This research explores the life and theology of Marcos McGrath, Dean of Theology at the Pontifical Catholic University of Chile and founder of the journal Teología y Vida, a scholarly publication still thriving today. In the first issue, McGrath urged theologians to relate the Catholic theological tradition to the problems of everyday life and urged the Church of Chile to theologize by engaging the language, popular wisdom, and struggles for social development of the people in their own land. This research project examines McGrath’s life and work on the basis of these principles. How did McGrath connect religious thought and the yearning for integral human development in the context of his work in rural Panama, Chile, CELAM, Rome, and the United States? McGrath was equally innovative in calling upon social scientists to study the situation of the poor in Latin America and contribute to a new plan for social engagement of the Church.