

## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

### A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON A THEO-ANTHROPOLOGY

Seven years ago at the International Congress of Learned Societies in the Field of Religion, which was held at Century Plaza Hotel in Los Angeles, and at which many of us here today were present, Walter Kasper delivered a plenary address entitled "Christian Humanism."<sup>1</sup> Over the intervening years, I personally have found this essay, brief though it is, to be both fascinating and challenging. In raising the central question as regards the meaning of being human, Kasper rightfully advised his theological peers to collaborate with various other disciplines, such as sociology, psychology, anthropology and politics—a venture which our present CTSA convention has attempted to do, at least to some degree. Kasper's position, no doubt, all of us here would endorse.

This author then goes on to indicate that with the contemporary explosion of knowledge, we in our century have access to an enormous amount of data regarding our human condition. Never, indeed, has the human race been privy to so much knowledge about the human condition and in such a layered and multiple dimension. "Yet," Kasper notes, "the more answers there are to this question [what is man?], the less man seems to know with which answer he should identify himself. The greater the number of possible answers becomes, the more man comes up against himself as if he were in a hall of a thousand mirrors and images, and finds that he has no clear image of himself."<sup>2</sup>

How different this situation is when we compare it to the heritage and rootage from which we today emerge. From ancient Greek philosophy, at least in its mainstream, down to a contemporary popular Marxism or a contemporary popular Freudianism, an understanding of the human was fairly general and by and large presupposed. Without any doubt, such a "classical definition of man presupposes from the very start a definable, uniform and fixed nature of man,"<sup>3</sup> at least in the essential and constitutive areas of the human structure. Our times, however, have radically changed this, and it is rather the openness of the human situation as well as the historical conditionedness of any attempt to define the human, including each and every Christian attempt as well, which have come to center stage. This change has not arrived on the scene without protest, but the protesting voices

<sup>1</sup> W. Kasper, "Christian Humanism," in J. M. Robinson, ed., *Religion and the Humanizing of Man* (Waterloo, Ontario: Council on the Study of Religion, 1972), pp. 20-34.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 22.

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 24.

have become ever more mute. Even in recent decades, however, there were clarion voices denouncing this kind of change, as is evidenced, for example, in much of the argumentation which *Humanae vitae* engendered. Such protesting argumentation upheld the classical definition of the human, with its definable, uniform and fixed elements. Nonetheless, such attempts at protest within our theological discipline have become increasingly ineffective.

In our present time the voices of many serious thinkers speak about the open-endedness of the human structure, and a statement, again from Kasper, reflects the thought of these many thinkers: "What human existence ultimately means," he writes, "remains an open question which defies any conclusive definition. The human in human-existence is that *per definitionem* it is not definable."<sup>4</sup> Raimundo Pannikar, to cite another author, leads us in the same direction, namely, that "man is an unachieved being"; that "the human predicament is infinite because it is not finite, finished. Man is an open being; he is not finished; he 'ek-sists' by stretching out his being along time and space at least."<sup>5</sup>

Such openness, variability, indefinability, however, does not only affect our understanding of human life, but touches all components of our world as well. A radical, all-pervading historicity and conditionedness constitute the very warp and woof of our existential fabric. Such a situation indicates that there is no longer a possibility of theologizing *sub specie aeternitatis*, as though one might find some Archimidean point, immune from any intrinsic historicizing itself; that there is no longer a possibility of speaking facilely or even speaking at all of eternal verities; that there is no longer a possibility of making so-called absolutes intelligible to our present generation. All of this, as is readily perceived, makes the theological enterprise a far more difficult one than it was for large numbers of our theological forebearers. In fact, this very historicity and conditionedness of all human endeavor complicates both the theological task and the means one employs to pursue that theological task. Even those theologians among us who find this intrusion of the historical and the conditioned uncomfortable cannot simply write it off; they, too need to address the basic issues involved.

Such is the state of affairs, and I wish to spend a short time on two areas which, hopefully, will aid our theological endeavor. First, I wish to say something on a phenomenology of the human person, and secondly, on a theo-anthropology.

### I. A PHENOMENOLOGY OF THE HUMAN PERSON

Phenomenology, as is well known, is not a philosophy in the same way that Platonism, Aristotelianism or Kantianism, for example, might be identified as a philosophy. Rather it is primarily a method and a style of approaching human existence and the human world. Its influence on

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 25.

<sup>5</sup> R. Pannikar, "Sunyata and Pleroma: The Buddhist and Christian Response to the Human Predicament," *Religion and the Humanizing of Man*, p. 76.

Catholic theology to date has not been overwhelming, and in this respect is similar to the influence of process modes of thought on Catholic theology. Both movements have made only initial and to some degree spotty contact with the fundamental areas of theology. The methodological bias of phenomenology was already noticeable in 1913, the year that Edmund Husserl, together with Moritz Geiger, Alexander Pfander, Adolph Reinach and Max Scheler began publication of the *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*.

The masthead of this first edition carried the following statement: [Phenomenology] "is not a system that the editors share. What unites them is the common conviction that it is only by a return to the primary sources of direct intuition and to the insights into essential structures derived from them that we shall be able to put to use the great tradition of philosophy with its problems and concepts."<sup>6</sup>

More recently Maurice Merleau-Ponty noted that "phenomenology can be practiced and identified as a manner or style of thinking, that it existed as a movement before arriving at a complete awareness of itself as a philosophy," and that in itself "phenomenology is accessible only through a phenomenological method."<sup>7</sup> Phenomenology's insistence on a return to the primary sources as well as its style of approaching reality has almost consistently been a return to the most original of all our sources, namely, the human structure itself. This we see quite clearly in the analysis of the *Dasein*, as advocated by Heidegger most particularly in *Being and Time*, and likewise in the primacy given to human perception by Merleau-Ponty in his *Phenomenology of Perception*. There is a primacy awarded to the human sphere by all the major phenomenologists.

Herbert Spiegelberg, in his rather monumental work, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, advises us, however, as follows: "It is important to realize that 'primacy' in this case does not mean the exclusive right of perception or even its prerogative in case of indecisive evidence, as in the case of the primacy of Kant's practical reason. It simply means that perception constitutes the ground level of all knowledge, and that its study has to precede that of all other strata, such as those of the cultural world and specifically that of science."<sup>8</sup> With this caution, lest anyone think that "primacy" means exclusiveness, we can better understand why Merleau-Ponty urges us to return to the things themselves, to the world which precedes knowledge, to the world of which knowledge speaks, to the world in relation to which every scientific, philosophical and theological systematization are but abstract and derivative sign-languages. Only on the grounding of perception does one build up a science, a philosophy or a theology, and to prevent science, philosophy and theology, abstract as these genuinely

<sup>6</sup> *Jahrbuch für Philosophie und phänomenologische Forschung*, 1913 on.

<sup>7</sup> M. Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, trans. C. Smith (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1962), p. viii.

<sup>8</sup> H. Spiegelberg, *The Phenomenological Movement: A Historical Introduction*, Vol. II, *Phaenomenologica* 5 (The Hague: Martinus Nijhoff, 1960), p. 544.

are, from forgetting their roots and ground, Merleau-Ponty stresses the primacy of human perception.

In this phenomenological style and method, there is a basic step which one must make, in order to understand what is happening. Given the dominance of the scientific method within Western civilization during the past two centuries, many find this step a difficult one to make, for it involves a step away from an objectifiable (so-to-speak) and categorizable world, seemingly free-standing and apparently self-evident to those who are both willing to face it and let it interpret itself, to a world that is interpretable only as a world that is seen and interpreted within one's own perceptual field, horizoned inwardly and outwardly to some degree by the perspective of the interpreter him or herself. It is not merely some objectifiable being which constitutes such a world, but it is the meaning of being that is sought out, and one can only speak of meaning when there is a meaning *of* something or someone *to* someone. This "of" and this "to" of necessity involve the perceiver in a mutual interchange between knower and known. Such an interchange is unavoidably relational, yet it is only within this sphere of the interrelational that both being and meaning for us make sense.

Let me offer you an example of this step. Almost mid-way through his book on the Eucharist, Edward Schillebeeckx purposely speaks of a new approach which he sees in terms of an anthropology, that is, an understanding of the human.<sup>9</sup> The implication of this part of his book is clear: were one unwilling to move from a physical, objectifiable and categorizable world to a humanly understood and interpreted world, the remainder of his book would make little sense. The starting point for him is not the so-called natural philosophy or natural theology, but human perception.

Such a return to the human underscores anew the openness of the human situation, for as Merleau-Ponty has elsewhere written: "I will never know how you see red, and you will never know how I see red; but this separation of consciousness is recognized only after a failure of communication, and our first movement is to believe in an undivided being between us."<sup>10</sup> Human perception, he notes, is highly individualized, so that there are as many human interpretations of one's world, one's life, one's very self as there are individual persons. Because of this individualism—not solipsism—the meaning of the human must be seen as rooted in the meaning of a unique individual person, not in a generalized definition.

Nonetheless, the process of individuation should be seen within a relational framework. Heidegger himself comes to grips with the problem of solipsism when he writes: "By 'Others' we do not mean everyone else but me—those over against whom the 'I' stands out. They are rather those from whom, for the most part, one does *not* distinguish oneself—

<sup>9</sup>Cf. E. Schillebeeckx, *The Eucharist*, trans. N. D. Smith (New York: Sheed & Ward, 1968), pp. 89-101.

<sup>10</sup>Merleau-Ponty, "The Primary Perception and Its Philosophical Consequences," in J. M. Edie, ed. and trans., *The Primacy of Perception and Other Essays* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1964), p. 17).

those among whom one is too. This Being-there-too [Auch-da-sein] with them does not have the ontological character of a Being-present-at-hand-along-'with' them within a world. This 'with' is something of the character of *Dasein*; the 'too' means a sameness of Being as circumspectively concerned Being-in-the-world."<sup>11</sup>

Phenomenologists, however, offer even more that points in the direction of an open-ended understanding of the human structure. Heidegger, for his part, describes phenomenology as a process whereby one lets "that which shows itself be seen from itself in the very way in which it shows itself from itself."<sup>12</sup> Obtuse as that sentence might be, it does indicate that the realities we encounter, our own self-reality included, in our daily life, generally involve two aspects: there is an aspect of reality which is manifest and open, but secondly there are aspects of that same reality which remain hidden and unknown. To understand the fulness of a reality—to understand a phenomenon in any clear way—the reality needs to be taken out of its hiddenness and brought into revelation. Phenomena, Heidegger remarks, generally have a part of their reality which proximally and for the most part does not show itself at all, namely, an area which lies hidden, in contrast to that area in the phenomenon which proximally and for the most part does indeed show itself. The hidden area—and this is deeply important—the hidden area is as much a constitutive area of the phenomenon as the manifest area also is. If a phenomenon is meant to show itself from itself, and yet if each phenomenon involves both a hidden and a manifest aspect, each of which is constitutive of the phenomenon itself, then to know the phenomenon can only take place in any depth as the area which proximally and for the most part remains hidden is allowed to come into manifest presence. Were we to apply this to the human phenomenon we would note that the structure of the human involves the same two areas: there is that which proximally and for the most part is manifest and there is as well that area which proximally and for the most part remains hidden, and both are constitutive of the human. Only when the hidden area moves from concealment to revelation, a process which Heidegger calls *aletheia*-truth, can we say that we are beginning to understand the meaning of the human phenomenon. Such a view precludes any *a priori* definition of human nature, since any such pre-packaged definition would of necessity require a pre-understanding of what the constitutive hidden factors of the human phenomenon might really be, and that in itself would be contradictory.

An exemplification of this is found in the area of the humanness of Jesus, seen as a sacrament. In my opinion, neither Rahner nor Schillebeeckx pay adequate attention to this. If the humanness of Jesus is a sacrament, then it signs and symbolizes only in so far as it manifests; but if there are in the humanness of Jesus areas which proximally and for the

<sup>11</sup>M. Heidegger, *Being and Time*, trans. by J. Macquarrie and E. Robinson (New York: Harper & Row), p. 154.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*, p. 58.

most part remain hidden, then the sacramentalizing of that very humanness is decreased as long as such areas are not brought into revelation. This would mean that the sacramentality of the humanness of Jesus is much more a process than a static characteristic, a process which becomes ever more revealing in as much as the hidden areas emerge from concealment.

Even were one to consider the human phenomenon not so much existentially but historically, that is, the long centuries that the common task of generations have built up on the meaning of human life, we would see that there has always been an emergent and processive movement in this struggle to find that meaning, and we would see as well that that very movement has not always been orthogenetic in its thrust.

That the meaning of our human life is not a fixed and definable quantum is further emphasized by the research of Paul Ricoeur, particularly as he deals with the question of human consciousness and the unconscious. I would point you to his essay "The Question of the Subject: the Challenge of Semiology" in *The Conflict of Interpretation: Essays in Hermeneutics*.<sup>13</sup> Ricoeur advances a position in which he calls for a reduction of the conscious itself and not a reduction to the conscious. He calls for a rethinking of the very understanding of the conscious, on the basis of an understanding of the unconscious. Forthrightly he accepts the challenge which Freud has raised in our own times as regards the unconscious, a challenge which by and large theologians have not been willing to deal with. The dimensions of the unconscious, the pre-conscious and the subconscious—all of which are constitutive of the human structure—indicate clearly the indefinability of the human, and the disability of approaching human life with any presuppositions that there is a classical, fixed and already defined understanding of the human. It would be beyond the scope of this talk to enlarge on Ricoeur's position, and I mention it only to round off my considerations on a phenomenological approach to human existence.

All of the above has been unabashedly philosophical and to some degree abstract, at least in its linguistic conceptualization. Yet in spite of this obtuseness the authors mentioned have attempted to describe concrete, existential historical human reality. These authors are at pains to come to grips with fundamental human structures, and what they—and others—are saying ought clearly to be heard by the theological world. This same openness and relationality can be seen in the contemporary novel, in contemporary music and in contemporary art. Johann Huizinga has said so often: "Historical thinking has entered our very blood." Thomas Mann in *Doktor Faustus* writes: "There is at bottom only one problem in the world, and this is its name. How does one break through? How does one get into the open? How does one burst the cocoon and become a butterfly?" T. S. Eliot describes the human condition as a floundering in a wasteland of meaninglessness. In Kafka we confront man's nightmare of delusion vis-à-vis reality. In Brecht we

<sup>13</sup>P. Ricoeur, *Le Conflit des Interprétations* (Paris: Editions du Seuil, 1969), pp. 233-311.

observe the basic inhumanity within human structures. In O'Neill's *The Iceman Cometh* we are shown that one's self-delusions are the only prop for existence in a goalless world. One could find so many other indications of the unsureness, the non-fixity, the unclarity of our human situation. As theologians we simply cannot bypass this mounting challenge of our times.

Karl Rahner, in his initial chapter of *Hearers of the Word*, goes to great lengths to bring together a philosophy of religion on the one hand and theology on the other, with a driving desire to discover something unifying these two disciplines.<sup>14</sup> In other words a philosophy of religion, which indeed contains within it a philosophy of the human, cannot define the human in one way, while theology defines or describes the human in quite a differing fashion. From philosophy and from theology we cannot have diverging pictures of the human. If—and I am quite aware that this is a quite challenging “if”—what the phenomenologists of today are saying is true, and as I mentioned their voices are not alone in this matter, then there must be some connection with the way we wish to theologize about human existence and the understanding of the human situation. Let us, for the moment accept, at least provisionally, the truth within these many insights, and ask ourselves anew: What is the meaning of our human structure and what does theology bring to this kind of understanding?

## II. A THEO-ANTHROPOLOGY

This section of the address is entitled a theo-anthropology to emphasize the correlation between what we say about God and what we say about the human. Piet Fransen, who has done so much in the theology of grace, has himself developed in his own understanding of grace, as one can see by pursuing his *Divine Grace and Man*, first published in 1959, through *The New Life of Grace* (1969), to “Das neue Sein des Menschen in Christus” which appeared in *Mysterium Salutis* (vol. 4/2), published in 1973. In this latter, rather extensive essay, Fransen first establishes the basis for his method. He speaks of the classical phrase that grace builds on nature (*gratia supponit naturam*). From there he cites with favor a similar but more expressive statement, formulated by Francis de Sales, namely: “The more grace divinizes us, the more it humanizes us.” However, Fransen himself makes this line of thought even more sharp as he writes: “The more intensive is our humanization, the more radical is our divinization, and the more total is our divinization, so much more profound is our humanization.”<sup>15</sup> Only a few pages later, and still as he is setting up his methodological basis, Fransen asserts: “By way of a conclusion we wish to present a further guideline for our theological reflexion: what cannot be integrated in some way into our

<sup>14</sup>K. Rahner, *Hearers of the Word*, trans. by M. Richards (New York: Herder and Herder, 1969), pp. 3-27.

<sup>15</sup>P. Fransen, “Das neue Sein des Menschen in Christus,” *Mysterium Salutis* (Benziger: Einsiedelem, 1973), IV/2, 922.

human experience, is meaningless for theology."<sup>16</sup> These are surely very strong statements, but they bring out most clearly the interrelationship between what one might wish to say about God on the one hand, and what one might wish to say about the human element on the other.

An approach such as Fransen's could possibly be interpreted by way of a fixed and established understanding of the human, in other words utilizing the classical definition of the human. However, this clearly is not Fransen's desire, since humanization for him takes place only in and through interpersonal relationships. Such interpersonal relationships draw out the hidden factors of the human structure, factors which thereby become known only in and through the very process of such relationships.

Let us consider this in greater detail by considering various areas of the theological enterprise.

A. *Christology*. Christian theology, in its mainstreams, has consistently considered the humanness of Jesus as paradigmatic for the humanness of all other men and women. This paradigmatic aspect of Jesus is understood whenever discussion took place on the two Adams, providing the emphasis was not merely on the functional but on the ontological. It was likewise included in any theological discussion on our becoming a "new man in Christ" through both baptism and the presence of the Spirit. It was of particular importance to the Greek Fathers, whose appreciation of the Incarnation was so intense. "What is not assumed is not saved" expresses both a soteriological and an anthropological dimension. Moreover, the Christian community's reflection on the life, death and resurrection of Christ was the very bedrock for the Christian understanding of human life.

Nonetheless, many of these reflections were articulated within a conceptual framework in which the meaning of "man," such as in the phrase "God became man" reflected the classical definition of the human, which presupposed from the very start a definable, uniform and fixed nature of the human structure. How different our theologizing would be, however, were we to mean by this phrase: "God became man," that God became human in the sense that the human is by definition not definable; that if man himself is an unachieved being, God, too, becomes in the Incarnation an unachieved being, an open being, an unfinished being, as far as the humanness of Jesus is concerned. Jesus, too, along with the rest of us would be becoming human, and there would be in Jesus' humanness, just as there are in our own humanness, those areas that proximally and for the most part are not manifest, that he shared in our consciousness and our unconsciousness, and all of those hidden, unknown, open-ended areas would be as constitutive of his humanness as are the manifest and known areas. The very phrase: God became man, would mean that we are not all that clear about what he did become.

Even the contemporary interest in the resurrection of the Lord extends the openness of the human question. A contribution to the

<sup>16</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 926.

international symposium on the resurrection of Jesus held in Rome in 1970 was that of G. Ghiberti, who drew up a bibliography of some 1,500 books on the resurrection written between 1920 and 1973, indicating the enormous interest that has taken place recently on this theme.<sup>17</sup> From the Catholic side a tremendous impetus was provided by the appearance of F. X. Durwell's *La Resurrection de Jesus, mystère de salut*, which was first published in 1950.

Even with all this research into the resurrection, risen life is seen more and more as a new way of being human, which of itself indicates that there is more to an understanding of the human structure than can be elaborated out of the present historical situation.

If the humanness of Jesus is to be paradigmatic for the humanness of all other men and women, it is paradigmatic only in the sense of showing us that our present humanness is quite open-ended, unfinished. Christology does not tell us what being human is all about; rather, it gives us an orientation towards an area in which we might eventually discover what being human is all about, namely, a theo-anthropology in which a divinization is at the same time a humanization.

B. *Social theology*. The period of time in which we live has experienced an enormous concern about humanization and the social processes. The dignity of so many sectors of the human family has been urged again and again and the CTSA has addressed itself to a number of these issues: the role of women in the Church, the dignity of every baptized creature in the ecumenical dialogues, the sexual dignity of individuals. Beyond this there has been the student unrest only a decade ago, in which the appeal for human value was quite strong: the questions about human life which were highlighted by the Vietnam war, the abortion issue, capital punishment, Jonestown; multi-nationals and corporate power are studied against the background of human rights; world hunger and the human struggle of emerging nations; the appeal of liberation theology; the violence of racism—these and so many additional issues of our own day center on the value not only of the individual human, but the human within a framework of social relations. Creative theologizing must go on in these very areas, not that it has not happened but that it must be intensified.

Central to all these issues is not *prima facie* the question of the existence of God or the credibility of the Christian Church, important as these might be. Central to all these issues is the meaning of the human, in spite of the openness and the relational, the historical and the conditioned. It is my thinking that gathered in this very room are the theological resources available to bring some light on the most pressing question of our day: what is the meaning of human existence? Fransen, as noted above, reminds us that whatever cannot be integrated into human experience is theologically meaningless, and thereby he places the human element at a most central position of all our theological endeavor.

<sup>17</sup>G. Ghiberti, "Bibliografia sulla Risurrezione di Gesù," *Resurrexit: Actes du Symposium International sur la Resurrection de Jesus* (Libreria Editrice Vaticana, 1974), pp. pp. 645-745.

In her presidential address<sup>18</sup> last year Agnes Cunningham referred to theology as ministry and touched on the various areas which such ministry includes: ourselves, particularly those in the CTSA who feel isolated, the wider community both in the Church and in society, and the bishops. Building on her insight, I would suggest that the greatest form of theological ministry which we could provide for our fellow men and women of today, would be a concerted effort to shed some light on the meaning of human life, not in spite of its problems and difficulties, but within those very problematic areas.

Let us reflect a moment on some themes presented to this present convention. Regis Duffy, in the opening address, spoke about the question of human development within Eric Erickson's framework, but more importantly he stressed the need of commitment, so that we might discover the meaning of our human situation—a meaning which comes to presence only and in so far as we "co-mittere" (to use his own phrasing) ourselves into our interrelational world.

Lee Cormie, for his part, spoke about the dichotomy of the private social sphere and the public social sphere, not simply as it pertains to human life, but more fundamentally of the male-dominated public sphere. Western man and woman have not yet found an integrated interpretation of human life both in the private and domestic sphere and in the public more social sphere.

Mary Buckley has offered us three models: the one-nature model, in which the meaning of the human is *a priori* determined. Her second model was the different but equal model, in which a presupposed definition of the human biased toward the male, molds the entire presentation. Thirdly, she offered the transformative model, which opens us to a possibly newer understanding of the human and leaves us with a certain open-endedness in our interpretation of human existence. Her presentation reminded me of Merleau-Ponty's development of sexuality in his book on the *Phenomenology of Perception*.<sup>19</sup> For Merleau-Ponty, as also for Mary Buckley, sexuality is not something which is added to an already constituted individual. Rather, sexuality is constitutive of the human, whether this is the dominant male/subdominant female, or dominant female/subdominant male situation. This insight into the constitutive role which sexuality plays in defining the human indicates once again that we cannot deal today with a classical, fixed, already understood approach to the human structure, since in the past sexuality has not been seen as a constitutive part of the human definition.

Joseph Nearon and Toinette Eugene, last evening, reminded us that an interpretation of the human is not the white understanding of man and woman against which the black community should strive to measure itself. Rather, there are in the black experience itself areas of the human as yet untouched in the general interpretation of the human which white philosophers and theologians have offered us.

<sup>18</sup> Agnes Cunningham, "Theology for a Future Church: Science, Wisdom, Ministry," *CTSA Proceedings* 33 (1978), 262-65.

<sup>19</sup> Merleau-Ponty, *Phenomenology of Perception*, pp. 154-73.

David Tracy reminded us so eloquently only moments ago of the comprehensiveness of the post-modern emphasis on negativity and fragmentation and of the evangelical message of grace, speaking through the uncanniness of the human situation—a reminder that at heart, from our human standpoint, there truly is only a theo-anthropology.

In all of these addresses, we as Catholic theologians are challenged today, mid-June, 1979, to turn our time and talent to disclose as well as we can the meaning of the human. If we do not do this, then our efforts to deal with Church, sacraments, faith, ethics, etc. will in all likelihood not speak to human experience, since we have not *first* faced the human situation itself, the very meaning of human experience, but rather we will be entering onto the theological scene with pre-packaged answers to a question—the human question—which we have not clearly articulated.

In *Gaudium et spes*, the bishops of Vatican II expressed something very fundamental about our human life. In n. 35 they state: "Here then is the norm for human activity—to harmonize with the authentic interests of the human race, in accordance with God's will and design, and to enable men as individuals and as members of society to pursue and fulfill their total vocation." In other words, they are saying that the norm for our behaviour is to humanize ourselves, while at the same time allowing for the humanization of others. If we as theologians can show ourselves and others what this humanization process really means, we are at the same time showing what real divinization is all about too. We are pursuing a theo-anthropology.

KENAN OSBORNE, O.F.M.  
*Franciscan School of Theology*  
*Berkeley, California*