Receptive Ecumenism
Listening, Learning and Loving in the Way of Christ

Editors: Vicky Balabanski and Geraldine Hawkes
Foreword and Afterword: Paul D Murray



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Edited by Vicky Balabanski
and
Geraldine Hawkes

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A Forum for Theology in the World Vol 5 No 2/2018

Introduction

Vicky Balabanski and Geraldine Hawkes

> *Your eye is the lamp of your body. If your eye is healthy, your whole body is full of light; but if it is not healthy, your body is full of darkness. Therefore consider whether the light in you is not darkness. If then your whole body is full of light, with no part of it in darkness, it will be as full of light as when a lamp gives you light with its rays. Luke 11:34–6 (NRSV)*

Receptive Ecumenism—listening, learning and loving in the Way of Christ is a response to the growing recognition of Receptive Ecumenism as a concept and process that has the potential to assist renewal and reform of the whole Church, both from within denominations as well as across the Church universal.

Since 2006, when Professor Paul Murray of the University of Durham organised and hosted the first Receptive Ecumenism conference, there have been three further international conferences on Receptive Ecumenism. The feasibility of a fifth is currently being explored. During these years, Receptive Ecumenism has caught the imagination of a wide range of people from various churches. A diverse and rich discourse has resulted, with a variety of papers and practical projects, in ways that are dynamic, creative and responsive to whatever part of the church the participants find themselves in, and a new sense of hope and possibility about being church has flowed.

However, despite such activity and the significant influence that Receptive Ecumenism is having, there is relatively little published on it so far. This volume is a contribution to filling this gap, inspired by the most recent International Conference, held in Canberra, Australia in November 2017.

It is helpful at this point also to reflect on the current shape or 'appearance' of ecumenical work so far, and how we might recognise Receptive Ecumenism.

There has been ecumenical co-operation and dialogue across churches in various arenas for many years. These have helped build respectful relationships and understanding among us, and generally serve our world well. However, involvement seems to be limited to the interested few, rather than to the greater whole. Various parts of the life and mission of each tradition seem untouched, understandably perhaps, by the fruitfulness of the ecumenical movement; energy for ecumenism has dissipated a little, and in some arenas conflicting sets of values permeate our attitudes, behaviour and language with and towards one another.

Over the years churches have created parishes, boards, committees, councils, synods, agencies, universities, hospitals and more, generally with a sound theological basis. However, as they evolve and are re-shaped, they can succumb to other demands and may unintentionally lose the distinctive light of the Gospel.

While learning about and co-operating with one another remains important, alongside creating structures and processes for sharing, transmitting and living faith, there is a need also to be attentive to those parts of the interior ecclesial life of one's own church that may not fully reflect the Way of Christ. The health of our ecclesial 'eyes', to use the biblical metaphor, is not what it could be, and the light of Christ does not radiate throughout the body as fully as it might.

Receptive Ecumenism encourages awareness of one's own institutional weaknesses and fragilities, and offers an approach for dealing with any part of Church life that needs reconciling. This is the very place where Receptive Ecumenism may enter.

Receptive Ecumenism does not ask us to focus on another church's wounds, weaknesses or vulnerabilities, nor to be telling them about where we think they are wrong and need to be healed. Rather, it is about a healthy recognition of one's own need for healing, through discerning from time to time any place within our structures, systems, practices and processes that may be oppressing, obscuring, diminishing or even extinguishing the light of Christ, or blocking people from being drawn closer into Christ and towards one another.

Receptive Ecumenism is seemingly simple. It invites us to ask not *'What do we have to tell, or learn about, the other?'*, but rather *'What do we need to learn from the other?'*

The complexity emerges as people begin the profound turn-around that a Receptive Ecumenical approach requires, if people are to grow in being truly able to recognise the need within one's own tradition, and to seek out another, in the hope of discovering, discerning and receiving with integrity the 'gift' of the other.

Following years of activity together, of describing ourselves to the other, and of feeling certain and sure about our own churches, Receptive Ecumenism draws us into a new disposition, and a new way of speaking and relating with one another.

Some current bi/multi-lateral dialogues or actions make use of words like dialogue, debate, mutual confidence, discussions, building of trust and the reduction of fear, and these are important concepts in ecumenism. However, Receptive Ecumenism does not require us to be in dialogue, debate, or even discussion. It does not need us to wait for the other, nor is it dependent on the other being concerned in any way about the need for their own healing or learning. The other does not even need to be remotely interested in ecumenism.

Receptive Ecumenism is a self-reflective posture before it is one of interrogating the other. It is a shift from dialogue and telling, to deep self-examination and listening. It includes discernment and learning, without judgement of, from or by the other, or expecting anything in return. It is about a culture of hospitality, of thinking and acting with love and humility; of being open to recognising our own ecclesial imperfections; of learning to recognise the other as gift; and of being open to receiving with integrity the wisdom and gift of the other in the same way as God receives them.

The hope is, therefore, that this publication will appeal to and assist not only the interested ecumenist or academic, but any individual or church body with a yearning for renewal and reform, with integrity, and all who have responsibility within any setting of Church.

The papers offer a wide-ranging understanding of Receptive Ecumenism, descriptions of the values undergirding it, as well as frameworks, methods and applications of Receptive Ecumenism to encourage, inspire and assist our flourishing together in the Way of Christ, in, with and for the world.

While there remain aspects and practices to be more deeply explored and understood, especially around what ecclesial discernment and reception with integrity look like, the hope is that each paper will inspire us / people to contribute to further discoveries.

Additionally, there is the hope that this publication will be a means of connecting people interested in this rapidly growing movement, to ignite the imagination of those who are curious, and to nurture us all theologically, spiritually and practically, not as separated Christians, but as a community of disciples, so that the body may fully radiate the light of Christ.

Paul Murray, the initiator of Receptive Ecumenism, offers two important, invitational and insightful reflections to open and close this volume—the Foreword and the Afterword. They form essential reading and deep consideration before and following the reading of, and acting on, this collection of essays.

The volume continues with three contributions that invite an engagement with Receptive Ecumenism through imagination and affect as well as through reason and intellect. By opening the volume in this way, we acknowledge that to practise ecumenism *receptively* requires not only an appropriate conceptual framework and rigorous intellectual discussion, but also an openness to engage with people who differ from ourselves with a 'gaze of love'. Such a gaze involves a degree of vulnerability to the other and necessarily involves the heart as well as the mind. By imaginatively entering into the biblical narrative and attending to what it has to say both to and about us, we allow ourselves to be formed according to the image of Christ. Such a formative process involves the whole person. Receptive Ecumenism thus cultivates receptivity not only towards the other, but also towards the Holy Spirit's guidance through the biblical narrative.

The first contribution is a guided meditation by Geraldine Hawkes. It invites the reader to enter into a self-reflective engagement with a striking visual text portraying the encounter between Jesus and the woman of Samaria. The movement of Receptive Ecumenism is mirrored in this meditation, and it can be used to accompany the reading of the essays that follow.

There follow two Bible studies by Vicky Balabanski. The first of these, with a focus on Colossians 3:11–17, explores how clothing ourselves with Christ means finding our identity not in the outward markers by which we differentiate ourselves from one another, but by expanding our gaze to perceive that 'Christ is all and in all' (Col 3:11). The second Bible study on Romans 8:18–30 places ecumenism in an eschatological context; this invites us to look beyond our own boundaries and glimpse the big picture of the *missio Dei*. The big

picture shows that God's concern is not only for humanity, but for all creation, which eagerly longs for the children of God to be revealed—a truly ecumenical revelation of a restored relationship between God, creation and humanity. Our unity is shaped by the eschatological future to which God is calling us.

The essays that follow are grouped according to their respective emphases on one of the three aspects of the Way of Christ named in the title of the volume: listening, learning and loving. Each of these is characteristic of Receptive Ecumenism and describes a core aspect of its approach to ecumenical engagement. How do we listen and discern what may be a gift of God? How can we learn from the other with integrity? In what ways does the approach of Receptive Ecumenism lead to loving that reflects the love of God?

Denis Edwards opens the section on 'Listening'. In dialogue with an insight of Karl Rahner on the experience of the Spirit of God, he explores the spiritual logic of Christian decision-making. Edwards sets out the way the experience of grace, which is indeed the experience of the Spirit, functions as a kind of first principle in the logic of this process, and how it leads over time towards the deepest sense of self. Edwards argues that there is a parallel at the level of Church to what Rahner proposes at the level of the individual, and tests this proposal in relation to the institutional charism of synodality, offered to the Roman Catholic Church by, among others, the Anglican, Lutheran and Orthodox churches.

In the next essay, Karen Petersen Finch takes up the issue of ecumenical discernment, this time in dialogue with Jesuit theologian and philosopher Bernard Lonergan, who argued that discernment includes an element of decision. Finch sets out Lonergan's cognitional theory in four cognitive 'operations': experience, understanding, judgment and decision, and draws out the significance of these for ecumenical discernment. She argues that the method we adopt is important in this process, and it assists as we move towards conversion–not only religious, but intellectual and moral.

The essay by Elizabeth Welch focusses on the Holy Spirit and communion. Welch sets out some key aspects of the work of the Spirit in enabling various levels of communion: first the transformative role of the Holy Spirit in bringing about communion (understood as the relationality that is possible with God); second, the Spirit drawing God's people into a communion that is embodied in prayer and wor-

ship, and third, the eschatological dimension of the work of the Spirit in bringing about communion. She concludes with a consideration of the International Reformed Anglican Dialogue as a dialogue between and about communion.

The second section of this collection, with a focus on 'Learning', opens with Antonia Pizzey's essay, 'Receptive Ecumenical Learning: A Constructive Way of Approaching Ecclesial Identity and Renewal'. She sets out how Receptive Ecumenism, while affirming the continued importance of both practical and theological ecumenism, directs our attention beyond learning about each other (theological ecumenism) and simply co-operating with each other (practical ecumenism) to focus on learning *from* each other (Receptive Ecumenism). She explores one of the most significant challenges facing ecclesial learning and church renewal today, namely that of ecclesial identity, and argues that Receptive Ecumenism offers a helpful strategy when grappling with issues surrounding ecclesial identity and learning.

Doru Costache, as an Eastern Orthodox scholar in the diaspora, reflects on the benefits of a receptive ecumenical approach in his essay 'Contemporary Orthodox Diaspora: Learning from a Lutheran–Roman Catholic Document'. With a focus on the Lutheran–Roman Catholic ecumenical document *The Ministry of Oversight* (2007), Costache considers what the Eastern Orthodox diaspora could learn from its approach and findings. He gives insight into the specific challenges faced by Australian Orthodoxy, including the pressure to define themselves as migrant communities, which leads to Eastern Orthodox jurisdictions coexisting within one place but not sharing in each other's life. He advocates the need to learn what it means to listen to one another, in order to contextualise each's message, and be capable of recognising shared values beyond cultural differences.

The learning continues with Geraldine Hawkes offering a description of three processes to assist in nurturing a receptive disposition and a practical engagement with Receptive Ecumenism.

John Littleton's essay explores linking the approach of Receptive Ecumenism with learning community strategies to enhance ecumenical learning within and between learning communities. He gives consideration to Ecumenical Learning, as defined by the World Council of Churches, and particularly Simon Oxley's concept that ecumenical education helps churches become learning communities rather than domesticating communities, having a broad or multiple

perspectives rather than a single, narrow view of their faith and the world. Littleton then describes parishes which function as learning communities when holistic, collaborative and theologically reflective processes are intentionally practised. He gives some examples of how receptive ecumenism is being practised in his own context of South Australia.

Sweden is the context for the final essay in this section. Sara Gehlin sets out the pedagogical process which Receptive Ecumenism inspired in the four 'church families' recognised by the Christian Council of Sweden: the Orthodox, Catholic, Lutheran, and Free Church families. The overarching shape of the pedagogical process was that of a Pilgrimage, and Gehlin sets this out under the key components of *place and movement, theme, structure, dynamics, challenges, timeframes*, and *goals*. Gehlin's reflection on the two-year process offers insight into the generative nature of the process, which brought about deeper knowledge of the ways in which mission is lived and understood within the four church families, mutual enrichment between traditions and interpersonal trust and ecumenical friendship.

The final section of the collection, under the heading of 'Loving', offers three essays that engage at depth with the approach of Receptive Ecumenism. Gabrielle Thomas focusses on the application of hospitality, which has been named in various places as a vital virtue in the practice of Receptive Ecumenism. She describes the steps taken by a group of women in the UK and the role of hospitality in creating safe spaces for learning and for gifts to be received. In making the link between the action of the women and Christ's hospitality, Gabrielle challenges the churches in their own hospitality towards women and the need to ensure the full reception of the gifts that women have to share. Gregory Ryan's essay challenges us to consider its theological and hermeneutical roots in order to avoid superficial appropriations of it. He sets out Paul Murray's overall methodological strategy, of which Receptive Ecumenism is one outworking, under the heading of 'Dynamic integrity'.

Ryan points out that part of the distinctiveness of Receptive Ecumenism is that, at least initially, it is oriented not towards direct consensus *between* traditions, but rather towards refreshing, expanding healing *within* a tradition through learning from the other. He brings this into fruitful conversation with reception hermeneutics, the work of Ormond Rush, showing that there is a structural and dynamic res-

onance between Murray's approach and Rush's hermeneutics which offers a rich field of exploration.

The final essay in the collection is by Callan Slipper, who sees a profound parallel between the cruciform love of Christ and the spiritual logic of Receptive Ecumenism. Drawing on ancient and contemporary trinitarian theology, he sets out the pattern of relationship in both as love which adopts a truly listening, comprehending and attentive stance. Slipper goes on to explore the way Receptive Ecumenism, when practised according to the full meaning of its theological depth, is an eschatological event. He concludes with a reflection on the major Receptive Ecumenism project in the North East of England, and emphasises the need for taking the eschatological dimension of such projects seriously. It is this horizon which shows that there is a possibility of experiencing the ultimate unity even before that unity is fully reached. He concludes that the final end is effective in the present means.

We express our gratitude to Peter Balabanski for his constant and expert attention to the written word and syntax, and to those at ATF Press for their willingness to respond quickly and generously in making this volume possible and for their assiduous work in bringing this to fruition.

We began this introduction with an acknowledgement of the fact that there has been relatively little published to date on Receptive Ecumenism. We offer this volume as a contribution to redressing this need, trusting that the Way of Christ will be made more accessible by it, and that we may join one another in this path towards our shared future.

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Foreword
Receptive Ecumenism as a Leaning-in to the Spirit of Loving Transformation

Paul D Murray

It is a great pleasure and honour to offer both a Foreword and an Afterword to this diverse volume which explores and celebrates Receptive Ecumenism.

Geraldine Hawkes' profound 'Meditation on the Water of Life', inspired by reflection on the beautiful sculpture from Chester Cathedral featured on the front cover, and Vicky Balabanski's highly apposite biblical reflections form a powerful entry point. Together with Antonia Pizzey's and Callan Slipper's contributions, these pieces variously serve to take us deeply into the spirit and soul of Receptive Ecumenism.

In turn, the contributions of Sara Gehlin, John Littleton, Doru Costache, and Gabrielle Thomas each extend this spiritual practice of—in the words of the editors—*listening, learning, and loving in the way of Christ* to fresh contexts: that of the ecumenical pilgrimages promoted by the Swedish Mission Council (Gehlin); that of the churches as intentional learning communities (Littleton); that of possible honest diasporal Orthodox self-recognition and receptive learning relative to the fruits of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue (Costache); and in relation to what can be learned of the ways of mutual hospitality from women's ecclesial experiences in the churches in the United Kingdom (Thomas). For her own part, Karen Petersen Finch provides a very clear presentation of Bernard Lonergan's approach to theological rationality and method, and reflects on its relevance for ecclesial decision-making in a way that might open some ground for Lonergan scholars to explore what connections can be made with Receptive Ecumenism.[1]

1. Of relevance here is Catherine E Clifford, 'Lonergan's Contribution to Ecumenism', in *Theological Studies*, 63 (2002): 521–38.

With all of this, and as I explore further in the Afterword, Elizabeth Welch is correct to point to pneumatology as being key to the thought and practice of Receptive Ecumenism. As, however, this should also hopefully suggest, if there is a spiritual soul and instinct at work in the practice of Receptive Ecumenism—what St Bonaventure and the Franciscan tradition would refer to as *affectus*[2]—it is important to keep clearly in mind that this is a spiritual practice and mode of understanding which needs to be explicitly theologically inflected, reflected, shaped, and scrutinised throughout by the power of intellect (*intellectus*) and reason (*ratio*).[3] Working in inextricable associa-

2. For example, St Bonaventure, *1 Sent*. proe., q.3, resp, in *Opera Theologica Selecta* (Firenze: Quaracchi, 1934), p. 11; also St Bonaventure, *Works of St Bonaventure, Vol. IX. Breviloquium*, translated by Dominic Monti, OFM (New York: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), 17; also St Bonaventure, Collation 2, n.32, in *Collations on the Six Days*, translated by Jose De Vinck (Paterson, NJ: St Anthony Guild Press, 1970), 39; and St Bonaventure, qq.6-7, in *Works of St. Bonaventure, Volume IV. Disputed Questions on the Knowledge of Christ*, translated by Zachary Hayes, OFM (New York: Franciscan Institute Publications, 2005), 161–194. I am grateful to William Crozier for identifying these and all other Bonaventurian references here; as too, more generally, for conversations on the theology of St Bonaventure stretching over some years now.

3. Something of a parallel again pertains with St Bonaventure, for whom the assent of love necessarily entails the use of reason: 'But when faith does not assent because of reason, but because of love for Him to whom it assents, it desires to have reasons (*desiderat habere rationem*). And when this happens it does not empty human reason (*ratio humana*) of its merits; instead, it serves to augment consolation.' St Bonaventure, *1 Sent*., proe., q.2, ad.6, in *Opera Theologica Selecta,* as translated by William Crozier (Firenze: Quaracchi, 1934), 10. For his own part and operating within the Thomistic tradition, Joseph Pieper distinguishes between 'the understanding as *ratio* and the understanding as *intellectus*' in a way which might initially sound as though it helpfully maps onto this Franciscan *affectus*/*ratio-intellectus* distinction. Pieper writes: '*Ratio* is the power of discursive, logical thought, of searching and of examination, of abstraction, of definition and drawing conclusions. *Intellectus*, on the other hand, is the name for the understanding in so far as it is the capacity of *simplex intuitus*, of that simple vision to which truth offers itself like a landscape to the eye.' Josef Pieper, *Leisure, the Basis of Culture*, translated by Alexander Dru with an Introduction by TS Eliot (London: Faber and Faber, 1952 [1948]), 33–4; also, 'The mode of discursive thought is accompanied and impregnated by an effortless awareness, the contemplative vision of the *intellectus* . . .' 34. Indeed, for present purposes—that is in the context of our discussing Receptive Ecumenism—it is particularly notable that Pieper refers to *intellectus* as 'not active but passive, or rather *receptive*, the activity of the soul in which it conceives that which it sees'. 34,

tion with the receptive spiritual soul of Receptive Ecumenism is a beating theological heart and intentional mind-set. Sure, without the former's close attentiveness to the in-*spiring* movement of the Spirit, the latter will tend towards being mere concept, dead letter, and frustrated strategy. Equally, however, without the latter, which involves due attention to the need for disciplined theological testing and strategising, the former will tend towards directionless desire and mere aspiration. Alternatively stated, this relates to the inextricable and necessary enfolding of the Pneumatic and the Christic, with the former as the movement and energy of God's being-in-act and the latter as its expressed form.

It is particularly good, then, to have included here the pieces by Denis Edwards, who demonstrates a clear grasp of the theological dynamics of Receptive Ecumenism in his various essays on the subject, and Gregory Ryan, who, with a deep appreciation for the theological infrastructure of Receptive Ecumenism, is in process of making a significant contribution to its substantive development and further dissemination in a way prefaced in his contribution here and shortly to come to full extended publication in its own right.

Gregory Ryan's reflections concern the hermeneutical process at work in Receptive Ecumenism and how this might be clarified and deepened by being brought into relationship with Ormond Rush's work on reception hermeneutics. As already alluded to, Vicky Balabanski and Geraldine Hawkes helpfully refer to this hermeneutical

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emphasis added; also 'Our knowledge in fact includes an element of non-activity, of purely receptive vision . . . ', 35; and '. . . in the same way his (*sic*) great, imperishable intuitions visit a man in his moments of leisure. It is in these silent and receptive moments that the soul of man is sometimes visited by an awareness of what holds the world together . . ', 54.. For such reasons the unwary reader might falsely assume: a) that *intellectus* in the Thomistic tradition maps onto *affectus* in the Franciscan tradition, with Bonaventure's less differentiated use of *intellectus* equating more specifically to the Thomistic *ratio*; and b) that in this way the supposed contrast between the priority of love in the Franciscan tradition and the priority of reason in the Thomistic tradition might be helpfully relativized. However, as Rik van Nieuwenhove carefully and clearly establishes, St Thomas' use of *intellectus* (compare 'insight') and *ratio* each pertain to distinct intellectual operations of the mind and not to the realm of intuition, love, or spiritual knowledge. See Rik van Nieuwenhove, 'Contemplation, Intellectus, and *Simplex Intuitus* in Aquinas: Recovering a Neoplatonic Theme', in *American Catholic Philosophical Quarterly*, 91/2 (2017): 199–225.

process with the three-fold movement of *listening, learning, and loving*. The various naming of three-fold movements and concerns has been a recurrent theme in writing on Receptive Ecumenism—indeed Gregory Ryan further extends this by drawing on Ormond Rush's own three-fold forms—and it is interesting to note the resonance that sounds between these various usages.

The *listening, learning, loving* of this volume correlates well with the three-fold *attending to what is*, *discerning what might be*, and *acting to realise the future* which I have elsewhere identified as describing the fundamental movements of human rationality and, indeed, of all true, beautiful, and good human engagement with reality.[4] There I also played upon these movements as having some resonance *both* with the always interrelated and mutually associated cardinal virtues of faith, hope, and charity—which are correctly understood as three facets of one God-initiated and God-sustained orientation of life—*and* with the inextricably interrelated form of our three-fold dependence on God's being-in-act as inexhaustible Source (Father), expressed Form/Logos (Son), and in-*spirating* Energy (Spirit). When theologically situated and configured in this manner, each of these fundamental movements of human engagement with reality is properly lived as a faith-held and hope-filled movement in love—and first and foremost not our love for God but God's love for us (see 1 Jn 4:10) which 'has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit' (Rom 5:5) who *is* the 'spring' of 'living water' which has been promised us (Jn 4:10–14).

In turn, it was reflection upon these various three-fold movements—combined with a concern to bring praxis-oriented theology and properly systematic theology into closer correlation with each other—which lay behind my varying articulations of the task of theology as consisting in: i) critical-constructive analysis of the understanding and practice of faith and the questions, problems, difficulties, and possibilities which arise there (compare *attending in faith*); with a view to ii) identifying and scrutinising the viability of potential ways ahead through various modes of coherence-based testing (compare *discerning in hope*); and so iii) being able to enhance the quality of

4. See Paul D Murray, *Reason, Truth, and Theology in Pragmatist Perspective* (Leuven: Peeters, 2004).

the understanding, practice, and witness of faith (compare *acting in love*).[5]

This is systematic theology in interrogative-pragmatic mode, concerned to think through rigorously and systematically that which arises on the way of Christian faith and which even lies in its path as obstacle and obstruction. This includes but is by no means exclusively limited to the traditional systematic concern to give a coherent account of the 'hope that is in us' (1 Pet 3:15) in a manner fitting for the times and places in which we find ourselves. Indeed the full range of concerns arising within this interrogative-pragmatic understanding of the systematic theological task extends well beyond this traditional aspiration for systematic presentation, stretching to encompass the full extent of Christian faith. For my own part, for example, a wide-ranging commitment to transformative ecclesiology stands as one general manifestation of this pursuit of systematic theology in interrogative-pragmatic mode and, closely related to this, the thought and practice of Receptive Ecumenism stands as another. It is essential to keep this systematically pursued, interrogative-pragmatic dimension of Receptive Ecumenism clearly in view, together with the commitment to rigorous, multi-levelled coherence-based scrutiny and testing which it represents.[6]

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5. See Paul D Murray, 'Searching the Living Truth of the Church in Practice: On the Transformative Task of Systematic Ecclesiology', in *Modern Theology*, 30 (2014): 251–81. For the relevance here of praxis-oriented theology, see, for example, Ignacio Ellacuría, 'Theology as the Ideological Moment of Ecclesial Praxis' (1978), translated by Anna Bonta Moreland and Kevin F Burke, in *Essays on History, Liberation, and Salvation*, edited and introduction by Michael E Lee and commentary by Kevin F Burke (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 2013), 255–73, where on 257 we find: 'And even when one does not presume a practical end explicitly, it is clear that the theologian and his or her supposed academic work are configured by the desire to respond to certain challenges, even if the responses are quite distinct from the challenges.'
6. To be explicit: there is a combined emphasis here *both* on the necessarily rigorous, critical, scrutinising function of theology—all in accordance with various levels of coherence-based consideration—*and* on the need for this to be understood as being clearly situated as a key moment *within* a far broader process of Christian engagement and understanding that is coextensive with, as I put it, 'the full extent of Christian faith'. There is two-fold resonance here: on the one hand with St Thomas' emphasis on the specific contribution of theological analysis to Christian life and wisdom being in the mode of a theoretical science, which proceeds through rational analysis and understanding; on the other hand