

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-

gies. His argument centered on how sacraments "really save" in the virtual and postmodern age through their capacity to ground human existence in terms of a transcendent and Incarnate God, community and tradition, and liturgy and life. The paper had four parts: a discussion of sacramentality, the body and the liturgy; an analysis of postmodernism, embodiment, and virtuality; an investigation for possible convergences between postmodern sacramental theology, incarnation, and reconciliation; a proposal for how sacraments in general and the rite of reconciliation in particular might save in a virtual world. Using the "body" as organizing metaphor (physical, social, ecclesial, textual, and sacramental), Baron engaged in a critical reading of both the Christian tradition and the "wired" existence of today. The paper argued that only through a proper understanding of sacramentality and the place of the historical and linguistic body in the celebration of the sacraments can one really hope for reconciliation among God, others, nature, and virtual reality. The concrete celebrations of divine reconciliation in the church are especially effective in preventing theological thinking on reconciliation in the virtual age from falling into the errors of individualism, abstraction, and Gnosticism because of their historical, social, bodily, and personal encounter with the Risen Christ.

Eileen C. Burke-Sullivan's paper, "Reconciliation in a Scandalized Church: Ritual Processes in Pastoral Context," provided a summary review of the pastoral strategy of "listening sessions" that were conducted in a number of parishes at the height of the recent sexual abuse scandal in the Boston Archdiocese. The paper proposed a theological analysis of the process using categories outlined by Yves Congar. These categories served as a fundamental heuristic for recognizing why parishes were wounded by bad ecclesiology and why some steps toward reconciliation were possible through the pastoral strategy described. Congar observed that there are differences between the Church as divine institution and the Church as a frail human hierarchy. Burke-Sullivan's presentation concluded with a concrete, but anonymous, comment of a senior Catholic in the archdiocese who laments that she will not again be proud of her church even though she is happy to be a part of a local parish where there are good people.

In his response to both speakers, Timothy Muldoon highlighted key elements of both presentations. Commenting on Congar's distinctions between the experience of being a member of the church and being an American, Muldoon noted that our national citizenship enables us to bring ambivalence into the polis, in order that discourse may lead to political change. However, our ecclesial citizenship also demands that we respond to ambivalence in the life of faith. In both cases, what is absolutely critical is the understanding that both political change in the national sphere and reconciliation in the ecclesial sphere are corporate acts—neither can make sense if they are regarded only as personal statements. An inescapable conclusion of both papers was the irreplaceability and multivalence of physical presence in the sacramental theology of reconciliation. The danger of cyberspace, Muldoon pointed out, is that it creates an illusion of

community, in that I can be part of groups that "meet" on the internet—but in reality, they are dependent upon my financial means to secure regular access to a computer. If access to the internet is the new mode of participation in a putative community, it runs the risks of not only the Docetism and Gnosticism to which Baron refers; it also runs the risk of excluding those whom Jesus loved most: namely, the poor, who have only their bodies.

A lively discussion followed the papers and response. Such topics as funeral liturgies and cremation surfaced as possibilities for next year's meeting. The possibility of holding a joint session with the Ecclesiology Program Group was also mentioned.

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COMPARATIVE THEOLOGY

Topic: Hindu God, Christian God: Questions on a New Methodology
 Convener: Michael T. McLaughlin, Saint Leo University
 Presenters: Michael T. McLaughlin, Saint Leo University
 James Keating, Providence College
 Respondent: Francis X. Clooney, Boston College

The methodology of the groundbreaking book in comparative theology by Francis Clooney, *Hindu God, Christian God* (Oxford, 2001) was the focus of this session. The book is part of a much larger trajectory which Clooney has been working on for a number of years. Chapters of the book focus on specific concepts of God in each tradition: God as maker of the world, naming God, divine embodiment, and the concept of revelation. It can be difficult to find Hindus who understand Christian theology in any depth, which makes things a bit one-sided. Clooney gave a brief summary of the careful structure of the book before the presenters gave their analysis of problems and issues. McLaughlin commented on the significance of this work as a real advance in the field of comparative theology because of its close attention to actual arguments within the multiple schools of Hinduism and between Hindus and Buddhists. He referred to his own book on Lonergan and Aurobindo (Gregorian University Press, 2003) as a related effort in comparative theology.

There is a great complexity of argumentation internal to Hinduism. For example, Vedānta resists the Nyāya view that by reasoning we can know that God exists, focusing instead on the priority of scripture over reasoning. Others argue whether sectarian symbolizations of the divine found in Śaivism and Vaisnavism are secondary to the concept of Brahman or reveal essential attributes.