

GOD/TRINITY

Convener: Gill Goulding Regis College, University of Toronto

Presenters: Christopher Pramuk, Xavier University

Michael H. Crosby, Independent Scholar, Milwaukee

Christopher Pramuk's presentation, "Merton, Symbolism, and Sophia: the Power of the Name" explored Thomas Merton's prophetic critique of the corruption and breakdown of language in an increasingly fragmented technological and violent world. In particular, he emphasized Merton's recognition of the impact of fear upon culture and society—a fear that resulted in increased alienation, isolation, and individualism. In response he stressed Merton's turn to Wisdom-Sophia as lyric symbol of divine-human relationality and the "communal eros" that is the very life of God. At this point, his paper had clear resonance with Aristotle Papanikolaou's paper from the 2009 convention. Drawing from his close study of Russian sophiology, biblical Wisdom literature, and Zen, Sophia emerges in Merton's writings, Pramuk argued, as a sacrament and revealed name for the mystery of God's union with the world in Christ and the invitation for all creation to participate in the unfolding life story of God. The "remembrance of Sophia," Pramuk maintained, gestures toward a mystical-prophetic spirituality of engagement with the world. Pramuk illustrated his presentation drawing from the prose, sketches, and poetry of Merton with a particular emphasis on "Hagia Sophia" written in 1962.

In his presentation, "Trinity as a Model of Organization in both Science and Religion" Michael Crosby recalled that in *Caritas in Veritate*, Pope Benedict XVI stated that Trinitarian relations are key to rightly ordered relationships. The more we know from science about the natural order of things, Crosby suggested, the more we find revealed the footprints of the Economic Trinity whose "reign" or "governance" must be worked out in the "economy of salvation" at every level. He argued that all relationships must ultimately reflect their origin in Trinitarian relationships. Drawing from the field of economics, he expounded a "business model" of the Economic Trinity. He concluded by emphasizing the task of theologians both to "ensure" the integrity of the Trinitarian vision they proclaimed and to prophetically remind the Christian community of the ongoing call to witness to the gospel and promote the Kingdom.

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