

requires us to listen and learn from their experience and to offer support, sanctuary, and hospitality. Justice requires that we work to promote gender equality. More generally, justice recognizes and respects the fact that sexuality is the embodiment of our most vulnerable dimensions as persons.

Sexual fidelity requires us to defend and sustain loving relationships. Mercy, described by Keenan as "the willingness to enter into the chaos of another," thickens fidelity by directing it into that chaos. Merciful fidelity calls us to stand with those we love in their chaos. It calls us to anticipate this chaos and enter into its complexity, upheaval, and confusion through dialogue.

Sexual self-care means sustaining our own dignity as persons in our sexual relationships. Self-care informed by mercy recognizes our weaknesses and guards us against their dangers. For example, it takes steps to protect us from being taken advantage of in a sexual relationship. Thus, it avoids premature sexual relationships, not because sex is bad but due to the demands of justice, fidelity, and self-care. Merciful self-care requires patience with our own vulnerabilities and a refusal to use sex in an effort to solve our self-esteem problems.

What if fidelity calls us to realize the moral good of entering into the chaos of another yet self-care seeks to protect us from the dangers that such an act of fidelity could present? Keenan's call for competitive virtues seems to imply that this tension might be a healthy stimulus for the authentic realization of virtue amidst the complexity of real moral conflicts.

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KARL RAHNER SOCIETY

- Topic: Karl Rahner Society—Program Group
 "Faith in Context: Rahner on the Possibility of Belief"
- Convener and Moderator: Howard Ebert, St. Norbert College
- Presenter: Richard Lennan, Catholic Institute of Sydney
- Respondents: Nancy Dallavalle, Fairfield University
 Terrence Tilley, University of Dayton

Richard Lennan gave a summary of his paper followed by responses from Nancy Dallavalle and Terrence Tilley. The full texts of the papers were available in advance on the Society's web page. Following the presentations, a lively exchange occurred among the 24 participants.

Richard Lennan explored the development of Rahner's understanding of faith through three periods: from the end of the Second World War to the Second Vatican Council; from 1965 to 1970; and from 1970 until his death. While Rahner's view of faith in each period exhibits distinctive qualities, there is a consistency present in his refusal to propose any view of faith and belief that would lead to a retreat from the world, to unrelenting complaining about the world, or to a denial of the genuine autonomy and goodness of the world. Rahner was in active, creative engagement with the world. This engagement was evident in Rahner's more nuanced and positive assessment of secularization. For Rahner, secularization should not be equated with atheism but rather seen as a sociological phenomenon, which is open to a positive theological evaluation. Rahner's creative engagement was also evident in his development of "short formulas" of faith and of a "practical ecclesiological cosmology." For Lennan, these two proposals show Rahner's recognition that faith and belief in the modern world could not simply be repetitions of past formulas. Lennan went on to note that Rahner grew a bit skeptical about the willingness of those in authority in the Church to carry on an open dialogue with the world. This skepticism is seen in Rahner's application of the phrase "wintry season" to "life within the church, rather than, as previously, to the church's reception in the world." Finally, for Lennan, Rahner's understanding of faith and belief is significant for two reasons. One, Rahner's theology of faith provides a way in which one can both affirm basic Christian faith and positively understand those who do not explicitly embrace that faith. Two, Rahner recognized and wrestled with "the impact of history on both the possibility and articulation of faith."

While Nancy Dallavalle expressed her overall agreement with and appreciation of Lennan's summary and appraisal of Rahner's theology of faith, she raised three observations for clarification and discussion. One, might not Rahner's "short formulas" of faith be easily dismissed in a postmodern world skeptical of "metaformulations"? Two, feminist thought provides an important resource and challenge to Rahner's understanding of faith, secularity and "folk-custom Christianity." Finally, three issues deserve more study in light of Lennan's presentation of Rahner's theology of faith: integracism, borderline Catholics, and practical ecclesial cosmology.

Terrence Tilley in his response raised numerous issues. One, Tilley argued that Rahner's Diaspora metaphor is simply not appropriate or accurate for U. S. Catholics. Two, there is a tendency both in Lennan's analysis and Rahner's theology of "identifying the effective church with the clerical caste." Three, further delineation of the meaning of secular is necessary given its radically different forms. Four, Rahner's awareness that his approach was "vulnerable to the critique that it collapsed the *fides quae* into the *fides qua*" is seen positively by Tilley if Rahner is seen as repositioning the relationship between the two from a "performance view." Five, Lennan's exposition of Rahner's understanding of the "deposit of faith," for Tilley, serves as an important "antidote to those who

think that Rahner's theological formality entailed a denial of particularity." Finally, Tilley observes that Lennan's contention that Rahner's theology is able to communicate the Christian faith in a postmodern world is misplaced. Ultimately, for Tilley, no theology conveys faith, faith is communicated in the lives and practices of Christian believers.

Discussion after the presentations focused on several themes: the nature of the Church as event and as consistency of a mystical element, the Church as a "school for sinners not a community of saints," the role of faith in self-acceptance, Rahner's similarity and difference with the theological stances of novelists Graham Greene and Walter Percy, the notion of mediation in Rahner's thought and the question of adjudicating what should or should not be tolerated at the margins.

The annual Karl Rahner Society Breakfast Meeting was attended by sixty-four people. Mary E. Hines and Declan Marmion gave an overview of the upcoming Cambridge Companion to Rahner. The volume consists of four major sections: Spiritual, Philosophical and Theological Roots, Theological Investigations, Conversations Ongoing and Retrospect and Prospect. A discussion of possible topics for the Rahner Society Program Group took place. Suggestions regarding themes from Rahner's thought that focus on next year's convention theme and Resurrection of the Body were submitted for the Steering Committee's consideration. The final parameters of the paper will be delineated by the Steering Committee and will be detailed in its Call for Papers to be conveyed by the end of the summer. Melvin Michalski, Robert Masson and Nancy Dallavalle were recognized for their many years of service. It was announced that Miguel Diaz and Terry Klein agreed to serve on the Steering Committee and that Mark F. Fischer agreed to serve as Webmaster. The meeting ended with a sharing of anecdotes of Rahner's life.

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SACRAMENTAL AND LITURGICAL THEOLOGY

Topic: Rites of Reconciliation in a Wired and Broken Church
 Convener: Bruce Morrill, Boston College
 Moderator: Judith M. Kubicki, Fordham University
 Presenters: Craig Baron, St. John's University, New York
 Eileen Burke-Sullivan, Creighton University
 Respondent: Timothy Muldoon, Mt. Aloysius College

Craig Baron's paper, "Sacraments 'Really Save' in Disneyland: Reconciling Bodies in Virtual Reality," explored the role of the body in Christian tradition and the recent social changes brought about by the internet and other technolo-