

church groups, there is the conflict between Athens and Jerusalem, where reason passes judgment on revelation or vice versa. Hefner mediates between the two by offering a naturalistic explanation of the supernaturalistic doctrine of *creatio ex nihilo*. For his own contribution, Zuschlag proposed that reconciliation or "at-one-ment" between opposing groups can be best achieved by a mediating third party, e.g., philosophy (e.g., North American pragmatism as represented by Josiah Royce and Charles Sanders Peirce) or ecology and the environmental sciences (above all, if they are informed by pneumatology, a revised doctrine of the Holy Spirit).

In the lively discussion that followed, several issues were raised. One participant questioned whether Nature was as friendly to human beings as Hefner seemed to assume. In reply, Hefner claimed that, without underestimating the severity of various natural evils, one should realize that creation is a work in progress, not a finished product. Someone else inquired just how human beings are created cocreators with God. Where is the "causal joint" between the divine and the human? A third respondent noted the pertinence of the doctrine of the Trinity for God's transcendence of and immanence within creation, a point missed by most process-oriented metaphysical schemes. Finally, the hope was expressed that a session on theology and ecology be organized again next year in connection with the convention theme, "Reading the Signs of the Times."

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#### ESCHATOLOGY

Topic: Is Our Faith in Vain? Meeting Paul's Challenge to the Corinthians  
Convener: Jean Liddell, St. John's Seminary  
Presenters: Jean Liddell, St. John's Seminary  
Anthony Godzieba, Villanova University  
Respondent: Leo Lefebure, Fordham University

In the light of this year's theme of *Missio Ad Gentes*, this session addressed the question raised by St. Paul in his letter to the Corinthians, "How can some among you say there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. 15:12b). Have we as a Catholic community lost sight of the future? Do we teach and preach the resurrection of the dead, or even individual survival after death?

Liddell pointed to Rosemary Radford Ruether's statement that the desire for survival after death is a weakness, tied to male ego. Liddell challenged this assertion. Her paper focused on her work with women survivors of domestic violence to argue for the centrality of self and its survivability after death, a conceivable notion in the light of the Christian belief in the Trinity. Abuse attacks the basic identity of a person, dismantling a sense of self. According to

research by Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger and Tarule, it creates a world of silence in which women are trained to be silent, to keep secrets, to keep apart from others. It is a place where power comes from without, and is wielded by men without explanation. Abused women do not think for themselves, do not dream or imagine a world different from the one in which they live. If Ruether's vision of absorption into the "Cosmic Matrix" after death is correct, then a woman stripped of all ego and sense of self would die and be absorbed easily. And yet, is this what we believe? When a woman claws her way out of this silent world, grace is experienced in the rebirth of self. Liddell argued that this journey of self-discovery is a powerful symbol of the place of self in the meaning and direction of human life.

Liddell argued that perhaps the human person becoming fully alive through the course of existence in time bespeaks the same complex ability to be both self and united with others, to function within both "divergence and convergence," the "eternal self-differentiating" described by David Cunningham in *These Three Are One*. Recent discussions of the nature of genes help us to reimagine our understanding of bodiliness, opening up the possibility that our fundamental reality as persons is far more dynamic than we suspected. Reclaiming the classic image of heaven as the "beatific vision," stated Liddell, might describe this dynamism.

Godzieba attempted to retrieve the crucial affective and aesthetic functions which "soul" played in the older Catholic eschatology. Having abandoned "soul" (for fear of lapsing into dualism), both eschatology and the liturgy have become impoverished and consequently have great difficulty speaking about "the life of the world to come." Using the funeral liturgy as a clue to the Church's "eschatology in practice," he found that its "quasirealized" eschatology and thinly formed holistic anthropology failed to address the sadness felt by the mourners and clashed with recent Vatican statements on eschatology (1979, 1992).

As an alternative, he argued, eschatology should acknowledge the *duality* of human existence and the depth of personal identity symbolized by "soul," seen as an imaginative and richly allusive metaphor which can articulate the unity and transcending openness of personal identity. By utilizing H.-G. Gadamer's theory of experience and M. Frank's theory of postmodern subjectivity, he suggested a way of articulating personal identity which would not fall into dualism and could survive as a basis for a renewed theological anthropology and eschatology.

Lefebure situated the two papers within a larger theological framework. Liddell's concern to support the victims of domestic violence and Godzieba's concern for those who grieve is not expressed in the current funeral rites raise the question of accountability after death. Liddell made no mention of the destiny of the abuser: what about judgement at death? And what happened to the tradition of "dies irae?" Although he would not advocate a return to the scrupulosity of earlier theologies, he suggested the possibility of a renewed understanding of purgatory.

Lefebure also pointed to the theological context of Paul's eschatology. Dying and rising in Christ is experienced in the here and now. No longer I, but Christ who lives in me, finds connections in Buddhist spirituality. Lefebure noted that detachment and withdrawal from life, rather than clinging to it, is the way that one can most deeply and truly engage life, freeing us from fears and desires that distort our existence.

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#### MISSION TO EXILES, REFUGEES, AND IMMIGRANTS

- Topic: "To all those scattered throughout" (1 Pet 1:1). A theology and spirituality for a redemptive ministry and call to mission to exiles, refugees and immigrants in the United States.
- Convener: Alicia C. Marill, Barry University
- Moderator: Mary Jo Iozzio, Barry University
- Presenter: Alicia C. Marill, Barry University
- Respondent: Allan F. Deck, S.J., Loyola Institute of Spiritual Life

Alicia Marill began the session with the following remarks:

There is a new breed of missionaries in this country. A breed who carry the cross, not of gold or silver or fine wood. It is not embroidered or pinned on clothing. This breed of missionaries carry the cross enfleshed in their bodies and in their souls. This breed of missionaries embody the scars of the wounds of the Glorified Christ who appears to Thomas. A breed of secularly dressed women and men, old and young, witness to a culture of death and to a culture of life. They witness in their daily lives the mystery of the Death and Resurrection of Christ. These are the immigrants, the exiles, the refugees, those who seek asylum within the boundaries of this nation, the United States. Their presence in our midst is a challenge, an invitation, and a gift. To enter this experience may lead to the profession of faith of Thomas as we stand in awe and exclaim, My Lord, My God.

She then shared how her own painful Cuban exilic experience as well as her call to mission has led her to seek a method to read the narratives of displacement and dispossession as signs of the Paschal Mystery.

Marill critiqued the present models and programs of ministry which are of an assistant nature. These models presuppose a theology of ministry in which the exiles are seen as "lacking." They "need" orientation, money, legal status and health treatment. They will "receive" fulfillment, integration and contentment by entering the mainstream of the dominant society. Their faith-life will consequently consist of entering the established norms and programs of a Church that does not reach out to the heart of the stranger. The danger of this theology of ministry is that it imposes a model of cultural adaptation and assimilation to the neglect