HISTORICAL STUDIES, II

Convener:     Helen M. Ciernick, Mount Marty College
Moderator:    Daniel Doyle, Villanova University
Presenters:   Anthony C. Sciglitano, Jr., Seton University
              Richard Penaskovic, Auburn University
              Massimo Faggioli, University of Saint Thomas

The Historical Studies Topic administrative team selected three papers that addressed an aspect of the convention topic All the Saints or honored John Henry Newman. In his presentation, "Charles Taylor: The Intervention of Sanctity in Narratives of Modernity," Anthony Sciglitano examined the figure of the saint in Charles Taylor's *A Secular Age,* arguing that Taylor's discussions of saints play a central role in the book's complex argument. Breaking the presentation into three parts, Sciglitano noted that Taylor's argument (1) intends an intervention to cure unhealthy modern habits of narration, (2) challenges official theology and ecclesiastical aridity, and (3) presents the saint as appropriating aspects of modern culture such as mobilization and the turn inward, while transcending their cultural milieu.

In the first part, Sciglitano argued that Taylor consistently avers to the figure of the saint to mark the saint's discursive marginalization in modernity and to suggest the saint as a counter to a modern narration of religion that names the extraordinary excessive and the supernatural unnatural. He pointed out that for Taylor the saint challenges characteristics of modernity that serve to marginalize the transformative and renunciatory of orientation sanctity. Having noted the first prong of Taylor's argument that intends an intervention to cure unhealthy modern habits of narration, Sciglitano turned his attention to the second prong of Taylor's intervention that challenges official theology and ecclesiastical aridity. Sciglitano explained that for Taylor the saints become far more than good people; they become sources for the rejuvenation of ecclesial life and thought. In his third part, Sciglitano explored how the Taylor sees the saint as both appropriating and moving beyond the culture in which he/she lives. He then concluded with brief suggestions regarding how Taylor's work may be more fully appreciated with the inclusion of a more directly theological perspective.

Richard Penaskovic in his presentation, "The Ecumenical Importance of J. H. Newman and the Tractarian Movement (1833-1845)," noted that in addition to raising the key question, What does it mean to be a Church?, the Tractarians demonstrated a lively interest in the liturgy, arguing that the ancient and undivided Church must be the model in devotion, doctrine, and worship. Thus, Penaskovic explained, in this connection the Tractarians had an ecumenical motive in mind believing that liturgical uniformity should lead the way to the visible unity of the Catholic Church. However, despite this position, the Tractarians did not have reunion as their main goal. Rather, by emphasizing the authority of the *Urkirche* and the basic catholicity of the Anglican formularies, they stressed Anglican beliefs held in common.

Shifting his focus, Penaskovic noted that Newman's views on church unity are not set down systematically in one work and changed over his life. Newman, he explained, sees the restoration of unity as an ultimate good during his Anglican period, and insists on the common ground between the two churches without glossing over the differences. He saw reunion coming through reform, but not possible during his day because of denominational rigidity and corruption in Christians' hearts. Consequently, Newman believed that reunion would come about only through the grace of God. Christians then must employ the ecumenical tools *par excellence* of devotion, prayer, and religious spirit. Taking these elements of Newman's vision of church unity into account, Penaskovic argued that the doctrine of the communion of saints must be seen as the source of Newman's ecumenical vision. Penaskovic concluded by offering some reflections on the ecumenical significance of Newman and the Tractarians for today's church.

In "From 'All the Saints' to 'All the Pope Saints'," Massimo Faggioli observed that the discourse on holiness, sanctity and sainthood has changed significantly within the Catholic Church and in theology during Vatican II and the post-Vatican II years. But the call of the whole Church to holiness has become, in the eyes of many Catholic theologians and Roman officials, the need to proclaim every pope of the 20th century a saint. The growing centrality of the role of the Pontiff given by official Catholicism has led, in the last decades, to the fact that a few popes since Pius IX have been proclaimed saints, and that for almost every pope since Pius IX the canonical processes for beatification or canonization are underway. We need to understand if there is a change between the medieval roots of the idea of an "ex officio sainthood" for the pope and the motivation of the popes of the 20th century to justify the beatifications and canonizations of their most recent predecessors. We must also understand if this present trend is part of the new Roman policy on canonizations or if there is a specific element suggesting a theological transition from the idea that "the Church is holy" to "the Holy Father is a saint."

The communio and the "people of God" ecclesiology of Vatican II seem to be increasingly subject to institutional and political components that have scant theological ground. The ecclesiological balance of the "making of the saints" is shifting more and more towards Rome, giving the local Churches a role just in the creation of saints that appear to be eminently "local saints," while the "universal saints" come from Rome. Faggioli concluded noting that one of the most visible effects of the increasing focus on the sanctity of the pope has ecclesiological consequences that are distant from the ecclesiological highlights of Vatican II. In particular, it seems that the crisis of papal infallibility seems to be compensated by another kind of power.

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