

LECTURE BY THE HOLY FATHER BENEDICT XVI AT THE UNIVERSITY OF ROME “LA SAPIENZA”

The Address that the Holy Father intended to give during a visit to La Sapienza University in Rome on Thursday, 17 January 2008.

The Path and Progress of Twentieth-Century Catholic Theology J. Michael McDermott, SJ

Abstract: *Theology depends upon philosophy for understanding revelation, and philosophy enjoys a symbiotic relation with culture, especially physics. From the beginning Catholic theology insisted upon the centrality of freedom, divine and human, for understanding reality. It shattered the natural necessities postulated by Greek thought. Yet Catholic theology also employed Greek philosophy to structure and explain revelation. Aquinas achieved a magnificent synthesis of Plato and Aristotle that allowed Catholic theology to adapt to twentieth-century cultural changes. This article relates the theological changes to cultural changes. The need of adaptation encouraged theologians to unearth difficulties inherent in outmoded Thomistic syntheses and propose new adaptations. Vatican II can be explained by the perspectival change in Thomism that was occurring during the twentieth century and came to maturation during the council. Finally the article indicates how the problem of freedom’s relation to thought’s necessities remains central to theology’s project. John Paul II’s emphasis on freedom points the way into the future.*

The Liturgical Reduction

Kevin Hart

Abstract: *No longer do postmoderns interested in theology talk about the death of God; rather, they tend to talk about living before God. Of particular interest in this regard are those postmoderns who have revived phenomenology so that it is possible to give an account in its terms of being human before the divine. And within this group the best guides to the new phenomenological thinking in theology are those interested in sacramental theology. This essay offers a brief reading of three of these guides, each of whom has learned a good deal from Heidegger: Jean-Luc Marion, Louis-Marie Chauvet, and Jean-Yves Lacoste. The essay takes its point of orientation from Lacoste’s notion of the “liturgical reduction,” namely, the leading back of “being human” to “being human before God.”*

Anscombe, Ernst and McCabe: Wittgenstein and Catholic Theology

Fergus Kerr, OP

Abstract: *Given that Wittgenstein’s later philosophy is of major importance how much impact has it had on Catholic theology? We consider an essay on transubstantiation by Wittgenstein’s student, translator and literary executor Elizabeth Anscombe; the course on philosophical psychology given by Cornelius Ernst, OP, the only future theologian who attended his lectures; and writings by Herbert McCabe, OP, who more explicitly than either of the others cited Wittgenstein – all to assess how affected they were by his teaching.*

Love, By All Accounts

Eleonore Stump

Abstract: *The heart of Aquinas's account of the nature of love is the idea that love requires two interconnected desires:*

(1) the desire for the good of the beloved, and

(2) the desire for union with the beloved.

My focus is on the nature of these two desires and the love which emerges from their interaction. I argue that Aquinas's account of love is more powerful than rival contemporary accounts of love. Furthermore, Aquinas's account is helpful for understanding forgiveness too, because, to the extent to which love is implicated in forgiveness, the absence of either desire undermines forgiveness also.

Friendship, Gender, and Vocation

Prudence Allen, RSM

Abstract: *"Friendship, Gender, and Vocation" gives an overview of four historical periods of writing about essential characteristics of friendship: ancient, medieval, modern, and contemporary. It traces the relation of these essential characteristics of friendship to the philosophy of the human person as lived by woman and by man in the three paradigm vocations to the priesthood, consecrated life, and sacramental marriage. It concludes with a brief demonstration of how contemporary Catholic thought about friendship overcomes some key distortions about friendship that occurred in modern philosophy.*

The Breath and Breadth of Being

Kenneth Schmitz

Abstract: *This is the text of the Lagbi Chair Lecture, which was delivered on March 5, 2008 at the Pontifical College Josephinum. In it Prof. Schmitz considers the intensity and comprehensive universality of the mystery of being through three "touch points": knowledge and truth; free human action and the good; and creativity. Under the first heading, he explores the implications that flow from the active reception of mental entities with intelligible content that is specific to human nature. Then, he considers of the nature of free human action or freedom and its relationship to the good, the value inherent in being, to virtue, and to natural law. Finally, he reflects upon how human creativity brings together knowledge and freedom to raise existing material things to a new level and investing them with a new dignity.*

The Self-limitation of Reason

Patricia Pintado

Abstract: *In this essay, Prof. Pintado elucidates a theme that is found diffused throughout Ratzinger's, and now Benedict's, critique of modernity: the "self-limitation of reason." She proceeds in two steps. First, she examines the Holy Father's analysis of the crisis in the philosophy of the late Middle Ages, which issued in Galileo's impulse toward Greek thought "purified" of Christianity. Second, she traces Benedict's observations regarding the increasing dominance, during the period from the Reformation to the Enlightenment, of the scientific method, leading to a destructive positivism. Following his critique of modernity's excesses, Pope Benedict XVI's positive proposal encourages us "to give a new thrust to the culture of our time and to restore the Christian faith to full citizenship in it."*

Husserlian Phenomenology and Ignatian Spiritual Experience

Joseph T. Papa

***Abstract:** Husserlian phenomenology is proposed as a method for the analysis of mystical experience. Husserl's principle of motivation is first described, then used to analyze consolations with and without previous cause, two central spiritual experiences described in St. Ignatius of Loyola's Spiritual Exercises. The motivational differences found in these two types of consolation are proposed as the key distinguishing feature in Ignatius's description of them, with the result that Husserlian language and concepts are shown to be effective for such analysis. Implications are drawn regarding the prominent role of consolation without preceding cause within the entire strategy of the Spiritual Exercises.*