

## HISTORICAL THEOLOGY (II) – TOPIC SESSION

Topic: Theologies of Work in Significant Historical Figures  
 Convener: Andrew Salzman, Benedictine College  
 Moderator: Kenneth Parker, Duquesne University  
 Presenters: Elizabeth Huddleston, National Institute for Newman Studies  
 Shawn Colberg, College of St. Benedict / St. John's University  
 Ryan Marr, Mercy College of Health Sciences

The papers in this year's second Historical Theology Topic Session addressed the topic, "Theologies of Work in Significant Historical Figures." Our first presenter, Elizabeth Huddleston, read a paper and provided a PowerPoint presentation entitled, "Work and Prayer: Newman's Work with the Poor at St. Mary and St. Nicholas Parish in Littlemore." While noting that John Henry Newman never developed an extensive theology of work as we see in some of his contemporaries, like Henry Manning, his work with the poor at St. Mary and St. Nicholas Parish in Littlemore demonstrated a commitment in his vocation to the poor, at least during his Anglo-Catholic period in residence at Littlemore. Huddleston investigated how Newman understood the nature of work and prayer as foundational for Christian "vocation" as it manifests in his theological, spiritual, and personal writings and correspondence during this time at Littlemore (1842–1845). Using Newman's terms from the *Grammar of Assent*, she noted that in Littlemore he experienced "real," rather than "notional," pastoral work, which has often been overlooked in biographical accounts of Newman.

Shawn Colberg explored medieval defenses of mendicancy in his paper, "Poverty, Prayer, and Labor: Aquinas, Bonaventure, and the Defense of the Mendicants at Paris." He explored the vocations and careers of Thomas Aquinas and Bonaventure, which unfolded in the midst of controversy about the lifestyle and charisms of the new mendicant orders. He found that Bonaventure and Thomas constructed compelling yet distinctive accounts of mendicant life that repositioned the significance of manual labor as secondary to the active charisms of preaching, celebrating the sacraments, and even begging. Colberg explored Thomas's and Bonaventure's newly articulated definitions of "work," as they related to Dominican and Franciscan life, as well as the specific polemics leveled against the friars by the secular masters at the University of Paris. He argued that Thomas and Bonaventure repositioned the significance of work to fit within a larger theological conception of the perfect wayfarer—one who is on the way to final union with God and who uses the journey to dispose oneself to that end.

In Ryan Marr's paper, "Cardinal Manning and the London Dockers' Strike: A Model for Episcopal Participation in Labor Organizing," he noted that in the field of church history, Henry Edward Manning (1808-1892) is primarily remembered for leading the effort to pass a definition of papal infallibility at the First Vatican Council. Marr took up the lesser-known fact that Cardinal Manning was a leading advocate for the working classes of England. He explained that the shining jewel of this advocacy was Manning's role in helping to resolve the London dock strike of 1889. Marr argued that this facet of Cardinal Manning's episcopal ministry remains an instructive model

for ecclesial leaders as the church continues to promote just economic policies for laborers, members of the service industry, and the working poor.

The twelve attendees engaged the presenters in a lively discussion after the three papers were read.

KENNETH L. PARKER  
*Duquesne University*  
*Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania*