

Summary

Thomas speaks about "The Great Work" in 1994 at the Riverdale Center of Religious Research during an American Teilhard Association meeting to commemorate his 80th birthday.

He discusses three principles which must be psychically embraced by human culture in order to successfully face the challenge: (1) the Universe is a communion of subjects not a collection of objects (2) the human is a sub-system of the Earth system (3) the Earth will never again operate in the same way as it did in the Cenozoic (pre-industrial humans)

Thomas discusses three revolutionary ideas of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin which set the framework for his thought: (1) the Universe from its beginning "is a spiritual thing" (2) to tell the human story you must tell the Earth and Universe Story (3) the need to move salvation processes from Redemption to Creation

Questions/Points for further discussion/study

- (1) How does Thomas Berry describe the importance of Pierre Teilhard de Chardin on his thought?
- (2) How did Maria Montessori suggest a child should learn about the Universe?
- (3) When and how did the Cenozoic begin? Why does Thomas feel it is ending?
- (4) Discuss the "self" - the family, career, nation, and Great Self
- (5) In the contemporary world discuss the role (help or hindrance) in "The Great Work" of each of nation/government/legal, corporation, university, and religion.
- (6) With reference to the parable of the stone carriers, in your life's work, which are you - a stone carrier, a breadwinner, or a cathedral builder?