A Triadic Model of How to Become Like the Saints

By Grace Hibshman

Abstract: Traditional forms of Christianity often portray the saints as examples of what we should try to become. However, it is not clear how we should engage with the examples of saints whose spirituality is bound up with practices that are inappropriate for most people. If we copy a saint's exact behavior, then we will likely end up imitating traits that are inappropriate for us. Alternatively, if we don't try to replicate any particular features of a saint, then it's hard to explain what purpose the saint's particular example is serving. To solve this puzzle, I sketch a triadic model of how engaging with the lives of the saints can help us become like them. On this model, a penitent becomes like a saint in an indirect way by engaging in a certain kind of three-way relationship with God and the saint. This model preserves the relevance of a saint's particular way of being a saint to the process of becoming like the saint, but it does so without requiring one to directly imitate the saint's specific features.

Introduction

The last four months of her life, medieval mystic St. Catherine of Siena neither ate nor drank anything except the Body and Blood of her Lord Jesus Christ. She died at the age of 33 after a life of intense asceticism. She often slept for only half an hour every other day and abstained from all food except water and the occasional raw vegetable. As a child, she was known to lead her playmates in flagellating themselves as they said the rosary together (Undset 1954).

The Church often portrays the saints as examples of what we should try to become. However, it is not clear how we should engage with the examples of saints like Catherine, whose spirituality is bound up with practices that are inappropriate for most people. If what it looks like for us to be holy is different from what it looks like for her, then what role can her example play in the cultivation of our sanctity?

Virtue ethicists have long tried to understand how moral exemplars can help us acquire virtue. Unfortunately, their models of moral emulation are not especially suited to modeling how the lives of saints help us become like the saints, or at least, so I argue, is true of the models of Aristotle, Linda Zagzebski, and Julia Annas. The core difficulty is that it is not clear what role an exemplar's particular features play in the process of emulation. If we try to copy an exemplar's exact behaviors, motives, reasons, or whatnot (e.g., Catherine's fasting), then we will likely end up trying to have traits that are inappropriate in our own context. On the other hand, if we don't try to replicate any particular features of the exemplar, then it's not clear how the exemplar is helping us acquire virtue.

My goal in this paper is to offer a model of how the lives of the saints can help us become holy that avoids this difficulty. Whereas in models of moral emulation, the aspiring practitioner of virtue becomes like the moral exemplar by directly imitating some feature of the exemplar, on my model a penitent becomes like a saint in an indirect way by engaging in a certain kind of three-way relationship with God and the saint. The saint, including their unique way of being holy, has an

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active role in this special, three-way relationship. However, engaging in this kind of relationship doesn't require the penitent to try to directly imitate any particular feature of the saint. So, the triadic model preserves the relevance of the saint's particular way of being holy to the process of becoming like the saint, but it does so without requiring the fraught activity of directly imitating the saint's specific features.

But in addition to its theoretical merits, my model explains actual practices of venerating the saints. In fact, I argue that something like my model appears to underlie hymnography surrounding the saints in the Eastern Christian liturgical tradition. Tracing this feature of the tradition serves the double purpose of illustrating how one might go about putting my triadic model into practice as well as some of the mechanisms by which the model works. I conclude with applications of the model to non-Christian and non-theistic settings.

Models of Moral Emulation

Aristotle famously supposed that we acquire virtue through habituation (*Nicomachean Ethics*, bk II). On his view, it is by first doing what the virtuous person would do that we learn to not only do *what* the virtuous person would do but also do it in the *way* that virtuous person would do it, i.e., at the right times, to the right extent, with reference to the right objects, toward the right people, with the right motive, etc. Even if we start out doing virtuous actions for less than virtuous reasons, or in less than virtuous ways, Aristotle thought that it is through doing virtuous actions that we learn to do them virtuously and so acquire virtue. For example, even if we start out abstaining from excessive drink simply to impress, Aristotle would contend that it is by abstaining in this less than temperate way that we learn to abstain as the temperate person would, i.e., for the right reasons, while taking proper pleasure in the act of abstinence itself, out of a stable disposition to abstain in relevantly similar contexts, etc. (*Nichomachean Ethics,* 2.3.1, 2.4.3–4). Analogous pictures hold for courage, justice, generosity, and the rest of the virtues.

If we tried to use Aristotle's model to emulate St. Catherine, then we would try to learn to be holy like her by doing the holy things that she did. But what are those things? Assuming, as hagiographies of her life suggest, that her fasting was a holy thing for her to do, "doing the holy things she did" could mean starving ourselves as she did; or, operating on a lower-level granularity, it could mean engaging in any form of bodily penance to which we feel called; or, operating on an even lower level of granularity, it could mean any form of self-denial, or some combination. Construing her example on a lower level of granularity makes imitating her example seem less problematic, but it also makes it harder to understand what role her example plays in the cultivation of our sanctity. If imitating her abstinence amounts to something as abstract as any form of self-denial, then it is not clear what her example teaches us about holiness that, say, a biblical command to be self-sacrificing does not.

This problem is at least partly addressed by the neo-Aristotelian models of emulation developed by Linda Zagzebski (2017, ch. 5) and Julia Annas (2011, ch. 3), both of which augment Aristotle's picture of how we transition from merely doing what the virtuous person would do to doing it in the way that a virtuous person would. The central mechanism of Zagzebski's model is the practice of imaginatively taking up the perspective of moral exemplars. It is intuitive to Zagzebski that imagining ourselves having a certain feeling can cause us to actually experience the feeling,

especially if we want to. One example she offers is that of a woman who falls in love with a man by wistfully imagining what it would be like to fall in love with him (C:\Users\user\Downloads\82017, 136). Zagzebski infers that imagining what it would be like to have the motives of moral exemplars can move us to actually have their motives, especially if our imagining is conjoined with admiration for them and a desire to be like them. With time, we can make having these motives a habit, which, once acquired, disposes us to perform the same kinds of actions as moral exemplars. Moral exemplars facilitate this process by giving us a window into what it would be like to have virtuous motives, thus inspiring us to want to have them.

The central mechanism of Annas' model is the transmission of practical reasons from the moral exemplar to the aspiring practitioner of virtue. Following Aristotle, Annas compares the acquisition of virtue to the acquisition of a skill, like pipe-laying, for example (2011, 19). She observes that in order to teach an apprentice, the expert needs to not only show the apprentice *how* he lays pipes but also explain *why* he lays them the way he does, what is essential to the arrangement and what is optional, what goal is being accomplished by a particular arrangement, etc. The apprentice acquires the skill of pipe-laying by internalizing these reasons so that he can apply them to pipe-laying problems he has never seen before. If the apprentice can only reproduce by rote the exact same arrangements that his mentor has already shown him, then he hasn't yet learned how to lay pipes. Annas supposes that we emulate moral exemplars through a similar process. In order to learn virtue, we need to not only observe *how* moral exemplars act but also understand *why* they act that way. We have acquired virtue when we have internalized their practical reasons so that we can apply their kind of reasoning to new situations. If we can only parrot back exact imitations of moral exemplars, we have not acquired virtue.

Both Zagzebski's motives-first model and Annas' reasons-first model at least partly solve the problem of needing to know how granularly to imitate the actions of moral exemplars. Instead of specifying how closely to follow the behavior of exemplars, their accounts specify how to acquire exemplary motives or practical reasons, both of which, once acquired, dispose their bearers to consequently perform exemplary actions. Deciding exactly which actions to perform is left as an exercise for the aspiring practitioner of virtue once they have acquired the right motives or reasons.

Nonetheless, if we tried to use their models to emulate the holiness of St. Catherine of Siena, for example, we would run into a number of difficulties. First, it's not clear *which* of her motives we should try to cultivate. She was holy, but not necessarily all of her purported motives were holy. Even if they were, just because they were part of what it looked like for *her* to be holy doesn't necessarily imply that they are part of what it looks like for *us* to be holy. Many saints, including Catherine, had special vocations that required them to make choices that would be inappropriate or harmful for most people to make. There is also the complication that the "holy" parts of a saint's life, like Catherine's zeal for fasting, are not easily separable from the "merely" incidental ones (e.g., Catherine's personality, her family life, the culture of 14th century Catholicism in Siena, etc.). After all, grace perfects nature. Some have even argued that the characteristic of passionate asceticism of many female mystics from Catherine's time, while perhaps still part of their sanctity, may have been

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a form of mental illness, such as anorexia.[1] But even if we restrict ourselves to motives that would be appropriate for us to have if we could manage to acquire them, it's still not clear that we should try to emulate them, at least not on a very high level of granularity. Trying to imitate the motives of such extraordinary saints as Catherine could easily lead to despair, bitterness, or self-righteousness. We might have more success if we started out by emulating those whose holiness is within a more realistic striking range for us.[2]

We could avoid these difficulties if we construed St. Catherine's motives from a low level of granularity, as a form of loving God or some other sufficiently abstract generality. However, that would lead us back to our old problem of needing to know at what level of granularity to emulate the saints. We've moved the goalpost from actions to motives. Construing the saints' motives on a low level of granularity makes imitating them seem unproblematic, but if our motives are only supposed to vaguely resemble theirs and resemble them by having qualities that we already know that we should have, like being less self-absorbed, then it is hard to understand what role their particular example plays in the development of our sanctity. We could try to follow Zagzebski's model by imaginatively taking up their perspective on a very low level of granularity, but in doing so, we would be taking up a very abstract version of their perspective, one that is largely formed by our preconceived notions of what it looks like to love God or whatnot. A similar argument can be made about the practical reasoning of saints.

A Triadic Model of How to Become Like the Saints

Aristotle's, Zagzebski's, and Annas' models of emulation are all dyadic in the sense that they can be described in terms of just two parties, the understudy and the exemplar. On their models, the understudy finds an exemplar that they would like to resemble, identifies features of the exemplar to imitate, and engages in a process to acquire those features themselves. Alternatively, we can conceive of the process whereby we come to resemble the saints as a triadic process, one that cannot be described without reference to at least three parties: the penitent, the saint, and God. Instead of conceiving of the saint's holiness as an attribute they possess, we can construe it as a two-way relationship between the saint and God. On this model, a penitent tries to acquire a similar two-way relationship with God as the saint's relationship with God by engaging in a certain kind of three-way relationship with God and the saint.

This three-way relationship functions in a variety of ways. Christ is mediated to the penitent through the saint's unique personhood. Observing the way that God has worked through the saint, the penitent asks God to work in their life just as he has worked in the life of the saint: that they would be united to God, that the Spirit would live in them and they in Christ, etc. Adding another layer of relationality, the penitent can do this through the saint by asking the saint to intercede with God and make this petition on their behalf. The saint can then ask God on behalf of the penitent that he would satisfy the penitent's desire and work in them as he worked in the saint, effecting in the penitent the same life in him that the saint already enjoys. Having received grace from God (perhaps through the

[1] See Bell (1985) and Bynum (1991, Chapter 4).
[2] For empirical support of similar claims, see Hyemin et al. (2017).

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saint's intercession), the penitent can more fully participate with the saint in joint love and worship of God. Furthermore, the penitent can honor and love the saint for the love of God, drawing closer to the saint as they draw closer to God, and drawing closer to God as they draw closer to the saint. Through this process taken as a whole, the saint is enfolded into the penitent's relationship with God, the penitent is enfolded into God's relationship with the saint, and God is enfolded into the saint's relationship with the penitent. Christ is mediated in and through all parts of the process, and all parts of the process are mediated in and through Christ.

As we will see in the next section, liturgical tradition offers us glimpses into the mechanisms by which this process works. Nonetheless, my triadic model cannot definitively spell out all of the mechanisms by which God transforms people when they enter into relationship with him and his saints, in part because these are parts of the Christian faith typically regarded as mysteries. So, to some extent, these must be taken on faith. Like standard models of moral emulation, the triadic model thus leaves unexplained some details of how we come to resemble those whom we aspire to resemble. Unlike standard models of moral emulation, however, these details are not ones that we must know in order to employ the model, and the triadic model has an explanation as to how these details are sorted out. Whereas those employing standard models of moral emulation must presumably know *which* motives, reasons, or behaviors to imitate, penitents employing the triadic model do not need to know how God is going to go about transforming them when they enter into relationship with him and his saints. That part of the model is outsourced to God's discretion. Of course, penitents need to know something about how to enter into relationship with God in order to employ the model; however, there are whole liturgical traditions to guide penitents through this part of the process. Moreover, even imperfect attempts to enter into relationship with God give God room to respond and begin his transformative work. Unlike imitating virtuous reasons, motives, or behaviors, entering into relationship with God is the sort of thing that one accomplishes to some extent just in virtue of trying.

The successful living out of the triadic model will culminate in the penitent's enjoying union with God. The penitent will thereby in fact come to resemble the saints in their union with God. Unlike models of moral emulation, however, on my triadic model the penitent does not do so by directly imitating specific features of the saint they are trying to become like. In this way, the triadic model resembles what it looks like to apply one of the dyadic models at a low level of granularity, i.e., wherein the understudy tries to imitate the exemplar only in a very general way, by loving God, for example. Consequently, the triadic model inherits immunity to the risks that come with trying to directly imitate an exemplar on too close a level of granularity. However, unlike high-level applications of the dyadic models, in the triadic model, the particularity of the saint's unique way of being holy retains a clear role in the cultivation of the penitent's sanctity. Through the communion of the saints, the penitent enters into a direct, living relationship with the saint. In addition, the saint has a direct and living relationship with God, the particularities of which impact how God receives and chooses to act on the saint's intercession on the penitent's behalf. Depending on the saint's role in salvation history, the particularities of the saint's relationship with God might even shape how God chooses to relate to his people as a whole, including the penitent, or, relatedly, how the penitent is able to relate to God. The details of how God has worked in the life of the saint can give the penitent knowledge of God's character. In addition, the saint may mediate facets of God's splendor that God has made, especially manifest in the saint's unique hypostasis. Knowledge of the saint's personhood

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and relationship with God can in turn move the penitent to respond to God's initiative in their life, which is a key part of how, on the triadic model, the penitent comes to resemble the saint. In these ways, the triadic model preserves the relevance of the saint's particular way of being a saint to the process of becoming like the saint, but it does so without requiring the penitent to directly imitate the saint's specific features.

As I have been describing throughout, the triadic model is in some ways similar to the models of moral emulation in the virtue ethics literature and in other ways dissimilar to them. Whether the similarities are great enough to make my model count as a model of "emulation" in a technical sense, I leave as a question of semantics. What's important for my purposes is that I have found a model of how engaging with a saint's particular way of being holy can help us become more like the saint, and this model avoids the problem I identify in the models of moral emulation in the literature.

Support for the Triadic Model within the Liturgical Tradition of Eastern Christianity

But while I have outlined some theoretical merits of the triadic model, it remains to be seen whether my model fits comfortably with actual practices of venerating the saints. In this section, I give evidence that the Eastern Christian liturgical tradition seems to assume something like my triadic model. The hymnography of this tradition does not say what one would expect it to if a purely dyadic model were operative. For example, prayers to the saint do not say, "O Saint So-and-so, you are such-and-such a way. I want to be that way too." Instead, prayers to and about the saints tend to follow a two-part, *anamnesis-epiclesis* structure. In the first part, they describe something about the saint's life. Then, in the second part, they respond to the example of the saint's life by turning to God in a way that is related to the saint, or alternatively, by asking the saint to do so on our behalf. These prayers thereby guide worshipers into a triadic relationship with God and his saints, giving us glimpses along the way into how this three-way relationship can reshape our own two-way relationships with God.

Having its origin in Eucharistic prayers, an *anamnesis-epiclesis* structure is typical of prayers of blessing in the Eastern Christian liturgical tradition. The *anamnesis* remembers features of who God is and how He has worked in the past, presenting this relational backdrop as warrant for the petition in the *epiclesis.* As an example, consider one of the epicycles of *anamnesis* and *epiclesis* found in the Great Blessing of Waters celebrated on the Feast of Theophany:

> …Thou art our God, who hast renewed through water and Spirit our nature grown old through sin. Thou art our God, who hast drowned sin through water in the days of Noah. Thou art our God who, through the waters of the sea, at Moses' hand hast set free the Hebrew nation from the bondage of Pharoah. Thou art our God who hast cleft the rock in the wilderness: the waters gushed out, the streams overflowed, and Thou hast satisfied Thy thirsty people. Thou art our God who by water and fire through Elijah hast brought back Israel from the error of Baal. [*anamnesis*] Therefore, do Thou Thyself, O Master, now as then sanctify this water by Thy Holy Spirit. (*3 times*) Grant to all those who touch it, who anoint

> themselves with it or drink it, sanctification, blessing, cleansing, and health…[*epiclesis*] (*Festal Menaion,* 357)

The *anamnesis* in this blessing does not present the lives of Noah, Moses, and Elijah as examples for us to imitate, nor does the *epiclesis* ask God to make us like them. Instead, their lives serve as precedents of a different kind. They confirm the church's faith that God will indeed work "now as then" through the water the church is ritually blessing. In addition, the church treats the events in the lives of Noah, Moses, and Elijah as typological moments in the history of God's people, allowing them to shape the church's poetic imagination of its relationship to water in the scheme of salvation. Immediately after the Great Blessing, the priest and the faithful engage in rituals that reference these and other water narratives in Scripture. The priest dunks a crucifix in the water three times and sprinkles the newly blessed holy water onto the walls of the church. The faithful ritually kiss the crucifix, drink the water, and receive a sprinkling of it on their heads. Through these prayers and rituals, the church enfolds the work of Christ and the lives of the faithful into the narratives of the lives of Noah, Moses, Elijah, and others.

An *anamnesis-epiclesis* structure is paradigmatic of prayers of blessing, especially Eucharistic blessing; however, its influence permeates the liturgical tradition at every level. Consider the following Theophany hymn addressed to John the Forerunner:

> With thine hand hast Thou Touched the immaculate head of the master (*3 times*). And with the finger of that hand, Thou hast shown him to us[3]: [*anamnesis*] on our behalf, O Baptist, stretch out that same hand over Him, for Thou hast great boldness before Him. [*epiclesis*] To thee He bore witness, that Thou art greater than all the prophets. With thine own eyes hast Thou beheld the Holy Spirit descending in the form of a dove. [*anamnesis*] Lift up those same eyes towards Him, O Baptist, and make Him merciful towards us. Come and stand with us (*3 times*) Setting the seal upon our song and beginning our feast. [*epiclesis*] (*Festal Menaion*, 332–333)

This hymn recalls three physical gestures John the Baptist made at Christ's Theophany in the Jordan River: the saint's stretching out his hand toward Christ, his touching Christ's head in baptism, and his lifting up his eyes toward the Spirit in the form of a dove. The first two especially reshape God's relationship with his people. The act of baptizing Christ brings Christ into a new kind of union with his creation, and the act of pointing us to Christ (both literally and figuratively) brings the church into a new kind of relationship with God, who has now been made manifest in the flesh. Each time the hymn remembers one of John's gestures, it asks the saint to relate to God in the same way, performing the same concrete movements, but this time in intercession on the Church's behalf, incorporating them into his prior relationship with God. The hymn then invites the saint into the congregation's own relationship with God, asking him to stand with them and seal their song.

[3] This is a reference to John the Baptist's gesture in the traditional festal Icon of Christ's Theophany in the Jordan, which in turn is a metaphor for the saint's role as the forerunner who points ahead to Christ.

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Encouraging the congregation to join with a saint in their worship of God is a common trope in Eastern Christian hymnography. For example, consider another theophany hymn.

> The waters saw Thee, O God: The waters saw Thee and were afraid. For the cherubim cannot lift their eyes upon Thy glory, nor can the seraphim gaze upon Thee: but standing by Thee in fear, the first carry Thee and the second glorify Thy might. [*anamnesis*] With them, O Merciful Lord, we proclaim Thy praises and we say: O God who hast appeared, have mercy on us. [*epiclesis*] (*Festal Menaion,* 362–363)

In this hymn, the *epiclesis* responds to the activities of the heavenly hosts described in the *anamnesis* by repeating the seraphim's requests for God's mercy. In so doing, it not only leads the faithful in imitating the heavenly hosts, but, adding another layer of communion, it also leads them in joining *with* the seraphim in their choir of praise.

In addition to putting the words of the saints in the mouths of the faithful, hymns often stimulate identification between the faithful, Christ, and the saints by asking the faithful to take up the first-person perspective of those in the events they are celebrating or to address them in the second-person, or paradoxically, to even do both simultaneously. For example, the Theophany hymnography contains a dialogue between Christ and John the Baptist in which Christ says,

> 'O John the Baptist, who from the womb has known Me the Lamb, minister to Me in the river, serving Me with the angels. Stretch out thy hand and touch My undefiled head; and when thou seest the mountains tremble and Jordan turn back, [*anamnesis*] do thou cry aloud with them: O lord who hast been made flesh of a Virgin for our salvation, glory to Thee.' [*epiclesis*] (*Festal Menaion,* 312)

When the choir sings the epiclesis, they not only join with John the Baptist and the Jordan river and the mountains as they praise Christ in the second person, but since the choir quotes Christ, who is quoting John, the choir simultaneously takes up Christ's first-person perspective as he addresses John in the second person. As the perspectival layers pile up, we lose track of whose voice in which we are speaking and catch a glimpse of the communion between us, God, his saints, and all creation.

Whereas in the hymns we've seen so far, the *epiclesis* concretely reflects the *anamnesis*, more commonly, the connection is looser and more abstract. For example, in the two hymns below, the first connects the *epiclesis* to the *anamnesis* primarily through wordplay, whereas the second culminates in a general, all-purpose *epiclesis* common to many hymns.

> O Thou who baptized in the waters of the river Him that taketh away the sins of the world, [*anamnesis*] do Thou, with the streams of thine intercessions dry up, O blessed John the Forerunner, the abyss of my evil deeds. [*epiclesis*] ("General Service to John, Precursor, Prophet, and Baptist of the Lord," Ode 8)

> O Baptist and Forerunner, strengthened by the divine grace of Christ thou hast shown us the lamb that takes away all the sin of the world; and with joy thou hast this day brought two

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> disciples to him. [*anamnesis*] Entreat Him that peace and great mercy may be given to our souls. [*epiclesis*] (*Festal Menaion,* 389)

The most common exception to the *anamnesis-epiclesis* pattern I have identified are hymns that are missing an *epiclesis*; however, these hymns can be construed as fitting the pattern if we attend to the surrounding liturgical context. In this liturgical tradition, hymns are sung in a call-and-response fashion with interjected psalms verses or short refrains, the most common being "Alleluia!", "Have mercy on me, O God, have mercy on me", "Holy St. ____, pray to God for us.", "Glory to Thee, O Lord, glory to Thee!", and "Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit both now and ever and unto ages of ages. Amen." We can construe these God-ward responses between hymns as supplying the missing *epiclesis.*

I have only addressed the hymns of one feast day, namely Theophany. However, my analysis is at least some evidence that Eastern Christian hymnography to and about the saints follows an *anamnesis-epiclesis* structure wherein the church responds to the lives of the saints by engaging in various three-way relationships with God and those saints. I infer that the triadic model fits well with at least traditional Eastern Christian practices of venerating the saints. If this is right, then liturgical prayers like the ones we've seen may serve as guides for engaging in the kind of three-way relationship at the heart of the triadic model.

The prayers I've analyzed also offer us clues about some of the mechanisms by which the triadic model works. As we've seen, the hymns present the lives of the saints as precedents for how God acts, paradigms for restructuring our poetic imagination of the world, stories into which we can imbed our own life narratives, schemas of God's economy of salvation, and pivotal moments in the history of God's relationship to the church. Each of these ways of understanding our relationship with the saints gives us a glimpse into how our relationship with them can work on us, reshaping our own two-way relationship with God. But there is still so much more to explore in this regard, and ultimately, much of it may remain a mystery to us.

Conclusion

It has long puzzled ethicists that we can fail to be virtuous precisely by trying to be virtuous. Michael Stocker (1976) famously offers the vivid example of a person who visits their friend in the hospital, not for the love of the friend herself, but simply because they want to be virtuous. I have suggested that we can fail to resemble the saints precisely by trying to be like them. Alternatively, we can come to resemble the saints, not by imitating them directly, but rather by engaging in a certain kind of three-way relationship with them and God, a relationship in which the saints' particular ways of being holy are operative and serve as precedents for us, but aren't exactly examples for us *per se.*

The engine of the triadic model is the Christian vision of the communion of the saints. Nonetheless, pieces of this model could be adapted to non-Christian and even non-religious settings. For example, one could jettison the robustly Christian commitments of the model and merely augment Zagzebski's and Annas' mechanisms of moral emulation with prayers that God (or Yahweh or Allah) would help one acquire the motives or reasons of one's moral exemplars, including non-religious moral exemplars. A completely non-religious adaption would call for more thorough revision, but even

secular ethicists could perhaps benefit from developing models of moral emulation that are more heavily relationships-first, as mine is. To my knowledge, no one in the literature has yet tried to understand moral emulation primarily as a process of entering into ever deeper relationship with moral exemplars.

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