Let us begin by looking at a simple example:

If \( x - 4 = 20 \), what does \( x \) equal?

An extremely simple example, but it tells us quite a lot.

(1) The Known Unknown. To come to understand something new, we usually have to identify the unknown. Once we have done this, we have what Lonergan terms a "known unknown". We still do not know but we know what it is we do not know. That is very important if we are ever going to know.

(2) Heuristic Structure. To gain access to what we do not know, we should line up what we know and use it to attack the unknown. So in the simple example, we put \( x \) on one side and everything we know about it on the other: \( x = 20 + 4 \). That will help us to find out the value of \( x \).

Let us look at another example to do with reading.

When I ___ to ___ shops,
I always have to t___ my croc___ with ___.
He ___ pleased to g___ for a walk.
He waves his t____ smile__ at every__.
Not ___y p____ple s___ b____ck.
They j___ blink and ___re.

The blanks are the bits we initially do not know, and because we are not clear about them we do not know the full meaning of this text. But we use what we do know in order to make sense of the passage. We use a lot of knowledge we already carry about with us in our heads: knowledge of crocodiles and of human reactions to crocodiles. But also knowledge of the structure of language: of tenses, of singulars and plurals, or normal word order in English. Without that habitual knowledge - knowledge that as a rule we hardly advert to - we would not be able to make sense of the passage at all. That is why it is right to say that we do not just get meaning from the text but we bring meaning to the text.

But more than that. We also did a number of things as we went through the passage, using the surrounding clues and cues to get at the blanks and fill them in. We used what was already understood or established. It is in this way that we use what we already know in order to attack what we do not know. We create a heuristic structure.

(3) As many of you will know, Lonergan's theory of cognition consists of three steps: experience, understanding and judgment. The object of experience is data, the given. Data in the first instance we might think of as simply the deliverances of sense, of acts of sensation, of seeing, hearing, touching, tasting, smelling. Lonergan's notion of data should not be confused with empiricist notions of sense data: data for Lonergan are not the building blocks of reality "already out there", stretched out in space and time. Data are what we ask questions about. They are what we experience but do not yet know or understand - they are the blanks in the crocodile passage, that about which we ask such questions as, "What is that? Why is that happening?" etc. Data give rise
to questions and questions, if successful, give rise to insights into the data. We fill in the blanks in a way that makes sense of the passage, we interpret the data, we decipher it, make it meaningful.

Meaning is what takes place at the second step. We come up with a meaning to make sense of the data, we offer an explanation of something we experience but do not yet understand. For example, a few years ago, I went into our back bedroom to pick up my briefcase on my way out to work. My eye swept round the room in the way eyes do, and I found myself looking back at something on the carpet. Something rather dark, a dark patch on the carpet between the radiator and the wash-hand basin. It was anomalous, it should not have been there and so it gave rise to a question, "What is that?" As I advanced towards it I noticed that it glistened, had a kind of silvery texture. It looked like water. I leaned over and touched it, ran my hand through it. It was water. Feelings of dismay followed. It should not have been there, not on the carpet. Why was there water on the carpet? - I began to interrogate the data, which had started as a dark patch on the carpet and were now seen to be water; this new fact, however, simply gave rise to another question, the question, "Why?" I looked at the radiator and ran my hand along its near side - quite dry. I looked at the wash-hand basin, but it seemed to be just too far away to account for this wet patch. Also the tap was turned off and it had been some time since the basin had been used. The foot of the basin was perfectly dry. Perhaps there was a pipe running under the floor boards to the radiator or the wash-hand basin, that had sprung a leak? But leaks usually go down rather than up. Perhaps it was a strong leak that was acting like a little fountain spouting water upwards? I came up with this hypothesis just as a drop of water fell on my head (I was still leaning over the wet patch on the carpet). I looked up to see another drop of water forming on the ceiling. I looked out. It was raining hard. I had found the source of the leak: the flat roof over this part of the house had a hole in it...

(4) Meaning, then, takes place when we make sense of our experience, when we achieve an understanding of the data. The kind of meaning we establish will depend on the kind of data that are puzzling us and the kind of question we ask. "What is that?" might give rise, in the first instance, to a description. "It is a dark patch with a shiny, silvery texture. It is cold and wet to the touch". Description helps us to understand the data by relating it to our senses. Sometimes that is all we want. But in the example I gave, I went on to ask the question, "Why?" I wanted an explanation for there being water on the carpet. I looked around for the likely suspect, came up with two possibilities, before finding out the true explanation. Explanation consists of relating things to each other in a way that answers the question. There is a wet patch on the carpet: the reason it is there is because water is coming through the ceiling and falling on the floor. The reason water is coming through the ceiling is because there is a hole in the roof above the ceiling and it is raining outside. Explanation consists of relating things to each other, description of relating things to our senses. In science, both are used. Through description we relate how things look, their colour, whether they are hot or cold, whether they change colour at certain points, whether things explode into flame etc. Accurate, sensory observation is crucial to science. But description does not provide us with explanation and science wants explanation. Why do things look like that, why does this behave like that, at what temperature exactly does it ignite, etc.?

We pour 5 fluid ounces of water onto another 5 fluid ounces of water in a glass and we get 10 fluid ounces of water. We pour 5 fluid ounces of alcohol onto another 5 fluid ounces of alcohol and we get 10 fluid ounces of alcohol. But if we pour 5 fluid ounces of water onto 5 fluid ounces of alcohol, we get something less than 10 fluid ounces of liquid. Why? One explanation might be the different molecular structures of water and alcohol etc.

(5) What is clear from our account so far is that acquiring understanding and knowledge is not a passive process: it is not a matter of sitting back and waiting for atoms of meaning to come in
through our eyeballs. We achieve understanding by asking questions. And having asked the question, we work at an answer. This might give rise to a hypothesis. But a hypothesis is not the answer, it is only a possible answer. We hear a bang next door, in the room next door. "What's that?" - something might have fallen off a shelf, the wind might have blown open the window, our infant son might have hit something with a hammer, the gas fire might have exploded. All sorts of possibilities run through our mind. We run next door to find that it is in fact the wind that has blown the window from its catch and the window has banged against the wall etc. One of our possible explanations has emerged as the correct one. We make the judgment, "It's all right. Only the window."

What actually are we doing at the point of judgment? We are basically confirming our understanding. But what do we mean by "confirming our understanding"? We mean that we are affirming that our understanding fits the data. To do that, to affirm that our understanding fits the data, might be a very simple process of taking a look: the banging of the window is sufficient to account for the noise I heard a moment ago. The noise came and went. I needed an explanation. I go and look. I find that the window most probably made the noise. In scientific explanation judgment often requires more complex procedures, but is essentially meeting the same demand for confirmation of a hypothesis. We work out the implications of the hypothesis. If the hypothesis is true (If is an important word in science), then this and this and this might be expected to happen in the following circumstances. The circumstances are created by experiment and we wait to see if the predicted outcomes occur. If they do, the hypothesis is to that extent confirmed. If they don't, the hypothesis is to that extent weakened. It may have to be abandoned altogether.

If is an important word as we attempt to move from understanding to judgment. The proposed meaning, hypothesis, solution to the problem is a conditioned - for it to be true, certain conditions have to be fulfilled. When these conditions are fulfilled - when, for example, predictions are realized or when we are able to confirm certain facts because we move to the scene of the incident and can see for ourselves - we no longer have a conditioned, but a conditioned whose conditions have been fulfilled. Lonergan calls that a virtually unconditioned. The virtually unconditioned nature of the meaning or the answer to the question gives us license to advance to judgment. We no longer have a conditioned knowledge claim, but a virtually unconditioned knowledge claim: a claim whose conditions have been fulfilled.

(6) The questions that lead to judgment are "Is that so? Is it probably so or probably not so?" These are questions looking for a different answer from the questions that give rise to understanding. These are questions looking for affirmation or negation, looking for a yes or a no. Positive judgment is the affirmation that the proposed meaning (description, interpretation, explanation) makes sense of the data. Judgment is, in effect, a synthesis of the data and their meaning, a synthesis of 1 and 2. So step 1, experience of the data, leads to questions. Questions if successful lead to step 2, and step 3 consists of ensuring that 2 matches 1. What is affirmed is the data as bearing this meaning, the data become a something. It is through judgment that we know the truth and through the truth that we affirm what is so, that we affirm the real, we know reality. The real is what is intelligently understood and reasonably affirmed in judgment. Judgment is the third step in knowing and results in the knowledge claim that something is the case. In judgment we are done with hesitation and take a stand on what is the case, on what is so.

(7) This fairly simple and straightforward account of what knowing consists of helps, I believe, to answer a lot of the questions that are current in philosophy. Let me advert to only one such problem, but one that will take us on to a consideration of some of the deeper elements entailed in Lonergan's model of cognition. This is the conflict between the correspondence theory of truth
and the coherence theory of truth. Today the coherence theory is probably the dominant one - things are true if they hang together. Whereas the correspondence theory finds that things are true if what I claim to be true corresponds with reality. The correspondence theory is in many ways the common sense view: things are true if they correspond with what is already out there. For example, if my idea matches the reality it supposedly depicts, it is a correct idea; if it does not, it is a wrong idea. The trouble with this version of the correspondence theory is that we can never line up ideas on the one hand and reality on the other and see if they match. We only get at reality through ideas, so we are never able to stand above the idea and see if it matches reality. The correspondence theory of truth appears to bite the dust.

(8) For the very same reason, scepticism becomes a problem in epistemology. If I can only know reality by virtue of ideas, through the medium of what I carry around in my head, and, moreover, if I can never be sure that what I carry around in my head matches what in fact is the case in the world, then can I ever claim to know anything? It would appear that reality in fact - or what I call reality - is just a screen of perceptions or ideas that I have in my brain. I can never get beyond the screen to reality itself. What I claim to know is not reality but my ideas. I can never get out of my own head, so to speak. We are into solipsism, subjectivism, scepticism, idealism, fideism and all the other problems that dog traditional epistemology. How does Lonergan's cognitional theory deal with these problems?

(9) Well, really it's a matter of the model of knowing that is being put forward. Lying behind the problem of ideas as an impenetrable screen is a model of knowing, a model that considers knowing to be a kind of seeing or a kind of looking. Correct knowing is looking and seeing what is there and incorrect knowing is looking and seeing what is not there. Ideas in turn somehow or other represent reality out there: the idea of a chair or table or desk, for example, is some kind of inner representation of realities that lie out there. But, as we have seen, this understanding of idea, this idea of idea, runs into the problems we referred to a moment ago. The notion that knowing is a kind of looking or seeing, that it is analogous to an act of ocular vision, and that the mind is some kind of inner or spiritual eye or mirror, is the notion that Lonergan most heartily repudiates. And with that repudiation goes the idea of reality and of objectivity that go with it - the idea that reality is what is out there already, spread out in space and time, and that objectivity is reaching out to that reality. The idea of idea as an inner representation of an outer reality accompanies the notion of knowing as looking. Lonergan rejects this model of knowing, this version of knowing and so he rejects this idea of the idea as always intermediary between the knower and the known. He rejects what is more formally termed representationism.

(10) What does Lonergan put in its place? Well, first of all a totally different model or version of what knowing is: the three step model we mentioned earlier. In that version looking or seeing or any form of sensing is not what knowing is, but only a first step in the process of coming to know something. Beyond that first step there are two other steps that have to be taken. Lonergan famously said that those who think that knowing is like looking find what is most obvious in knowing and conclude that that is what knowing obviously is. So, if knowing is not like looking, ideas are not like inner pictures or representations of reality out there. So what are ideas? Ideas are intelligibles, they are the answers to our questions. They are what we find in things when we are striving to understand them.

(11) Let me explain. Plato was struck by the problem of universals. How is it that when we see a particular chair we apply to it the universal notion of chairness? We could not grasp this in a particular thing because that would be taking from a particular what a particular cannot give, namely something that is universal; something that can be applied to any number of chairs, to any number of particular objects in the world. The idea of chair - as opposed to particular chairs we
come across - is indifferent to time and place, and can be applied universally. It must, he believed, exist prior to the particular as an Ideal Form of which particular chairs are an instance, things that partake of the universal Form of Chairness. When we recognize something as a chair we are simply recalling our knowledge of the universal Form. Lonergan sees this version of idea put forward by Plato as a myth that has had an influence on conceptualism. Conceptualism, Lonergan would have it, is a major intellectual error against which he pits his own intellectualist theory of knowing. Very briefly, conceptualism would have it that what are first are concepts or ideas, universal ideas that we apply to the world in order to understand it. The problem with conceptualism is that it can lead on to scepticism or idealism, because if ideas come first how can we ever claim to know the real? The idea is always intermediary between the knower and the known.

Lonergan's idea of the idea is the Thomistic one, which is also the Aristotelian one, that what comes first are not ideas but understanding. Ideas come out of understanding. What is more, understanding is not applying a universal concept, it is grasping the idea or the universal in the particular. In trying to understand what a chair is, I grasp what it is that makes something a chair. I make sense of this particular thing. In doing that I am not making an internal sketch of the particular, but I am grasping what it is that makes this thing a chair. I am grasping, if you like, the design or plan of this chair, what it is that makes these bits of wood into a chair. To turn it round the other way, if I were making a chair I would need to make it according to a design; this design would make the materials into a chair. It is by grasping the design or plan or idea that is in a thing and is not independent of the thing that I understand the kind of thing it is. The idea does not represent the thing, it does not stand for the object in the world; it is that which makes something an object, a particular thing. By grasping the idea I grasp not something in the mind but something in the object: the idea I have intentionally in my mind is identical with that which exists causally in the thing. Idea is not separate from reality, it is not something that stands over against the real world of concrete things our senses bump up against. The idea belongs to ousia, to the being of the thing. It is that which causes this to be the thing it is: it is a cause of being.

(12) It is important to grasp this if we are to avoid idealism, representationism and all their attendant problems. What is more, as we have seen in our consideration of the three step model of coming to know, the idea has to be confirmed, has to be checked out and tested to make sure that it is truly the idea that makes this the thing that it is. In judgment we affirm that something is. Now, underpinning the three steps of knowing, driving them, binding them into a single act of knowing is the pure, disinterested desire to know. We have a natural desire to know. Asking questions is not the primordial urge, rather asking questions is a manifestation of the desire to know. This is a natural human desire. If you ask me if that is true, you are simply demonstrating the truth of what I am saying - questions are simply the unfolding, the manifestation of this natural human desire. And what I want to know is everything about everything. There are no limits to human curiosity. It is this impatience with incompleteness, with what is only half true, with answers that are unsatisfactory, that drives us on, to ask more questions, to find better, more satisfactory answers. Lonergan calls the drive to know and the questions it gives rise to the "operator": that which drives us onwards to seek ever fuller and better answers.

(13) Now, what does all this have to do with the supposed conflict between the coherence theory of truth and the correspondence theory? Quite simply, for most philosophies, these two theories are seen as rivals: one is right and the other is wrong. They cannot both be right. Or can they?

Consider. If I subscribe to a confrontational model of knowing, believing that it is by looking out at the world and observing accurately what I see there, the notion of a correspondence theory of
truth looks inevitable and convincing. The truth of my claims will, quite naturally, appear to be the accuracy with which they match what is, in reality, out there. My statements are true because they correspond with the facts as they are, independently of my saying so. The correspondence theory is the champion of the absoluteness of facts and the independence of facts from any belief system that I may subscribe to. Facts rule, you might say, is a slogan of those who subscribe to the correspondence theory of truth. Propositions are only true if they correspond to the facts. Facts do not depend on my say-so. Rather the truth depends on my statements being in conformity with the facts as they are.

But, as we have seen, there are not a few arguments offered against this view. The main one is that it is not possible to know facts without some interpretation of what is in fact out there. We do not intuit facts, we come to a knowledge of them by ideas. There are not facts independent of any conceptual scheme, independent of some system of beliefs, and the reason we accept some things and reject others is because they cohere with, are consistent with a wider set of beliefs, including perceptual beliefs. There are many forms of the coherence theory, but its general basis is that it overcomes what Lonergan would call the naive realist component in many versions of correspondence. The naive realist says he knows something because he can see it; the coherence theorist says, you know something because you can fit it into your wider set of beliefs: it is your conceptual schema that determines what is or is not a fact.

The correspondence theorist tends to assert the objective nature of knowledge, to emphasize the objective pole in knowing. The coherence theorist tends to emphasize the subjective pole in knowing. One is empiricist, the other tends to be more akin to idealism.

Lonergan believes in both coherence and correspondence and, indeed, that one makes no sense without the other. Against the empiricist or naive realist he denies that knowing is taking a look at what is there, but with them he agrees in the absoluteness of facts and the independence of facts from the knower. What justifies the independence of facts from the knower's say-so, according to Lonergan, is the conditioned nature of understanding at step 2. The proposed meaning or understanding, if it is to be affirmed as fact, must fit the data. That is a brute requirement, it is not something that I can determine by my volition or will-power or which depends on my favour. The need for the conditioned to have its conditions fulfilled before understanding can be affirmed as true, is the ground for facts being independent of the knower, of the one who makes the judgment. It is the givenness of the data and the need for understanding to fit the data that provide Lonergan with the ground for rejecting subjectivism and idealism. For this reason he agrees with the empiricist that truth is a correspondence between what I claim to be true and what in fact is so.

But against the empiricist and with the idealist, Lonergan argues that all facts have to be interpreted, that there is no such thing as an uninterpreted fact. We do not establish facts by bumping up against them with our senses. What we bump up against with our senses are data, and they are not yet meaningful. They are that which we interrogate in order to establish their meaning. If facts emerge at the end of this process, it is because we have shown that understanding fits the data, that these data bear this meaning. And we do that by showing that so many things converge on this being the case, that the conditions surrounding the knowledge claim can be considered to be fulfilled. There are no such things as brute facts: only brute data. Human facts are always interpreted, always invested with meaning, and meaning emerges from a process of fitting things together, as we saw in the simple examples we considered at the beginning of this session. Like a crossword puzzle. That is why the coherence theory of truth is also true. Far from being the opposites deemed by empiricism and idealism respectively, the correspondence theory of truth and the coherence theory of truth are seen by Lonergan's position to be one and the same. For both are dependent on the conditions attached to understanding being fulfilled: to fulfil those
conditions is a matter of piecing things together; to fulfil those conditions is to provide the
grounds for saying that something is the case independently of my say-so.

(14) How can this be so? The reason is that he does not subscribe to a confrontational model of
knowing. And because he does not see knowing as confrontational, he does not see objectivity as
reaching out to reality already out there now, as sensory extroversion. Objectivity is being true to
the desire - the human desire - to know. The pure, disinterested desire to know the truth is the
ultimate criterion of objectivity. And human objectivity consists in being at one with this desire,
in resisting our biases, and personal preferences and, on occasions, the traditions we are born into,
in order to remain faithful to that desire. This is often hard to do. Human knowing is highly
moral, and is never an a-moral activity.

(15) This is Lonergan's cognitional theory. It is a theory in the sense that it purports to be a
description of what we actually do when we come to know something. It is intended to be an
account of knowing based on accurate observation of what knowing actually is, of what knowing
actually consists of. But how can we claim to observe what knowing is? How do we establish the
data, which we in turn interpret in order to provide a theory of cognition? Lonergan's answer is
that we can know what cognition is because the process of cognition is a conscious process, we
are conscious when we are working out answers to questions. We are not unconscious. And
because we are conscious, we can take hold of what it is we do, what it is we get up to, the
various moves and manoeuvres we execute, when we come to know something. The data of
cognitional theory are the data of consciousness. Most of the time when we come to know
something we are dealing with the data of sense, we are attempting to interpret or explain the data
delivered by consciousness. But in establishing what knowing is we are attempting to interpret and explain the data
delivered by consciousness.

Now we must take care when we talk about consciousness. As in all things to do with
epistemology, there are traps for the unwary. Consciousness is not looking, it is not a kind of
inward peering at what I am doing. If we interpret consciousness in that way we are back with all
the problems we have inherited from the traditions which regard knowing as looking.
Consciousness is self-presence. It is being present to oneself as one does something. It is because
I am present to myself when I experience something, when I understand something and when I
affirm my understanding as true, that I can know what knowing is. When I know something, I am
aware that I know it. When I understand something, I am aware of my understanding. When I
have sensory experience, I am aware of having this experience. It is almost tautological to say
this, because without this awareness, there would be no experience, without this awareness there
would be no understanding, without this awareness there would be no knowledge. Human
consciousness is human self-consciousness. Human consciousness is raised to the power of 2.
Nothing can be present to me unless I am present to myself.

(16) Lonergan sees the three steps in knowing as constituting three levels or stages of
consciousness. In fact, when he comes to discuss moral or ethical judgment, as distinct from the
kind of cognitional judgment we have been considering up till now, Lonergan posits four stages
of consciousness, with the moral stage being the fourth, building on the cognitional. The
important point to grasp while we are talking about consciousness in the context of cognition, is
that with each step or stage in knowing there is an expansion or deepening of consciousness.
Experience is often contingent, things happen to us; we open our eyes and we see what our eyes
fall upon. In the same way, we hear what is within earshot, and so forth. We can direct attention,
but that is proof of what we mean: the senses have to be directed. With understanding we are
more in control of what is happening and more personally involved; we have to think, we have to
exercise the grey matter, we have to make the effort of focusing our attention and coming up with
an answer to the question. But understanding is not knowing, and we can play at understanding, we can invent a vast number of possibilities, we can offer a profusion of hypotheses. When we come to judgment we have to be done with playing, with hesitation, and we have to take a stand on what is the case. We have to offer a yes or a no, and this is an area of freedom that involves me more than simply supposing that something is true or is the case; because to say that something is the case is personally to make a commitment; this is not so when we simply suppose that something might be the case but might not be the case either. Judgment in cognition is not a free act in the same sense that a moral choice or decision is a free act; but it is a freer act, requiring an increasing input from the will, so to speak, than either understanding or sensation. To put it briefly, *I am more implicated in understanding than I am in merely gazing at something, or simply floating in the lotus land of sensation. In the same way, I am more implicated in making a knowledge claim than I am in simply entertaining an intellectual explanation. But I am most implicated in making value judgments and arriving at moral decisions based on what I know to be the truth.*

(17) It is in a sense rather artificial to talk about consciousness without bringing in what Lonergan means by the fourth level of consciousness, a level of freedom and responsibility, the level at which we make value judgments, judgments about right and wrong, moral choices and decisions. It is at this fourth level that consciousness truly becomes self-conscious, as Lonergan says, and we not only take a stand on what is so, but we actually stand up for what we believe in. We truly put ourselves on the line. I say it is rather artificial to talk about the first three levels of consciousness without talking about this fourth level because, as I said before, we cannot neatly separate the first three levels, the levels of cognition, so to speak, from the fourth level, the level of morality, freedom and responsibility.

It simply remains for me to sum up what I have said. So I would remind you of the following:

The known unknown
The heuristic structure
Different models of knowing
Confrontational models versus the three-step model of knowing
Experience, understanding and judgment
The data, the intelligible, the true
The true is the real, the verified is the real
The pure, disinterested desire to know the truth
The role of the question
The virtually unconditioned
Objectivity is not sensory extroversion
Reality is not the already out there now
The coherence theory of truth
The correspondence theory of truth
Consciousness
The four level of consciousness

(18) These are the notions I have covered in my talk, which has perforce had to be very condensed. Now Lonergan took to calling his approach to philosophy "intentionality analysis". By this he meant that acts of seeing are intentional acts, acts which intend to bring the object before me as seen. Seeing is not just looking and it is certainly not just gazing: it has an intention behind it: through seeing, the object comes before me as seen. Likewise, through understanding, the object comes before me as understood, as intelligible, as having meaning. Through judgment the object comes before me as what in fact is so. Binding together these different acts of seeing,
understanding and judging is the intentionality to know. And to know is to know what is, is to know being. Human intentionality is unconfined, it is impatient with uncertainty and incomplete knowledge claims and it drives humanity onwards and upwards towards ever more satisfying and more complete viewpoints and explanatory schemata. All human knowledge in all fields of inquiry is driven by this basic desire to know, by this conscious intentionality of the inquiring subject. That is why Lonergan called his approach "intentionality analysis" - in saying this, he said it all.

Moreover, what Lonergan is offering is a position on knowing and valuing and acting that is invariant, that is part of the human constitution, that is the common core of all knowing and all instances of the human and natural sciences. That is why Lonergan called it Transcendental Method. As such, his position is uniquely qualified to overcome the relativism that is at the heart of so much of our culture today. This four-fold structure gives rise also to an interpretation of the human person that runs counter to the dualism stemming from Descartes and at the same time it is resistant to physicalist interpretations of personhood which are set up in opposition to Descartes today. (OK dualism is wrong; we are nothing but bodies). Moreover, the four-fold method used by Lonergan becomes, in turn, his own guide and compass that will lead us through the jungle of contemporary philosophy and the tangled history of philosophy. Lonergan might fairly be described as a methodologist. And he saw the four-fold structure of knowing and doing as the key to the methodologies of all the human and natural sciences. The common core of all human and natural sciences, it is capable of overcoming the fragmentation of knowledge that is such a feature of modern culture. Finally, transcendental method is a programme of action: we should advance positions that are in line with it and show how positions that run counter to it bring about their own reversal.

The message I would like to leave with you finally this morning, reverting once again to cognition, is that there is nothing occult in Lonergan's theory of knowing. This distinguishes it from just about every other theory of knowing you might care to mention. Hume talks about the hidden operations of Nature. Kant speaks about the noumenon while claiming that it is completely unknowable. Russell speaks of "simples" or atomic facts without being able to provide any convincing examples of what would constitute such a fact. And the early Wittgenstein searched for the hidden essence of language. The later Wittgenstein was to reject this quest for the hidden, for the occult, characteristic of his earlier philosophy. Instead of trying to invent a language built on the principles of logical atomism which would replace ordinary language, he said we should be content with ordinary language and find reality revealed in that. Now Lonergan is not Wittgensteinian, but there is something of the spirit of the later Wittgenstein in Lonergan's rejection of attempts to solve the problems of epistemology by appealing to secret processes, to that which must (it is alleged) underlay our cognitional operations. Just take hold of your conscious processes, Lonergan urges us. Note them, identify them, see how they relate to each other, and you will understand the structure of cognition. Do not try to reduce consciousness to something else, to neural impulses or the workings of a computer or to any other hidden mechanism which, it is claimed, is what consciousness really is. Interpret consciousness at the level of consciousness. Be true to consciousness and you will understand the structure of cognition.