

GOD/TRINITY

Topic: Trinity and Deification
Convener: Gill Goulding, University of Toronto
Moderator: Gloria L. Schaab, Barry University
Presenters: Christopher Collins, Boston College
Gregorio Montejo, Marquette University

The 2011 session of the God/Trinity topic area focused on the theme of "Trinity and Deification." Two papers elucidated this theme in uniquely effective ways. In his paper "The Saint and the Word," Christopher Collins rooted his insights in the premise that the saint is the one who opens up radically to and is transformed by friendship with God. Deep participation in the life of the Triune God through this friendship leads the saint into friendship and solidarity with his or her companion sojourners in the world. Thus, the path toward sanctity is not a private affair, but rather a public pilgrimage in communion with God and with the whole Church.

According to Collins, the catalyst for this twofold communion is the human encounter with the transformative Word-made-flesh spoken by the Father. This Word of God motivates the saint toward obedience in love in imitation of Son's obedience to the Father. Moreover, the Holy Spirit as the bond of love between Father and Son, as well as the basis of the unity of the Church is the guiding force along this path to holiness. Following this line of thought, Collins then traced the Trinitarian pattern of formation of the saint as a twofold process of conversion that involves both obedient listening to the Word and obedient proclamation of that Word in the world. In so doing, Collins drew upon the theological method of Joseph Ratzinger, with particular emphasis upon his use of the philosophy of dialogue of Martin Buber. In this way, Collins demonstrated the dynamism and transformation involved in entering into the "I-Thou" structure of relationship which leads to the full flourishing of the human person in sanctity.

In his paper "How the Light of Glory Participates in and Imitates Filiation: Trinity and Deification in Aquinas and Lonergan," Gregorio Montejo proposed that deification, Trinitarian indwelling, and adoptive filiation are three distinct perspectives on one theological reality: the process of divinization whereby human beings are intimately united to the life of God through sanctifying grace. The goal of his paper was to explain how the supernatural reality of deification, what Lonergan termed "the light of glory," imitates the divine relation of filiation using Lonergan's intentionality analysis. In so doing, Montego aimed to transpose the metaphysical categories of Thomas Aquinas into a theological methodology responsive to the challenges of Trinitarian thought today.

Focusing on the psychological analogy as employed by Thomas Aquinas, Montejo reiterated that the emanations of Word and Love in the Trinity find analogous existence in the intellect and will of the human person. Because of this, divinization constitutes the fulfillment of the human desire to know and love the triune God accomplished through sanctifying grace which establishes a distinct

relation between the human person and each divine person. To amplify this point, Montejo utilized the fourfold hypothesis developed by Bernard Lonergan that relates created supernatural realities to the divine relations. In this schema, sanctifying grace, identified by Lonergan as a dynamic state of being in love with God, participates in and imitates the divine inner-trinitarian relation of active spiration.

From this starting point, Montejo proceeded to illuminate, through the work of such Lonergan scholars as Robert Doran and Christiaan Jacobs-Vandegeer, the inseparable connection between the mission of the Son as the indwelling Word and the mission of the Holy Spirit as sent by the Word. As a result of this concurrence, the Son is the Word precisely in the sense of spirating Love who perfects the intellect toward a dynamic state of being and acting in love. Becoming deiform, therefore, involves a synthesis of the operations of intellect and will, united in the rational and moral consciousness described by Lonergan as the state of being in love and manifested in decisions that are acts of loving. Thus, Montejo concluded, both the will and the heart are ordered to humanity's ongoing sanctification and participation in the triune life of God.

Both papers were well received and stimulated significant discussion. Questions and comments focused in large measure on the means by which the free and active participation of humanity and the cosmos in the movement of deification finds a place in the dynamics presented by these two papers.

GLORIA L. SCHAAB

Barry University

Miami Shores, Florida