

methodological tools (e.g., mathematical) used by science in the formulations of their hypotheses.

Some discussion referred to the attempts in earlier theological traditions, given their own philosophical frameworks, to account for the unity of human existence and its distinct place in the order of created life. Finally, there was some consideration of how the issues would be opened up anew were we to approach them more from an eschatological perspective than from that of the origins and evolution of life.

The session concluded with discussion of future topics. There appeared to be a marked interest in exploring eschatological dimensions further by inviting both a scientist and a theologian to address a common topic. Another idea would be to consider how, within a contemporary scientific world view, one might go about developing a more coherent systematic formulation of a theological doctrine or notion as had been done in an earlier theological period (one person mentioned that it might be interesting to reassess whether whiteheadian thought continues to stand up to the knowledge of reality given by contemporary science).

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TRINITARIAN THEOLOGY

- Topic: Holy Spirit: Presence, Power, Person
Convener: Joseph A. Bracken, Xavier University
Presenter: Ralph g. DelColle, Marquette University
Respondent: Donald L. Gelpi, Jesuit School of Theology, Berkeley

In his presentation, Del Colle chose to work from Biblical affirmations of God as Spirit (e.g., John 4:24) to a systematic understanding of the Holy Spirit as presence, power and person within salvation history and the immanent Trinity. With reference to Spirit as presence, Del Colle suggests that the gracious self-presentation of God as Spirit is "neither innate to the creature nor already there by virtue of creaturely being or being in general." With respect to Spirit as power, he notes that sanctification and mission are closely linked in the Scriptures and carry both Christological and pneumatological overtones. One is, in other words, conformed to Christ for the sake of mission in the power of the Spirit. Finally, with respect to Spirit as person, Del Colle proposes that Christ

and the Spirit must accordingly be distinct persons both within the economy of salvation and within the immanent Trinity. For, while the personhood of the Spirit is less evident than the personhood of Christ or the Word as revealed in Jesus, only as "herself" a person can the Spirit be responsible for the origination and sustenance of personhood between Father and Son within the immanent Trinity and among human beings within the economy of salvation. Gelpi's response originated not in an analysis of biblical statements about God as Spirit but rather in an antecedent systematic understanding of the doctrine of the Trinity (cf., e.g., Gelpi, *The Divine Mother* [Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1984]). Yet, even with a different starting point, Gelpi concurred with Del Colle in most of the latter's conclusions about Spirit as presence, power and person with one exception; for Gelpi, *Spirit* always has reference to the Holy Spirit rather than to the generic understanding of God as Spirit. Thus he argues that Spirit as presence is always a mediated presence: mediated by Christ as the spoken Word of God in human history. Similarly, the distinctive power of the Spirit is persuasive rather than causally efficacious as in the Father's mission of the Son and the Father's mission of the Spirit through the efficacious mediation of the Son. Finally, Gelpi agrees with Del Colle that the Spirit as presence and power must likewise be personal. Only as a distinct person, can the Spirit elevate the innertrinitarian relations of Father and Son and the sharing of human beings with one another to the level of genuinely interpersonal communication. Most importantly, however, both Gelpi and Del Colle shared the conviction that some analogical understanding of the immanent Trinity is necessary for proper understanding of the economic Trinity, as became evident in the brief discussion period which followed their presentations.

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