

professor's bona fides. He was too aware of ultramontane power moves and curtailment of legitimate theological debate. (5) "Discourse Nine of *Idea* flatly says that the church watches over the teachings of the university and *superintends* its actions, and therefore Newman would support the most conservative and controlling readings of *Ex Corde*." Newman would take umbrage of this misapplication of his words in the direction of a neoorthodox agenda. Miller directed the seminar participants to the May 2002 issue of *The Newman Newsletter*, in which he uses Newman's own words and stratagems to prove that "to superintend" does not mean "to control."

Because the three presenters kept their remarks brief, there was about forty-five minutes of lively seminar discussion on the topics of the presentations. Particularly noteworthy were observations from Dick Liddy (Seton Hall) and Les Orsy (Georgetown).

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ECCLESIOLOGY

Topic: Generational Shifts in Ecclesiology
Convener: Susan K. Wood, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota
Presenters: Thomas Rausch, Loyola-Marymount University, California
Christopher Ruddy, Saint John's University, Collegeville, Minnesota

Thomas Rauch cited a number of factors leading to his impression that the concerns of his generation of theologians are different from those of younger Catholics in the academy today: current polarization in the church today, the "new apologists," the discontinuity and fragmentation in many of today's candidates for religious life, and the lack of grounding in the Catholic tradition which may lead seminarians to demand "what the Church teaches." Many young people come late to faith from a secular culture, but find little to tell them who they are as Catholics in the contemporary Catholic Church, which too often seems more concerned with church reform and with showing how similar Catholics are to other Christians. Since this seems to threaten the life of the church they've found, they are often drawn to more conservative expressions of Catholicism.

This gap in experience between the two generations leads to some attitudinal differences. An older generation is often more concerned with a rejection of the past than an embrace of the future and experience anger with the church for not changing as they had hoped and anger at the next generation for wanted forms and ways of thinking that they had rejected. Theology reflects these differences with some theologians thinking that the myriad forms of liberation theology are

the way forward and others preferring what might broadly be called *ressourcement*.

Rausch then identified three priorities for the task of ecclesiology today: evangelization, a renewed sense of Catholic identity, and a more inclusive, collegial exercise of authority. In spite of an extraordinary missionary past, today's Catholic Church is not very evangelical even though the church's mission is to proclaim salvation in Christ Jesus and to bring others into a saving relationship with him. However, an overly academic theology has become separated from the life and faith of the church. A church unsure of its own identity is not an effective instrument for evangelization, while a strong Catholic identity cannot be based on a narrow parochialism which exalts the uniqueness of the Catholic Church on the basis of a nonhistorical orthodoxy and shaky polemical arguments. A superficial ecumenism and eager embrace of religious pluralism seem to provide only a subjective or cultural grounding for faith and ecclesial allegiance. Finally a rigid and monarchical exercise of authority is itself an obstacle to evangelization.

Christopher Ruddy, representing a younger generation of theologians, identified the church as "the world reconciled" and exists to remind the world of its true story or final destiny. Ruddy argued that the church makes that truth and life present through heroism, hospitality, and holiness. He finds the call to heroism encapsulated in the Lukan refrain of Pope John Paul II's 2001 apostolic letter, *Nuvo millennio*: "Put out into the deep." This heroism is achieved in the affirmation of ordinary life. However, the search for God in the ordinary—that is, in all things—comes only after purification, conversion, and obedience to God and embrace of the Cross. Ruddy argues that the sacramental imagination has lost its edge in a world that has replaced sin with therapy and fatalism, and ignored the necessity of conversion if grace is to be discerned and embraced. Grace has become cheap. The church today needs to recover that same spirit of heroism and generosity that sent missionaries to certain suffering and possible death. Such heroism calls for a real love for the world.

Hospitality makes room for the gifts and burdens of others and provides stable community in an increasingly mobile and fragmented world. Hospitality, such as that embodied by Jesus on the road to Emmaus, manifests itself in friendship and truth. In friendship the church makes the "joys and hopes, the grief and anguish" of the world its own and this entails a sharing of life, even in the most difficult of circumstances. Such friendship is grounded in truth and is received through listening and argument. This emphasis on truth helps counter a tendency toward a tolerance and openness toward other beliefs and ideas that can slip into a well-intentioned, but sloppy, relativism and indifference that ignores claims of revelation and objectivity.

Hospitality and heroism lead to the third "sign of the times," holiness. The witnesses to holiness speak more convincingly than teachers. Three dimensions of holiness are poverty, beauty, and the spirituality and structures of communion. The closer the church is to the Christ who is poor in means and in spirit, the

closer it will be to God. Paradoxically, poverty is deeply attractive and beautiful, for beauty reaches its fullest glory in the crucified and risen Christ. Through beauty, what can be otherwise distance and other touches something deeply intimate even in those of different or no faith. Lastly, the witness of holiness is manifest in the spirituality and structures of communion. This requires the greater participation of all of the baptized in the life and structure of the church.

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