



*The Inaugural
Des Places Libermann Award
In Pneumatology*

THE DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
6TH ANNUAL
HOLY SPIRIT LECTURE AND COLLOQUIUM

**SEPTEMBER 17, 2010
POWER CENTER BALLROOM**

Featuring Special Guest

The Rev. Dr. Robert D. Hughes III
Professor, University of the South School of Theology
in Sewanee, Tenn.



**DUQUESNE
UNIVERSITY**
For the Mind, Heart and Spirit



The Inaugural Des Places Libermann Award In Pneumatology

The Pneumatology Award is named in memory of the two founders of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, Father Claude-François Poullart des Places and Venerable François-Marie-Paul Libermann. Its purpose is to honor the individual who has made the most significant scholarly contribution to the area of pneumatology in the preceding five-year period and is given at the annual Holy Spirit Lecture and Colloquium. Dr. Hughes received this award for his book, *Beloved Dust: Tides of the Spirit in Christian Life* (Continuum, 2008).

The Duquesne University Annual Holy Spirit Lecture and Colloquium was initiated in 2005 by Duquesne University President Charles J. Dougherty as an expression of Duquesne's mission and charism as a university both founded by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit and dedicated to the Holy Spirit. It is hoped that this ongoing series of lectures and accompanying colloquia will encourage the exploration of ideas pertaining to the theology of the Holy Spirit. Besides fostering scholarship on the Holy Spirit within an ecumenical context, this event is intended to heighten awareness of how pneumatology (the study of the Spirit) might be relevantly integrated into the various academic disciplines in general.

This lecture may be read online at www.duq.edu/holy-spirit. You can contact us at holyspirit@duq.edu. Radu Bordeianu, Ph.D., serves as the director.

2010 Colloquists

- Dr. Radu Bordeianu
Assistant Professor of Systematic Theology, Duquesne University (Pittsburgh, PA)
- Dr. Ralph Del Colle
Associate Professor of Systematic Theology, Marquette University (Milwaukee, WI)
- Dr. Bradford Hinze
Professor of Systematic Theology, Fordham University (Bronx, NY)
- Dr. Kirsteen Kim
Associate Senior Lecturer in Theology (Systematic and Social), Leeds Trinity University College (Horsforth, Leeds, Great Britain)

BIOGRAPHY LECTURER

Dr. Hughes is the Norma and Olan Mills Professor of Divinity at the University of the South School of Theology in Sewanee, Tenn. Author of *Beloved Dust: Tides of the Spirit in Christian Life* (Continuum, 2008) and numerous articles appearing in journals such as *The Anglican Theological Review*, *The Sewanee Theological Review*, and *The St. Luke's Journal of Theology*, he also wrote "The Holy Spirit in Christian Spirituality" for *The Blackwell Companion to Christian Spirituality* (2005).

Hughes actively serves in a number of national and international organizations. He has been president and continues to participate in the Global Outreach for Addiction and Recovery Leadership (GOAL) Project, an ecumenical mission society that starts and supports 12-step recovery in new locations. He is past president of the Society of Anglican and Lutheran Theologians (SALT). He has held several offices in the local, state, and national American Association of University Professors (AAUP). He was a chaplain of the General Board of Examining Chaplains of the Episcopal Church.

Dust and DNA: The Intertwining of Word and Spirit in History and the Trinitarian Life

The Rev. Dr. Robert Davis Hughes, III

Introduction and Thanks

May we begin with prayer, starting with the words of Orthodox Patriarch of Antioch, Ignatios IV, as translated by Metropolitan Kallistos in his 2007 Holy Spirit Lecture:

Without the Spirit,
God is far away,
Christ belongs to the past,
The Gospel is a dead letter,
The Church is a mere organization,
Authority takes the form of domination,
Mission is turned into propaganda,
Worship is reduced to bare recollection,
Christian action becomes the morality of a slave.

But in the Spirit,
God is near,
The risen Christ is present with us here and now,
The Gospel is the power of life,
The Church signifies Trinitarian communion,
Authority means liberating service,
Mission is an expression of Pentecost,
The Liturgy is a making-present of both past and future,
Human action is divinized.¹

O God, you teach the hearts of your faithful people by sending to them the light of your Holy Spirit: Grant us by the same Spirit to have a right judgment in all things, and evermore to rejoice in his holy comfort; through Jesus Christ your Son our Lord, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, for ever and ever. Amen.²

First, let me briefly give my thanks to Duquesne University, the Congregation of the Holy Spirit, the committee of judges, and especially Fr. Radu Bordeianu for this marvelous award³ and occasion. Particular thanks are due to President Charles J. Dougherty, Ph.D., and Provost Ralph Pearson, Ph.D., for creating both this award and colloquium to honor the dedication of Duquesne University to the Holy Spirit as life-giver. Thanks also to our distinguished colloquists, to my wife and first editor Barbara, and everyone on the Continuum team who helped bring out the book. What I propose to do tonight is build on what was said in *Beloved Dust* and what has been said about it.

One guiding passion of *Beloved Dust* is missiological, a search for a missiology that must, of necessity now more than ever, include an apologetics, a commending of the Gospel to our time, place, and culture that addresses the scientific worldview. In many ways science recommended, if not dictated, the anthropology of dust,⁴ a physicalist interpretation of humanity enhanced only by the Holy Spirit, not by any occult properties of humanity itself. *Beloved Dust* was also born out of a passionate desire to retrieve, recover, and revise for our time the wisdom about life in the Holy Spirit locked in the neo-scholastic rhetoric of the classic spiritual theologies. It backed into pneumatology by suggesting that a theology of the spiritual life must be foremost about the Holy Spirit, not about us, however much we may have learned from the spiritual psychologies of much of the modern mystical tradition. By its very nature and conception, *Beloved Dust* is not a complete pneumatology, because it focuses on the personal dimension of the spiritual life. Yes, there are important “hooks” to the larger story in the insistence that all true Christian spirituality must be corporeal, corporal, corporate, and ecclesial, and ultimately grounded in the eschatological reality of the Holy Spirit’s work of the final *pleroma*, the fullness and fulfillment of all things. But the larger issues of the Spirit’s role in creation and history were evident only in hints and glimpses. My own current thinking and research is focused on expanding the insights of *Beloved Dust* to the consideration of these larger issues; it is some preliminary thoughts about these that I would share with you tonight. And I do mean preliminary. Please bear with me, as this will be more glimpses of a work under construction than a finished piece, more of an effort to probe problems and questions and make a few tentative suggestions than an offer of complete solutions.

Let me quote something from Ralph Del Colle’s book, *Christ and the Spirit*,⁵ which helps define the intersection we seem to be occupying at present. He has discussed the temporal missions, the sending of Word and

Spirit by the Father into time and history and the work they do there in what is called the divine economy, describing them as hypostatically engaged (that is, each person of the Trinity is fully involved *in propria persona*, not merely as a kind of appropriate hook for the undivided action of the one divine essence), and also as distinguishable but inseparable at every moment. In examining the human reception of these missions in cultural and historical pluralism, he states:

Formally speaking, all that is human is included in these temporal missions of the Son and the Spirit. Also, as we have seen, the two missions are not identical but neither are they separated. The Holy Spirit creates, sanctifies, and unites the human nature of Jesus to the divine Son while the risen Lord is present through the modality of the Holy Spirit who is the mutual love of the Father and the Son and who now in the divine economy extends that love to include all those who are sons and daughters in the Son. However, this delineation of the model does not extend to a material explanation of the manner in which the various concerns, actions, and dimensions of the human are the object of the missions. This would come under the rubric of a more practical exposition of the theology of grace and the Christian life.⁶

This latter is what *Beloved Dust* attempted, not yet fully engaged with the dogmatic concerns in Del Colle's work, though certainly with those concerns on the horizon. So, we might envision this conversation as me working up from *Dust* towards the dogmatic concerns, while Del Colle might work down from the constructive-dogmatic model of Spirit-Christology towards Spiritual theology, perhaps as performed not unlike as in *Beloved Dust*. That is at least one way of defining where we are.

As Cardinal Kasper noted in the opening lines of his paper for the second Holy Spirit Lecture,⁷ the motto of Duquesne University "It is the Spirit who gives life" is the ground of all our work at this Lecture, and it is precisely this theme that I undertake here, in exploring the Christian creedal confession that the Holy Spirit gives life; specifically the Spirit is confessed in the Nicene Creed as *Dominum et vivificantem, to Kyrion, to Zōopoion*, "the Lord and Giver-of-Life." What does that mean in our day, with our understanding of cosmology, evolution, natural history, and history? At the interface of dust and the Holy Spirit as life-giver we find above all in our time, the remarkable properties of DNA, which Francis Collins, director of the Human Genome Project and now of NIH, called "the language of God."⁸ Also, one concept

stands out from all the current discussion in pneumatology – the inseparability of Word/Wisdom/Child/Son/Christ on the one hand, and the Holy Spirit on the other. The missions of the second and third persons of the Trinity in the divine economy of creation and history are now seen as accompanying one another, as indelibly linked and inseparable, even though distinct and thus distinguishable. We speak, and here my fellow colloquists have been eloquent, as have Killian McDonnell and Eugene Rogers,⁹ of the ongoing necessity of both a pneumatological Christology and a Christological pneumatology, of understanding the Spirit as the mediation of that of which Christ is the mediator. Furthermore, pneumatology proper has begun to ask about the implications of this fundamental insight from the economy for our understanding of the inner life of the Triune God, the immanent Trinity. I propose tonight to bring together these two insights, the inevitability of dealing with DNA when we consider the Spirit as life-giver on the one hand, and the intertwining of the Word/Wisdom and the Spirit in their missions on the other, by suggesting that DNA may indeed be a *vestigium*, a vestige or footprint, of the Trinity. Or, to be a more faithful interpreter of my own work, I suggest that DNA as the very structure of life as we know it is a kind of **resonance** of the divine life, one of the myriad ways in which the self-expressive self-transcendence of the Triune God evokes all drives towards self-transcendence in the creation. So, I propose to do three things. First we shall explore the idea of DNA as a *vestigium* or resonance of the Trinity and the way that enlightens our understanding of the tradition of the Holy Spirit as life-giver as we have received it. Second, this will lead us inevitably into a consideration of the role of the Holy Spirit in history, and how what we have learned from DNA may strengthen suggestions I have made about that role in earlier work. Finally, we shall ask if we have learned anything in these largely economic considerations that might give us insight into the place of the Spirit in the immanent Trinity, and especially the question of the *filioque*, the debate between Eastern and Western Christianity over the procession of the Holy Spirit.

DNA AND THE MISSIONS OF WORD AND SPIRIT

The first proposal, then, is that we examine DNA as a possible footprint or resonance of the Holy Trinity in creation, especially the creation of life. This is not designed to replace others, but to complement them; for example Irenaeus' picturing of the Word and Spirit as the two hands of God is a model that has been used by many contemporary authors. The idea of an aspect of evolution as a vestige of the Trinity is not itself new. James Salmon and Nicole Schmitz-Moorman propose as a Trinitarian vestige the unity we see

in systems evolution and later stages of thermodynamics in generating the irreversible arrow of history.¹⁰ Ian Barbour has likewise written persuasively on how we might envision divine action in evolution.¹¹ He suggests five issues in contemporary biology that any theological reflection must take into account: self organization in material systems; indeterminacy at various levels from the quantum to the historical; the phenomenon of “top-down causality” in complex systems; new concepts in information theory and its communication; and, most especially, the place of history in all of these. Each provides a possible model of God’s interaction with the evolutionary process, which Barbour then supplements with what he sees as an even more powerful model—the concept of interiority in process thought. Thanks to Phillip Cary’s work on Augustine,¹² I am becoming even more wary of Western notions of interiority than I was when I wrote *Beloved Dust*, so, perhaps, Teilhard’s notion of “centreity” in complex systems will serve us better than the concept of “interiority.” I should also note again that Francis Collins has also called DNA “The Language of God,” which is, indeed the title of his book relating his scientific work to his Christian faith. As far as I know, however, no one has as yet proposed the double helix structure of DNA itself as a Trinitarian vestige or resonance, though Elizabeth A. Johnson has imagined a triple helix as such.¹³ It is vital, when we make a move like this, to be clear that we are not letting theology dictate to science or importing occult causes into science, or even supporting creationism or intelligent design as scientific concepts. Rather, we are doing some philosophical and theological reflection on what science offers as a picture of the world.

This reflection, however, suggests that DNA is more than a mere metaphor for God as the source of life. To summarize quickly some common but contested ground, proper theological language goes beyond metaphor to analogy, looking for places where there are true commonalities between creaturely realities and God; by the principle of *analogia entis* or analogy of being, when we find such an analogy there really is something in common between the creature and God at the level of being, even though there is also much that is not in common, as the finite can never completely or accurately reflect the infinite. This prevents us from ever thinking that an analogy asserts a simple, literal identity, which would be idolatry. The task of positive theology is to explore the commonality and learn from it, and of negative theology to state and take careful note of the differences, which will always be more than the similarities.¹⁴ Sacraments, understood as real symbols rather than mere signs, are one example of this analogical existence between metaphor and identity, and Augustine’s idea that creation contains *vestigia*, vestiges or footprints of the Trinity, is a particularly interesting case.

The most famous example of the latter is his assertion that the threefold psychological principle in his anthropology--that human consciousness is made up of memory, reason, and will--reflects the structure of the Trinitarian life.

In our day, "footprint" sounds a little too physical, a little too literal, and in *Beloved Dust* I suggested that "resonance" and "current" were better ways to get at the "imprint" of the *analogia entis*. I hope you all are familiar with the experiment, which involves two tuning forks of the same pitch. Strike one, and the other will begin to sound as well, even more loudly if they touch. Similarly, take a resonating tuning fork and touch it to a container of water and ripples become evident. More unknown to most of us, and still mysterious even in science, is the way in which at the quantum level particles are able to exchange information with each other across huge gaps in the space/time continuum. So, our first task is to explore what it might look like to suggest the existence of an analogy between the very structure of life as we know it, the double helix or twisted "ladder" of DNA, and the source of life as we Christians confess it, in the manner in which the inner Trinitarian life is expressed in the external missions of Word/Wisdom and Spirit in the giving of life to creation. Should we be surprised that there is such a correspondence, that creaturely life is a kind of resonance of divine life without in any way being identical to it or a chip off it?

Even a current inspection of any diagram or model of the now familiar double helix of DNA in its standard B-form reveals suggestive features. In this structure, the two long pieces, the vertical elements of the twisted ladder, called strands, run in opposite directions (anti-parallel) and wind about a common axis in a right hand twist. The repeating unit on each strand, termed a nucleotide, is composed of a sugar¹⁵ and phosphate chain; the horizontal rungs on which we find the actual genetic coding are one of four chemical compounds, called bases.¹⁶ One unit of one strand of the "ladder," called a nucleotide, is composed of a sugar, a phosphate group, and one of four bases, each of which is attached to the sugar. The phosphate groups link sugars of adjacent nucleotides, thus building the long polymeric chain that makes up one side of the DNA "ladder." Each base comprises half of one of the horizontal rungs, and their order along each strand is responsible for the encoded genetic information. Further, the bases form hydrogen bonds in predictable pairings with counterparts on the other strand, giving rise to the term "base-pairs." The double helix or "twisted ladder" is formed as two complementary streams nucleotides join together through these hydrogen bonds. The emerging structure has the bonded base pairs on the "inside" of

the helix, while the sugar-phosphate chain forms a kind of negatively charged skeleton on the outside. All the observable biological action involves the information encoded by the order of the bases, though the flexibility of the sugar-phosphate skeleton contributes to the distinct shapes DNA can take.¹⁷

The first thing I propose is that we see the character of the strands as a vestige or resonance of the inseparability of the economic missions of Word and Spirit that has become a touchstone of contemporary pneumatology. As ECLA theologian Robert Jenson puts it, the issue is to see how the external acts of the Trinity are undivided but distinguishable. That is exactly what we see in the strands of DNA.¹⁸ First, they are, in a sense, inseparable. True, they “unzip” and put some distance between the two strands in brief regions of the DNA chain when they are working, either in transcription or replication,¹⁹ a fact to which we shall return, but then they re-entwine when the process is complete. If they are unwound from each other by various chemical means in experiments, when “released,” they also intertwine again if they remain intact. There is in life as we know it no way one functions without reference to the other. Thus, they are not *absolutely* inseparable, as space does open up between them in specific regions when work is being done; but they are functionally inseparable and in fact, in nature, never fully come apart. They are tightly joined, intertwined, connected in a very stable way, and always related to each other through attraction. I shall continue to use “inseparable,” but in this relative sense. I hope in future work to expand the theological analogy further by examining the fact that in DNA the work gets done precisely when a bit of space opens up between the strands in a limited section or bubble. Does even this tell us something of how Word and Spirit work with each other in the economy?

In addition, as previously noted, the two strands are not exactly identical. The base pairs are not homogeneous, and have a determined directionality and sequence determined by the shape of the sugar molecules (dictated by their chemical structure), and the strands are not parallel but anti-parallel in this directionality; that is, the order of the nucleotides in them runs opposite; if one runs from what the scientists call three prime to five prime (denoted as 3' to 5'), the other strand runs from five prime to three prime (5' to 3');²⁰ and this may indeed be a reflection or cause of their inseparable intertwining. The strands are identical, however, if read from the same direction (3' to 5'). This resonates with the idea that the persons of the Trinity are of the same substance (*homoousios*), but distinguishable by the taxis or order of their origin.

The directionality and complementarity of the DNA strands also reminds

me immediately of the classic rhythm of exodus/reditus in theology, or of what our Spirit Christology theologians call the *taxeis* of bestowal and return. One thinks even of Irenaeus' theology of recapitulation. What we see in the DNA is a simultaneity and inseparability of the strands, which can, nevertheless be distinguished because they are indeed distinct. This seems to me a good way to understand how the Word is the light that enlightens every human, and is the life of humans (John 1:4-5), and yet the Spirit is confessed as *Dominum et vivificantem, to Kyrion, to Zōopoion*. The gift of life, of evolving life, the DNA analogy suggests, is one act of two inseparable but distinguishable actors. Note how this fits the most fundamental points of Del Colle's exposition of Spirit-Christology, the temporal missions of the Word and Spirit being distinguishable but inseparable, full hypostatic or personal engagement in the economy reflecting the originating processions within the immanent life of God who is triadic unity. The relative inseparability of the DNA strands deriving from their distinction and directionality is an insight that would deepen our understanding of how Word and Spirit interact in Christology and the other great mysteries of the faith. It certainly helps counter any threat of modalism, of collapsing one into the other as if there were no true distinction. The inseparability is not in tension with the distinctions, but actually caused by them. This could, I believe, be the source of very fruitful further theological reflection, especially when we view the Spirit as the mutual love of the Father and the Son, from the eternal beginning.

Second, however, there are other features of DNA from which we can learn and draw theological analogies. However crucial the sugar-phosphate skeletal strands are, we really don't know much about what they do except that by their intertwining helical structure they provide an architecture for the bases, the rungs of the ladder, which in sequence form the genes whose effects we can study. The relationship between these genes and the phenotype of the organism is far more complex than once thought. Even at the cellular level, each gene sequence—in "conversation" with various regulatory bits of DNA and what can occur post-translationally—may produce a variety of proteins. Some of these seem to respond to the environment, giving Lamarck (the Russian biologist who argued for inheritance of acquired characteristics) and acquired characteristics new life in evolutionary theory. This complex interaction among proteins, the genes that encode them, and the metabolism of the cell may be analogous to the great economic mysteries of the Christian faith, and it is only with the eyes of faith that we can see the analogy between these complex processes and the Trinitarian mystery. The point I wish to make, however, is that despite all we have learned, within

the cellular economy the strands have a kind of ineffability by themselves. It is where they come together, where they interact along the rungs, that we can actually see what is happening. Here again, the analogy to Word and Spirit is exact. We know little of the divine persons, energies or missions in isolation. What we know best is their interaction in certain key mysteries, and for Christians the archetypal mysteries are the Incarnation and the Resurrection, both mysteries in which we also see precisely the bestowal of life by the Spirit on the Word in a manner that is definitive for us also, as we find life in Christ, in the flesh and body of Christ, by the indwelling of the Spirit in us as well.

It is worth pausing for a brief look at these two mysteries. Lindbeck's proposal that the two great Christian dogmas are the grammar of the Christian conversation is now enshrined in the theological conversation.²¹ What I propose is that the great Christological mysteries are the bases, the fundamental genetic structure at the center of the DNA of the entire divine/human conversation and interaction, the Rosetta Stone that allows us to "crack" the rest of the code and read the whole "theological genome." This, of course, moves us more deeply from science into theology.

I take them in reverse order because it is the reality of the Resurrection that allowed the disciples of Jesus in their time and now us in ours to see Jesus enough in depth to contemplate the reality of the Incarnation. As the early apostolic preaching asserts, it is by raising him from the dead that the Father manifests Jesus as both Lord and Messiah.²² Jesus does not first become these at the Resurrection, but perhaps as per Pannenberg, Schoonenberg, and Macquarrie,²³ among others, he only *fully* becomes them there. Certainly, only there are his divinity and messianic anointing fully apparent in a manner that has caused believers to read everything that came before and after in that light. And the power by which the Father raises Jesus from the dead **is** the Holy Spirit, the same Spirit whom we can now receive in baptism, and thus be joined to the Church as Jesus' new, resurrected, pneumatological body of flesh in the church as community and on the church's tables as sacrament. I do, however, want to emphasize a truth we have rediscovered through the liturgical renewal movement in the West, in our recovery of Easter as the Great Fifty Days. Pentecost is not what comes *after* Easter; it is not subsequent to it. Pentecost is rather the climax of the paschal mystery, the outpouring on all flesh, all animated dust, of the resurrected life we see most intensely in the resurrection of Jesus itself. We also see this in the way the Johannine evangelist telescopes the two realities in his account of Easter evening.²⁴ This, along with the inseparability and complementarity of the divine missions, warns against any scheme like that

of Joachim of Fiore in the twelfth century in which in a final age of the Spirit we can leave cross and resurrection behind. There is no age of the Spirit not also marked by cross and empty tomb, because it is there we first find the Spirit as Christians. From that point only we read back both Incarnation and the gift of life itself as theological.

We turn next, in the light of the experience of the Holy Spirit in the Resurrection of Jesus and its aftermath, to consider the mystery of the Incarnation as symbolized in the Annunciation. Eugene Rogers has done such a splendid job on this mystery in particular that I simply refer you to what he wrote in *After the Spirit*,²⁵ if you have not yet read it. The DNA analogy we are exploring requires that we confront a couple of very specific theological questions. One, as Del Colle has so helpfully shown, can be stated very precisely in neo-scholastic terms. Surely, the Holy Spirit is involved in the Incarnation, even though only the Word is personally incarnated; Mary of Nazareth conceives Jesus *by* the Holy Spirit, who comes upon her as the *shekinah* cloud of divine glory comes upon the Holy of Holies in the temple, so that God the Word tabernacles in her womb just as in and around the ark of the covenant. But, especially in the Western Catholic tradition, the external works of the Trinity are undivided. No acts of God are ever an act of just one person of the Trinity; all three are always involved and precisely in their unity. We have already noted one addition or correction of our time: “The external works of the Trinity are undivided, but not indistinguishable,” Here above all we see the “distinct and distinguishable but inseparable” highlighted by the DNA analogy. Second, we must allow our conversation with the Christian East to correct a Western tendency to view the divine essence as primordial in its unity, which then gets expressed in the three hypostases. In this aberration, the divine essence becomes the fount of all being and activity rather than the Father. The more Eastern view that the divine essence is known and indeed “exists” only in the triadic unity of the three hypostases is surely correct.

But that still leaves us with a question of the level of the Spirit’s involvement in the Annunciation, and, indeed in the other great Christological mysteries, which can be stated technically as follows: are the acts of the Spirit in these mysteries only “appropriate,” that is, expressing the Spirit’s participation in the one divine essence and will, or are these acts “proper,” that is, also expressive of the hypostatic properties of the Spirit that distinguish her from the other persons in the Trinity? As Del Colle has shown clearly in his work on Spirit Christology, the old answer was that these acts were appropriate only.²⁶ More recently, however, theological opinion has shifted: even

though the acts of God remain undivided, though distinguishable, the Spirit is fully involved personally, hypostatically, “properly” in the Christological mysteries. Certainly theological reflection based on DNA as a vestige or resonance of the Trinity, specifically of the divine missions and perhaps the Trinitarian processions, would suggest that: both Word and Spirit are fully, personally, hypostatically involved in the Christological mysteries, which precisely so express the one divine essence and will. If this sounds overly technical, I hope we will be able to see its importance when we turn in conclusion to pneumatology proper.

The theological use of DNA points to further problems we must tag in thinking about the Incarnation and Annunciation and the role of the Spirit in them; one comes from the shift in our scientific understanding of the human biological realities on which the analogy of begetting is based. Aristotle expressed the common view of his time that the entirety of the human person was in the male sperm or seed, the female womb being only the passive ground in which that seed is planted and from which it draws its nourishment, its material substance. The discovery of human ova in 1827 by Karl Ernst von Baer and subsequent discoveries about the nature of human reproduction, including its basis at the level of chromosome and gene, have indelibly altered the way we must now think about “begetting,” as we now recognize the much greater contribution of the woman and her genes. Neither our understanding of the virginal conception of Jesus nor of the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father in the inner life of the immanent Trinity have been adequately rethought in the light of this shift in the human ground of the analogy. Traditionally, Mary provides the full enfleshed humanity of Jesus, though current Spirit-Christology emphasizes the role of the Spirit resting in the womb of Mary in the creation of that sacred humanity, sanctifying it, and then uniting it to the Word. Must we not now transcend this and think instead of the Spirit as somehow providing Mary with DNA from the Word to combine with her own DNA in Jesus’ human begetting? This must be done carefully, however, if Jesus is not to emerge human on the X chromosome but divine on the Y! We cannot do more with this now with regard to Annunciation and the human birth of the Word, but I file the question as relevant to one to which we shall return, the role of the Spirit in the first nativity of the Word, the eternal begetting.

These considerations may also bear on a pneumatological retrieval of the Immaculate Conception.²⁷ Poullart des Places is known especially for his devotion to the Holy Spirit and Mary the Theotokos, the God-Bearer. This particular conjunction is especially evident in the Incarnation and its

historical symbol, the mystery of the Annunciation, which is one reason I chose Eugene Rogers' superb chapter on the Annunciation as one of the colloquium readings. We seek to grasp from the traditional interpretations of this mystery new ways to envision the interaction of the Holy Spirit with the historical reality of the flesh of the Blessed Virgin as in her and with her consent the Spirit gratuitously provides the Word with a human body, immersed not just in human nature as an abstract substance, but in all of human history and of the covenant history with Israel in particular. For Mary is not just any woman, as the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception struggles to say. Above all and of note for our considerations tonight, she is Bethulah Israel, the Virgin Daughter of Israel, precisely in her flesh the icon of all the covenant history of God with Israel up to that point.

I would also like to pick up on the devotion of des Places and Libermann to *Maria Immaculata* by suggesting a pneumatological interpretation of the Immaculate Conception. Before my evangelical Anglican friends object, let me refer all of us to the work of Anglican evangelical theologian John de Satgé who pointed out that though Anglicans cannot accept as dogma this teaching that Mary is conceived by her parents (traditionally Sts. Joachim and Anne) without taint of original sin, that is an argument over the nature of dogma, not the truth of the teaching, which Anglicans are free to accept. He argues a specifically evangelical reason for accepting it: only so is Mary's "*fiat mihi*" a graced act rather than one of supererogation.²⁸ If we understand the Holy Spirit's creation of the sacred humanity as the creation of a fully historical reality rather than an abstract essentialist one created in heaven and dropped down into history, then the Immaculate Conception is the penultimate stage of the creation of the sacred humanity of Jesus precisely within Covenant history. The emphasis is on Mary as the bearer of the priestly and remnant-prophetic aspects of that history, as the story of her marriage to Joseph will add the royal; that would have been fully reasonable to both Jewish and Roman hearers of Luke's telling of the story; after all, Octavius Augustus was the adopted son of Julius Caesar. In flesh and history the actual, historical humanity Mary embodies then already carries the offices of priest and king, and the full Messianic office lacks only the prophetic anointing that comes, for Luke at least, at the Baptism in the Jordan. Prophethood is in any case not inherited but always bestowed, and as Rogers argues, Mary is both prophet and patriarch in Luke's tale anyway. Thus, by the incarnational anointing through the flesh of Mary, the engaged, future wife of Joseph, Jesus is already by flesh priest and king and his messiahship awaits only the prophetic anointing in the Jordan. But the essential point here is that the sacred humanity created by the Holy

Spirit is not an abstract human nature but a very specific human animated (ensouled) body in a very specific human context, the womb of a very specific woman of priestly descent who is virgin but betrothed to a man of Davidic descent. This understanding of Mary as the penultimate climax of the covenant history and precisely as such the place where the Spirit rests in gratuitously providing the Word with a human body opens the door, I believe, to a pneumatological understanding of the Immaculate Conception free from any nineteenth century Romantic or Mariolatrical overtones: the same Spirit who is about to create in her a sinless sacred humanity, and will in baptism free all from original sin, is perfectly free to grant that grace to her preveniently, and thus prepare not so much an “untainted vessel” as a spunky young daughter of the covenant with the courage to receive and respond to a further grace of the Spirit with “*fiat mihi*,” “OK, I’ll do it.”

Laying aside some of the technicalities, the point is this: in the great Christological mysteries we see both the Word and the Spirit as fully and personally present, as not merely appropriately but properly, hypostatically active in their intertwined missions. In particular, in both great mysteries we see the creedal mission of the Holy Spirit as *Zōopoion*, life-giver, both as full hypostatic presence, activity, mission, and also as always intertwined with the Word who is likewise fully, personally, and hypostatically present in his proper mission. These two missions are always intertwined, and at every moment also the perfect expression of the love and will of the Fount, who is also fully present in the undivided external acts, but precisely in the missions of the other two as the one who sends. By extension, we read this DNA model of “Spirit Christology” back into the narrative of creation and covenant, and forward into ecclesiology, sacramental theology, and spiritual theology of the salvation and sanctification of the believer through the indwelling of the Spirit and union with Christ, and precisely as such, with the Fount; in this light we look even further to the great eschatological mysteries of the communion of saints (Commonwealth of God), the forgiveness of sins, resurrection of the body and eternal life; then ultimately, because even these acts, though distinguishable in their Trinitarian structure, are nevertheless undivided, we read the Beatific Vision as a loving knowledge of the Triadic Unity of God, and theosis as participation in that very life. The theanthropic principle itself, that in the God/human Christ all humans are invited to share the divine life, consistently expresses the hypostatic presence, distinguishability, and yet indelible intertwining of Word and Spirit at every moment. I hope we can all learn to say theanthropic rather than theandric, by the way. It is not only more sensitive to gender issues; it more accurately reflects the creedal language and intent.

How does this discussion of DNA as a footprint or resonance relate to the traditional analogy of Word/Breath? In the economic order, the realm of God's external acts, this is relatively easy—the Word is always vocalized on the Breath, but is the Breath always breathed as a vocalization of the Word? Does the Spirit/Breath have her own mission apart from the Word, apart from Christ? It is tempting to say “yes” as a means of hospitality to persons of other faith, but in the end I believe that is a mistake, and would invite our guests of other faith into an empty room. Kirsteen Kim and Del Colle come to very similar conclusions in their own work, though Kim challenges us in her very fine book on the subject to make room for considering the reality of other spirits;²⁹ this is another issue to which more attention must be given than is possible tonight. It is vital in both Asian and African contexts, where questions of ancestors and witchcraft still predominate among theological issues surrounding the enculturation of the Gospel. I believe these questions will be best resolved by theologians from cultures where they are of first importance. But, in the end, I think we shall not find a Christian theology in which the Spirit has a mission separate from that of the Word, but where Word/Wisdom and Spirit together have intertwined missions beyond the covenant and its communities, and hence with less obvious connection to the historical Jesus, though in the end, as Christians, we shall be discerning all spirits in his name. If this is largely correct, then in the economy there is no Breath that is not also a vocalization of the Word, and the congruence with DNA as a vestige or resonance is exact.

When we turn, however, to the immanent Trinity, or even to the Divine Energies prior to the economy, we reach the more vexed question of what Augustine calls the inner Word; what is the role of the Breath in the formation of the inner Word or Wisdom? Is that formation “inspired?” Does God “inhale” before speaking? Or, to state baldly the problem to which we must return in our third major consideration, does the Spirit have a role of some kind in the eternal begetting of the Son by the Father within the Trinity? If so, what does this say about the taxis or order of origin or procession? We must return to this question in the third consideration tonight.

SPIRIT, DNA, and HISTORY

But first, we must notice a vitally important aspect of DNA: It is a product of a unique history, and it carries much of that history in its own code. We cannot avoid the question of history in exploring DNA as a vestige or resonance. Ian Barbour puts it well:

Stored in the DNA is a wealth of *historically acquired information* [emphasis original] including programs for coping with the world. . . . Even at low levels, reality consists not simply of matter and energy, but of matter, energy, and information.³⁰

And, as Barbour has pointed out, the actual content of this information has been acquired in a history that, precisely as historical, is opaque to scientific method. Consider, for example, Caesar crossing the Rubicon. Science can speak of wetness, human skin, etc., but has nothing to say about the historic importance of **that** man crossing **that** river on **that** day. Science studies the repeatable, what can be replicated in experiment; but it is precisely the **unrepeatable** that is important to history. Caesar cannot go back and recross the river if his director needs another “take.” The agreement with Pompey is broken only by the first crossing. Freedom, final causality, all those things that make the event historical drop out in a scientific analysis, where they become either determinate or random. That is why the methods of history as a discipline are perfectly reasonable and rational, but quite different from those of natural science.

The issue of history gets more complicated when we enter the realm of “natural history.” The fact that Sally dinosaur met Harry dinosaur and he lit up her Christmas tree before Tom dinosaur got there may well determine the whole course of evolution by being imprinted in the DNA of the offspring of Harry and Sally. From a scientific point of view, the meeting is only the result of random chance, but to Harry, Sally, and their offspring it is an event fraught with historical meaning. History as a natural history of evolution is not ephemeral; it is actually carried as a physical record in the DNA itself. Many of the historic bits have been thought of as “junk” until recently, when we have begun to find out that this “junk” often has complex regulatory functions. The point is that these aspects of DNA are present as the result of an evolutionary history that, precisely as *history*, is opaque to biology as a science.

It is opaque to more than natural science, however. History as we now think of it is a late modern concept, arising with historical consciousness somewhere in the eighteenth century in Europe. As such, it is also opaque to the language of classical Greek metaphysics and the later Christian scholasticism based upon it, which “in its conceptual formulation . . . expressed being in preference to becoming. The result,” as Salmon and Schmitz-Moorman put it, “was an explanatory system that took little account of the interpersonal, the historical, and the evolving process of growth and

development.”³¹ This is one of the forces driving all theology beyond the boundaries of scholasticism, Catholic or Protestant. Although Roman Catholic scholarship had many important historians, it was, according to Hans Frei, Protestant theology that brought the gift of historical consciousness to theological thinking, a consciousness he so keenly expressed in his own narrative theology. By this I do not point to any lack of Church history or history of theology in Catholic or Orthodox communities, but specifically an awareness of history and historicity as a theological problem in its own right, of the need for a theology of history, of human being as temporal, historical being, including the humanity that the incarnate Word, in the power of the Holy Spirit, inherits from Mary through her historically derived DNA and cultural heritage.³² Here is where we must go beyond even Chalcedon. We now share a sense that it is not just human nature in the abstract, but Jesus the Jew, the rabbi from Nazareth, son of the daughter of the little people, who is decisive for our salvation. We mean something now by “person” and “personality” that formed in response to the Gospel and was not yet present in the conceptual framework of the framers of Chalcedon. Without it in our picture of Jesus, we feel as if we were facing a new Alexandrian heresy, with something important about Jesus’ humanity left out. The problem will be deciding how to fill that lacuna in Christology without falling over into the crypto-Nestorianism that Jenson believes haunts all Western theology.

This sense of history is also one of the great differentiating features from the milieu in which classical pneumatology was formulated. As I read Moltmann, Coffey and Del Colle in *Advents of the Spirit*,³³ this really stuck out – both Eastern and Western pneumatological formulas and the whole issue of the three orders or *taxeis* in the Trinity exist in a milieu in which being is defined as **perseverance**, as Robert Jenson puts it.³⁴ We must at least ask how to re-envision these issues in the light of historical consciousness in which being is defined by becoming, and also note, this is key to understanding the cultural pluralism Kim calls for.

In earlier work, based on the philosophy of Paul Weiss and the theology of history of W. Taylor Stevenson and Moltmann’s more mature eschatology,³⁵ I suggested that only a revived pneumatology can make history translucent, providing both God and creatures with a meaningful and effective past and a hopeful and significant future. I proposed seven theses, which I shall simply revise tonight as a possible way through. They make use of a concept from Paul Weiss, the “historic ought-to be,” an historic ideal, or ought-to-be, which is at once a critical principle allowing the historian to determine what of the past is relevant for the present, and an actual causative factor which

allows the accumulated past to be present. It has real ethical content,³⁶ even though it is neither the absolute Good (which is larger and includes private as well as public life) nor simply the desired outcome of any age (*Zeitgeist*).³⁷ For history as written to be true, Weiss believes, the past must also exist outside the present, and, he insists, it is God's role to be the one who re-members, and preserves the past, making historical truth claims possible. God is also the one who always presents the historical present with the ought-to-be, providing history with a meaningful future grounded in the past, and guaranteeing that History as written (*Geschichte*) will bear some resemblance to the fullness of history as lived (*Historie*).³⁸ Indeed, without taking account of the historic ideal and God, the historian will not even be able to do the work of history properly, let alone know why what is written could be true.³⁹

Here are my theses, applying contemporary pneumatology and even more now the DNA model to the problem of history:

(1) History as written confronts us with texts. The Spirit brings the Word to life in the process of hearing, reading, and interpretation. It is not the text which brings the presence of a previously absent spirit to a reader, but rather an already present Spirit who presents the reader with the text (the Spirit gives the text as a present, brings it into the present, makes it a vehicle of presence and re-presentation of the living Word/Wisdom). This is supremely true of scripture, but also true of all meaningful text. The issue is the reality of the helix of the Spirit/Word missions in the process of interpretation. Indeed, Taylor Stevenson argued that it is neglect of the Spirit that opens the late modernist chasms between word, referent, and hearer or reader.⁴⁰

(2) The Spirit is also the sanctifier of human culture as a means of grace, and the resolver of the ambiguities of history as the presence of unambiguous life, albeit in fragmentary ways in this world, as the theology of Tillich has so powerfully shown.⁴¹ This, too, is always related to Word and to Jesus, specifically as the Spiritual Presence re-members the New Being manifested in Jesus as the Christ in new concrete situations.

(3) The Spirit fills the gap between Resurrection/Ascension and Parousia by creating those structures of koinonia that bind the people of God into the church as Body of Christ as a sacramental reality; this is not just a metaphor, but a sacrament of the Commonwealth to come as well as of the Jesus who has inaugurated it. Here the intertwined missions give new, resurrected life to the people of God. The church and its time and its actions become part of

the account of salvation, not merely a vehicle of memorial and proclamation “in the meantime.” See here especially Hinze’s Spirit-ecclesiology.⁴² Without this sense, nothing truly meaningful takes place between Pentecost and Parousia, except perhaps one’s own conversion, an ahistoricism that haunts many versions of evangelical Christianity.

(4) In short, only the intertwined Spirit/Word helix bridges the gap between *Geschichte* and *Historie*; Word, referent, and hearer/reader; faith and knowledge; the “yield of the past” and “the meaning of the future”;⁴³ between the living and the dead, this life and eternal life. This is not to make the Spirit a “God of the Gaps,” which may be filled by later scientific inquiry. These gaps are never actually there. They arise when we attempt the human historical or theological enterprise in denial of the Spirit as the “Go-Between God.”⁴⁴

(5) The Spirit carries out her *missio* by inhabiting or indwelling the present moment, re-presenting the graceful past of the Word as precisely the ground by which the historic-ought-to-be is presented to the present as both real ideal and real hope, as a possible future of God and world in the Word by the power of the Spirit. As the Spirit of covenant and Sabbath holiness⁴⁵ the Spirit presents this ought-to-be within history *in propria persona*, definitively as the incarnate Word, Jesus. This is one of the ways in which the Spirit is *another* advocate, *another* Christ.⁴⁶ The Spirit continues to present and re-present the Word, now with the humanity of Jesus as a permanent feature, to the world as both its meaningful past and viable future. This is the Spirit as covenant partner executing what we may call the objective, historical dimension of the *missio* as hope, and again, always intertwined with the Word as now carrying the DNA of Jesus in full historical humanity.

(6) The Spirit provides this hope not only to church and world on the objective side, but also to individuals and communities on the subjective side by the gift of the theological virtues, specifically the virtue of hope. This personal indwelling in the form of the three theological virtues of faith, hope, and love, notably, in this case, as **hope** (the virtue which resonates with the Spirit’s own proper *missio*) is the personal, subjective, and even epiphanic dimension of the eschatological *missio*. Here I can only file by title what I said about the theological virtues in *Beloved Dust*.⁴⁷ The virtues are the direct, immediate effect in believers of the uncreated grace of the indwelling of the Spirit in person, in full hypostatic reality. The purpose is to make us more like Jesus, conformed to Christ in the process of theosis. Hence again the intertwining.

True hope must thus be grounded not merely in a utopian apocalyptic commitment to the future. It must remain grounded in **faith** in “the yield of the past,” the entirety of past history read under the signs of covenant and cross, and read realistically in the fullness of its ambiguity and fragmentation as illuminated by those symbols.⁴⁸ True hope thus requires humility as its mother, in an ongoing practice of repentance in the face of the proclamation of the Gospel which is the “yield of the past” as that proclamation ruthlessly exposes the failure of the human community at every moment fully to live up to the ought-to-be with which the Spirit presents it. Hope is thus never optimism.⁴⁹

True hope must also be grounded in the praxis of **love** in the present, as the Spirit creates the church as beloved community through concrete sacramental structures of *koinonia*, binding faithful, loving, and hopeful individuals into the body of Christ. The Spirit then empowers that body for its mission of proclamation of the yielded past of the Gospel, calling all persons into membership in the people of God, in loving service to all (the classic dominion of charity in all traditional spiritual theologies, based on I Cor 13.) This love is also unsentimental, realistic, and unromantic. It, too, stands under the signs of covenant and cross, ministering to the deep wounds caused by sin in past and present, including the church’s own sins.

This manifestation of love terminates in a prophecy of liberating hope that holds before the world and all its people a true historic ought-to-be of justice and peace for all in the divine Commonwealth. This latter allows the believer to see the Spirit at work in the present manifestations of love in juncture with the yielded Gospel past and the hopeful future. True eschatological hope is thus fully Trinitarian, grounded solidly and realistically in past and present as well as future, in the fullness of the Trinitarian economy.⁵⁰ It must be true hope for all humanity, not merely those within privileged enclaves of the covenant. As such, it must face all the issues raised by Kim in her work.

(7) This awareness of the “helix” of the divine missions--their inseparable complementarity--as the historic ought-to-be is, I believe, the only solution that holds together the notion that the present moment, the here and now, the *Dasein* of humanity, is of ultimate theological significance; it is so precisely as the Spirit builds the beloved community into the sacrament of the coming Commonwealth, while maintaining its grounding in the Christ event (recalling the words and deeds of Jesus) and yet assuring that the end, when it comes, indeed, as it comes, will be an irruption of God’s graciousness, and not the mechanistic working out of some optimistic trend

inherent in human nature and the world. If we think otherwise, we have failed the test of I Constantinople – we have not confessed that the Spirit is both distinct from the Father and the Son, and is yet fully God. Without the Spirit and her *missio* in the present, the eschaton is either pure apocalyptic or mere religious metaphor for a historic ought-to-be that is really to be explained better in worldly causal terms. Only in the Spirit, and *hence* in Christ, is the eschaton truly the historic ought-to-be; only in these terms can the historic ought-to-be be recognized as both truly *historical* (the apex of the myth of history and yet also truly active in the present) and *justifiable* in terms of Goodness, Truth, and Beauty as precisely an “ought” and not merely a *terminus ad quem*. History, then, from a Christian point of view, is not the history *of* the Spirit but the history the Spirit provides the world by re-presenting to it at every moment the Word/Wisdom as meaningful past and viable, hopeful future, gospel past and historic ought-to-be.⁵¹ It is the double helix of life writ large in nature and human society.

Bringing our first two parts together: Evolution, cosmic and biological, and “natural history” as “written” in the DNA itself can be seen as a place *between* random chance and determinism, alongside systems theory. This has been a largely neglected topic in both science and theology until very recently. For our purposes, how do we see the resonances between the Holy Spirit as giver of life and the Holy Spirit’s role as Lord of history (again the double helix, since the Messiah is Lord of the Sabbath, the purpose of history), i.e., the Holy Spirit as giver of life precisely as co-Lord of “natural history?” Because DNA is the bearer of history--specifically natural history--and the flesh of Mary bears also the covenant history to that point, the flesh Jesus inherits from his mother (by the gratuitous provision of the Spirit) bears both the natural history of the species, and, by being born “under the law,” also the covenant history, even as that interlocks with all other human histories and cultures. I hope the model of the double helix as an analogy for the interplay of the divine missions has helped us see the Spirit’s role in all that, as she gratuitously provides the Word with precisely that body, that dust, that flesh, by resting on the Word in precisely that womb and no other.

THE TURN TO PNEUMATOLOGY PROPER

We now turn to pneumatology proper, to ask if we have learned something from our pursuit of DNA as an analogy for the intertwining missions of Word and Spirit in the gift of life and in human history that might apply to God’s own immanent triadic life. Del Colle provides us with a good summary of the methodological commitment we share in common with so many others

at this point: “. . . Spirit-Christology is revelatory of the being of God who communicates the divine self in these two missions. This underscores that the relation of the divine persons to one another in the divine being [the inner life of God or the immanent Trinity] is the basis for communion with the other—i.e. the creature—that is actualized in the incarnation of the Son and the sending of the Spirit.”⁵² We do need to proceed with some caution at this point. All Trinitarian theology in some sense begins with what is revealed to us in the economy, harvests what by analogy can be learned about God’s own life, and then returns to the economy with still further insights. There are, however, great tectonic divides about just how much of the inner life of God is knowable even on the basis of God’s self-revelation in the economy. These also have to do with how detached our knowledge of the immanent Trinity can become from that revelation in the economy.⁵³ Those issues are much too large to chew on tonight. But, if Rahner’s Trinitarian *Grundaxiom* on the Trinity means anything – that the Economic Trinity is the Immanent Trinity and the Immanent Trinity is the Economic, i.e., we are not talking about two separate Trinities, two gods, as it were – then surely we can learn something by applying the DNA analogy to the Immanent Trinity, to God’s own personal life, as it were, and prescind from the debate about just how deep into that life we have been taken by this move. As with all theological language we are dealing with analogy at best, and at some point will need to say where the analogy does not hold and breaks down; but it is our theological task to say first as much on the positive side as we can. It is also important to say that we are plowing some new ground here, which always risks falling into some heresy or other. So, this is a trial balloon, floated for the purpose of seeing what works and what does not, and where it is in error we must either confess the analogy has broken down, or perhaps even withdraw the suggestion.

Most of the discussion over the ages about this level of the Trinitarian reality has been about the *filioque*, that is, the classic debate between Eastern and Western Christianity about the role of the Son in the procession of the Holy Spirit by spiration. Coffey, Del Colle and others in the Catholic Spirit-Christology camp have attempted to make some room for the traditional view of Augustine, that the Holy Spirit is the bond of love between the Father and the Son, by returning to a model of the Spirit as the mutual love of Father and Son. In most cases they have tried to move away from the interpretation that this involves either a double procession, or even a procession from the Father and the Son as a single principle. Common ground with the Eastern view that the Spirit proceeds from the Father alone, though perhaps *per filium*, through the Son, or always accompanied by the Son⁵⁴ (Staniloae) is

usually now explored, and nearly everyone (and I am firmly in this camp, as is The Episcopal Church officially) now agrees that the text of the Nicene Creed which is authoritative is the one tradition holds was passed at I Constantinople in 381, without the *filioque*. Does the DNA analogy shed light on this issue, and if so, what might it mean?

I believe it does, but only by raising up for further discussion a very vexing problem that has had much too little exploration in either East or West, a question that the analogy of the divine missions as a double helix must inevitably raise: what is the role of the Holy Spirit in the eternal begetting of the Son within the Trinity? Can we really assert the co-equality and co-eternity of the Holy Spirit as one of the three divine hypostases if the answer continues to be “none?” Even though we know we speak as fools, we have talked as if, in the order of procession or origin, the generation Son is properly first, and then comes the Spirit, either in a second but subordinate procession from the Father alone (East) or from the Father and the Son or from the Father through the Son as their mutual love for each other (West). I suggest that the DNA analogy does make real, if dangerous progress here.

First, the helix model would suggest that the two processions, if they reflect at all what we see in the economy, must be eternally simultaneous, eternally distinct and hence distinguishable, but always inseparable, not merely alongside each other, or eternally accompanying each other, or even as closely related as two hands, but as inseparably intertwined as DNA. This suggests the following picture: The self-communication of God is truly monopatristic, of the Abba-Fount alone—here we agree with the East. There is one, great eternal act of self-expression from the Father alone as the Fount of all being, which takes the form of the helix, two simultaneous, co-eternal, co-equal processions, one of generation and one of spiration, Word and Breath always perfectly together, intertwined but distinguishable, inseparable and complementary, in the one act of self-donation and self-communication. From one side, that of the second person, the Spirit is the love between the Father and the Son, and in that sense in their mutual love they eternally mutually spirate the Spirit, and the order of that strand, of that procession, is Father-Son-Spirit. We can still view this as monopatristic in that the ultimate source is the Father, though from this side when the Father spirates the Spirit it is always as Father of that Son and the Spirit as the Spirit of that Son. So far, so good.

Now we get to the risky part. The analogy of the double helix demands we ask the question from the perspective of the other strand, the procession

of the Spirit. From that perspective, can we say there is a role of the Spirit in the eternal generation of the Son? Our method demands that the answer be “yes,” not only by the analogy of the double helix and the complementarity of the strands, but at a more certain level. We have touched upon the way that all Spirit-Christology now emphasizes the proper, hypostatic role of the Spirit in the Incarnation. I have put on the table some of Del Colle’s own work on that, and also the chapter on the Annunciation in Eugene Rogers’ book. In layer after layer of contemporary theological analysis we see how powerful and omnipresent is the personal role of the Spirit in the second nativity of the Word, the one in time and space and history, in short, in the economy of covenant and grace. However gratuitous this is, that is, dependent only on God’s free will and graciousness, it is inescapable in the story: the Holy Spirit tabernacles in Mary’s womb just as the *shekinah* of glory tabernacles in the Holy of Holies in the Temple. Can we any longer tolerate an assertion that what we learn here in the economy from the second nativity says **nothing** about the first, the eternal begetting of the Word by the Father within the immanent Trinity? Not, I submit, without entirely abandoning Rahner’s *Grundaxiom* and all its corollaries. Not without abandoning the very principle of revelation that the one true God has truly given and revealed the divine self in the great narrative of the economy of grace.

So, here we go, way out on a limb. There must be a role for the Spirit in the eternal begetting of the Word, an order or taxis on the strand of the Spirit that reads Father-Spirit-Son, always deeply entwined with the other strand. Can we envision this? Is there any evidence in the tradition? Well, there is Prudentius’ Christmas hymn *Corde natus ex parentis*, translated in the Episcopal hymnals as “Of the Father’s love begotten.” There are the clues in Rogers’ work on the Spirit resting on the Word in the womb of the Father. Robert W. Jenson’s work on the Trinity also provides clues. There is the question we raised tonight about the “inspiration” of the formation of the inner Word, the question, “does God inhale before speaking?” My own doctoral work on theology of parenting also suggests a consideration. I know a lot of children are conceived casually or unintentionally but still then loved, at least by somebody. But let’s consider as ideal a case as we can in the economy that includes the Fall. When a deeply in love married couple choose to have a child, they do not first conceive her and then love her when she arrives. Instead, the child is conceived in love, and loved personally and hopefully from the very start. It is, as I have written, a wonderful moment when at birth we finally meet him, but part of the phenomenology of the moment is “I have always loved you.” There was a wonderful moment of what I would call theological insight when my grandson said: “You loved

me even before I was born!” reflecting, of course, Psalm 139 among other biblical texts. Then begins the adventure of the actual concrete history of that love. So, I suggest, in the Trinity, the Father does not first beget the Son and then love him and in turn is loved by him. Rather, the eternal **motive** for the eternal begetting is itself the love who must be the Holy Spirit. What else or who else could it be? Only so can the two nativities of the Word, so key to the teaching of II and III Constantinople,⁵⁵ be truly analogous.

The picture that emerges then, is one great act of self-communication with two eternal processions, one by generation in the taxis of Father-Son-Spirit and one by spiration in the taxis of Father-Spirit-Son, always distinct and distinguishable but inseparably intertwined and acting together, each with a conceivable role in the procession of the other but only as eternally simultaneous, fully intertwined. Notice that the one act is truly monopatristic, protecting the deep theological concerns of the Eastern Church. But the Spirit is always not merely *accompanied* by the Son/Word/Wisdom, but inseparably *intertwined*; so also, the Son/Word/Wisdom is always intertwined with the Spirit. This protects the legitimate theological concerns of the West that the Spirit never be separated from the Son, though it holds open the possibility in the economy of distinct missions of the Spirit beyond the boundaries of the covenant community, deeply affirmed by many passages of scripture, not least “I have other sheep that are not of this fold.”⁵⁶ It also affirms the Western tradition of the Spirit as mutual love without challenging the monopatristic character of the one great act of self-communication. And, it is truer to the real depths of both human parenting and filiation.

Then something else happens as we move from the sphere of the divine hypostases to that of the divine energies. Just as there is a self-emptying, a kenosis of the Word going forward, so also there is one of the Spirit. The Spirit gives up her own taxis of origin, Father-Spirit-Son, and instead, I suggest, following hints from McDonnell, takes on the taxis of return, Spirit-Son-Father, so that in what we see of the helix, the two strands are indeed anti-parallel. This is the deference, the reticence, the gratuitousness of the Spirit Rogers so powerfully depicts. The Word/Wisdom keeps the taxis of procession or origin proper to himself, but yields, self-limits some of the divine attributes, while the Spirit yields even her own proper taxis of origin to take on the taxis of return. It is the two, together, I think, in their eternal anti-parallel intertwining that are the taxis of bestowal.⁵⁷

Although I do not propose an amendment to the creed, I think there is here a possible deeper solution to the *filioque* debate than we have yet seen. Just as the Spirit is worshipped “together with” the Father and the Son, so also the Spirit proceeds always “together with” the Son, and vice versa. *Con* in Latin, *syn* in Greek. Perhaps “*conprocedit?*” Anyway, I hope the proposal is clear. It draws the deepest analogy between the two nativities of the Word and the role of the Spirit in them, and is more faithful to the depths of human begetting at our best. This is in addition to making clearer what we mean by calling the Holy Spirit Lord and Life Giver, *Dominum et vivificantem, to Kyrion, to Zōopoion* in the Creed, as we see the very structure of life as we know it resonating with the intertwined life-giving processions at the heart of the divine life.

This model also asserts that history matters from the beginning, even at the very heart of the monarchy of the Father. DNA bears history. The economy is not something added on extrinsically to the eternal Trinitarian life, but flows naturally out of it, is intended by it from the beginning. God’s creating is not **necessary** to God, but it is in character. Eternity must thus be timefull, not timeless; trans-historical, embracing all history, not ahistorical. Process theology is right thus far. So is Jenson: the Trinitarian identities are the identity of the God who is **those** characters in **that** story. One vestigial clue in the DNA, then, is that the strands of the double helix are differentiated by the anti-parallel order of the nucleotides, which also appears to be a “cause” of the intertwining. It is precisely in the *intertwining* of the two energies and thus the two missions, of mediator and mediation, of bestowal and return, and the taxis appropriate to each, as played out in the one story of salvation we know, that we shall find the clues to understanding the taxis of origination.

This far I think we have come: whatever the priority of the Son as second after the Father, and hence of begetting and filiation, there must be some role of the Holy Spirit, and thus of spiration, in the eternal begetting itself if history, **that** history, matters; also if begetting, as we now understand the human side of that analogy, takes two equal partners to tango. The eternal begetting of the Word by the Fount must itself be “inspired,” but only by God’s own love, which is always Trinitarian love, and is itself always God. The procession of the Holy Spirit is not subsequent to the generation of the Son, not even logically, but properly part of it. The Father does not first generate the Son and then decide to love him, but generates the Son eternally precisely as the Beloved, with--I believe the Dust intended from all eternity, Fall or no Fall (here I am a Scotist)--love being the “motive” for the

eternal generation and the Incarnation alike. So, the spiration of the Spirit arises solely from the Father, but always and already as within and eternally contributing to the generation of the Son. Generation is **in-spired**, and so is filiation, and yet the procession of love is clearly distinguishable from the generation/filiation relation and perhaps, in some sense (I speak as a fool), subordinate to it, if this is where the analogy begins to break down, but I wonder even about that. The Father *ex arche* loves the Son as his own future in the history he intends for Word and Spirit with their distinguishable but intertwined missions.

Maranatha, Come Lord Jesus, and *Veni, Creator Spiritus*, are, in the end, not two prayers, but one with distinguishable strands, for it is the Spirit and the Bride who say to the Incarnate Word, Come.

And so, for tonight, Amen.

NOTES

¹See Metropolitan Kallistos Ware, "The Holy Spirit in the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom" (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 2007) (available on the website for the Holy Spirit Lecture and Colloquium, <http://www.duq.edu/holy-spirit/2007.cfm>), 31-32; see footnote 52, p. 40, for Metropolitan Kallistos' full attribution of these words.

²Collect for Pentecost Sunday, translation *The Book of Common Prayer* (1979), 227, modified.

³The occasion for this colloquium was the inaugural des Places-Libermann award in Pneumatology, given for Robert Davis Hughes, III, *Beloved Dust: Tides of the Spirit in Christian Life* (New York and London: The Continuum International Publishing Group, 2008). The award, intended to be given every five years, is named for Claude-François Poullart des Places and the Ven. François-Marie-Paul Libermann, the founder and re-founder of the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. The causes of both are being advanced in Rome. For the theological, spiritual, and missiological interests of these two saintly founders, see the excellent articles in the inaugural issue of *Spiritian Horizons*, Fall 2006. If you are wondering about "pneumatology," it is the study of the Holy Spirit, from the Greek *pneuma* for spirit.

⁴See *Beloved Dust*, ch. 4, 53-68 and the attributions there.

⁵Ralph Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit: Spirit-Christology in Trinitarian Perspective* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1994). I cite Del Colle's work not only because he was a colloquist on this occasion, but also because I find it admirable and accurate. His work is in turn a consideration of that of David Coffey, see his "Spirit Christology and the Trinity," in Bradford E. Hinze and D. Lyle Dabney, eds., *Advents of the Spirit: An Introduction to the Current Study of Pneumatology* (Milwaukee: Marquette University Press, 2001), 315-38, with Del Colle's response to Coffey and Moltmann, 339-46.

⁶Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, 202.

⁷Cardinal Walter Kasper, "The Holy Spirit and Ecumenical Dialogue: Theological and Practical Dimensions" (Pittsburgh: Duquesne University, 2006, also available on the website), 3.

⁸Francis S. Collins, *The Language of God: A Scientist Presents Evidence for Belief* (New York, etc.: Free Press, 2006). This book is a rarity, sensible on both the science and the theology, making a philosophical/theological claim for theism as an interpretation of the scientific picture without falling over into Creationism or Intelligent Design as the importation of occult causes into science. For a similar account see the document "Catechism of Creation" at: http://www.episcopalchurch.org/19021_58397_ENG_HTML.htm.

⁹Killian McDonnell, *The Other Hand of God: The Holy Spirit as Universal Truth and Goal* (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 2003); Eugene, F. Rogers, *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology From Resources Outside the West* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Pub. Co., 2005) are seminal works in contemporary pneumatology, cited frequently throughout *Beloved Dust*.

¹⁰James F. Salmon, S.J., and Nicole Scmitz-Moorman, "Evolution as Revelation of a Triune God," *Zygon* 37 (December 2002), 853-871.

¹¹Ian G. Barbour, "Five Models of God and Evolution," in Robert Johnson Russell, William R. Stoeger, S.J., and Francisco J. Ayala, eds., *Evolutionary and Molecular Biology: Scientific Perspectives on Divine Action* (Vatican City State: Vatican Observatory Publications, and Berkeley, CA: Center for Theology and the Natural Sciences, 1998), 419-442. I am grateful to my Sewanee colleague, Dr. Cynthia S. W. Crysdale, for calling my attention to these last two works.

¹²Phillip Cary, *Augustine's Invention of the Inner Self: The Legacy of a Christian Platonist* (Oxford, etc.: Oxford University press, 2000); *Inner Grace: Augustine in the Traditions of Plato and Paul* (Oxford, etc.: Oxford University press, 2008); *Outward Signs: The Powerlessness of External Things in Augustine's Thought* (Oxford, etc.: Oxford University Press, 2008).

¹³As Bradford Hinze reminded me at the colloquium, I was wrong about DNA as such never having been used. Elizabeth A. Johnson has twice made the suggestion, *She Who Is: The Mystery of God in Feminist Theological Discourse* (New York: Crossroad, 1996), 221; and *Quest for the Living God: Mapping Frontiers in the Theology of God* (New York and London: Continuum, 2007), 220. As I am familiar with both of these excellent works and admire their exposition of the current state of the doctrine of the Trinity, I should have been aware of these references. In a personal communication, Dr. Johnson has stated that she has not developed this suggestion further, nor have others who have found it attractive, as far as she knows. (E-mail, Sept. 23, 2010, in which Dr. Johnson graciously gave permission for me to forge ahead with the idea.) In both instances, she uses the image of a "triple helix" for the Trinity, while acknowledging that the double helix is the form of life as we know it. In fact, Linus Pauling originally imagined a triple Helix, until the work of James Watson and Francis Crick showed that such an arrangement would be unstable and proposed the double helix as an alternative. A triple helix may exist at the end of chromosomes and in at least one biological process, and has also been envisioned as a possible structure for DNA-influencing medications. The Wikipedia article "Triple Helix" as of January 10, 2011, is actually quite accurate and helpful. See also Peter E. Nielsen, "Triple Helix: Designing a New Molecule of Life," *Scientific American*, December 1, 2008. Despite the obvious Trinitarian resonances in a triple helix model, as will be seen, I have chosen to stick with the double helix as the fundamental structure of life, and the result is different though not contradictory insights into the Trinity from those that would follow from a triple helix model.

¹⁴The definitive work on theological analogy remains David Tracy, *The Analogical Imagination: Christian Theology and the Culture of Pluralism* (New York: Crossroad, 1981).

¹⁵A 5-carbon deoxyribose.

¹⁶Adenine, cytosine, guanine, thymine, abbreviated as A,C,G,T.

¹⁷Simply for the sake of completeness it should be noted that in our cells the DNA, when not being used, does not form a linear and exceedingly elongated structure; rather, it is compacted by a factor of approximately 10,000, first by being wound around a protein core, forming what are called nucleosomes. The resulting structure gives the appearance of beads on a string, where the beads are the nucleosome particles joined by the continuous DNA double helix. In other words, the double strand chains bend sufficiently to form nucleosomes. This “string of beads” is then further compacted through coiling and supercoiling within the structure of chromosomes in the cell.

¹⁸My original presentation of the science, including the preceding paragraph, contained a number of factual errors. I am grateful to the Rev. Daniel E. Hall, M.D., of the Episcopal Diocese of Pittsburgh, the Episcopal Church, for pointing out these errors. I have corrected as many as I can, relying heavily on an excellent general introduction to the subject, Chris R. Calladine, Horace R. Drew, Ben F. Luisi, and Andrew A Travers, *Understanding DNA: The Molecule and How It Works*, Third Edition (Amsterdam, etc.: Elsevier Academic Press, 2004). I am grateful to Dr. Hall and most especially to my brother-in-law John David Puett, Ph.D., Chair, Biochemistry Department, University of Georgia, *emeritus*, for checking the science and making many helpful suggestions, most of which I have adopted. I remain responsible for any remaining errors and for drawing the theological analogies.

¹⁹In transcription, a messenger RNA, encoded on the basis of a stretch of a DNA strand, is biosynthesized and in turn carries “instructions” to another part of the cell for manufacturing a protein. In replication, the DNA reproduces itself prior to chromosome doubling leading to cell division or reproduction.

²⁰Parallel strands can be imagined and even produced artificially, but are less stable and hence do not occur in nature. On this issue of directionality and anti-parallelism see Calladine *et al.*, 8, 27-28.

²¹George A. Lindbeck, *The Nature of Doctrine: Religion and Theology in a Postliberal Age* (Philadelphia, now Louisville: Westminster (Knox), 1984, 2009). The two great dogmas are the doctrine of the Trinity and the doctrine of the union of two natures (human and divine) in the one person, Jesus the incarnate Word.

²²Acts 2:14-36. This is, of course, the fundamental point of C. H. Dodd’s classic, *The Apostolic Preaching and Its Developments: Three Lectures, with*

an *Appendix on Eschatology and History* (London and New York: Harper, 1954, and many subsequent editions).

²³See Del Colle's appendix on Schoonenberg and van Beeck, 217-226.

²⁴Jn 20:19-23.

²⁵Rogers, *After the Spirit*, 98-134.

²⁶See esp. Del Colle, 64-90, but continuing to wrestle with this issue in post-scholastic terms is much of the backbone of chapters that follow.

²⁷For reasons of time, this section was omitted from the spoken lecture.

²⁸John de Satgé, *Down to Earth: The New Protestant Vision of the Virgin Mary* (Wilmington, NC: Consortium, 1976).

²⁹Kirsteen Kim, *The Holy Spirit in the World: A Global Conversation* (Maryknoll: Orbis, 2007; London: SPCK, 2008). Kim was a colloquist on this occasion. See also my "Christian Theology of Interfaith Dialogue: Defining the Emerging Fourth Option." *STR* 40 (1997), 383-408.

³⁰Barbour, "Five Models," 430.

³¹Salmon and Schmitz-Moorman, "Evolution as Revelation," 855-56.

³²Del Colle treats this theme throughout *Christ and the Spirit*, but especially, as previously noted, in the Appendix.

³³Hinze and Dabney, 302-346.

³⁴Robert W. Jenson, *Systematic Theology: I, The Triune God* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 159.

³⁵"The Historic Ought-to-Be and the Spirit of Hope." In *A Heart for the Future: Writings on Christian Hope*, edited by Robert B. Slocum. New York: Church Publishing, 2004, 109-120. The principal works referred to are Paul Weiss, *History: Written and Lived* (Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press, 1962); W. Taylor Stevenson, *History as Myth: The Import for Contemporary Theology* (New York: The Seabury Press, 1969); and Jürgen

Moltmann, *The Coming of God: Christian Eschatology*, trans. Margaret Kohl (Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 1996).

³⁶Weiss, 18.

³⁷Weiss, 16.

³⁸Weiss, 217-230.

³⁹Weiss, 230.

⁴⁰Stevenson, *History as Myth*, 80ff.

⁴¹ST III; *Theology of Culture*, ed. Robert C. Kimball (New York: Oxford University press, 1959).

⁴²"Releasing the Power of the Spirit in a Trinitarian Ecclesiology," in Hinze and Dabney, 347-81.

⁴³Stevenson, 80.

⁴⁴John V. Taylor, *The Go-Between God: The Holy Spirit and the Christian Mission* (Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1973).

⁴⁵Abraham J. Heschel, *The Sabbath* (New York: Farrar, Strauss and Young, 1951).

⁴⁶Raymond E. Brown, *The Gospel According to John XIII-XXI*, Anchor Bible 29A (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1970), appendix on "The Paraclete," 1135-1144.

⁴⁷Pp. 131-150.

⁴⁸See Tillich on the ambiguities of life and history in ST III, 138-277, 362-426.

⁴⁹Moltmann, lecture in Cambridge, MA, 1967.

⁵⁰The debt here to David Tracy's three modes of theology in *The Analogical Imagination* (New York: Crossroad, 1981) is, I trust, obvious. For a closer analysis see my "A Critical Note on Two Aspects of Self-Transcendence," *STR*

46:1 (2002) 112-132.

⁵¹See Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, 207-210 for a highly sophisticated account of the relationship of the Word and the Spirit in their intertwined missions to history and hence between salvation in God and human emancipatory action in history.

⁵²Del Colle, *Christ and the Spirit*, 183.

⁵³See the excellent discussions by Elizabeth Johnson in *She Who Is*, 191-223 and *Quest*, 202-225.

⁵⁴See the classic defense of this particular Eastern position by Dumitru Staniloae, "The procession of the Holy Spirit from the Father and his relation to the Son, as the basis of our deification and adoption," in *Spirit of God, Spirit of Christ: Ecumenical Reflections on the Filioque Controversy* (Faith and Order Paper No. 103) (London: SPCK; Geneva: World Council of Churches, 1981), 174-86. For some important reservations about the Eastern view, see Jenson, *Systematic Theology I*, 146-61, where we also find his views on the role of the Spirit in the generation of the Son.

⁵⁵In the ongoing effort to show that the council of Chalcedon was not Nestorian, these two councils virtually ceased to talk about two natures of Christ and instead speak almost exclusively of two nativities of the Word, one within the Trinity before all time and a second by the Holy Spirit in the womb of Mary in history.

⁵⁶Jn 10:16.

⁵⁷Dr. Hall subsequently made an observation that bears further reflection (slightly edited): " And even more so, the information on either strand (Son or Spirit) is released by [the DNA] analogy only when the love of God the Father [analogous to the hydrogen bonds between the bases holding the strands of the helix together] kenotically releases them from that love just long enough for the information to be transcribed. An eternal procession of love and release. . . ."

2010 Colloquium Readings

Hughes, Robert D. "The Historic Ought-to-Be and the Spirit of Hope." In *A Heart for the Future: Writings on Christian Hope*, edited by Robert B. Slocum. New York: Church Publishing, 2004, 109-120.

Hughes, Robert D. *Beloved Dust: Tides of the Spirit in Christian Life*. New York: Continuum, 2008.

McDonnell, Kilian. *The Other Hand of God: The Holy Spirit as the Universal Touch and Goal*. Collegeville, MN: Liturgical Press, 2003, 81-90.

Rogers, Eugene F. *After the Spirit: A Constructive Pneumatology from Resources outside the Modern West*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2005, 98-134.

Previous Lectures

Available at www.duq.edu/holy-spirit.

2005	The Holy Spirit, Witness, and Martyrdom	Geoffrey Wainwright
2006	The Holy Spirit and Ecumenical Dialogue: Theological and Practical Dimensions	Cardinal Walter Kasper
2007	The Holy Spirit in the Liturgy of Saint John Chrysostom	The Right Rev. Bishop Kallistos Ware
2008	Creative Giver of Life: An Ecological Theology of the Holy Spirit	Elizabeth A. Johnson
2009	“Whose Sins You Shall Forgive ... The Holy Spirit and the Forgiveness of Sin(s) in the Fourth Gospel”	Sandra M. Schneiders



600 FORBES AVENUE
PITTSBURGH, PA 15282

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Permit No. 390
Pittsburgh, PA

