

that all systematic and constructive theology must lead to doxology and that, in the end, doxology extends to commitment; and (3) allowing his students to refine his vocation by reminding him that what matters is not so much imparting knowledge about liturgy as helping them to know liturgically, to cultivate a competence for being people of celebration, vision, and mission.

Also approaching the topic autobiographically, Susan Roll explained that for her *vocation* has always meant a call to the whole person, not reducible to the traditional vocations to celibacy, marriage or (often as a sort of third choice) single life. Her lifelong sense of call as a liturgist, a theologian, and a pastoral minister is best situated in this broader framework. She finds the three intertwined like threads, and further argued that each of the three could, with only slight adjustments, have been exercised apart from her "vocation" in the traditional sense. Roll suggested three important aspects of the contemporary call of the liturgical theologian: (1) the call to *tell the story*, describing the evolution of the church's worship and thereby teaching that change is normal and natural, for which the best illustrations are the fourth century and the twentieth-century Liturgical Movement; (2) the call to redefine and expand what is meant by *the tradition*, recognizing that tradition is not only dynamic and fluid but also a product of social location; and (3) the call to address the *credibility* crisis in the church today, recognizing the healing power of good common worship.

BRUCE T. MORRILL
Boston College
Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts

* | * | *

THEOLOGY AND THE NATURAL SCIENCES

- Topic: Theology and the Natural Sciences
 Convener: William R. Stoeger, Vatican Observatory Research Group,
 The University of Arizona
 Presenter: Stephen J. Duffy, Loyola University of New Orleans
 Presenter: Jame Schaefer, Marquette University

Duffy's presentation, "Genes, Original Sin, and the Human Proclivity to Evil," reflected upon both the inherently selfish genetic heritage humans have received from their evolutionary forebears and their self-transcendent nature, which is open to redeemability and an eternal destiny. This provided the key example for Schaefer's description and application of her "A Method for Reformulating Catholic Doctrine."

Duffy's program is to mount a constructive theology of original sin, attempting to protect and reformulate the core truth contained in that traditional concept, which is "that deeply rooted within the human being is a proclivity to evil"—an inherent tendency to sin. This persists within a human individual and communal nature which is essentially good and called to an ever deeper

relationship with God and with others. Although Duffy, in agreement with Daryl Domning (*America*, November 2001) and with Tom Shannon and Zachary Hayes (compare the report of this group in the 2002 CTSA *Proceedings*) and others, accepts that this inclination to sin is basically "the genetic legacy" of self interest we have received from our biological ancestry, he stresses that it cannot be reduced to this. Genetic impulse is both qualified and interfused with rational freedom and all that flows from it. Integration of mind and spirit with the body "transforms all biological elements constituting the human person." This serves both to call us to transcend our inherent selfishness and to invite its aggravation, depending on our motivations and choices. Long-range reinforcements in both directions are mediated by the cultures within which we grow and develop. And in particular, through them, we are continually being drawn to transformation through God's grace given in Jesus.

Schaefer's suggested method for reformulating doctrines consists of nine stages: (1) prayerfully preparing for this theological task, listening and being open to the Spirit in all the Spirit's manifestations; (2) understanding the magisterium's most recent rendering of the doctrine in question, as well as its earlier renderings, along with the factors and contexts which influenced those formulations; (3) critically appropriating the relevant biblical scholarship and perspectives; (4) reviewing the major relevant theological reflections from the early Christian to the contemporary periods; (5) studying and understanding the relevant generally accepted scientific findings; (6) determining the coherence of current magisterial formulations with these scientific conclusions, taking into account the differing assumptions, metaphysical underpinnings, and terminological distinctions employed by science and by the relevant theology; (7) reformulating the given doctrine, taking into account its essential meaning, its coherence with other accepted Catholic beliefs, the consonance it has with scientific understandings, and the most appropriate, accurate and understandable way of articulating it for the faithful of today; (8) remaining humble and open throughout the task, recognizing the inherent limitations in any articulation of our beliefs; (9) offering the reformulation to the Church for its consideration and eventual reception.

Schaefer concluded by reflecting briefly on how this scheme could be applied to the doctrine of original sin, emphasizing that what is involved here is primarily a state or condition, not a primordial act, and referring to both the positive and the negative aspects of the two principal factors in our human constitution—our biological inheritance and our complex cultural context, which includes the Church community. Although each person is born without a conscious relationship with God and with a tendency towards selfishness and sin, God's grace is continually available through creation, culture and the ecclesial community to enable him or her to live theocentrically and open to the other.

The discussion which followed ranged over a number of different issues. There was a worry expressed by one or two participants that the focus on biology threatened to push theology out of the picture. Both Duffy and Schaefer replied

by reasserting that their approaches were very theologically based—theological reflection, however, brought to bear both on the conclusions of the biological and psychological sciences and on the data of revelation. The result is a reemphasis on the core meaning of the doctrine and a more meaningful and relevant articulation of it. Several other participants stressed the need for the mediating role of philosophy in the different phases of forging the links between the conclusions of the biological sciences and theology, and in rearticulating the various aspects of the doctrine of original sin. A third theme which emerged was the need to balance the inherent human tendency to sin with the human condition as one that is essentially graced, as stressed in Eastern Christianity and by Karl Rahner.

In this regard the Catholic position which stresses the innate goodness of creation and human life should be preferred to some of the Protestant positions which tend to emphasize the essential depravity of the human condition. Finally, it was mentioned that the theology of original sin should avoid making it the principal counterpoint or reason for the salvific act of Jesus.

WILLIAM R. STOEGER

Vatican Observatory Research Group

The University of Arizona

Tucson, Arizona

* | * | *

KARL RAHNER SOCIETY

- Topic: A Discussion of Miguel Diaz's *On Being Human: U.S. Hispanic and Rahnerian Perspectives*
- Convener: Howard Ebert, St. Norbert College
- Presenters: Susan Abraham, St. Bonaventure University
Michael H. Barnes, University of Dayton
Conrad Gromada, Ursuline College
- Respondent: Miguel H. Diaz, St. Vincent De Paul Regional Seminary

The focus of this session was on Miguel H. Diaz's book, *On Being Human: U.S. Hispanic and Rahnerian Perspectives* (New York: Maryknoll, 2001). Three respondents gave ten-minute summaries of their respective papers and the author responded briefly to the reviews. The complete texts of the papers and the response were available in advance on the Society's web page <www.theo.mu.edu/krs/>. A discussion followed the presentations. Forty-one people were in attendance.

The first respondent, Susan Abraham, utilizing the tools of postcolonial analysis, raised critical questions of the category of "cultural identity," which is central to Diaz's methodology. Postcolonial theorists are deeply suspicious of identity categories. Such designations easily mask the distortive power of past oppressions. A postcolonial perspective would also be deeply suspicious of the ahistorical tendencies within Rahner's thought as reflected in such notions as