

Dulles did not deny that other criteria might be brought forward to complement those expounded; but he maintained that the foregoing are distinctive and defining of theology in the Catholic tradition.

A wide-ranging exchange followed upon the formal presentation. Among the issues raised were: What generates the criteria? Is there a systematic principle that governs them? How far does a particular understanding of theology determine the criteria set forth? Does "experience" enter as a criterion of theology? Is there place for a self-corrective process in the account? Can the magisterium itself become a special interest group?

At the end of the discussion a business meeting was held. The clear consensus was that the seminar be reconvened at next year's convention. It was agreed that discussion of the criteria continue, with explicit reference to Dulles' paper. Among the formats suggested were a single lecturer or a three-person panel. Lamb and Imbelli were asked to serve again as convener and moderator.

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COMMUNICATION THEOLOGY

TRINITY AND COMMUNICATION: THE MYSTERY AND TASK OF SELF-COMMUNICATION

Presenter: John R. Sachs, Weston Jesuit School of Theology
Respondents: Frances Forde Plude, Notre Dame College, Cleveland
Jane Redmont, Berkeley Theological Union

Sachs proposed that looking into the immanent Trinity will not much advance theological efforts to understand communication; focus on the economic Trinity as God saving us through Jesus and the Spirit will. Salvation is realized and experienced (or not) in and through authentic human (self-)communication. Jesus' life and ministry of self-sacrificing love consisted of such communication. In him, God's self-communication and human self-communication are one. Hence communication is a critical subject for theological reflection.

Some implications: (1) we must communicate our selves and an experience of salvation, not simply information, even about God; (2) communication must build solidarity with the voiceless, giving them voice as Jesus did. The internet offers helpful possibilities.

Discussion explored what "authentic" self-communication is when the communication requires the collaboration of many persons, as in most media productions. Truth telling, avoidance of distorting idols, and inclusion of all pertinent voices were suggested as criteria.

Plude distinguished communication (self-revelation through personal interaction) and communications (different technologies). She emphasized the dialogic dimension of communication in the economic Trinity. Salvation takes place in daily interactive communications which "share meaning"; access is a justice/Gospel issue; and communications technology should impact theological anthropology.

Joseph Bracken called for a social Trinity to ground a communitarian approach to reality, an interactive style of communication and the possibility of group vs. individual communication, as in collaborative media productions. Might such reflection on the immanent Trinity help resolve many blocks to human communication and resolve the dilemma of one person's sense of self-communication conflicting with that of another (e.g., Carmel McEnroy's with Archabbot Sweeney's)? Sachs held that looking to the behavior of Jesus and our experience of Spirit will provide more insight than speculating about intratrinitarian dynamics. Asserting that religious people tend to be inferior to secular persons in using communications technology, Michael Warren called for more collaborative Church communications efforts.

Redmont reflected that theologians must reflect critically on culture. Because ours is a communications culture, theologians must reflect on communication. Further, we are living through an epistemological turning point unlike any experienced since Gutenberg. Redmont observed the simultaneous explosion of "high" communication technologies among the wealthy and the rise of "high touch" Pentecostalism among the poor. Both are intense forms of communication; both are works of the Spirit. Redmont sees the historicity of Sachs' approach correlating well with communication, which exists inside history. She worried over Sachs' emphasis on *self*-communication and over a loss of the plural and dynamic sense of God which Trinity evokes.

This session confirmed that communication(s) belongs on the theological agenda and that Trinity is an appropriate "centering point" for such reflection. While the economic Trinity is fruitful, an immanent Trinity approach might also illuminate communication and thus salvation in a communications culture.

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