

## *acknowledgments*

I am convinced that our reasons for acting morally are rooted deep in our loves. Most people do not ask, Why be moral? They simply act from something like Aquinas's assumption that the good must be loved and made real. Simone Weil argued that one of the illusions created by "imaginative literature" was that evil is "romantic and varied," whereas good is boring. She thought just the opposite to be true in life and great art: real evil "is gloomy, monotonous, barren, boring." "Real good," on the other hand, is "always new, marvelous, intoxicating."

My experience confirms Weil's judgment. I have been the recipient of many real and extraordinary goods, and I have always found them varied, engaging, and inexhaustible. They have often come, of course, in the form of people, some of whom I can try to thank here.

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