

between the Church and the world, the saints' pneumatological witness demonstrates that the Spirit may also labor in the religious other.

During the open discussion, the question was raised about how Christians can learn from the non-Christian religions given the decisiveness of the revelation in Jesus Christ. Both panelists resisted the notion that von Balthasar advocated the idea that an adequately concrete form of revelation could be found in non-Christian religions. They also noted, however, that the form decisively given in the person of Christ can still be repeated in new ways in every generation and that the Church as the interpreter of the evidence of faith is always capable of unpacking that evidence more fully. Moreover, they stated, Balthasar's program does not presuppose that the Church is always free from error or ignore the work of the Holy Spirit in other religions. Another question concerned the meaning of the eternal "fettering" of the Spirit to the Son. Such fettering, it was noted, cannot inhibit the universal scope of the Spirit's activity in the world.

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RENAISSANCE AND MODERN THEOLOGY

- Topic: Between Modernity and Catholicism:
The Theology of Erich Przywara
Convener: William McConville, Raleigh, North Carolina
Presenter: Thomas O'Meara, University of Notre

O'Meara offered a succinct overview of his recently published book, *Erich Przywara, S.J.: His Theology and His World* (University of Notre Dame Press). His aim in both the book and the presentation was to profile the life and work of Przywara (1889–1972), generally regarded as one of the most influential and creative German theologians of the first half of the twentieth century, a distinction he shares with the better known Romano Guardini. O'Meara is fascinated by Przywara as a theologian who was unafraid to engage in a sustained dialogue with the world of modernity in all its intellectual and artistic richness. In this he is an interesting "breakthrough thinker" in preparing the way for the Second Vatican Council. (Ill health prevented him from participating significantly in the council.)

Born the same year as Hitler and Heidegger, Przywara joined the Jesuits in 1908 and received his philosophical and theological education in the Jesuit studium at Valkenburg, Holland. The curriculum encouraged a serious dialogue between the Middle Ages and modernity, between Aquinas and Kant. The young Jesuit took full advantage of this situation and deepened his education with

intensive study in Augustine, Newman, Carmelite spirituality, as well as music. After ordination he joined the editorial staff of the influential Jesuit journal, *Stimmen der Zeit*, whose editorial offices were located in Munich. This connection lasted almost twenty years and gave him the opportunity to write numerous articles and reviews on theological, philosophical, and cultural topics. He was also free to lecture and offer short courses in university settings, e.g., Leipzig, Ulm, and Tuebingen. Many of these presentations were published and widely circulated and read. He inspired his hearers and readers with a vision of a new, culturally open Catholicism. He was unafraid to engage Husserl, Stein, and Scheler, as well as Barth, Tillich, and Leo Baeck. The upheavals caused by the Second World War as well as chronic ill-health lessened his capacity for sustained intellectual work. He continued to publish sporadically, including appreciative pieces looking toward the Council, but he became reclusive and withdrawn. He died in Hagen bei Murnau on September 28, 1972.

This short summary cannot do justice to the richness and complexity of Pryzwara's theological agenda. As O'Meara expresses it, the German Jesuit's view was to "fashion a fundamental theology, that is, a philosophical approach for the Catholic self-expression of Christianity in the world around it." [73] This involved a complex and variegated project. It took seriously what he perceived to be the threefold "turn" in modern culture: the turn to the object (exemplified in Husserl), the turn to the infinite, and the turn to mystery. It was exemplified in the dynamic polarity between the infinite and the finite, the God above and the God within, grace and freedom. His use of "analogy," not so much as neoscholastic logicolinguistic category, but as "the Catholic primal principle" or "primal structure" is meant to suggest the foundational reality of the God of absolute mystery who approaches us in love and thus grounds incarnation and grace. In sum, despite some limitations in his thinking when it came to addressing ecclesial issues (e.g., ministry and liturgy), O'Meara praises Pryzwara for his optimism that "the core of Catholic faith could be made attractive to Catholics of every generation and country." Thus Catholics should not yield "extra-Catholic or ecclesiastical pessimism" (186).

The discussion which followed the presentation focused on Przywara's relationship to Rahner and von Balthasar, his views on the liturgical renewal, as well as his connection with the vibrant artistic scene in Munich in the 1920s and 1930s.

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