seem clear, but it is largely a piece of sweeping rhetoric. Indeed, it is doubtful whether the question itself, put in this common form, can be given any precise or determinable meaning: It becomes a "metaphysical" question in the bad sense of this word, about which some contemporary philosophers have so copiously instructed us.

15. Why is there anything at all, rather than nothing? We may speak of the need of faith here, but simply as intellectual beings we are brought to confront this question. It gapes before us. If our civilization were to continue to progress in ways unimaginable to us now, humankind would still face this question, and on the same terms as we confront it today. Science can never answer this question that we are supremely concerned with as human beings. Science can never take the place of religion, perform its functions or answer its questions.

16. Eternal silence of infinite spaces frightens us. The cosmos before our intellect or imagination poses questions which are totally incomprehensible.

## About Brother Eugene Trzecieski



Eighty-two year old Marist Brother and teacher, Br. Eugene Trzecieski, has worked at Christopher Columbus High School for the last 43 years. Br. Eugene became a Marist Brother at age 17, as soon as he graduated from high school. He started his teaching career in 1950 at New York's St. Ann's Academy and later taught at Archbishop Molloy High School, NY, and worked at the Marist Brothers Training House in Esopus, NY, as the Director of Novices. Over the years he has served Columbus as Academic Dean, Treasurer, Teacher of Latin, Philosophy, Humanities, and English. He was also a key leader in Columbus extra-curricular activities, moderating the National Honor Society for 25 years, creating the school's Student Activities Committee, and founding the Columbus Arts Society for Adults and the Erasmus Culture Club for students. For years he also was in charge of the gardening and landscaping of the school's campus, a job he loved

because of his great passion for nature.

Br. Eugene taught at Columbus from 1968 until 2010. Thousands of alumni from the last five decades remember him most for his famous 12th grade "Philosophy of Being" class, which he taught for 43 years straight. In fact, Br. Eugene holds the title of the teacher who taught at Columbus for the most number of years. Many alumni will also remember that Br. Eugene enlivened the campus with his beloved pet, Brandy, a St. Bernard that won the hearts of all the students and became the school's mascot.

Although he no longer teaches, Br. Eugene is still very actively engaged at Columbus, handling all of the school's paper copying and keeping the school archives, a collection that he started in 1968 and that today contains hundreds of bound books and files which he neatly organizes. It was Br. Eugene who came up with the idea to publish the school's first history book to commemorate the school's 50th Anniversary in 2008. He wrote the book entitled "50 Years Exploring Christopher Columbus High School" with co-author and fellow teacher, Mr. John Lynskey.

Around Columbus Br. Eugene is respected and loved by faculty, alumni, and students. He is known as a wise and gentle man who is demanding, kind, and inspiring. He always referred to his students as gentlemen, and never found the need to send a student to detention. Early in his career he came up with a quote that he began teaching to his students; "A mind made noble, leads a noble life." It has been his motto ever since.