

she speaks to her divine partner in that moment of maximum relative tension of which the one and the other are capable."

Then, continuing with this (basically Rahnerian) anthropological approach, Shiner illustrated the central and universal sacramentality of self-giving love by pointing out how, across religions and cultures, the "salvific love of marriage" can be verified in the following aspects of marriage and marital life: (1) free consent; (2) the daily affairs of family life; (3) forgiveness; (4) spiritual-physical communion; and (5) children and community. She then sought to ground the "uniqueness of Christian marriages" (and their irrevocability) in a consciously appropriated Christ-Church relationship of the marriage partners rather than in the (mere) fact of their having been baptized.

Larson-Miller, while agreeing with most of the presentation, had the following comments: (1) the definitions of "sacrament" and "sacramentality" and "salvation" should be more precise; (2) the discussion of marriage might better have preceded rather than followed that of the Eucharist; and (3) it remains very difficult to use the Ephesians marital Christ-Church imagery in a pastorally constructive way.

The open discussion evoked a reservation about the presentation's apparent inattention to the positive aspects of the medieval distinction between *sacramentum* and *res sacramenti*, but for the most part evoked positive and complementary responses, including: the openness of this approach to comparative theological dialogue, the constructive possibilities of basing eucharistic theology on the Eucharistic Prayer, and the helpfulness of remembering Augustine's concept of Church as "all the just from the time of Abel." There was also significant discussion of the meaning of "consent" which involves the community as opposed to the more individualized concept increasingly common in modern Western society.

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Topic: The Threatened *Humanum* and Eschatological Hope:
Insights from Edward Schillebeeckx.

Moderator: Elena G. Procaro-Foley, Iona College

Presenter: Mary Catherine Hilker, O.P., University of Notre Dame

Respondent: Bradford E. Hinze, Marquette University

The work of Schillebeeckx as a resource for a contemporary and constructive theological anthropology provided the focus for this meeting. Hilker's paper

offered a valuable tour through central elements in Schillebeeckx's thought while focusing them through the lens of theological anthropology.

Hilkert's presentation was divided into three parts: (1) analysis of Schillebeeckx's turn to history; (2) five theses as the basis for a theological anthropology; and (3) reflection on the theological and christological nature of Schillebeeckx's anthropology.

Schillebeeckx's turn to history constitutes a claim that the human experience and interpretation of history is the starting point for theology. Hilkert delineates four contributions to theological anthropology that follow from this position: the anthropological starting point of theology as the "threatened *humanum*," the specification of experience as negative contrast experience, the understanding of the *imago Dei* symbol as located in specific instances of human suffering with the concomitant demand to restore the *humanum*, and the link between ethics and theology.

Hilkert's first thesis is that Schillebeeckx's understanding of experience and history implies that human nature is not given and is thus a "project of human freedom." Secondly, the intractable presence of suffering causes irrational history eliminating any systematic explanation of the human. Thirdly, Hilkert notes that Schillebeeckx honors both the "irreducible particularity" of human experiences and the universal experience of suffering while holding the position that dialogue is possible. The fourth thesis is that finitude is constitutive of the human situation. Finally, though the nature and meaning of being human is subject to the specificities of time and place, there are anthropological constants; these constants can be found in *Christ*, part four.

The last portion of Hilkert's paper argued that Schillebeeckx's emergent anthropology is theological and christological because of Christian eschatological hope. For Schillebeeckx, the final hope for humanity cannot be humanity itself. Rather, human resistance to evil and action on behalf of the fullness of the *humanum*, no matter how fragmentary, is supported by the Creator God and God's salvific action through Jesus. Hilkert highlighted Schillebeeckx's insistence on a creation-centered faith, the "mediated-immediacy" of the relationship between God and humanity, and Jesus as the paradigm of humanity (or, "concentrated creation").

Hinze's response posed four areas for consideration: Does Schillebeeckx's eclectic approach to intellectual resources strengthen or undermine his anthropology? Does the almost exclusive focus on the damaged *humanum* and negative contrast experience generate a limited anthropology? Do the constants provide an anthropology or a framework for an anthropology and should "the dialogical character of the human person" be added as a constant? Does the anthropology suffer from the lack of a trinitarian emphasis, both immanent and economic?

The passionate discussion that ensued focused all but entirely on Hinze's second question. Participants were concerned that Hinze's request for a "thick description" of positive human experiences vitiated the insight of Schillebeeckx's

anthropology. Hinze repeatedly noted that he was suggesting a balance: "Everything is affected by suffering but suffering is not everything." Other emphases were the importance of liturgical practice and a Thomistically based creation-centric position for Schillebeeckx.

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