

HISTORICAL THEOLOGY (I)—TOPIC SESSION

Topic: Ecology and Historical Theology
Convener: Scott D. Moringiello, DePaul University
Moderator: Nicole Reibe, Boston College
Presenters: Andrew Salzmann, Benedictine College
Clifton Stringer, Boston College
Jonathan M. Kaltenbach, University of Notre Dame

The Historical Theology session received many excellent paper proposals for this year's conference. The organizing team picked three papers that mined the history of Christian theology for resources to add to our conference's discussion of ecology and Roman Catholic theology.

Andrew Salzmann began our discussion with his paper, "Augustine's Subversive Pneumatology of Creation: Love and the *Literal Commentary on Genesis*." Salzmann masterfully rebutted those scholars who claim Augustine's theology is partly responsible for Christians' historical neglect of the environment. Instead, Salzman showed how the role Augustine gives to the Holy Spirit in creation, and how the Spirit thus subverts any divide between the spiritual and the material.

Clifton Stringer's talk, drawn from his own doctoral dissertation, focused on the twelfth-century canon, Hugh of St Victor, who was deeply influenced by Augustine. Stringer's talk drew. The talk, entitled "Building the Ark of "Ecological Conversion": Meditation in Hugh of St. Victor in Service to *Laudato Si*" drew connections between the meditative aspects in Hugh's thought and Pope Francis' call for conversion in his encyclical. Stringer argued that twelfth-century Parisian Augustinian canon Hugh of St. Victor's allegorical and tropological interpretations of the Scriptures present a meditative technique that helps foster the "ecological conversion" Pope Francis discusses in *Laudato Si*'.

Jonathan Kaltenbach continued the connections between historical theology and *Laudato Si*'. In his paper, "Thomas Aquinas and *Laudato Si*': Economic, Anthropological, and Trinitarian Resonances," Kaltenbach noted that Pope Francis refers to Thomas four times in his encyclical, but he could have made more use of the Angelic Doctor. Specifically, Kaltenbach argued, Thomas' discussion of how the desire for profit "tends to infinity" unless it is ordered to a good end affirms Francis' focus on human ecology, and grounds the relationality of the created world in the mystery of the Trinity.

A lively conversation followed the presentations. The participants and the audience asked questions about Augustine's *Literal Commentary*, about purgation, illumination, and unity in Hugh, and about Pope Francis' use of Thomas Aquinas.

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