

Karl Rahner's Efforts for a Relevant Christianity

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Abstract: Karl Rahner is a theologian who struggled with, and alongside, a Church that was struggling to reconcile deeply held faith convictions with the changed times. This article attempts to describe some aspects of that struggle.

Key words: task of theology, Heidegger, Marechal, Aquinas, Vatican II, pluralism, dialogue

The efforts of Karl Rahner have touched many aspects of theology concerning persons, their relationship to God and pluralism along with the issues they raise. Rahner has influenced much of Catholic theology in the twentieth century and played an important role both in Vatican Council II as well as in its aftermath. The editors of the volume *Karl Rahner in Dialogue, Conversations and Interviews 1965-1982* point out that Rahner's theological views on questions and issues changed over a period of time, but "his architectonic view of the faith remained unchanged."¹ Rahner came from a middle class, Catholic family that had schooled him well in the faith but without any pretensions of introducing him to discussions about philosophical or theological questions. When he joined the Jesuits on April 20, 1922, he was introduced to Neo-Scholasticism by his professors but did not feel challenged by them to look for new avenues in philosophical or theological research. Two persons were responsible for the stimulus that influenced his thinking and led him to discover a new way of 'doing' theology: Martin Heidegger (1889-1976) and Joseph Marechal (1878-1944). He says:

Naturally, there are interesting people outside my order and the Church whom I've met and who have indeed made a certain impression on me. Martin Heidegger should, of course, be mentioned first of all... Certainly, I learned a variety of things from him, even if I have to say that I owe my most basic, decisive, philosophical direction, insofar as it comes from someone else, more, in fact, to the Belgian philosopher and Jesuit, Joseph Marechal. His philosophy already moved beyond the traditional neoscholasticism. I brought that direction from Marechal to my studies with Heidegger and it was not superseded by him.²

In this article, an effort is made to describe some aspects of Rahner's thinking that some parties in the Church found difficult to reconcile with the Catholic theology as propounded in ecclesiastical institutions. He appreciated the Catholic doctrine and faith that he received from his family and which he prized till the end of his life. In making this effort, no attempt is made to provide an *apologia* to explain his quintessential reflections as set down in his rejected doctoral thesis *Spirit in the World*.³ Nor will this be an occasion to justify or reject the claims made in the revised edition of *Hearers of the Word* brought out by Johannes B. Metz.⁴ *Hearers of the Word* deals with the link between philosophy and faith as this affects the human phenomenon in history.⁵

Rahner considered himself to be a theologian: "I myself aim to be a theologian and really nothing else; simply because I am just not a philosopher, and am under no illusions that I could ever be one."⁶ He did not see himself as a traditional theologian ensconced in the world of academics and it was not his intention to disparage philosophy.⁷ His overall purpose was to communicate the message of Christianity and he felt the need to produce a new genre of theological writing—the "first level of reflection."

We get a remarkable glimpse as to what Rahner was attempting to do when we read through his lecture notes put into book form:

This book, therefore, proceeds from the conviction, and it will try to confirm this in the process, that between the simple faith of the catechism on the one hand, and on the other the process of working through all of the disciplines [sociology, history, phenomenology and philosophy of religion, exegesis, biblical theology and systematic theology] we mentioned and many more besides, there is a way of giving an intellectually honest justification of Christian faith, and this precisely on the level that we called the "first level of reflection".⁸

Rahner contrasts this level of reflection with another level of reflection where "the scientific expert in theology" would be called to elaborate his theology "in an explicit and scientifically adequate way with all the questions and tasks of these disciplines."⁹ Acknowledging the formidable task undertaken by the theologian, Rahner asks the reader to "remember that he ought to listen more to what I wanted to say than

what I actually did say.”¹⁰ How did Rahner see his task as a Catholic theologian?

(a) Rahner the Catholic Theologian

On the occasion of his seventieth birthday, Rahner was interviewed by *Herder Korrespondenz* and affirmed that his “theology is reflection on the data that was always readily available in sound scholastic theology.”¹¹ In the same interview, he said that he “tried to ferret out the inner power and dynamism which is hidden in scholastic theology.” (p 17) On being asked how he would define himself against the background of conservatism during the period from Pius X (1903-1914) to Pius XII (1939-1958), Rahner replied as follows:

I am a Catholic theologian who attempts in absolute loyalty to the magisterium of the Church to rethink Catholic teaching... There are, of course, positions of the magisterium that are not definitive. It can err and issue a statement that can be criticised or reformulated... Catholic theologians not only can, but must criticize nondefinitive statements of the magisterium and develop ever more profound interpretations of the dogmas that have already been defined. Here there is a great deal of freedom, and it must remain so.¹²

In the pre-conciliar atmosphere of Vatican II where the *Idem semper* (the same forever) attitude was cultivated in matters of church doctrine, and where the doctrine of “creeping infallibility” was attached to many magisterial pronouncements, Rahner’s efforts to “develop ever more profound interpretations of the dogmas” must have been very disturbing.¹³

While admiring the genius of Thomas Aquinas, Rahner felt that the theology of Aquinas had been reduced to being no more than a commentary on the *Summa Theologiae* by the teachers of theology who used it as a textbook. In fact, the theology taught in the Roman schools consisted of twenty-four theses which reflected what was contained in the *Summa*.¹⁴ Such theology fostered conservatism in the Church’s thinking and created an impression of the Church having an establishment theology that a student studying theology—normally the student doing ecclesiastical studies—had merely to accept. He offers a reason why this happened:

Up to Pius XII—just look at *Humani Generis* (1950)—there prevailed in the Church the strange idea that there had been a history of dogmas and their development, but now we are at last in possession of concepts that could not be improved. If such an idea is deeply impressed on the psyche through a shock, as, for example, in the nineteenth century through the Enlightenment, it is quite understandable that the return to a progressive thinker like Thomas could lead to conservatism.¹⁵

In contrast, the Second Vatican Council fostered methods of teaching and scientific approaches that obviated the need of Thomas' *Summa* being used as a mere textbook of theology.¹⁶

According to Rahner, a theology for the contemporary world should possess four characteristics:¹⁷

1) It should be pluralistic and hence many theologies would exist. "This pluralism...raises new questions about the relationship of theology to the magisterium and to the common creed of the Church..."

2) It would need to be more immediately missionary and mystagogical. "...with Christian faith losing its social basis and support and becoming more a faith that is rooted in the personal decision and conviction of the individual, theology will have to serve faith in a new way. By mystagogical I mean bringing the *fides quae* or what we believe into the closest possible unity with the *fides qua* or the act of faith itself, and thus showing what the tenets of faith actually mean for the individual and for society."

3) It would have to be demythologizing, that is "expressing Christian faith in such a way that it can really be assimilated by contemporary people," while being bound to the (Christian) tradition.

4) Such theology would have to be transcendental in so far as "it will bring out more clearly the role of the knowing subject in all of our objective knowledge, including our knowledge via faith and theology."

(b) The Starting Point of Rahner's Theologizing

The Christian message calls a person in his or her historical journey of life. The existential situation of the human phenomenon does not begin with a situation that is the focus of philosophy alone, the domain of reason, and only then by theology, the domain of faith and revelation. "It [the Christian message] summons man before the real truth of his being. It summons him before the truth in which he remains inescapably caught, although this prison is ultimately the infinite expanse of the

incomprehensible mystery of God.”¹⁸ As a consequence, a person’s self-understanding that is historically situated takes into account his/her total life’s experience, part of which is the experience of Christianity. Rahner explains his position as follows:

Even the most basic, self-grounded and most transcendental philosophy of human existence is always achieved only within historical experience. Indeed, it is itself a moment in human history, and hence we can never philosophize as though man has not had that experience which is the experience of Christianity...A philosophy that is absolutely free of theology is not even possible in our historical situation. The fundamental autonomy of this philosophy can only consist in the fact that it reflects upon its historical origins and asks whether it sees itself as still bound to these origins in history and in grace as something valid, and whether this self-experience of man can still be experienced today as something valid and binding. Conversely, dogmatic theology also wants to tell man what he is, and what he still remains even if he rejects this message of Christianity.¹⁹

Since it is Rahner himself who identifies Heidegger as the person who has influenced him in his theologizing, we may ask how. Attending Heidegger’s seminars for two years (1934-1936), Rahner speaks about how he participated in those seminars, and about the protocol of reading a summary of a previous session with “some fear and trepidation” possibly because his own research was theological: “purgatory, the nature of the sacraments, the Trinity, and so on,” in contrast to Heidegger’s own philosophy. He also explains in some detail the influence of his two “mentors”—Marechal and Heidegger:

Heidegger’s philosophy that was characteristic of the years 1934 to 1936 was quite distinct from his later philosophy. The Heidegger that I learned was the Heidegger of *Being and Time*, the Heidegger of the battlecry, perhaps even the Heidegger of metaphysics. That was the Heidegger with whom I learned to think a little bit, and for that I am grateful to him. Insofar as it is philosophical, my theology does not really show the systematic and thematic influence of Heidegger. What he communicated was the desire to think, the ability to think. Then, of course, up to a certain point, influenced by my early interest in Marechal, I studied what is called, in a very vague and general sense, existential philosophy or existential theology but which, strictly speaking, was not necessarily linked

with Heidegger. I would say that Martin Heidegger was the only teacher for whom I developed the respect that a disciple has for a great master. That had little to do with individual questions or individual formulations of my theology. I would say that Heidegger had little influence on my philosophy or even my theology, although I am really extremely grateful to him.²⁰

Heidegger claimed that through the periods of history of philosophy the meaningfulness of being had been forgotten and he wanted to retrieve what had been lost in that history. As understood in the thinking of Martin Heidegger, existence is restricted to the human phenomenon; man is the “shepherd of being”. This is so because only in the case of a human person is it possible for him/her to reflect on him/herself and know the ‘other’. Explaining “existence” in the thought of Martin Heidegger, John Macquarie says:

...in Heidegger and other traditionalist writers, the word [existence] is restricted to the human existent. This does not imply any unreality on the part of other beings, but draws attention to the fact that the human being stands out (ex-sists) as the only being that is open to and responsible for what is. Similarly, the German word *Dasein*, usually left untranslated in English writings, traditionally stood for any kind of existence, but is restricted in Heidegger to the human existent. Of the adjectives derived from ‘existence’, *existential* refers to the universal structures of human existence, while *existentiell* refers to the unique, particular existent.²¹

If one were to ask how exactly Heidegger entered into Rahner’s theological explorations, he would say the following:

...it is not specific doctrines that I have taken from Heidegger, but rather a style of thinking and of investigating which has proved most valuable. This may be described as a method or approach by which one does not examine dogmatic truths *merely* as evidence derived from positive sources, but one seeks to construct a synthesis. One takes the various dogmatic Richmond, (1968) 1973, pp 61-62. See also Karl Rahner’s and Herbert Vorgrimler’s *Theological Dictionary*, (Translated by Richard Strachen), edited by Cornelius Ernst, O.P., p 160: “In the philosophy of M. Heidegger, and similarly in the ‘philosophy of existence’ in general, the concept of existence is confined to man, since man is that privileged

entity which possess the understanding of being, that is, understanding of itself, of its 'there-ness' and of being in general. Hence human existence displays the real ingredience (sic!) of being; and therefore all philosophical enquiry into the nature of being must begin with the analysis of this existence (Theological anthropology).propositions and reduces them to certain fundamental principles. In that way an internal, coherent body of dogmatic truth is established.²²

Perhaps the real point of departure in Rahner's theologizing is to be found in what he refers to as Transcendental Anthropology. For human experience is not seen as antecedent to or logically prior to the divine presence in the human, but because of the datum of revelation as seen in the person of Jesus Christ, God Incarnate, a person can gradually be brought to awareness of God's presence already present in that same experience. In fact, Rahner's *Spirit in the World* that seeks to interpret Thomas Aquinas' *Summa Theologiae* I, Question 84, Article 7 "Can the intellect actually know anything through the intelligible species which it possesses, without turning to the phantasms?" establishes the a-priori conditions for revelation to occur:

Man concerns Thomas the theologian at the point at which God manifests Himself in such a way that He is able to be heard in the word of His revelation: "from the viewpoint of his soul." In order to be able to hear whether God speaks, we must know that he is...If man is understood in this way, he can listen to hear whether God has not perhaps spoken, because he knows that God is; God can speak, because He is the Unknown.²³

(c) Rahner's Transcendental Anthropology

Rahner's understanding of the human phenomenon begins with the supposition that the human being as created is already a person in whom the Spirit of God is at work. In fact, the human phenomenon should not be considered solely by itself if the fulfilment of men and women is realized through God's self-communication—grace:

...right from the outset the human being is not only radically, unequivocally open to God as the absolute mystery, surrendering to it, but also because the dynamism of God's self-communication, what we call grace, Holy Spirit, is also at work from the outset. Thus, if and to the extent a person once experiences this inner offer of grace and historically objectifies it in a continuing process

which, finally, is precisely identical with human history, then a person is already in the realm of revelation and theology—a theocentric theology.²⁴

For Rahner, such an understanding is the starting point for understanding and speaking about nature and grace which is not quite the case with the usual teaching concerning these topics in theological anthropology:

....grace appears there as a mere super-structure, very fine in itself certainly, which is imposed upon nature by God's free decree, and in such a way that the relationship between the two is no more intense than that of a freedom from contradiction...²⁵

This starting point of Rahner was elucidated in *Spirit in the World* where he interprets Thomas Aquinas' doctrine of the "turning to the phantasms":

By spirit I mean a power which reaches out beyond the world and knows the metaphysical. World is the name of the reality which is accessible to the immediate experience of man. How, according to Thomas, human knowing can be spirit in the world, is the question which is the concern of this work. The proposition that human knowing is first of all in the world of experience and that everything metaphysical is known only in and *at* the world is expressed by Thomas in his doctrine of the *conversion* and of the intellect's being constantly turned to the phenomenon, the doctrine of the "conversion of the intellect to the phantasm."²⁶

Writing the Foreword to this work of Rahner ("An Essay on Karl Rahner"), Johannes B. Metz says:

Spirit in the World uses a Thomistic metaphysics of knowledge explained in terms of transcendental and existential philosophy to define man as that essence of absolute transcendence towards God insofar as man in his understanding and interpretation of the world respectfully "pre-apprehends" (*vorgreift*) towards God.²⁷

This point of departure in Rahner's transcendental philosophy seemed to imply a "mixing" of the natural and supernatural in the human phenomenon and, if so, would be at odds with a certain school of interpretation where God's free action of creation is later followed by the (traditional) free gift of grace. The following quotation from Rahner may explain how he proceeds in his theologizing:

Our actual nature is *never* 'pure' nature. It is a nature installed in a supernatural order which man can never leave, even as a sinner and unbeliever. It is a nature which is continually being determined (which does not mean justified) by the supernatural grace of salvation offered to it. And these 'existentials' of man's concrete, 'historical' nature are not purely states beyond consciousness. They make themselves felt in the experience of man. By simple reflexion on himself, in the light of natural reason, he cannot simply and clearly distinguish them from the natural spiritual activity which is the manifestation of his nature. But once he knows from revelation that there is an order of grace, not due to him and not belonging to the necessary constitutives of his being, he becomes more cautious. He must allow for the fact that much of his concrete experience which he is almost automatically tempted to attribute to his 'nature' may perhaps in fact be the effect in him of what he must recognize as unmerited grace in the light of theology.²⁸

It is not philosophical speculation by itself that brings Rahner to recognize unmerited grace in a person's experience; it is because he is a member of the Church that is the enduring and public witness to the historical event of Jesus Christ. An individual's recognition of unmerited grace would occur "in the light of theology" because of the community of the Church that preserves the *memoria Christi* in its teaching, its sacraments and its life. Rahner describes the Church as follows:

...it is the concrete appearance of this message of Jesus, and because it is the community of those who believe in Christ and who entrust their existence in its entirety to him...the Church is the mediator and guarantor of my life in unity and solidarity with God. To this degree I can call the Church my mother. Obviously this has nothing to do with the infantile attachment to the Church or with a clerical identification with all that goes on in it.²⁹

There are many aspects to Rahner's theology and it is possible to deal with only some of these since taking all of them and describing their significance in the overall architectonic view of the faith of Rahner would lengthen this article prohibitively. At this stage, it will help to consider some conflicts that Rahner's efforts occasioned within the Church.

(d) Conflict of Interpretations in Rahner's Theology

While in his publications, Rahner may have received critical appraisal of his theology and thinking, he was never condemned for saying something that denied an essential tenet of the Catholic faith. At times, the censor appointed by his religious superiors may have disallowed a publication as, in 1951 when he was forbidden to publish "Problems in Contemporary Mariology". In 1954 his reflections on "The Many Masses and the One Sacrifice" seemed to be at variance with what Pius XII held and the pope took issue with him. The upshot was that Rahner's superiors forbade him to discuss the matter concerning concelebration and in 1962 Rahner was instructed to send all his intended publications to Rome for censorship. It was in 1962—and seven months into Vatican Council II—that the censorship was withdrawn.³⁰

Rahner's participation in Vatican II

Cardinal Koenig of Vienna took Rahner as his adviser to Vatican II and Pope John XXIII appointed Rahner as a *peritus* at the Council.

Rahner's stature in the commissions set up to formulate and present the different schemas in the council hall was immense. Yves Congar attests to it in the following jottings when he had ample opportunities of working with Rahner in the different commissions:

(Concerning schema XVII which was Card. Suenens' responsibility in the council)

Discussion of the text resumed. Fr. Rahner monopolised the discussion once again. He is magnificent, he is brave, he is clear-sighted and deep, but, in the end, he is indiscreet.³¹

(Concerning *De Populi Dei*)

Rahner, as always, monopolised the dialogue. He is marvellous, but he does not realise that where he is there is no room left for anything else.³²

(Concerning the question of Tradition)

Rahner said to me: Danielou gets on my nerves in the extreme by his habit of taking up, one minute later, as his own, an idea expressed by someone else, and that he had, at first, dismissed... This is certainly true, but it must irritate Rahner more

than others because of his particular personality and because he is so intellectually honest.³³

Rahner and the International Theological Commission (ITC)

Set up by Pope Paul VI in 1969, the ITC was presided over by the head (Cardinal Franjo Seper) of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (CDF) and was meant to help the different dicasteries in Rome. It had a term of 5 years (May 1969-August 1974) and included Rahner among the 30 theologians who constituted the commission when it was first set up. Rahner resigned after the first term because he felt that the CDF and Seper were not willing to discuss important theological issues with the ITC.

...in its actual work, not its ideas, the International Theological Commission is more or less ineffective. Where the guilt exactly lies remains to be seen. No Roman commission has ever asked the Theological Commission for advice. It stews, if you will, in its own juices. It deals with problems and speaks about them in more or less praiseworthy ways, but that's about it.³⁴

Since every account of the faith begins with a particular understanding of the context, the account will be coloured by the context. For Rahner, the idea of Christianity needed to be validated in a world that had travelled twenty centuries since Jesus Christ and had found now that the traditional ideas as expounded in Neo-Scholasticism were unable to speak meaningfully on God, organized religion and ethical stances. Rahner's efforts in anthropology were often seen as a capitulation of the divine to the human.³⁵

However, Rahner is very clear about respecting and preserving the divine mystery of God in his theology and elaborating an anthropology that does justice to this mystery:

Now in the jargon of theologians I belong to the 'anthropocentric' theologians. In any ultimate sense that is nonsense. My aim is to be a theologian who says that *God* is the most important reality there is, that we exist to love him in a self-forgetting way, to adore him, to exist for *him*, to leap out of our own domain of existence into the abyss of the incomprehensibility of God. It is obvious that a theologian has to say that it is the *human being* who,

related ultimately to God, must forget self for God. In this sense one can never do theology anthropocentrically enough.³⁶

Pluralism in the Church

In addition, Rahner's point of departure offered a substantial basis both for admitting religious pluralism in the Church as also for the idea of a World Church:

Today the Church lives in a pluralistic society, and it has a worldwide job; it has become in the course of the last century a world-Church. Consequently, theology has the job of a dialogue with the contemporary person's understanding of self and the world; that means an interdisciplinary dialogue with the contemporary sciences as well. Beyond that it has the job of being a worldwide theology, that is, not only a theology suited to European and North American cultures, but it must develop theologies of the different cultures and situations in the world. At least it must develop a Latin American, East Asian, and African theology.

That also means, of course, that contemporary theology must be a theology that itself develops as well as accepts the modern scientific methods and the results coming from them.³⁷³⁷

Karl Rahner in Dialogue

Rahner had already been speaking of the Catholic Church in diaspora.³⁸ In the series *Theological Investigations*, Volume XX, Rahner develops not only his ideas about a World Church but suggests structural changes in the Church.³⁹ Salvation outside the Church as outlined in *Lumen Gentium* 16 and *Gaudium et Spes* 22 would be the practical way in which a person could be saved even when he/she did not belong to the visible Church. This could be cogently defended from the perspective of Rahner's theological anthropology. Such theology would call for a new conception of the Church's mission in the world, something which was unacceptable to highly placed officials in the Church since this would change appreciably the way in which the *missio ad gentes* had been conceived. In the past, the Church had relied on the "donor model" to exercise its apostolic mission where it offered sacramental grace to those who were seen as totally bereft of it. Rahner's theological anthropology would suggest that the apostolic mission of the Church be seen as that of recognizing the saving presence of God outside the Church as Vatican II

has, in fact, affirmed. The “breaking of idols” is perhaps Christianity’s present mission. It will be a mission carried out with hope in the future where God’s self-communication will be recognized in the different religions with which Christianity enters into dialogue.

On the other hand, Rahner’s doctrine on the “anonymous Christian” which he did not forsake till the end of his life was challenged by progressives in the Church. To those who felt that Rahner was imposing a nomenclature on an unwilling “opponent” there is an anecdote found in his writings that bears retelling:

...Nishitani the well-known Japanese philosopher, the head of the Kyoto school, who is familiar with the notion of the anonymous Christian, once asked me: What would you say to my treating you as an anonymous Zen Buddhist? I replied: certainly you may and should do so from your point of view; I feel myself honoured by such an interpretation, even if I am obliged to regard you as being in error or if I assume that, correctly understood, to be a genuine Zen Buddhist is identical with being a genuine Christian, in the sense directly and properly intended by such statements. Of course in terms of objective social awareness it is indeed clear that the Buddhist is not a Christian and the Christian is not a Buddhist. Nishitani replied: Then on this point we are entirely at one.⁴⁰

Rahner would also like the statements from the pope to affirm clearly the type of acceptance they demand; he would like the pope to indicate clearly the relative degree of binding force which a teaching of the Church entails.⁴¹ Such an expectation would militate against creeping infallibility and the presumption that whenever Rome speaks a matter has been decided no matter if it is defined as of faith or whether it is the personal theology of an individual.

Finally, as indicated in footnote 16, Rahner was in fact very much in line with the *aggiornamento* heralded by Pope John XXIII who appointed him a *peritus* in Vatican II. Rahner’s efforts gave rise to a process of theologizing that capitalized on human experience as present in a context and recognized in the person the God-given ability to reflect and discover the presence of the divine in the world. When asked to summarize his theology about two years before he passed away, he said the following:

I would plainly and simply say that I am a Catholic Christian, I am attempting to reflect on my faith and relate it to the questions, needs and difficulties which confront me as a man and a Christian... But in general, I really have endeavoured to pursue a theology that looks to concrete proclamation in the Church, to dialogue with people of today. Perhaps some will believe that this is just the opposite of what I have done, for there are, of course, many people who say that my writings are not understandable, that I write sentences that are too long, and so on. I believe, however, that the pastoral concern of proclaiming the Christian faith for today has been the normative aspect of my work.⁴²

One can say that the “turn towards the subject” entered into Rahner’s theological enterprise; he did not find this approach disconcerting nor did he perceive this point of departure as inimical to Catholic faith and dogma. Throughout the length of this article, there are sufficient quotations from Rahner himself indicating that his theological anthropology was a fruitful constant in his elaborating not only a theology of the human person but also of his Christology. Distaste for his point of departure from some Christian circles could not be seen as a clear denial of Catholic faith and dogma even by those who disagreed with Rahner’s theological anthropology. What Rahner achieved was to illustrate the need for pluralism in the Catholic Church’s thinking and its theology. The Church with the present Pope Francis is reaping the fruits of Rahner’s efforts.

Notes:

1. Paul Imhof, Hubert Biallowons (editors), Harvey D. Egan (translator), Crossroad, New York, 1986, p. 5.
2. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue...*, Interview with Leo J. O’Donovan, for *America* magazine, Munich (March 10, 1979).
3. (Translated by William Dych SJ), Herder and Herder, New York, 1968. (Original Edition: *Geist in Welt*, Munich, 1939.)
4. (Translated by Michael Richards), Herder and Herder, New York, 1969. (Original Edition: *Horer des Wortes*, Munich, 1963.)
5. “The present work, which falls into the category of ‘fundamental-theological anthropology,’ is concerned with an idealistic piece of

philosophical enlightenment in matters of faith, something that seems the more urgent in our times as the basic relation of man to history loses more and more ground to the categorical pre-eminence of science and technology as an ideal system of epistemology, and as the modern individual first of all looks upon the founding of existence and his own perplexity in the face of it, in a historical context, with scepticism or incomprehension." Johannes B. Metz in the preface to *Hearers of the Word*, p viii.

6. *Theological Investigations* (TI), Volume XVII, (Translated by Margaret Kohl), "19. Some Clarifying Remarks about my Own Work," New York, 1981, p 243.
7. TI, Volume XVII, "19. Some Clarifying Remarks about my Own Work," p 244: "The philosophy of expert, specialised scholarship becomes a philosophy that is existentially empty and ineffective. Itself moving in circles round its own axis, it moves no one else at all."
8. *The Foundations of Christian Faith, An Introduction to the Idea of Christianity*, (Translated by William V. Dych), New York, 1978, p xii.
9. See footnote 8.
10. TI, Volume XVII, "19. Some Clarifying Remarks about my own Work," p 248.
11. *Faith in a Wintry Season, Conversations and Interviews with Karl Rahner in the Last Years of His Life*, edited by Paul Imhof and Hubert Biallowons, (Translation edited by Harvey D. Egan), "2. Grace as the Heart of Human Existence," New York, 1990, p 16.
12. *Faith in a Wintry Season...*, "20. The Future of the World and the Church," Interview with Giancarlo Zizola, Rome (1982), p 155.
13. "creeping infallibility" implies attributing a sense of infallibility to any papal pronouncement even when the claim to its being infallible is absent.
14. TI, Volume XIII, (Translated by David Bourke), New York, 1975, "1. On Recognizing the Importance of Thomas Aquinas," pp 9-10.
15. *Faith in a Wintry Season...*, "4. The Importance of Thomas Aquinas," Interview with Jan van den Eijnden, Innsbruck (May 1982), p 58.

16. TI, Volume XIII, (Translated by David Bourke), New York, 1975, "1. On Recognizing the importance of Thomas Aquinas," p 4.
17. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "5. The Church's Responsibility for the World," Interview with William V. Dych, S.J. for *America* magazine, New York (October 31, 1970), pp 49-50.
18. *Foundations of Christian Faith*, p 24.
19. *Foundations of Christian Faith*, p 25.
20. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, Interview with Peter Pawlowsky for Radio Austria, Vienna, (July 11, 1980), "45. On Becoming a Theologian," p 257.
21. John Macquarrie: *Martin Heidegger*, Makers of Contemporary Theology, Richmond, (1968) 1973, pp 61-62. See also Karl Rahner's and Herbert Vorgrimler's *Theological Dictionary*, (Translated by Richard Strachen), edited by Cornelius Ernst, O.P., p 160: "In the philosophy of M. Heidegger, and similarly in the 'philosophy of existence' in general, the concept of existence is confined to man, since man is that privileged entity which possess the understanding of being, that is, understanding of itself, of its 'there-ness' and of being in general. Hence human existence displays the real ingredience (sic!) of being; and therefore all philosophical enquiry into the nature of being must begin with the analysis of this existence (Theological anthropology).
22. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "1. A Theologian at Work," Interview with Patrick Granfield, Washington, D.C., (October, 1965), p 13.
23. *Spirit in the World*, p 408.
24. *Faith in a Wintry Season*, "2. Grace as the Heart of Human Existence," Interview with *Herder Korrespondenz* on the occasion of Rahner's seventieth birthday, Munich, (February 1974), p
25. TI, Volume I, "9. Concerning the Relationship between Nature and Grace," p 298. Refer also to pp 300, 303 and 307.
26. (See footnote 3), *Spirit in the World*, Author's Introduction, p liii.
27. *Spirit in the World*, p xvi.
28. TI, Volume IV, (Translated by Kevin Smyth), London / New York, 1974, "7. Nature and Grace," p 183.

29. *Faith in a Wintry Season*, "19. Our Relationship to the Church," Interview with the Catholic student community of Munich, Munich, (November 1983), p 145.
30. William V. Dych, *Karl Rahner*. Collegeville, 1992, p 11.
31. Yves Congar, p 380.
33. Yves Congar, 815.
34. *Faith in a Wintry Season*, "2. Grace as the Heart of Human Existence," Interview with *Herder Korrespondenz* on the occasion of Father Rahner's seventieth birthday, (Munich, February 1974), p 34.
35. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "33. For an Open Church," Interview with Christian Modeln for West-German Radio, WDR, Cologne (February 21, 1979), pp 201-202: "...I am convinced that a true Catholic theology of liberation can and must exist. (I gladly confess to having been a theologian of late European individualism.) I can only rejoice when a theology develops in Latin America which is built up on the experience of community, on the grassroots experience of the Church, on the socio-political task of the Church."
36. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "47. Christianity on the Threshold of the Third Millennium," Interview with Hans Schopfer for the Swiss magazine, *Civitas*, Fribourg, (January, 1981), pp 267-268.
37. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "56. Theological Thinking and Religious Experience," Interview with Rogelio Garcia-Mateo and Peter Kammerer for *Entschluss* (1982), p 324.
38. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "2. Questions about Today's Church and World," Interview with Eugene C. Bianchi, for *America* magazine, New York (June 12, 1965), pp 26-27.
Also, "29. The Church must have the Courage to Experiment," Interview with Ignaz Kessler and Joachim Wiedera, editors of *Saarbrücken Zeitung*, Saarbrücken (July 14, 1978).
39. *Concern for the Church*, (Translate by Edward Quinn), New York, 1981.
40. *TI*, Volume XVI, (Translated by David Morland), New York, 1979, "13. The One Christ and the Universality of Salvation," p 219.
41. *Karl Rahner in Dialogue*, "34. A theology of the Church that seeks to serve," Interview with Meinold Krauss for South-German Radio (SDR), Stuttgart, (April 14, 1979).