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QUAERITE FACIEM EIUS SEMPER LA “CRISTOLOGÍA ESPIRITUAL” DE JOSEPH RATZINGER

Ratzinger propone una “cristología espiritual”, en la que se unan ontología y soteriología, teología de la cruz y de la encarnación, cristología, pneumatología y eclesiología. Para esto se requiere superar la fractura entre el Jesús histórico y el Cristo de la fe, y defender el homousios y la divinidad de Jesucristo definidos en Nicea y III Constantinopla. De igual manera recuerda Ratzinger la centralidad de la figura salvífica de Cristo, en la que no solo hay que recordar su divinidad, sino su carácter único de mediador en la salvación. No es un avatar más de la divinidad, sino el Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre “por nosotros” y “para nuestra salvación”. Jesús de Nazaret tendrá una “singularidad y unicidad irrepetible”. Solo Él puede ser el mediador y redentor. La búsqueda del rostro de Cristo culminará en la última obra teológica del actual papa emérito.

Con la publicación de *Jesús de Nazaret* (2007–2012)¹ como el «libro de su vida», queda claro un itinerario, un hilo conductor que ha recorrido toda la obra ratzingeriana, ahora explicitado en estas últimas páginas. Sin embargo a lo hora de profundizar en sus raíces, podemos remitirnos a los orígenes y descubrir esta constante en los escritos del papa-teólogo. Allí encontraremos la “cristología espiritual” que darán lugar con el tiempo a las “meditaciones” sobre la figura de Jesucristo que nos deja como legado. Estamos pues aquí ante las premisas de su *Jesús de Nazaret*. Así, por ejemplo, en

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¹ Obras completas de Joseph Ratzinger. VI/1: *Jesús de Nazaret. Escritos de cristología*, Madrid 2015.

un curso de cristología impartido por el profesor Ratzinger en Tübinga en 1967², afirmaba que “el concepto de Cristo ha caído en una crisis de la historia”³. En un mundo con una ciencia dominada por el fenómeno, la pregunta sobre el Hijo de Dios resulta inoportuna y extemporánea. Es más, la cuestión de “la muerte de Dios” parece terminar de una vez por todas con el asunto propuesto. El único acercamiento a la figura de Cristo sería teológico, pues nada podemos afirmar sobre el Jesús histórico, se repetía en tono bultmanniano. “Mientras los hombres lo reconocen como “un gran hombre”, los “discípulos” le adoran y creen en él”⁴: el Jesús histórico se encuentra netamente separado del Cristo de la fe. He aquí el dilema en que nos encontramos. “La cristología es –se acaba definiendo ahí– un intento de acoger y asumir de modo cabal el *logos* de nuestro conocimiento, de nuestro sentido. La cristología es una función de la fe; se realiza de modo pleno en la fe. Contiene no solo una función crítica sobre nuestro conocimiento, sino también sobre toda nuestra existencia que se encuentra bajo el signo del Logos, que sale a nuestro encuentro”⁵. La cristología ha de ser al mismo tiempo crítica y creyente y, de esta forma, la “cristología espiritual” de Joseph Ratzinger debe ser también entendida a la vez –como recuerda Vidal Taléns– como contemplativa y en “un sentido trinitario y pneumatológico”. Ahora que va a cumplir sus noventa y dos años, tal vez resulte interesante acercarse al núcleo y –a la vez– la síntesis de su obra teológica⁶.

² *Christologie*, Tübingen: pro manuscrito 1967: se trata de unos apuntes editados a ciclostil por J. Metzner, U. Seneca, H. Wirth y H. Zacarias, de “carácter privado” y en el que no se asume responsabilidad alguna sobre “los errores y las carencias”. El mencionado texto no presenta de momento gran autoridad, aunque supone una interesante rareza en el panorama bibliográfico ratzingeriano. He de agradecer al profesor Pedro Rodríguez que me haya facilitado este documento túbingués, así como la ayuda del Dr. Christian Schaller, de la *Joseph Ratzinger/ Benedict XVI. Stiftung* de Ratisbona, Alemania.

³ *Ibidem*, 1.

⁴ *Ibidem*

⁵ *Ibidem*, 1–2. Se citan ahí las fuentes de las que se sirve: K. Adam, *Der Christus des Glaubens*, Düsseldorf 1954; J.R. Geisselmann, *Jesus der Christus*, Stuttgart 1951; A. Grillmeier, *Christ in Christian Tradition*, I: Oxford 1975²; II: London 1987; A. Grillmeier, H. Bacht, *Das Konzil von Chalzedon*, 3 vols., Würzburg 1951–1954; J. Liebärt, *Christologie*, Freiburg 1965; W. Pannenberg, *Grundzüge der Christologie*, Gütersloh 1966²; M. Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik*, II/2, München 1963⁶.

⁶ J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger*, “Communio” 7 (2008), 97; *idem*, *Mirar a Jesús y “ver” al Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre para nuestra Redención. Aportación de J. Ratzinger a la Cristología contemporánea*, ed. S. Madrigal, Madrid–San Pablo 2009, 67–68; allí se afirma que es además una cristología bíblica, eclesial y litúrgica (cf. *ibidem*).

TESIS SOBRE JESÚS

En la conocida *Introducción al cristianismo* (1968), el profesor Ratzinger presentaba a Jesucristo como Hijo y Palabra: el Hijo hecho hombre, el Logos que se ha hecho *sarx* y que se constituye en apertura al Padre y a cada uno de nosotros⁷. Ahí se adentra entonces –dice– en el “zig-zag de la teología” entre el Jesús histórico y el Cristo de la fe⁸. Además, “la fe cristológica afirma decididamente la experiencia de la identidad existencia-misión en la unión inseparable Jesús-Cristo”⁹. Se da pues una unidad entre cristología y soteriología, entre el ser y la misión de Cristo, entre ser-en-sí-mismo y el ser-para-nosotros. A su vez, propone la cruz como “punto de partida de la confesión de fe”, al confesar a Jesús como “el Cristo” y, por tanto, como “verdadero Dios y verdadero hombre”. Esto lleva consigo la identidad de amor y verdad en la persona de Jesucristo, quien es el Logos encarnado, muerto y resucitado por amor. Pero esta afirmación contiene una postura implícita: “el desarrollo cristológico del dogma afirma que la mesianidad radical de Jesús exige la filiación, y que la filiación exige la divinidad”¹⁰. De esta forma profundizaba el profesor de Tübinga en los títulos de “el Hijo” e “Hijo de Dios” (cf. S 2,7; Ex 4,22; Jn 1,34; Hch 9,20; 1 Jn 4,15; 5,5), dejando de lado el término helenístico de “hombre divino”. De modo análogo, habrá que compatibilizar la “teología de la encarnación” con la “teología de la cruz”, la ontología con el acontecimiento pascual y la doctrina de la redención¹¹.

En definitiva, Ratzinger recuerda a Cristo como “el último hombre” (1 Co 15,45), “el hombre, *el* hombre verdadero es el que más se abre, quien no solo toca el in-

⁷ *Introducción al cristianismo*, Salamanca 2001⁹, 165.

⁸ Analiza en concreto las propuestas de A. Schweitzer, *Geschichte der Leben-Jesu-Forschung*, Tübingen 1906; A. von Harnack, *Das Wesen des Christentums*, Stuttgart 1950; R. Bultmann, *Das Verhältniss der urchristlichen Christusbotschaft zum historischen Jesus*, Heidelberg 1960. Sobre el tema de la combinación entre lo ontológico y lo histórico, puede verse de igual modo su obra: *La teología de la historia en san Buenaventura*, especialmente 63–104.

⁹ *Introducción al cristianismo*..., 174.

¹⁰ *Ibidem*, 179.

¹¹ Cf. *ibidem*, 192–196. Sobre la “teología de la cruz” puede verse P. Blanco, cfr. *Cruz (teología de). Dimensión teológica*, 202–207. Sobre la compatibilización entre lo ontológico y lo histórico-relacional en el concepto de persona (en las doctrinas de Tomás de Aquino y Emil Brunner), puede verse: *El Dios de la fe y el Dios de los filósofos*, Barcelona 1962, 42. Sobre la importancia del pensamiento fenomenológico y personalista en Ratzinger, Krieg recuerda “die vorgefaßte Meinung vom Begriff der Person und von Jesus als der vollkommenen Person” (R.A. Krieg, *Kardinal Ratzinger, Max Scheler und eine Grundfrage der Christologie*, “Theologische Quartalschrift” 160 (1980), 111). Según Bellandi, este personalismo parte de la doctrina de la

finito –¡el infinito!–, sino que se hace uno con él: con Jesucristo”¹². Después, desarrollaba en esas lecciones tubinguesas los artículos de fe cristológicos que aparecen en el símbolo de los apóstoles. Expone así la *theologia gloriae* a propósito del artículo: “concebido por obra y gracia del Espíritu santo, nació de santa María virgen”, y la doctrina mariológica en los términos del Vaticano II¹³. Añade además que “esta filiación no significa que Jesús sea Dios y hombre a partes iguales, sino que para la fe fue *completamente* Dios y *completamente* hombre. Que sea Dios no significa que se reduzca su humanidad”¹⁴. Sobre el “padeció... fue crucificado, muerto y sepultado”, recuerda Ratzinger que la cruz –y aquí se refiere a la *theologia crucis*– es “expresión de un amor radical que se nos entrega por entero”¹⁵. Por eso la cruz será sobre todo adoración, sacrificio y acción de gracias, más que la simple expiación o satisfacción que aparece en otras religiones. En cuanto al “descendió a los infiernos” realiza una “teología del sábado santo”, con la que se refiere al silencio y a la “muerte de Dios”. “La cristología pasa por la cruz, el momento en que se percibe el amor, para sumergirse en la muerte, el silencio y el oscurecimiento de Dios”¹⁶. En fin, con el “resucitó entre los muertos”, el profesor tubingúes traía a la memoria que “el amor es más fuerte que la muerte” (Ct 8,6). “Solo el amor [humano] unido al poder divino de la vida y del amor puede fundar nuestra inmortalidad”¹⁷.

Con lo anterior, Ratzinger pretendía defender la divinidad de Jesucristo, a la vez que afrontaba las críticas formuladas por la teología contemporánea. Esta toma de postura la llevará también a la predicación. En unos textos que proceden

encarnación. “L’insistenza di Ratzinger sulla dimensione personale-cristologica del credere si fonda essenzialmente sulla centralità dell’evento dell’incarnazione, che costituisce infatti il segno distintivo e paradossale dell’annuncio cristiano di tutti i tempi” (A. Bellandi, *Fede cristiana come stare e comprendere*, Roma 1993, 188). La doble naturaleza de Cristo como Dios y hombre, Logos y carne, encontraría su correlato en el concepto cristiano de persona. Puede verse también R. Tura, “La teología de J. Ratzinger. Saggio introduttivo”, 158–161; allí concluye: “L’essenza del Cristianesimo è e rimane la persona di Cristo, il Dio fatto uomo, cioè il fatto di un “Tu” vissuto in Palestina che era Dio” (ibídem, 160–161). Sobre este tema puede verse mi estudio: *La teología de la persona en Joseph Ratzinger*”, en: *Propuestas antropológicas del siglo XX*, II, ed. J.F. Sellés, Pamplona 2007, 353–382.

¹² *Introducción al cristianismo...*, 198; cf. J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 110–111.

¹³ Tal postura aparece resumida en el artículo: P. Blanco Sarto, *María en los escritos de Joseph Ratzinger*, 309–334.

¹⁴ *Introducción al cristianismo...*, 229–230.

¹⁵ Ibídem, 235.

¹⁶ Ibídem, 247.

¹⁷ Ibídem, 255.

de la predicación y la enseñanza en distintos lugares entre los años 1972 y 1975¹⁸, el teólogo Ratzinger realizaba un recorrido por el vida terrena de Jesucristo. En primer lugar, comenzaba por el *descendit de coelis*, en contraposición con los intentos ideológicos que rechazan este abajamiento y que prescinden de la realidad de Dios. El “bajar” del Verbo denota una superioridad que no todos aceptan. “Quien desee entender el descenso, debe comprender primero el misterio de la altura, que aquí se expresa con la palabra “cielo””¹⁹. Con un amplio desarrollo bíblico, desarrolla esta teología de la encarnación y afirma que “Jesús es el *hombre* que viene de arriba. [...] Jesús, el Hijo de Dios, ha penetrado –en cuanto hombre– en medio de los animales. En la debilidad del hombre, erige él la grandeza de Dios. [...] Va hacia los animales sin convertirse en animal, sin apropiarse de sus métodos. Y es devorado. Pero vence precisamente de este modo. La que se consideró una derrota es justamente victoria del adversario: no existe solo lo animal. Existe el “amor hasta el fin” (Jn 13,1). En él se restaura al hombre”²⁰. La *theologia gloriae* culmina en la *theologia crucis*²¹.

¹⁸ *Der Gott Jesu Christi. Betrachtungen über den Dreieinigigen Gott*, München 1972; después como *El Dios de los cristianos*, 2005; contiene: “Dios” (1973), “Jesucristo” (1972 y 1975), “El Espíritu Santo” (1973). Después aparecen algunos capítulos en *El misterio pascual*, 73–140; sobre este texto, puede verse: J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 111–112.

¹⁹ *El Dios de Jesucristo. Meditaciones sobre Dios uno y trino*, Salamanca 1976, 57.

²⁰ *Ibidem*, 61.

²¹ Tales afirmaciones bíblicas y cristológicas tendrán unas claras consecuencias espirituales: la culminación de la cristología se encuentra en el amor, la plegaria y la obediencia al Padre por parte de Jesús. “Nuestra salvación consiste en hacernos cuerpo de Cristo, como Cristo mismo: tomándonos de él a diario, y volviendo a diario a él” (*ibidem*, 64). Tras la teología de la cruz, el predicador de Ratisbona se centrará en el *et incarnatus est*: “Aquel que es la Palabra se hizo hombre y vivió entre nosotros lleno de amor y de verdad” (Jn 1,14). Procede a un nuevo acercamiento bíblico a la infancia de Jesús y al resto de la vida pública, en la que ya se dibuja la existencia de la Iglesia. La “cristología espiritual” se convierte también ahora en cristología eclesial. A propósito de la oración de Jesús, escribe Ratzinger: “es precisamente la conversación con el Padre, su retiro al monte, lo que le hace presente, y al revés: la Iglesia es al mismo tiempo objeto de conversación entre Padre e Hijo, y con esto se arraiga *teo-lógicamente*” (*ibidem*, 75). Aquí se encuentra la esencia de la vida pública de Jesús: en la continua relación con el Padre, la presencia entre los hombres y la cercanía a ellos. Al mismo tiempo insiste en la consustancialidad del Hijo respecto al Padre, en el *consubstantialis Patri* definido en el concilio de Nicea (325). Esta afirmación dogmática presenta así evidentes consecuencias en la espiritualidad cristiana. La palabra clave de este concilio es *homousios*: Jesucristo es consustancial al Padre y, por tanto, es Dios. ¿Tiene esta afirmación vigencia y relevancia en la actualidad?, se preguntaba el teólogo Ratzinger. Intentaba además responder *piscatorie, non aristotelice*, tal como pretendieron formularlo los obispos en tiempos de Nicea (tal expresión aparece en el *Codex Enyclusius*; sobre este puede verse: A. Grillmeier, *Mit ihm und in ihm. Christologische Forschungen und Perspektiven*, Freiburg 1975, 283–300). “El vocablo *homousios* –concluye– es, en el sentir de los padres nicenos, la simple traducción conceptual de la metáfora “Hijo”” (*El Dios de Jesucristo...*, 84).

La simultaneidad entre lo ontológico y el acontecimiento pascual estará siempre presente en su cristología. Así, aborda en fin el *resurrexit secundum Scripturas*, siguiendo también las aportaciones de otros autores²². En primer lugar desarrolla –como suele ser habitual en él– la cuestión bíblica, exponiendo la tradición confesional (1 Co 15,3) y la narrativa aparecida en los evangelios, en torno al relato de la resurrección de Jesucristo. Esta viene a continuación de la muerte “por nuestros pecados” y “según las Escrituras”, y del “fue sepultado” (cf. 1 Co 15,3). Añade entonces el texto neotestamentario, en el que se afirma que “resucitó al tercer día según las Escrituras” y que “se apareció a Pedro y a los doce” (cf. 1 Co 15,3–5). Sin embargo, “la resurrección no se disuelve en las apariciones. Las apariciones no *son* la resurrección, sino solamente su resplandor. Primero, esta constituye un *suceso* en Jesús mismo, entre el Padre y él, por fuerza del Espíritu santo; luego, se comunica el suceso que ha ocurrido en él”²³. Quien confiesa esto no está creyendo un milagro extraño, sino en el poder de Dios sobre la creación, por el que no está sujeto a la inexorable ley de la muerte. Quien confiesa esto cree que verdaderamente Cristo es el Hijo de Dios (cf. Jn 1,34; Hch 9,20; 1 Jn 4,15; 5,5)²⁴.

De igual manera abordará como arzobispo de Múnich y Frisinga la teología latente en la devoción al sagrado corazón de Jesús²⁵. En primer lugar pretende superar el debate entre liturgismo y devocionalismo en torno a este modo de acercarse a la persona de Jesús²⁶. Ahí se relacionaba la devoción al sagrado Corazón con el mismo misterio pascual. A su vez, en el texto de Jn 19,34 (“uno de los soldados le atravesó el costado con una lanza, y al momento salió sangre y agua”), Ratzinger ve la unidad entre cristología, pneumatología y eclesiología: “Cristo se comunica en el Espíritu Santo, y es el Espíritu Santo quien transforma la arcilla en un cuerpo vivo, es decir, quien une a los hombres divididos en el único organismo del amor de Jesucristo”²⁷. Así, pretenderá fundamentar esta devoción en la teología de la encarnación, a la vez que considera la importancia de los sentidos

²² Cf. L. Scheffczyk, *Auferstehung. Prinzip christlichen Glaubens*, Einsiedeln 1976; B. Rigaux, *Dieu l'a ressuscité*, Glembloux 1973; H. Schlier, *Über die Auferstehung Jesu*, Einsiedeln 1978; H.U. von Balthasar, *Theologie der drei Tage*, Einsiedeln 1969.

²³ *El Dios de Jesucristo...*, 93.

²⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, 94–95.

²⁵ “Il mistero pasquale. Contenuto e fondamento profondo della devozione al sacro cuore di Gesù” (1981), 43–61.

²⁶ Acude aquí a los estudios de Hugo Rahner sobre la interpretación patristica de Jn 7,37–39 y 19,34, aparecidos en *Symbole der Kirche. Die Ekklesiologie der Väter*, Salzburg 1964.

²⁷ *Guardare al Crocifisso*, Milano 2005², 44.

y los sentimientos en la antropología cristiana, hasta llegar a un somero desarrollo en torno a la teología de la cruz²⁸.

Sin embargo, también querrá abordar de nuevo –con más detenimiento– la cuestión cristológica en sede dogmática. Una síntesis de todos los argumentos que Ratzinger aporta se encuentra en las “reflexiones y meditaciones cristológicas” que se contienen en un pequeño libro dedicado a Alois Grillmeier (1910–1998), el conocido jesuita que dedicó gran parte de su vida a los estudios sobre la formación del dogma cristológico. Tras destacar el vínculo entre cristología y soteriología, Ratzinger presentaba y recordaba “la insoluble unidad interna entre Jesús y Cristo, y entre Iglesia e historia”²⁹. La unidad ontológica de las dos naturalezas en Cristo (la cristología inmanente, podríamos decir) está íntimamente relacionada con la salvación y la existencia de la Iglesia (la cristología económica), a la vez que se insiste en la unidad entre el Jesús histórico y el Cristo de la fe. En la misma línea de la cristología joánica, el entonces prefecto de la Congregación de la doctrina de la fe presentaba la figura de Jesús en continua unión con el Padre. Después de “una lucha por una correcta interpretación de Cristo en la Iglesia”, se llegaba –según el prefecto– a tres atributos cristológicos esenciales: Cristo-Señor-Hijo (de Dios). “Llamar a Jesús “el Hijo” no implica en absoluto aplicarle el oro mítico del dogma (como se viene repitiendo a partir de Reimarus); es por el contrario la resonancia más directa con la figura histórica de Jesús. Todo el testimonio de los evangelios concuerda a la hora de afirmar

²⁸ Cf. ibidem, 47–54. “No cabe dudar del dolor de Cristo –continuaba–, no hay *Passio* sin *passiones*: el sufrimiento presupone la capacidad de sufrir, la fuerza de las pasiones. [...] Dios sufre porque está enamorado; el tema del Dios que sufre remite de modo inmediato al Dios que ama. La verdadera y propia superación de la idea antigua de Dios por parte de la cristiana estriba en conocer que Dios es amor” (ibidem, 51–52. Se remite aquí a J. Moltmann, *Der gekreuzigte Gott*, München 1972; H.U. von Balthasar, *Zur einer christlichen Theologie der Hoffnung*, “Münchener Theologische Revue” 32 (1981), 81–102; idem, *Theodramatik IV (Das Endspiel)*, Einsiedel 1983; J. Galot, *Dieu souffre-t-il?*, Paris 1986). Ratzinger fundamenta estas afirmaciones sobre la devoción al corazón de Jesús en Os 11 y en los Padres (cf. *Guardare al Crocifisso...*, 54–61. Se remite aquí entre otros a los estudios de E. von Ivánka, *Plato christianus*, Einsiedeln 1964, y H.W. Wolff, *Anthropologie des Alten Testaments*, München 1973). Así se acoge al agustiniano *Redeamus ad cor; et inveniamus Eum* (cf. Conf IV,12,18), es decir, al mismo Cristo. “En el corazón de Jesús se encuentra ante nosotros el mismo centro del cristianismo. En él se dice la novedad revolucionaria de la nueva alianza. Y esto apela a nuestro corazón” (*Guardare al Crocifisso...*, 61). Sobre este tema puede verse también: M.D. Kirby, *The Sacred Heart of Jesus in the Theology of Benedict XVI*, “L’Osservatore Romano” (2005) 10.

²⁹ Ibidem, 15. Sobre la relación entre cristología dogmática y eclesial, puede verse: J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 100–101; idem, *Mirar a Jesús y “ver” al Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre para nuestra Redención. Aportación de J. Ratzinger a la Cristología contemporánea...*, 67–68.

que las palabras y las acciones de Jesús procedían de la más íntima unión con el Padre”³⁰.

En segundo lugar, Ratzinger recuerda que Jesucristo ha muerto “rezando, amando y adorando” al Padre. “Todos [los evangelistas] están de acuerdo en que las últimas palabras de Jesús constituían una expresión de su disposición al Padre y un grito dirigido no a algo o a alguien, sino a Él: estar en diálogo con Él constituía su más íntima esencia”³¹. Por eso el profesor bávaro añadía una tercera tesis cristológica, en la que se unen la fe y la adoración al mismo tiempo: “Puesto que la oración es el centro de la persona de Jesús, podemos conocerlo y comprenderlo solo si participamos de su oración”³². No podremos por tanto encontrar a Jesucristo sin la oración, sin introducirnos en ese diálogo continuo del Hijo con el Padre. A lo que se añade una cuarta tesis, por la que llegamos de Cristo a la Iglesia: “La comunión con la oración de Jesús incluye la comunión con los hermanos”³³. Como consecuencia la Iglesia es el “cuerpo de Cristo”, y todo lo que está presente en la memoria y el conocimiento de Cristo se contiene en la misma Iglesia, “pues en ella vive y está presente Cristo”. Jesús enseñó a sus discípulos a decir “Padre nuestro”, no simplemente “Padre mío”³⁴. Por eso el fin de la relación del cristiano con Cristo es no solo la comunión con Él, sino también con el Padre “que está en los cielos” (cf. Mt 5,16; 5,45.48; 6,1.14.26; 7,11; 10,32 et al.), y esta doble comunión es la que crea el “nosotros eclesial”³⁵.

Además, la voluntad divina no anula ni absorbe la voluntad humana de Jesús, con lo que la libertad humana de Cristo sigue siendo plena. “La voluntad humana de Jesús encuentra su lugar en la voluntad del Hijo. Obrando de este modo, recibe la identidad, es decir, la subordinación completa del yo al tú, la autodonación y la entrega del yo al tú: esta es la esencia del que es pura relación y acto

³⁰ *Guardare al Crocifisso...*, 17.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 23.

³² *Ibidem*

³³ *Ibidem*, 25.

³⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, 25–26.

³⁵ Cf. *ibidem*, 28–29. Junto a esto, clamaba una vez más el prefecto Ratzinger por la unidad de la cristología con la soteriología, de la cristología bíblica con la dogmática, de “teología de la encarnación y teología de la cruz, de la “cristología descendente” y la “ascendente”” (*ibidem*, 30. Sobre la importancia de la cristología bíblica en el desarrollo teológico de Ratzinger, así como la mutua implicación entre exégesis y dogmática, puede verse: J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 101–102). Así, lo afirmado en la Escritura sobre Cristo no es otra cosa que la formulación del “Hijo consustancial” de los primeros concilios: el lenguaje bíblico se identifica con el filosófico en cuanto a los contenidos. “Esto quiere decir que el término filosófico “consustancial” no añade nada al Nuevo Testamento, sino que constituye el punto culminante de su testimonio y la defensa de su literalidad contra todo alegorismo. Esto

puro”³⁶. En la medida que el cristiano identifica su libertad con la de Cristo, alcanza su propia liberación, es decir, lo salva, lo diviniza, lo hace Dios. Esto es lo que se desprende al leer la Escritura. Por otra parte, Ratzinger se opone a la ideologización de la imagen de Jesús, como consecuencia de no haber hecho un análisis crítico de los presupuestos metodológicos que preceden a la misma lectura de los textos bíblicos. Por eso repropone una lectura de las fuentes bíblicas sin prejuicios ni preconcepciones. Así, revisa la “hermenéutica de la fe”, pues es “la única capaz de mantener toda el testimonio de las fuentes”, y es la única con capacidad para “trascender la diversidad de culturas, épocas y pueblos”³⁷. “En la unidad de la persona de Jesús – continuaba–, que une a Dios con el hombre, se fundamenta la unión entre Dios y el mundo, a cuyo servicio ha de estar la teología”. Pero esta síntesis solo se puede acabar –insiste de nuevo– por medio de la oración: “la cristología nace solo de la oración, y de ningún otro lugar”³⁸. He aquí también por qué llama a su cristología “espiritual”.

LA CENTRALIDAD DE CRISTO

En los años setenta y ochenta del siglo XX, las teologías de la liberación presentaban a un Jesús tan solo humano y en clave política, que en el fondo venía a ser deudor de los desarrollos cristológicos ya vistos. Después, la irrupción de la teología de las religiones y del “pluralismo religioso” tendía de nuevo a eclipsar la importancia de la figura de Cristo como único redentor. En 1989 el prefecto

quiere decir que la palabra de Dios no nos engaña. Jesús no es tan solo *llamado* Hijo de Dios: *lo es*” (*Guardare il Crocifisso*, 33).

Así, el teólogo Ratzinger reivindicaba la fórmula neocalcedoniana, formulada en el tercer concilio de Constantinopla (680–681), por la unidad entre cristología bíblica y dogmática, y entre teología y vida. “Este [concilio] enseña, por una parte, que la unión entre Dios y hombre en Cristo no contiene limitación o amputación de la naturaleza humana. Si Dios se une a la criatura, al hombre, ni lo hiere ni lo disminuye; lo lleva más bien a plenitud. Ni siquiera queda, por otra parte (lo cual no tiene menor importancia) ningún tipo de dualismo o paralelismo entre las dos naturalezas, sino que considera necesario a lo largo de la historia defender la libertad humana de Jesús” (ibídem, 35. En la nota 19, Ratzinger analiza la postura de Wolfhart Pannenberg, cuya afirmación sobre la divinidad de Jesucristo se encuentra en la misma línea que el tercer concilio de Constantinopla –a pesar de la postura antineocalcedoniana del teólogo luterano–, mientras a la vez subcribe la postura duetelista presentada por K. Rahner: cf. W. Pannenberg, *Grundzüge der Christologie...*, 351; K. Rahner, *Chalkedon – Ende oder Anfang?*; A. Grillmeier, H. Bach, *Das Konzil von Chalkedon*, III, Würzburg 1954, 13).

³⁶ *Guardare al Crocifisso...*, 37. Remite aquí al estudio de A. Miralles, *Precisiones terminológicas en torno al misterio de Cristo sugeridas por la lectura de los concilios I y III de Constantinopla*, en: *Cristo, Hijo de Dios y Redentor del hombre*, ed. L.F. Mateo-Seco, Pamplona 1982, 597–606.

³⁷ *Guardare al Crocifisso...*, 40.

³⁸ Ibídem, 41.

Ratzinger volvía a presentar un resumen sobre la situación de la cristología en aquel entonces en un curso de verano en El Escorial (España), titulado después como *Jesucristo, hoy*³⁹. En esa conferencia recordaba que Cristo es hombre de verdad, pero que también es Dios, tal vez para completar la figura del Cristo libertador de la teología de la liberación: “la atención centrada en la humanidad de Cristo va haciendo desaparecer su divinidad, la unidad de la persona se disgrega y dominan las reconstrucciones de Jesús como puro hombre, que reflejan más las ideas de nuestro tiempo que la verdadera figura de Nuestro Señor”⁴⁰. Consistiría en una nueva versión de nestorianismo o arrianismo, pues “se ha generalizado la opinión –continuaba– de que solo podemos seguir a Jesús hombre, no al Hijo de Dios”⁴¹. Ratzinger reivindicaba una vez más los concilios segundo de Nicea y tercero de Constantinopla⁴², y proponía por tanto allí a Jesucristo, al Hijo de Dios hecho hombre, como el único mediador y salvador de los hombres.

Junto a esta necesidad de reconocer las dos naturalezas de Cristo, Ratzinger desarrollaba a su vez la continuidad entre el Jesús histórico y el Cristo de la fe según la sentencia neotestamentaria: “Jesucristo es el mismo ayer, hoy y siempre” (Hb 13,8)⁴³. La perennidad y la continuidad salvífica de la persona de Cristo apuntan hacia su divinidad. Por el contrario, “el que solo quiere ver a Cristo en el ayer, no lo encuentra; y el que solo quiere tenerlo hoy tampoco lo encuentra. Él es desde el principio el que fue, es y vendrá. [...] Si renunciamos a participar en una existencia que se dilata en esas dimensiones, no podemos comprender a Jesús”⁴⁴. Y comprender a Jesucristo –continuaba– supone verlo como “camino, verdad y vida” (Jn 14,6)⁴⁵. Será esta la sentencia fundamental del Cristo joánico que el teólogo alemán glosa del siguiente modo: “El que tenga sed, que venga: Jesús sigue siendo hoy la fuente inagotable de agua viva. Nos basta llegar y beber para que la frase siguiente valga también para nosotros: “Si alguien cree en mí, de su seno manarán ríos de agua viva” (Jn 7,38). La vida, la verdadera vida, no puede simplemente “tomar”, recibir. Nos introduce en la dinámica del dar: en la dinámica de Cristo, que es la vida. Beber del agua viva de la roca significa aceptar el misterio salvador del agua y de la sangre. Es la antítesis radical a esa ansia que

³⁹ *Jesucristo hoy*, en: *Un canto nuevo para el Señor*, Salamanca 2005, 11–39.

⁴⁰ *Ibidem*, 19.

⁴¹ *Ibidem*, 12.

⁴² Remite aquí a H.U. von Balthasar, *Kosmische Liturgie. Das Weltbild Maximus' des Bekenners*, Freiburg 1941; C. Schönborn, *Die Christus-Ikone. Eine theologische Hinführung*, Schaffhausen 1984.

⁴³ Cf. *Un canto nuevo para el Señor...*, 19–23.

⁴⁴ *Ibidem*, 20. Sobre la relación entre el Jesús histórico y el Cristo de la fe según Ratzinger, puede verse: J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 105–110; ahí reivindica una “hermenéutica creyente y cristológica” (*ibidem*, 110).

⁴⁵ Cf. *Un canto nuevo para el Señor...*, 23–39.

empuja hacia la droga. Es aceptar el amor, y es acceder a la verdad. Y eso es precisamente la vida”⁴⁶.

Y por qué se cree en Jesús pero no en Cristo o en su Iglesia?, sería la siguiente cuestión que abordaba Ratzinger en 1992⁴⁷. No solo se trata del problema “Cristo sí, Iglesia no”, sino también “Jesús sí, Cristo (o Hijo de Dios) no”. La verdadera crisis de la fe se encuentra en la cristología, no en la eclesiología, sentencia Ratzinger. Aparece así un Jesús meramente antropológico y profundamente desmitificado. “Digámoslo con claridad: el hombre de hoy no entiende ya la doctrina cristiana de la redención. No encuentra nada parecido en su propia experiencia vital. No puede imaginar nada detrás de términos como expiación, sustitución y satisfacción. Lo designado con la palabra Cristo (Mesías) no aparece en su vida y resulta una fórmula vacía. La confesión de Jesús como Cristo cae por tierra”⁴⁸. Entonces triunfan las interpretaciones sobre Jesús de tipo sentimental, psicológico o puramente político. La consecuencia es clara: “La figura de Cristo debe presentarse en toda su altura y profundidad. No podemos conformarnos con un Jesús a la moda: por Jesucristo conocemos a Dios y por Dios conocemos a Jesucristo, y solo así nos conocemos a nosotros mismos y encontramos la respuesta sobre el sentido y la felicidad definitiva y permanente del ser humano”⁴⁹.

En este sentido resulta significativo que el cardenal Ratzinger firmara una presentación de un texto anterior de la Congregación para la doctrina de la fe, titulado *El misterio del Hijo de Dios*, en el vigésimo aniversario de su publicación⁵⁰. “La figura y la obra de Jesucristo –comenzaba diciendo–, y su relación con el misterio de Dios, tienen una centralidad objetiva y fundamental, y poseen una riqueza inagotable para la fe cristiana y para la reflexión teológica de cualquier época”⁵¹. En primer lugar, el prefecto situaba la declaración en el contexto teológico del momento. Ahí se reseñaba “un protagonismo y desarrollo notable” de la cristología, en la que se intentaba conjugar el renovado interés por la historia y la antropología. Más que un enfoque meramente ontológico, se pretendía destacar la dimensión histórico-salvífica en la que se subrayaba la acción redentora de Cristo y de su muerte. Se procedía además

⁴⁶ Ibídem, 39.

⁴⁷ *Christ und die Kirche*, en: *Un canto nuevo para el Señor...*, 41–48.

⁴⁸ Ibídem, 43.

⁴⁹ Ibídem, 47–48.

⁵⁰ *Mysterium Filii Dei* (21.02.1972): AAS 64 (1972), 237–241. Texto en castellano: “El misterio del Hijo de Dios. Declaración para salvaguardia de la fe en torno a algunos errores recientes sobre los misterios de la encarnación y de la santísima Trinidad”, *El misterio del Hijo de Dios. Declaración y comentarios*, Madrid 1992, 39–45. Además del texto de Ratzinger, aparecen también comentarios de Jean Galot, Umberto Betti y Charles Boyer, así como un prólogo del cardenal Antonio Cañizares

⁵¹ *Introducción a la declaración Mysterium Filii Dei*, en: *El misterio del Hijo de Dios. Declaración y comentarios*, Madrid 1992, 15.

a considerar “la figura concreta de Jesús de Nazaret”⁵². De esta forma, se aprovechaba este subrayado del dato histórico-salvífico y de la concepción soteriológica de la figura y las acciones de Jesucristo, para negar las afirmaciones de tipo ontológico contenidas en los concilios de Nicea (325), Constantinopla (381) y Calcedonia (451)⁵³.

En concreto, recordaba Ratzinger que los conceptos de “persona”, “naturaleza” y “preexistencia” siguen teniendo vigencia en la actualidad y que, por lo tanto, no se puede afirmar sin más que Jesucristo es una “persona humana” para subrayar su humanidad, ni reducir su divinidad a mera autoconciencia o autopresencia⁵⁴. La renovación del lenguaje teológico nos podría llevar así a vaciar de contenido la realidad del dogma. “Así –seguía diciendo– se problematizaba aquello de que, en el pensamiento cristiano tradicional, constituía el punto de partida, es decir, la existencia del Verbo eterno, verdaderamente Dios como el Padre, que asume la naturaleza humana en la unión hipostática”⁵⁵. En esta situación, intervienen por tanto no solo una mayor fidelidad a la perspectiva bíblica o una mayor sensibilidad antropológica, sino también la influencia de varias escuelas filosóficas (fenomenología, existencialismo, hermenéutica, estructuralismo). Tal “contexto problemático” podría llevar así a rechazar también las nociones de “hipóstasis” o “naturaleza divina”. De esta forma, la declaración se proponía “precisar y recordar los puntos irrevocables de la profesión de fe cristológica de la Iglesia”⁵⁶,

⁵² Cf. ibidem, 16.

⁵³ Cf. ibidem, 17. Sobre este tema, la Pontificia Comisión Bíblica había publicado *De Sacra Scriptura et christologia*, Città del Vaticano 1984. No hemos encontrado ninguna presentación del cardenal Ratzinger a este documento. También puede verse, en lo que se refiere a la unidad entre cristología y soteriología en Ratzinger: J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger...*, 102–104.

⁵⁴ Cf. *Introducción a la declaración Mystrium Filii Dei...*, 18.

⁵⁵ Ibidem.

⁵⁶ Ibidem, 19. Por un lado, seguía diciendo el prefecto, pretendía evitar la separación entre Trinidad, cristología y antropología, mientras por otro se desea mantener unidas la “cristología ontológica” con la “funcional”, la supuestamente helénica con la bíblica (cf. ibidem, 23–24). Además, el texto mantiene la vigencia de los conceptos de “naturaleza” y “persona”. “La noción de *persona* –recordaba Ratzinger– es definida más en términos psicológicos o fenomenológicos, olvidando el aspecto propiamente ontológico” (cf. ibidem, 25). Junto a esto, se da también una reducción del discurso teológico al meramente cristológico, el deslizamiento de la cristología en la antropología, y la puesta en duda de la profesión de fe calcedonense. La cuestión común a todas estas propuestas sería no ver a Cristo como el “punto ideal” de encuentro entre Dios y un hombre, sino verlo como “determinante” para la historia y la experiencia humanas. Jesús de Nazaret tiene una personalidad absolutamente única: “esta singularidad y unicidad irrepetible es propia de un ser histórico, contingente, particular” (ibidem, 26). Por eso se ha de recordar la preexistencia del Hijo eterno, evitar la reducción de lo ontológico a la mera funcionalidad de la praxis y recordar la doctrina de las dos naturalezas en la única persona divina de Jesucristo, y por tanto la “singularidad del acontecimiento Cristo”. Él no es “un hombre más”, sino “la Verdad absoluta de la historia” (cf. ibidem, 27–35). Puede verse también: P. Blanco Sarto, *La teología de la persona en Joseph Ratzinger...*, 353–382.

sin renunciar a la renovación propia del lenguaje teológico, tal como pretenden todas las ciencias.

De igual manera en 1993 el prefecto Ratzinger pronunció una significativa conferencia en Hong Kong titulada *Cristo, la fe y el reto de las culturas*, ante los obispos responsables de las comisiones doctrinales de las conferencias episcopales asiáticas, en un contexto que se podía asociar al de la teología de las religiones y, sobre todo, al del “pluralismo religioso”. Ratzinger volvía a hacer mención ahí de la centralidad salvífica de Jesucristo⁵⁷. “Mi intención es considerar el derecho y la capacidad de la fe cristiana para comunicarse a otras culturas, para asimilarlas y para difundirse en medio de ellas”, declaraba⁵⁸. No se puede identificar a Cristo y al cristianismo con una determinada cultura, sino –por su misma voluntad salvífica– con todas ellas a la vez. Hablaba entonces el prefecto de que –al igual que las personas– toda verdadera cultura busca la verdad. Si se anula la verdad, todas las culturas (incluidas las cristianas) se sitúan en el mismo plano, y se cae por tanto en “el problema más grave de nuestros días”: el relativismo cultural. Este “dogma del relativismo” ha afectado de modo indudable a la misión y a los misioneros. La ideología occidental del relativismo religioso podría así aliarse con el sincretismo propio de las religiones orientales no cristianas, en las que cualquier divinidad –real o imaginaria– sería de por sí salvífica. Si renunciamos a Cristo como único salvador, “lo que queda después sería una selección de textos bíblicos, pero no la fe de la Biblia. [...] Sin esta opción fundamental [de anunciar a Cristo], no hay cristianismo”⁵⁹.

Cuatro años después y con motivo de la preparación del jubileo del año 2000⁶⁰, el cardenal Ratzinger recordaba una idea contenida en los documentos conciliares. “La revelación no está formada por una serie de afirmaciones, puesto que ella [la revelación] es Cristo mismo: Él es el Logos, la Palabra que abarca todo, en la que Dios se expresa a sí mismo, y al que por eso llamamos Hijo de Dios”⁶¹. De esta forma Ratzinger recuerda la doctrina conciliar de Cristo como centro de la revelación, y recurre de nuevo al “logocentrismo” de Juan (1,1), inseparable del Espíritu (16,12–13), de forma que descubrimos la Palabra en las palabras. “En Cristo, Dios nos ha dado a su Hijo, se ha dado a sí mismo,

⁵⁷ *Der christliche Glaube von der Herausforderung der Kulturen*, en: *Evangelium und Inkulturation (1492–1992)*, Hg. P. Gordan, Graz 1993, 9–26; después en *Fede, verità, tolleranza. Il cristianesimo e le religioni del mondo*, Siena 2003, 59ss.

⁵⁸ *Ibidem*, 59.

⁵⁹ *Ibidem*, 73.

⁶⁰ *Guardare Cristo*, “Osservatore Romano” (7.03.1997) 6ss.; después en *Caminos de Jesucristo*, Madrid 2004, 77–98.

⁶¹ *Ibidem*, 79.

nos ha dado toda su Palabra: más no podía darnos”⁶². Tras remitirse al relato de las tentaciones de Jesús (Mt 4,1–11), el prefecto recordaba que la salvación que nos trae Jesucristo no es política o intramundana. “Jesús establece el primado de Dios y define el mundo como su reino, como el reino de Dios”⁶³. Dios es lo único absoluto, que se hace presente en la persona de Cristo. Por eso, la unión con Dios pasa de modo necesario por Jesucristo, por “la comunión de pensamiento y voluntad con Él, [por] confiar en Él, encomendarse a Él, seguir sus caminos”⁶⁴.

Tras la caída de las ideologías, existía el riesgo del nihilismo y el relativismo, a pesar de que las religiones corrían también a cubrir ese vacío. Cabe aquí el riesgo de otro relativismo más sutil: el religioso. La presión de las demás religiones confirma a nuestro teólogo en la necesidad de anunciar a Cristo, evitando todo relativismo: “el encuentro entre las religiones no puede darse con una renuncia a la verdad, sino con su profundización. El escepticismo no une, ni tampoco el pragmatismo. Estas dos posiciones lo único que hacen es abrir la puerta a las ideologías que, después, se presentan todavía más seguras de sí mismas”⁶⁵. Si es necesario buscar en el otro siempre lo positivo y si, por tanto, también el otro ha de ser para nosotros una ayuda en la búsqueda de la verdad, no puede ni debe faltar sin embargo el elemento crítico. “La religión [no cristiana] custodia la preciosa perla de la verdad, pero al mismo tiempo la oculta, y está siempre bajo el riesgo de perder su propia naturaleza. La

⁶² Ibídem, 80.

⁶³ Ibídem, 95.

⁶⁴ Ibídem, 97. Ese mismo cristocentrismo que apreciábamos en los escritos de Barth, Guardini y de otros autores del periodo de entreguerras, y que sirvió de columna vertebral a los textos del Concilio Vaticano II, seguirá apareciendo en los trabajos de Ratzinger de los últimos años. El motivo parece claro, dado el desarrollo actual del llamado “pluralismo religioso”. “Ratzinger lo ha comparado con la teología de la liberación de nuestros días –afirmaba uno de sus biógrafos–, y la comparación es acertada. Ambos movimientos reflejan la “irrupción” del Tercer Mundo en la conciencia católica” (J.L. Allen, *Cardinal Ratzinger: the Vatican's enforcer of the faith*, New York 2000, 235). Nombres como Hick y Balasuriya o Dupuis ocupan lugares importantes en las bibliotecas de teología (cf. ibídem, 241–250). Ratzinger lo explicaba del siguiente modo: “Los cambios históricos que se han verificado desde el año 1989 [con la caída del Muro de Berlín] han llevado también a un cambio de temas dentro de la teología. La teología de la liberación, entendida políticamente, había proporcionado a los problemas de la redención y de la esperanza del mundo –olvidados desde hacía tiempo– una forma nueva, precisamente política, atribuyendo así a la política una misión que no podía asumir. [...] Este contexto diferente [en que nos encontramos ahora] supone el diálogo entre las religiones del mundo, que con el desarrollo del encuentro y del entrelazamiento de culturas se ha convertido en una necesidad interna” (*La Chiesa, Israele e le religioni del mondo* (1998), Cinisello Balsamo–San Paolo 2000, 5).

⁶⁵ Ibídem, 71.

religión puede enfermar y convertirse en un fenómeno destructivo”⁶⁶. Como consecuencia de todo lo anterior, el diálogo debe ir siempre acompañado del anuncio de Cristo como salvador del mundo. “El diálogo [del cristianismo con otras religiones] no es una diversión sin un fin claro, sino que se dirige a la persuasión, al descubrimiento de la verdad, pues de otro modo carece de valor. [...] En este sentido, en el diálogo interreligioso debería darse lo que Nicolás de Cusa expresó como un deseo y una esperanza en su visión de la asamblea celestial: el diálogo entre las religiones debería convertirse siempre en la escucha del Verbo, que nos señala la unidad en medio de nuestras divisiones y contradicciones”⁶⁷.

En esos años, tal reivindicación será una constante en los escritos y palabras del prefecto Ratzinger. En torno a la declaración *Dominus Iesus* (2000)⁶⁸, el prefecto de la Congregación de la doctrina de la fe abordaba una vez más este tema⁶⁹. Ahí recordaba el acto de fe de Pedro (“Tú eres el Mesías”: Mc 8,29), a la vez que pasa revista a la idea de Jesús que aparece en el siglo pasado (Harnack y Jaspers, Bultmann y Moltmann, entre otros), en las que se separa el Jesús histórico del Cristo de la fe. Además, si se parte de un presupuesto positivista, solo puede haber experiencias subjetivas, nunca una revelación en cuanto tal. “Se dan luces, pero no la Luz; palabras, pero no la Palabra. En esta situación es inevitable el relativismo religioso. Entonces se le puede conceder –como sucede también fuera del cristianismo– que Jesús es una persona de grandes experiencias religiosas, un iluminado y un iluminador”⁷⁰ como tantos otros. Pero solo Dios es Dios, y solo se ha encarnado en Cristo Jesús. Solo Él es Luz de Luz. “Solo Él puede decir: “Yo soy el camino, la verdad y la vida”; todos los demás nos pueden mostrar partes del camino, pero no son el camino. Pero sobre todo, [solo] en Jesucristo están unidos Dios y el hombre, el Infinito y lo finito, el Creador y la criatura. El hombre ha encontrado sitio en Dios. Solo Él mismo puede traspasar la distancia infinita entre el Creador y la

⁶⁶ Ibídem, 72.

⁶⁷ Ibídem, 73–74

⁶⁸ Sobre el ambiente que rodeaba esta declaración, puede verse: L. Rodríguez Duplá, *El contexto filosófico y cultural de la declaración “Dominus Iesus”...*, 469–486.

⁶⁹ *Die Einzigkeit und Heiluniversalität Jesu Christi und der Kirche*, “Die Tagesschau” (1.03.2003); después en *Unterwegs zu Jesus Christus*, Augsburg–Sankt Ulrich 2003, 55–78; tr. esp.: *La unicidad y la universalidad salvífica de Jesucristo y de la Iglesia*, “Boletín UCAM” 1 (2003), 4–10.

⁷⁰ *La unicidad y la universalidad salvífica de Jesucristo y de la Iglesia...*, 6.

criatura. Solamente Él que es hombre y es Dios, es el puente existencial entre el uno y el otro”⁷¹.

De esta forma, la misión actual de los cristianos resulta pues clara, tal como relataba en una anécdota de 1978. “No hace mucho tiempo, recibí la visita de dos obispos sudamericanos, con quienes hablé tanto de proyectos sociales como de sus experiencias y fatigas personales. Me hablaron de la intensa campaña de propaganda desarrollada en aquel país tradicionalmente católico por las cien confesiones cristianas reformadas [allí presentes], que estaban cambiando el panorama religioso de aquella nación. La conversación derivó hacia una curiosa anécdota que ellos consideraban sintomática y que les llevó a hacer examen de conciencia sobre el rumbo que había tomado la Iglesia en Sudamérica desde finales del concilio. Me contaron que unos delegados de una aldea visitaron al obispo, para comunicarle que se habían pasado a una comunidad evangélica. Aprovecharon la ocasión para agradecerle todos sus esfuerzos sociales, todas esas cosas tan bonitas que habían hecho por ellos en todos esos años y que sabían apreciar. “Pero además

⁷¹ Ibídem, 8. Solo Él puede ser el mediador y redentor. Ahora bien, surge entonces una duda, tal como oímos en todo momento en la actualidad. ¿No supone un acto de arrogancia creer que se posee la verdad, cuando tan solo se puede estar buscándola eternamente? Ratzinger da entonces la vuelta a la pregunta: “¿No es arrogancia decir que Dios no nos puede dar el regalo de la verdad? ¿No es despreciar a Dios decir que hemos nacido ciegos y que la verdad no es cosa nuestra?” (ibídem, 8). La misión y el anuncio de Cristo es una consecuencia inevitable, un gozoso privilegio, no exento de consecuencias. “El hablar de Jesús como salvador único y universal no supone de ninguna manera desprecio hacia las demás religiones, aunque sí se opone decididamente a la incapacidad de conocer la verdad y de admitir la cómoda estadística del dejar-todo-como-estaba” (ibídem, 10). El cristianismo tiene también un inevitable poder transformador: eleva y purifica todas las culturas, interpela a las demás religiones. El cristianismo se declara asimismo como la religión del *logos* y del *agape*, de la verdad y el amor, esto es, del mismo Logos divino encarnado por amor, como venimos diciendo.

Esto trae consigo la necesaria coda eclesiológica, consecuencia no solo de las enseñanzas del Vaticano II, sino sobre todo de la unidad existente entre Cristo y la Iglesia. Cuando se publicó la declaración *Dominus Iesus*, se despertó una encendida polémica con algunas comunidades protestantes, por un presunto exclusivismo y el eclesiocentrismo que se arrogaba la Iglesia católica. “Es verdad que la Congregación de la doctrina de la fe ha sido censurada muchas veces con vehemencia por haber añadido a la defensa de la unicidad de Jesucristo una segunda parte eclesiológica. Han visto en esto un estorbo ecuménico, e incluso un “accidente de trabajo”. Pero el que habla de Jesucristo como salvador de todos, también para todos los tiempos, no puede ocultar que Cristo está —y cómo está— siempre presente y que no se ha detenido en el pasado. Y esta presencia cristológica se denomina Iglesia” (ibídem). Jesús sí, pero Cristo e Iglesia también, por tanto, puesto que la misma Iglesia ha sido definida por la Escritura como el cuerpo de Cristo (cf. 1 Co 6,15; 10,16; Ef 1,23; 4,16). Esta prolongación de la cristología como eclesiología supone para Ratzinger una instancia irrenunciable.

necesitamos –añadieron– una religión, y por eso nos hemos hecho protestantes”⁷². Necesitaban también que les anunciaran a Cristo crucificado y resucitado.

“BUSCAR SU ROSTRO”

En la lección inaugural pronunciada en 1959 con ocasión de la obtención de la cátedra de Bonn, el joven profesor se refería a la distinción pascaliana entre el Dios de la fe y el Dios de los filósofos. Tras abordar las relaciones entre fe y razón en Tomás de Aquino, el nuevo catedrático recordaba la dimensión personal del concepto de Dios (“Dios es persona, un yo que sale al encuentro del tú”), a veces olvidado –según decía– por “los apologetas y los padres del Dios filosófico”. Con lo que proponía al final el augustiniano *quaerite faciem eius semper*⁷³, para encontrar el necesario equilibrio entre un enfoque personalista y una fundamentación ontológica de la antropología y de la misma gnoseología. Más adelante Ratzinger llegará –en un viejo escrito sobre exégesis de 1965, publicado con otro de Karl Rahner– a una serie de conclusiones teóricas y allí proponía, en primer lugar, a Cristo como centro de la revelación: “La realidad que acontece en la revelación cristiana –decía– no es otra, ni otro, que el Cristo mismo. Es él, en sentido propio, la revelación”⁷⁴. Cristo va a ser la clave hermenéutica de toda la Escritura, y leer la Biblia será sobre todo “mirar a Cristo”⁷⁵.

Este cristocentrismo será –como hemos visto– una constante en el pensamiento y lógicamente en la “cristología espiritual” de Joseph Ratzinger. En 2001, el cardenal Ratzinger pronunció una ponencia titulada *El rostro de Cristo en las sagradas Escrituras*⁷⁶. Como el mismo título indica, se trata de un recorrido exegético a la búsqueda del verdadero rostro del Dios encarnado, pues –tal como dijo Jesús a Felipe– “quien me ve a mí, ve al Padre” (Jn 14,9). En el fondo, esta afirmación supone respuesta a la petición de los griegos al mismo Felipe: “queremos ver a Jesús” (12,20). “La respuesta de Jesús –continuaba Ratzinger– trasciende ese momento y se adentra en el futuro: sí, los griegos me verán y no solo estos que

⁷² *Teoría de los principios teológicos. Materiales para una teología fundamental*, Barcelona 1985, 157.

⁷³ Cf. *El Dios de la fe y el Dios de los filósofos...*, 41–42.

⁷⁴ K. Rahner, J. Ratzinger, *Revelación y Tradición*, Barcelona 1968, 42.

⁷⁵ Un buen ejemplo de esta lectura cristológica –en este caso, del Sermón de la Montaña– se encuentra en: *Mirar a Cristo. Ejercicios de fe, esperanza y amor*, Valencia 1990, 60–68; puede verse también *Dios y el mundo*, 144–145; *Relaciones entre el antiguo y el nuevo testamento*, presentación a Pontificia Comisión Bíblica, *El pueblo judío y sus Escrituras sagradas en la Biblia cristiana*, Roma 2002, 11–12.

⁷⁶ “*Wer mich gesehen hat, hat den Vater gesehen*” (Joh 14,9). *Das Antlitz Christi in der Heiligen Schrift*, en: AA. VV., *Il volto di Cristo*, Pomezia–Chiesa 2005, 21–35.

han venido con Felipe, sino todos los griegos. Estos verán pero no solo por medio de mi existencia terrena, histórica, “según la carne” (cf. 2 Co 5,16); estos me verán según la pasión”⁷⁷. En definitiva, la búsqueda del rostro de Cristo consiste en “mirar al que traspasaron” (Jn 19,37; cf. Zc 12,10). La *theologia crucis* vuelve así a ocupar el centro de la cristología ratzingeriana, sin renunciar a otras dimensiones del misterio del Dios encarnado⁷⁸.

A la doctrina de la filiación divina, se une un hecho diferencial con otras religiones, en las que existen dioses que son personas pero no Dios. Aquí volverá a aflorar el conocido personalismo de Joseph Ratzinger⁷⁹, a la vez que lo relaciona con la teología del icono, y culmina y cierra toda la argumentación con el misterio pascual de Jesucristo. “La novedad de la religión bíblica consiste en que el mismo ser originario –el Dios verdadero–, en el que no puede existir imagen alguna, que no puede tener rostro ni nombre, es una persona. La salvación no consiste en disolverse en el anonimato, sino en “llenarse de su rostro”, que nos será concedido en la resurrección (*im Erwachen*). El cristiano va al encuentro de esta resurrección, de este llenarse, mirando al crucifijo, contemplando a Jesucristo”⁸⁰. Con todo este desarrollo conclusivo, el teólogo Joseph Ratzinger había conseguido unir exégesis, cristología, arte y espiritualidad, y de esta forma el teólogo alemán seguirá adelante esta continua “búsqueda del rostro de Cristo” en otros escritos.

En efecto, con el tiempo, el mismo Joseph Ratzinger se atreverá a hacer una prueba y a presentar su propia propuesta exegética –histórica, eclesial y cristológica– por medio de su último libro sobre Jesús de Nazaret. Precisamente en un momento en el que el conocimiento histórico parece separado de aquel en que creemos (el Cristo de la fe no tiene nada que ver con el Jesús histórico), el ya papa

⁷⁷ Ibídem, 22.

⁷⁸ Tras una primera introducción sobre todo en el Nuevo Testamento, dirige la mirada a la teología del rostro de Dios en el Antiguo Testamento, para encontrar toda la profundidad de los textos neotestamentarios, a la vez que recuerda la unidad entre ambos testamentos. El rostro en la Biblia (*pânim*) –sigue diciendo– es signo de personalidad y de relación con los demás, por lo que los griegos lo tradujeron por *prosopon*, es decir, persona (cf. ibídem, 24–25). El “contemplar el rostro de Yahveh” se puede encontrar en los salmos (4,7b; 17; 24; 24,6; 80,4.8.20; 90,8) y otros textos veterotestamentarios (Dt 31,11; Ex 32–34). En este último “el Señor hablaba con Moisés, cara a cara, como si fuera un amigo” (33,11; cf. Dt 34,10), lo cual expresa una cercanía inusitada con la divinidad. A esto añade Ratzinger una lectura cristológica: Cristo se veía “cara a cara con el Padre –más que como un profeta o un amigo– como un Hijo. Él podía ver el rostro de Dios, y su rostro se hizo visible a nosotros para la gloria de Dios (2 Co 4,6). A partir de ese momento, la búsqueda del rostro de Dios se convierte en algo más concreto: consiste en el encuentro con Cristo, en la amistad con él, que ya no nos llama siervos, sino amigos (Jn 15,15)” (ibídem, 31).

⁷⁹ Cf. P. Blanco Sarto, *La teología de la persona en Joseph Ratzinger...*, 353–358.

⁸⁰ “*Wer mich gesehen hat, hat den Vater gesehen*” (Joh 14,9). *Das Antlitz Christi in der Heiligen Schrift*..., 35.

Benedicto XVI nos invitaba a dirigir de nuevo nuestra mirada crítica y creyente –con fe e inteligencia– hacia Jesús. “Solo quien conoce y ama a Jesucristo –había afirmado ya como romano pontífice– puede introducir a sus hermanos en una relación vital con él. Impulsado precisamente por esta necesidad, pensé: sería útil escribir un libro que ayude a conocer a Jesucristo”⁸¹.

Con la primera entrega de *Jesús de Nazaret* (2007)⁸², el papa teólogo concluía –según sus mismas palabras– “un largo camino interior”: “mi búsqueda personal del rostro del Señor”⁸³. Se trataría de una teología de los misterios de la vida de Jesús, actualizada exegeticamente, por lo que se alcanzaría una completa interpretación de la fe cristológica⁸⁴. “Siguiendo el estilo de los libros sobre Jesús –es un *Jesus-Buch*– respira todo él “cristología”, sin ser un tratado al uso”, resume Vidal⁸⁵. Por su parte, González de Cardedal añadía que se trata de “un libro testimonio y un libro testamento”⁸⁶. No consiste en un libro de exégesis, sino que es sobre todo un libro de teología. Su método es el clásico de la teología: partir de la sagrada Escritura en la unidad del Antiguo y del Nuevo Testamento, teniendo en cuenta las interpretaciones que han ido dando a lo largo de los siglos la liturgia, los padres de la Iglesia y los teólogos, para unir a ellos la lectura que la exégesis por un lado y la fe por otro nos ofrecen hoy⁸⁷. De esta forma confluirían en esta nueva obra distintos puntos de vista, en el que sin embargo dominaba la mirada desde arriba y desde dentro, propia de un creyente y un teólogo.

⁸¹ *Discurso a la asamblea diocesana de Roma* (11.6.2007).

⁸² Edición original: *Jesus von Nazareth. Von der Taufe im Jordan bis zur Verkündigung I*, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 2007; utilizamos aquí la traducción al italiano: *Gesù di Nazaret*, Milano 2007.

⁸³ Cf. *Gesù di Nazaret*..., 20.

⁸⁴ Cf. T. Marschler, *Ratzinger als Interpret der Theologie der Misterien des Lebens-Jesu*, en: *Jesus und der Papst. Systematische Reflexionen zum Jesus-Buch des Papstes*, Hg. H. Hopping, M. Schulz, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 2007, 90–100.

⁸⁵ J. Vidal Taléns, *Líneas maestras de la cristología de J. Ratzinger*..., 112. Puede verse también: *Das Jesus-Buch des Papstes. Die Antwort der Neutestamentler*, Hg. Th. Söding, Freiburg–Wien–Basel 2007; idem, *Ein Weg zu Jesus. Schlüssel zu einem tieferen Verständnis des Papsbuches*, Hg. Th. Söding, Freiburg–Wien–Basel 2007; H. Hopping, *Der Anfänge der Christologie im Leben Jesu*, en: *Jesus und der Papst. Systematische Reflexionen zum Jesus-Buch des Papstes*, Hg. H. Hopping, M. Schulz, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 2007, 113–123. Para la situación en el contexto biográfico, puede verse: J. Martínez Gordo, *La cristología de J. Ratzinger – Benedicto XVI a la luz de su biografía teológica*, “Lumen: revista de síntesis y orientación de ciencias eclesásticas” 56 (2007) 5–6, 341–378; O. González de Cardedal, *Jesús de Nazaret de J. Ratzinger-Benedicto XVI: génesis, estructura y sentido de un libro y testamento*, “Salmanticensis” 1 (2008); J. Chapa, *Joseph Ratzinger / Benedicto XVI, Jesús de Nazaret*, “Anuario de Historia de la Iglesia” 17 (2008), 257–264.

⁸⁶ O. González de Cardedal, *Jesús de Nazaret de J. Ratzinger-Benedicto XVI: génesis, estructura y sentido de un libro y testamento*..., 85.

⁸⁷ Cf. ibidem, 105.

En esta obra Benedicto XVI volverá a abordar de modo decidido la cuestión histórica. La crítica que se formulaba en esas páginas se podía dirigir a algunos sectores del mundo exegético contemporáneo, en los que la imagen sobre Jesús ofrecida es la de un personaje del pasado, que tiene muy poco que decir al mundo actual. Lo poco que es posible afirmar de él –según estos métodos– nos lo revela como un hombre de hace dos mil años que no fue más que un profeta apocalíptico, un rabino piadoso, un filósofo itinerante o un revolucionario utópico, por mencionar tan solo algunas de las distintas propuestas ya aparecidas⁸⁸. El Jesús histórico habla también al presente, sostiene por el contrario Ratzinger: “Jesucristo hoy y siempre” (Hb 13,8), repite. “Como en el siglo XIX –recuerda Chapa–, el Jesús de estos eruditos estudios históricos no hace más que reflejar la visión del mundo y del hombre que tienen sus autores. Benedicto XVI conoce la situación y, desmarcándose netamente de esta línea, sostiene que los evangelios nos dicen quién es Jesús, lo que hizo, lo que dijo y lo que significa para la historia”⁸⁹. Se trata por tanto de alcanzar una lectura unitaria del texto, y no una fragmentación atomizada en infinitas interpretaciones, tantas veces incompatibles entre sí. Valen aquí todas las lecturas que sean fieles y personales al mismo tiempo, puesto que ha de haber siempre una interpretación plural que mantenga de modo continuo un diálogo continuo con todas las demás interpretaciones verdaderas. Es una cuestión metodológica, que contiene importantes consecuencias para la fe y para la imagen que se ofrezca de Cristo. Por tanto, concluía, “el Jesús de los evangelios es el Jesús que realmente existió y, por tanto, el que puede y debe ser llamado el Jesús histórico”⁹⁰.

Y así lo confirma –por ejemplo– la cristología del himno de Filipenses 2, a la que no se puede llegar mediante formaciones comunitarias anónimas, carentes de un fundamento real e histórico. “Estoy persuadido –sigue afirmando Chapa– de que *Jesús de Nazaret* marcará un hito en la historia de las “vidas de Jesús”. Con él se recuperará buena parte de la confianza perdida por algunos en los evange-

⁸⁸ Cf. ibídem, 91–100.

⁸⁹ J. Chapa, *La recuperación del Jesús de la Historia*, “Nueva revista de política, cultura y arte” 112 (2007), 43.

⁹⁰ Ibídem, 18; cf. O. González de Cardedal, *Jesús de Nazaret de J. Ratzinger-Benedicto XVI: génesis, estructura y sentido de un libro y testamento...*, 113–115. Por otro lado, señalaba Benedicto XVI una vez más que la lectura de la Escritura ha de ser en la comunidad viva de la Iglesia: son estos –Escritura e Iglesia– los dos pilares concéntricos en los que se apoya toda comprensión verdadera sobre la figura de Jesús. “El pueblo de Dios –la Iglesia– es el sujeto vivo de la Escritura; en este las palabras de la Biblia son siempre presencia” (*Gesù di Nazaret...*, 17). La Iglesia es el ámbito hermenéutico donde se puede leer y comprender la Escritura del mejor modo posible; en ella se escucha mejor la palabra de Dios y, por eso, la Biblia es el libro de un pueblo. Sin embargo, queda todavía pendiente una pregunta: ¿cuál será el núcleo interpretativo que hace una interpretación verdadera? ¿Existe un íntimo meollo esencial? En efecto, la figura de Jesús

lios. Benedicto XVI intenta, y a mi juicio lo consigue, presentar el Jesús de los evangelios como el Jesús real, histórico”⁹¹. Con la audacia teológica que le caracteriza, Joseph Ratzinger había pretendido presentar ahora una versión personal de Jesús, que supere la fragmentación y la subjetivización en las visiones que tan solo ofrecían “fotografías de los autores y de sus ideas”⁹². En diálogo también con muchos otros autores, el teólogo alemán ha intentado demostrar que “a partir del hombre Jesús se hacía visible a Dios, y a partir de Dios se podía ver la imagen de un auténtico hombre”⁹³. Hay que superar la aporía planteada por el método histórico-crítico que, según Voderholzer, debe más a los presupuestos de la teología liberal, que a la propia metodología positiva⁹⁴. De esta manera, como indica el exegeta protestante Gerd Lüdemann, el papa Ratzinger se enfrentaría a la fórmula exegetica del “pesebre vacío y la tumba llena” (*leere Krippe, volles Grab*) que había triunfado entre los académicos de los últimos tiempos⁹⁵.

A pesar de ser una “cristología inacabada” –todas lo son–, nos encontramos pues ante una cristología creyente de verdad, ante –en palabras de Benavent– “una cristología en la que se quiere recuperar la fe como punto de partida”, en la que se combinen fe e historia, la exégesis crítica y la “cristología espiritual” (“interpretación de la Escritura en el Espíritu”, pues él es “el auténtico exegeta de Cristo”); en definitiva, ante una combinación de exégesis, cristología dogmática y contemplación creyente⁹⁶. El teólogo Ratzinger nos ofrece así una “lectura crey-

es mucho más lógica y también más comprensible desde el punto de vista histórico que las reconstrucciones con las que debemos enfrentarnos en las últimas décadas. Sostengo que precisamente este Jesús –el de los evangelios– es una figura históricamente razonable y convincente” (ibidem, 18). No lo es, por el contrario, pensar que la comunidad ha sido la creadora de la imagen que tenemos de él. Solamente si ha sucedido algo extraordinario, si la figura y las palabras de Jesús habían superado radicalmente todas las esperanzas y expectativas de la época, se explica la crucifixión y su eficacia, comentaba el papa Ratzinger. Una buena explicación sobre las dos crisis en la relación entre Biblia e Iglesia se encuentra en O. González de Cardedal, *Jesús de Nazaret de J. Ratzinger-Benedicto XVI: génesis, estructura y sentido de un libro y testamento...*, 88–90.

⁹¹ J. Chapa, *La recuperación del Jesús de la Historia...*, 50.

⁹² Cf. *Gesù di Nazaret...*, 8.

⁹³ Ibidem, 7; cf. también todo el capítulo 10: 367–405.

⁹⁴ Cf. R. Voderholzer, *Überlegungen zur “impliziten Dogmatik” im Anschluss zn Kapitel zwei und drei*, en: *Jesus und der Papst. Systematische Reflexionen zum Jesus-Buch des Papstes*, Hg. H. Hoping, M. Schulz, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 2007, 38–47.

⁹⁵ Cf. “Vorwort”, en: *Jesus und der Papst. Systematische Reflexionen zum Jesus-Buch des Papstes...*, 7–8.

⁹⁶ Cf. E. Benavent Vidal, *El “Jesús de Nazaret” de Joseph Ratzinger-Benedicto XVI: cristología y lógica de la fe*, “Anales valentinos” 34/68 (2008), 207–225; J. Vidal Taléns, *Mirar a Jesús y “ver” al Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre para nuestra Redención. Aportación de J. Ratzinger a la Cristología contemporánea...*, 97–100.

ente” que presenta al “Jesús real” de los evangelios, a través de una combinación de la crítica racional con la “lógica de la fe”. La fe en el Jesús pospascual se fundamenta en el prepascual, es decir, en “alguien que tiene conciencia humana de su “yo divino””. En lo que al método o la perspectiva se refiere, se trata de una “cristología “desde abajo” sostenida por el “desde arriba””, tal como hizo con anterioridad Walter Kasper en sus escritos cristológicos⁹⁷. Una metodología ascendente que va desde el bautismo del Señor a su manifestación divina, iluminada por el “desde arriba”. Al entenderlo como Hijo de Dios, se entienden mejor sus acciones y sus palabras⁹⁸.

El presentar a Cristo como verdadero Dios y verdadero hombre “es el punto de apoyo en que se basa mi libro”⁹⁹, declaraba el mismo Benedicto XVI. De hecho, acababa significativamente su libro con la confesión de Pedro: “Tú eres el Cristo, el Hijo de Dios vivo” (Mt 16,16). Para esto se ha apoyado tanto en la fe como en los logros y descubrimientos de la historia y la filología: es esta a la vez una lectura crítica y creyente, en la que caben tanto sus necesariamente limitados conocimientos exegéticos como su propia experiencia espiritual. Ha intentado por tanto trazar “una figura sensata y convincente” de Jesús, es decir, “presentar al Jesús de los evangelios como el Jesús real, como el “Jesús histórico” en sentido verdadero”¹⁰⁰. Jesucristo se muestra a sí mismo ante el Padre, en relación al Padre, especialmente cuando se encuentra haciendo oración ante él¹⁰¹. En este Jesús humano e histórico resplandece la divinidad de Cristo, tal como ocurrió en la Transfiguración en el monte Tabor. Sobre esta escena escribía el pontífice alemán: “en su ser uno con el

⁹⁷ Cf. W. Kasper, *Christologie von unten? Kritik und Neuansatz gegenwärtiger Christologie*, en: *Grundfragen der Christologie heute*, Hg. L. Scheffczyk, Freiburg i. Br. 1975, 141–170; *Für eine Christologie in geschichtlicher Perspektive. Replik auf die Anmerkungen von Hans Küng*, en: *Grundfragen der Christologie heute*, Hg. L. Scheffczyk, Freiburg i. Br. 1975, 179–183.

⁹⁸ Cf. *Gesù di Nazaret...*, 212, 214–216. Así, por ejemplo, la autoconciencia de Jesús según los parámetros ofrecidos por Ratzinger, se estudia en: T. Krenski, *Steht Jesus über unseren Psychologien? Joseph Ratzinger kommentiert Benedikt XVI.*, en: *Jesus und der Papst. Systematische Reflexionen zum Jesus-Buch des Papstes...*, 13–23; Wendel, Saskia, “*Selig die reinen Herzens sind, denn sie werden Gott schauen*” (Mt 5,8). *Eine exemplarische Annäherung an Benedikts XVI. Auslegung der Seligspreisungen*, en: *Jesus und der Papst...*, 38–46; A. Matena, *Theologie und Verkündigung: Die Gleichnisse*, en: *Jesus und der Papst...*, 77–81; P. Hofman, *In den Gleichnissen spricht Christus, die Gleichnisse sprechen von Christus*, en: *Jesus und der Papst...*, 83–88.

⁹⁹ *Gesù di Nazaret...*, 10.

¹⁰⁰ *Ibidem*, 18.

¹⁰¹ Cf. M. Schulz, *Das Gebet des Herrn. Fundamental-theologische Überlegungen zu Ratzingers Gebets-Christologie*, en: *Jesus und der Papst...*, 60–72.

Padre, Jesús mismo es Luz de Luz. [...] Jesús resplandece por sí mismo: no recibe sin más la luz, sino que él mismo es Luz de Luz”¹⁰².

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¹⁰² Ibídem, 358. Esta tesis de la continua referencia al Padre se encuentra en R. Pesch, *Der Jesus der Evangelien ist auch der einzig wirkliche historische Jesus. Anmerkungen zum Konstruktionspunkt des Jesus-Buches*, 31–56. Sobre la centralidad de la cristología joánica: Cf. *Caminos de Jesucristo...*, 15–19; J. Vidal Taléns, *Mirar a Jesús y “ver” al Hijo de Dios, hecho hombre para nuestra Redención. Aportación de J. Ratzinger a la Cristología contemporánea...*, 93–96.

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Palabras-clave: naturaleza, persona, unicidad, mediación, concilio de Calcedonia

QUAERITE FACIEM EIUS SEMPER. JOSEPH RATZINGER'S "SPIRITUAL CHRISTOLOGY"

Summary

Ratzinger proposes a "Spiritual Christology", in which will be together Ontology and Soteriology, the Theology of the Cross and the Theology of Incarnation, Christology, Pneumatology and Ecclesiology. In the first place, it is need to fulfill the breaking-off between the historical Jesus and the Christ of the faith, and to defend the *homousios* and the divinity of Jesus Christ defined in Nicaea and III Constantinople. On the other hand Ratzinger reminds the centrality of the salvific figure of Christ, in which is related not only the divinity, but also the unique character of mediation in the salvation. He is not an *avatar* more of the Divinity, but the Son of God, who was made man "for us" and "for our salvation". Jesus of Nazaret will have an "unrepeatable singularity and unicity". He is the only Mediator and Saviour. The Seeking of Christ's Face will be the summit of the theological work of the present pope emeritus.

Keywords: nature, person, unicity, mediation, council of Chalcedon

QUAERITE FACIEM EIUS SEMPER. „CHRYSTOLOGIA DUCHOWA” JOSEPHA RATZINGERA

Streszczenie

Ratzinger proponuje „chrystologię duchową”, w której łączą się ontologia i soteriologia, teologia krzyża i wcielenia, chrystologia, pneumatologia i eklezjologia. Aby to osiągnąć, trzeba przezwyciężyć rozłam między Jezusem historycznym a Chrystusem wiary i bronić *homousios* i Bóstwa Jezusa Chrystusa zdefiniowanych na soborach w Nicei i Konstantynopolu. Ratzinger przypomina również o centralności zbawczej figury Chrystusa, która domaga się przypomnienia nie tylko Jego Bóstwa, lecz również Jego charakteru pośrednika zbawienia. Nie jest to kolejny *awatar* boskości, lecz Syn Boży, który stał się człowiekiem „dla nas” i „dla naszego zbawienia”. Jezus Chrystus posiada „niepowtarzalną osobliwość i jedność”. Jedynie On może być pośrednikiem i odkupicielem. Poszukiwanie oblicza Chrystusa znajduje swój pełny wyraz w ostatnim teologicznym dziele papieża emeryta.

Słowa kluczowe: natura, osoba, jedność, pośrednictwo, Sobór w Chalcedonie

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COMMUNIONAL ASPECTS OF THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT ACCORDING TO JOHN D. ZIZIOULAS

What deserves emphasizing in the significant theological thought of John D. Zizioulas is his ecumenical openness and deep theology saturated with communion thought, which also produces the communion perspective of the reality of the Holy Spirit. Pneumatology has its origins in the Trinitarian-ecclesial reflection, which developed the fundamental concept of the Communion of the Holy Trinity. Zizioulas completely agrees with the Orthodox Trinitarian-pneumatological vision, which critically refers to the Trinitarian contribution of the thought of St. Augustine and he presents also a communal view on the contentious issue of Filioque – emphasizing the ecumenical perspectives of this topic and of ongoing dialogues which are still trying to bring the consensus of the Churches of East and West.

The Metropolitan of Pergamon John D. Zizioulas is one of the best known Orthodox theologians. He has gained worldwide recognition for his books which are a collection of articles on the relationship between anthropology and ecclesiology, the human person, freedom, truth, communion and the ontology of otherness.¹ They were published in English, which also contributed to the rapid reception of

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¹ *Being as Communion. Studies in Personhood and the Church*, New York 1985; *Communion and Otherness. Further Studies in Personhood and the Church*, London–New York 2006. Later published: *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics*, London–New York 2009; *The Eucharistic Communion and the World*, London–New York 2011.

his texts, full of acclaim and very critical at the same time.² Despite the unfavourable attitude of a part of his own ecclesial community to him, his ecumenical openness³ and systematically thought-out theology⁴ is definitely imbued with communion thought.⁵ In his lectures on dogmatics, he points out that theology begins in worshipping God and communion with Him experienced by us in the Church.⁶ It is therefore worthwhile to look at the truth he proclaims about the Holy Spirit, characterized by the idea of communion, which is omnipresent in Zizioulas.

TRINITARIAN AND ECCLESIOLOGICAL BEGINNINGS OF PNEUMATOLOGY

Benedict XVI wrote in his exhortation *Sacramentum caritatis*: “God is the perfect communion of love between the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.” (No. 8). On the subject of contemporary Trinitarian theology, Jürgen Werbick noted that it has again become the preferred topic of theological discussion – largely because the concepts of “social trinitology”⁷ (he recalls here J. Moltmann and L. Boff) seem to lead trinitology beyond the notions and models that are self-sufficient and without perspectives. The Divine tri-unity is understood here

² Cf. K. Leśniewski, „*Kim jest człowiek, że o nim pamiętasz...?*” *Podstawowe idee antropologii prawosławnej*, Lublin 2015, p. 31n.

³ “John Zizioulas [...] has led many of the exchanges between Eastern and Western churches. He believes all ecumenical efforts are mutually enriching, and he expresses his gratitude to the Western churches for them. Some Eastern churches are wary of Western ‘influence’ and critical of those involved in such ecumenism. But Bishop John tells us, every act of ecumenism must be based in the truth and thus hear the judgment of God with repentance and in the hope of reconciliation. The whole Church eagerly looks forward to its redemption and the fulfilment of all things in Christ, so it must be the prayer of the churches ‘that they may be One’” (*Introduction*, in: J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. xxii–xxiii).

⁴ Zizioulas explains clearly his approach: “our purpose [...] is to offer an interpretation rather than simply a repetition of Christian doctrine. In the inspired words of the late Father Georges Florovsky, the message of the Fathers must be phrased today ‘in such a way as to secure an ecumenical, a truly universal appeal. This obviously cannot be achieved by any servile repetition of the Patristic letter [...] servility is alien both to the Bible and to the Fathers [...] The East must face and meet the challenges of the West, and the West perhaps has to pay more attention to the legacy of the East [...] Theological tradition must be reintegrated, not simply summed up and accumulated’. This *neopatristic synthesis*, as Florovsky termed it, is the task to which Orthodox theology is called today” (J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. x).

⁵ See: R. Małeck, *Kościół jako wspólnota. Dogmatyczno-ekumeniczne studium eklezjologii Johna Zizioulasa*, Lublin 2000.

⁶ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 1.

⁷ See: E. Piotrowski, *Traktat o Trójcy Świętej*, Warszawa 2007, p. 216–218.

as an “open Holy Trinity,” as the primordial event of communication that includes also people and wants to involve them in the divine communication of love. The Divine communion of Persons here is the pre-image, the “ideal” of what *koinonia* means, towards which God directs all human history. In the face of this mostly “inter-personal” view, the second concept (emphasizing the first one’s danger of falling into the Tritheistic imagery) proclaims that the tri-unity of God can be comprehended starting with the Trinitarian self-giving in the history of salvation, in which the Father finally expresses himself in the Son and in the Holy Spirit and offers salvation to people (Werbeck here quotes K. Rahner and K. Barth). The historical-salvific concept does not oppose the social and interpersonal concept.⁸ Werbeck emphasizes that the Son’s “before” in relation to the Father in the Holy Spirit, testified by the New Testament, requires a more interpersonal interpretation if one wants to avoid a modalist threat to the Trinitarian economy in the history of salvation.⁹

The Church’s teaching on God does not bring some new concept of God, but continues the faith of Israel modified by Jesus Christ. God is transcendent, absolutely free, personal, and manifested in history through his mandates.¹⁰ Christ is the Lord who sits at the right hand of God (cf. Ps 110:1), receives all worship and glory, but when he goes to the Father he said: “I will not leave you orphans: I will come to you. [...] And the Comforter, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name, will teach you everything and remind you of everything I have told you.” (J 14:18.26). When Christ has sat at the right hand of God, the Father sends another Assistant, the Spirit of Truth.¹¹

⁸ Quoting H.U. von Balthasar, J. Werbeck (*Trinitätslehre*, in: *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, ed. T. Schneider, vol. 2, Düsseldorf 2000, p. 539) assesses that an attempt to clarify the Trinitarian mystery “can only be made from the perspective of polarity in the transcendentalities of any finite being and therefore cannot go beyond the convergence of two earthly non-integratable images of the Trinity which together point to one another. The inter-personal model cannot reach the material unity of God, the intra-personal model cannot present a real and lasting mutual relationship of hypostasis in God” (H.U. von Balthasar, *Teologika*, vol. 2: *Prawda Boga*, transl. J. Zychowicz, Kraków 2004, p. 36).

⁹ Cf. J. Werbeck, *Trinitätslehre*..., p. 513n.

¹⁰ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures*..., p. 40–44.

¹¹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 44. In chapter 15 of Acts of the Apostles, the Congregation of Apostles addressed a message to Christians with very meaningful words: “For we have decided, the Holy Spirit and we”. (1. 28). Zizioulas comments on the words “all Scripture from God is inspired [...]”. (2 Tim 3:16) and writes that the Church’s teaching is equal to the action of the Holy Spirit. One cannot think that this is done mechanically or magically, or as an action of the Holy Spirit leading, over time, to the development and improvement of the human spirit’s efforts. Rather, it must be seen as the work of the Holy Spirit being an event of communion which is concentrated in the community and has both horizontal and vertical dimensions. (Cf. *ibidem*, p. 10).

The coming of the Third Person – the Holy Spirit – has initiated a new relationship between people and God. His Person verifies the presence of God himself, gives gifts and shows the power that can be the power of God alone.¹² The first disciples had to find in their understanding of God a place for the experience of being accompanied by the Holy Spirit, through which Christ breaks the barriers of nature and creates the Church.¹³ For the Holy Spirit enables every human being to transcend limitations and to go out towards “others” regardless of natural differences. Until the coming of the Spirit of Christ, the world did not know a community that would surpass all the divisions of creation.¹⁴

Therefore we cannot continue to refer to God as Israel did without referring to the Son and the Spirit. So we have the person of Christ who called himself “the Son of God” and the person of the Holy Spirit who makes Christ present to us in the Church.¹⁵ Through the experience of this communion, the Church was led to profess faith in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit – and this Trinitarian formula of faith became the proper name for the God of Christians. It is therefore possible either to reject Christ’s claim and remain with Israel’s form of faith, or to accentuate its Trinitarian signature, which leads to a new communion of all creation through Christ.¹⁶ This Trinitarian signature appears in the New Testament in three forms: in two liturgical forms – in the context of Baptism and the Eucharist – and in a broad theological context.¹⁷

Zizioulas writes about the Holy Spirit, quoting the words of one of the hymns for Pentecost that it is He who unites the whole institution of the Church. He notes that we often overlook the fact that in the New Testament the Holy Spirit was sent to the Church after Christ’s resurrection (Jn 7:39), and this is because the coming of the Spirit into the world means “the last days” (cf. Acts 2:17). He also stresses

¹² Cf. *ibidem*, p. 106–108.

¹³ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 33.

¹⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45. “The Holy Spirit enables the transcendence of the limitations between the created and the uncreated. He is the Spirit of communion, of power and of life, who tears down the barriers that separate beings; he enables creation to surmount the physical impossibility of communion of created and uncreated” (J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 136). Cf. *idem*, *Being as Communion...*, p. 110–113.

¹⁵ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 148–153.

¹⁶ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45.

¹⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 45–47. The ecclesial action of the Holy Spirit creates the communion of Christ. We must get rid of the conviction that the Holy Spirit acts in us as isolated individuals. This understanding of the Holy Spirit would remove the person from the community. In the Old Testament, the Spirit was given to individuals; in the New Testament, the Messiah gives the Holy Spirit to all God’s people. (Cf. Acts 2:17n). Cf. *ibidem*, p. 11.

that it is no exaggeration to identify the Kingdom of God with the Holy Spirit,¹⁸ and that this Kingdom is linked to the whole structure of its fulfilment – together with the Eucharist. Zizioulas adds that the liturgy of the Eucharist is usually approached from a Christological point of view and that the Holy Spirit is usually treated only as auxiliary – and this happens under Western influence. It is, of course, about the issue of the epiclesis.¹⁹ The Eucharist is not simply a repetition, a copy of past events. Zizioulas recalls the words of Nikolai Kabasilas that the Eucharist – and the repetition of Christ’s words – is done in narrative form, but the work of transforming gifts into the Body and Blood of Christ is the work of the Holy Spirit. The transformation therefore requires the descent of the Holy Spirit, and He comes – bringing the aforementioned “last days” into history. Christ’s presence in the Eucharist is therefore not realized without its pneumatological and eschatological structure – the “real presence” of Christ presupposes and entails the gathering “in one place” of the eschatological community which the Holy Spirit maintains in its entirety.²⁰

The Eucharist is Communion and participation in the Blood of Christ, which is “full of the Holy Spirit.” We share in Christ, but at the same time – according to the anaphora of St. Basil – in the communion of the Holy Spirit, and He descends not only on the gifts offered, but also on us (the celebrant and the entire liturgical assembly). In this way the “real presence” of Christ extends to the Head and body in the unity of the Holy Spirit. The Eucharist as the communion of the Holy Spirit becomes a “communion of saints” in a double sense: a communion of holy things and a communion of holy people, becoming a mystery of love.²¹

The Eucharist understood in this way also leads to the transformation of the world. The Eucharist does not only direct us towards the past, but also towards the future. Thanks to the economy of the Trinity, realized in the person and work of Jesus Christ and with the participation of the Holy Spirit, space and time become capable of transformation and become carriers of life, not death. Thus the Eucharist as the “Communion of the Last Times” shows that all creation is destined in God’s love to be liberated from corruption and death and to live “for ever and ever” – to the communion of creation with God.²²

¹⁸ Cf. Maximus the Confessor St, *Orationis dominicae brevis exposition*, in: *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graecae*, ed. P. Migne, vol. 90, Paris 1865, c. 885.

¹⁹ See: P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej*, transl. M. Żurowska, Poznań 2012, p. 141–148.

²⁰ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *The Eucharistic Communion and the World...*, p. 74n.

²¹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 75n.

²² Cf. *ibidem*, p. 80n.

THE COMMUNION OF THE PERSONS OF THE HOLY TRINITY

After an initial period of struggle to form the doctrine of God from the perspective of the Logos, the question of the person appeared.²³ Zizioulas emphasizes that the revolutionary innovations of the Cappadocian Fathers, concerning the redefinition of the terms used, contributed the most to solving the problem of persons and unity in God. Until their time, the term “hypostasis” meant existence or substance. The Cappadocians concluded that essence and hypostasis cannot be treated as synonyms. “Substance” and “nature” mean the same and can be used to refer to unity in God, while the Latin term “substance” was referred in Greek not to “hypostasis” but to “ousia.” The Cappadocians decided that “hypostasis” was to mean “person” in relation to a separate being that has a true and special existence, and is not merely a “way” or “manifestation” of another being.²⁴

And Zizioulas insists that it is not nature that is the source of Divine Persons in God. It is the Person of the Father who “makes” God exist as the Trinity, although the “Father” himself has no meaning outside of the relationship with the Son and the Spirit, because he is the Father of “someone”. This plurality and interdependence of Persons is the basis of the new ontology. One being is not the beginning or source of God’s existence. It is the Father’s Person who is the decisive factor, but since the “Father” implies communion, it is not possible to understand Him as an isolated being. Personal communion therefore lies at the heart of the essence of being God.²⁵

²³ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 48–50.

²⁴ Cf. P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej...*, p. 49–63; J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 50–52; K. Leśniewski, „*Kim jest człowiek, że o nim pamiętasz...?*”..., p. 45–55.

²⁵ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 53. “The Metropolitan of Pergamon [...] is critical of the formula ‘one nature, three persons,’ which is dominant in Western theology, because from it one could conclude that God is essentially an impersonal being. [...] He believes that what Cappadocian theology has contributed, namely the identification of *prosopon* and *hypostasis* and the monarch – the Father, shifts the ontological center of gravity in the Trinity from the notion of *ousia* to the notion of *hypostasis*, because God’s being is identified with a person. The focus on Persons does not diminish the unity of the Deity, because among Divine Persons there is a *koinonia* (community/communion), the cause of which is the Person of God the Father. A true community can be realized in the relationship of one person to another. God is a relational being. Without taking the term *koinonia* seriously, it would be impossible to speak of God’s being. You can’t talk about one God until you tell about God who is *koinonia* – that is, a community/community of persons in the Trinity. The essence of God has no ontological content, there is no real being outside the community/community of Persons. God exists through the event of *koinonia*. The Trinity is an essential ontological concept, not a concept that is added to the Divine Being. (K. Leśniewski, „*Kim jest człowiek, że o nim pamiętasz...?*”..., p. 51).

This makes it possible to better understand the sentence that “God is love.” Christianity did not invent this truth. Plato believed that God is love in the sense that love is a stream of divine nature, as involuntary as the pouring of liquid from a cup or chalice. However, the Church rejected the concept of love as an involuntary emotion or passion and instead came to understand “God is love” in the sense of constituting God’s being through personal relationships. God is Communion – that is to say, love is fundamental to His being and not an addition supplementing Him.²⁶ The fact that “God is love” means that it is the Communion of the Holy Trinity.²⁷ God is God as Father, Son and Holy Spirit – these Persons indicate how God exists. But a person does not exist without reference to other people, in isolation from them. He is an identity born of relationships and exists only in communion with others. That is why “Father,” “Son” and “Spirit” mean exceptional persons.²⁸

EVALUATION OF ST. AUGUSTINE’S CONCEPTION

For St. Augustine, the analogy between the person of God and a single human being was important in trinitology. According to Zizioulas, the Cappadocian Fathers did not recognize the usefulness of this analogy. For Augustine, the Platonic, God is above all “the mind” and that is why the Logos comes from the

²⁶ “It is perhaps our usual assumption that we exist first, and then that we love. However, let us imagine that our existence depends on our relationship with those we love. Our being derives from our relationship with those who love us, and if they cease to love us, we disappear. Love is this communion of relationships which give us our existence. Only love can continue to sustain us when all the material threads of life are broken and we are without any other support. If these threads are not reconnected we cease to exist; death is the snapping of the last thread. Love, or communion with other persons, is stronger than death and is the source of our existence” (J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 53).

²⁷ “God the Father would lose his identity and being if he did not have the Son, and the same applies to the Son and to the Spirit. If we took away the communion of the Trinity to make God a unit, God would not be communion and therefore would not be love. [...] God did not *become* love because he loves the world, for this would imply that he became love when the world came into existence. But God is absolutely transcendent, his existence is utterly independent of the world. God is love in his very being. It is not however himself that he loves, so this is not self-love. The Father loves the Son and the Spirit, the Son loves the Father and the Spirit, the Spirit loves the Father and the Son: it is another person that each loves. It is the person, not the nature or essence, who loves, and the one he loves is also a person. Because divine love is a matter of personal communion this love is free: each person loved is free to respond to this love with love” (ibidem, p. 53n).

²⁸ “Every person is unique, unprecedented and irreplaceable, even though he exists only through relation with others”. Cf. ibidem, p. 57–64.

Father on the path of knowledge.²⁹ God is also the good. The Logos knows the Father as a “good” and this is how the love of this good is born. According to Augustine, the Spirit is the love of the Father and the Son. The Spirit is the third form of existence through which the Father loves the Son and the Son loves the Father. Augustine calls him *nexus amoris*, the “bond of love.” The Father is characterized by memory, the Son is characterized by knowledge, the Spirit is love – the attribute of communion therefore belongs to the Holy Spirit, who revealed that God is communion.³⁰ Each of the three Persons therefore has its own attribute. However, the Greek Fathers did not recognize that it is possible to describe the Divine Persons by providing them with appropriate attributes. They did not say anything about the attributes of the Son and the Spirit, nor did they try to explain the difference between Trinitarian “being born” and “coming from.”³¹

Recalling the distinction between the immanent Trinity and the economic Trinity, Zizioulas emphasizes that there is an element of apophatism in defining Trinitarian personal attributes. We can talk about them in relation to the economic Trinity because individual Persons have taken specific actions for us and therefore have their own particular characteristics. However, if, for example, the Spirit means love and creates communion for us, this is not necessarily because love is a specific attribute of the Spirit in the eternal Trinity. Love is therefore not an attribute of the Holy Spirit, but his free personal action, and all actions of the eternal Trinity are common.³²

²⁹ “Augustine, influenced by Platonic thought, decided that the memory is the most important aspect of the mind. Our entire existence springs from the memory, and everything we know and think about, is stored inside us, in an eternally existing storeroom of truth. Knowledge is simply the recollection of this truth; the etymology of truth (*aletheia*) is ‘un-forgetting’. We discover the truth at the moment that knowledge re-emerges from within us. This makes memory the source of our existence” (ibidem, p. 65). Cf. ibidem, p. 10–16.

³⁰ Cf. ibidem, p. 70.

³¹ Cf. ibidem, p. 66. “The Greek Fathers did not identify the persons of the Trinity with particular characteristics, but believed memory, knowledge and love belonged to the persons of the Trinity together. God has one knowledge, one will and love, not three. So we do not have one person representing knowledge, or one person representing love, but love and knowledge are common to the three of them. [...] In order to obtain an image of a person, we need to have a communion of more than one person” (ibidem, p. 68).

³² Cf. ibidem, p. 72. “This united action is expressed in different ways within the economy, so the persons do not all do the same thing, although they always act in unison. Where the Father is, there the Son and the Spirit are; where the Son is, there the Father and the Spirit are, But the Son does not perform the work that the Father performs. Whatever the differentiated actions of God in the economy, they are not extensions of differentiations within the eternal Trinity. Western theology, however, has often turned distinctions in the economy into differentiations within the eternal Trinity, which is one reason why it became trapped in the *Filioque*” (ibidem, p. 73).

COMMUNION OUTLOOK ON *FILIOQUE*

The Western Church says that the Holy Spirit comes from the Father and the Son. Zizioulas sees the canonical³³ and theological aspect of Filioque. As a theological issue, *Filioque* appeared again in the theology in the twentieth century, when Russian emigration brought Slavo-philic theology to the West. The main representative of this theology, Vladimir Lossky, put *Filioque* at the centre of the debate and this caused the return of controversy.³⁴

From the theological point of view, *Filioque* was based on the position of St. Augustine, stating that in the Trinity, the Son – as the Logos – represents the knowledge of God, while the Holy Spirit is the love of God. Then, as knowledge precedes love, so the Son preceded the Spirit. On this basis, Augustine gave priority to the Son over the Spirit and made the Son, next to the Father, the source of the Holy Spirit's origin.³⁵ The second basis of *Filioque* was the conviction that, according to Augustine's view, in God "substance" is primordial to the person. One God means the substance in which three relationships subsist: Father (memory), Son (knowledge) and Spirit (love). According to scholastic theologians, complete relationships must also be mutual, and therefore they must occur in pairs. The

³³ See: *ibidem*, p. 75–77.

³⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 77.

³⁵ Because St. Augustine understood the Holy Spirit as what was common between the Father and the Son – as their mutual gift – the source of His origin had to be sought from them both. More courageously than Eastern theologians, St. Augustine drew conclusions about God's inter-Trinitarian life. His Trinitarian model of thought, however, allows us to assume a circular rather than linear dynamic that does not go, like Eastern thought, from the Father to the Son and then to the Holy Spirit, but goes from the Father in Spirit to the Son and vice versa. Originally the profession of faith spoke of the origin of the Holy Spirit "from the Father". In the Latin translation of the symbol, the expression "Filioque" has been present in the Franconian area since the 8th Synod in Toledo (653). Cf. Y. Congar, *Wierzę w Ducha Świętego. Duch Święty w ekonomii Objawienia i doświadczenie Ducha*, transl. A. Paygert, t. I, Warszawa 1995, p. 157–160. Western theologians have tried to disprove the accusation that Filioque postulated two original principles of the origin of the Holy Spirit instead of one. The Second Council of Lyons taught that the Holy Spirit eternally comes from the Father and the Son not as from two principles, but as from one principle. However, there was no unification. The success achieved at the Council of Florence also did not last long, even though its teachings were in line with Greek thought by revealing the exact theological meaning of the statements "from the Father through the Son" and "from the Father and the Son" and paved the way for reconciliation. Cf. W. Kasper, *Bóg Jezusa Chrystusa*, transl. J. Tyrawa, Wrocław 1996, p. 267–276; B. Stubenrauch, *Pneumatologia – traktat o Duchu Świętym*, Kraków 1999, p. 155–159; R. Laurentin, *Nieznany Duch Święty. Odkrywanie Jego doświadczenia i Jego Osoby*, transl. M. Tarnowska, Kraków 1998, p. 357n, 362–364. On the contemporary Eastern pneumatology see: Y. Congar, *Wierzę w Ducha Świętego. Rzeka życia płynie na Wschodzie i na Zachodzie (Ap 22,1)*, transl. L. Rutowska, vol. III, Warszawa 1996, p. 95–102, 207–251.

Holy Spirit cannot therefore come from one Person, but from the relationships of two Persons. If the Son is the only other Person, *Filioque* necessarily appears.³⁶

Zizioulas points out that the Reformation brought a different approach to the problem of the origin of the Holy Spirit. The Protestants condemned as metaphysics any theology that speaks of the “being” of God and maintained that we know God only through His action in history – through His economic action. So if the Holy Trinity appears economically in history because the Father sends the Son and the Son sends the Spirit, the Spirit is given to us by the Son. Assuming that all our knowledge of God depends on the economy of salvation, we must agree that the Spirit is also dependent on the Son and not only on the Father. The result of such reasoning led to support the doctrine of *Filioque*.³⁷

According to Zizioulas, the Protestants fell victim to the same confusion as the fourteenth-century theologians, who were unable to distinguish between two types of Trinitarian processes: “origin” and “being sent.” “Origin” refers to the eternal relationship between Father, Son and Spirit. The Spirit comes directly from the Father in eternity. In the economy of salvation, on the other hand, the Son sends us the Spirit – He gives us the Spirit. Apparently the Son has something to do with the economic manifestation of the Spirit. Zizioulas recalls at this point that the Greek-speaking East used the term “origin” (εκπορεύεται) only in relation to the eternal immanent Trinity. In Latin it was not easy to distinguish these aspects precisely. From the 4th century onwards, the Greek *ekporeuetai* (come from) and *pemptai* (be sent) were translated as *procedere* in the Latin texts. From the beginning, therefore, the West used *Filioque* both in the theological (immanent) and economic meanings – and that is why there were mutual misunderstandings that fuelled these controversies.³⁸ The second area of difficulty was contained in the above mentioned Trinitarian analogies of Augustine.³⁹

The East did not set the nature of God before the person. It believed that if the Father is God, then making the Son the source of the origin of the Holy Spirit on an equal footing with the Father would mean recognizing the existence of two ontological origins in the Trinity, that is, two Gods. The unity of God is thus

³⁶ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 77.

³⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 77n.

³⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 78.

³⁹ “In the view of the Greek Fathers such arguments give no support to the *Filioque*. The only thing we can say about the Father, the Son and the Spirit is that the Father is Unbegotten and that he is the Father of the Son; the Son is begotten and is the Son of the Father; and the Spirit ‘proceeds from’ the Father and that he is the Spirit, not the Son. These characteristics, which derive from the very being of these persons, tell us *how* they are and thus *who* they are. We cannot say anything about the other characteristics that belong to each of the persons” (*ibidem*, p. 78).

secured by the Father, who is the only source and cause from which the whole life and existence of God comes. The absolute sovereignty of God is safeguarded by the unique principle of the Father (*monarchia*) and *Filioque* would introduce a second source (*arché*) beside the Father.⁴⁰

Zizioulas also believes that the Augustinian argument that knowledge precedes love is unjustified, so the Holy Spirit can follow the Son. He stresses that knowledge is intrinsically linked to love and communion, and therefore we can only get to know a person to the extent that we love this person, that is, we are in communion with him.⁴¹

Zizioulas concludes that *Filioque* can be accepted if it is understood correctly. The first point concerns the clear distinction between “origin” and “being sent” in relation to the Eternal and Economic Trinity. In the economy of salvation the Holy Spirit does indeed depend on the Son, but it is completely different in the case of the immanent Trinity, where one cannot speak of any *Filioque*, because there the Father is the only cause of the Spirit. However – he adds – the Greek Fathers made a distinction that allows a certain role for the Son in the eternal origin of the Holy Spirit. St. Gregory of Nyssa wrote that the difference between the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is that the Father is the cause, while the Son and Spirit are the fruits of that cause. Cause is a person, a factor taking free initiative. This distinction between cause and what is the result is most important. St. Gregory writes that the Son comes directly and right from the Cause, while the Spirit comes through Him who comes directly from the Cause, i.e. through the mediation of the Son.⁴² This mediation of the Son in the origin of the Spirit protects the fact that the Son is only begotten, i.e. He is the only Son, and the Spirit is not another son beside Him. The mediation of the Son does not change the fact that the Holy Spirit has a direct relationship with the Father, and St. Gregory emphasizes that the mediating role of the Son in the Spirit’s origin safeguards this direct relationship. So, as long as we are aware that the Son is not the cause, His role in the Spirit’s origin is acceptable. In the immanent life of God, however, the Holy Spirit does not come from the Son. Because in the immanent Trinity relationships are completely ontological, the Father must be the cause or the agent. In the economy it can be said that the Spirit depends on the Son, is sent by the Son and given by the Son to the Church.⁴³ From this it can be concluded that, in distinguishing between the eternal plane and

⁴⁰ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 78n.

⁴¹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 79.

⁴² Cf. św. Grzegorz z Nyssy, *Ad Ablabium*, in: *Patrologiae Cursus Completus. Series Graecae*, vol. 45, t. II, Paris 1863, k. 133.

⁴³ Cf. W. Hryniewicz, *Duch Święty – Mistagog Bożego Królestwa*, in: P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej...*, p. 20–23.

the economic plane, the origin of the Spirit from the Father “and the Son” is also acceptable to the East.⁴⁴

Zizioulas presents documentation of the patristic development of the controversy between East and West⁴⁵ and adds that the Council of Florence (1438–1439) wanted to prevent a division of the Church on this issue and suggested that if both parties wanted to accept the expression “by the Son” instead of “from the Son”, there could be a basis for consent. Neither party, however, wanted to take the decisive step. The West has established its position by accepting the expression “from the Father and the Son,” and did not wish to withdraw or replace it with the expression “by the Son.” Zizioulas believes, however, that the question of *Filioque* can be solved by the Churches of East and West, and that the dialogues undertaken can lead to success in this matter.⁴⁶ Meanwhile, he stresses that we must avoid everything that might contradict the principle that in the Trinity only the Father himself is an acting cause. He writes that we can all contribute to understanding the place of *Filioque* in the doctrine of God as the Church did in the era of St. Maximus the Confessor.⁴⁷

PROSPECTS

God has shown Himself in Jesus Christ as the mystery of extraordinary closeness, love, and gift communication – the Holy Trinity.⁴⁸ John Paul II wrote in his encyclical *Dominum et Vivificantem* that the Holy Spirit, “proceeding from

⁴⁴ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 79n. See: chapter I in the second part of P. Evdokimov's, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej*, entitled „Pneumatologia Ojców w ekonomii zbawienia”, p. 115–134.

⁴⁵ See: J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures...*, p. 80–82; P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej...*, p. 77–102.

⁴⁶ See: P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w tradycji prawosławnej...*, p. 102–114, 149–154.

⁴⁷ Cf. J.D. Zizioulas, *Lectures in Christian Dogmatics...*, p. 82. “In the seventh century, as word was getting around that the *Filioque* being used in the West, Saint Maximus was asked for his opinion on this matter. He replied that he had looked into it, and found that the Latin-speaking Romans did not have respective words for expressing the two notions of *proceeding from* and *sent out by* (*ekporeuetai* and *pempetai*), so they used only one word, *proceeds* and this gave rise to confusion. In the same letter to Marinus, Saint Maximus noticed that Roman Christians referred to Saint Cyril of Alexandria, whose writings seemed to give the *Filioque* some support in the eternal Trinity. [...] he discussed the issue with Christians in Rome and concluded that they did not mean that the Son is the cause, so Maximus said that there was no heresy involved. That was how the situation was left in the seventh century” (ibidem, p. 80–82).

⁴⁸ Cf. E. Jüngel, *Gott als Geheimnis der Welt*, Tübingen 1977, p. 479; J. Auer, *Gott – Der Eine und Dreieine*, Regensburg 1978, p. 324–332; H.U. von Balthasar, *Teologia*, vol. 2: *Prawda Boga...*, p. 117–119.

the Father, he directs toward the Father the sacrifice of the Son, bringing it into the divine *reality of the Trinitarian communion*.” (No. 41). Moreover, the experience of the Church as a communion⁴⁹ has made it possible to show convincingly that God’s being is perfect Communion through personal relationships and inter-personal love.⁵⁰ For Christians, one God has always been the Holy Trinity, Communion, and in this perspective Zizioulas shows the Holy Spirit.

Today it can be said that there are two ways of approaching the mystery of the Trinity.⁵¹ When the aim is to show unity, the reflection starts with the life process that constructs the Persons as one – this is the path that the theology of the Eastern Churches in particular follows: The Father’s “monarchy” is on the top, also when one describes intra-Trinitarian relationships; the Father is the only source of divine life, so the Holy Spirit owes his being God alone – the Son has at most an intermediary function (“through”). However, when one wants to show the equality of persons as to the essence (different from one another) and see unity as justified in God – this way of thinking has become dominant in Latin theology – the Father and the Son are united in the fact that they have a function of the beginning in relation to the Holy Spirit, for how could one concretely call the relationship between the Son and the Holy Spirit differently? The function of the beginning is not fully identical in the case of the Father and the Son, as St. Augustine already observed: the Father – *principium non de principio* – is a beginning without beginning, the Son – *principium de principio* – is a beginning that has an origin. The most recent Western theology tends to assess the various explanations of the origins of the Holy Spirit as complementary ways of seeing and explaining each other, profoundly conceived but not alternatives to each other. The complementary view of the two theological narratives should be interpreted in mutual dependence according to the hermeneutics of aesthetic polyphony⁵² and thus even controversial pneumatological issues should not block the ecumenical rapprochement of all Christians.

⁴⁹ See: E. Piotrowski, *Traktat o Trójcy Świętej...*, p. 257–263.

⁵⁰ G. Greshake writes that the development of the theology of the Trinity would not have been possible without the experience of the Church, and without the idea of communion it would not have been possible to speak of God’s being (*Trójjedyny Bóg. Teologia trynitarna*, transl. J. Tyrawa, Wrocław 2009, p. 46). Cf. S. Kołata, *Komplementarność modeli w teologii trynitarniej*, Kraków 2017, p. 175n.

⁵¹ On Greek and Latin contribution to the dogmatic theology see: Y. Congar, *Wierzę w Ducha Świętego. Rzeka życia płynie na Wschodzie i na Zachodzie (Ap 22,1)...*, p. 149–163. On the critical juxtaposition of the principles of Eastern and Western Trinitology see: P. Evdokimov, *Duch Święty w koncepcji prawosławnej...*, p. 96–102.

⁵² Cf. J. Strumiłowski, *Między Bogiem a człowiekiem. Teologia relacji w kontekście późnej nowoczesności*, Kraków 2018, p. 46.

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KOMUNIJNE ASPEKTY NAUKI O DUCHU ŚWIĘTYM WEDŁUG
JOHNA D. ZIZIOULASA

Streszczenie

W myśli teologicznej Johna D. Zizioulasa na podkreślenie zasługuje jego otwartość ekumeniczna i głęboka teologia przesycona myślą komunijną, owocującą także komunijnym spojrzeniem na rzeczywistość Ducha Świętego. Prezentowany artykuł omawia trynitarno-eklezjalne początki pneumatologii, ważną dla niej koncepcję Komunii Osób Trójcy Świętej, a potem prawosławną ocenę trynitarną koncepcji św. Augustyna i komunijne spojrzenie na *Filioque* – wraz z ekumenicznymi perspektywami tego zagadnienia.

Słowa kluczowe: Trójca Święta, Duch Święty, Komunia, pneumatologia, *Filioque*

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THE SYMBOL OF FAITH IN THEOLOGY AND IN PREACHING

The life of the Church from the very beginning is connected with searching for Her own identity which has its expression in the forming of the profession of faith. The testimonies of this fact can be found already in the Old Testament, which is shown in multifarious doctrinal formulas which are handed over by the apostolic proclamation which is based on them. In a relatively short time these formulas were gathered as a whole, first in the profession of faith used during the right of Baptism and later, especially in a profession of faith which is called the Apostles' Creed. It has preserved its significance and superior role in theology and preaching to this day although in reality its role has been diminished especially in preaching. This paper recommends the return to the Apostles' Creed and to its inspiring role. The most important thing is to present its doctrinal message which highlights the need for the holistic, Trinitarian and Christological perspective in reference to theological issues. Today, the Apostles' Creed can play the same role in the organisation of Church proclamation, which admiring the so called original kerygma falls into short-sighted interpretations and restrictions, resulting in the weakening of Christian identity.

Observing contemporary, or even broader, modern dogmatic theology, it is easy to see that from a formal and structural point of view, the so-called treatises have become its hallmark. They cover the main sections of theology, creating a more or less coherent whole. Much could be said about the various proposals for the systematization of theological treatises put forward even after the Second Vatican Council. In any case, however, it seems that in general their weakness, and this holds true for most cases, is the lack of a closer connection with the

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structure of the creed, and often also with its fundamental option, which could be considered its soteriological significance. This is at odds with the fundamental premise of theology understood as the *scientia fidei* and *scientia salutis*. Based on the same self-understanding, theology should strive to organize its contents in such a way that its connection with the creed becomes clear and its existential-soteriological aspect becomes more visible.

While we obviously do not want to take up all possible problems concerning the creed in one place, it seems, however, that the time has also come to deal more dogmatically with the issue of ecclesiastical preaching, in which there is a very similar problem as in theology, namely, a process of ever stronger breaking with the creed under the pretext of so-called kerygmaticism. This is obviously not a new problem, although it appears in a new context and with a new justification, obviously as inconsistent as it was in the 1930s and later 1950s in the so-called kerygmatic theology. For over a dozen years now, within the framework of homiletics, as well as in official ecclesiastical documents, we have noted a strange apotheosis of the kerygma, that is, of the so-called first proclamation (preaching), which is undoubtedly a fact in the New Testament, while its proper identification mark and the only tool is to be a homily, treated as a panacea for all defects noticed in ecclesiastical preaching and teaching.

Such a reduction is often justified by reference to the papal teaching, especially of Pope Francis. It must be admitted that its many points are not clear, which is boldly and rightly pointed out. Above all, there is a lack of distinction between the content and the way of teaching. In the Pope Francis' *Evangelii gaudium* we find this synthetic term for the first proclamation, or kerygma: "Jesus Christ loves you, he gave his life to save you, and now he is alive at your side every day to enlighten, strengthen and liberate you" (No 164). Above all, it should be noted that this is by no means a novelty in ecclesiastical teaching, because already Pope John Paul II, for example, in his exhortation *Christifideles laici* (30 December 1988), clearly pointed out that this is the principle on which the new evangelization is to be based. We read in this unjustly forgotten document: "Humanity is loved by God! This very simple yet profound proclamation is owed to humanity by the Church. Each Christian's words and life must make this proclamation resound: God loves you, Christ came for you, Christ is for you 'the Way, the Truth and the Life!'" (No 34). Pope John Paul or later Benedict XVI returned to this idea many times, which is not taken into account in various statements.

Many analyses of the Church's teaching on the kerygma would become clearer if, on the basis of classical methodology, a distinction were well made between the material and the formal subject in the statements on the subject. Both the statement of John Paul II and that of Pope Francis concern the subject of formal

preaching, that is, the perspective that should be given to it, and that perspective is “for you.” It is about showing that the content of faith rooted in Jesus Christ has the most personal reference to each person. And this is the right thing to do, both with regard to preaching and with regard to theology, which cannot be an abstract science, but must be concrete with regard to the believer and the one seeking salvation. But ecclesiastical statements do not take sufficient account of the material object of the kerygma, because it is not a concept that can be given a fully unambiguous content. It is certainly about the death, resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ and the sending of the Holy Spirit as important salvation events, but it is by no means so obvious from an exegetic and theological point of view. As we begin to clarify the issue, it suddenly expands and the assumption of reducing it to a few, even the most important ideas is lost. The supporters of the rigidly conceived kerygma generally aim to limit the scope of the content of the preaching, because they assume that in such a case the preaching will become more effective, which, by the way, has not yet been demonstrated.

The question then arises, simple but extremely fundamental, as to where in this kerygma to place the symbol of faith, or “summary”, as St. Augustine called it, of the fundamental truths of the faith¹. Christian doctrine includes many truths which are essential to ecclesiastical doctrine and which, although they do not belong directly to the original proclamation (kerygma), are irreplaceable in the entirety of faith and ecclesiastical life, such as the truth about creation or original sin. Examples could also be multiplied. Various spiritual and ecclesiastical experiences from different eras confirm that many truths belonging not only to the creed but to Christian doctrine cannot be left on the margins of ecclesiastical preaching, just as they cannot be left on the margins of theology. To make such a separation would mean introducing a dichotomy between the first proclamation and the creed, between the New Testament and the doctrine of the Church, that is, simply between preaching and the catechism. Sooner or later, such a dichotomy would lead to the whole structure of ecclesiastical life being disturbed.

“SYMBOL” – THE ORIGINAL MEANING OF THE TERM

In ancient times, in order to recognize two counterparties, an object, e.g. a coin, was broken into two parts; each person received one of them, and when the two parts fitted together (*symbolleîn*), the identity of the shareholders of the contract was confirmed, and thus the contract could be finalized. The symbol, in the ancient sense,

¹ Augustyn, *Sermo* 213, 1.

was therefore a sign of conformity, a hallmark, and thus also a sign of unity. In the fourth century, Latin Africa began to call the formula of Christian creed a “symbol” – a single, common symbol of faith was a means of recognizing members of the same community of believers, and at the same time distinguishing true Christians from those who in various ways departed from the true faith, that is, those who had already ceased to be associated with it. In modern use, the term “symbol of faith” has lost its ancient meaning, becoming rather a manifestation of personal faith, or even, in a sense, a doxology since it was included in the Christian’s daily prayers².

The official symbols – the creeds can be divided into two categories; the first one includes the “Apostolic Symbol” (Apostolic Creed, “Apostolic Composition”, as we traditionally still call it in Polish), including its numerous variants³, and the second category includes the council creeds, which are primarily distinguished by their more developed content⁴.

HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT

The creeds belonging to both categories have been developed over a long period of time, which shows both their nature and their importance in the life of the Church. In order to speak of a symbol of faith and to seek further opportunities for its use, both in personal and communal faith, as well as in theology and other forms of teaching, especially in preaching, one must bear in mind its historical character.

THE APOSTOLIC CREED

From the fourth⁵ to the fifteenth and even up to the sixteenth century it was commonly accepted in the Latin Church that the twelve articles contained in the

² On the various theological and cultural aspects of the Apostolic Symbol cf. *Symbol Apostolski w nauczaniu i sztuce Kościoła do Soboru Trydenckiego*, ed. R. Knapiński, Lublin 1997; *Credo in Deum w teologii i sztuce Kościołów chrześcijańskich*, ed. R. Knapiński, A. Kramiszewska, Lublin 2009.

³ Cf. H. de Lubac, *La foi chrétienne. Essai sur la structure du Symbole des Apôtres*, Paris 1970².

⁴ On the development of the faith, especially Nicene-Constantinopolitan cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Early Christian Creeds*, London 1960²; G.L. Dosetti, *Il simbolo di Nicea e di Costantinopoli. Edizione critica*, Roma–Freiburg–Basel–Barcelona–Wien 1967; R. Staats, *Glaubensbekenntnis von Nizäa-Konstantinopel: historische und theologische Grundlagen*, Darmstadt 1996.

⁵ Ambrose, *Epistula* (to Pope Siricius) 15*, 5: „But if you do not believe in the teachings of the bishops [...] let them believe the apostolic profession of faith, which the Church of Rome has guarded and preserved intact at all times”.

creed were personally edited by the Apostles⁶. There was even an assignment of each article to individual Apostles. For the first time the questioning of the historicity of this well-established concept came from the East, namely during the Florentine Council, Mark of Ephesus (c. 1394–1444)⁷ noted that the Eastern Church knew nothing about the Apostolic Symbol⁸. Later, the humanists, especially Lorenzo Valla, Reginald Pecock and Erasmus of Rotterdam, put the question of the origins of the “Apostolicum” back on the agenda, but it was only in the 19th century that extensive and analytical research on the subject was undertaken, just as was the case with the research into the history of other creeds. A separate field of historical and theological research called “Symbolforschung” was even created, and its important effect is the identification of the various creeds used in different Churches and traditions⁹.

Since then, in the light of the results of studies – very often openly regarded as sensational – all relations between the symbol and the apostolic era had to be rethought. In these studies, it is relatively easy to go back to the third century, because in the earlier period, everything is very confusing, mainly because of a lack of sources. In any case, however, on the basis of this research, an important conclusion has been drawn, namely, that even if the Apostolic Symbol is later than the Apostolic Age, it is still in direct contact with the creeds found in the New Testament, and even, as is worth noting in today’s circumstances, it is a systematic reflection of apostolic preaching, the so-called *kerygma*. As for the content and form, the “Apostolicum” is truly apostolic because it reflects the tradition of apostolic faith, the prehistory of which can be traced back to the time before the formulas of faith well known from the New Testament appeared.

a) If we look at Acts and reflect on the preaching of St. Peter (Acts 2:14–39; 3:12–26; 4:9–12; 10:34–43) and St. Paul (Acts 13:16–41), it is reasonable to think that it reflects the classic pattern of missionary proclamation during the apostolic period – we find that there is a constant return of certain specific formulas relating to the death, resurrection and ascension of Christ. In addition to the proclamation of the central event of the Passover of Christ, there are also typical expressions of the mysteries that prepare or result from the Paschal event. At Baptism, Christ was pro-

⁶ St. Thomas Aquinas refers to this tradition in *In III Sententiarum* d. 25, q. 1, a. 2, but does not mention it in *Summa theologiae*.

⁷ Cf. R. Sawa, *Marek z Efezu*, w: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 11, Lublin 2006, c. 1267–1269.

⁸ Cf. J. Hardouin, *Acta conciliorum et epistulae decretales*, vol. 9, Paris 1714, p. 842A–843E.

⁹ Cf. S. Bäumer, *Das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis*, Mainz 1893; C. Blume, *Das Apostolische Glaubensbekenntnis*, Freiburg 1893; F. Kattenbusch, *Das Apostolische Symbol*, vol. 1–2, Leipzig 1894–1900; A. Hahn, G.L. Hahn, *Bibliothek der Symbole und Glaubensregeln der alten Kirche*, Breslau 1897³; J. de Ghellinck, *Les recherches sur les origines du Symbole des Apôtres*, Paris 1949².

claimed the Messiah (Acts 10:37–38); He revealed Himself through his public life, doing good and miracles (Acts 2:22; 10:38–39); He appeared after the Resurrection (Acts 2:32; 3:15; 5:32; 10:39–42; 13:41) and finally sent his Spirit (Acts 2:23; 5:32).

So we find the whole mystery of the redemption accomplished by Jesus Christ scattered throughout the Acts of the Apostles, always expressed in a certain fixed form that already allows us to think about the future twelve articles of faith. From the very beginning the broad character of the apostolic kerygma and the catechesis of the original Church is revealed, which includes the human, Davidic and messianic origins of Christ (Acts 2:30; 13:33–34), His passion (Acts 3:18), including His rejection by the Jews (Acts 4:11), His resurrection (Acts 2:25–31; 13:34–37), His sitting at the right hand of the Father (Acts 2:34–35), His resurrection as the inauguration of the Messianic times of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:17–21) and therefore of salvation (Acts 2:39; 4:12), and the prospect of the Lord's glorious return (Acts 3:20–21). All this calls for conversion, repentance and baptism (Acts 2:38). Certainly we are dealing here with a great synthesis of the guiding lines of apostolic proclamation and thus of the Apostles' creed.

Everything we find in the Acts of the Apostles is clearly confirmed in other New Testament writings, especially in St. Paul. In the apostolic writings similar formulas, often linked to the notion of tradition (*paradosis*), return repeatedly. St. Paul states very clearly and obligingly at the same time: "I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received" (1 Cor 15:3). It is about the "principle of faith" – the "deposit" of the venerable heritage, which should always be preserved (1 Tim 6:20; 2 Tim 1:14), about the "profession of faith" (Heb 4:14). In the apostolic writings we find the main formulas that will enter the symbol of faith in the future, although they are still scattered: "...by our Lord Jesus Christ, who died for us" (1 Thess 5:10)¹⁰; "Jesus indeed died and rose again" (1 Thess 4:14)¹¹; "Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised from the dead, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us" (Rom 8:34)¹²; "Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living" (Rom 14:9).

In addition to these already established kerygmatic formulas, we also find in the New Testament more official and concrete creeds, which are used for baptism and liturgical celebrations. The practice of confessing the faith in Christ at the time of Baptism was established very early on (Acts 22:16; 8:37), simply becoming the norm¹³. In addition, there also appear very clearly defined confessions of faith, for example, during exorcisms or miraculous healings. A characteristic

¹⁰ Cf. Rom 4:25; 2 Cor 5:14; Ga 1:4; 2,20 etc.

¹¹ Cf. Rom 4:25; 8:34; 14:9 etc.

¹² Cf. Eph 1:20; Heb 1,3,13; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; 1 P 3:22.

¹³ Cf. Acts 2:38; 8:16; 10:48; 19:5; 1 Cor 1:13–15; Matt 28:19.

feature is the confession of faith made at the time of persecution (1 Cor 12:3; Rom 10:9) and generally at liturgical gatherings¹⁴.

The creeds typical of the New Testament are of Christological character. There are also two-part professions of faith in which the Father is mentioned together with his Son, Jesus Christ. It cannot be ruled out that such creeds were introduced as part of the preaching addressed to the Jews, who had to be offered monotheism in connection with the mystery of Christ.¹⁵ Finally, the New Testament also contains the first creeds of the Trinitarian faith, or at least the first ones that generally include the Three¹⁶. The addition of the Holy Spirit to the confessions of the Father and the Son seems to be a direct result of the rapidly maturing liturgy of baptism, which aims to show that the baptized person is included in the fullness of the Christian faith, realized in a personal and direct reference to the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. To emphasize the link between the paschal event of Jesus Christ and the message of the Holy Spirit, St. Paul could refer to the baptismal event. We find in him a pattern based on the reference to the Three, especially when he takes up the baptismal theme. It is therefore certain that in addition to the creeds of a Christological character, there are also formulas of a Trinitarian character in the New Testament.

b) Starting from these Christological and Trinitarian creeds that we meet in the New Testament, two different formulas, that is, Christological and Trinitarian, appeared gradually and were applied. They were born independently of one another, in different contexts, but were quickly combined in the baptismal liturgy. It is not possible to determine precisely when this happened, but some testimonies indicate at least in general terms that it could have happened at the turn of the second and third centuries. The fluctuations that emerge during this period become very meaningful.

In St. Justin, the two schemes are sometimes separated¹⁷, and in other cases they are connected¹⁸. In St. Irenaeus, the merger of the two formulas has already taken place, although in such a way that the Christological article has been incorporated into the confession relating to the Holy Spirit¹⁹. In the *Apostolic Tradition* attributed to St. Hippolytus²⁰ and to Tertullian we find the first testimonies of the

¹⁴ Cf. 1 Cor 16:22; Col 3:6; Phl 2:6–11; 4:5.20; 1 Tim 3:16; 1:17; Rom 11:36; 16:27.

¹⁵ Cf. 1 Tess 2:16; 1 Cor 8:6; 2 Cor 1:3; 11:31; Eph 1:3; Acts 4:24–30; Col 3:16–17; 1 Tim 6:13; 2:5; 2 Tim 4:1; 1 P 4:11; Rev 1:2.

¹⁶ Cf. Matt 28:19; 2 Cor 13:13; Acts 5:29–32. Moreover, the following can be indicated: Gal 4:4–6; 1 Cor 6:11; 12:4–6; Eph 1:3–14; 2:18; 1 P 1:2–12.

¹⁷ Cf. Justin, *1 apologia* 13, 3–4.

¹⁸ Cf. Justin, *1 apologia* 61, 3.

¹⁹ Cf. Irenaeus, *Adversus haereses* 1, 10, 1.

²⁰ Cf. DH 10; BF (2007) 4

merger, which will later take precedence, in which the Christological article is the second and gradually expanding part of the Trinitarian symbol. Since this synthetic symbol was also a baptismal symbol, it took on a dialogical form. The confession of faith in its personal form (“credo – I believe”) will appear later, especially in St. Rufinus of Aquileia²¹. It is a “Roman formula”²² of the Apostolic Symbol. Given that the Hippolytus’ *Tradition* reflects the Roman liturgy of about 215, the baptismal symbol contained therein is indeed the most original formula of the present symbol. However, its general scheme must be even older, that is, it must be situated at the beginning of the second century, as shown by the allusions we find in St Ignatius of Antioch, Tertullian and St. Irenaeus. The liturgical papyrus of Dêr Bazyleh in Upper Egypt conveys an even older symbol which, in its simple form, has the same structure as the baptismal symbol of Hippolytus: “I believe in God the Father Almighty, and in his only-begotten Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Holy Spirit, and in the resurrection of the body in the holy Catholic Church”²³. We can therefore conclude that the basic form of our Apostolic Symbol appeared at the end of the second century probably in Rome.

c) The current version of the Apostolic Symbol, classical throughout the West, which has entered our catechisms and thus also our preaching, and which is also used in the administration of the sacraments, was first found in *Ordo Romanus* in 950. It was called “textus receptus”²⁴. It has no Roman origins, but most likely comes from southern Gaul; however, we find it in certain variations at the turn of the fourth and fifth centuries. It is actually already present in the *Gelasian Sacramentary*²⁵. During the Carolingian reform it came to Rome. The Roman symbol in Greek in intermediate form between the R and T versions was included in Marcel of Ancyra’s letter to Pope Julius²⁶.

d) We still have even less information about the eastern symbols. Actually, in the main themes they have been formed in the same way, but they have taken on more elaborate and detailed forms, as well as more varied. Certainly, this was influenced by numerous doctrinal controversies, which appeared with strong clashes in the East. We know the baptismal symbols of numerous local churches,

²¹ DH 12. Cf. V. Peri, *Rufino e il simbolo della Chiesa di Aquileia. La tradizione culturale del Simbolo Apostolico nella “stilizzazione storica” occidentale*, w: idem, *Da Oriente e da Occidente. Le Chiese cristiane dall'impero romano all'Europa moderna*, a cura di M. Ferrari, vol. 2, Roma–Padova 2002, p. 750–778 [Medioevo e Umanesimo 108].

²² “Forma Romana”, called version R, is also called “forma occidentalis antiquior”. Cf. DH 10.

²³ DH 2.

²⁴ It is also called version T or “forma occidentalis recentior”. Cf. DH 30.

²⁵ DH 36; BF (2007) 12.

²⁶ PG 42, 385.

such as the Palestinian Caesarea²⁷, Jerusalem²⁸, Antioch²⁹ etc., dating from the 4th century.

e) Although the symbol of faith which has taken on the classic meaning, was not put together by the Apostles, it can be called “apostolic” in a consistent and rightful way. It has been rightly stated in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*: “*The Apostolic Symbol* was named this way because it is rightly considered a faithful summary of the Apostles’ faith”³⁰. It is indeed the “rule of faith” which stems from the Apostles’ original proclamation, drawn from their personal encounter with Jesus Christ and the experience of faith based on it. It is not only a faithful reflection of the original “kerygma,” but also its first and binding synthesis. This is why it defined the shape of the apostolic catechesis addressed to the neophytes as well as the faith of the Church, which would then be supplemented and developed, but would always retain this original centre. There is therefore no basis to introduce any division between apostolic preaching and the ecclesiastical clarification of its doctrinal principles, the most important manifestation of which are the confessions of faith, because at their starting point these two areas of ecclesial life form an organic unity.

The twelve articles of faith contained in the Apostolic Symbol (version T) have never been solemnly dogmatized in the Church, although it must be made clear that it has always been treated as a general rule of faith, accepting its contents in ordinary and universal teaching, indicating it as a certain point of reference for individual believers and for the ecclesiastical religious formation, which is also reflected in his elevation in the *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, which based its lecture on the doctrine of the faith on this symbol, complementing it with some of the statements contained in the Nicene-Constantinopolitan Symbol³¹.

So if we are talking about the Apostolic Symbol, we have to keep in mind that it is a kerygmatic-dogmatic symbol, although genetically and functionally it is a baptismal symbol. The principle “lex orandi – lex credendi” has found full application in it, emphasizing that the Catholic creed is deeply rooted in the living devotion of the Church and above all in her liturgy, that is, in the essential manifestation of her life and her identity. If, therefore, one wants to form Catholic devotion, to revive the liturgical spirit and to form the basis of commitment in the spirit of the Gospel, it is not enough to refer to the original kerygma, but one

²⁷ DH 40.

²⁸ DH 41; BF (2007) 14.

²⁹ DH 50.

³⁰ Catechism of Catholic Church [*Katechizm Kościoła katolickiego*], Poznań 2002, No. 194

³¹ Cf. ibidem, nr 196.

must clearly and decisively appreciate the faith described in the articles of the Apostolic Symbol.

Although the symbol of faith is a baptismal symbol, which was initially to be confessed by a neophyte at the time of baptism and was later to serve as a reference point for formation to the Christian life, it cannot be considered as some complete extract of Christian dogmas. It only takes into account the main truths of the creed which the Church demands from the catechumen. This explains why a reality as important as the Eucharist, for example, is not mentioned in it. It only concerns initial initiation, and so many themes that arise in the formation of neophytes after Baptism, and also in the course of the developing Christian life, are not included.

As the history, and especially the prehistory of the Apostolic Symbol was not known, it was treated during the Middle Ages as a complete but synthetic articulation (“articulus”) of faith on which all dogmas were based. It was believed that the symbol was some kind of pre-foundation from which they grew up, as well as their existential orientation. St. Thomas Aquinas is also the heir to this premise on which he built his concept of the “article of faith”, even though he included in it some innovative contents, departing from the traditional understanding of the Apostolic Symbol³². According to Aquinas, articles of faith are dogmatic, not because they are connected with the original apostolic symbol of faith, but because they have a salvific character which allows to shed the right light also on all theological issues, including the identification of certain truths as dogmas. A dogma, then, is something that cannot be rejected if one is to guarantee salvation for man. This approach reflects the idea that dogma and theology show their proper meaning in a soteriological perspective (*scientia salutis*). It is a conception that refers to the patristic tradition, although it contains some additions, because the Fathers of the Church saw in the soteriological perspective first of all the principle of defending the doctrine of faith, while the approach of St. Thomas is more open, which allows him to include all theology in this principle. In this perspective, all the theological content is placed in such a way that it refers to the individual man, showing him how God works for his salvation. In the further part of the part we will return to the concrete consequences of St Thomas Aquinas’ concept.

CONCILIAR AND SYNODAL SYMBOLS

In a certain contrast to the simplicity of the Apostolic Symbol, there are symbols (confessions) of faith proclaimed by the universal councils, as well as by par-

³² Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II–II q. 1, a. 6–9.

ticular synods. These are, above all, more elaborate depending on which doctrinal problems, in the concrete circumstances of ecclesiastical life, were attempted to be answered through them. With these confessions there has inevitably been a certain “theologization” of the baptismal profession of faith, which, however, should not be considered only negatively, as is sometimes done. They are an expression of a willingness to defend the truth and, above all, a manifestation of the maturity of faith and the richness of its expressions in the Church, and sometimes of its doctrinal-theological pluralism. At least in the beginning these symbols remained outside the context of liturgical and catechetical life, and their immediate aim, starting with the Apostolic Symbol, was generally to combat heresy. None of the creeds proclaimed in the Church proved superfluous.

Among the conciliar symbols, “fides nicaena,” i.e. the confession of faith of the First Council of Nice of 325, ranks absolutely first³³. Its starting point is the eastern version of the Apostolic Symbol, worked out from the perspective of the Arian heresy countered by the Council.

The *Nicaeno-Constantinopolitanum* symbol is a reworked version, certainly related to the First Council of Constantinople (381), the Eastern Apostolic Symbol and the Nicene Symbol³⁴. Its genesis is still uncertain, which is ultimately not the most important thing; the decisive factor is that it reflects ecclesiastical orthodoxy – especially in the version promoted by Saint Basil the Great³⁵ – which was highlighted in the context of Christological and Pneumatological disputes in the middle of the fourth century, making this symbol very quickly and universally accepted in the East. In the doctrinal context, the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol appeared for the first time during the Council of Chalcedon in 451, at which the fathers stated that in the announced adapted definition of the faith they also wanted to preserve “the symbol of the one hundred and fifty Holy Fathers gathered in Constantinople”³⁶. The scarce sources concerning the First Council of Constantinople do not allow much to be said about the genesis of this symbol. It is certain that it appears in 374 in Epiphanius of Salamis³⁷ and that it is connected with the Church of Jerusalem and its baptismal tradition.

³³ DH 125; BF (2007) 30.

³⁴ DH 150; BF (2007) 36.

³⁵ Cf. J.-R. Pouchet, *Vivre la communion dans l'Esprit Saint et dans l'Église. Études sur Basile de Césarée*, Abbaye de Bellefontaine 2014, p. 241–330.

³⁶ Council of Chalcedon [Sobór Chalcedoński], *Definicja wiary 5*, in: *Dokumenty soborów powszechnych*, vol. 1: *Nicea I, Konstantynopol I, Efez, Chalcedon, Konstantynopol II, Konstantynopol III, Nicea II (325–787)*, ed. A. Baron, H. Pietras, Kraków 2001, p. 217 [Źródła Myśli Teologicznej 24].

³⁷ DH 44.

The Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol was included in the liturgy of the Mass.³⁸ This practice was initiated in Constantinople, to which Patriarch Timothy (511–517), associated with the monophysite community, probably contributed, thus intending to officially introduce his orthodoxy. In the East, the practice was widely accepted, from where it passed to Spain in 589. In the ninth century, we find this creed in the Frankish countries, which happened with the contribution of Charlemagne. Then the practice gradually spread to the northern countries. When Emperor Henry II came to Rome in 1014, he was surprised that the creed was not recited during Mass. Pope Benedict VIII (1012–1024) granted the emperor's request, and in this way the symbol from the East was incorporated into the Roman Mass. Later on, it was accepted as a profession of faith by the Council of Trent and was long used in the Church as the official profession of faith³⁹. Since the Nicene-Constantinopolitan symbol was adopted by the Councils of Chalcedon and Trent as their fundamental doctrinal premise and is part of the Eucharistic celebration, it is undoubtedly dogmatic in nature. It is also necessary to remember the dogmatic definition introduced by the Council of Chalcedon, which must be taken in conjunction with the whole symbol of faith⁴⁰.

Later on, many creeds appear, proclaimed by universal councils and local synods. An important role in the Church was played by the symbol of the XI Synod of Toledo (675)⁴¹, which proclaimed the teaching on the Trinity; it certainly contains an authentic explanation of dogma, but it was not approved by Pope Innocent III (1198–1216), as it was sometimes thought⁴². The *Quicumque* symbol is worth mentioning⁴³, which was originally edited in Latin and certainly cannot be attributed to St. Athanasius, as was believed for centuries. Although as yet little can be said about its origin, it is a very interesting theological and spiritual phenomenon. The use of this creed in liturgy, at first private, but over time also official, determines its dogmatic value. It seems to belong to the category of anti-Priscillian symbols that appeared in Spain, such as *Fides Damasi*⁴⁴ or *Clemens Trinitas*⁴⁵. Certainly worth mentioning are also: the creed of the Fourth Lateran

³⁸ Cf. J. Królikowski, *Miejsce i znaczenie wyznania wiary w liturgii*, „Analecta Cracoviensia” 49 (2017), p. 67–80.

³⁹ DH 1862–1870; BF IX, 40–46.

⁴⁰ DH 301–302; BF (2007) 89.

⁴¹ DH 525–541; BF (2007) 171–197.

⁴² Cf. J. Madoz, *Le symbole du XI^e concile de Tolède. Ses sources, sa date, sa valeur*, Louvain 1938, p. 161–162.

⁴³ DH 75–76; BF (2007) 122.

⁴⁴ DH 71–72; BF (2007) 20.

⁴⁵ DH 73–74; BF (2007) 21.

Council (1215) against the Albigenses and Cathars⁴⁶; the creed of Pope Leo IX (1049–1054)⁴⁷, later included in the creed of Emperor Michael Palaeologus during the Second Council of Lyons (1274)⁴⁸; the already mentioned Tridentine creed with additions made by Pope Pius IX and the fathers who came to the First Vatican Council (1870)⁴⁹. Certainly, the anti-modernist oath of 1910 should also be mentioned here, although it does not constitute a confession of faith in the strict sense. However, by being emphasized, it had a significant impact on preaching, and some of its formulations still affect theology, at least some of its treatises, especially the theology of revelation and ecclesiology⁵⁰.

The 1968 “*Credo Populi Dei* – Confession of Faith of the People of God”⁵¹ of Pope Paul VI deserves special attention, although surprisingly, it does not enjoy any greater recognition in contemporary theology or in devotion⁵².

THEOLOGICAL REFLECTIONS

A review of the various issues concerning the history of the Apostolic Symbol and other symbols in the Church now leads to at least a few suggestions for theology and preaching, because it is clear that the history discussed has been closely connected from the beginning with these areas of Church life.

a) First of all, it should be noted that the Apostolic Symbol has a fundamental and clear soteriological dimension, which implies a very specific vision of salvation. The Holy Trinity reveals its inner life and itself as the Saviour of man in history and through the history of salvation initiated with creation, reaching its fulfilment in Jesus Christ, God-Man, and its completion occurs in eternal life. It is true that Christological confessions are more frequent in the New Testament, but unacceptable is the thesis of Oscar Cullmann⁵³, which is also repeated today, both in the theology and in the theology of the preaching, according to which

⁴⁶ DH 800–802; BF (2007) 247.

⁴⁷ DH 680–681.

⁴⁸ DH 851–861; BF (2007) 253.

⁴⁹ Cf. *Trydenckie wyznanie wiary złożone przez najświętobliwszego papieża Piusa IX oraz wszystkich ojców Soboru Watykańskiego* (6 stycznia 1870 r.), in: *Dokumenty soborów powszechnych*, vol. 4: *Lateran V, Trydent, Watykan I (1511–1870)*, ed. A. Baron, H. Pietras, Kraków 2004, p. 882–887 [Źródła Myśli Teologicznej 33].

⁵⁰ Cf. DH 3537–3550; BF I, 85–94.

⁵¹ Cf. Paul VI [Paweł VI], *Wyznanie wiary Ludu Bożego – Credo Populi Dei*, transl. J. Królikowski, Kraków 2012.

⁵² Cf. F. Holböck, *Credimus. Kommentar zum Credo Paulus VI*, Salzburg–München 1970.

⁵³ Cf. O. Cullmann, *Les premières confessions de foi chrétienne*, Paris 1948.

the transition from Christological confessions to Trinitarian confessions would be some kind of deviation connected with post-apostolic times, which contributed to depriving Christianity of its Christological authenticity. It is evident that already in the New Testament the mystery of Jesus Christ is inseparably connected with monotheism and theocentrism of the Old Testament. The event of salvation is treated starting from the providential rule of God the Father, who rules over creation, constantly directs the history of salvation, and Jesus Christ also turns to Him completely in his life and in his actions.

Everything begins with creation, which then continues through God's salvific works in the old covenant. The reference to the biblical vision of faith, which inseparably links creation and covenant – being a kind of personal development of the mystery of creation – to which the New Testament explicitly refers, allows this to be said, although the covenant is not explicitly mentioned in the Apostolic Symbol. This concept is therefore present in the first word "I believe" itself, the proper meaning of which we know, among other things, by reference to witnesses to the faith (Heb 11:3–40; Acts 4:24–27). Jesus Christ is the fullness of the mysteries of creation and covenant.

The Father, the Creator, is the source, author and target of the history of salvation, of which Jesus Christ is the personal and working centre: "For of Him and through Him, and for Him is everything." (Rom 11:36). The New Testament treats monotheism and theocentrism as a permanent background for the salvific mystery of Jesus Christ: "in Christ God was reconciling the world to himself" (2 Cor 5:19). Through the Holy Spirit – God – Christ was born (Matt 1:20), in the Spirit He was justified (1 Tim 3:16), and at his descent at baptism in the Jordan He was called the Beloved Son (Lk 3:22). In the power of the Spirit resting on Him, Christ accomplished great works (Acts 10:38), sacrificed Himself on the cross (Heb 9:14), was raised from the dead by His power (Rom 8:11), and was established in power as the Lord and Messiah (Acts 3:13–15). The God of the covenant, who once spoke through the prophets, has now spoken through his Son (Heb 1:1–2), and His voice resounds in the Church, which is His "now" in history.

All this shows that the Christological confessions of faith are inconceivable without their precise location in the Trinitarian context, which in the Apostolic Symbol was clearly formulated on the basis of the fundamental inspiration provided by the original apostolic preaching (*kerygma*). In this proclamation, in the original catechesis and in the apostolic confessions of faith, the mystery of Jesus Christ is seen in an essential way from the perspective of the mystery of God, which encompasses everything with its radiation. In the original Church, on the other hand, the experience of the works and actions of the Holy Spirit was closely

linked to the proclamation of the mystery of Christ. The original teaching connects the Holy Spirit's mission with the most important messianic event, which is Christ's resurrection and exaltation in glory (Acts 2:33).

The original apostolic proclamation (kerygma) can therefore be summarized in the following way: on the basis of the resurrection, the Father gives the fullness of the Holy Spirit to Jesus Christ, who, for His part, imparts Him permanently and forever to the whole Church. The history of salvation is the work of the Holy Trinity; it reaches its climax in Jesus Christ, who reveals the Holy Trinity to us as "Deus salutaris – God the Saviour"⁵⁴. This scheme – God's saving initiative realized in Jesus Christ and completed in history by the Holy Spirit – is obviously already present in the Christological opening hymn to the Ephesians (1:3–14). The believers' reflection on the mystery of Jesus Christ, undoubtedly linked to the pneumatological experiences of the young Church, reached its culmination in the first Trinitarian confessions. Although they are still very general, they clearly confirm that the Christian lives authentically as a believer only in his personal relationship with the Three: Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

We find the same theological and spiritual climate in the Apostolic Symbol. Christ, the pre-existing Son of God, sent by the Father in the flesh, entered into the glory of the Father through His resurrection, but by virtue of His personal sacrifice He appears in this glory as a power sanctifying and sending the Holy Spirit to act in the Church, even though He had already spoken through the prophets. This is the profound inspiration that underpins the Apostolic Symbol. Creation, redemption and fulfillment in glory are the three stages in the history of salvation, fulfilled by God, the One and the Triune, manifested in the individual salvific actions realized by the Three. The Apostolic Symbol read in this key is one of the best examples of the identity of the confessions of faith, the prehistory of which is the original apostolic preaching and its summaries made already in the New Testament formulas. The development that would follow was a continuation of this development that met the various historical requirements.

b) The second reflection concerns the fact that in the Holy Scripture "fides fiducialis," that is, the great question of trust in God, is always and fundamentally connected with the profession of faith. In other words, the personal and existential act of faith, as a fundamental choice, is never separated from the "fides dogmatica," in which the personal position is completely determined by the manifested salvific reality. The opposite is also true, namely, the profession of dogmatic faith cannot be separated from the act of existential faith, as the New Testament clearly shows: the faith of the centurion (Matt 8:5–13), the faith of Peter walking on water

⁵⁴ The Fathers of the Church captured this fact very well in their teaching about God and Jesus Christ. Cf. B. Studer, *Gott und unsere Erlösung im Glauben der alten Kirchen*, Düsseldorf 1985.

to Jesus (Mk 14:22–23), or the praise of the faith of the ancestors (Heb 11:4–38). The “object” of the profession of faith concerns not only things and events, even the event of salvation, but also the Person, that is to say, the living God as God for us and with us, as he is revealed in Jesus Christ.

In the faith of the Church, each profession of individual articles belonging to the “Apostolicum” presupposes a fully personal act of faith in the living God. None of its articles have any theoretical character. The ecclesiastical tradition, above all St. Thomas Aquinas, has taken a keen interest in the expression “Credo in unum Deum,”⁵⁵ which already in its linguistic specificity (neither classical Greek nor Latin knows it) tried to express the full personal dimension of faith. As faith in the living God, the confession of Christ ends ultimately – against the background of the confession of the works of the Holy Spirit concentrated on the forgiveness of sins, that is, on the ecclesiastical sacramental order – in faith in the resurrection of the body and in eternal life. I believe in God the Saviour: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, who through the saving work of Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit, is eternal life for man in body and soul. This is the lasting basis of the confession of faith and the inspiration of every theology and every preaching.

c) Without going into the details of the matter, it is sufficient to point out here that the profession of faith, being based on concrete revealed content, refers in the highest degree to the personal life of those to whom it is addressed and whose answer it demands. In other words, in the perspective of faith, one can say that what inspires the first and fundamental trust in God is His truth. Of course, what reinforces this dependence is the fact that God’s truth is never theoretical, but it is an event, it is based on events and it gives rise to events. Thus at the point of departure it has a testimonial character that moves and calls for an answer. Particularly evident is this concept of truth in Saint John, in whom it recurs very often and is almost entirely shown in such a way that it is open to relationship, closeness and reciprocity. God’s truth, therefore, is structured in such a way that by its very nature it is intended to inspire confidence, although there is no doubt that the basic task of theology and preaching is to show this fact.

In the light of the biblical concept of faith it is therefore unacceptable to juxtapose the object of faith with an act of faith, as well as juxtapose the “fides fiducialis” and “fides dogmatica.” The dichotomy in this regard, which is particularly present in Luther’s concept, is an expression of a lack of consideration of what faith is in its biblical sources. Neither in the Old Testament nor in the New Testament is there the slightest basis to justify this. It is quite the contrary, which

⁵⁵ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II–II q. 2, a. 2. In this article Aquinas draws attention to three formulas that describe different aspects of faith: “credere Deo, credere Deum, credere in Deum”.

the Psalms prove very suggestively. They are certainly a school of trusting faith, but at the same time no Bible book is as dogmatic. The Psalms are a spiritual synthesis of a heart poured out with trust before God, because they enable the Psalmist to know God. They show that trust in the believer arises only from the knowledge of God working in creation and covenant, i.e. in objective works. It is never based on some kind of inner experience, on the analytical reaching into oneself and one's own depths, nor is it born from thinking about ideas.

d) The problem posed here is meaningful for theology, which should give it consideration. It is a known and evident thing, that the creed is a point of reference for theology, since it is a *scientia fidei*, that is, it is based on what the Church believes in. The problem, however, does not come down to this simple and rather obvious fact, but it is more about whether the profession of faith, above all the Apostolic Symbol, should also serve to give the proper structure the theological lecture.

In the twentieth century, much attention was paid to studying the structure of the *Summa Theologiae* of St. Thomas Aquinas, reflecting on its genesis, neo-platonic influences, the pattern of *exitus* – *reditus* etc.⁵⁶ However, something simpler was not noticed, namely that it reflects to a large extent the structure of the Apostolic Symbol, which is not Platonic, but profoundly biblical and Christological, which clearly shows that we have come from God and are heading towards God, and this journey becomes possible in Jesus Christ and in the Holy Spirit. There is no coquetry in Aquinas' statement that he addresses his work to "beginners – ad eruditionem incipientium"⁵⁷, just as the Apostolic Symbol is addressed to the beginners.

As already mentioned, the modern and contemporary lecture of theology is based on a system of treatises covering the main fields of theology. A frequent, repeatedly reported negative result of such a shape given to theology is that their mutual bond is lost, and thus the classical assumption that theology is and should be "one science." So, basing the theological lecture on a historically and logically coherent structure of the ecclesiastical creed could therefore contribute to overcoming this negative tendency, which results in the fragmentation of theology.

What could further strengthen the theological lecture and contribute to its further consolidation in terms of content would be to put greater emphasis on its soteriological option, which is the theme of the Apostolic Symbol. It has been stated for a long time that Catholic theology has been marked by a significant so-

⁵⁶ Cf. M.-D. Chenu, *Le plan de la Somme Théologique de S. Thomas*, „Revue Thomiste” 45 (139), p. 91–107; A. Patfoort, *Thomas d'Aquin, les clés d'une teologie*, Paris 1983, p. 49–70; I. Biffi, *Teologia, storia e contemplazione In Tommaso d'Aquino*, Milano 1995, p. 223–312.

⁵⁷ Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae*, I, prologus.

teriological “deficit.” In fact, many theological treatises lack a marked tendency to present a clear and certain way of salvation, which is undoubtedly present in their contents. A more profound rethinking of soteriological problems, which underlie the creed and many dogmatic definitions, could contribute to this. Certainly noteworthy is the above mentioned concept of the article of faith, which is found in St. Thomas Aquinas and which was then transferred to his theology, about which there should be no doubt that it is deeply soteriological. This is not only due to his assumption concerning theology as *scientia salutis*, but also to the whole of his theological lecture, which consistently takes this into account⁵⁸.

e) In line with the original assumption of this paper, let us turn our attention to the issue of preaching, or actually to one of its currents and a very pronounced one. In today’s concept of the kerygma there appears a problem which is actually connected with what we said about “fides fiducialis.” Emphasizing the perspective of “God/Jesus Christ for man” – “for you and for me” is undoubtedly right and biblically justified, for God has revealed Himself for the sake of man. Actually, all the teaching and activity of the Church, not just preaching, is based on this conviction. Moreover, it is a perspective that is clearly present in most of the symbols of faith, in which it is affirmed that everything they speak of, not only the incarnation of the Word, has been done “for us and for our salvation.” Hans Urs von Balthasar, in his commentary on the creed, stressed: “We never believe in words, but in one single reality that unfolds before us, for us and in us, which is at the same time the highest truth and the deepest salvation”⁵⁹. God is anthropocentric in his salvific action in every respect.

So the general assumption of the kerygma and its perspective does not raise doubts, but the same cannot be said of its application. Classically, that is, above all biblically and truthfully, what shows that God’s salvific work is “for me” is its actual realization, which then becomes the subject of a narration, aimed at bringing out its truth. In this event-and-truth combination it is best and most clearly shown that God is really working for man – for me. Juan Alfaro, who deeply reflected on faith in the Bible, states: “Faith lives the reality of its object, which is the salvific intervention of God through Christ; if the salvific event of Christ is not real *in itself*, it cannot be real for me – I cannot experience it as real”⁶⁰. There is no other

⁵⁸ Cf. Y. Congar, *Le sens de l'«Économie» salutaire dans la «théologie» de saint Thomas d'Aquin (Somme théologique)*, w: *Glaube und Geschichte. Festgabe Joseph Lortz*, ed. E. Iserloh, P. Manns, Baden-Baden 1957, p. 73–122.

⁵⁹ H.U. von Balthasar, *Credo. Medytacje o Składzie Apostolskim*, tłum. J. D. Szczurek, Kraków 1997, p. 21.

⁶⁰ J. Alfaro, *La fede come dedizione personale a Dio e come accettazione del messaggio cristiano*, “Concilium” [Italian ed.] 3 (1967), p. 69.

way and means to show this than to recount the truth of God's works, and this is the only way to stimulate man to respond, that is, ultimately, to believe.

In ecclesiastical statements, at the higher and lower levels, there is a repeated call for the kerygma to arouse the "admiration for God", which is supposed to become the basis of faith, its renewal and living it fruitfully in the world today. This statement in itself may not be controversial, but the proposed path to it, which generally boils down to arousing emotions that are considered synonymous with admiration, is unacceptable. Here we are dealing with some kind of spiritual and theological Freudism⁶¹. The only admiration that can bring something into a person's life is the admiration aroused by God's objective action and by the people who have captured it and translated it into their personal experiences, that is, simply believed, trusted and loved Him. In order to arouse such admiration, it is absolutely necessary to speak first and foremost about God's action and its truth. All in all, only this truth can arouse admiration so that it will then develop into a faithful life. Surely there is something right in the theology trying to act on the basis of the narrative method.

Unfortunately, today's proclamation, above all the kind that is kerygmatically oriented and led by various clerical and lay "evangelizers", to a large extent does not take this fact into account, because it is based on an emotionally stimulated search for some kind of approval for the faith through various miracles, healings, prophecies, visions, etc., which are purported to confirm its authenticity. It refers to the concept of a miracle as a testimony of faith, but in general it is all infested with superficiality, falsehood and pseudo-charismaticism. Still, the greatest miracle is God's action in the history of salvation and its events, which today is prolonged above all by the miracles of conversion and faith realized in many people who do not need a miracle to believe. It is worthwhile to refer to St. Thomas Aquinas, who in his sermons on the Apostolic Symbol made a suggestive observation: "The conversion of the world without a miracle is probably an even greater miracle. So why should we look for another miracle?"⁶². Perhaps it is also worth remembering the sentence known to many fathers of the Church that the one who converts is greater than the one who resurrects the dead.

The Apostles' symbol and other symbols of faith can also arouse the admiration of God if they are well presented, if one brings out their contents as being "for us and for our salvation", that is "for me". How to do this? This is a separate question, although the essential elements of the answer have already been shown

⁶¹ On the genesis and modern conception of emotions cf. M. Menin, *Il fascino dell'emozione*, Bologna 2019.

⁶² Thomas Aquinas [Tomasz z Akwinu], *Wykład Składu Apostolskiego*, wstęp, 8, in: idem, *Dziela wybrane*, transl. J. Salij et al., Kęty 1999, p. 578.

above. It certainly cannot be done by separating the preaching and the creed from each other, because both concern the same thing and even are the same thing, differing from a pragmatic point of view, as St Thomas Aquinas already knew⁶³. In fact, the only problem today is to find the right language to use to speak about God, because what needs to be said about Him is obvious.

CONCLUSION

In one of his statements, the great Orthodox theologian Georges Florovskij, pondering over what should be proclaimed to the present generation, wrote: “Of course, I still fully and consciously preserve and accept ‘the teaching contained in the creed’, because by faith I grasp its constant relevance and meaning for every era and every time, including ‘our time’. And I believe that it is precisely the ‘teaching contained in the creed’ that can enable our generation, immersed in hopelessness, to regain Christian courage and Christian vision of reality”⁶⁴. Starting from this conviction, Florovskij encourages unambiguously: “Preach the symbols of faith!”⁶⁵. I believe that these statements are deeply justified and their message corresponds with the inspirations that come from the Apostolic Symbol and the apostolic preaching (kerygma). We are, therefore, situated in the framework of a kind of theological feeling which not only cannot be underestimated, but must definitely be adhered to, bearing in mind that we have urgent work to do both in theology and in preaching. We also do not forget that this is our contribution to the creation of culture and to the shaping of concepts that relate to the concrete life situations of modern man⁶⁶. As we have already mentioned, the truths contained in the symbols of faith have a doctrinal meaning, but they are also truths that speak about man in his earthly condition, so they should also be seen in an earthly perspective, gaining the courage to draw appropriate conclusions from them.

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⁶³ Cf. Thomas Aquinas, *Summa theologiae* II–II q. 1, a. 9, ad 2.

⁶⁴ G. Florovskij, *Cristo, lo Spirito, la Chiesa*, Magnano 1997, p. 25.

⁶⁵ Ibidem, p. 23.

⁶⁶ From this point of view, the work of Peter L. Berger is worth a lot of attention: *Pytania o wiarę. Sceptyczna zachęta do chrześcijaństwa*, transl. J. Łoziński, Warszawa 2007.

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Keywords: Apostles' Creed, profession of faith, faith, theology, original kerygma, proclamation

SYMBOL WIARY W TEOLOGII I W PRZEPOWIADANIU

Streszczenie

Życie Kościoła od samego początku związane jest z poszukiwaniem własnej tożsamości, której wyrazem jest formowanie się wyznania wiary. Świadectwa tego znajdujemy już w Nowym Testamencie, o czym świadczą rozmaite formuły doktrynalne, na których opiera się i które przekazuje przepowiadanie apostolskie. W stosunkowo krótkim czasie te formuły zostały zebrane w jedną całość, najpierw w chrzcielnym wyznaniu wiary, a potem zwłaszcza w wyznaniu wiary nazywanym Symbolem Apostolskim. Zachowuje on swoją wagę i pierwszorzędną rolę w teologii i w przepowiadaniu do naszych czasów, chociaż w praktyce jego rola uległa pomniejszeniu, zwłaszcza w przepowiadaniu. W niniejszym artykule proponuje się powrót do Symbolu Apostolskiego i do jego inspirującego znaczenia. Chodzi przede wszystkim o wydobycie jego przesłania doktrynalnego, które zwraca uwagę na potrzebę całościowego, trynitarno-chrystologicznego, ujmowania zagadnień teologicznych. Taką samą rolę może on odegrać w porządkowaniu dzisiejszego przepowiadania kościelnego, które zachwycając się tak zwanym kerygmatem pierwotnym, popada w krótkowzroczne interpretacje i zawężenia, czego rezultatem jest osłabianie tożsamości chrześcijańskiej.

Słowa kluczowe: Symbol Apostolski, wyznanie wiary, wiara, teologia, kerygmat pierwotny, przepowiadanie

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BENEDICT XVI'S PARTICIPATION IN THE ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE WITH THE ORTHODOX CHURCH

The author of this article presents the involvement of Benedict XVI in the ecumenical dialogue with the Eastern Orthodox Church as a whole based on speeches, declarations and homilies delivered to representatives of this Church. Undoubtedly, it is significant. As a pope, he encouraged this dialogue by his authority, fraternal treatment filled with friendship and love, meetings, communal prayer and teaching. He overcame various difficulties and contributing to the progress of this dialogue. He emphasized joint theological research, because without the unity of faith there is no complete and visible unity. As always – as the theologian and as the Prefect of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith – he taught that common celebration of the Eucharist could take place only in full unity: when will it happen? It is God's gift for which we have to pray and work at the same time: to evangelize together, to resist ideologies hostile to Christianity and humanity, to care for peace and justice among Christians and followers of other religions, and to cooperate in charitable work for the poor, the sick and the needy.

INTRODUCTION

Joseph Ratzinger's contribution as a theologian to the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue is known to the Polish reader thanks to the publication of his *Opera omnia*.¹

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¹ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia*, vol. VIII/2: *Kościół – znak wśród narodów. Pisma ekumeniczne i ekumeniczne*, ed. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, Lublin 2013, p. 699–715; cf. P. Rabczyński, „*Fides querens dialogum*”. *Prymat biskupa Rzymu w dialogu z Kościołami Wschodu*, „Teologia w Polsce” 13,2 (2019), p. 166–172.

Ratzinger writes there about the milestones that were laid in this dialogue before, during and after the Second Vatican Council. He is also known thanks to some studies. However, we are probably less familiar with his pontifical teaching, which he presented when speaking at meetings with representatives of the Orthodox Church. And although these speeches are not theological dissertations, they do refer to biblical data and the theological problems which were dealt with by the Theological Commissions and which stand in the way of achieving full communion; in fact, they promote this dialogue in various areas. It seems therefore worthwhile to examine them and to bring them closer to the reader.

During less than eight years of his pontificate (2005–2013), Benedict XVI gave more than twenty speeches to patriarchs, archbishops and Orthodox delegations of Constantinople, Greece, Cyprus, Jerusalem, Tirana, to the Mixed International Commission for dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church, signed two declarations, preached several ecumenical homilies, thus making a major contribution to the promotion of this dialogue, not to mention meetings with delegations of Eastern Churches having unity (perhaps imperfect) with the Pope.²

ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE AS THE PRIORITY OF THE PONTIFICATE

One could expect from the great theologian and prefect of the Congregation of Faith that he would try to promote ecumenical dialogue. All the more so because, while already a Pope, he admitted that as a lecturer of theology and a bishop he “got to know and love the Orthodox Churches more deeply, and as a Pope he has the opportunity to see the growth of Orthodox parishes in Western Europe with a positive and well-meaning attitude.”³ In Warsaw, at an ecumenical meeting – attended by representatives of the Orthodox Church in Poland – in the church of the Holy Trinity, Benedict XVI confessed that right at the beginning of his pontificate he made a strong decision to make the restoration of full and visible Christian unity a priority of his papal ministry.⁴ To express this, on the day he officially took up the ministry of Peter, he went to the tomb of St. Peter together with the

² Papal speeches, homilies and declaration included in this article were taken either from the Italian Vatican website (discorsi – easy to find by the date of being delivered by Benedict XVI), or from the Polish edition of “L’Osservatore Romano”.

³ Cf. Speech at the meeting with the Orthodox Community in Freiburg, 24.09.2011.

⁴ Cf. Speech at the ecumenical meeting in the Holy Trinity Church in Warsaw, 25.05.2006.

Eastern Patriarchs in communion with his successors.⁵ He repeatedly assured the Delegation of the Patriarch of Constantinople and the Holy Ecumenical Synod that he was determined to seek the full and visible unity of all Christians and expressed his joy that the Patriarch Bartholomew I also had similar intentions.⁶ His trip to Istanbul (28.11.–1.12.2006) also served this purpose. It was primarily a matter of renewing the common commitment to restore, by God's grace, full communion between the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople, and ultimately to respond to Christ's will for all to be one.⁷

During subsequent meetings with representatives of the Orthodox Church, Benedict usually stressed the importance of joint achievements in the past, especially in the agreement between the Vatican and Constantinople, emphasizing that they mean a commitment to take further actions. Among the milestones in the ecumenical dialogue he repeatedly mentioned: the pilgrimage of Paul VI and Atenagoras to Jerusalem,⁸ the participation of a delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople in the last session of the Second Vatican Council, the removal of the excommunication on the eve of the Council (7.12.1964),⁹ which brought about a radical change in relations between the Churches, the publication of *Tomos Agapis*, the establishment of the Mixed International Commission for Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church and the issuing of documents of great importance for dialogue, the visit of John Paul II to Constantinople (1979), and his meeting – a kiss of peace with Patriarch Dimitrios I shortly before the death of the Polish Pope.¹⁰ Benedict XVI himself promoted the participation of mutual delegations at the celebrations of Peter and Paul and Andrew, the patron saint of the Church in Constantinople, because, as he thought, it enabled the exchange of visits, allowed for fraternal conversations and common prayers. The participants were thus able to get to know each other better, to harmonise their initiatives, and thus to increase the hope that full unity in obedience to the Lord's commandment would soon be achieved.¹¹

⁵ Cf. Speech in the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, 9.06.2007, "L'Osservatore Romano" 9 (2007), p. 48.

⁶ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 30.06.2005.

⁷ Cf. Homilia in Fanar on 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 25.

⁸ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 30.06.2005.

⁹ Cf. Declaration of 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 28. Let us remark that J. Ratzinger wrote about all of this, *Opera omnia*, vol. VIII/2: *Kościół – znak wśród narodów...*, p. 699–715; cf. P. Rabczyński, „*Fides querens dialogum*”..., p. 166–168.

¹⁰ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 30.06.2005.

¹¹ Cf. Speech during the meeting with Bartholomew I, 29.06.2008.

ECCLESIAL FRATERNITY

Benedict XVI often used expressions such as: fraternal relations, fraternal encounters, fraternal conversations, fraternal collaboration, authentic friendship and fraternity, deepening of the fraternity, fraternal spirit,¹² which may indicate that, in his opinion, these expressions play an important role in ecumenical dialogue. Thus in his address to the delegation of the Patriarchate about the planned visit to Turkey, following the example of Paul VI and John Paul II, he expressed his confidence that this exchange would strengthen ecclesial fraternity and facilitate cooperation in undertaking common initiatives.¹³

Indeed, in the joint declaration¹⁴ of Benedict XVI and Bartholomew I, signed on 30.11.2006, the introduction expresses gratitude to God for the gift of the meeting, for the possibility of common prayer and dialogue, and for the joy that they could feel themselves brothers and that they could enjoy the renewal of their common commitments to strive for full unity. They interpreted this as the will of God and an expression of the responsibility resting on the shepherds of the Church of Christ. This awareness should inspire them to be guided in the future by the same feelings and to adopt the same attitude of brotherhood, cooperation and communion in love and truth. In this attitude, they have expressed their confidence that the Holy Spirit will help to prepare the great day of restoration of full unity, and this will happen when and as God wills.

It should be emphasized that for Benedict XVI the term “fraternity” used for Catholic-Orthodox relationships was not an empty word, but it expressed an authentic attitude of spiritual friendship and had a deep biblical and theological justification. He presented this justification extensively and referred to it on other occasions, during his visit to Constantinople in his homily¹⁵ on the Feast of St Andrew the Apostle, in the Patriarchal Church of St George, during the “Divine Liturgy” on 30.11.2006. It is based on the fact that Christ called brothers Peter and Andrew to be Apostles, that is “fishermen of men” (Matt 4:19; Mk 1:17). John the Evangelist shows Andrew as the first of the called ones – *ho protoklitos* and this term is used by the Byzantine tradition. It was Andrew who brought his brother Simon to Jesus (John 1:40). Although Peter and Andrew were both called, the

¹² Cf. Speech at the meeting with Chrisostom II, the Archbishop of Cyprus, 5.06.2010.

¹³ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 29.06.2006.

¹⁴ Cf. Common Declaration of Pope Benedict XVI and Patriarch of Constantinople Bartholomew I signed in Fanar in Istanbul, 30.11.2006, “L’Osservatore Romano” 2 (2007), p. 28.

¹⁵ Cf. Homily in the patriarchal church of St. George during the Divine Liturgy in Fanar, Istanbul, 30.11.2006, “L’Osservatore Romano” 2 (2007), p. 25.

same task of being “fishermen of men” took on a different form in each of them. Simon, despite his human weakness, was called “Peter” or the Rock, on which the Church was to be built, and it was to him that the keys of the kingdom of heaven were entrusted in a special way (Matt 16:18). This path led from Jerusalem to Antioch and from there to Rome, so that he could later exercise universal authority in this city. Unfortunately, it is precisely the matter of the universal ministry of Peter and his successors that still causes the discrepancy between East and West. The two Churches, however, hope to overcome these difficulties through a recent reopening of theological dialogue.

Apostle Andrew, on the other hand, received another task from Christ, which is indicated by his very name (Greek name Andros – man). For, as the Gospel testifies, thanks to his knowledge of the Greek language, he became, together with Philip, the apostle, the advocate of the meeting with the Greeks who came to Jesus (Jn 12:20). According to tradition, Andrew was a missionary in Asia Minor and in areas south of the Black Sea, in the regions of Constantinople, and also in Greece, where he died a martyr's death. For this reason, Andrew is a symbol of the encounter between early Christianity and Greek culture, which culminates in the theology of the Cappadocian Fathers. It is the Cappadocian Fathers' theology which, by combining these two streams, enriched the liturgy, theology and spirituality of both the Eastern and Western Church.¹⁶ Thus also the encounter between the successor of Peter and the head of the Church founded by Andrew the Apostle, a brother in episcopal ministry is based on the fraternity of the blood of the apostles, and at the same time on their common and at the same time different vocation. This fraternal encounter shows clearly the special bond between the Churches of Rome and Constantinople as sister Churches, and gratefulness is due to God that he revives these fraternal and sisterly relations between the Church of Rome and Constantinople. The Pope also expressed the hope that fraternity, alongside trust and respect, is the basis on which further significant progress can be made in the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue.¹⁷

One can ask what kind of Churches did Benedict XVI have in mind when he talked about the sister Churches: only the Church of Rome and the Church of Constantinople, or other Eastern Orthodox Churches? Well, the Pope, who worked out the *Information* on this subject as the Prefect of the Congregation of Faith, who taught that this term can be used in mutual relationships by the particular Churches, and not the universal Church and the particular Churches, said this

¹⁶ Cf. Homily on 30.11.2006. quoted, “L'Osservatore Romano” 2 (2007), p. 25.

¹⁷ Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2010, “L'Osservatore Romano” 8–9 (2010), p. 42.

precisely both in the aforementioned homily and in an interview given during the flight to Istanbul. He announced: "This will be a qualitatively important meeting of the two sister Churches, Rome and Constantinople, and therefore an important moment on the road to Christian unity." He pointed to the general opinion that Constantinople is considered to be "another Rome." When it comes to spiritual influence, there is a similarity to the influence of Rome. "It has always been a point of reference for Orthodoxy, it has given us the great Byzantine Orthodox culture and continues to be a point of reference for the whole Orthodox world and likewise for all Christianity. So the Patriarchate of Constantinople retains its symbolic meaning even today... It is a landmark for the whole Orthodox world." But "the Patriarch does not have the power of the Pope"¹⁸ and so there is no power over the universal Church, and this is a fundamental difference in the perception of the office of Pope and Patriarch and the Church of Rome and the Orthodox Church of Constantinople.

BONDS BETWEEN THE CHURCHES OF THE EAST AND WEST

What does the Catholic Church essentially have in common with the Orthodox Church? It is known that there are many unifying elements. Benedict XVI pointed to them frequently, on various occasions and in various ways. Although he did not present them in the form of a systematic lecture, some of them are undoubtedly worth mentioning.

Perhaps the most optimistic opinion about the reconciliation of the Churches was expressed by the Pope in his speech in Freiburg,¹⁹ when he quoted a keenly repeated opinion that "undoubtedly among the Churches and Christian communities, Orthodox Churches are theologically closest to us." He then explained that this is indeed the case, since Catholics and the Orthodox have both maintained the same structure of the Church of the first centuries, so that both of them are "the Church of the first centuries, which is always present and yet new." He then added that, despite the difficulties that have arisen from the human point of view, he trusts that in the not so distant future Catholics and Orthodox will be able to celebrate the Eucharist together as an expression of full communion.²⁰

And the Pope, while visiting Albania, mentioned those elements of faith which are shared by both our Churches.²¹ And these are: the common Nicene-

¹⁸ Interview during the flight to Istanbul, 29.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 17.

¹⁹ Cf. Speech in Freiburg, 24.09.2011.

²⁰ Cf. Benedict XVI, *Światłość świata, rozmowa z Peterem Seewaldem*, Kraków 2011, p. 111.

²¹ Cf. Speech at the meeting with Anasthasius, the Archbishop of Tirana and all Albania, 4.12.2009.

Constantinopolitan creed, a common baptism for the remission of sins and for our inclusion in Christ and the Church, the same legacy of the first ecumenical councils, a real but not fully perfect communion that the Churches already share today, and finally a common desire, as well as joint efforts to cooperate, to build on what already exists, especially learning about Scripture and promoting mutual understanding and cooperation between Catholics and Orthodox and other religions.

It is a fact that the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches share ecclesial legacy which dates back to the apostolic times and the first centuries of Christianity. The Pope therefore stressed that it is precisely this “heritage of experience” that should shape the future, “guiding our common path towards the restoration of full communion” (US 56).²² He also expressed his gratitude to God for the fact that the theologians of both Churches, after 1500 years of division, still find in ecumenical dialogue a consensus on the sacramental nature of the Church, on the apostolic succession in priestly ministry, and on the urgent need to bear witness to the Gospel about Jesus Christ the Saviour of the world, as expressed in a text drafted jointly between 2003 and 2009 and entitled: “The nature, the system and the mission of the Church.”²³

In the aforementioned homily delivered during the “Divine Liturgy” celebrated in the Church of St. George in Fanar according to the rite of St. John Chrysostom, Benedict XVI emphasized the sacramental character of the Orthodox Eucharist in the following words: “the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ have been made mystically present. For us Christians this is a source and sign of constantly renewed hope.”²⁴ In this way the Pope confirmed the real transubstantiation and the real sacrificial character of the Eastern Mass, the real presence of Christ and its paschal character, and that it is the prelude of eternal life. Finally, he expressed the wish that daily prayer and activity should be inspired by a fervent desire not only to be present at the Divine Liturgy, but to be able to celebrate it together, to take part in the one table of the Lord, sharing the same bread and the same chalice. May our encounter serve as an impetus and joyful anticipation of the gift of full communion.²⁵

It is significant that both the Catholic Church and Eastern Orthodox Churches celebrate the martyrdom of Saints Peter and Paul on the same day. The question is: why? The Pope noted that this feast is one of the oldest celebrations of the

²² Cf. Address to the members of the Mixed International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Catholic Church and the Eastern Orthodox Churches, 1.02.2007.

²³ Cf. Address to the Mixed Commission, 28.01.2011.

²⁴ Homily in Fanar on 30.11.2006, “L'Osservatore Romano” 2 (2007), p. 26.

²⁵ Cf. *ibidem*.

liturgical year and thus bears witness to a time when both communities still lived in full mutual communion.²⁶

On another occasion²⁷ Benedict XVI emphasized that the preaching of the apostles Peter and Paul, supported and sealed by the witness of martyrdom, is a lasting, strong and solid foundation on which the Church was built. And the Churches today find the roots of the communion they experience among themselves in fidelity to their deposit of faith. Through the intercession of Peter and Paul, they therefore implore God, rich in mercy, to allow the happy day to come as soon as possible when the faithful of both churches will be able to share the Eucharistic table and give thanks for the journey of peace and reconciliation that he has been made possible to go together.

At the headquarters of the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, the Pope repeated that “we have almost everything in common, and above all a sincere desire for unity” (OL 3).²⁸ And he added that this quest for unity is important also because it is about restoring the full picture of the universality of the Church (OL 1).²⁹

And addressing the Delegation of the Patriarchate, he said that the Church of Rome and the Ecumenical Patriarchate are connected by friendship and authentic fraternity³⁰ and that these are bonds firmly anchored in the faith received through the testimony of the apostles. The deep spiritual closeness experienced at each meeting therefore fills the Pope with joy and gratitude to God. At the same time he stressed that this incomplete community should mature until it reaches full, visible unity.

An extremely important element connecting East and West is also the cult of Our Lady of Panaghia – Hodegetria – the guide on the way, revered as the guide for Christians. The Pope emphasized that it was God in the Trinity who gave people Mary, the Virgin Mother, to guide Christians through all times and show the way to perfection through her intercession. Finally, he encouraged us to entrust ourselves to her and to present our petitions to her so that all may become a community in Christ, more and more internally unified, in honour and glory of God’s name.

²⁶ Cf. Speech to the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2010, “L’Osservatore Romano” 8–9 (2010), p. 42.

²⁷ Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2012.

²⁸ Cf. Speech in the Congregation for the Eastern Churches, 9.06.2007, “L’Osservatore Romano” 9 (2007), p. 49.

²⁹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 48.

³⁰ Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2011.

PRINCIPLES OF ECUMENICAL DIALOGUE

What are the requirements that the Pope set for ecumenical dialogue? It seems that the first and fundamental one is that it should be a dialogue of love. This most important requirement was already found in the joint and still important ecumenical declaration of Atenagoras and Paul VI,³¹ then also in the declaration of Benedict XVI and Bartholomew I, who stressed that a true dialogue of love should be the basis and inspiration for all relations between people and between the Churches themselves.

The second fundamental requirement of this dialogue turns out to be the requirement of truth, so closely linked to the requirement of love that the Pope mentioned it together with the former.³² Already in his first address to the delegation from Constantinople, he stressed³³ that theological studies would be needed to analyse various complex issues and to identify some non-superficial solutions. For if Christ calls his disciples with all his might to build unity in love and truth, then this serious challenge of rebuilding a broken unity between all Christians cannot be avoided. It is not appropriate to simply evade the task, that is, to examine with all clarity and goodwill all differences in order to rectify them, because it is known that existing divisions reduce the effectiveness of preaching the Gospel to every creature (UR 1).

The next requirement for dialogue that the Pope saw was that of prayer. Following John Paul II Pope Ratzinger recognized that its pulsating heart was to be spiritual ecumenism, expressed in prayer and penance; "Christian unity is and will remain prayer and it lives in prayer."³⁴ For it expresses the awareness that full union can only be a gift from God and that it is God who will lead to union when He wishes. The Pope has often spoken about this in the context of theological works and has stressed that intellectual effort is not enough, but that this effort must be accompanied by the awareness that the unity of Christianity itself is of supernatural character. This God's gift will not be given if Christians do not zealously strive for this unity.

And so, before the plenary session of the Mixed Commission, which was to take place in Belgrade in 2006, Benedict XVI expressed most of all the hope that this dialogue could be the beginning of a new phase on the ecumenical road. At the same time, he gave encouragement to pray that the Holy Spirit would enlighten and

³¹ Cf. Declaration of 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 28.

³² Cf. *ibidem*.

³³ Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Patriarch of Constantinople, 30.06.2005.

³⁴ Address to the members of the plenary session of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, 18.11.2010.

inflame hearts and strengthen the common will to respond, as much as possible, to the fervent prayer of Christ: “that they may be one,” that His disciples, united, may proclaim His Gospel to the world together, so that, believing in Him, all may be saved.³⁵ He also expressed his confidence that with God’s help progress will be made, that at some point there will be a day when Catholics and Orthodox will be able to celebrate together the Holy Eucharist of the Lord as a sign of full unity.

Before the next session of the International Mixed Commission in 2007, which was to continue the research on the main and decisive issue, namely the ecclesiological and canonical consequences of the sacramental structure of the Church, and in particular of collegiality and authority in the Church, he encouraged the Orthodox delegation³⁶ to pray together for light for the members of the Commission, so that, on the basis of the Scripture and the Tradition of the Church, they could prepare proposals for solutions to take important steps towards full communion. He also expressed his joy that the Patriarch Bartholomew I, together with the Holy Ecumenical Synod, had similar thoughts.

The Pope has included all the three elements in this one speech. He said that the deepening of feelings and bonds of love between the Churches of East and West and between individual believers is really intended to overcome the prejudices and misunderstandings that have accumulated over the centuries of ongoing divisions. At the same time, it is intended to help to stand in truth and to face in fraternal spirit the difficulties that still prevent us from joining the same Eucharistic table. He stressed that these meetings are held in prayer, which is indispensable because only the Lord can show the way to unity. For unity is a gift from God, for which we must pray in harmony and “receive it with humble obedience and awareness of the sacrifices that the path to unity requires.” It is about striving for full, visible unity with respect for both Eastern and Western traditions.

Already at the first meeting with the delegation from Constantinople, the Pope defined the unity we should strive for. And he specified that he did not mean a unity that would be the result of compromises reached in the course of negotiations, far removed from the truth of Christ, not a unity that would absorb or merge everything into one, but one that would have respect for the manifold fullness of the Church. The Church, which according to the will of its founder Jesus Christ, should always be one, holy, Catholic and apostolic. The Pope also reminded us that the Second Vatican Council clearly recognised the treasure which the East possesses and from which the West “drew many things.” After all, the basic dog-

³⁵ Cf. Speech at the meeting with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 29.06.2006.

³⁶ Address to the Delegation of Constantinople, 29.06.2007, “L’Osservatore Romano” 9 (2007), p. 46.

mas of the Christian faith were defined by the Ecumenical Councils held in the East. He also called us not to forget how much suffering the East has suffered to preserve its faith. Thus East and West, only when taken together, form the shining face of the Pantocrator blessing all of Oikoumene with his right hand or, as John Paul II put it, the two lungs with which Europe and the Church breathe.³⁷ The different theological formulas adopted in the East and in the West should therefore be seen as complementary rather than opposing (UR 17; SlAp15), as Western theology seeks concerning the phrases *Filioque* and *per Filium*.

THE QUESTION OF UNDERSTANDING THE PRIMACY

Reflecting on the direction in which the Catholic-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue will go, Fr Paweł Rabczyński points out – referring to Pope Francis – that the principle of conciliarity “seems to be the most ecumenically fertile ground for striving for Christian unity and the most appropriate context for the theological dialogue.”³⁸ I was wondering if this is how Benedict XVI saw the matter? But I must admit that I have not encountered statements that would confirm this. I would say that Benedict clung more to the statement of John Paul II, who distinguished the primacy as to the essence and as to the form of its realization. In my opinion, this was his starting point. For he always stressed the primacy of the universal Church over local churches.

Undoubtedly, in order to restore full and visible unity, it would be necessary, above all, to clarify the theological differences in ecumenical dialogue, and one of the most important is, of course, the question of a proper understanding of primacy. According to Benedict XVI, this distinction between the essence and the form of its exercise, previously presented by John Paul II in his encyclical *Ut unum sint*,³⁹ can be a guiding light on this path. Therefore, in one of his most important speeches, that is in his homily delivered in Fanar, he called the question of primacy – the question of universal authority of Peter in the Church of Christ. He also recalled the definition of Peter's office as a ministry of mercy, that mercy which Peter first experienced himself (US 91). Based on an awareness of this nature of the ministry of Peter, Benedict's predecessor, in his ecumenical encyclical, invited the Orthodox Church to a fraternal dialogue whose aim “was to find ways of exercising the ministry of Peter, with respect for its essence

³⁷ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with Chrisostom II, Archbishop of Justiniana and all Cyprus, 16.06.2007.

³⁸ P. Rabczyński, “*Fides querens dialogum*”..., p. 182.

³⁹ Cf. Speech in Freiburg, 24.09.2011.

and nature, so as to carry out a ministry of charity recognised by both” (US 95). So Benedict XVI has again encouraged this dialogue.⁴⁰

For the Pope, the progress of the ecumenical dialogue was particularly marked by the fact that in October 2009, in Paphos, a discussion began on the role of the Bishop of Rome in community – the communion of the Church in the first millennium. In this way Catholics and Orthodox reached a crucial point.⁴¹ He even considered it indispensable to study this issue⁴² in order to be able to deepen the understanding and recognition of the primacy of Peter in the current context of the search for full communion. On this occasion, the Pope assured that he prayed that the members of the Commission would continue along this path during the Vienna Plenary Session and that they would examine this sensitive and important issue in detail.⁴³ As can be seen, Benedict XVI believed that the most appropriate starting point for this dialogue would be to reflect on the understanding of primacy in the context of collegiality rather than conciliarity.

It may be worth reminding at this point how the Orthodox perceive the office of the Pope. Let a short illustration of this be the speech of the Archbishop of Cyprus Chrysostom II delivered just after the Pope’s welcome in Rome,⁴⁴ who called him a Shepherd of the ancient Church and a famous witness of the Eastern Church. Archbishop Chrysostom answered: “Your Holiness, Pope of Ancient Rome and Bishop of the Historical Cathedral of St. Peter.” And he went on to say what prompted him to come to Rome, namely: “The grace of the Holy Spirit and the duty of Archbishop Primate of the Holy Church of the martyr Saint Apostle Barnabas for unity and peace among our Apostolic Churches brought him to the place of martyrdom of the Corypheuses, the Apostles Peter and Paul, to the Shrine of the Catacombs of the Martyrs of the Holy Faith, to meet the Pope, the one who among the bishops has the honorary primacy of undivided Christianity, to pass on the fraternal kiss of peace and, after centuries of walking along the non-fraternal road, to rebuild anew the bridges of reconciliation, cooperation and love.” These contacts culminated in Benedict XVI’s subsequent apostolic journey to Cyprus, which was also a significant step in ecumenical dialogue.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Cf. Homily in Fanar..., p. 26.

⁴¹ Address to the members of the plenary session of the Pontifical Council for Christian Unity, 18.11.2010.

⁴² Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, 27.06.2009.

⁴³ Cf. Address to the Delegation of the Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2010, “L’Osservatore Romano” 8–9 (2010), p. 42.

⁴⁴ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with Chrysostom II, Archbishop of Justiniana and all Cyprus, 16.06.2007.

⁴⁵ Cf. Z. Glazer, *Prymat biskupa Rzymu w perspektywie prawosławnej. Ekumeniczne nadzieje*, “Studia Nauk Teologicznych” 10 (2015), p. 161–185.

BIBLICAL AND HISTORICAL PREMISES FOR DIALOGUE

It is obvious that the striving for unity is not just a matter of achieving some human ambition, but is based on Revelation data. In his speeches, homilies, catecheses on the occasion of the week of prayers for Christian unity, or speeches addressed to representatives of the Orthodox Churches, Benedict XVI almost always started from biblical premises in order to encourage work for the unity of Christianity. He quoted evangelical texts, texts of Paul, especially those addressed to representatives of the Orthodox Church of Greece and Cyprus, where there were Christian communities founded by the Apostle of the Nations (Corinth, Thessaloniki). It is impossible to quote all of them, but perhaps, to present some examples, it is worth citing at least some of them.

Benedict XVI, meeting with the patriarch of Jerusalem,⁴⁶ Theophilos III on 15.05.2009, indicated that Christ stretching his arms on the cross fully revealed His desire to attract all people to Himself and to unite them in the People of God (John 12:32). Then, he mentioned further motives for reconciliation: the fact that Christ, through breathing of His Spirit on the apostles, revealed His power to empower disciples to participate in His mission of reconciliation (Jn 19:30; 20:22–23). Redemption has a unifying character. The Church's mission is accomplished by the power of breathing in. Hence Christians who have an ardent desire to bring Christ to others, to acquaint them with His message of reconciliation (2 Corinthians 5:19) may feel ashamed of the divisions between them. Therefore, knowing that they have been sent into the world (Jn 20:21) and strengthened by the unifying power of the Holy Spirit (v. 22), they proclaim the reconciliation that leads everyone to believe that Jesus is the Son of God (v. 31). It is for this reason that they must find the strength to strive for perfect unity, to make it complete, to give common witness to the love of the Father who sent the Son so that the world may know his love for us (Jn 17:23). Hence, if we want to glorify the name of the Lord, we should be of “one heart and one spirit” (Acts 4:32).⁴⁷

Patriarch Bartholomew I, who came to the Vatican for the feast of St. Peter and Paul,⁴⁸ and at the opening of the Year of Paul, was greeted by the Pope with the words of Peter, who writes to those who have received the same precious faith from God the Father and Jesus Christ (2 Peter 1:1–2). Then the Pope showed Saint Paul as the perfect master of Christian unity, because full communion has its foundation “in one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph 4:5). Common faith, one baptism for the

⁴⁶ Cf. Speech in Jerusalem, 15.05.2009 r., “L'Osservatore Romano” 7–8 (2009) p. 43–44.

⁴⁷ Cf. Speech at the meeting with the Delegation of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, 28.06.2012.

⁴⁸ Cf. Speech at the meeting with Patriarch Bartholomew I, 29.06.2008.

remission of sins and obedience to the one Lord and Saviour are always expressed in both the communal and ecclesial dimensions. He added that just as Christians are one body and one spirit, so they are animated by being called to one hope (Eph 4:4). This is a constant way to maintain unity and, in the case of division, to rebuild it. The Pope also pointed out that the Council's Decree on Ecumenism contains Paul's indications on how Christians should act, that is to say, in a manner worthy of their vocation, in all humility, gentleness, patience, to endure one another with love, seeking to maintain the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace (Eph 4:1–3). Nevertheless, Paul was not afraid to address to the Corinthians harsh words and a strong call to be unanimous in saying that the divisions should disappear and that they should try to maintain a perfect unity of thoughts and intentions (1 Cor 1:10).

In turn, the joint declaration⁴⁹ of Benedict XVI and Chrysostom II, Archbishop of Justiniana and Cyprus, draws attention primarily to the long history of Christianity in Cyprus, which began with the preaching of the first disciples who came there from Jerusalem after the martyrdom of Stephen, and then it followed Paul's journey from the coast of Cyprus to Rome described in the Acts of the Apostles (Acts 11:19; 27:4). This in turn should encourage us to remain faithful to our Christian vocation and to respond to the needs of the world today, which is to preach the Gospel today.

When Benedict XVI received Christodoulos, the Archbishop of Athens and all Greece in the Vatican⁵⁰ on 14.12.2006, he reminded that Greece and Rome had had intense relationships from the very beginning of Christianity and maintained them for a long time. These relations have contributed greatly to the emergence of various forms of Christian communities and traditions (for example, of St. Cyril and Methodius) in various regions of the world, which today correspond to Eastern Europe and Western Europe. A similar "osmosis" in preserving in particular the disciplinary, liturgical, theological and spiritual matters of the two Roman and Greek traditions has made the Church's evangelizing activity and the inculturation of the Christian faith effective.

AREAS OF COMMON ECUMENICAL ACTIVITY

Despite the lack of doctrinal unity,⁵¹ the Pope pointed out the fields in which Catholics and Orthodox can bear witness to the Gospel together; he especially

⁴⁹ Cf. Common declaration of Pope Benedict XVI and Archbishop Christostom II, 16.06.2007, "L'Osservatore Romano" 7–8 (2007), p. 34.

⁵⁰ Cf. Speech at the meeting in Rome with Christodoulos, Archbishop of Athens and all Greece, 14.12.2006.

⁵¹ Cf. Address to the Delegation of Constantinople, 28.06.2011.

pointed out what religious leaders – the Pope, patriarchs, bishops – can and should do together. He emphasized that the primary duty of shepherds is to preach the Gospel in today's world, because this necessity results above all from the words of Christ: "Go therefore and teach all nations" (Matt 28:19), not only in missionary countries but also in traditionally Christian ones. He drew attention to the difficult contemporary context, which is the growing wave of secularization, relativism and even nihilism, especially in the Western world. He believed that this situation must not lead to a weakening of evangelizing activity; on the contrary, this activity should be carried out with new power, in a way adapted to the present day. The proclamation of the Gospel is sharing a legacy, it is offering it to others. This is why it calls for a strengthening of cooperation and a clear common witness to all peoples.⁵²

This common duty should also encourage closer ties between the Churches, since "divisions between Christians are a scandal to the world and an obstacle to the proclamation of the Gospel" and contradict Christ's prayer to God the Father on the eve of His passion asking for unity so that the world may believe (Jn 17:21). Thus "only the fraternal communion of Christians and their mutual love can make the message of God's love for all people and for every person credible. Anyone who looks at the modern world realistically will see an urgent need for such witness."⁵³

At the meeting with the Cypriot Catholic community,⁵⁴ the Pope encouraged in a special way to live the faith, so that its members could contribute in the modern world to the promotion of the values of the Gospel, which were passed on to them by generations of Cypriot Christians. These values should encourage them to make efforts to strengthen peace, justice, respect for human life and the dignity of their fellow citizens. In this way, faithfulness to the Gospel will benefit the entire Cypriot society. He also pointed to the quest for a fuller union in love with other Christians, as this is the most important part of the life and mission of the Church. The situation in which Cypriots live makes it possible for them to contribute to building greater unity among Christians in their daily lives.

At the same time, Benedict XVI pointed out that, at this stage of ecumenical progress, cooperation in the field of charity is extremely important. In his speech at the *Instrumentum Laboris*⁵⁵ presentation ceremony he strongly stressed that Christians are called to overcome differences, to bring peace and reconciliation

⁵² Declaration of 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 28.

⁵³ Cf. Homily in Fanar 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 25.

⁵⁴ Cf. Speech at the meeting with the Cypriot Catholic community, 5.06.2010, "L'Osservatore Romano" 8–9 (2010), p. 18.

⁵⁵ Cf. Speech delivered in Nicosia, 6.06.2010, "L'Osservatore Romano" 8–9 (2010), p. 18.

where there are conflicts and to offer a message of hope to the world. They are called to extend a helping hand to people who are in need, generously sharing earthly goods with those who are less fortunate.

The declaration of Benedict XVI and Bartholomew I also includes a positive assessment of the process of creating the European Union. At the same time, the authors urged the participants of this momentous undertaking to take into account “all matters that concern the human being as a person and his inalienable rights, especially religious freedom, which is a testimony and a guarantee of respect for all other freedoms.”⁵⁶

They also stressed that members of all Churches should make a common contribution to the promotion of peace and interreligious understanding, that in any process the protection of minorities, their traditions and cultures, and religious differences should be ensured. Indeed, Europeans should be open to other religions and value their contribution to culture. However, the need of the moment is to combine the efforts of all the followers of Christ to protect Christian roots, traditions and values, to ensure respect for the past and at the same time to contribute to the culture of the future Europe and to improve relations between people at all levels.⁵⁷ The contribution of the Churches to the culture of Europe must not be forgotten, and in particular in the lands where this meeting took place, i.e. in today’s Turkey.⁵⁸ It is on this land, as the Acts of the Apostles testify, that the message of the Gospel was combined with the old cultural tradition. It is this bond that the common heritage of East and West owes so much and it will bear fruit in the future, as the authors assure us.

And even an initiative undertaken in Warsaw “Wigilijne Dzieło Pomocy Dzieciom” (Christmas Charity for Children) did not escape Benedict XVI’s attention. Charitable organizations of the Roman Catholic, Orthodox and Evangelical Churches participate in this initiative. The Pope considered it important because many brothers and sisters expect from all Christians the common gift of love, trust, and concrete spiritual and material help. And ecumenical dialogue has created a network of relationships that can be joined by those who wish to participate from different denominations and thus they can work for “respect for the rights and needs of all, especially the poor, humiliated and vulnerable” (DeCa 30 b).

The difficulties that have to be faced by Middle Eastern Christians, on the other hand, were a particular source of deep anxiety and concern for the Pope

⁵⁶ Declaration of 30.11.2006, “L’Osservatore Romano” 2 (2007), p. 28.

⁵⁷ Cf. *ibidem*.

⁵⁸ Cf. *ibidem*.

and Catholics.⁵⁹ For this reason, Benedict reminded everybody that all Christians should work together on mutual recognition and mutual trust and thus serve the cause of peace and justice. He also expressed the wish that the intercession and example of the many martyrs and saints who have given courageous testimonies about Christ in individual Churches should sustain their strength and sustain their communities.

The Pope also expressed particular appreciation for educational work in Jerusalem,⁶⁰ Cyprus⁶¹ and Jordan. He emphasized that by bringing up future, well-educated generations, Christians do great service to the countries they inhabit together. The Declaration also mentions those areas in the world where Christians face problems such as poverty, war, terrorism, as well as various forms of exploitation of the poor, emigrants, women and children. In this regard, Pope Benedict XVI encouraged the common action for the respect of human rights, of every human being, created in the image and likeness of God, and for economic, social and cultural development. He pointed out that first of all the theology and ethics of both Churches is a strong foundation for the defence and operation of the traditions of East and West. These command to oppose the killing of innocent people in the name of God, because it is an offence against God himself as well as against the dignity of man. Finally, both leaders assured that they will strive to mobilize everyone to engage in a renewed service to man and to defend every human life.⁶²

SUMMARY

The analysis of numerous speeches, homilies and declarations made it possible to show how involved Benedict XVI was in the Catholic-Orthodox ecumenical dialogue, how much he promoted it in all dimensions: top-down (hierarchical) and grass-roots (the Church as a whole), supernatural and human, prayerful and dialogical, official and fraternal, biblical and theological – open to other formulations of the truths of faith, historical and contemporary, respecting both his own and sisterly traditions, evangelizing and anti-ideological, personal and social, sacred and everyday, peaceful – diplomatic and defending the unborn, the poor and persecuted, in the areas of worldview and spirituality, charity and education, using the word of truth and love. All these activities, taken together, can – in his opinion –

⁵⁹ Cf. Address to the Mixed Commission, 28.01.2011.

⁶⁰ Cf. Speech in Jerusalem at the meeting with Greek Orthodox Patriarch Teophil III, 15.05.2009.

⁶¹ Cf. Speech delivered in Nicosia, 6.06.2010, "L'Osservatore Romano" 8–9 (2010), p. 18.

⁶² Declaration of 30.11.2006, "L'Osservatore Romano" 2 (2007), p. 28.

contribute to a full, visible union, which is a gift of God, for which one must pray, and which will find its fullest expression in the common participation in the sacrament of the Eucharist.

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Keywords: ecumenical dialog, way to full unity, fraternity, antique Christian tradition, Orthodox Church, ecumenical collaboration

UDZIAŁ BENEDYKTA XVI W DIALOGU EKUMENICZNYM Z KOŚCIOŁEM PRAWOSŁAWNYM

Streszczenie

Autor tego artykułu przedstawia – opierając się na przemówieniach, deklaracjach, homiliach wygłoszonych do przedstawicieli Kościoła prawosławnego Wschodu – udział Benedykta XVI w dialogu ekumenicznym z tym Kościołem jako całością. Niewątpliwie jest on znaczący. Benedykt XVI jako papież zachęcał do tego dialogu swym autorytetem, pełnym przyjaźni i miłości braterskim traktowaniem, spotkaniami, wspólną modlitwą, pouczeniami, przełamywał różne trudności, przyczyniał się do postępu w dialogu. Kładł nacisk na wspólne badania teologiczne, gdyż bez jedności wiary nie ma pełnej i widzialnej jedności. Jak zawsze – i jako teolog, i jako prefekt Kongregacji Wiary – uczył, że wspólne sprawowanie Eucharystii może mieć miejsce dopiero przy pełnej jedności. Kiedy ona nastąpi? Niewątpliwie jest darem Bożym, o który należy się modlić i zarazem pracować: wspólnie ewangelizować, wspólnie przeciwstawiać się wrogim chrześcijaństwu i człowiekowi ideologiom, dbać o pokój i sprawiedliwość pomiędzy chrześcijanami i wyznawcami innych religii, razem działać charytatywnie na rzecz ubogich, chorych i potrzebujących.

Słowa kluczowe: dialog ekumeniczny, droga do pełnej jedności, braterstwo, starożytna tradycja chrześcijańska, Kościół prawosławny, współpraca ekumeniczna

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MAN IN THE “SPLENDOUR OF DIVINITY.” THE HAGIOLOGICAL INTERPRETATION OF “SPOUSAL LOVE” IN LINE WITH JOHN PAUL II’S THEOLOGY OF THE BODY

The article presents the theological interpretation of the phenomenon of spousal love in terms of examining its correlations with the call to holiness. This study belongs to the field of hagiological research aiming at developing a new concept that defines arguments in the Church’s strategy concerning the defence of every human life. The analysis concerns the statements and philosophical writings of Karol Wojtyła and then John Paul II on spousal love and the dependence of the person and his actions on the Truth and Good. The Christological-soteriological aspect of spousal love as conditioning the sanctification of the person has been indicated. The axiological conditions related to the Christological assumption have been termed as “the Splendour of Divinity,” identifying it with the space of the salvific influence on a person, sanctified by Christ’s spousal love and called to develop an ethos based on this love.

The phenomenon of “spousal love” is experienced in human life. It was John Paul II who initiated this theme during his Wednesday audiences held from September 1979 till November 1984 under the title “The theology of marriage and theology of the body.” The pope discussed various aspects of spousal love. First of all, he related spousal love to the theology of the body, the spousal meaning of the body and God’s love for man in Jesus Christ – his life and work (actions), crowned with the *Ecclesia*. John Paul II presented the human experience of spousal love as a source referring to the salvific mission of Jesus, realised on the foundation of

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divine love. The purpose of this study is to determine the hagiological content of John Paul II's concept of spousal love. How should spousal love be perceived in the perspective of the Christian ethos whose main feature is sanctity? The answer to this question will provide arguments to develop and strengthen the strategy of defending human life, the sanctity of which has many a time been confirmed by Pope John Paul II and Pope Francis. The theological analysis of John Paul II's statements referring to personalistic anthropology conducted as part of my hagiological research has allowed me to put forward a thesis that spousal love is God's presence among people, analogous to the radiation that embraces and penetrates the creation.

Being inspired by the main message of John Paul II's encyclical *Veritatis Splendor*, the hagiological context of spousal love can be called the "Splendour of Divinity," in which man, having received the grace of salvation, lives and performs actions. This study undertakes a discussion on this thesis in the context of hagiological research. The first two points lead to a synthesis of the results of the analysis of the sources. Firstly, the justification of raising the issue of the "Splendour of Divinity" referring to the Splendour of Truth will be explained along with the aspects of the papal teaching appropriate to the subject of "redemptive love." The next points contain a synthesis of the information obtained from the analysis of the sources, including the answer to the question about the Christian call to holiness. Following John Paul II's thought, two aspects of spousal love will be discussed: Christological and ecclesiological, with reference to the Karol Wojtyła's personalistic anthropology as the basis for conclusions having a hagiological value.

WHY "SPLENDOUR OF DIVINITY"?

John Paul II uses the analogy to splendour-light sketching the anthropological-personalistic structure of moral teaching documented in the encyclical on some problems of the Church's moral teaching beginning with *Veritatis Splendor* – the Splendour of Truth.¹ This Splendour shines in Christ – his person and act – revealing the heights of God's Love.² Man sees the harmony between the created reality and the uncreated reality in the light coming from God, i.e. in the splendour of the Absolute Truth.³ Assuming the Splendour of Truth as presented by John Paul II in the theological interpretation of man's experience of faith has allowed

¹ The analogy to splendour can be seen in the literary output of Karol Wojtyła, in his drama *Promienowanie ojcostwa* [Radiation of Fatherhood].

² John Paul II, *Veritatis Splendor* (6 August 1993), 2, Vatican 1993 [further: VS].

³ VS, 2.

me to discern the further horizon leading to discovering the sense of the human person and his/her actions as the “echo of a call from God” received in Christ.⁴

The reflection on the analogy to the Splendour of Truth made by John Paul II leads to formulating the concept of the term “Splendour of the Good.”⁵ Only God is the Good,⁶ while man accepting God’s call functions, acts and works in accordance with what the Splendour of Truth reflects.⁷ John Paul II closely combines Truth and Good, as if in a divine stream embracing human reality. Following John Paul II’s understanding of what the Splendour of Truth is, and by analogy of the Splendour of the Good, allows me to generate a new concept the “Splendour of Divinity” from the papal theology of the body and teaching about spousal love. Although John Paul II did not use this phrase, what comes to our mind while interpreting the issue of spousal love in the hermeneutic key offered in *Veritatis Splendor* is the association of the human experience of spousal love with the “Splendour of Divinity” surrounding and permeating the human person.

CATECHESIS ON “SPOUSAL LOVE”

The concept of man living in the “Splendour of Divinity” emerges from John Paul II’s concept of spousal love, and the sense of linking these two concepts begins in the Pope’s commentary on the biblical narratives of creation.⁸ In the first description (Elohism), we are talking about mankind created in the image and likeness of God as male and female (cf. Gen 1:27-28). In the second description (Yahwism), man is depicted as experiencing solitude and as one who only in the unity between man and woman experiences satisfaction and joy. According to the papal narrative, only another human beings – their presence, closeness and recognising as person

⁴ VS, 7.

⁵ K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, *Conscience in the light of the Truth and the light of the Good in the context of the necessary correlation of religious studies and natural sciences*, “Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne” 34 (2019), pp. 75–76. [DOI: 10.14746/pst.2019.34.05]. The conception of the “Splendour of Good” has been developed in the teaching of Benedict XVI and Francis, see: K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, “*Sumienie eklesjalne*” w blasku Prawdy, *Dobra i zbawienia*, “Teologia w Polsce” 12 (2018) 2, pp. 143–159.

⁶ VS, 12.

⁷ K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, *Conscience in the light...*, pp. 75–76.

⁸ John Paul II, [Catecheses given during general audiences] [further.: Catecheses]: 7 November 1979, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791107.html, 14 November 1979 <http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791114.html, 21 November 1979, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791121.html.

not living beings (animalia) – gives man a sense fulfilment in the community.⁹ According to Wojtyła, this experience of recognition results from love – love gives “recognition”¹⁰; love is as if God’s ray without which the biblical Adam would not recognise the proper sense of the female’s being and existence.¹¹ Love, according to Karol Wojtyła and later John Paul II is a peculiar splendour illuminating the personal horizon. In this splendour, human begins to recognise the truth about himself, about God, about other people and things. Being loved by God – who is Love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8), and whom Christ reveals – man is able to recognise the sense of all the things around: people, things and events – the whole history of mankind.¹²

Saint John Paul II calls “spousal love” the love that Jesus embraces the Church and the love he teaches by his words and deeds.¹³ He compares it to the love depicted in the Song of Songs and the Book of Tobit.¹⁴ The Song of Songs allows him to teach on the desire to be with a beloved person until forgetting himself. The Book of Tobit leads him to indicate the decision of his total personal self-giving, expressed by the decision to share a life together. By embedding spousal love on these two assumptions: the desire of another person and the attitude of pro-existence for her,¹⁵ in his catechesis John Paul II reveals the power of love, which has the power to redefine human life. Spousal love – on account of its connection with the dynamics of the gift, to which John Paul II points – frees a person interiorly from the constraint of his/her own bodies.¹⁶

John Paul II does not limit spousal love only to marital relations – they are admittedly classic, but it is about the personal condition of a particular person, which is revealed in the act of sacrifice and total self-giving. Following the course of thinking set by the Saint Pope, we note that the salvific sacrifice of Christ is the

⁹ Cf. K. Korobczenko, *Problem aktualizacji oblubieńczego sensu ciała w teologii ciała Jana Pawła II*, “Forum Teologiczne” 10 (2009), pp. 115–133.

¹⁰ See: K. Wojtyła, *Pieśń o Bogu ukrytym*, in: id., *Poezje i dramaty*, Kraków 1979, p. 16.

¹¹ The original thought of Karol Wojtyła (John Paul II) penetrates all kinds of statements uttered by the Great Pole, i.e., scientific works, teachings and literary works, which has been proven in the doctoral dissertation of Fr Tomasz Bondzio, entitled *Wiara i życie. Teologiczno-egzystencjalna interpretacja doświadczenia religijnego w dziele Karola Wojtyły*, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, Lublin 2020 [typescript].

¹² Cf. VS, 8.

¹³ Catecheses: 4 July 1984, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1984/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19840704.html

¹⁴ Catecheses: 23 May 1984, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1984/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19840523.html.

¹⁵ GSan, 11.

¹⁶ Cf. Catecheses: 16 January 1980, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1980/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19800116.html.

paradigm of the human act having a pro-existential value.¹⁷ In the Pope's teaching, the Christian marriage is portrayed as a reality indicating a transcendent dimension.¹⁸ This view allows us to see a universal message about the power of spousal love, which reveals itself in the fulfilment of Christ's work of salvation in the human person.¹⁹ The love of the Messiah – the Saviour – touches the creation with power that saves and transforms the person. It affects man's existence generating an ontic change that brings about the *rebirth* (cf. Jn 3:5). It transforms the human existence, giving it a horizon that shows the perspective of living with God and in God, i.e. living in the splendour of Truth and Good.²⁰

John Paul II's catecheses on spousal love are filled with concern about forming believers, especially young ones, in the image of Jesus Christ – his person and deeds – meaning the whole work that socially defines Jesus including the personalistic foundation of the Ecclesia.

According to the teaching of the Second Vatican Council, ecclesiality defines the universal call to holiness,²¹ combining three aspects in the call: the soteriological activity of the Church, the anthropological condition of human sin and the eschatological creation and history. In the papal catechesis the concept of spousal love and concepts directly related to it (the theology of the body, the spousal sense of the body) are presented as specific tools that direct young people and mature spouses to form an ethos of marital love, in accordance with the requirements of God's law and human possibilities. Well-functioning marriages are the support and anchor of life in society. The papal catechesis straightforwardly refers to individual life, but in a broader perspective it has a social sense: the ecclesial one and the secular one that results from it, developed in the papal concept of the "civilisation of love" and the "culture of love."²² For this reason, one should

¹⁷ Catecheses: 13 January 1982, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19820113.html.

¹⁸ See: R. Martin, *Sakrament małżeństwa świętą więzią miłości*, trans. P. Kawalec, in: Jan Paweł II, *Mężczyznę i niewiastę stworzył ich. Sakrament. O Jana Pawła II teologii ciała*, ed. T. Styczeń, Lublin 1999, p. 289; K. Lubowicki, *Duchowość małżeńska w nauczaniu Jana Pawła II*, Kraków 2005, p. 29ff.

¹⁹ Cf. GSane, 5, 22.

²⁰ Cf. K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, "Sumienie eklezjalne"..., pp. 150, 156–157.

²¹ *Dogmatic Constitution on the Church Lumen Gentium*, 39–42, https://www.vatican.va/archive/hist_councils/ii_vatican_council/documents/vat-ii_const_19641121_lumen-gentium_en.html.

²² Cf. John Paul II, *Letter to families Gratissimam sane* (2 February 1994), 13, in: The Holy See [online], access: 10.01.2020, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/letters/1994/documents/hf_jp-ii_let_02021994_families.html [further: GSane]: "[...] the family is the centre and the heart of the civilization of love." See: Z. Gleaser, "Rodzina centrum i sercem cywilizacji miłości". *Jana Pawła II przesłanie do rodzin i o rodzinie w kontekście listu do rodzin "Gratissimam sane"*, in: *Matrimonio et Familiae. Z problematyki małżeństwa i rodziny*, ed. P. Landwójtowicz, Opole 2016, pp. 53–56.

take into consideration the connection of spousal love according to John Paul II's theology of the body not only with familiology, but also with the social teaching of the Church.

THE SANCTIFICATION OF THE HUMAN PERSON BY CHRIST'S SPOUSAL LOVE

In the theology of the body, John Paul II portrays Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church. The Pope integrates this aspect into the catechesis on marriage as the sacrament of Redemption, i.e. the fruit of "Christ's spousal love."²³ He describes the Sacrament of Matrimony as the one that assumes Christians into "Christ's spousal charity."²⁴ Following the teaching of Saint Paul (cf. Eph 5:25f), the Pope shows the similarity between the integration of Christ with the Church and the integration of persons in marital life. It is the interpersonal unity: total, intimate, embracing the whole being and existence, indissoluble.²⁵ Therefore, the most appropriate word that could express the specificity of the act of salvation in the Church through the sacramental service is "love" that is focused on the spousal relationships.²⁶ Jesus as the Bridegroom "reveals the essence of God and confirms his immense love for mankind."²⁷ The salvific sense of God's love is most meaningfully illustrated in the Sacrament of Matrimony and consecrated celibacy because of their element of spousal love that predisposes a person to pro-existence.²⁸ Accordingly, Christ's spousal love, as integrating the Divine Person of Christ with the person of the believer and as a redemptive act, should be seen as sanctifying the members of the Church.²⁹

The direction set out John Paul II's catechesis indicates that Jesus' spousal love is directed to the Church, linking all members with a kind of mysterious bond. In the ecclesial community, the baptized man becomes the mediator of God's Love

²³ The sacraments of the Church are fruits of Christ's spousal love, including marriage – see Catecheses:13 October 1982, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19821013.html.

²⁴ FC, 13,51.

²⁵ FC, 20; GSane, 19.

²⁶ Cf. John Paul II, Encyclical *Redemptor hominis* (4 March 1979), 18, Vatican 1979 [Further: RHm].

²⁷ GSane, 18.

²⁸ Cf. RHm, 21.

²⁹ GSane, 19; cf. A. Sarmiento, *Powołanie do świętości i małżeństwa*, in: Jan Paweł II, *Mężczyznę i niewiastę stworzył ich. Sakrament. O Jana Pawła II teologii ciała*, ed. T. Styczeń, Lublin 1999, p. 284.

in the Only Mediator – Jesus Christ.³⁰ So spousal love has a Messianic character since it is the love that comes – as if flows – from God through man, firstly through Christ and then through a person anointed by the Holy Spirit, i.e. Christified through the sacraments of the Church. Jesus Christ, because of the hypostatic union harmonised creation with the Father infinite, the Creator uncreated. He enabled the human person to be a mediator of God's Love, i.e., he introduced man to the dynamics, space and splendour of his spousal love. He embraced, filled and reformed or reprogrammed a particular human person to correlate with his person and acts. That is why a Christian is Christified, i.e. a person prepared to fulfil the messianic mission towards the whole world and creation. The Messianic mission, i.e. Christ's mission, is thus to fill the world with the "splendour" of God's love: to practice the "spousal love" of Christ, present in the human act revealing and transmitting the Love of God Himself. The function of an intermediary of God's love puts man in the position of holding the source of God's love, of being directed to others and to the creation. The mediator causes the spread of the "radiation" coming from God; he continues and functions in the "splendour" of Divinity that also embraces others. In the writings of Karol Wojtyła and later of John Paul II, the phrase "Splendour of Divinity" does not occur, instead we can find the phrase "holiness." This phrase, as one of Wojtyła's classic concepts, will help us better understand the meaning of the "Splendour of Divinity" referring to the human existence and Christian ethos, whose fundamental feature is being holy (*hagios*).

John Paul II's vision of man is Christological, which means that man is constituted in the Divine image and likeness according to the Son of God, and oriented to growing mature in this likeness. Perfect humanity is revealed in Jesus Christ – in his person and deeds.³¹ Only God is holy, and people have a leaven of holiness as a gift of the Creator, incorporated into the foundations of the human being.³² Holiness is a gift – a grace; having it one can and should do "something" with it; one should not waste it but should work "somehow" on it. That "somehow" is a variant of the attitude of love that binds people together in a community and

³⁰ "[...] Le parole citate mostrano con grande plasticità in che modo il Battesimo attinge il suo significato essenziale e la sua forza sacramentale da quell'amore sponsale del Redentore, attraverso cui si costituisce soprattutto la sacramentalità della Chiesa stessa, "sacramentum magnum." [istotne znaczenie i moc sakramentalną czerpie chrzest z owej obłubieńczy miłości Odkupiciela, poprzez którą konstituuje się przede wszystkim sakramentalność samego Kościoła: *sacramentum magnum*"] – see Catecheses: 27 October 1982, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/audiences/1982/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19821027.html.

³¹ RHm, 8.

³² Cf. J. Bajda, *Konsekracja ciała w aspekcie powołania osoby*, in: Jan Paweł II, *Mężczyznę i niewiastę stworzył ich. Chrystus odwołuje się do „początku”. O Jana Pawła II teologii ciała*, ed. T. Styczeń, Lublin 2001, p. 188.

expresses itself in the human ethos. Here the focus is on spousal love because it indicates the foundation of the human being, as the inspired author implicitly states it in Gen 1:25–28. John Paul II perceives the holiness of the human person as Christ-like – the human person has no chance to be fulfilled in holiness without Christ and apart from him.³³

MATURING IN HOLINESS THROUGH SPOUSAL LOVE

John Paul II's conception of spousal love points to a specific mysticism of marital encounter revealing the spousal sense of the human body. It testifies to the *hagios* conditioning of corporality and marital relations: the sanctifying function of marital relations.³⁴ The Pope specifically contemplates this holiness as an element that explains that the sanctity of the human body is focused on announcing to the world that Christ's spousal love has been revealed. It is in marital relationships that the *hagios* dimension of human corporeality in its basic, holistic and general sense becomes more noticeable. That is why, according to John Paul II, the spousal sense of the body is also present in the solitude of the consecrated life since in self-offering to God, the spousal value of the love of Christ, who offers himself to the Church in the Eucharist, is visible.³⁵ The life of solitude on account of the kingdom of God, as being related to a special grace – vocation, confirms the spousal sense of the body, emphatically pointing to the vertical dimension of the dynamics of spousal love. According to John Paul II, spousal love implies a total personal self-giving, which is self-sacrifice; this attitude conditions the final fulfilment.³⁶

In order to show the hagiological sense of spousal love in the Pope's theology of the body, one should refer to the key combination of the terms "person and act."³⁷ Karol Wojtyła shows that the person is inseparably connected with the process of performing an action and of creating that take place in the conditions arising from the "radiation" of values.³⁸ According to the personalistic anthropology proposed by Karol Wojtyła, the human person lives in the splendour of absolute Truth and Good.³⁹ This is revealed in the actions of the person as the fruits of the human ex-

³³ RHm, 7.

³⁴ Cf. FC, 51, 56, 66.

³⁵ Cf. John Paul II, *Apostolic exhortation "Vita Consecrata"* (25 March 1996), 59, Vatican 1996.

³⁶ Cf. M. Pokrywka, *Antropologiczne podstawy moralności małżeństwa i rodziny*, Lublin 2010, p. 192f.

³⁷ On the basis of the personalistic anthropology of Karol Wojtyła's book *Osoba i czyn* [The Acting Person] (1969).

³⁸ VS, 40, 41.

³⁹ K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, *Conscience in the light...*, p. 76.

istence characterised by subjectivity. The person, according to Cardinal Wojtyła, is a dynamic being, and thus is a living being, and not only an existing being. This concept is most evidently developed in his teaching on the theology of the body. In his subjectivity the human person is conditioned in its materiality – "In this activity the body expresses the person."⁴⁰ Accepting the ontic fundamentals of the human person the Pope explains the specific man's similarity to God, exactly in the corporal-spiritual construction.⁴¹ Consequently, two dimensions are essential in spousal love: vertical and horizontal. Love "happens," love touches and transforms the person; love causes that the transcendental dimension permeates the temporal-spatial dimension. The two-dimensionality means the holistic commitment of the person in being for another person – it is "pro-existence" (horizontal dimension), which results in *communio* (based on participation, mutual supportive actions of its members). The God's image and likeness in the human person makes it possible to draw from the divine source: the Absolute Truth and Good. It enables the person to accept his or her calling to perform actions and tasks that express the absolute dimension of values. The dynamics of spousal love causes the human person to mature in the Good and the Truth, towards the paradigm of the perfect humanity of Jesus Christ, until the final fulfilment, i.e. holiness.⁴²

All the views – John Paul II's christistic-hagiological vision of the person begins in his philosophical concept of man as an axiologically conditioned person. Man is a person, and the person indicates the category of existence and action. According to Karol Wojtyła's personalistic anthropology, "person" and "act" are inseparable. The status of the person means sensitivity to the absolute values of Truth and Goodness, which are accessible in the dimension of existence exceeding the space-time structures, verifiable by means of measuring tools in laboratories. The person is axiologically conditioned, which means that he or she "must" take a stand on the values: Absolute Truth and Good; the person lives among values – values are the person's world.⁴³ As a subject, the person expresses himself outside, in his creativity, intentional action, making gestures, creating informative symbols – messages. The person's expression, revealing his attitude to values in the absolute dimension, is "act" – the person expresses himself in actions. Therefore, the "act" is a carrier, an exemplification of values, and at the same time

⁴⁰ Catecheses: 31 October 1979, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791031.html.

⁴¹ Catecheses: 14 November 1979, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1979/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19791114.html; 20 February 1980, http://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/audiences/1980/documents/hf_jp-ii_aud_19800220.html.

⁴² Cf. FC, 34.

⁴³ J. Tischner, *Filozofia dramatu*, Kraków 1998, p. 109; idem, *Myślenie według wartości*, Kraków 1982, pp. 407–408.

a testimony of its author's reference to values. Karol Wojtyła explains that actions arise as a result of the person's subjective existence; here the person depends on the absolute Good, which means that the person either recognises it, accepts it and implements it in his actions, or rejects the Good, which will be coded into his actions as well. As a result, we are dealing with good or bad actions. Further, the quality of an action affects the development or degradation of the acting subject, i.e. the person of the author. Each action is related to some intention that means the person's attitude towards values. Therefore, all actions are axiologically verifiable and as such they belong to the moral category.⁴⁴

These philosophical assumptions provide fundamental elements to explain how to understand human holiness. In the encyclical *Evangelium Vitae*, John Paul II states that human life is sacred from its beginning.⁴⁵ This sacredness is understood as the value of each person. Jesus Christ shows the value of every person and reveals God's love in his person and actions. In defining holiness in relation to the human person, the Pope points to the uniqueness and limitless of God's love for man.⁴⁶ Human holiness is realised in a dialogue with God who calls to "fullness of life" exceeding the dimensions of earthly existence.⁴⁷ The call to holiness is unconditionally applicable to every person, from every nation, epoch and culture. It is a possibility for participating personally in the Absolute Fullness, whose preparation stage is temporality. The sanctity of the person is revealed in his ethos. In John Paul II's teaching, there is a motif of corporeality associated with the Incarnation and Resurrection of Jesus Christ. The philosophy of Karol Wojtyła points to the correlation between corporeality and the transcendental (non-corporeal) dimension. The action of the human person expresses this relation. On the one hand, actions reveal intentions and axiological choices of the person as a subject, and on the other hand they sustain (or degrade) the person. In other words, actions form a person in the hagiological dimension. In human experience, this dimension is felt as well as created and developed in spousal love, which should be considered here as a category of personal existence in the history of salvation.

CONCLUSION

Spousal love according to the theology of the body taught by Saint John Paul II directly concerns the sphere of marital life. The Pope draws his attention to the

⁴⁴ See J. Koperek, *La concezione personalistica della coscienza*, Lublin 2009, p. 67ff.

⁴⁵ John Paul II, *Encyclical "Evangelium Vitae"* (25 March 1995), 2, 5, Vatican 1995 [further: EV].

⁴⁶ Cf. EV, 2.

⁴⁷ Cf. EV, 2.

element of the depth of interpersonal ties in the intimacy of relationships and the completeness of mutual self-giving in the attitude of pro-existence encompassing all life. He understands the human experience as a phenomenon in order to explain the theological question of Christ's spousal love as constituting the essence of God's saving action. According to John Paul II, the concept of spousal love, the action of Jesus Christ as the Bridegroom of the Church, has a salvific sense implemented in the pro-existential attitude, directed towards achieving the highest good by the human person (cf. Jn 3:16).⁴⁸ According to the classical approach to theological questions, the subjective state of salvation is identical with the individual state of the sanctity of the human person. In this perspective, Christ's spousal love – in the thought of John Paul II – is essential for the Christian ethos, which, according to the conciliar concept of the Church, is the realisation of the call to holiness. The fulfilment of this call is the acceptance of God's grace, which was won for man by the saving action of Jesus Christ, and man's cooperation with it.

Christ's spousal love reveals itself as the quintessence of Truth and Good, permeating all the created reality. In the perspective of the papal catechesis on spousal love, the salvific work of Jesus Christ is the penetration of all creation and human being with the Splendour of Truth and Good. Members of the Church, by virtue of their sacramental relationships with Christ, become intermediaries of this saving love. The Sacrament of Matrimony is the ecclesial space in which the fundamental sense of Christ's spousal love for the Church is revealed, and the consecrated solitude strengthens the message about the theological value of this love.

The hagiological profiling of the concept of spousal love serves the Church (in research and pastoral work) to help the faithful carry out their call to holiness (in accordance with the encouragement of Pope Francis, expressed in the Apostolic Exhortation *Gaudete et Exultate* promulgated on 10 April 2018). John Paul II's teaching on man as the human person, constituted in the image of God as male and female, and on the Christification of the human being is a certain educational programme to develop one's holiness. Assuming John Paul II's perspective, one cannot think of spousal love without the category of holiness – spousal love belongs to holiness since love exists in the *hagios* dimension.

In the Christian ethos, whose main feature is holiness, spousal love appears as a divine light, splendour or radiance that permeates the human person and human reality. This penetration takes place in the ecclesial space where Jesus as the Church's Bridegroom – his person and actions – saving people by his most perfect love is the foundation of the Ecclesia, dynamising the ecclesial re-

⁴⁸ Cf. RHm, 8.

lationships (ad intra and ad extra), based on love, generating the pro-existential, soteriologically oriented, Christian attitudes. Christ's spousal love predisposes a Christian to become a mediator of salvation in the Mediator, and this mediation becomes effective through the Christian ethos, comprising two dimensions of interpersonal relations: vertical and horizontal. A Christian matures in this ethos reaching holiness in the vertical dimension and mediating in Christ's spousal love through his personal attitude of love, aiming at becoming a complete gift in pro-existence.

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Keywords: spousal love, theology of the body, sanctity, Truth, Good

CZŁOWIEK W „BLASKU BÓSTWA”. HAGIOLOGICZNA INTERPRETACJA „MIŁOŚCI OBLUBIEŃCZEJ” WEDŁUG JANA PAWŁA II TEOLOGII CIAŁA

Streszczenie

W artykule przedstawiono teologiczną interpretację fenomenu miłości oblubieńczej pod kątem zbadania korelacji z tematyką dotyczącą powołania do świętości. Opracowanie należy do obszaru badań hagiologicznych, którego celem jest przedstawienie argumentu w kościelnej strategii obrony życia ludzkiego. Analizie poddano wypowiedzi papieskie i pisma filozoficzne Jana Pawła II/ Karola Wojtyły na temat miłości oblubieńczej oraz zależności osoby i czynu od Prawdy i Dobra. Wskazano na chrystologiczno-soteriologiczny aspekt miłości oblubieńczej jako warunkujący uświęcenie osoby. Uwarunkowania aksjologiczne powiązane z założeniem chrystologicznym nazwano Blaskiem Bóstwa, utożsamiając to z przestrzenią oddziaływania zbawczego na człowieka, który zostaje uświęcony miłością oblubieńczą Chrystusa i powołany do rozwijania etosu opartego na tej miłości..

Słowa kluczowe: miłość oblubieńcza, teologia ciała, świętość, Prawda, Dobro

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LA MISSIONARIETÀ DELLA CHIESA NELL'ENCICLICA *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO* DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II DI FRONTE ALLE VOCI DEL SINODO AMAZZONICO

Oggetto di questo studio è la questione della natura missionaria della Chiesa, prospettata e rinnovata con più profonda e convincente impostazione come espresso nell'enciclica *Redemptoris missio* di san Giovanni Paolo II. Il XXX° anniversario della sua promulgazione (7 dicembre 1990) costituisce una ragione particolare per riprendere l'argomento e trattarlo nell'attuale contesto storico-ecclesiale. L'esposizione e l'approfondita ricerca dimostrano l'attualità dei contenuti presenti nel documento e la permanente validità del mandato di Gesù affidato agli apostoli e a tutta la Chiesa di andare nel mondo intero per annunciare il Vangelo e portare il battesimo della salvezza a tutti i popoli. La necessità di riportare all'attenzione questo tema è determinato anche dalla condizione interna della Chiesa stessa che sembra pian piano abbandonare o non considerare con la dovuta serietà il mandato di cui fu investita sin dalle sue origini. Di conseguenza, di fronte ad un indebolimento della consapevolezza missionaria all'interno della Chiesa, riportare e rievocare senza equivoci la questione del compito di evangelizzare appare un impegno necessario.

INTRODUZIONE

La *Redemptoris missio* si iscrive nell'insieme del magistero ecclesiale conciliare e post-conciliare, soprattutto a partire dal Decreto sull'attività missionaria della Chiesa *Ad gentes* Concilio Vaticano II¹, che chiarisce e ribadisce, insieme

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¹ Concilio Vaticano II, *Decreto sull'attività missionaria della chiesa "Ad gentes"*, in: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* (=EV), Bologna 2002¹⁸, 1/1087–1242.

all'insegnamento dei papi Paolo VI², Benedetto XVI³ e Francesco⁴, la natura missionaria della Chiesa di Cristo. L'enciclica di papa Wojtyła evidenzia la permanente validità del mandato missionario – attestato chiaramente nel Nuovo Testamento⁵ – cioè, che Cristo dopo la sua Risurrezione, in occasione delle apparizioni e infine della Sua gloriosa ascensione al cielo e il ritorno al Padre, affidò agli apostoli, ai loro successori e a tutta la comunità della Chiesa il mandato di andare in tutto il mondo e di annunciare il Vangelo a tutti popoli, battezzandoli nel nome del Padre, e del figlio e dello Spirito Santo – come riferiscono tutti i sinottici⁶, l'evangelista Giovanni⁷ e l'autore degli Atti degli Apostoli⁸.

La validità di questo mandato emerge con maggior urgenza in questi giorni in occasione dell'appena concluso Sinodo Amazzonico svoltosi a Roma, dal 6 al 27 ottobre del 2019. Anche se il Sinodo non ha nessuna facoltà decisiva e non entra nel magistero ufficiale della Chiesa nelle questioni del magistero della Chiesa, comunque viene considerato come 'corpo ausiliare' con i suoi suggerimenti, proposte, osservazioni ecc. La peculiarità di questo Sinodo stava nel fatto di voler affrontare certe questioni di natura teologico-disciplinare riguardanti la Chiesa universale⁹, determinando geo-politicamente ed ideologicamente la prospettiva di trattarle. Il grosso rischio dei temi discussi nell'aula sinodale era, in fin dei conti, quello della necessità o, nel migliore dei casi, del modo di evangelizzare i popoli e le culture che vivono ancora nell'ignoranza del Vangelo di Cristo o della sua mistificata conoscenza. In questo contesto il bisogno di richiamarsi alla *Redemptoris missio*, data la ricorrenza di 30 anni dalla sua promulgazione (7 dicembre 1990), sembra una cosa del tutto dovuta.

LA CHIESA, MISSIONARIA PER SUA NATURA, NELLA *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO*

L'esposizione sarà divisa in due momenti (in pratica, in due articoli). In questa istanza, la considerazione teologica, sviluppata in maniera diacronica, punta piut-

² Paolo VI, *Esortazione apostolica postsinodale "Evangelii nuntiandi"* (1975), EV 5/1588–1716.

³ Benedetto XVI, *L'esortazione apostolica "Verbum Domini"* (2010), EV 26/2218–2433.

⁴ Francesco, *L'esortazione apostolica "Evangelii gaudium"*, AAS 12 (2013) 1019–1137.

⁵ Seminario Urbano, *La missione nella Bibbia*, 16 aprile 1996, <http://www.cistercensi.info/monari/1996/m19960416.htm>.

⁶ Mt 28,18–20; Mc 16,15–20; Lc 24,46–53.

⁷ Gv 17,17–19; 20,21–22.

⁸ At 1,8.

⁹ Innanzitutto si trattava di tre argomenti: il sacerdozio dei diaconi sposati, il diaconato delle donne e il rito liturgico amazzonico.

tosto sull'opera evangelizzatrice come quella che per natura spetta alla Chiesa. Essa sarà messa in rilievo riportando il modello della vita missionaria, lasciato dall'autore dell'enciclica, cioè da papa Giovanni Paolo II, uno dei più grandi apostoli del cristianesimo degli ultimi secoli. Successivamente si rifletterà del giusto rapporto tra la dimensione verticale e orizzontale della missione della Chiesa tenendo conto, in seguito, di alcune proposte del Sinodo, viste come sfide per riconfermare l'autentica natura missionaria della Chiesa, istituita come tale da Dio stesso.

LA CONTINUITÀ TEOLOGICA E UN'ADEGUATA ERMENEUTICA DEL TESTO

La *Redemptoris missio*¹⁰ a differenza della *Evangelii nuntiandi* e della recente *Evangelii gaudium* che sono Esortazioni è una Enciclica e quindi ha un maggior spessore magisteriale. È stata scritta nel XXV anniversario del Decreto *Ad gentes* del Concilio Vaticano II. Cinque anni fa, invece, nell'anno 2015 abbiamo ricordato il XXV° della pubblicazione della stessa *Redemptoris missio*. Il documento di Giovanni Paolo II, contro una qualsiasi scettica opinione, fino ad oggi non ha perso nulla della sua attualità, anzi *Evangelii gaudium* rappresenta la ripresa e il tentativo di contestualizzare i suoi contenuti più essenziali. Questa enciclica non è soltanto un gesto celebrativo del XXV° del Decreto missionario del Concilio Vaticano II, come sta scritto nell'Introduzione e nella data finale, ma è un vero grido del papa, che invita tutta la Chiesa a riconsiderare lo specifico impegno missionario e ad impegnarsi per l'evangelizzazione del mondo non cristiano. Giovanni Paolo II incoraggia gli uomini ad aprirsi a Cristo e chiede alla Chiesa il coraggio di testimoniarlo e di proporlo al mondo d'oggi. Questo infatti è il primo dovere assegnato da Cristo alla sua comunità, è il primo servizio offerto per la crescita integrale dell'umanità, è il modo più sicuro per il rinnovamento della vita cristiana superando le tensioni interne, è un'esigenza di condivisione dei doni divini ricevuti, ma è anche un diritto di scelta da parte dei singoli e dei popoli.

In questo momento così difficile, l'invito del papa perché la Chiesa intera si rinnovi nell'impegno per realizzare il mandato del Signore suona molto diverso da tante propagande. Le comunità cattoliche sono chiamate al loro dovere di testimoniare e annunciare il Cristo nella carità fattiva ed effettiva verso tutti, nel rispetto delle persone e delle culture, nella promozione della libertà da parte degli individui e dei popoli. Questi atteggiamenti, fondamenti della pace, sono conna-

¹⁰ Giovanni Paolo II, *Lettera enciclica "Redemptoris missio"* (=RMi), EV 12 (1990), 547–732.

turali a tutto il messaggio cristiano che è la rivelazione dell'amore di Dio per noi. L'annuncio del Vangelo non può essere opprimente, perché è per sua natura liberatorio; non può essere imposto ma proposto. Ad imitazione di Cristo, la Chiesa missionaria non condanna nessuno a morte, ma si lascia mettere in croce, come espressione culmine dell'amore e della salvezza. Gli esempi di missionari testimoni di Cristo fino al martirio, sono notizie continue anche in tempi recenti¹¹. "Al termine del secondo millennio, la Chiesa è diventata nuovamente Chiesa di martiri. Le persecuzioni nei riguardi dei credenti – sacerdoti, religiosi, laici – hanno operato una grande semina di martiri in varie parti del mondo"¹².

Infatti, come dice Rino Fisichella, per paradossale che possa sembrare, i martiri dei nostri giorni – dei tempi di libertà religiosa, rispetto, tolleranza, dialogo, apertura ecc. – sono giovani, ragazzi e ragazze, uomini e donne di ogni età, ancora uccisi, violentati, torturati, scherniti ed emarginati solo perché cristiani. Quanti nomi potrebbero riempire un nuovo e aggiornato martirologio dei nostri tempi. Purtroppo, il secolo XX ha visto un numero di martiri cristiani superiore a quello dei diciannove secoli che ci hanno preceduto. L'ingresso nel XXI secolo, tristemente, sta allungando l'elenco senza lasciar intravedere una diminuzione o almeno qualche tregua. Ciò che rende spesso inconcepibile questa situazione è il silenzio di tante voci sul palcoscenico della vita pubblica – anche tra le autorità della Chiesa stessa d'oggi –, quel silenzio che essendo complice per l'incapacità di debellare la violenza, diventa ancor più udibile e percettibile¹³.

Nonostante tutto ciò, l'enciclica è radicata nella visione del Vaticano II, non solamente per le basi teologiche e per le aperture pastorali, ma per l'ottimismo¹⁴ che la domina e che è stato espresso quasi profeticamente dallo stesso papa: "Vedo albeggiare una nuova epoca missionaria, che diventerà giorno radioso e ricco di frutti, se tutti i cristiani e, in particolare, i missionari e le giovani chiese risponderanno con generosità e santità agli appelli e alle sfide del nostro tempo"¹⁵. Malgrado le diverse difficoltà e contro ogni tentazione di scoraggiamento e di pessimismo, il papa offre dunque una visione ottimistica e piena di speranza. Questo ottimismo viene dalla fede¹⁶. Egli parla di "nuova primavera del cristianesimo",

¹¹ Cfr. P. Gheddo, *L'Ad gentes in Giovanni XXIII e Giovanni Paolo II*, (25.05.2014), <http://www.gheddopiero.it/index.php/lad-gentes-in-giovanni-xxiii-e-giovanni-paolo-ii-radio-maria-2014/>.

¹² Giovanni Paolo II, *Lettera apostolica "Tertio Millennio Adveniente"*, EV 14 (1994) 1781, 37.

¹³ Cfr. R. Fisichella, *I segni del giubileo. Il pellegrinaggio, la città di Pietro e Paolo, la Porta Santa, la professione di fede, la carità, l'indulgenza*, Cinisello Balsamo 2015.

¹⁴ Cfr. M. Lemonnier, *Svolte storiche della missione*, in: AA.Vv., *La missione del redentore. Commenti all'enciclica "Redemptoris missio"*, Bologna 1991, 27.

¹⁵ RMi 92.

¹⁶ Cfr. J. Tomko, *La "Magna charta" per la missione del duemila*, in: AA.Vv., *La missione del redentore. Commenti all'enciclica "Redemptoris missio"*..., 9.

di “una umanità più preparata alla semina evangelica”¹⁷ e ribadisce la convinzione che “Dio sta preparando una grande primavera cristiana, di cui già si vede l’inizio”¹⁸. Dopo venticinque anni – dalla chiusura del Concilio Vaticano II – di cammino travagliato del mondo e della Chiesa, il documento traccia il punto della situazione nei riguardi della missione. Ha ereditato dal Concilio una coraggiosa dinamica e una visione aperta, facendo però un discernimento delle posizioni teoriche e pratiche nella Chiesa. Ne risulta un “manifesto per la missione”, una sintesi teoretico-operativa per la Chiesa del prossimo millennio¹⁹.

Nella *Redemptoris missio* si ritrovano le grandi linee dell’insegnamento e dell’attività pastorale di Giovanni Paolo II. Già il titolo richiama la sua prima enciclica programmatica (*Redemptor hominis*). Del resto le sue otto encicliche precedenti vi ritrovano un riscontro puntuale. Quelle antropologico-trinitarie (*Redemptor hominis*, *Dives in misericordia*, *Dominum et vivificantem*) costituiscono il punto di partenza dei tre primi capitoli, che sono di natura teologica e che rispondono alle grandi tematiche attuali che rafforzano la sollecitudine missionaria della Chiesa d’oggi, come l’unicità e l’universalità della salvezza in Gesù Cristo (cap. I), del Regno di Dio in rapporto a Cristo, alla Chiesa e quindi all’attività missionaria (cap. II), della presenza attiva dello Spirito nella Chiesa e nel mondo (cap. III). Anche se il respiro teologico è consistente, comunque vengono profondamente trattati gli aspetti pratici che sono importanti e innovativi. Su questo piano la *Redemptoris missio* proporrà di promuovere l’impegno missionario *ad gentes*, armonizzando le diverse attività invece di escluderle, dando priorità all’annuncio, verso il quale tutto tende. In tal modo i successivi capitoli (IV–VIII), più di carattere operativo, vanno letti nel loro rapporto con la dottrina sociale della Chiesa, esposta e sviluppata negli altri documenti del magistero di Giovanni Paolo II (*Laborem exercens*, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*). È anche da notare che la pubblicazione dell’enciclica precede immediatamente l’inizio dell’Anno della Dottrina Sociale della Chiesa proclamato il 1 gennaio 1991²⁰ e che avrà la sua particolare espressione con la promulgazione di un’altra enciclica *Centesimus annus*, 1 maggio 1991. L’orizzonte operativo in cui si colloca la seconda parte dell’enciclica precisa dunque la verità degli impegni della Chiesa, origina

¹⁷ RMi 2–3.

¹⁸ RMi 86.

¹⁹ Cfr. M. Zago, *Riscoprirci tutti missionari. La “Redemptoris missio”: un orientamento per la lettura*, www.indaco-torino.net/gens/34gens91.html [“Gen’s – Rivista di vita ecclesiale” 34 (1991) 4].

²⁰ *Voglio quindi proclamare quello che oggi s’avvia “Anno della Dottrina Sociale della Chiesa”, invitando con ciò i fedeli, nel contesto della commemorazione dell’Enciclica “Rerum novarum”, a meglio conoscere, approfondire e diffondere l’insegnamento della Chiesa in materia sociale*, “Insegnamenti” XIV (1995) 1, 1–5.

ti dal suo essere “connaturalmente” missionaria: la cura pastorale di coloro che si riconoscono cristiani; la nuova evangelizzazione per coloro che non sono più o non si riconoscono cristiani; e infine l’attività missionaria verso i gruppi e i popoli che non sono mai stati cristiani. La missione *ad gentes* è poi chiarita da tre approcci convergenti: quello geografico, quello sociale, collegato ai nuovi fenomeni sociali, e quello culturale del rapporto con i moderni «areopaghi» (cap. IV). Il rapporto tra il dovere missionario di tutta la Chiesa e di ogni Chiesa locale e i “carismatici della missione” è un altro argomento trattato profondamente dall’enciclica²¹. Infatti l’attenzione alle giovani Chiese accompagna tutto il documento. L’avvenire della missione dipenderà in gran parte dal loro impegno missionario nel proprio ambiente e in tutto il mondo²². L’attività missionaria si realizza in un clima di rispetto e di dialogo. Il dialogo, talvolta, è la sola espressione possibile e sufficiente di una presenza missionaria. La promozione umana, l’impegno per la pace e la giustizia, l’inculturazione sono parti integranti della missione, ma per natura propria tendono all’annuncio della Buona Novella; questo annuncio costituisce il cuore, il centro dinamico e l’apice di tutte le attività missionarie (cap. V)²³. Non c’è missione senza missionari, e d’altra parte non ci sono missionari senza comunità coinvolte nella cooperazione e nella testimonianza della propria incorporazione a Cristo (cap. VI e VII). La connessione tra santità e missione, non solo per i missionari – “i santi sono gli autentici missionari” –, ma anche per tutta la Chiesa, è un’altra sottolineatura importantissima. L’impegno missionario rinnova la Chiesa; e la santità dei cristiani è l’anima del suo dinamismo missionario (cap. VIII)²⁴.

REDEMPTORIS MISSIO E L’ATTIVITÀ MISSIONARIA DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II

Il Papa ha rilanciato la “missione alle genti” in modo teologico e programmatico nell’enciclica *Redemptoris missio*, ma in modo concreto e pratico l’ha resa

²¹ Cfr. D. Colombo, *Mandati ad gentes ieri, oggi e sempre*, in: AA.Vv., *La missione del redentore. Commenti all’enciclica “Redemptoris missio”*..., 75–87.

²² Cfr. M. Zago, *Riscoprirci tutti missionari. La “Redemptoris Missio”: un orientamento per la lettura*, www.indaco-torino.net/gens/34gens91.html [“Gen’s – Rivista di vita ecclesiale” 34 (1991) 4].

²³ Cfr. M. Fitzgerald, *Religioni in dialogo nel segno di Assisi*, in: AA.Vv., *La missione del redentore. Commenti all’enciclica “Redemptoris missio”*..., 102–107; cfr. M. Fitzgerald, *Dialogo interreligioso. Il punto di vista cattolico*, Cinisello Balsamo 2007, 29–52.

²⁴ Cfr. M. Zago, *L’urgenza di tutte le vocazioni missionarie*, in: AA.Vv., *La missione del redentore. Commenti all’enciclica “Redemptoris missio”*..., 88–91.

realizzabile nei suoi 62 viaggi missionari extra-europei, di cui circa 40 in Europa (fino alla promulgazione dell'enciclica), quando ha rinfrancato e incoraggiato le giovani Chiese in paesi non cristiani. Si diceva che il Papa viaggiava troppo, ma chi diceva questo non è stato nei paesi da lui visitati dopo un suo viaggio. Inoltre richiamandosi a Paolo VI ha detto a Loreto nel 1994 durante l'incontro personale con i vescovi italiani:

I viaggi, le visite, sembra che oggi il papa deve essere presente non solamente spiritualmente, ma anche personalmente in diverse parti del mondo, e così io l'ho capito da Paolo VI. Se lui con la sua salute, che era piuttosto debole, poteva fare tutto questo, questo papa giovane più atletico, [...] deve anche lui avere il coraggio di andare in tutto il mondo, così ci ha detto Cristo, non ci ha detto 'sedete in Vaticano', ma ci ha detto: 'andate in tutto il mondo!' cioè, ai confini della terra²⁵.

Il titolo "Giovanni Paolo II è il centravanti delle missioni" introduce quanto ha detto padre Schiavone, un missionario domenicano toscano, che nel 1982 era in Pakistan da una quarantina d'anni. Secondo la sua testimonianza il Papa l'anno precedente aveva fatto una visita a Karachi, allora capitale del Pakistan, e aveva suscitato un grande entusiasmo nello stadio cittadino pieno di giovani musulmani ad applaudirlo. Diceva Schiavone: "Noi missionari che siamo in questo paese da decine d'anni, tollerati e a volte perseguitati, non avevamo mai nemmeno immaginato di poter essere testimoni di una scena simile: una folla di musulmani che applaudiva il nostro Papa! Abbiamo pianto di gioia". E concludeva dicendo: "Noi missionari abbiamo trovato il nostro centravanti!". Un caso simile racconta il cardinale Robert Sarah sull'accoglienza di Giovanni Paolo II in Guinea (sotto il governo dittatoriale di Sékou Touré) sia dai cristiani che dai musulmani; questi ultimi spiegano così la loro presenza e il loro saluto nei confronti del papa al suo arrivo: "Al tempo della rivoluzione siamo stati forzati a venire ad accogliere i dirigenti dell'URSS; non c'è alcun motivo per cui non dobbiamo uscire nelle strade per un grande credente e un uomo di Dio!"²⁶.

Secondo A. Riccardi il papa slavo è una grande figura del Novecento, di cui esprime appieno la storia. È anche un personaggio del Duemila: si è spento nel nuovo secolo già iniziato e la sua ricchissima eredità religiosa, teologica e pratica deve continuare ad essere un punto di riferimento fermo. Testimone del complesso crocevia polacco e protagonista della scena mondiale per ventisette anni, Karol Wojtyła è stato un personaggio decisivo della vicenda religiosa contemporanea,

²⁵ A. Ambrogetti, *Il mistero dei 12. I vescovi del mondo a tavola con Giovanni Paolo II*, Tau Editrice 2014, 91.

²⁶ Cfr. R. Sarah, *Dio o niente. Conversazione sulla fede con Nicolas Diat*, Siena 2015, 89–90.

ma anche un leader che ha collocato la Chiesa nel cuore e sul palcoscenico della storia mondiale e della vita sociale, un leader globale che ha toccato le fibre di tanti popoli e nazioni²⁷.

Giovanni Paolo II ha lottato con tutte le sue forze, affinché l'Europa ritrovasse l'unità riconoscendo le sue radici cristiane²⁸ – come quando lanciava l'appello di inserire il riferimento alla cristianità nella Preambola nella Costituzione Europea²⁹ – ma capiva che la civiltà fondata ed edificata sul fondamento dei valori cristiani, a partire dai tempi moderni non aveva più la forza e la gioia della fede per portare Cristo ai miliardi di uomini e donne che ancora non lo conoscono³⁰. Aveva una visione profetica della missione e viaggiava il più possibile nelle giovani Chiese, proprio per promuovere il primo annuncio e il dialogo interreligioso chiamando i giovani e le giovani Chiese ad esserne protagonisti. Alla Xª Giornata Mondiale della Gioventù a Manila (5–10 gennaio 1995) ha gridato: “A ciascuno di voi Cristo dice: ‘Io mando voi’. Ecco l'ideale del giovane cristiano: sentirsi mandato da Cristo, avere nella vita lo scopo ben preciso di realizzare il mandato di Cristo. Non si può vivere senza ideali. I giovani (ma anche tutti quanti) hanno bisogno di dare senso ed entusiasmo alla vita, proporsi grandi mete, sentirsi protagonisti di grandi conquiste, spaziare per grandi orizzonti. Ecco, la missione è tutto questo”. “Il mondo è stanco delle vecchie ideologie” ha detto visitando Cuba nel 1998 e riferendosi, tra l'altro, al comunismo, secolarismo, neoliberalismo economico, consumismo, vuoto spirituale, nichilismo e spiegava che la missione non è un'ideologia, ma un ideale che risponde al vuoto e alla più profonda ricerca umana e che viene dall'avvenimento che ha cambiato il corso della storia: la persona di Gesù Cristo unico Salvatore dell'uomo.

La dimensione missionaria è essenziale per essere cristiani autentici invitando gli altri alla fede. Aggiungeva pure che la Chiesa non può non essere missionaria. Ma come? La missionarietà va intesa in due modi principali. Anzitutto verso i non cristiani, soprattutto le masse umane dell'Asia, che ancora attendono di conoscere la Buona Notizia della nascita del Salvatore. La Chiesa ha bisogno di missionari per annunciare Cristo alle genti, quelle che, come ha detto il papa, “anelano all'autentica liberazione e realizzazione. I poveri cercano giustizia e solidarietà; gli oppressi chiedono libertà e dignità; i ciechi invocano la luce e la verità”. La missione

²⁷ A. Riccardi, *Giovanni Paolo II Santo. La biografia*, Cinisello Balsamo 2014, 590.

²⁸ Giovanni Paolo II, *Esortazione apostolica post-sinodale “Ecclesia in Europa”*, 1–22, 28 giugno 2003, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/apost_exhortations/documents/hf_jp-ii_exh_20030628_ecclesia-in-europa.html.

²⁹ Cfr. C.M. Martini, *L'Europa interpellata dalla Redemptoris missio*, in: AA.VV., *Riflessioni sulla “Redemptoris missio”*, Roma 1991, 237–247.

³⁰ Cfr. M. Invernizzi, *L'Europa nel magistero della Chiesa*, “Christianità” 396 (2019) marzo–aprile, 5–17.

verso i non cristiani è la giovinezza della Chiesa. C'è anche un secondo modo di realizzare la missione: "Essere missionari nella nostra società". C'è una "missione nel quotidiano" a cui dobbiamo educarci: testimoniare e annunziare Cristo con la nostra vita nella famiglia, nella società, nella scuola, sul lavoro, in politica. Ma per esercitare questa missione dobbiamo andare controcorrente (il Vangelo è sempre all'opposizione rispetto allo spirito del mondo). Il papa, nel discorso della veglia di preghiera a Manila, ha ammonito i giovani con forza: "Attenti ai falsi maestri! Appartengono alle *élites* intellettuali della scienza, della cultura e dei mass media. Loro presentano un anti-vangelo che dichiara morto ogni ideale. Vogliono che voi siate come loro: dubbiosi e cinici". "Chi ci ha rubato le ali?" chiedeva un giovane filippino. Il Papa a Manila ha proposto, per volare, due ali ai giovani credenti: fede e missione³¹.

LA MISSIONARIETÀ E L'IMPEGNO SOCIALE DI GIOVANNI PAOLO II

La missione della Chiesa è quella di annunciare e portare in tutto il mondo il Vangelo della libertà e della liberazione da ogni forma di schiavitù, di alienazione, di qualsiasi ostacolo che impedisce all'uomo di realizzarsi pienamente e in tutta la sua dignità come persona umana creata a immagine e somiglianza di Dio e redenta dal Figlio di Dio fattosi uno di noi. In questa ottica si comprende quell'ardore di Giovanni Paolo II che lo accompagnava nei viaggi per dare a tutti un messaggio di liberazione. Un eclatante esempio è quello di Puebla in Messico nel gennaio 1979, quando ha aperto l'Assemblea del CELAM (Consiglio Episcopale dell'America latina e dei Caraibi). Il documento di preparazione era impostato sul tema "Vedere, Giudicare, Agire", che portava ai problemi economico-politico-sociali: "vedere" la situazione dei popoli dell'America Latina, "giudicare" di chi è la colpa e poi "agire" per liberare i popoli da ogni oppressione. Il Papa, nel discorso iniziale dice che lo schema di preparazione va cambiato: "Per liberare i popoli latino-americani, ripartiamo da Cristo". Giovanni Paolo II era profondamente innamorato di Gesù Cristo, di cui parlava come una persona viva che egli aveva incontrato e di cui si era innamorato. Ai vescovi e sacerdoti dell'America Latina diceva: "Lasciatevi prendere dall'amore di Cristo; lasciatevi penetrare, coinvolgere, illuminare e cambiare dall'amore di Cristo; nella misura in cui sarete tutti di Cristo, sarete anche tutti degli uomini". Riaffermava chiaramente che la missione della Chiesa è di natura religiosa, portare la salvezza in Cristo, liberando l'uomo prima dal

³¹ Cfr. P. Gheddo, <http://www.gheddopiero.it/index.php/lad-gentes-in-giovanni-xxiii-e-giovanni-paolo-ii-radio-maria-2014/>.

peccato personale e poi cambiando la società oppressiva attraverso l'azione e la testimonianza dei credenti in Cristo.

La Chiesa, portando il Vangelo di Gesù, si schiera inequivocabilmente dalla parte dei poveri. Pertanto riconoscendo il primato della conversione a Cristo nel senso verticale, insisteva anche sulla fraternità e solidarietà universale in senso orizzontale, proclamava di dover portare alla ribalta tutte le sofferenze e le ingiustizie del mondo, gli sfruttamenti, le oppressioni, le persecuzioni che cercano di rendere l'essere umano una "non-persona", "un insignificante", "un oggetto" ed annunciare, per contro, la liberazione integrale, evangelica della persona umana e della sua dignità³². Questa idea è intrinsecamente legata alla "nuova evangelizzazione" alla cui base c'è irrinunciabilmente la solidarietà verso i poveri; solidarietà che ha trovato la sua articolazione nella nota espressione "opzione preferenziale per i poveri" presente in tanti documenti di Giovanni Paolo II in cui trattava e sviluppava la dottrina sociale della Chiesa³³. In essi emerge la visione dell'uomo liberato nella sua totalità e ri-dotato della sua dignità; questo il papa lo confermava in modo pratico e concreto visitando 13 volte i vari villaggi della popolazione indigena in America Latina, parlando ai "favelados" di Rio de Janeiro, ai lebbrosi di Marituba in Amazzonia, agli indios di Oaxaca in Messico o ai pescatori di Baguio nelle Filippine; quando condannava con forza ogni violazione dei diritti dell'uomo davanti a dittatori come F. Marcos (Filippine), A. Pinochet (Cile), A. Stroessner (Paraguay), Mobutu Sese Seko (Zaire), Fidel Castro (a Cuba), i Sandinisti (in Nicaragua)³⁴. Per dimostrare l'amore di Cristo in modo concreto è stato convocato il Pontificio Consiglio *Cor Unum* al fine di aiutare i popoli di tutto il mondo che vivono nell'estrema miseria, povertà e sofferenza. È da notare che nella stragrande maggioranza dei casi i paesi aiutati sono quelli con popolazione non cristiana, spesso con maggioranza musulmana³⁵.

In Messico Giovanni Paolo II ha preso solennemente le difese degli indios. A Oaxaca un indio gli dice: "Santità, noi viviamo peggio delle vacche e dei porci. Abbiamo perso le nostre terre, noi che eravamo liberi, ora siamo schiavi". Il papa si stringe la testa fra le mani e rispondendo dice: "Il papa sta con queste masse di indios e di contadini, abbandonate ad un indegno livello di vita, a volte sfruttate

³² Basta menzionare solo alcune encicliche: *Redemptor hominis*, *Laborem exercens*, *Sollicitudo rei socialis*, *Centesimus annus*, *Veritatis splendor*, *Evangelium vitae*: Tutte le encicliche di Giovanni Paolo II, Paoline Editoriale Libri, Milano 2010³.

³³ Per una sintesi della dottrina sociale da Leone XIII fino a Benedetto XVI, si consiglia M. Ormas, *Umanesimo cristiano e modernità. Introduzione alle Encicliche sociali. Dalla "Rerum novarum" alla "Caritas in veritate"*, Città del Vaticano 2014.

³⁴ Cfr. G. Mazzoleni, *L'eredità missionaria di Giovanni Paolo II*, www.consolata.org/.../13273-le-eredita-missionaria-di-giovanni-paolo-ii.

³⁵ Cfr. R. Sarah, *Dio o niente. Conversazione sulla fede con Nicolas Diat...*, 179.

duramente. Ancora una volta gridiamo forte: rispettate l'uomo! Egli è l'immagine di Dio! Evangelizzate perché questo diventi realtà, affinché il Signore trasformi i cuori ed umanizzi i sistemi politici ed economici, partendo dall'impegno responsabile dell'uomo". Inoltre non si dimentichi la sua richiesta ai paesi ricchi di cancellare i debiti esteri dei popoli poveri nell'anno 2000 in occasione del grande giubileo, inteso nel senso biblico del termine³⁶. Nemmeno si deve scordare che è stato Giovanni Paolo II a far costruire sul territorio dello Stato Vaticano la casa per i poveri gestita dalle suore della Congregazione delle Missionarie della Carità fondata dalla beata Teresa di Calcutta. Gesti e fatti pieni di significato.

Sul piano politico e diplomatico voleva realizzare la vocazione missionaria attraverso e nella forma del dialogo. Basta pensare all'insistenza con cui cercava di instaurare e poi sviluppare i contatti di dialogo con i vari capi degli stati e delle nazioni, come ad esempio, con il capo dello Stato Sovietico M. Gorbačëv. Simili contatti di dialogo ha realizzato anche quando parlava del valore della cultura africana (in Benin) e dello "sviluppo dal volto umano" (in Gabon); egli incideva fortemente sulle coscienze dei popoli. Quante volte un popolo sofferente e umiliato (si pensi alla Guinea Equatoriale appena uscita dalla spaventosa dittatura di Macias Nguema) ha ricevuto dalla visita del papa il provvidenziale stimolo a riprendere con coraggio la via della riconciliazione e della ricostruzione³⁷.

LE SFIDE DELLA MISSIONE CRISTIANA E LA NECESSITÀ DELL'ENCICLICA

Anche se il papa esprimeva ottimismo riguardo all'opera missionaria che stava vivendo la sua "nuova primavera", tuttavia affermava già dall'inizio che "la missione di Cristo redentore, affidata alla Chiesa, è ancora ben lontana dal suo compimento" e "che tale missione è ancora agli inizi"³⁸. Inoltre sono ben evidenti i fattori negativi che causano perfino il rallentamento dell'evangelizzazione. Non mancano secondo il papa le difficoltà interne ed esterne che indeboliscono lo slancio missionario della Chiesa verso i non cristiani e questo deve preoccupare tutti i credenti in Cristo³⁹. Tra gli ostacoli esterni si potrebbero individuare: la ra-

³⁶ Non sarebbe stato opportuno in occasione dell'anno Santo della Misericordia 2016 di rifare lo stesso appello ai paesi ricchi, ai loro capi e governi? Invece non si è sentito nulla circa una iniziativa del genere da parte della Santa Sede.

³⁷ Cfr. P. Gheddo, *Missione senza se e senza ma. L'annuncio alle genti dal Concilio a Papa Francesco*, Bologna 2013, 119–120.

³⁸ RMi 1.

³⁹ Cfr. RMi 2; P. Gheddo, *Missione senza se e senza ma. L'annuncio alle genti dal Concilio a Papa Francesco...*, 122.

dicale secolarizzazione della vita, la rinascita del fondamentalismo nazionalistico e religioso, il ripiegamento sulla cultura laica, la mondanizzazione della Chiesa, la speranza intra-storica legata al primato dello sviluppo economico, scientifico, tecnologico, biogenetico ecc. Invece tra i fattori interni si potrebbero annoverare: la considerazione teologica delle religioni come fonti della rivelazione e come vie della salvezza, e quindi un radicale pluralismo religioso, la sottovalutazione della vocazione missionaria della Chiesa, l'idea della Chiesa considerata e ridotta all'*humanum* inteso nella sua realizzazione orizzontale, immanente, sociale e del benessere umano (economico, politico, culturale, progresso tecno-scientifico ecc.), in fin dei conti una vaga e priva del significato più profondo 'auto-realizzazione della persona'.

Se il papa nella *Redemptoris missio* punterà e riprenderà gli elementi costitutivi del messaggio evangelico come la centralità di Cristo, la salvezza realizzata pienamente nel Regno di Dio inteso escatologicamente (senza sottovalutare la sua dimensione storica), la necessità della Chiesa, la presenza e attività universale dello Spirito Santo, l'annuncio della salvezza eterna a tutti i popoli, sarà perché tiene conto degli attuali e, radicalmente presenti nella vita della società globalizzata d'oggi, fenomeni particolari che esprimono la profonda crisi della fede. La civiltà post-moderna prima di tutto si caratterizza per *il rifiuto di Dio*: la cultura benché non neghi evidentemente l'esistenza di Dio, non lo ritiene più di alcun significato. Secolarizzazione, laicismo e ateismo pratico significano il rifiuto del rapporto con Dio e della presenza di Dio nella società e nella cultura moderna. Semmai la relazione con Dio assume una forma del tutto individualistica e ricondotta al piano privato, diventando una *religione fai da te o credi a modo tuo*. Sul piano epistemologico ed etico il primato viene dato all'effimero, come dirà il papa otto anni dopo nella *Fides et ratio*⁴⁰. Per il *relativismo* non esiste una verità assoluta sull'uomo e sul suo destino, anzi è lo stesso relativismo che in certo qual modo diviene la nuova religione dell'uomo moderno⁴¹. Questi presupposti inevitabilmente portano, sul piano esistenziale, al *nichilismo*, cioè alla perdita del senso della vita. Se non esiste più una verità assoluta, non esistono più valori universali e meta-storici, quindi nulla per cui valga la pena di spendere la vita, difendere la verità anche dando la propria vita; tutto diventa provvisorio, transitorio, passeggero. Non si capisce più a che serve la vita dell'uomo, se non ad andare verso il nulla, cioè la morte, senza alcuna speranza⁴². Già da decenni nella cultura occidentale si può constatare la carenza della fede, l'eclissi del senso di Dio e dell'uomo,

⁴⁰ Cfr. FR 46.

⁴¹ Cfr. J. Ratzinger, *Fede, verità, tolleranza*, Siena 2003, 75, 87.

⁴² Cfr. P. Gheddo, *Missione senza se e senza ma. L'annuncio alle genti dal Concilio a Papa Francesco...*, 153–154.

la mancanza di conoscenza reale della dottrina di Gesù Cristo, la presa di distanza di certi paesi dalle loro radici cristiane e anche quella che Giovanni Paolo II chiamava un'“apostasia silenziosa”⁴³. Per questo i fenomeni specifici della cultura occidentale, caratterizzata dal ‘proselitismo ateo’, hanno portato Giovanni Paolo II a lanciare l'appello per una nuova evangelizzazione. L'immensa influenza economica, militare, tecnica, biogenetica e mediatica di un Occidente senza Dio potrebbe tradursi in un disastro per il mondo. Il cardinale Sarah, riallacciandosi all'appello di Giovanni Paolo II, afferma che se l'Occidente non si converte a Cristo e non risponde alla ‘nuova evangelizzazione’ potrebbe finire per paganizzare il mondo intero⁴⁴.

A tale crisi è legato l'orientamento di colmare il vuoto esistenziale con le speranze intra-storiche che vedono la salvezza umana realizzata nelle dimensioni immanenti. Infatti “salvezza” è un termine con molti significati. C'è nella nostra epoca una tendenza generale a ridurla a qualcosa di puramente secolare e temporale⁴⁵. “La tentazione oggi è ridurre il cristianesimo ad una sapienza meramente umana, quasi scienza del buon vivere. In un mondo fortemente secolarizzato è avvenuta una “graduale secolarizzazione della salvezza”, per cui ci si batte, sì, per l'uomo, ma per un uomo dimezzato, ridotto alla sola dimensione orizzontale”⁴⁶. Da qui nascono gli atteggiamenti comuni come materialismo e consumismo che vedono la vita umana volta ai beni terreni: benessere economico, potere politico, fama mediatica o carriera professionale. Già nel suo discorso ai partecipanti al congresso internazionale su “La salvezza oggi” tenutosi ad ottobre 1988 alla Pontificia Università Urbaniana, Giovanni Paolo II ha detto:

Correnti di pensiero e modelli di vita secolarizzati, sconvolgenti trasformazioni socio – culturali, meravigliose conquiste della scienza e della tecnica, sollecitazioni pressanti dei mezzi di comunicazione, l'idea stessa o il pregiudizio circa tutto quello che costituisce la modernità, possono far credere all'uomo d'oggi che il concetto di salvezza

⁴³ Un esempio dello “sradicamento” dalle origini cristiane si vede in certe posizioni delle Chiese dell'area germanica. In questo contesto può sembrare strano il silenzio di papa Francesco nel suo discorso ai vescovi tedeschi ricevuti il 20 novembre 2015 in cui ammonisce per certe tendenze nella Chiesa tedesca o indica i vari particolari della sua vita e, allo stesso tempo, non fa nessun accenno alla pratica estremamente diffusa e illegittima tra i pastori in Germania di ammettere i divorziati risposati alla Comunione Eucaristica. Cfr. I. Scaramuzzi, *Strutture nuove e perfette non rispondono all'erosione della fede*, <http://vaticaninsider.lastampa.it/vaticano/dettaglio-articolo/articolo/francesco-francis-francisco-44783/>.

⁴⁴ Cfr. R. Sarah, *Dio o niente. Conversazione sulla fede con Nicolas Diat...*, 188–189.

⁴⁵ Cfr. S. Karotemprel, *Motivazioni e validità permanente della missione cristiana*, in: AA.VV., *Riflessioni sulla “Redemptoris missio”...*, 41–42.

⁴⁶ RMi 11.

si riduca all'ambito temporale, così che egli possa trovare in sé e nel suo progresso terreno quanto occorre per realizzarla⁴⁷.

In tal modo si è realizzata la profezia articolata nella sua prima enciclica: “L'uomo d'oggi sembra essere sempre più minacciato da ciò che produce [...]; i frutti del suo lavoro si rivolgono contro l'uomo stesso [...] che pertanto vive sempre più nella paura”⁴⁸. Si parla di una promozione umana e degli umanesimi laici che in effetti risultano incapaci di rispondere e appagare i più profondi aneliti del cuore umano. Senza ignorare i problemi e la condizione di estrema povertà materiale e lo sfruttamento subito da molte popolazioni del mondo (problema che è stato profondamente affrontato nelle encicliche sociali), il papa afferma: “Il contributo della Chiesa e della sua opera evangelizzatrice per lo sviluppo dei popoli riguarda non soltanto il Sud del mondo, per combattervi la miseria materiale e il sottosviluppo, ma anche il Nord, che è esposto alla miseria morale e spirituale causata dal super-sviluppo”⁴⁹. Per tale motivo l'enciclica parlando dei destinatari e degli immensi areopaghi della missione cristiana contemporanea considera anche il mondo scristianizzato, ossia i popoli e le nazioni che avendo la loro storia e il loro passato strettamente legato alla fede cristiana comunque si sono sradicate da essi. In tale contesto il documento del magistero mette in guardia da qualsiasi concezione ‘regnocentrica’ della salvezza intesa o ridotta alla sua dimensione immanente, che pretenderebbe la realizzazione della missione della Chiesa in quanto impegnata primariamente o semplicemente nelle questioni sociali, politiche, economiche e così via. In questo contesto si capisce ancora di più il desiderio ardente di Giovanni Paolo II di ridare slancio alla vita missionaria della Chiesa, da lui chiamata nuova evangelizzazione in tempi in cui sempre più evidenti sono i disaccordi, i dissensi, le divisioni sulle questioni dogmatiche, etiche, legislative, pastorali e sociali non solo nel mondo, ma che penetrano anche la Chiesa provocando profondi disorientamenti tra i fedeli⁵⁰.

Un'altra sfida di fronte a cui sta oggi la validità della missione evangelizzatrice della Chiesa è piuttosto di carattere interno e teologico; precisamente si tratta della sempre più diffusa teologia del pluralismo religioso che non di rado assume una forma radicale. Infatti un notevole indebolimento dello slancio missionario

⁴⁷ <http://www.fjp2.com/fr/jean-paul-ii/bibliotheque-en-ligne/discours/10585-to-the-participants-at-the-international-missiology-congress-held-by-the-urbanian-pontifical-university-october-7-1988>.

⁴⁸ RH 15.

⁴⁹ RMi 59.

⁵⁰ Cfr. R. Sarah, *Dio o niente. Conversazione sulla fede con Nicolas Diat*, 125, 149, 187–188.

è anche dovuto in gran parte ad un certo relativismo religioso⁵¹ espresso da alcune correnti teologiche indicate dal papa⁵². Nella seconda metà del XX secolo la ricerca teologica su una piattaforma comune per l'umanità intera in ordine alla salvezza, ha portato molti teologi a optare per un'accettazione teoretica del pluralismo religioso. In modo molto sintetico, secondo la loro tesi, la salvezza e la rivelazione per l'uomo, sia che gli sia donata da un Dio personale, sia che provenga da forze intrinseche all'uomo stesso, si basa sull'evidenza della volontà salvifica universale di Dio confermata dalle Scritture; si basa inoltre sul fatto della presenza di uomini santi e buoni in tutte le religioni ispirate dalle autentiche esperienze di Dio; ed infine sul fatto che lo Spirito di Dio è all'opera in mezzo a tutti i popoli e nell'universo intero sempre nello stesso modo e sempre con gli stessi effetti. Secondo il pluralismo religioso radicale qualunque cosa faccia da intermediario tra il Divino, l'Assoluto, il Trascendente, è sempre assoluto per la salvezza dell'uomo. A questo punto tutte le religioni, compreso il cristianesimo, sarebbero solo varianti culturali dell'esperienza umana o probabili esperienze mistiche del Trascendente⁵³. Secondo i propugnatori della teologia pluralista delle religioni la tradizionale pretesa cristiana sull'unicità e universalità della rivelazione salvifica in Gesù Cristo, sarebbe il risultato di condizionamenti culturali come tutte le altre esperienze religiose, e pertanto devono essere abbandonate in favore dell'unità umana, del reciproco rispetto, del dialogo svolto su una comune piattaforma⁵⁴. Questi presupposti comportano alcune conseguenze sconcertanti per la comprensione teologica della missione cristiana: la proclamazione di Gesù Cristo come unico e universale mediatore della salvezza è "assurda", "arrogante", "mal interpretata", o almeno qualcosa da passare sotto silenzio nell'epoca del dialogo, della tolleranza e del mutuo arricchimento. La fede nell'unicità e universalità di Cristo in ordine alla salvezza è un'esperienza soggettiva senza una base obiettiva nella realtà e nella storia⁵⁵. Tale impostazione teologica ha messo ovviamente in crisi la cristologia, l'ecclesiologia e la teologia della missione. Sono fallite le ragioni d'essere dell'attività missionaria dei cristiani. Per questo sembrano un grido di allarme le parole del cardinale Joseph Tomko, prefetto

⁵¹ Cfr. A. Wolanin, *Linee attuali della "theologia missionis"*, in: AA.Vv., *Cristo Chiesa Missione. Commento alla "Redemptoris missio"*, Pontificia Università Urbaniana, Roma 1992, 42.

⁵² Cfr. RMi 35.

⁵³ Cfr. W.C. Smith, *Theology and the Worlds' Religious History*, in: *Towards a Universal Theology of Religion*, ed. L. Swidler, New York 1978, 51–72; G. Kaufman, *Religious Diversity, Historical Consciousness and Christian Theology*, in: *The Myth of Christian Uniqueness*, eds. P. Knitter, J. Hick, New York 1988, 3–15; P. Knitter, *No Other Name?*, New York 1985.

⁵⁴ G. Kaufman, *Religious Diversity, Historical Consciousness and Christian Theology...*, 3–15.

⁵⁵ Cfr. P. Knitter, *Hans Küng's Theological Rubicon*, in: *Towards a Universal Theology of Religion...*, 225–229; L. Newbigin, *The Gospel in a Pluralist Society*, Grand Rapids 1989, 25.

di *Propaganda Fide*, pronunciate nella prolusione al congresso internazionale, già menzionato prima, su “La salvezza oggi”, tenutosi nel 1988 alla Pontificia Università Urbaniana di Roma che esponevano i dubbi e le obiezioni degli stessi missionari che provavano ed avvertivano come una ferita alla loro vocazione e all’impegno di tutta la vita: “che senso ha annunciare Cristo, se gli uomini si salvano anche senza di lui? Se la rivelazione cristiana è una delle tante espressioni della volontà di Dio? Se le altre religioni possono ugualmente portare a Dio e il dialogo può sostituire l’annuncio? Se l’evangelizzazione consiste principalmente nella promozione della giustizia sociale? Se i missionari non sono più accettati o graditi come annunciatori del Vangelo? Questa preoccupazione è stata espressa dal papa già all’inizio dell’enciclica⁵⁶ e in seguito ribadita in modo ancora più deciso:

una delle ragioni più gravi dello scarso interesse per l’impegno missionario è la mentalità indifferentista, largamente diffusa, purtroppo, anche tra i cristiani, spesso radicata in visioni teologiche non corrette e improntata a un relativismo religioso che porta a ritenere che «una religione vale l’altra»⁵⁷.

Questo contesto storico – teologico è indispensabile per comprendere fino in fondo l’intenzione del papa di scrivere l’enciclica correggendo le idee sbagliate e chiarendo i fondamenti della fede e della missione, intrinsecamente legati. Innanzitutto ha come uno dei principali obiettivi quello di chiarire la confusione teologica sorta intorno alla missione alle genti, al dialogo con le religioni non cristiane e al rapporto fra l’annuncio di Cristo e lo sviluppo dell’uomo e dei popoli⁵⁸. In tale contesto emerge ancor più la necessità dell’enciclica missionaria che con la sua esortazione e incoraggiamento, malgrado le difficoltà interne ed esterne, chiama a vincere i comportamenti pessimisti o inattivi: “Ciò che conta [...] è la fiducia che viene dalla fede, cioè dalla certezza che non siamo noi protagonisti della missione, ma Gesù Cristo e il suo Spirito”⁵⁹. La *Redemptoris missio* è stata giudicata da alcuni teologi l’enciclica più rappresentativa del pontificato di Giovanni Paolo II, che con tutti i suoi viaggi, fino agli estremi confini del mondo, dava nitidamente l’idea di essere il Pontefice della Chiesa cattolica, cioè universale, missionaria. Diversi ne hanno lodato lo stile semplice e immediato. Il cardinale Godfried Daneels di Bruxelles ha scritto che è “il programma di lavoro per il prossimo millennio”. Il cardinale Joseph Tomko, aveva ottenuto un’enciclica per il XXV dell’*Ad gentes*, l’unico fra i 16

⁵⁶ Cfr. RMi 4.

⁵⁷ RMi 36.

⁵⁸ Cfr. P. Gheddo, *Missione senza se e senza ma. L’annuncio alle genti dal Concilio a Papa Francesco...*, 127.

⁵⁹ RMi 36.

documenti del Vaticano II aggiornato con un'enciclica. Tuttavia l'idea ricorrente a quel tempo, nelle alte sfere della Curia romana, era che un'enciclica per le missioni era troppo: non è più il momento di porre in risalto l'urgenza e il valore specifico della missione alle genti, poiché tutta la Chiesa è missionaria e tutti i popoli hanno bisogno di missione. Anche nell'opinione pubblica occidentale (e cattolica) l'enciclica ha avuto uno scarso impatto. L'enciclica missionaria non ha quasi fatto notizia e anche in seguito, la stampa cattolica e missionaria l'hanno quasi dimenticata, forse perché, secondo i primi affrettati commenti, non diceva nulla di nuovo rispetto all'*Ad Gentes* del Concilio Vaticano II. Anche parecchio tempo dopo, riviste teologiche cattoliche scrivevano che era una rilettura del Decreto conciliare.

Questa opinione rispecchia l'ignoranza anche da parte di chi l'ha letta, ma non l'ha capita in profondità. Prima di tutto l'enciclica ha confermato l'*Ad gentes*, in un momento in cui difficoltà esterne e interne, come è stato detto sopra, avevano indebolito lo slancio missionario della Chiesa. Il fatto che il papa abbia voluto fare un'enciclica specifica sul primo annuncio del Vangelo ai non cristiani, ha un significato importante che va richiamato! Anzi nell'enciclica dice: "Proprio il contatto diretto con i popoli che ignorano Cristo, mi ha ancor più convinto dell'urgenza di tale attività (missionaria)"⁶⁰.

Giovanni Paolo II introduce anche l'espressione "nuova evangelizzazione", cioè nuova nel suo ardore, nei suoi metodi, nelle sue espressioni e anche in quanto rivolta al mondo scristianizzato⁶¹. Questo concetto, tanto caro a papa Wojtyła, è stato usato da lui stesso per la prima volta nel 1983 ad Haiti, in occasione dell'inizio del novenario per la celebrazione del V° centenario dell'evangelizzazione nelle Americhe⁶².

LA CHIESA MISSIONARIA DI FRONTE ALLE PROBLEMATICHE SFIDE DEL SINODO AMAZZONICO

Solo brevemente e in modo sintetico ci si può soffermare ad individuare alcuni elementi prospettati, discussi o avvenuti durante il Sinodo Amazzonico (6–27 ottobre 2019, Roma) e riflettere su di essi alla luce della dottrina sulla Chiesa che – come ricorda e ribadisce la *Redemptoris missio* – per sua natura è missionaria⁶³. Una attenta lettura del documento finale del Sinodo, ma anche dell'*Instrumen-*

⁶⁰ RMi 1.

⁶¹ Cfr. G. Gutiérrez, G.L. Müller, *Dalla parte dei poveri. Teologia della liberazione, teologia della Chiesa*, Padova 2013, 15, 42.

⁶² Cfr. M. Zago, *Il contenuto della nuova evangelizzazione*, in: *Omnis Terra*, aprile–giugno 1990, 104–109.

⁶³ Cfr. RMi 5.

tum laboris, suscita l'impressione di una certa discontinuità tra le linee principali dell'attuale magistero ecclesiale⁶⁴ e il contenuto della *Redemptoris missio* è il suo linguaggio. Già due cose colpiscono in riferimento sia al sinodo stesso che al suo linguaggio. La prima cosa riguarda la stessa scelta di concentrarsi sulla regione amazzonica, come ragione "teologica"(?) per prendere in considerazione e analizzare alcune questioni della Chiesa nella sua universalità, ossia cattolicità. Il grosso rischio sta nel fatto che le soluzioni di carattere dottrinale, morale, disciplinare, pastorali e così via, derivanti dall'analisi della situazione particolare della Chiesa amazzonica possano avere ripercussioni inaccettabili per la Chiesa universale. La frammentazione della Chiesa percepibile attraverso il termine spesso usato "la Chiesa dal volto amazzonico" non ha molto a che fare con la Chiesa pluriforme di cui parla ad esempio Giovanni Paolo II nella *Novo millennio ineunte*⁶⁵, a cui si richiama l'*Instrumentum laboris* del Sinodo, nel numero 110. Pare dunque che non sia metodologicamente giustificabile affinché i temi ecclesiologici inerenti la vita di tutta la Chiesa siano trattati secondo il detto "*pars pro toto*", con il ripiego alla fraintesa "pluriformità". Il secondo problema è relativo al linguaggio sinodale dove – riportando solo il testo del documento finale del Sinodo⁶⁶ – non appaiono nemmeno una volta tra i concetti specifici della fede della Chiesa: rivelazione, salvezza, redenzione, risurrezione, eternità, penitenza, santità (santo), Santissimo Sacramento, Trinità, adorazione ecc. Ed altri, come preghiera, liturgia, peccato (nel senso strettamente teologico) – appaiono una sola volta. Invece 29 volte sono citati i termini: cultura, inculturazione, culturale, interculturalità. Il sinodo dimostra evidentemente il suo orientamento orizzontale con gli accenti posti sulle questioni sociali, ambientaliste, ecologiche, politiche, pluralistiche (teologia delle religioni), perdendo di vista, allo stesso tempo, ciò che fa parte della sua identità e della sua natura.

LA STRATEGIA DEL SINODO: COSA E COME FARE PER CAMBIARE LA DOTTRINA DI FEDE E DI MORALE?

La prima questione che si impone riguarda la domanda: si può essere sicuri che al sinodo a Roma conoscano la regione di cui si stanno occupando in questi giorni? Non è forse che l'Amazzonia di cui si parla è solo un luogo teologico

⁶⁴ Anche se il sinodo non ha di per sé il valore del magistero ufficiale, ma ha un notevole influsso su di esso.

⁶⁵ Cfr. Giovanni Paolo II, *Lettera apostolica*, "Novo millennio ineunte" 40, 6 gennaio 2001, http://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/apost_letters/2001/documents/hf_jp-ii_apl_20010106_novo-millennio-ineunte.html.

⁶⁶ Sinodo Amazzonico, *Il Documento finale: Chiesa alleata dell'Amazzonia*, <https://www.vatican-news.va/it/vaticano/news/2019-10/sintesi-documento-sinodo-chiesa-alleata-amazzonia.html>.

preso in ostaggio da un certo modo di fare missione con lo scopo di stravolgere la dottrina e introdurre una nuova fede?⁶⁷. Infatti l'*Instrumentum laboris*⁶⁸ sembra dimostrare una insufficiente e unilaterale conoscenza ed esposizione della vera realtà di tutta la zona amazzonica. Davvero l'intera popolazione amazzonica è da considerare nativa? Almeno non in Venezuela. Nelle diocesi già stabilite in questa regione, non nei vicariati, vi è una maggioranza di creoli, venezuelani bianchi o misti e afro-venezuelani che non hanno quella cultura indigena. Lo stesso accade a Manaus e Belem, in Brasile⁶⁹.

Secondo il vescovo Robert Mutsaerts, ausiliare di Hertogenbosch in Olanda, la Chiesa durante questo Sinodo per l'Amazzonia parla di qualcosa di diverso da ciò che effettivamente vuole raggiungere⁷⁰. Tra il parlare (dialogare, discutere, incontrarsi, condividere ecc.) e il fine del sinodo c'è un abisso quanto ai contenuti da raggiungere. Ogni volta si sentiva suonare la stessa melodia: nuovi percorsi, l'ascolto delle popolazioni indigene, il cambiamento climatico e la Madre Terra. Sembra che nessuno voglia veramente menzionare i problemi fondamentali⁷¹.

In simile modo si esprime il cardinale venezuelano Jorge Urosa Savino:

è sorprendente che la maggior parte dei commenti sul Sinodo, fatti di recente dagli ecclesiastici, siano collegati alla sua preparazione, toccando solo o principalmente l'aspetto ecologico e i problemi di ordine sociale ed economico delle popolazioni amazzoniche. Questa sembra essere la cosa più importante per la Chiesa. Toccano poco l'aspetto religioso e spirituale della missione della Chiesa di annunciare la Parola e comunicare i doni di Cristo all'umanità. Anche il documento di lavoro dà questa

⁶⁷ Cfr. A. Zambrano, "In quei riti c'è il diavolo". *Parola di vescovo amazzonico*, 23.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/in-quei-riti-ce-il-diavolo-parola-di-vescovo-amazzonico>.

⁶⁸ Assemblea speciale del Sinodo dei vescovi per la regione panamazzonica, *Instrumentum laboris*, "Amazzonia: nuovo cammino per la Chiesa per la una ecologia integrale", Vaticano, 17 giugno 2019, <http://www.sinodoamazonico.va/content/sinodoamazonico/it/documenti/l-instrumentum-laboris-per-il-sinodo-sull-amazzonia1.html>.

⁶⁹ Cfr. J. Urosa Savino, *Amazzonia, quando parliamo di evangelizzazione?*, 1.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/amazzonia-quando-parliamo-di-evangelizzazione>.

⁷⁰ Ad esempio quanto al problema degli indios in Amazzonia. L'Amazzonia non sta per essere distrutta, l'Amazzonia è intatta. Non ha fondamento il mito dell'Amazzonia che brucia. [...] Secondo un recente studio dell'Istituto brasiliano di geografia e statistiche gli indios nel Paese sarebbero 897mila, di cui solo 180mila vivono in Amazzonia. Come si giustifica un Sinodo di fronte a un numero tanto ridotto di popolazione? Cfr. *Il sinodo per l'Amazzonia, forse una nuova religione tribale?*, <https://cronicasdepapafrancisco.com/2019/10/08/il-sinodo-per-lamaz-zonia-forse-una-nuova-religione-tribale/>.

⁷¹ Cfr. A. Zambrano, *Il Sinodo per l'Amazzonia segue un'agenda politicamente corretta*, 24.10.2019, <https://anticattocomunismo.wordpress.com/2019/10/24/lagenda-politicamente-corretta-del-sinodo-sullamaz-zonia/>.

impressione, quindi nel Sinodo si dovrà correggere il percorso e si dovrà mettere in evidenza la centralità dell'azione evangelizzatrice e pastorale per la rivitalizzazione della Chiesa in 'Amazzonia'⁷².

Di fronte a tale preoccupante domanda non si sottrae il cardinale Müller spiegando schiettamente che oggi è “assai inquietante come in alcuni «testi ecclesiastici di riforma» non venga fatta alcuna menzione di Dio, di Cristo, delle Sacre Scritture dell'Antico e Nuovo Testamento, o come il Vangelo rischi di venir soffocato sotto un mucchio di retorica relativa alla preoccupazione socio-psicologica e pastorale”⁷³. E poi aggiunge che i cattolici non credono in

un Dio pagano che ci parla nei miti e nelle utopie, nella dinamica degli eventi, nei processi da noi avviati, nel sangue della razza, nello spirito popolare o nelle realtà immorali della vita. La teologia riconosce come locus theologicus soltanto l'unica Parola di Dio nella Sacra Scrittura e nella Tradizione, mentre il Magistero può solo rivendicare un'autorità interpretativa⁷⁴.

Proprio come gli apostoli, anche i vescovi e i sacerdoti sono solo ed esclusivamente “servi di Cristo e amministratori dei misteri di Dio ai quali si richiede solo che ognuno risulti fedele”. Non devono reinventare il cristianesimo, considerando se stessi più saggi di Gesù stesso, che sarebbe ancora limitato dalla vecchia visione del mondo e i cui insegnamenti avrebbero urgente bisogno di essere adattati al pensiero illuminato dei suoi discepoli di oggi⁷⁵.

Sulla linea del ragionamento del cardinale Müller, anche Martin Hähnle dell'Università Cattolica di Eichstätt-Ingolstadt asserisce che Il Sinodo sembra essere il punto focale di un'“agenda ecclesiale”. La Chiesa moderna, soprattutto dal XIX sec., ha sostituito l'idea della Divina Provvidenza con il progresso; sostituzione che è stata accompagnata dalla liquefazione della dogmatica e dalla relativizzazione delle norme morali. Questo processo sta raggiun-

⁷² J. Urosa Savino, *Amazzonia, quando parliamo di evangelizzazione?*, 1.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/amazzonia-quando-parliamo-di-evangelizzazione>.

⁷³ Cfr. M. Tosatti, *Papa e vescovi servono il Magistero, non ricevono nuove rivelazioni neopagane*, 28.09.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/papa-e-vescovi-servono-il-magistero-non-ricevono-nuove-rivelazioni-neopagane>.

⁷⁴ M. Tosatti, *Papa e vescovi servono il Magistero, non ricevono nuove rivelazioni neopagane*, 28.09.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/papa-e-vescovi-servono-il-magistero-non-ricevono-nuove-rivelazioni-neopagane>.

⁷⁵ Cfr. M. Tosatti, *Papa e vescovi servono il Magistero, non ricevono nuove rivelazioni neopagane*, 28.09.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/papa-e-vescovi-servono-il-magistero-non-ricevono-nuove-rivelazioni-neopagane>.

gendo il suo vertice proprio nel Sinodo e ne è segno il fatto che l'assise sinodale si mostra priva della forza di forgiare una cultura ed una mentalità. Non è più il cristianesimo che ha la forza di "incorporare" il mondo, come, per esempio, San Tommaso seppe "battezzare" Aristotele, ma il contrario. Questo adeguamento della Chiesa allo spirito del mondo è la ragione per cui il mondo riesce ad imporre le sue esigenze, alle quali la Chiesa sta cedendo sempre di più. Hähnel ricorda che nel 2011 a Friburgo, in occasione del suo viaggio apostolico in Germania, Benedetto XVI aveva cercato di fermare questo processo, chiedendo alla Chiesa di "de-mondanizzarsi"⁷⁶.

Secondo l'opinione di A. Strumia, la crescente tendenza ad attenuare l'importanza della dottrina e della verità all'interno della Chiesa è un fenomeno palese ed esplicito, quasi di moda, nella prassi del mondo cattolico. La sua causa secondo alcuni risiede nel rifiuto del fondamento metafisico della teologia, nell'assunzione di una teologia "narrativa" poggiata su esperienze ed opinioni soggettive. Ora da qualche tempo, in particolare con il pontificato di papa Francesco, ci si chiede di trovare il modo per eliminare il "fondamento" metafisico della teologia e quindi, di conseguenza, per cambiare la dottrina di fede e di morale. Il metodo assunto consiste nel puntare sugli aspetti storico-esperienziali che aprono le porte alle ideologie come ambientalismo, animalismo, ecologismo, pauperismo, immigrazionismo illimitato e in questi ultimi giorni al panteismo e al paganesimo che hanno fatto ingresso anche in Vaticano, non limitandosi a fermarsi sulla facciata della basilica di san Pietro⁷⁷.

TRA L'INCULTURAZIONE CRISTIANA E LA PAGANIZZAZIONE DEL CRISTIANESIMO

Già l'*Instrumentum laboris* del sinodo parlava dell'inculturazione della fede, ma dando un valore quasi autonomo e autosufficiente alle culture native in ordine alla salvezza e non valorizzando o proponendo l'evangelizzazione dei popoli anche attraverso l'inculturazione. Questa infatti è la necessaria trasformazione dell'esistenza umana e della vita religiosa, sociale, culturale e familiare dei popoli attraverso il Vangelo di Cristo e la morale biblica, cristiana e cattolica⁷⁸. Nell'ottica della *Redemptoris missio* l'incarnazione dell'Evangelo nelle tradizioni dei

⁷⁶ Cfr. L. Scrosati, *Chiesa mondana e senza verità: come siamo arrivati fino a qui*, 27.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/chiesa-mondana-e-senza-verita-come-siamo-arrivati-fino-a-qui>.

⁷⁷ Cfr. A. Strumia, *Come ha fatto la Chiesa a ridursi così?*, 11.10.2019, <https://anticattocomunismo.wordpress.com/2019/10/11/come-ha-fatto-la-chiesa-a-ridursi-cosi/>.

⁷⁸ Cfr. A.A. Roest Crolius, *Missione e inculturazione*, in: *La missione del Redentore. Studi sull'enciclica missionaria di Giovanni Paolo II*, eds. E. dal Covolo, A. Triacca, Torino 1992, 247–255.

popoli avviene mediante l'inculturazione⁷⁹, cioè l'intima "trasformazione degli autentici valori culturali mediante l'integrazione nel cristianesimo e il radicamento del cristianesimo nelle varie culture"⁸⁰. È un punto che deve essere rivisto e migliorato⁸¹.

Una delle più grandi preoccupazioni dei fedeli che seguivano le voci dell'aula sinodale e gli eventi che accompagnavano il sinodo, erano i riti tribali delle varie tradizioni religiose, che avendo il carattere pagano, entravano nelle cerimonie svolte nelle chiese cattoliche e proprio lì, in presenza perfino dei partecipanti al sinodo, entravano come parte integrante della celebrazione liturgica o para-liturgica. Questi riti pagano-amazzonici si sono celebrati in questi giorni perfino in Vaticano, a cominciare dalla cerimonia nei Giardini Vaticani sotto lo sguardo del Papa. Il Sinodo sull'Amazzonia entrerà nella storia come il Sinodo di Pachamama? Chi è Pachamama? È la Dea terra, una divinità pagana venerata dai Padri Sinodali riuniti a Roma in queste settimane. L'immagine di Pachamama, ha fatto la sua apparizione nei Giardini Vaticani, il 4 ottobre (festa di san Francesco d'Assisi), alla vigilia dell'apertura del Sinodo sull'Amazzonia. Nel corso di una cerimonia guidata da una donna india dell'Amazzonia, alla presenza di papa Francesco e di cardinali e vescovi, sono state adorate due statuette in legno di Pachamama, raffiguranti due donne nude e incinte una di fronte a un'altra, mentre un'altra statuetta rappresentava un soggetto maschile nudo e pronto all'atto sessuale.

L'8 ottobre la statua di Pachamama è ricomparsa nella chiesa di Santa Maria in Traspontina, prima in un cesto, poi in una canoa trasportata nella Chiesa nel corso di un'altra cerimonia pagana organizzata dalla Rete Ecclesiale Panamazzoneica (REPAM). In una cappella laterale di Santa Maria in Traspontina è stato sistemato un poster per mostrare che "tutto è collegato", secondo l'insegnamento della *Laudato si* di papa Francesco. In esso si vede la foto di un animale, un piccolo mammifero che succhia il seno di una donna indigena nuda che sull'altro braccio porta un bambino. Infine la Pachamama, sempre sulla sua canoa, è ricomparsa nella Via Crucis amazzonica, (secondo tanti fedeli una cosa blasfema), che si è svolta il 19 ottobre alla presenza, tra gli altri, del cardinale Pedro Barreto, vicepresidente della REPAM, che ha organizzato tutti questi eventi che difficilmente possono essere visti come vera inculturazione secondo il pensiero il Concilio Vaticano II e il magistero successivo, inclusa soprattutto la *Redemptoris missio*. Piuttosto si potrebbe parlare di una precisa e deliberata manovra di infiltrare all'interno della fede della Chiesa elementi che le sono intrinsecamente contraddittori.

⁷⁹ Cfr. RMi 52–54.

⁸⁰ RMi 52.

⁸¹ J. Urosa Savino, *Amazzonia, quando parliamo di evangelizzazione?*, 1.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/amazzonia-quando-parliamo-di-evangelizzazione>.

Fino al 21 ottobre, le statuette di Pachamama sono state ospitate nella chiesa della Traspontina, dove ogni giorno si è svolto un rituale amazzonico di carattere magico ed esoterico, cioè diabolico, intitolato “Momenti di spiritualità amazzonica”⁸².

La cosiddetta Chiesa dal volto amazzonico si presenta piuttosto come un prodotto da laboratorio, frutto delle direttive dell'*Instrumentum laboris*, più che un esito inculturato di un seme cristiano che, immesso nella cultura primigenia, ha portato a un culto e a una cultura cattolica. Il 12 ottobre è stata celebrata la *Misa por la Tierra Sin Males*, creata nel 1979 e già condannata dalla Santa Sede. Veniva “celebrata” in Brasile nell’ambito della Teologia india e in occasione del Sinodo di nuovo riproposta nella chiesa di Santa Maria in Traspontina in un trionfo di rivendicazioni anticolonialiste e senza alcunché di cattolico. Anzi, si chiede perdono per il battesimo imposto agli Indios come un marchio impresso nel corpo e si loda la terra che è stata saccheggiata. Si tratta dunque di una messa blasfema in cui il battesimo viene bestemmiato e definito come il “marchio del bestiame umano”⁸³ – spiega José Antonio Ureta⁸⁴, studioso e autore del noto libro “*Il «cambio di paradigma» di Papa Francesco: continuità o rottura nella missione della Chiesa?: Bilancio quinquennale del suo pontificato*”⁸⁵.

La risposta ai riti pagani di questi giorni a Roma arriva da un vescovo amazzonico che conosce l’Amazzonia più di molti padri sinodali. Di fatto, il vescovo emerito di Belem, Azcona, ha spiegato che in certi di “quei riti c’è il diavolo, c’è la magia [...] Quelli visti in questi giorni sono sacrilegi demoniaci che producono scandalo. Noi in Amazzonia questo lo sappiamo bene”⁸⁶. In seguito, riferendosi sempre alla statua di Pachamama, il vescovo Azcona ha ribadito che essa “non è e non sarà mai la Vergine Maria. Dire che quella statua rappresenta la Madonna è

⁸² Cfr. R. de Mattei, *Alla fine il Sinodo sull’Amazzonia entrerà nella storia come il Sinodo di Pachamama*, 25.10.2019, <https://www.radioromalibera.org/cultura-cattolica/analisi-e-commenti/il-sinodo-di-pacha-mama/>.

⁸³ Cfr. A. Zambrano, *Hanno portato via il Signore! L’Amazzonia entra in chiesa con un culto pagano*, 12.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/hanno-portato-via-il-signore-lamazzone-entra-in-chiesa-con-un-culto-pagano>.

⁸⁴ José Antonio Ureta è membro dell’Associazione Tradizione Famiglia Proprietà (TFP), nata per diffondere il pensiero e l’azione di un grande leader cattolico, il prof. Plinio Corrêa de Oliveira (1908–1995), ispiratore di un’opera spirituale ormai diffusa in tutto il mondo. In Italia, la TFP pubblica il trimestrale *Tradizione Famiglia Proprietà*, e organizza conferenze ed incontri, collaborando a questo scopo con altre realtà del mondo cattolico, <https://www.atfp.it/chi-siamo/108-le-societa-per-la-difesa>.

⁸⁵ Cfr. J.A. Ureta, *Il “cambio di paradigma” di Papa Francesco: continuità o rottura nella missione della Chiesa?: Bilancio quinquennale del suo pontificato*, San Paolo 2018.

⁸⁶ Cfr. A. Zambrano, “*In quei riti c’è il diavolo*”. *Parola di vescovo amazzonico*, 23.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/in-quei-riti-ce-il-diavolo-parola-di-vescovo-amazzonico>.

una bugia. Non è la Signora dell'Amazzonia perché l'unica Signora dell'Amazzonia è Maria di Nazareth. Non facciamo mescolanze sincretiste. Tutto ciò è impossibile: la Madre di Dio è la Regina del Cielo e della terra"⁸⁷. In tale contesto il vescovo Azcona riferendosi ai principi teologici e pastorali dell'*Instrumentum laboris*, sottolinea l'urgenza del discernimento dello Spirito Santo che tanto piace a parlare al papa Francesco. Bisogna dunque "distinguere quello che viene dal demonio o dalla mente umana da quello che viene dallo Spirito Santo. Questo discernimento è fondamentale oggi per appartenere alla Chiesa e molto più per evangelizzare"⁸⁸.

LA DE-FALSIFICAZIONE DEL TERMINE "PROSELITISMO" E LA PERMANENTE VALIDITÀ DEL MANDATO MISSIONARIO

Nelle sue riflessioni il vescovo olandese Mutsaerts nota che "i missionari vengono improvvisamente ritratti come imperialisti che hanno imposto i loro valori ai popoli indigeni. Questo significa che questi missionari non hanno mai significato nulla per i popoli indigeni? Hanno rischiato la vita per proclamare il Vangelo. Quanti martiri ci sono ora?". Il fatto è che tutto questo non ha niente a che vedere con la compassione per le tribù indigene. Sta diventando sempre più chiaro che il Sinodo viene usato impropriamente per portare avanti un'agenda nascosta"⁸⁹.

Di fronte alla diversità delle religioni, culture, nazioni, popoli, tradizioni la Chiesa "nulla rigetta di quanto è vero e santo in queste religioni [...] Tuttavia essa annuncia, ed è tenuta ad annunciare, il Cristo che è «via, verità e vita»"⁹⁰. In forza di questo compito, affidato alla Chiesa intera, ogni cristiano è chiamato alla "diffusione del regno di Cristo su tutta la terra a gloria di Dio Padre, [e a] rendere partecipi tutti gli uomini della salvezza operata dalla redenzione, e per mezzo di essi ordinare effettivamente il mondo intero a Cristo"⁹¹.

Il documento finale del Sinodo nel capitolo III in cui parla della "conversione culturale" esprime la preoccupazione, mettendo in guardia i cristiani e i missionari dal "proselitismo". Infatti dice:

⁸⁷ Cfr. ibidem.

⁸⁸ Cfr. ibidem.

⁸⁹ Cfr. A. Zambrano, *Il Sinodo per l'Amazzonia segue un'agenda politicamente corretta*, 24.10.2019, <https://anticattocomunismo.wordpress.com/2019/10/24/lagenda-politicamente-corretta-del-sinodo-sullamazzone/>.

⁹⁰ Concilio Vaticano II, *Dichiarazione sulle relazioni della chiesa con le religioni non-cristiane "Nostra aetate"*, 2, EV 1/853-871.

⁹¹ Concilio Vaticano II, *Decreto sull'apostolato dei laici "Apostolicam actuositatem"*, 2, EV 1/912-1041.

Nell'ottica, poi, dell'inculturazione – ovvero dell'incarnazione del Vangelo nelle culture indigene – spazio viene dato alla teologia india e alla pietà popolare, le cui espressioni vanno apprezzate, accompagnate, promosse e talvolta “purificate”, poiché sono momenti privilegiati di evangelizzazione che devono condurre all'incontro con Cristo. L'annuncio del Vangelo, infatti, non è un processo di distruzione, ma di crescita e di consolidamento di quei semi Verbi presenti nelle culture. Di qui, il rifiuto netto di “un'evangelizzazione in stile colonialista” e del “proselitismo”, in favore di un annuncio inculturato che promuova una Chiesa dal volto amazzonico, in pieno rispetto e parità con la storia, la cultura e lo stile di vita delle popolazioni locali⁹².

Sembra che questo passo del documento finale non c'entra nulla con l'attuale situazione in cui si trova la Chiesa, come se il ragionamento degli autori di questo brano fosse completamente staccato dalla realtà e dal contesto storico in cui vivono i cristiani. Come parlare oggi del rischio di “un'evangelizzazione in stile colonialista” se, prima di tutto, le questioni politiche dei paesi “colonizzanti” sono del tutto separate dalle questioni di religione, a nome del principio, comunemente assunto dal mondo moderno, cioè della separazione o dell'autonomia tra la politica (l'ordine laico) e la Chiesa (l'ordine della fede). In secondo luogo, come è possibile parlare del proselitismo oggi, quando il 25–30% (300 milioni) delle popolazioni cattoliche vive nelle condizioni di persecuzione proprio per il fatto di essere cristiani o membri della Chiesa? Si dovrebbe chiedere ai padri sinodali in quale parte del mondo sarebbe così evidente l'agire distruttivo da parte della Chiesa nei confronti delle culture, tradizioni, credenze ecc.; da questo testo sinodale emerge una grave ignoranza quanto al significato del termine “proselitismo”.

Il sinodo acriticamente e in maniera unisona con gli enunciati di papa Francesco ha assunto il concetto di “proselitismo” nella sua connotazione unilaterale e negativa. Spesso nei suoi discorsi usava il linguaggio tipo “*il proselitismo è una solenne sciocchezza*”, “*fare proselitismo nel campo ecclesiale è peccato*” ed ancora “*il proselitismo è un veleno per il cammino ecumenico*”. Limitandosi a queste espressioni sembra che il sinodo, seguendo fedelmente le idee del papa, è rimasto nel remoto passato, in alcuni periodi storici definitivamente tramontati e da parecchio tempo superati.

Invece nell'Enciclopedia Treccani, riguardo al termine “proselitismo” si legge che è una

attività svolta da una religione, un movimento, un partito per cercare e formare nuovi seguaci. Mentre le religioni tribali e nazionali non hanno alcuna tendenza a estender-

⁹² *Sinodo Amazonico. Il Documento finale: Chiesa alleata dell'Amazzonia*, <https://www.vatican-news.va/it/vaticano/news/2019-10/sintesi-documento-sinodo-chiesa-alleata-amazzonia.html>.

si al di là della comunità sociale che le pratica, le religioni sopranazionali tendono a esercitare proselitismo, partendo dalla convinzione di essere vera religione, non legata a un singolo popolo, ma valida per tutti e di rappresentare la via di salvezza per ogni individuo umano: mossi da ideali soteriologici i rappresentanti della religione cercano di conquistare il maggior numero di proseliti. L'attività missionaria è una forma organizzata del proselitismo⁹³.

L'Enciclopedia precisa poi che si tratta di una attività tesa a cercare i proseliti e formarli. In ogni modo che cosa c'è di male o di inaccettabile nel concetto di "proselitismo" per come lo definisce una laica enciclopedia? Applicando il riferimento enciclopedico alla Chiesa, la prima componente del "proselitismo" è la convinzione di "essere vera religione". Questa formula intende dire non tanto la superiorità sul piano meramente cognitivo, ma si riferisce alla Chiesa, realtà umano-divina, storico-trascedente, depositaria della Verità di natura soprannaturale, unita all'opera salvifica di tutta l'umanità. In altre parole si tratta della verità contenuta, formulata e trasmessa nel Credo, nell'evento dell'unica auto-comunicazione di Dio avvenuta nella storia universale con l'incarnazione del Figlio di Dio fattosi uomo. Se non ci fosse questa fede/convinzione, allora che ne sarebbe della Chiesa? A che cosa essa servirebbe nella storia dell'umanità, dato che era voluta *de iure* da Dio sin dall'eternità?

Altri due termini che spiegano il significato del "proselitismo" sono "cercare" e "formare". L'Enciclopedia non parla affatto di imposizione, costrizione, repressione, violenza, oppressione ecc. È una cosa naturale che, se la Chiesa è cosciente del mandato che le è stato affidato (Mt 28,18–20; Mc 16,15–20; Lc 24,46–53; Gv 17,17–19; 20,21–22), non può essere chiusa, ermetica, auto-referenziale, ma una "Chiesa in uscita", come ripete spesso papa Francesco. Ne deriva che la Chiesa si muove, va in cerca di chi è predisposto e interessato ad ascoltare e conoscere il suo messaggio. Una volta accettato il messaggio, un convertito o un proselita inizia una permanente formazione circa il nuovo stile di vita fondato sulla verità ascoltata, conosciuta, accolta e vissuta. L'Enciclopedia definisce il "proselitismo" come una forma organizzata dell'attività missionaria; nel caso specifico, dell'attività evangelizzatrice svolta dalla Chiesa sin dalle sue origini, che risalgono sia alla storia pre-pasquale di Gesù, che alla storia della comunità dei cristiani dopo la risurrezione di Cristo. È chiaro che il "proselitismo" inteso in questo senso implica sia la "attrazione", sia la "intrinseca bellezza del Vangelo", sia la "credibile testimonianza" di chi annuncia.

⁹³ <http://www.treccani.it/enciclopedia/proselitismo/>.

DI FRONTE ALLA RIDUZIONE 'SOCIOLOGISTA' DELLA MISSIONE DELLA CHIESA

Si discuteva dell'ambiente, dell'innalzamento del livello del mare di ripetere il mantra che occorre "ascoltare". I padri sinodali, secondo Mutsaerts, parlavano "come politici, usando gli stessi slogan, la stessa retorica da quattro soldi. È strano che in un sinodo questi argomenti debbano essere oggetto di discussione. Non è competenza della Chiesa, non è la nostra attività principale e non è la nostra prospettiva"⁹⁴. Con un pizzico d'ironia alcuni vaticanisti hanno definito il Sinodo come un corso accelerato di climatologia⁹⁵. Il 22 ottobre al briefing c'erano ben due vescovi amazzonici e un cardinale congolese, che hanno parlato quasi esclusivamente di cambiamenti climatici e di catastrofi prossime venture se in Occidente non si cambiano subito gli stili di vita. A parte le sciocchezze che sono state dette – ma non si può pretendere diversamente, con un corso così accelerato è facile che idee e concetti si confondano – è stato interessante notare quello che è accaduto all'ultima domanda: dopo un'ora di catechismo ecologista, una persona ha fatto la domanda sull'evangelizzazione. Sono seguiti alcuni attimi di smarrimento. Evangelizzazione? Quale evangelizzazione? È stato come se alla riunione di un consiglio d'amministrazione di una grande multinazionale qualcuno si alzasse improvvisamente in piedi e dicesse: "Adesso recitiamo una preghiera". Poi il cardinale ha detto qualcosa, ma le facce viste al momento della domanda erano molto più significative della risposta⁹⁶. Questo episodio che rispecchia tut-

⁹⁴ Cfr. A. Zambrano, *Il Sinodo per l'Amazzonia segue un'agenda politicamente corretta*, 24.10.2019, <https://anticattocomunismo.wordpress.com/2019/10/24/laagenda-politicamente-corretta-del-sinodo-sullamazzoniam/>.

⁹⁵ A proposito dei cambiamenti climatici e pericoli di cui sarebbe minacciata l'Amazzonia, Luiz Carlos Molion dice che non esistono mutazioni climatiche o riscaldamento globale prodotti dagli uomini. Quella che esiste è una variazione naturale del clima. Ad esempio ci sono argomenti fisici concreti che suggeriscono che il riscaldamento globale tra il 1916 e il 1945 è stato causato dall'attività solare (la maggiore degli ultimi 400 anni). Oppure che il riscaldamento del 1976–2005, attribuito a attività umane, è invece stato causato dalla riduzione della copertura nuvolosa del 5% e dalla grande frequenza di eventi come *El Niño*. Lo stesso studioso smaschera il mito secondo cui l'Amazzonia sia polmone verde del mondo. In realtà l'Amazzonia non è essenziale per la distribuzione delle piogge in altre regioni lontane dall'America del Sud, perché l'Amazzonia non è fonte di umidità per l'atmosfera. La foresta consuma più ossigeno di quanto ne produca. La foresta non produce acqua, ricicla appena l'acqua di piogge anteriori. Cfr. *Il sinodo per l'Amazzonia, forse una nuova religione tribale?*, <https://cronicasdepapafrancisco.com/2019/10/08/il-sinodo-per-lamazzoniam-forse-una-nuova-religione-tribale/>; cfr. anche Marinellys Tremamunno, *L'Amazzonia non è il «polmone verde». Né un paradiso*, 18.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/lamazzoniam-non-e-il-polmone-verde-ne-un-paradiso>.

⁹⁶ Cfr. R. Cascioli, *Da Pompili a Tornielli, due giorni di parole in libertà*, 23.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/da-pompili-a-tornielli-due-giorni-di-parole-in-liberta>.

to il clima del sinodo e il suo procedimento, impone l'interrogativo sulla vera missione della Chiesa, su ciò che è da considerare il suo primo obiettivo⁹⁷. La risposta sarà possibile solo se i pastori e le guide più responsabili nella Chiesa sapranno rispondere alla domanda: che cosa è la Chiesa? Quale è la sua natura e la sua identità? Anzi chi è la Chiesa?⁹⁸. Ogni attività da parte della Chiesa, anche quella di carattere sociale, politico incluse le questioni ecologiche ecc., devono essere onticamente precedute da ciò che costituisce la missione della Chiesa, quella missione che appartiene alla sua natura:

E poiché la Chiesa è in Cristo come sacramento, cioè segno e strumento dell'intima unione con Dio e dell'unità di tutto il genere umano, il sinodo intende illustrarne con maggior chiarezza [...] questo dovere della Chiesa: uniti fra di loro dai vincoli sociali, economici e culturali, raggiungano anche la loro piena unità in Cristo⁹⁹.

Il primo compito affidato alla Chiesa è la proclamazione e l'annuncio del Vangelo della salvezza compiuta in Cristo. Il suo darsi da fare è, in primis e per sua natura, pensare alla salvezza di ogni persona umana, alla salvezza non nel senso orizzontale, temporaneo, storico-sociale del benessere materiale (senza ovviamente trascurarlo e ignorarlo), ma verticale, trascendente, in riferimento all'eternità e alla comunione di vita con Dio. Ecco la ragione per cui esiste nella storia dell'istituzione divina la Chiesa, orientata però verso la dimensione meta-storica e soprannaturale.

L'ABBANDONO DELLA PASTORALE-VOCAZIONALE: 'LAICIZZAZIONE' DEL SACERDOZIO

Secondo lo spirito conciliare sul piano missionario viene concesso maggior spazio ai laici e vengono a loro affidati molti nuovi impegni o funzioni, riservati prima solo ai ministri ordinati o alle persone consacrate. Tuttavia lo scarso interesse verso la pastorale vocazionale sembra essere abbastanza palese nel contesto dell'evangelizzazione e potrebbe falsamente indurre a pensare che ci possa essere

⁹⁷ Cfr. L. Scrosati, *Il Sinodo che ha dimenticato la salvezza delle anime*, 28.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/il-sinodo-che-ha-dimenticato-la-salvezza-delle-anime>.

⁹⁸ Cfr. K. Parzych-Blakiewicz, M.A. Kopiec, "Sumienie eklesjalne" w blasku Prawdy, *Dobra i zbawienia*, „Teologia w Polsce” 12 (2018) 2, 143–160.

⁹⁹ Concilio Vaticano II, *Costituzione dogmatica sulla chiesa "Lumen gentium"*, 1, EV 1/284–456.

come una sorta di “sostituzione” dei sacerdoti con i laici¹⁰⁰. È interessante notare come il sinodo amazzonico voglia risolvere il problema della mancanza delle vocazioni sacerdotali, dei religiosi e dei missionari, usando i mezzi puramente pragmatici e mondani. Il tentativo sinodale mirato alla creazione di un clero non continente sembra essere fuori strada. L'idea di ordinare i *virī probati* sembra una deliberata scorciatoia per sottovalutare il sacramento dell'ordinazione e far apposta calare il numero delle vocazioni sacerdotali e missionarie, soprattutto quando continuamente e in ogni possibile occasione si parla del cosiddetto “clericalismo” come il male peggiore nella Chiesa?

Già nel 1990 san Giovanni Paolo II ha escluso ogni possibilità di intavolare una discussione all'interno della Chiesa in merito all'ordinazione dei *virī probati*¹⁰¹. Vale la pena citare per intero il passaggio del discorso pronunciato dal pontefice polacco in occasione dell'VIII Assemblea generale ordinaria del Sinodo dei Vescovi:

È vero che altre questioni, gravi, vengono poste quando la mancanza di sacerdoti è avvertita in modo tragico [...]. Alcuni si sono domandati se non sia il caso, in tali circostanze, di pensare all'ordinazione di *virī probati*. Questa soluzione non è da prendersi in considerazione e al problema posto occorre rispondere con altri mezzi. Come è noto, la possibilità di fare appello a dei *virī probati* è troppo spesso evocata nel quadro di una propaganda sistematica ostile al celibato sacerdotale. Tale propaganda trova il sostegno e la complicità di alcuni mass media. Occorre quindi cercare, senza indugio, altre soluzioni a questo angoscioso problema pastorale¹⁰².

L'evangelizzazione ha bisogno di operatori preparati per la missione. *Nell'Instrumentum laboris* al Sinodo dei Vescovi del 2012, su “La nuova evangelizzazione per la trasmissione della fede cristiana”, si trova il punto intitolato “Centralità delle vocazioni” (nn. 159–161) in cui si legge:

In questa prospettiva si aspetta che il prossimo appuntamento sinodale metta a tema in modo esplicito la centralità della questione vocazionale per la Chiesa di oggi [...] dovrà prestare un'attenzione particolare al ministero presbiteriale e alla vita consacra-

¹⁰⁰ Cfr. M.A. Kopiec, *L'evangelizzazione nel recente magistero dei papi. Tra le sfide, il mandato e la carità*, Terni 2016, 275.

¹⁰¹ Cfr. *Ma il sacerdote non è già sposato con la Chiesa? Chi è che vuole la botte piena e la moglie ubriaca?*, <https://cronicasdepapafrancisco.com/2019/10/16/ma-il-sacerdote-non-e-gia-sposato-con-la-chiesa-chi-e-che-vuole-la-botte-piena-e-la-moglie-ubriaca/>.

¹⁰² Cfr. Giovanni Paolo II, *Discorso in occasione dell'VIII Assemblea Generale Ordinaria del Sinodo dei Vescovi*, 6, 27 ottobre 1990, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/it/speeches/1990/october/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_19901027_sinodo.

ta, auspicando che il Sinodo porti alla Chiesa il frutto di nuove vocazioni sacerdotali, rilanciando l'impegno di una chiara e decisa pastorale vocazionale¹⁰³.

La domanda che qui si impone è che cosa ha fatto la Chiesa nell'arco degli ultimi anni per suscitare e far crescere le nuove e sante vocazioni, tranne un continuo discreditarlo il sacerdozio ripetendo il mantra del "clericalismo"? Come ha operato la Chiesa per far avvicinare i giovani a Cristo per – usando una parola tanto cara a papa Francesco – "attrazione" e "bellezza" di questa forma vita dedicata completamente a Dio, alla Chiesa e alla salvezza degli uomini?

Pare che l'attuale tattica di affrontare il problema delle vocazioni sia quella di mondanizzare e ridurre il sacramento dell'ordine attraverso un primo passo, quello di una discreta liquidazione del celibato. Secondo il cardinale Müller è evidentemente sbagliata l'idea di introdurre i "*virī probati*". Infatti ci sono già dei diaconi sposati. Anche se loro fossero introdotti spiega l'ex Prefetto della Congregazione per la Dottrina della Fede – dovranno rispettare la consuetudine della Chiesa antica, cioè vivere in castità. Non è una qualsiasi legge che può essere cambiata a piacimento. Ma ha profonde radici nel sacramento dell'ordine. Il prete è rappresentante di Cristo sposo e ha una spiritualità vissuta che non può essere cambiata. Gli apostoli hanno lasciato tutto per andare dietro a Gesù. Cristo è il modello per i ministri, i preti. E questa cosa non può essere cambiata da spinte secolari. E nemmeno si può contraddire il Concilio Vaticano II che in "*Presbyterorum ordinis*", al numero 16, parla del celibato e del legame di convenienza fra chi rappresenta Cristo celibe sposo e la Chiesa¹⁰⁴. Inoltre l'antica pratica della Chiesa finalizzata a provvedere le nuove e sante vocazioni è testimoniata dall'antico Rito romano che prevedeva le cosiddette *Quattro Tempora*. Questo Rito consisteva, all'inizio delle quattro stagioni, in tre giorni di digiuno, astinenza e preghiera (mercoledì, venerdì e sabato), per poter ricevere il frutto della terra (l'aspetto ecologico) e la grazia dei santi e numerosi sacerdoti (l'aspetto vocazionale)¹⁰⁵.

Secondo il cardinale Robert Sarah, spesso si sente dire, in merito al celibato sacerdotale, che si tratta semplicemente di una disciplina di carattere storico. Tale opinione sembra essere falsa. Il celibato rivela l'essenza stessa del sacerdozio cristiano. Parlarne come di una realtà secondaria significa ferire tutti i sacerdoti del

¹⁰³ "*Instrumentum laboris*" al Sinodo dei Vescovi del 2012, su "*La nuova evangelizzazione per la trasmissione della fede cristiana*", http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/synod/documents/rc_synod_doc_20120619_instrumentum-xiii_it.html#Centralità delle vocazioni.

¹⁰⁴ Cfr. P. Rodari, *Il cardinale Müller: "Nemmeno il Papa può abolire il celibato dei preti"*, 10.10.2019, <https://ilsismografo.blogspot.com/2019/10/vaticano-il-cardinale-muller-nemmeno-il.html>.

¹⁰⁵ Cfr. L. Scrosati, *Creto e vocazioni? Recuperiamo le 4 tempora*, 21.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/creto-e-vocazioni-recuperiamo-le-4-tempora>.

mondo. In effetti la relativizzazione della legge del celibato sacerdotale riduce il sacerdozio a una semplice funzione¹⁰⁶.

“Chi relativizza il celibato riduce il sacerdote a funzionario e il sacerdozio a un fare, mentre è un essere”¹⁰⁷. Gesù ci ha insegnato che il vero sacerdote offre in sacrificio se stesso. Giovanni Paolo II e Benedetto XVI l’hanno ribadito con fermezza. Sicché, sottolinea Sarah, non c’è spazio per le deroghe, nemmeno se limitate a una sola regione¹⁰⁸. “Fin dai primi secoli della Chiesa la legge della continenza e poi il celibato sono state considerate come di origine apostolica¹⁰⁹. Il celibato, il sacerdozio, la Croce e la verità sono realtà strettamente connesse in Gesù che è la pietra d’inciampo”¹¹⁰.

Nel contesto del Sinodo sull’Amazzonia e della mancanza delle nuove vocazioni presbiteriali, la proposta di alcuni vescovi e cardinali di ricorrere a uomini sposati per il sacerdozio vuol dire trattare l’Amazzonia con “disprezzo” e “umiliazione”, come se Dio in questa parte del mondo fosse incapace di chiamare giovani generosi e desiderosi di donarsi totalmente, anima e corpo, nel celibato consacrato¹¹¹. Infatti per nessuna cultura, popolo e tradizione, accettare il celibato è una cosa facile, nemmeno per i cristiani stessi.

Al termine di questo capitolo, si giunge a toccare una questione ecclesiologicala di capitale importanza che costituisce un’asse o base per tutte le varie idee portate insieme al Sinodo Amazzonico, è il concetto stesso della “sinodalità” ‘della’ e ‘nella’ Chiesa. Gli effetti della sinodalità come è stata definita ed applicata dai padri sinodali con a capo i rappresentanti della chiesa tedesca e latino-americana erano – come si è visto sopra – evidenti e devastanti. Ormai si potrebbe avere l’impressione di una ‘dogmatizzazione’ della sinodalità nella teologia e nella vita della Chiesa. Difatti, la sinodalità intesa nel modo in cui è stata sviluppata nelle riunioni sinodali, che lo si voglia o no, porta inevitabilmente alla frammentazione della Chiesa in campo dottrinale e morale: non esiste più la Chiesa di Cristo, una, santa, cattolica ed apostolica, bensì – secondo l’immagine poliedrica della Chiesa tanto voluta ed apprezzata da papa Bergoglio – molte chiese, o meglio,

¹⁰⁶ Cfr. R. Sarah (con N. Diat), *Si fa sera e il giorno ormai volge al declino*, Siena 2019, 69; cfr. A.M. Valli, *Celibato dei preti / Il cardinale Sarah: “Non creiamo un nuovo sacerdozio a misura umana”*, <https://www.aldomariavalli.it/2019/11/04/celibato-dei-preti-il-cardinale-sarah-non-creiamo-un-nuovo-sacerdozio-a-misura-umana/>.

¹⁰⁷ R. Sarah (con N. Diat), *Si fa sera e il giorno ormai volge al declino...*, 69.

¹⁰⁸ Cfr. A.M. Valli, *Celibato dei preti / Il cardinale Sarah: “Non creiamo un nuovo sacerdozio a misura umana”*, <https://www.aldomariavalli.it/2019/11/04/celibato-dei-preti-il-cardinale-sarah-non-creiamo-un-nuovo-sacerdozio-a-misura-umana/>.

¹⁰⁹ R. Sarah (con N. Diat), *Si fa sera e il giorno ormai volge al declino...*, 72.

¹¹⁰ Ibidem, 82.

¹¹¹ Cfr. ibidem, 85.

diverse comunità autonome, che, essendo ognuna di natura determinata geo-politicamente (l'idea della chiesa poliedrica al posto della Chiesa una, santa, cattolica e apostolica), creano singolarmente il proprio Credo e il proprio *Symbolum definitionum et declarationum de rebus et morum*, condizionato dal contesto storico, spazio – temporale. Ovviamente non si può resistere all'impressione di trovarci di fronte ad un processo, già in atto, di luteranizzazione della Chiesa cattolica. Invece, come scrive giustamente Stefano Fontana, non esiste una vera sinodalità nella Chiesa senza l'autentica dottrina fondata sulla divina rivelazione, depositata congiuntamente nella Sacra Tradizione e nella Sacra Scrittura¹¹² e affidata alla Chiesa sin dai tempi degli apostoli con l'effusione dello Spirito Santo nel giorno della Pentecoste¹¹³.

CONCLUSIONE

L'obiettivo di questo studio era quello di ricordare e mostrare una continua attualità dell'enciclica *Redemptoris missio* di san Giovanni Paolo II, in occasione del XXX° anniversario della sua promulgazione nel 1990. L'importanza di questa enciclica, nonostante i 30 anni trascorsi, proprio oggi emerge con una particolare evidenza. Il suo rilievo si rende palese esattamente in questo periodo segnato da molti cambiamenti che stanno accadendo nella Chiesa e che mettono in repentaglio i punti fermi della fede e della morale della Chiesa, anzi del Vangelo che è stato affidato da Cristo agli apostoli, cioè da Dio alla Chiesa. In questo documento papa Wojtyła cercava di rammentare i temi fondamentali riguardanti la natura della Chiesa e la necessità di evangelizzazione. La Chiesa infatti di per sé è missionaria e uno dei suoi compiti principali è l'opera missionaria. In questa maniera la Chiesa realizza ed esprime la propria identità, ovvero, essere il sacramento, cioè segno e strumento della salvezza universale, di tutta la creazione. La fede, essendo condizione della salvezza proclamata e proposta dalla Chiesa, non è esclusiva proprietà dei cristiani, ma è un dono da condividere con gli altri. Infatti ogni essere umano ha il diritto di conoscere il contenuto della Buona Novella accolta, annunciata e divulgata dalla Chiesa da due millenni. Perciò la Chiesa mai si può dispensare da questo dovere di portare il lieto annuncio a tutti i popoli, nazioni, culture, società e tradizioni. Spetterà poi ad ogni uditor della Parola di Dio, in piena libertà, di prendere in modo responsabile la decisione: accettare o rifiutare il Vangelo di Cristo.

¹¹² Concilio Vaticano II, *Costituzione dogmatica sulla divina rivelazione "Dei Verbum"*, 9, EV 1/872–911.

¹¹³ Cfr. S. Fontana, *Senza fedeltà alla dottrina non c'è sinodalità*, 30.10.2019, <https://lanuovabq.it/it/senza-fedelta-alla-dottrina-non-ce-sinodalita>.

L'attuale situazione fuori e dentro la Chiesa rende questo dovere ancora più urgente¹¹⁴. Prima, le difficoltà venivano piuttosto dai fattori esterni che ostacolavano la missione evangelizzatrice della Chiesa come ad esempio la diffidenza mentale o emotiva dei destinatari, sistemi ideologici che di principio vietavano l'agire missionario della Chiesa, l'ermetismo culturale e religioso dei popoli, la derisione e disprezzo dei sapienti o degli studiosi sicuri del potere e dell'autonomia della ragione umana ecc. Oggi i problemi che impediscono di proclamare con *parresia*¹¹⁵ il messaggio evangelico vengono purtroppo dal dentro della Chiesa. Fino a qualche decennio fa la convinzione sulla vocazione missionaria della Chiesa non era mai messa in discussione e non è stata mai sottoposta a qualsiasi tipo di dubbio o di ambiguità. Sin dalle origini della Chiesa era una cosa scontata e inconfutabile quella di portare il Vangelo in tutto il mondo. Ora invece assistiamo ad un atteggiamento "strano e nuovo" riscontrabile dentro la Chiesa stessa. Esso riguarda il fatto che lentamente e in modo sottile si sta inserendo e diffondendo sempre più il pensiero che richiede di frenare o rallentare una piena apertura e totale uscita della Chiesa verso il mondo con la Parola della salvezza, rimpiazzandola con l'idea del rispetto verso la diversità religiosa, culturale, etica ecc. Infatti da qualche anno all'interno della Chiesa si è creata e sta penetrando le menti dei cristiani una bizzarra idea, secondo cui l'evangelizzazione non deve contrastare il principio di dialogo e di tolleranza; il principio che si distingue per una esasperata e troppo irenica convinzione – quasi fosse un dogma laico – che la verità e la salvezza c'è dovunque, dappertutto ed è raggiungibile in qualunque modo. Anzi, è subentrata una nuova concezione della salvezza che ognuno può concepire a modo suo. Il pluralismo religioso *de iure* da decenni è già presente in teologia e si sta man mano infiltrando anche in maniera implicita, indiretta, quasi inosservabile, nel magistero ecclesiale¹¹⁶. Tale teoria, di origine modernista, rimuove la fede della Chiesa dal palcoscenico pubblico e le toglie il carattere

¹¹⁴ Cfr. Concilio Vaticano II, *Costituzione dogmatica sulla Chiesa "Lumen gentium"* 1, EV 1/284–456.

¹¹⁵ "Parresia" (viene dal greco παρρησία) letteralmente significa "libertà di dire tutto". È frequente nel testo greco del Nuovo Testamento dove esprime il "coraggio e la sincerità della testimonianza". È stato molto usato nella tradizione cristiana, specie agli inizi, come contrario di ipocrisia. Col tempo la connotazione di "parresia" si allarga indicando anche "imperturbabilità", "sincerità". Nelle fonti cristiane ha due significati fondamentali: "franchezza nel parlare", e "fiducia nel giudizio". Cfr. H.-C. Hahn, *Franchezza, parresia*, in: *Dizionario dei Concetti Biblici del Nuovo Testamento*, eds. L. Coenen, E. Beyreuther, H. Bietenhard, Bologna 1976, 729–730.

¹¹⁶ "Il pluralismo e le diversità di religione [...] sono una sapiente volontà divina, con la quale Dio ha creato gli esseri umani": *Documento sulla fratellanza umana per la pace mondiale e la convivenza*, Viaggio Apostolico di Sua santità Francesco negli Emirati Arabi Uniti, 3–5 febbraio 2019, http://w2.vatican.va/content/francesco/it/travels/2019/outside/documents/papa-francesco_20190204_documento-fratellanza-umana.html.

oggettivo, riducendola ad un atto esclusivamente privato, nonché ad una forma di sentimentalismo individuale e personale. In tale ottica, non sarebbe in qualche senso permesso se i cristiani ritenessero che non sia più necessario essere ancora missionari?¹¹⁷.

In questo contesto l'insegnamento della *Redemptoris missio* evidenzia proprio oggi, ancora più, la sua novità, sottolineando l'unicità e universalità della salvezza in Cristo e comprendendo la Chiesa come sacramento necessario della salvezza universale. Ecco la verità che la Chiesa non può non proclamare e non può mai far tacere, con la falsa scusa di evitare un presunto proselitismo o di dover considerare – a nome di un umanesimo secolarizzato – quasi sullo stesso piano, equivalenti, i fenomeni delle altre tradizioni religiose e il mistero della Chiesa e della sua natura missionaria.

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¹¹⁷ Cfr. D. Airoma, *Essere (ancora) missionari dopo Abu Dhabi?*, "Cristianità" 396 (2019) marzo–aprile, 31–32.

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Parole chiavi: Chiesa, missione, evangelizzazione, Vangelo, Cristo, salvezza, universalità

THE MISSIONARY NATURE OF THE CHURCH IN JOHN PAUL II'S ENCYCLICAL *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO* IN THE FACE OF THE VOICES OF THE AMAZON SYNOD

Summary

The subject of the study is the theme of the missionary nature of the Church presented and shown in a new light in a deepened and adapted to the challenges of the end of the 20th century by Saint John Paul II in the encyclical *Redemptoris missio*. Today, a special opportunity to undertake this issue and to present it in the current historical and ecclesial context is the 30th anniversary of its announcement (December 7, 1990). The presentation of its contents and their analysis highlighted the uninterrupted continuity of Christ's missionary command and the unchanging relevance of the message contained in the document regarding the proclamation of the Gospel and the baptism of all people. The necessity of recalling this topic appears inevitably, taking into account the internal condition of the Church, as a result of which the mandate entrusted to all Christians loses its power and seriousness. As a result, due to the weakening of missionary awareness and responsibility manifesting itself within the Church, it seems necessary and absolutely essential to remind and refer to the encyclical of John Paul II in order to awaken among Catholics the awareness of the mission of announcing the Gospel given to them.

Keywords: Church, mission, evangelization, Gospel, Christ, salvation, universality

MISYJNY CHARAKTER KOŚCIOŁA W ENCYKLICE *REDEMPTORIS MISSIO* JANA PAWŁA II W OBLICZU GŁOSÓW SYNODU AMAZOŃSKIEGO

Streszczenie

Przedmiotem opracowania jest temat misyjnej natury Kościoła, przedstawiony i ukazany w nowym świetle, w pogłębiony i dostosowany do wyzwań końca XX wieku sposób przez św. Jana Pawła II w encyklice *Redemptoris missio*. Dziś szczególną okazją do podjęcia tej kwestii i ujęcia jej w aktualnym kontekście historyczno-eklezyjnym jest przypadająca 30. rocznica jej ogłoszenia (7 grudnia 1990). Ukazanie jej treści oraz ich analiza uwydatniły nieprzerwaną ciągłość misyjnego nakazu Chrystusa oraz niezmienną aktualność orędzia zawartego w dokumencie dotyczącym głoszenia Ewangelii i udzielania chrztu św. wszystkim ludziom. Konieczność przywołania tego tematu jest szczególnie konieczna, biorąc pod uwagę wewnętrzną kondycję Kościoła, w wyniku której powierzony wszystkim chrześcijanom mandat traci na swojej mocy i powadze. W efekcie, wobec osłabienia misyjnej świadomości i odpowiedzialności przejawiającej się wewnątrz

Kościół, zdaje się rzeczą niezbędną i bezwzględnie istotną przypomnienie encykliki Jana Pawła II celem przebudzenia się wśród katolików świadomości powierzonego im zadania i misji głoszenia Ewangelii.

Słowa kluczowe: Kościół, misja, ewangelizacja, Ewangelia, Chrystus, zbawienie, powszechność

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TOPICALITY OF THE SPIRITUAL HERITAGE AND THEOLOGY OF BROTHER ROGER OF TAIZÉ

This year in Wrocław we experienced the European Youth Meeting organized by the Taizé Community. This great spiritual event is an opportunity to reflect more deeply on the importance of the heritage of Brother Roger of Taizé for the contemporary Church. As a starting point for this analysis, author took the biographical background, which will allow the reader to grasp the life context of Roger Schutz's ecumenical research. Then, in the following points, he describes three essential elements of Brother Roger's legacy, which are an ever-inspiring gift to the Church on the path of building unity. Firstly, it is a fully original form of Christian life in a monastic ecumenical community. Secondly, on the basis of this concrete experience of the Taizé Community, Brother Roger indicated a deeply existential way of building the unity of divided Christians. And thirdly, in his teaching he outlined a theology of forgiving love as the key to building reconciliation between the Churches. Undoubtedly the most spectacular fruit of his evangelical life are the crowds of young people from various Christian Churches that have invariably gathered around the Taizé Community for decades.

A few months ago we experienced the 42nd European Youth Meeting in Wrocław, organized by the Taizé Community, which brought together 15 thou-

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sand young Christians from all over Europe, but also greatly involved about 100 local parishes and thousands of families hosting these pilgrims. It was a great celebration of faith and reconciliation both on the interdenominational plane and the international one. Such a meeting took place for the fifth time in Poland and the third time in Wrocław. The phenomenon of these meetings organized either in the great cities of Europe, or in Taizé itself, where at a time of rapidly progressing secularization of the societies of our continent, tens of thousands of young Europeans gather for common prayer, gives a lot to think about, and therefore demands a certain theological reflection, not only in the field of pastoral theology.¹ There is, therefore, a need to point out the sources of the power that attracts young people to the Taizé Community on a somewhat deeper level than just a fascination with the beauty of prayers, singing canons and the constant popularity of the many thousands of meetings organized by young people. It seems unquestionable that these sources should be seen above all in the life and teaching of the founder of the Taizé Community, Brother Roger of Taizé.²

So how do we see his person and legacy 15 years after his death? Although it still seems to be a relatively short perspective on the horizon of the Church's history, it is enough to assess the importance of his work from a certain distance. Especially for the young generation, he is already a historical figure, whose great charisma they constantly feel when coming to Taizé. So what elements of the spiritual heritage and theology of the founder of the Taizé Community can we regard as original and thus constantly topical and inspiring for the contemporary Church? The author, wanting to answer this question, realizes that this contribution is only a certain attempt to sketch out the issue, and much more to encourage some further in-depth reflection on Brother Roger's work, which actually still awaits a thorough theological study.

The basic research material here will be the writings of Brother Roger, and especially those that constitute the foundation sources for the Taizé Community. They are supplemented by studies, largely of a more historical and factual nature, since we still have very few strictly theological studies, and those that exist, are rather fragmentary in their scope and more often than not concern broadly defined spirituality or ecumenism and not systematic theology. Since this study, despite

¹ One example is found in the ample publication: J. Höglauer, *Der Einfluss von Taizé auf die Spiritualität Jugendlicher. Eine empirische Untersuchung*, Berlin 2016 (pp. 384).

² Such a conclusion can be drawn from a biographically rich interview with brother Marek, the first Pole in the Community, who in describing his 40 years of life in Taizé constantly refers to the person and teaching of his Founder – see *Bóg. Ciska. Prostota. Brat Marek z Taizé w rozmowie z Piotrem Żyłką*, Kraków 2019. Cf. *Bóg przyjmuje wszystkich. Brat Alois z Taizé odpowiada na pytania młodzieży*, transl. M. Cofta, Poznań 2009, p. 25–26.

having a strong ecumenical leaning due to the specificity of the subject, is essentially theological in nature, the research has mainly used a theological-historical method consisting first of all in the analysis of sources, and then in the systematization of conclusions. As a supplement, the ecumenical method is used, which involves constructing a presentation open to the confessional multidimensionality of the theological truth, which is why we will often refer to the opinions contained in the works of non-Catholic authors. Here we should remember in particular the specificity of the ecumenical vocation of Brother Roger and his Community, which in its precursory form cannot in many respects be clearly classified in terms of classical Catholic ecclesiology.³

The formula of the article, in which we want to cover such a creative personality, with a wide range of activities, makes it necessary for this presentation to be reduced to only the four most important aspects. First, a concise biographical background will be presented, which, as a kind of introduction to further research, will allow us to grasp the life context of Brother Roger's pursuit.⁴ Next, we will focus our attention on the realization of his vocation to monastic life in the Taizé Community, focusing on the original elements of this work, especially in the ecumenical dimension. Another aspect, strongly correlated with the previous one, is the vision of how to build unity among divided Christians. In conclusion, we will attempt to diagnose his contribution to contemporary theology.

BROTHER ROGER'S LIFE PATH

Roger Schutz was born on May 12th 1915 in Provence⁵ (canton of Vaud) in French-speaking part of Switzerland, as the youngest of nine children of Charles Schütz,⁶ Pastor of the Reformed Church, and Amélie Marsauche, of French ori-

³ Cf. D. Sattler, *Contributions by Brother Roger Schutz to Theology*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé, August 31 – September 5, 2015*, Taizé 2016, p. 266–267.

⁴ The importance of this aspect of the study of the connection between the biographies of theologians and their teaching is highlighted by D. Sattler – *ibidem*, p. 267–268.

⁵ Biographical data based mainly on: S. Laplane, *Frère Roger de Taizé. Avec presque rien...*, Paris 2015 and J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, *Historia Taizé*, Warszawa 2009; *Bóg. Ciska. Proszota...*, p. 61–104. See S.J. Koza, *Schutz Roger*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 17, Lublin 2012, c. 1298–1299; J. Oeldemann, *Schutz Roger*, in: *Personenlexikon Ökumene*, Hg. J. Ernesti, W. Thönnissen, Freiburg im Br. 2010, p. 206–208.

⁶ Roger's father had a German surname, Schütz, but after his marriage his wife of French origin, who did not like the German character of the surname, started using the spelling without umlaut. Official documents oscillated between both forms of writing. Today, the spelling Schutz is accepted – see S. Laplane, *op. cit.*, p. 469, note 6.

gin. Deeply rooted in the Protestant tradition and at the same time open family environment was the first place of his spiritual formation⁷ that was so important for the future path of the founder of Taizé. A great authority in his childhood was Roger's grandmother on the part of his mother Marie-Louise Marsauche,⁸ who during the First World War received refugees in the north of France and, as a Protestant, went to pray to the Catholic church to express her opposition to the absurdity of this bloody conflict between Christian nations. Years later, Brother Roger interpreted her inspirational influence on his life in this way:

The miracle of her life was that by reconciling the current of the Protestant-by-origin faith with the Catholic faith, she was able not to become a symbol of renouncing her own... My grandmother's intuition must have given me a Catholic soul in my childhood.⁹

At the end of his life he confirmed even more strongly the role of his grandmother's example in shaping his vocation:

When I was still very young, in turn, moved by the testimony of her life, I found my own Christian identity when I reconciled the faith of my ancestors with the mystery of the Catholic faith, without breaking communion with anyone.¹⁰

In 1931, Roger fell ill with difficult-to-cure tuberculosis. It was precisely this long-lasting disease that was for him a time to think deeply about his personal vocation.¹¹

⁷ See G. Hammann, *Did Brother Roger Have a Theology?*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 18.

⁸ It should be mentioned here that her husband, Roger's grandfather, was in a Catholic seminary, which he left as a result of the controversies connected with the First Vatican Council, becoming an Old Catholic, and after his marriage he became a Reformed pastor – see D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 268.

⁹ F.R. de Taizé, *Fleurissent les déserts du cœur*, Taizé 1982, p. 75 (transl. after: J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 12). See also *Wybrać miłość. Brat Roger z Taizé 1915–2005*, Poznań 2008, p. 21–23, 66; *Brat Roger z Taizé, Bóg może tylko kochać*, Warszawa 2005, p. 55. Cf. S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 19.

¹⁰ *Brat Roger z Taizé, Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 64. The current Priory of Taizé points out this path of Brother Roger as a constantly valid direction for the Community – Frère Alois, “*Die Leidenschaft für die Einheit des Leibes Christi*”. *Der Weg der Einheit, wie er in Taizé gelebt wird*, Taizé 2012, p. 13 [Hefte aus Taizé 17]. See also Brat François, *Czy Chrystus jest podzieleny?*, transl. M. Prussak, Poznań 2012, p. 15 [Zeszyty z Taizé 13].

¹¹ See *Brat Roger z Taizé, Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 47.

In accordance with his father's will, but contrary to his own passion for literature, he began studying Evangelical Theology in Lausanne and Strasbourg (1936–40). During his studies in Strasbourg, the 16th-century reformer Marcin Bucer became a very inspiring figure for him. As a theologian, he saw the need for small communities in the Church and, unlike Luther, he showed the way to reform as building unity, and considered this a central issue of theology.¹² It was then that Roger's interest in monastic life developed, to which he dedicated his thesis *Monastic Ideal before the times of St. Benedict and its conformity with the Gospel*,¹³ defended in 1943. Such a subject of his work crowning his studies in Protestant theology proves that from his youth Roger fed his faith by drawing on various Christian traditions and breaking down denominational barriers.¹⁴

In August 1940, he had a break in his studies and cycled to France, conquered by the Nazis, with a view to finding a home where he could help the suffering and lead a lonely life of prayer. His choice finally fell on an old house in Taizé, a tiny Burgundy village in the deep province, 10 km from Cluny. And so, on 20 August 1940, the history of the future Taizé Community began.¹⁵ This location seems to have been largely determined by two factors:¹⁶ on the one hand, the proximity of Cluny with its great historical tradition of monastic life, and on the other hand, its location only about a dozen kilometres from the demarcation line separating the northern occupied part of France from the southern part under Vichy rule, which made it an excellent transfer point for fugitives from Nazi terror, especially Jews.¹⁷ At that time, the first draft of the future Rule of the Community was published on October 1, 1941 under the title *Communauté de Cluny. Notes explicatives*.¹⁸ It was also at this time that Roger established his first ecumenical contacts with the Catholic precursors of ecumenism: on July 4, 1941, Taizé was visited by Father Paul Couturier, and at the end of September 1942, the future Taizé Prior attended a meeting of the Ecumenical Group from Dombes, where he met the already then famous theologian Fr. Henri de Lubac.

¹² See G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 20–22.

¹³ See more: J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 26–28.

¹⁴ See W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, Taizé 2016, p. 291.

¹⁵ Cf. S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 99–102.

¹⁶ Brother Roger often mentioned that the words of an old woman from Taizé, who had given him hospitality on the first day he arrived there in search of a home for the community, were decisive for him personally. – see J.-M. Paupert, *Taizé i Kościół jutra*, Warszawa 1969, p. 30.

¹⁷ See *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 27.

¹⁸ See fragments in: J.-M. Paupert, op. cit., p. 48–50.

In mid-October 1942 Roger left for Switzerland and then found out that in November, after the German army had occupied the south of France, the Gestapo became interested in the house in Taizé.¹⁹ He therefore decided to stay in Geneva and start implementing his concept of community life here. He was joined by Max Thurian, later Taizé Community theologian,²⁰ Pierre Souvairan and Daniel de Montmollin.²¹ In the meantime Roger completed his studies and was ordained pastor of the Reformed Church on 16 July 1944. He gathered the experience of this time in a book *Introduction à la vie communautaire* published in October 1944. At the end of that month, Roger, Max and Pierre, and later Daniel, went to Taizé to finally realize there their monastic ideal, modelled on the Cluny spirit of prayer and work. Shortly after the war this small community took care of German prisoners and orphaned children. Soon another three companions joined and on Easter 1949 the first seven brothers took their profession²² for life, and the former *Communauté de Cluny* took the name *Communauté de Taizé*. Roger Schutz became its prior, and from then on always described himself as Brother Roger, while the brothers called him “our brother.” Over the years this Protestant community took on a truly ecumenical character, when brothers from other denominations were also admitted to it – in 1961 the first Anglican and in 1969 the first Catholic.²³

From the beginning, Brother Roger wanted the Taizé Community to be involved in building reconciliation between divided Christians. In the fifties and sixties Taizé was the site of numerous official and unofficial ecumenical meetings. He, too, established many personal ecumenical contacts. However, as he often stressed, the meeting with Pope John XXIII, who confirmed the Taizé Community in its vocation to build Christian unity, was for him a breakthrough. This Pope invited Brothers Roger and Max to participate in the Second Vatican Council as observers.²⁴

Since the end of the 1950s, more and more young people from all over the world started coming to Taizé. This was a new challenge for the brothers. In 1970,

¹⁹ See *Bóg. Cisza. Prostota...*, p. 66.

²⁰ See more systematic development of Max Thurian's theology with a detailed bibliography of all his publications, but only until 1970 – H. Fox, *Die Theologie Max Thurians*, Trier 1971. Cf. D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 275.

²¹ He's the only brother in this group who is still alive. (He is 98 years old) – *Bóg. Cisza. Prostota...*, p. 88.

²² The term ‘profession’ has been used precisely to emphasise the reference to monastic tradition – see S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 166–167; for the formula of profession taken then see ibidem, p. 174–175.

²³ See J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 176.

²⁴ See Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 64–67. The fruit of the participation in the Council was the commentary of these brothers on the Constitution *Dei Verbum* (R. Schutz, M. Thurian, *La Parole vivante au Concile*, Taizé 1966) – see more D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 275–277.

Brother Roger announced the “Youth Council,” which began in 1974²⁵ with the gathering of 40,000 young people, and was later replaced by a “pilgrimage of trust on the Earth” which has continued until now.²⁶ The youth meetings organized by the Community, first at its seat and then in the great cities of Europe and other continents, have even become the hallmark of Taizé. Thanks to them, the way the Community prayed and the idea of reconciliation spread throughout the world. Brother Roger shared his thoughts with the young people in letters prepared in various parts of the world marked by difficult experiences, and they were written each year for successive youth meetings and provided material for group sharing in Taizé. The Prior of Taizé also published many books containing his meditations, prayers and diaries.²⁷

Undoubtedly the great mark of a recognition of the importance of the work of Brother Roger and his Community was the visit of Pope John Paul II to Taizé on 5 October 1986. The words of the Polish Pope spoken in the Church of Reconciliation are significant: “The Pope, like you pilgrims and friends of the community, came here for a while, but one comes to Taizé as if to the source.” But even more strongly John Paul II supported the community in its vocation in the words to the brothers,²⁸ which one of them commented on: “To explain to someone the meaning of the vocation of the community, it is enough to give them to read the words of the Pope. This is the best introduction to our life.”²⁹ The recognition of Brother Roger’s contribution to reconciliation and youth work was also evidenced by prizes of international prestige: the Templeton Prize (1974), the UNESCO Prize for Education to Peace (1988), the Charlemagne Prize (1989), the Robert Schumann Prize (1992). Also in Poland, his ecumenical commitment was appreciated by the honorary doctorate of ATK in Warsaw (1986).³⁰

At the age of 83, Brother Roger officially named Brother Alois as his successor. He was a German Catholic who had been a member of the Community since 1974 and was to become its prior after the founder’s death.³¹ And the death came

²⁵ See more *Préparer le concile des jeunes. Audacieuse aventure*, Taizé 1973.

²⁶ Cf. *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 48–51.

²⁷ Full bibliography – see ibidem, p. 141–142. Cf. S.J. Koza, op. cit., k. 1299. And the full bibliography concerning Taizé – A. Łopalewski, *Taizé przypowieścią o komunii i pojednaniu. Formacja chrześcijańska wspólnoty z Taizé*, Lublin 2011, p. 141–145.

²⁸ See Brat Roger z Taizé, *Miłość ponad wszelką miłość. Źródła Wspólnoty z Taizé*, Poznań 1991, p. 98–101.

²⁹ *Papież Jan Paweł II w Taizé*, Taizé 1986, p. 6 (a leaflet published for young people arriving in Taizé).

³⁰ See the laudation on this occasion in: A. Skowronek, *Odkrywanie jedności*, Warszawa 1988, p. 110–117.

³¹ Cf. *Bóg. Cisza. Prostota...*, p. 346–347.

unexpectedly – on August 16, 2005, during an evening prayer, Brother Roger was stabbed by a mentally ill woman from Romania.

THE PHENOMENON OF TAIZÉ AS A MONASTIC COMMUNITY

Brother Roger's charism is the basis of the phenomenon associated with the name of Taizé, but this work finds its lasting strength in the Community he founded.³² In order to understand the incredible originality of the Taizé Community, one must first realize that on the Protestant ground, religious life practically disappeared after the Reformation.³³ The radical criticism of this form of Christian life made by the Reformers³⁴ meant that for over 300 years no one dared to debate on this matter. The sharpness of this criticism was directed mainly against the religious vows, which were in a way supposed to guarantee the justification for deeds, and not by grace itself through faith, which contradicted the fundamental principle of Protestantism *sola gratia*.³⁵ However, since the middle of the 19th century, groups of deaconesses³⁶ who lived together began to appear in Protestantism and after World War II they also took religious vows – Roger met such a community in Grandchamp in autumn 1940.³⁷ Further inspiration for the concept of the Taizé Community was also provided by an experiment, operating in the years 1935–37 in Finkenwalde (now Szczecin-Zdroje), a seminar for pastors founded by Dietrich Bonhoeffer – an outstanding Lutheran theologian. The pioneering character of this centre in the Protestant world consisted in the implementation of community life – it was a peculiar quasi-religious fraternity house, where the essential elements of

³² Cf. Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 25.

³³ See L. Schlumberger, *Can One Be Protestant and a Monk?*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 90–91 – The author indicates here few examples of forms of common life among the Protestants between the 16th and 18th centuries.

³⁴ See *Wyznanie augsburskie*, art. XXVII oraz *Obrona Wyznania augsburskiego*, art. XXVII, in: *Księgi Wyznaniowe Kościoła Lutherańskiego*, Bielsko-Biała 1999, p. 156–158 oraz 313–322. In 1521 Luther wrote a separate treaty in 139 points criticizing the religious vows *De votis monasticis Martini Lutherii iudicium* (WA 8, 323–329) – German text: *Ein Urteil Luthers über die Klostersgelübde*, in: *Luther deutsch. Die Werke Martin Luthers in neuer Auswahl für die Gegenwart*, Hg. K. Aland, Göttingen 1991, Bd. 2, p. 313–322. Cf. J.-M. Paupert, op. cit., p. 55–56.

³⁵ See more L. Schlumberger, op. cit., p. 92–94, 97. An echo of this view can also be found in the text of the Rule of Taizé: “You know that salvation is provided only by the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ; therefore do not impose asceticism on yourself for its own sake” – Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy*, [no place of publ.] 1981 (mimeograph), p. 6.

³⁶ See more L. Schlumberger, op. cit., p. 100–103.

³⁷ See J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 20–21; S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 106–107.

life were: everyday common meditation, the custom of personal confession – long abandoned in Lutheranism as well as common finances.³⁸ However, Roger Schutz modelled the ideal of monastic life itself directly on the experiences of two centres of renewal of monasticism, which had once been extremely important in the history of the Church and radiated across Europe, and which were located in the immediate geographical proximity of Taizé – the Benedictine Abbey of Cluny and the Cistercian Abbey of Cîteaux.³⁹

The first outline of the rule for the future community was sketched by its founder in the 1941 publication *Communauté de Cluny. Notes explicatives*, where as the fundamental axis of building a fraternal community he indicated a life in the spirit of Beatitudes: joy, simplicity, and charity, which would become a permanent feature of formation in Taizé.⁴⁰ He then developed his idea of community life in the book *Introduction à la vie communautaire* of 1944, mentioned above. The first version of the Rule of Taizé was written at the turn of 1951/52.⁴¹ Its text evolved later on – for the 40th anniversary of the Community, the renewed version of the Rule took the name *Little Source of Taizé*⁴² and the next one was preceded by a series of texts by Brother Roger, which formed the entire *Taizé Community Sources*.⁴³ The evolving text of the Rule, though unchanged as to its essence, became in its form more and more a poetic meditation on the Gospel applied to community life.⁴⁴ It never had the character of some religious constitutions, and was rather a set of basic intuitions of Brother Roger based on the Gospel, expressing his vision of the Community, formulated with great simplicity. In a certain way, the Rule was treated by its author as a certain provisional text open to the constant inspiration of the Holy Spirit – as he wrote in one of its earlier versions:

If this rule were to be treated as something closed and complete, and if it should relieve us of our ever-increasing pursuit of God's purposes, the love of Christ and the light

³⁸ See more D. Bonhoeffer, *Życie wspólne*, Kraków 2001.

³⁹ Cf. A. Łopalewski, op. cit., p. 74–75.

⁴⁰ Cf. M. Grygiel, *Taizé*, in: *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. 19, Lublin 2013, c. 448.

⁴¹ Brother Roger presented it to the brothers at Easter 1952. – see S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 192–193. The entire text of the original rule in the Polish translation see J.-M. Paupert, op. cit., p. 237–266.

⁴² *Reguła zwana „małe źródło” Taizé*, no year of (mimeograph published by the Community of Taizé). Cf. Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy...*, p. 5–46.

⁴³ See Brat Roger z Taizé, *Miłość ponad wszelką miłość...*, and idem, *Źródła Taizé. Bóg chce naszego szczęścia*, Poznań 2001.

⁴⁴ After the death of Br. Roger, the Community returned to the original Rule of the early 1950s – see more Bóg. *Cisza. Prostota...*, p. 80.

of the Holy Spirit, it would mean that we took on an unnecessary burden; it would be better if it was never written.⁴⁵

The Rule is accompanied by the text of the profession of the evangelical counsels called “Commitment for life.”⁴⁶ It is worth noting that the Rule of Taizé does not use the term “perpetual vows” anywhere.⁴⁷ Brother Roger initially hesitated for a long time to introduce some form of religious vows, due to fears of being misunderstood in the Protestant milieu.⁴⁸ However, it was already clear to the first friars that the decision to form a permanent community together must involve a commitment for life and they made such commitments in 1949.⁴⁹ The text of the Commitment consists of an encouragement, which is a collection of evangelical indications and appropriate promises in the form of six questions that define the commitments made. Among them, we find three classical religious vows, which are described in slightly different terms, so that they are not historically burdened by the Protestant-Catholic controversy concerning the understanding of these vows as some form of merit:⁵⁰ renunciation of property and community of goods, celibacy and acceptance of the decisions of the community expressed by the servant of communion, as the Rule defines the Prior. It is worth noting that Brother Roger preferred the word simplicity over poverty. In the older version of the Rule, it was even written “Poverty is not a value in itself”.⁵¹ The founder of Taizé explained his own concept of evangelical poverty in the Rule: “The spirit of poverty is not about making oneself poor, but about arranging everything in life with ingenuity in accordance with the simple beauty of creation.”⁵² The radicalism of living poverty in this sense is realized in Taizé not only by living from the work of one’s own hands, but also by the principle of absolute non-acceptance of any goods – donations, inheritances or even gifts, as the Rule comments on this: “The courage of not supplying oneself with any capital, free from the fear of possible poverty, gives a calm strength.”⁵³

The rhythm of life in Taizé is determined by common prayer, for which the brothers together with the pilgrims who come to them gather in the Church of Reconciliation three times a day. As we read in an earlier version of the Rule:

⁴⁵ Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy*, op. cit., p. 39. Cf. *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 8.

⁴⁶ See idem, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 80–82.

⁴⁷ See more L. Schlumberger, op. cit., p. 98–99.

⁴⁸ See Br. Roger’s statement on this subject – ibidem, p. 99, note 12.

⁴⁹ See J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 40–41.

⁵⁰ Cf. L. Schlumberger, op. cit., p. 99.

⁵¹ Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy...*, p. 31.

⁵² Idem, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 70.

⁵³ Ibidem.

“The regularity of common prayer makes the love of Jesus germinate in us, even though we do not know how.”⁵⁴ The form of this prayer has changed throughout the history of the Community. Originally it was modelled on the Benedictine liturgy combined with elements taken from the traditions of French Protestantism. With the influx of young people, it required a certain simplification and was based on simple meditative chants with verses repeated many times, which are now known throughout the world as the canons of Taizé, and its center is the reading of the Word of God and a long moment of silence. This so-called “Taizé prayer” has now become a kind of common ecumenical good of all Christian Churches, and is commonly encountered all over the world on many occasions, especially during various types of ecumenical services.⁵⁵

The fundamental aim of the Taizé Community is to put into practice the “parable of community,”⁵⁶ or as Brother Roger later put it the “parable of communion,”⁵⁷ which was very aptly formulated by the Orthodox theologian Olivier Clément:

The word ‘parable’ introduces humility: the brothers do not claim that the community is the full realization of ecclesial communion, but that it is a ‘parable.’ What image of the Church is the parable to which the community is called? It is supposed to be precisely the image of the Church, gathered in her diversity.⁵⁸

This diversity in the Community has a concrete ecumenical dimension – it is currently made up of about 100 brothers from different ecclesiastical traditions: about half of them are Protestants and Anglicans and the rest are Catholics. They also come from very different cultures – they represent nearly 30 countries from four continents. Brother Roger never planned for the Taizé Community to grow too much – to open new foundations; on the contrary, he wanted it to remain a single genuine small family, so that the brothers who form it would realize reconciliation in the concrete unity of the visible community. Yes, since the beginning of the 1950s some brothers have lived in several so-called fraternities in different parts

⁵⁴ Brat Roger, *Regula. Listy i modlitwy...*, p. 11.

⁵⁵ See S. Kopp, *Liturgie und Ökumene aus katholischer Perspektive*, “Catholica” 72 (2018) 1–2, p. 125. Cf. C. Sigov, *Vulnerable Trust and the “New Song” of Taizé*, in: *Brother Roger’s Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 187–189; W. Kasper, *A Handbook of Spiritual Ecumenism*, New York 2008³, p. 86.

⁵⁶ Brat Roger z Taizé, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 81. The term was first used by Br. Roger in 1969 – see S. Laplane, op. cit., p. 159.

⁵⁷ Brat Roger z Taizé, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 58.

⁵⁸ O. Clément, *Taizé, szukanie sensu życia*, Poznań 1999, p. 31 – it is worth noting this publication, as it seems to be one of the deepest in showing what Taizé really is – see the opinion in: Frère Alois, op. cit., p. 15.

of the world, but these are something provisional and their goal is to experience life together with the poorest.⁵⁹ The phenomenon of the Taizé Community can therefore be recapitulated as an original combination of elements of the monastic tradition with the pioneering intuitions of Brother Roger,⁶⁰ but both of these elements reach one source – they are deeply rooted in the Gospel. It is, according to the term of John Paul II, a community with “a particular, original and even in a sense provisional vocation.”⁶¹

THE BUILDER OF UNITY BETWEEN CHRISTIANS

“Never accept the scandalizing fact of Christians being divided, who so eagerly profess the love of their neighbor, yet remain divided. Fervently love the unity of the Body of Christ”⁶² – these words of Brother Roger inscribed in the Rule of the Taizé Community seem to be the best summary of his life. The tireless search for ways to reconcile the divided Christians was a particular charism of Brother Roger. He imparted it not only to the Taizé Community he founded, but also successive generations of young people who came there in search of the sources of faith. It can even be said that this Community in its essence, starting from Brother Roger’s first projects, was to be the site of a very concrete realization of this desire – as a “parable of communion” it was to make the reconciliation of Christians visible right now.⁶³ From the beginning he believed in the power of witness of such a community because, as he wrote in his letter *The Ways of a Pilgrim*: “if such a community becomes a leaven of reconciliation in that communion which is the Church, then the impossible becomes possible.”⁶⁴ The turning point in the practical implementation of this vocation by the community was the acceptance of the Catholic brothers – as Brother Roger said: “the presence of the Catholic brothers among us forced us to be concrete, to reject answers that would be purely

⁵⁹ See Brat Roger z Taizé, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 62; *Bóg. Cisza. Prostota...*, p. 235–239 – currently, Brother Alois has introduced a year-long stay in the fraternity as a permanent element of formation for young brothers before their vows. Cf. A. Łopalewski, op. cit., p. 78, note 194.

⁶⁰ See more Brother Alois Prior of Taizé, *What Is Distinctive about Taizé?*, in: *The Relevance of a Religious or Monastic Vocation. Acts of the International Colloquium, Taizé, 5–12 July 2015*, Taizé 2016, p. 13–19.

⁶¹ See Brat Roger z Taizé, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 85.

⁶² Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy...*, p. 9.

⁶³ See *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 69; Frère Alois, op. cit., p. 14.

⁶⁴ Brat Roger, *Reguła. Listy i modlitwy...*, p. 75.

theoretical.”⁶⁵ Thus a concrete consequence of this fact was the decision taken in the late 1960s and early 1970s to receive the Catholic Eucharist in the Community and to recognize the necessity of the ministry of the Bishop of Rome for the unity of the Church.⁶⁶

Referring to this chronology, we can, somewhat generalizing, distinguish two essential stages in the way of the ecumenical involvement of Brother Roger and the Taizé Community. In the nineteen-fifties and sixties this was largely an activity in the institutional sphere, that is, participation in forums of ecumenical dialogue, organizing meetings for theologians and those responsible from the various Churches, and finally, participation in the Second Vatican Council. In this field the outstanding contribution made by Brother Max Thurian to the theological work of the Dombes Group and of the Commission “Faith and Order” of the World Council of Churches should be highlighted.⁶⁷ Later we see in the activities of the Community concerning Christian unity a certain shift in emphasis, albeit without abandoning theological activity, more towards spiritual and practical ecumenism – reconciliation was based much more on building direct human relations. The key to restoring unity here is a real encounter as a method of breaking down distrust and barriers through the experience of being together – knowing each other and mutual sharing of one’s gifts. Taizé has thus become a meeting place on a large scale, mainly for young people from different countries as well as from different denominations, where prayer and meditation on the Bible was a common platform.⁶⁸ This experience of meeting people of different origins in the communion of the Church has become a special feature of Taizé and a magnet that attracts larger and larger groups of people. Brother Roger’s prophetic vision of a small community as an evangelical leaven of unity began to bear concrete fruit, albeit unexpectedly, because the founder of Taizé had never planned that it would be a place of big gatherings for young people. Nor did the Taizé Community, despite the rapid influx of young people, ever want to formalize this in the form of creating some new movement in the Church. Thus fidelity to the original charism of building Christian unity, through the authenticity of the

⁶⁵ Brat Roger przeor Taizé, *Niech twoje święto trwa bez końca. Zapiski (1969–1974)*, Warszawa 1982, p. 50.

⁶⁶ See more Frère Alois, op. cit., p. 15–18. Cf. Brat Francis, op. cit., p. 16–17; D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 277–278, 281.

⁶⁷ See more J. Froniewski, *Teologiczne znaczenie wkładu Maxa Thuriana w przygotowanie “Dokumentu z Limy (BEM)” w zakresie eucharystycznego charakteru anamnezy (z pozycji 30 lat recepcji Dokumentu)*, “Wrocławski Przegląd Teologiczny” 20 (2012) 2, p. 84–86; M. Hardt, *Thurian Max*, in: *Personenlexikon Ökumene...*, p. 225–226 (here also bibliography in German); J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 26, 31–32, 34, 36, 42–43, 52–53, 61, 130–132.

⁶⁸ See more J. Höglauer, op. cit., p. 73–128.

testimony of the life of the Community, gave rise to a completely new gift – it brought to Taizé thousands of young people, thirsty for an experience of a life of prayer and community, often full of an unconscious longing for Christ in the communion of the Church.

The more Brother Roger approached the end of his life, the more he felt that on the road to Christian reconciliation, in view of the slowdown in the process of official ecumenical dialogue, strong prophetic gestures were needed instead of waiting for further theological documents. This is attested to by his courageous text, addressed a year before his death to the young people gathering at the meetings held by the Taizé Community:

For many years the ecumenical vocation has been a stimulus for important conversations. It is an announcement of living communion between Christians. [...] Could there in the Church appear signs of great openness, so great that one could say: those who were divided in the past are no longer separated, they live in communion? The first step towards reconciliation will be to see those places all over the world where life in communion is already being realized. It will take courage to say this and to adapt to it. The texts will come later. Does the privileged treatment of the texts not result in putting away the call of the Gospel: reconcile with your brother without delay?⁶⁹

These words of the founder Taizé are not so much an expression of impatience as an expression of evangelical radicalism in the sense of reconciliation inscribed from the beginning in the vocation of the Community. Reconciliation for Brother Roger is something concrete, it is faithfulness to the Gospel and its practical realization:

In this unique communion that is the Church, old and new disputes tear Christ apart in His Body. The great ecumenical vocation is, and always will be, the realization of reconciliation without delay. According to the Gospel, reconciliation should not be postponed: “So if you bring your gift before the altar and there you remember that your brother has something against you, leave your gift there before the altar and first go and reconcile with your brother.” “Go first!” And certainly not: “Put it off!” Ecumenism sustains false hopes when reconciliation is postponed. It stops at a standstill and even becomes petrified when it allows for parallel paths to be created where forgiveness loses its life-giving power⁷⁰.

⁶⁹ Brat Roger z Taizé, *U źródeł radości. List 2004*, Taizé 2004, p. 4.

⁷⁰ Brat Roger z Taizé, *Źródła Taizé...*, p. 28. Cf. idem, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 61; idem, *Jego miłość jest ogniem*, transl. A. Foltńska, Katowice 1992², p. 89–91.

Interpreting these words in the context of the entire Brother Roger's life, we can state today that his work has become a prophetic sign for the divided Christians at the turn of the twentieth and twenty-first century, because he did not only think so, but actually lived in this way. This was not just outlining beautiful ideas – he completely devoted his life to the evangelically radical realization of the work of Christian reconciliation.

What should be emphasized in particular is that Brother Roger always wanted to create his work in the Church, not above her or in opposition to her. The communion of the Church is one of the key concepts in his writings and a great desire of all his life – as he wrote: “«Communion» is one of the most beautiful names of the Church.”⁷¹ Hence his attachment to building up direct ties, especially with the heads of the various Churches and, above all, with the Pope, which has been repeatedly perceived negatively in many Protestant circles, even raising suspicion of a crypto-conversion to Catholicism.⁷² However, the founder of Taizé always looked for a vision of the Church that would not consist in renouncing one's own roots, but would also not be falling into syncretism. It is true that in Taizé we find elements of both the Protestant and Anglican traditions, as well as the Catholic and Orthodox ones, but it is about the reintegration and reconciliation of these traditions, because the Community of Taizé as a “parable of communion” wants to be the leaven of the undivided Church. And the undivided Church, as O. Clément writes, is the Church of Pentecost, and that is why at Taizé one can experience a kind of “Pentecostal harmony,” but this is not so much about a historical return to the undivided Church of the first centuries as it is about the reality of today, in which the Holy Spirit makes this ecclesial communion real in an experience of Pentecost that transcends all past divisions.⁷³ And in this sense Brother Roger's work in the form of the Taizé Community can be called “the place of the prophetic Church.”⁷⁴ It is not a ready-made ecclesiological concept of the “Church of tomorrow” to which Taizé never had the slightest intention of aspiring, but more an evangelical intuition which Brother Roger sowed to indicate how to move forward towards unity. The current Prior of Taizé writes:

Brother Roger's path should be carefully considered in order to understand it correctly. We still have not quite discovered how it can be made more concrete. By following it,

⁷¹ *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 67. Cf. Brat Roger z Taizé, *Miłość ponad wszelką miłość...*, p. 29.

⁷² See J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 132–134. Cf. W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 294.

⁷³ O. Clément, op. cit., p. 31–32. Cf. W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 292–293.

⁷⁴ J.-C. Escaffit, M. Rasiwala, op. cit., p. 167. Cf. D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 281–282.

we want to anticipate reconciliation through our life in Taizé and already live as reconciled. We hope that through this experience we will contribute to the preparation of theological progress. Is it not always the case in the history of the Church that the faith put into practice precedes theological formulations?⁷⁵

THEOLOGY WRITTEN BY THE HEART

Brother Roger left us with about a dozen books,⁷⁶ but we do not find any treatises that systematically address theological issues. These are, apart from the successive versions of the Rule of the Taizé Community, rather loose thoughts, albeit solidly based on the Bible and referring to the Fathers of the Church, most often collected in the form of diaries, notes or meditations.⁷⁷ Besides, his legacy includes a whole series of deeply meditative annual letters written to young people,⁷⁸ which are the basis for work at meetings organized by the Community. Therefore, some have accused him of a lack of substantive theological reflection.⁷⁹ What is more, he himself, especially in the early period of his life, was quite critical of academic theology and we even find once in his notes surprising words – as for a graduate of the Faculty of Theology: “I never liked theology.”⁸⁰ Brother Alois explains this statement in such a way that it did not mean disregarding theology, but the urgent need to put it into practice – the priority of the living dimension of faith over the conceptual one.⁸¹ Yet, for the sake of completeness, it should be recalled that the founder of the Taizé Community constantly sought inspiration on his path in close encounters with such eminent theologians as: de Lubac, Congar, Kasper, Ricoeur or Clement.

⁷⁵ Frère Alois, op. cit., p. 16.

⁷⁶ Since 2011, the publishing of Brother Roger's collected works in Taizé began – by the end of 2019, eight volumes see http://www.taize.fr/pl_article10857.html?territ=10&category=1&lang=pl [accessed 13.04.20] (since 2016, Herder in German has only published volume I).

⁷⁷ See more on the sources for research on the theology of Br. Roger – D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 272–275.

⁷⁸ The full list is on website: https://pl.wikipedia.org/wiki/Roger_Louis_Sch%C3%BCtz-Mar-sauche [accessed 13.04.20].

⁷⁹ Cf. G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 17; *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 132.

⁸⁰ „Je n'ai jamais aimé la théologie” (sentence written in 1948.) – Frère Roger de Taizé, *À la joie je t'invite. Fragments inédits 1940–1963*, Taizé 2012, p. 21 (Les écrits de frère Roger, vol. 2). See also G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 17 and 24.

⁸¹ Brother Alois Prior of Taizé, *In Conclusion*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 299–300. Cf. G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 19, where he points to the inspiration coming from M. Luther, who stated: *Sola experientia facit theologum* and *Vera theologia est practica* – ibidem, p. 22; D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 272.

If we penetrate really deeply into the work of the founder of Taizé, regardless of these various objections, we discover that he undoubtedly deserves to be called a theologian, but perhaps rather in the original sense of the term, as one who has the gift of explaining the mysteries of faith, because in the 20th century, there are not many spiritual authorities like him who would speak about God and His love with equally great simplicity and at the same time with such power of persuasion. Hence Brother Roger, more than as a theologian in the modern sense, that is, as someone doing a methodical reflection on Revelation, should perhaps be seen as a prophet in the biblical sense, one who paves new paths for God in the world.⁸²

However, in such interpretation, can his teaching, as it is usually done, be reduced to the sphere of spirituality or even mysticism, or can it be encapsulated only within the framework of ecumenical research and mainly on the level of spiritual ecumenism? At the end of August 2015, on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of Brother Roger's birthday and 10th anniversary of his death, an international scientific colloquium entitled *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought* was held in Taizé, bringing together 250 young theologians of various denominations from many countries of the world, with 20 papers showing Brother Roger's contribution to a wide range of different fields of theology.⁸³ This symposium clearly showed, perhaps for the first time in such a vast area, that Brother Roger's legacy can become a very inspiring *locus theologicus* for theological research. It is difficult to present here all the results of the studies on the thought of the founder of Taizé, which were collected in a publication totaling 300 pages, but it is worth sketching out the main lines in his teaching, which bring some clear freshness to the theological thinking of our time. Cardinal Walter Kasper, an eminent theologian and retired President of the Pontifical Council for the Promotion of Christian Unity, who also took part in this debate and it is his text that crowns the collection of speeches from this conference will be a competent guide in sketching this outline of the fundamental elements of the contribution of Brother Roger's teaching to contemporary theology.

Cardinal Kasper, who knew Brother Roger and his Community⁸⁴ well from the time when he was still a professor of theology in Tübingen, calls the founder of Taizé an existential theologian, that is, a theologian whose life was rooted in a

⁸² Cf. W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 286; D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 266. In such a tone also Bishop Jorge Ortega – chairman of the Portuguese Episcopal Conference wrote about the founder of Taizé after his death – see *Wybrać miłość...*, p. 23.

⁸³ Brother Alois Prior of Taizé, *Presentation*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 11–12.

⁸⁴ It is worth reminding here that it was Card. Kasper himself who presided in Taizé over the funeral mass of Brother Roger 23 August 2005.

deep spiritual experience; a theologian who listened on his knees in silence to the voice of God and lived what he heard in his heart to open the paths of hope and reconciliation.⁸⁵ The key word that constantly returns in Brother Roger's statements, prayers and writings is trust, trust of the heart. What is worth emphasizing is precisely this element of the message proclaimed at Taizé, which most young people who come here in search of the sources of faith rediscover for themselves as something fundamental to establishing a living relationship with God. This trust, as Brother Roger teaches, is always possible, even in the darkness of our existence, when we turn to the Risen Christ.⁸⁶ What gives this trust a permanent foundation is the basic biblical truth that God is love, which in various ways returns as the constant leitmotiv of all the texts of the first Prior of Taizé. As Brother Roger repeated until his death "God can only love."⁸⁷ The Protestant theologian Gottfried Hammann even claims that this theology of God's love, interpreted more with the heart than with reason, can be called the "theology of *agape*."⁸⁸ God in this love is faithful to himself and to us, and the essence of this love is mercy. As Kasper writes, mercy is the basic truth about God in Brother Roger's teaching, and the concrete expression of this is forgiveness as an opportunity for a new beginning.⁸⁹ What is more, God in his mercy is always patient – He always accompanies us on our life's paths.⁹⁰

This message of God's love and mercy, which enables us to trust in every situation, is not, in Brother Roger's view, a utopia or an abstract idea. In Kasper's opinion, it translates very specifically into ecclesiology. God, by revealing these truths to us through His incarnate Son, continues to make them real in His Body – the Church – after His resurrection: "After His resurrection, the presence of Christ became something concrete in the communion of love that is the Church."⁹¹ The Church as a "communion of love" – as the Founder of Taizé prefers to call

⁸⁵ W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 286.

⁸⁶ Ibidem, p. 287–288. Cf. W. Kasper, *That They May All Be One. The Call to Unity*, London–New York 2004, p. 164, where he points to the Christological criterion as a basis for authentic spiritual ecumenism.

⁸⁷ The essence of this teaching can be found in the original 2002 collection: Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać*. Cf. K. Scott, *Experiencing and Thinking Jesus*, in: *Brother Roger's Contribution to Theological Thought. Acts of the International Colloquium Taizé...*, p. 122–127.

⁸⁸ G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 23.

⁸⁹ See in particular the chapter "Przyjąć przebaczenie", in: Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 42–43; ibidem, p. 95–96, 101. Cf. idem, *Jego miłość jest ogniem...*, p. 16–18.

⁹⁰ See W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 288–289. Cf. idem, *Barmherzigkeit. Grundbegriff des Evangeliums – Schlüssel christlichen Lebens*, Freiburg im Br. 2012, where Card. Kasper developed his own teaching on mercy in an ample, systematic study.

⁹¹ Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 60.

it in his writings – is sent to be an instrument and sign of God's love and mercy. And here we come to the point to which Brother Roger was one of the first to draw our attention: how can the Church concretize God's love if she is divided in herself? For him, this is not just an ecumenical problem, but a real suffering of many Christians of different denominations because it is a denial of the nature and mission of the Church. The division of the Church for Brother Roger is a tragedy which is increased by the indifference of Christians who accept this condition.⁹² In this cry for unity he had the courage of a prophet who was ahead of his time. As a cure that would make it possible to truly restore the unity of the Church, he pointed to mercy, forgiving love:

Will Christians have a heart that is wide enough, a mind that is open enough, love that is fervent enough to discover this Gospel way of reconciliation without delay? [...] When Christians continue in great simplicity and infinite kindness of heart, when they carefully seek to discover the deep beauty of the human soul, they already begin to live in the communion that Christ gives. This communion, which is the Church, can regain credibility among young people if the Church becomes more transparent, seeking with all her soul to love and forgive.⁹³

As we have already shown in the previous paragraph, ecumenism for Brother Roger is not so much theological disputes and findings as a reality written by one's life – a mission that opens new paths of reconciliation. This is his most important legacy not only for the Taizé Community, but also for the whole Church.⁹⁴

And at this point, Cardinal Kasper poses an important question: can this path set out by Brother Roger be regarded today as a paradigm for ecumenism? Undoubtedly, the vocation of the founder of Taizé is something extraordinary – a personal path inspired by the Holy Spirit at a particular moment in the history of the Church and the world⁹⁵ and in this sense cannot be copied. However, the personal charism of the founder of the Order is no longer perceived in the Church as just some kind of private grace, but becomes something fundamental for a given community, and through it is realized as a gift for the entire Church. Thus, through the Taizé Community, Brother Roger's charism radiates to the whole of Christianity, and in this sense his legacy can be read as a discrete indication by the Holy Spirit of the future path to ecumenism. Today, after a wave of post-concil-

⁹² W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 289–290. See also G. Hammann, op. cit., p. 23–24. Cf. Brat François, op. cit., p. 5–7.

⁹³ Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 60–61.

⁹⁴ Cf. W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 291.

⁹⁵ Cf. D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 282–283.

iar enthusiasm, ecumenism has reached such a point that, with the help of God's grace, it needs courageous personal decisions in order for reconciliation between the Churches to continue concretely.⁹⁶ And the creator of Taizé showed with his life how to do this in a clear and irrevocable way, without denying one's own identity and without breaking up with anyone. For him, the basic method on this journey, as outlined above, is mercy. It is the cure of mercy and forgiveness that heals the wounds of divisions in the Church, and at the same time is not some form of "cheap grace."⁹⁷ With this vision of the Church, which does not exclude anyone on the basis of this "method of mercy," Brother Roger remains in agreement with the line of teaching of the holy popes who supported him in his ecumenical vocation: John XXIII⁹⁸ and John Paul II.⁹⁹ Likewise, today Pope Francis, in guiding the Church, constantly opens the door of mercy for all. Therefore, Cardinal Kasper is convinced, seeing from the present perspective how great a gift God has given us in the person of Brother Roger, that as a Church we are invited to continue on this path of Christian reconciliation, which he has shown us with the witness of his life and teaching.¹⁰⁰

CONCLUSION – THE INSPIRING TOPICALITY OF BROTHER ROGER'S LEGACY

This article in its form is only a certain theological sketch, which does not aspire to exhaust such a rich issue. Rather, as already indicated in the introduction, it is an invitation to explore more intensively what the founder of Taizé left to the Church. In conclusion, according to the structure of the above presentation, the following three essential components of this heritage, which form a certain harmonious whole, can be pointed out from today's perspective as permanently valid. First, it is a fully original form of Christian life in a monastic ecumenical community. This originality, in short, consists, on the Protestant side, in a return to

⁹⁶ Cf. Brat François, op. cit., p. 21, 23.

⁹⁷ Here it is worth recalling the source and understanding of this term and the distinction between "cheap" and "expensive" grace in contemporary theology – D. Bonhoeffer, *Nasładowanie*, transl. J. Kubaszczyk, Poznań 1997, p. 9–11.

⁹⁸ In this context, it is important to recall the words spoken by this Pope at the beginning of the Second Vatican Council, to which Br. Roger referred: "The Church prefers to resort to the cure of mercy rather than to wave the weapon of austerity" – see Brat Roger z Taizé, *Bóg może tylko kochać...*, p. 66.

⁹⁹ Cf. A. Dudek-Kowalska, *Miłosierdzie jako oikonomia Kościoła. Na podstawie wybranych tekstów Magisterium Ecclesiae*, "Teologia w Polsce" 13 (2019) 2, p. 217–218.

¹⁰⁰ See more W. Kasper, *Mercy and the Ecumenical Journey of Brother Roger...*, p. 294–297.

the model of monastic life before the division of the Church, and on the Catholic side, in the ecumenical composition of that community. Secondly, on the basis of this concrete experience of the Taizé Community, Brother Roger showed a deeply existential way of reconciliation of the divided Christians, based on building communion through the community of life, which preceded in a pioneering way the possibilities arising from the previous doctrinal arrangements. And thirdly, in his teaching, which, although not systematic in nature, he gave a clear outline, deeply rooted in the Bible, of a theology of forgiving love as the key to building the foundations for authentic reconciliation between the Churches.

To be open to the future, we should accept the suggestion of some authors that the Taizé Community, as a realization of Roger Schutz's vision, has something of poetry in it – it tries to grasp what is often only sensed, what is mainly spiritual intuition, or perhaps, to put it more biblically, it is a place to seek what the Holy Spirit tells the Church, and therefore has a certain prophetic character.¹⁰¹ This gives it a constantly creative dynamic, which allows it to develop the work of its founder and to set forth constantly new ways of reconciliation in the Church. Brother Roger's charism attests to the fact that for the fulfillment of Jesus' desire "that all be one" (Jn 17:21) the Holy Spirit breathes "where he wants" (Jn 3:8) and is not limited by human divisions in the Church. For the unity of the Church in its essence is the work of the Holy Spirit.¹⁰²

It is also worth noting that the results presented here can be put into practice: Brother Roger's legacy can inspire in concrete terms the activities of our ecclesial communities on very different levels, not necessarily linked directly to ecumenism, but rather to the building of unity in the broader sense. Many visitors to Taizé experience discovering at a deeper level their own ecclesial identity through encounter with diversity. A well-understood unity does not consist in unification, but in the light of Paul's model of the Church as the Body of Christ, in mutual enrichment. John Paul II wrote in this context about a new method of ecumenical building of communion through the "exchange of gifts" between the Churches.¹⁰³ Taizé, through its own example, teaches that such an essential means is simply to enable us to meet one another and discover diversity, not as what divides, but as what enriches.¹⁰⁴

Brother Roger's witness of life and his writings are constantly a profound spiritual inspiration for many Christians of different denominations, and not only for the young, with whom we now mainly associate Taizé. For many of them, he is

¹⁰¹ Cf. D. Sattler, op. cit., p. 266; K. Scott, op. cit., p. 126–127.

¹⁰² See John Paul II, Encyclical *Ut unum sint*, Vatican 1995, No. 7, 102.

¹⁰³ Ibidem, nr 57, 87.

¹⁰⁴ See more Frère Alois, op. cit., p. 10–12.

not only a spiritual authority, but even a saint – an ecumenical saint, beyond the divisions.¹⁰⁵ When, therefore, from a certain distance, we judge the fruits of the life of the founder of Taizé in an evangelical way, it is above all necessary to point out here the hundreds of thousands of Christians who, by attending the meetings organized by this Community, inspired by the authenticity of his witness to the life of the Gospel, have created, throughout Europe, as well as on other continents, in the 80 years since the arrival of young Roger Schutz in this Burgundy village, an ecumenically sensitive “Taizé generation,” embracing all Christian traditions.

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Keywords: Roger Schutz, Brother Roger of Taizé, Taizé Community, ecumenism, ecumenical theology, unity of the Church

AKTUALNOŚĆ DZIEDZICTWA DUCHOWEGO I TEOLOGII BRATA ROGERA Z TAIZÉ

Streszczenie

W tym roku przeżyliśmy we Wrocławiu Europejskie Spotkanie Młodych organizowane przez Wspólnotę z Taizé. To wielkie wydarzenie duchowe jest okazją do głębszej refleksji nad znaczeniem dziedzictwa brata Rogera z Taizé dla współczesnego Kościoła. Autor

za punkt wyjścia tej analizy przyjął tło biograficzne, które pozwoli czytelnikowi uchwycić kontekst życiowy specyfiki poszukiwań ekumenicznych Rogera Schutza. Następnie w kolejnych punktach opisuje trzy zasadnicze elementy dziedzictwa brata Rogera, które są stale inspirującym darem dla Kościoła na drodze budowania jedności. Po pierwsze, jest to w pełni oryginalna forma życia chrześcijańskiego w monastycznej wspólnotie ekumenicznej. Po drugie, na bazie tego konkretnego doświadczenia Wspólnoty z Taizé brat Roger wskazał głęboko egzystencjalną drogę budowania jedności podzielonych chrześcijan. I po trzecie, w swoim nauczaniu naszkicował teologię przebaczącej miłości jako klucz do budowania pojednania między Kościołami. Bez wątpienia najbardziej spektakularnym owocem jego ewangelicznego życia są rzesze młodzieży z różnych Kościołów chrześcijańskich, które niezmiennie od dziesięcioleci gromadzą się wokół Wspólnoty z Taizé.

Słowa kluczowe: Roger Schutz, brat Roger z Taizé, Wspólnota z Taizé, ekumenizm, teologia ekumeniczna, jedność Kościoła

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INTERPRETATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE ACCORDING TO THE “IMAGO DEI”¹

This article is the result of theological research on the subject of life. The phenomenon of life is multifaceted, but often it cannot be defined because it is a mystery. The author of the article, based on the truth that man is a biological-psycho-spiritual unity, interprets these spheres in the key of St. Bonaventure's idea, describes them as *vestigium*, *umbra*, and *imago Dei*. The issue of spiritual life in the category of *Imago Dei* is analyzed in detail. The author tries to answer the questions that arise by using not only theological fields: or is there an openness to transcendence only in a man? What does it mean to be an image of God? How to achieve a full life? The sphere of *bios*, *psyche*, and *zoe* in the human person are permeating each other, but this spiritual life transcends the previous two planes. This distinguishes man from other creatures and gives him a unique character. God, in His goodness and freedom, grants man life, creates him as a free being and in His image. But the perfect image of the Father is Jesus Christ. In His Incarnation, He showed us the fullness of humanity and through imitation and union with Christ, man can become conformed to the image of God. In this way, it is finally possible to obtain full participation in the communion with God in the Holy Trinity.

INTRODUCTION

Life is a mystery. There are different interpretations of this phenomenon, on many planes, from the natural sciences, through the psychological sciences,

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cognitive science, to the humanities and philosophy. However, the most important and broadest interpretative perspective is given by theology. In its context, this phenomenon can be presented in three categories: *bios* (biological life), *psyche* (conscious life, mental life) and *zoe* (spiritual life). The research undertaken on this subject encourages the theological reflection especially on spiritual life. The inspiration and at the same time the working method for the author of the article is the concept of St. Bonaventure, who explained the relationship of the Creator to creation in three categories: *vestigium* (trace, vestige), *umbra* (shadow) and *imago* (image).² As the title of the article itself indicates, the most important category for this consideration is *imago*, which will be the basis for the interpretation of spiritual life, hereinafter referred to as *zoe*. The correlation between spiritual life and the theological category of *imago* thus defines the main purpose of the article, as indicated in the title. The presented interpretation will not be a simple analysis of Bonaventure's theology, but will be made in relation to the cultural, psychological and even biological understanding of the term *image*.

It is worth making a methodological remark here. Although science and theology operate using different ways of describing the world, they deal with one and the same reality. Therefore, an appropriate hermeneutical key is needed to enable dialogue between science and theology. This analysis adopts the approach called convergence, which was presented by John Haught in his book *Science and faith*.³ Therefore, spiritual life will not be presented as a simple synthesis of different views of science and theology. Rather, it will be presented as a new emergent quality – a *zoe* that is finally established in God.⁴ It is worth noting that the article is a continuation of the two earlier papers, which were previously published in the *Theology in Poland* [Teologia w Polsce].⁵ Together with them it constitutes

² Cf. Bonaventura, *Commentaria in quatuor libros sententiarum magistri Petri Lombardi* [I d 3 p 3 q 2 c (I 73 a)], in: Bonaventura, *Opera omnia*, Quaricchi 1882, quote after: J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia*, vol. II: *Rozumienie objawienia i teologia historii według Bonawentury*, transl. J. Merecki, ed. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, Lublin 2014, p. 280.

³ J. Haught, *Science and faith. A new introduction*, New York 2012.

⁴ Cf. K.E. Duszek, *Theological Insight into the Phenomenon of Life: the Bios as a Vestigium Dei*, "Teologia w Polsce" 13 (2019) 1, p. 62.

⁵ In 2018 a research team created in the Institute of Dogmatic Theology of KUL, including the author of the article, undertook research work on the issue of life. The project was entitled *The phenomenon of Life in Interdisciplinary view. A Theological Analysis of the State of Research*. The research resulted in the articles of K.E. Duszek, *Theological Insight into the Phenomenon of Life: the Bios as a Vestigium Dei*, "Teologia w Polsce" 13 (2019) 1, p. 59–72; A. Pędrak, *Umbra Dei. A Theological Interpretation of Psychological Life*, "Teologia w Polsce" 13 (2019) 1, p. 87–100. They became an impulse to undertake further research on this topic. The present article is a continuation of the idea included and explained therein.

a certain whole and it is worth reading it in their context. Each of these articles looks at life from the point of view of interdisciplinary research, showing a broader perspective on this phenomenon. The following analyze is the apex of the research, so that it is possible to answer the questions: is the plane of life of the *zoe* exclusively human? Does the spiritual life bear witness to being an image of God? And finally: what produces the fullness of life?

ZOE AND IMAGO

Spiritual life can be defined using the term *zoe*. This term is, on the one hand, very simple, but on the other hand, it encompasses the highest, most subtle aspect of life – transcendence. Spiritual life is more than just mental life, which will be expanded further on in the article. *Zoe* means reaching "towards" something higher than oneself, it is a longing for the "Other," the "Inconceivable," the "Eternal." It is a content that goes beyond the described phenomenon and is never fully defined. The final form of existence is called life – *zoe* because it is not just ordinary, actual and lifeless existence. Life indicates such a quality of being that allows an internal communication within itself, makes it possible to possess oneself and to relate freely to the other. To the highest extent it belongs to a person, especially through the two fundamental activities of the spirit – reason and will – and reaches perfection in one's community with God.⁶

As was said in the introduction, *imago* together with *vestigium* and *umbra* appeared in the teaching of St. Bonaventure, but here the comparisons of *zoe* as *imago* will not directly relate to his concepts. The expression *imago* itself is surprisingly diverse. To see the fullness and coherence of all the meanings it is worth relating to the interpretation taken from non-theological fields. In the most general and colloquial meaning *imago* is simply an *image*. This is the world presented in an image which reflects some reality. An image can be a work of art or a scene recounted in memory or imagination, the entirety of matters. An image has the dimension of otherness and diversity. Its task is to show "something" or "someone else." There are different kinds of images: mental, literary, cultural and material ones. Man has the tendency to create mental images of reality, especially of some-

⁶ Cf. G.L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik. Für Studium und Praxis der Theologie*, Freiburg–Basel–Wien 1995, p. 565–566. Man, thanks to soul and spiritual powers of reason and will, is bestowed with freedom, „a special sign of the image of God" CCC 1705 (2nd Vatican Council, The Pastoral Constitution on the Church in the Contemporary World *Gaudium et spes*, Vatican 1965, 17).

one unknown, including God.⁷ In psychoanalysis *imago* denotes an subconscious or unconscious notion of some person that is projected on other persons in the milieu.⁸ Biology also gives an interesting definition, since *imago* is an adult form, capable of reproduction, shaped fully and finally after successive transformations.

It seems that the proposed scopes of understanding of image have little to do with spiritual life and the analogy is largely incomprehensible, but by developing the theme it will be possible to present a broader and interesting horizon for theological interpretation of *zoe* as the *imago Dei*.

SHADOWS, VESTIGES, IMAGES

In this section we will try to answer the first fundamental question: is *zoe* (inner life, transcendental) something exclusively human? It is certain that the world is not something created and existing without any relationship with God. Its truthfulness and potentiality have their basis in the reflection of the Father – the Eternal Word. The Trinitarian features of God are also imprinted in creatures.⁹ In his concept, St. Bonaventure proposed a ternary construction that indicates the relationship of creation to the Creator. All living beings, named by the holy Doctor of the Church, are vestiges – *vestigia Dei*; *umbra Dei* are shadows, meaning everything created but lifeless. Both have a causal relationship to God. *Imago*, on the other hand, is related to the Creator through a relationship of knowledge and love.¹⁰ Man as a spiritual-personal and spiritual-corporeal being integrates all three degrees within himself. Only he can praise God, reciprocate His love and have a personal relationship with Him as God the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. In his existence, knowledge and desire for perfect love, he is the image of God.¹¹ The very term *imago Dei* (Latin), Greek *eikon*, Hebrew *selem*, is the inner relationship between God and man who was created in His image. In the light of the Bible, the image of God indicates an ontological relationship between man and his Creator that touches the very essence of being, emphasizing his special status and dignity and destiny, different from other creatures.¹²

⁷ Cf. F. Boespflug, *Karykatury Boga. Potęga i niebezpieczeństwo obrazu*, transl. M. Szewc, Poznań 2006, p. 15.

⁸ Cf. I. Błocian, *Psychoanalityczne wykładnie mitu. Freud, Jung, Fromm*, Białystok 2010, p. 11–22.

⁹ Cf. G.L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik...*, p. 194.

¹⁰ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera Omnia*, vol. II: *Rozumienie objawienia i teologia historii według Bonawentury...*, p. 279–281.

¹¹ Cf. G.L. Müller, *Katholische Dogmatik...*, p. 194.

¹² Cf. *Obraz Boży*, [in:] *Encyklopedia katolicka*, vol. XIV, Lublin 2010, col. 226.

An interesting vision of anthropology was put forward by Wolfhart Pannenberg. He does not start with theological teaching on man, but looks for sources in philosophical, psychological or even biological and zoological research. In this way he indicates a connection between all sciences dealing with man in the most important points of his structure as an individual and a cultural-social being. Contemporary anthropology defines man differently from Christian tradition. It starts with his place in nature, not with his relationship with God. Man, in the order of nature, is conceived of as a microcosm that is in relation to the macrocosm, constituting the whole universe. Since the time of Democritus man has been considered a reflection of the macrocosm because he unites all realities: body, soul and spirit. Such an assignment was very much present in the Renaissance era and lasted until modern times. It was then that the idea of man as a microcosm began to be abandoned, concurrently with opposing him to animals by returning to the idea that only man has the immortal soul. So the Christian understanding of the soul, which bears witness to the dignity of man, rising above the cosmos and being on God's side, returned. However, the dualism of the soul and the body has reappeared, which has brought back the problem of defining man from the material side. Behavioural psychology and biological research have tried to help solve this problem, showing again that man is not fundamentally different from animals, but only presents a different variant of behaviour in the environment and this is what makes him special. According to Pannenberg, the animal environment cannot be conceptually transferred to the human environment. Man's behaviour is not inborn, as in animals, but is the result of culture and other complex factors. Man's uniqueness is revealed in his openness to the world. The human person distinguishes himself from the animal world by his way of being, which points out to his spirituality and his different way of looking at the world, as well as going beyond it.¹³

Helmuth Plessner explained man's position by distinguishing him from animals, which are the centre of life for themselves. Man sees his centre not only inside himself, but also outside himself. And so Pannenberg, referring to the discussion on the place of man in the world, explained that man does have certain patterns of behaviour, but they are the starting point of man's openness, that is self-transcendence. The most important thing, however, is that man constitutes a personal unity of soul and body.¹⁴ Humans surpass animals with their spirit, which gives them an infinite horizon. Man not only wants to eat and drink, but also seeks community, closeness, friendship. He wants spiritual exchange and spiritual cognition. As a result, he finds his perfect place in the order of love and

¹³ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia człowieka*, Lublin 2006, p. 375–377.

¹⁴ Cf. W. Pannenberg, *Anthropologie in theologischer Perspektive*, Göttingen 1983, p. 35–37, quote after: K. Gózdź, *Teologia człowieka...*, p. 378–380.

this is what he is assigned to. This is revealed in man to an incomparably higher degree than in animals.¹⁵ God gave the animals an instinct, and left the image, religion and humanity to man in his soul.¹⁶

Zoe is therefore most fully realized in man, because only the human person as *imago Dei* is capable of spiritual acts that make him or her a transcendental being – open and going above himself or herself. For “traces” and “shadows” God is only the cause, while for “image” He is the object of knowledge. But all creatures say something about God. Nature is neither a revelation of God nor an image of God, but everywhere one can see the traces and shadows of God’s beauty and divine intervention.¹⁷ It can therefore be considered that in a certain sense other creatures and the whole world are a *subimago* – an incomplete, imperfect figure.

Zoe is “hidden” in the potentiality of all creation, of every life. This potentiality is participation in the infinite life of God. The phenomenon of life, also understood as *bios* and *psyche*, testifies that biological and mental life is a *vestigium* and *umbra Dei*. However, this *zoe* – spiritual life emerges from the earlier ones and is fully realized in the human person by God’s grace.

HOMO – THE WORK OF THE “OTHER ONE”

It has been mentioned that in psychoanalysis, *imago* denotes subconscious or unconscious image of a certain person based on experience, projected at other people from the environment and at God. In order to fully understand what *imago* is, it is worth addressing this issue as well. It should be made clear that Freudian thesis that the image of God is a projection of the image of the father of the family is not only a theological but also methodological error. According to this interpretation, it is man who “creates God in his own image, according to his image and concepts.” Although the psychology of religion draws attention to a mental process of a religious character, it is not entirely competent to deduce the ontological fact of a deity on this basis. Carl Gustav Jung has delineated these spheres more concretely, emphasizing that when one speaks of God (especially in the imaginative mode), one has a psychological fact in mind, because at the bottom in every human being rests the image of God as an archetype.¹⁸ Depending on

¹⁵ Cf. G.L. Müller, P. Lisicki, *Chrystus jest zawsze nowoczesny*, Łomża 2018, p. 14.

¹⁶ Cf. J.G. Herder, *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784), Berlin–Weimar 1965, p. 312–313, quote after: K. Gózdź, *Teologia człowieka...*, p. 381.

¹⁷ Cf. J. Moltmann, *Bóg w stworzeniu*, transl. Z. Danielewicz, Kraków 1995, p. 132.

¹⁸ Cf. C.G. Jung, *Archetypy i symbole. Pisma wybrane*, transl. J. Prokopiuk, Warszawa 1993, p. 182–187.

experience, these images may be distorted, but as an empiricist he confirmed that there are no research methods to clearly define God as a *factum ontologicum*.¹⁹

Most generally speaking, the image's task is to present something or someone else. Also the very concept of creation presupposes a Creator, the Maker of this image. The uniqueness of creation consists in the fact that it is an empirical, tangible being, existing in relationship to a person, pointed at a person and revealed in a person. So the Creator as the Ultimate Person is in some way revealed through creation. An image presents some reality but is not this reality. Also here. Man is created in God's image, but is not God. Personal God is absolute transcendence and for all creation He is inherently immanent, but not in the sense of being identical with creation. He exists in a dialogical mode in relation to creation, particularly as reaching towards man, who is the crown of creation.²⁰

According to the most widespread interpretation, being an image of God means being a substitute or representative of God in the created world. This concept, which has its source in Genesis (1:26–27), becomes the key to interpreting the particular dignity and role of man. This is indicated by some of his characteristics: diversity of the organic system, biological structure, openness to the world, awareness, self-determination, knowledge.²¹ The second description of man's creation adds two details, that he was created from the dust of the earth and that God breathed the spirit of life into him. In the light of these descriptions, three aspects of similarity to God can be seen: exceptional dignity, moral values and participation in the way of existence of God.²² At the same time, these issues raise further questions. Does not the biological and mental life itself already bear witness to the fact that man is God's image? In what sense does this spiritual life make man *imago Dei*? What about people who do not believe in God or, in ecclesiastical terms, do not lead a spiritual life; or those who, due to a disability, are not even able to maintain cognitive processes?

Based on our previous research, we recognize that man is a biological-psycho-spiritual unity. Biological life is given, but also partly determined, has its openness and is in a sense a struggle, characterized by emergence and "leaning" towards the future. Already these characteristics of life understood as *bios* have their transcendental reference to God and make the phenomenon of life understandable as *vestigium Dei*. However, it cannot be separated from the psychological and spiritu-

¹⁹ Cf. A.J. Nowak, *Osoba fakt i tajemnica*, Rzeszów 2010, p. 187–190.

²⁰ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia spełnieniem myśli ludzkiej*, Lublin 2019, p. 109.

²¹ Cf. J. Bujak, *Człowiek jako imago Dei. Wokół antropologicznych treści w wybranych dokumentach dialogów doktrynalnych*, Szczecin 2007, p. 51–52.

²² Cf. J. Czerwski, *Ikona w Nowym Testamencie. Studium semantyczno-egzegetyczne pojęcia Eikon*, Wrocław 2011, p. 11–12.

al sphere. This means that the *bios* as a trace of God is ultimately fulfilled in *imago Dei*.²³ The same is true of the mental sphere of man. Mental processes in this key can metaphorically be called a shadow of God (*umbra Dei*), because they lead to deeper spiritual reflection, particularly connected with the ultimate meaning of existence. Mental life results from the *bios* and leads to the *zoe*, which is ultimately fulfilled in its transcendental function.²⁴ Karol Wojtyła explains these issues by distinguishing between ontological and experiential subject, which means that man is not only aware of his actions but also experiences them very deeply.²⁵ Wojtyła also writes about the pure *self* and the spiritual *self*. The experiences of the soul constitute the transcendence of the person and embrace the entire spiritual *self* of man. Moreover, the integration of body and spirit in every person is perfect, regardless of their physical, mental or spiritual health. Therefore, we can speak of total equality, dignity and value of people. An individual's personality, as an expression of a person, can be more or less integrated, but it is not identical to that person.²⁶ The mentally ill, the deeply disabled are persons fully created in the image of God. Even if these people are not able to make full use of the powers given to them because of their disability, there is a potential in them to make use of the sphere of *bios*, *psyche* and *zoe* granted to every human being during creation. According to Wojtyła, the integrity of a person consists in aligning the dynamism of the body (proper to nature) with the dynamism of the spirit (proper to person).²⁷

It should be stressed once again that free will and reason, cognitive processes and mental life distinguish man from other creatures. St. Thomas believed that in the act of creation God poured a rational soul into man and this fact proves that man is *imago Dei*. It is the rational nature that imitates God in the fact that God knows and loves himself. Moreover, St. Thomas believes that the image of God is only in man's mind and not in his entire existence.²⁸ Joseph Ratzinger follows this categorization, explaining the difference between mental and spiritual life based on the main theological virtues.²⁹

²³ Cf. K. E. Duszek, *Theological Insight into the Phenomenon of Life...*, p. 71.

²⁴ Cf. A. Pędrak, *Umbra Dei...*, p. 98.

²⁵ Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, Kraków 1969, p. 268–269.

²⁶ Cf. A. J. Nowak, *Osoba fakt i tajemnica*, Rzeszów 2010, p. 128.

²⁷ Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Osoba i czyn*, p. 218–219; also. A. J. Nowak, *Osoba fakt i tajemnica...*, p. 129.

²⁸ Cf. B. Kochaniewicz, *Homo Imago Dei? O Tomaszowym i współczesnym spojrzeniu na tajemnicę człowieka*, in: *Teologia św. Tomasza z Akwinu dzisiaj*, ed. B. Kochaniewicz, Poznań 2010, p. 97.

²⁹ A similar understanding of this issue is given by the Catechism of the Catholic Church: "Being in the image of God the human individual possesses the dignity of a person, who is not just something, but someone. He is capable of self-knowledge, of self-possession and of freely giving himself and entering into communion with other persons. and he is called by grace to a covenant with his Creator, to offer him a response of faith and love that no other creature can give in his stead." CCC 357.

Faith is something else than a "pre-understanding" of scientific knowledge, it is beyond intellectual cognition. Faith is disproportionate to knowledge, it gives meaning to man's place in the world, without which he could neither calculate nor act. Of course, it must be added that understanding helps to retain faith, but faith goes far beyond rational thinking.³⁰

Hope is something else than optimism. Optimism in some moments of life is good and useful, but it is based on a kind of utopia, and even proposes a world without hope, often deceptive, urging one to escape into unreal life. Hope also goes beyond optimism and is directed to happiness here on earth, but also in the future. For it assumes an eschatological union between the world and God through an act of God's power and love. It presupposes a return to the original state.³¹ Ratzinger also stresses that human love (*eros*) cannot be separated from the supernatural one (*agape, caritas*). Usually such attempts end in degeneration and falsification. Likewise, love should not be reduced to the love for the temporal, as it is deprived of its deepest sense – the infinity. And whoever tries to separate the love of *agape, caritas* from the nature transforms it into a caricature.³² God wants to reveal His love, which He has for the world, He wants it to be recognized by the world in spite of its completely-different-existence. In the most significant way God has done this, giving people His Son. "For it is the God who said, "Let light shine out of darkness," who has shone in our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ" (2 Corinthians 4:6). Love can only be recognized by love. It is from God that love lights up and it is also ignited in human hearts. If we are His creation, there is in us the germ of love, the image of God.³³ Love, as the highest ability anchored in the *zoe*, enables the human person to go beyond himself, beyond his "self," and to respond lovingly to Love.

Thanks to this simple analysis, we can conclude that spiritual life is something other than mental life. In many respects it goes beyond it, making it possible to explain the non-definable. With full awareness one can also come to the conclusion that a non-believer (or rather not having the name for what or whom he believes in) has an inner life. He has a desire, as well as the ability, to carry out inner processes, not only on the *psyche* level. Michael Polanyi calls it *the logic of achievement*.³⁴ It is one of the most characteristic features of living beings, which takes

³⁰ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera Omnia*, vol. IV: *Wprowadzenie do chrześcijaństwa. Wyznanie – chrzest – naśladowanie*, transl. R. Biel, M. Górecka, ed. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, Lublin 2017, p. 71–77.

³¹ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia...*, vol. IV, p. 385–386.

³² Cf. *ibidem*, p. 412–413.

³³ Cf. H.U. von Balthasar, *Wiarygodna jest tylko miłość*, transl. E. Piotrowski, Kraków 2002, p. 70–71.

³⁴ Zoltan M. Polanyi, *Personal Knowledge: Towards a Post-Critical Philosophy*, New York 1958, p. 327.

on a full and unique shape in a person. It is an openness and focus on “something more.” The definition of person developed by the Boetius is not enough to convey who he/she is and what his/her purpose is. Joseph Ratzinger refers to the term proposed by Richard of St. Victor that a person identifies himself as a *spiritualis naturae incommunicabilis existentia* (non-communicable existence of a spiritual nature); he refers in this way to the treatment of the word *persona* in a theological sense, not to the essence, but to the relationship.³⁵

Faith is the co-communion of two or more persons, and above all of a human person with the Person of God in a way that is not reistic but personal. According to Ratzinger, God gives the grace of faith to everyone, and does it always, but man is not an impersonal being or a thing, so faith cannot be imposed on him by force. Man has his share in the phenomenon of faith through the fact of creation, so he can open himself to it or close himself up, he can accept or reject it, he can develop it, but he can also destroy it – because of sins or for various other reasons. Man has the chance to complete his faith in cooperation with Christ and the Holy Spirit in order to become a man of God.³⁶

A FULLY SHAPED FIGURE

In the light of Jürgen Moltmann’s theology, the teaching about creation is closely linked to the Trinity; creation is shaped by the revelation of Christ and by the experience of the Spirit. The Creator-Father is the one who sends the Son and the Spirit. The Word-Son is the one who unifies and redeems. The creative Power-Spirit is the one who animates and enables creation to participate in eternal life.³⁷ Christ – The Word perfectly realizes the fullness and perfection of the Image of God. It is Jesus Christ who is said to be “the Image,” not “in the image,” because he reminds the Father through the unity of nature. He is the “Image of the invisible God, the firstborn of all creation” (Col 1:15). The human nature of the Son of God is therefore the most perfect realization of the Image of God in creation.³⁸ Christ is the perfect *Imago Dei* – a fully and completely formed figure. Man, on the other hand, in the order of grace, is the image of Christ and can imitate Him.³⁹ Christ

³⁵ Cf. M.J. Szulc, *Obraz Boga. Wokół twórczości Josepha Ratzingera*, Poznań 2011, p. 138–139.

³⁶ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Logos i miłość. Teologia Josepha Ratzingera – Benedykta XVI*, Lublin 2018, p. 86.

³⁷ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia spełnieniem myśli ludzkiej...*, p. 119.

³⁸ Cf. J. Bujak, *Człowiek jako Imago Dei...*, p. 159.

³⁹ Cf. J. Moiser, *Dogmatic Thoughts on Imitation of Christ*, “Scottish Journal of Theology” 30 (1977) 3, p. 204.

is the glory of creation, which at the same time means that Christ is the Sense of the whole world. God's Incarnate Son, the eternal Logos, is the goal, the glory of creation and of new creation (Romans 8:18–23; CCC 280).⁴⁰ What does it mean? History is a development, process, it is not static. In particular, we mean the development of the meaning and final purpose of history. This summit is the Event of Christ. It is not about supernatural or supra-rational development, but about development that appeared at a crucial moment in human history – in the person of Jesus Christ. It is in Him that the summit of humanity has been revealed, and every development of man is heading towards that summit.⁴¹

Man "before Christ" was different from the one "after Christ." According to Fr. Jozafat Nowak, man, even if he sensed that God loves him, probably did not know that He loves differently than man and that God himself is Love. This knowledge came only with Christ. The Word's incarnation was a necessity for man to understand his dignity, both spiritual and corporal. The new man, who reads the Old Testament in the key of the Jesus Christ's Person can conclude that God created man in the image that He was to be in His Incarnation.⁴² Jesus Christ, who crossed the boundaries of humanity, became at the same time a model of man. Man becomes more himself when he lives for another, when he moves away from himself. Jesus Christ is the one who has fully risen above himself and is therefore a man who has truly become human. The process of humanization came in Him to its ultimate end. In order for man to be fully human, God had to become man; only then was the "Rubicon" crossed, separating the animal and rational levels; only then were realized the possibilities that man had from the moment of being created from the dust of the earth; by looking above himself, he could speak to God as "You."⁴³ Christ "has restored to the sons of Adam the divine likeness which had been disfigured from the first sin onward (...) The Christian man, conformed to the likeness of that Son Who is the firstborn of many brothers, received the 'first fruits of the Spirit,' by which he becomes capable of discharging the new law of love."⁴⁴

In this context, it can therefore be concluded that man is actually an *imago Christi*. Christ is a model for every human being, which is why the New Testament calls Him the New Adam. This means that He is to bring together the whole nature of "Adam," the reality that St. Paul called "the Body of Christ." According to Teilhard de Chardin, man is the ultimate point of the complexifica-

⁴⁰ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia spełnieniem myśli ludzkiej...*, p. 119.

⁴¹ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Twórca i Spełniiciel naszej wiary*, Lublin 2009, p. 323.

⁴² Cf. A.J. Nowak, *Osoba fakt i tajemnica...*, p. 106, 110.

⁴³ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia...*, vol. IV, p. 191.

⁴⁴ 2nd Vatican Council, *Gaudium et spes*, 22.

tion of evolution, but he is also something unfinished; he has not yet reached his goal, he shows a tendency which demands fullness and completeness. The direction of the existence of his “self” makes it clear that he is a creature belonging to a superego who does not destroy him, but embraces him and only in connection with him can the figure of the future man appear, fully achieving his own goal.⁴⁵ Although Teilhard’s theory is not devoid of biological reductions, it does outline a good horizon of theological reflections on spiritual life and the fulfilment of humanity. It points to man’s universal vocation to holiness, to deification, or, as the French thinker calls it, to merging with the divine – christomorphization. The moral obligation to perfect the image of God within oneself does not depend on some external precept; rather, it is an ontological necessity based on the real presence of the image of God in man and on the fulfilment of the divine mission.⁴⁶

Man’s salvation consists in a total rapprochement and being conformed to God in cooperation with Christ and the Holy Spirit. The Fathers of the Church remind us that divinization is never achieved through self-divinization, but only “by grace.”⁴⁷ The measure of man’s vocation is “life in Christ”: “If one remains in Christ, he is a new creature.” (2 Cor 5:17; Gal 6:15). A “new one” because of the presence of Christ and the Spirit, and due to living according to the spirit (*kata pneuma*) and not according to the body (*kata sarka*).⁴⁸

Apart from the identity of the being, man can become everything that God is, because he was created for this. Deification by grace does not equal the annihilation of human nature, but is realized in its most perfect form. Christ did not come to transform human nature or to change it into some other nature, but through His Incarnation He wanted to bring it back to where it was before the fall, to immortality. The divinized humanity, therefore, is a humanity that has reached the purpose for which it was created.⁴⁹ Jesus Christ became man not only to save us from our sins but also to restore our full communion with God.⁵⁰

The fullness of human life is expressed in three aspects. First, man’s response to God’s love is not based on compulsion, but on full freedom. The second aspect shows Christ as the fulfilment of man. It is in Jesus Christ that man’s openness to God is achieved and man’s mystery is revealed in its fullness. True humanity

⁴⁵ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia...*, vol. IV, p. 192–194.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. Moiser, *Dogmatic Thoughts on Imitation of Christ...*, p. 205.

⁴⁷ Cf. Ch. Schönborn, *Przebóstwienie, życie i śmierć*, transl. W. Szymona, Poznań 2001, p. 37–42.

⁴⁸ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia człowieka...*, p. 90.

⁴⁹ Cf. Ch. Schönborn, *Przebóstwienie, życie i śmierć...*, p. 43–45.

⁵⁰ Cf. N. Vasiliadis, *Wieczny raj*, transl. A. Bieć, K. Korszak, Hajnówka 2004, p. 9.

reaches its peak in communion with God when man is filled with the presence of the Trinity. The third aspect shows the Christological perfection of man. He will reach it when he follows the way of the cross, living in communion with the Crucified, Risen and Glorious One.⁵¹

Exitus is understood in Christianity as a creative act of God, in which man can respond to God's freedom and love by returning to Him. *Reditus*, on the other hand, means the recognition by man that he is a creature and in his freedom has the possibility of giving a response of love to God's love. This is how the dialogue between the Creator and creation arises, in which man as a creature comes to dedicate himself to the Creator in love.⁵² Joseph Ratzinger emphasizes that the spiritual soul, given to man by creating him in the image and likeness of God, opens man to immortality. In Trinitarian Love, in *Christus Totus*, there is the fulfilment of man's time and the beginning of eternity. And every death is an entry into "eternity," into the "end of time," into the full *eschaton*, into the already present resurrection and completion.⁵³ "We know that when He appears, we will be like Him." (1 Jn 3:2). Being like Christ means entering into eternal dialogue with the Divine Persons. By receiving life and love from the Father, in union with the Son and by the power of the Spirit who will dwell in us eternally, we will be able to speak with God the Father in filial intimacy.⁵⁴ Man's existence makes sense when we consider his beginning and vocation: the beginning of creation and the vocation to participate in God's life.⁵⁵

CONCLUSION

"For God created man for incorruption, and made him in the image of his own eternity" (Wisdom 2:23). The words from the Book of Wisdom perfectly summarize the reflection on spiritual life in the light of the *imago Dei* category. This article is not a comprehensive study of this issue, but answers the questions raised at the beginning of the paper. God's marks exist in all nature. In the created world one can see traces (*vestigia*) and shadows (*umbra*) and images (*imago*)

⁵¹ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Teologia spełnieniem myśli ludzkiej...*, p. 132–133.

⁵² Cf. K. Gózdź, *Logos i miłość...*, p. 81.

⁵³ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Opera omnia*, vol. X: *Zmartwychwstanie i życie wieczne. Studia o eschatologii i teologii nadziei*, transl. J. Kobienia, ed. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, Lublin 2014, p. 354.

⁵⁴ Cf. M.M.G. Gil, *Chrystus – Pośrednik przez miłość jednoczącą*, in: *Jezus Chrystus Pośrednik Zbawienia w hiszpańskiej teologii posoborowej*, ed. J. Lekan, Lublin 2010, p. 165–166.

⁵⁵ Cf. L.F. Ladaria, *Człowiek stworzony na obraz Boga*, in: *Historia dogmatów. Człowiek i jego zbawienie*, ed. B. Sesboüé, vol. II, transl. P. Rak, Kraków 2001, p. 127.

of divine love. However, it is man who is the crown of creation, and it is only in him that unique rational and spiritual processes and openness to relationships with others, and in particular with the Creator, exist. Going deeper into the allegory of understanding life as *bios*, *psyche* and *zoe*, we come to the conclusion that there are three spheres of being in the human person: material, mental and spiritual. God is present in the *bios* as its Creator, but He is not a part of the world, but its foundation. God exists in everything that is alive and constitutes the horizon of biological life, is its cause, purpose and revealed meaning. Life is something given, but also a challenge; being *vestigium Dei*, it reveals the mystery of the Creator.⁵⁶ The mental sphere can be compared to the likeness of God in an *umbra*-like way, because at this level, like a shadow, certain processes are imperfect and distorted, but in their function, structure and sense they already speak of man's Creator, the Cause and the ultimate Purpose – the Divine Logos.⁵⁷

It is spiritual life called *zoe*, which every human being possesses, which shows in a perfect way that through spiritual acts, going beyond himself, towards Transcendence, man can realize himself as a person. Jesus Christ is a perfect image of God the Father. He is "the firstborn among creation." The humanity of the Son of God has revealed the fullness of human life, which is being destined for eternal life. Following Christ is, therefore, participation in His life on the way of the cross, it is union with His love, in order to transform our lives, to return to the original destiny of man, who was created in God's image. Man is *Imago Christi* when he responds in full freedom to the love of the Creator. In union with the Incarnate Word, the mystery of man in all its fullness and his special vocation is revealed.

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⁵⁶ Cf. K.E. Duszek, *Theological Insight into the Phenomenon of Life...*, p. 64.

⁵⁷ Cf. A. Pędrak, *Umbra Dei...*, p. 98.

- Duszek K.E., *Theological Insight into the Phenomenon of Life: the Bios as a Vestigium Dei*, "Teologia w Polsce" 13 (2019) 1, p. 59–72.
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Keywords: spiritual life, image of God, Creator, creation, following of Christ, human

INTERPRETACJA ŻYCIA DUCHOWEGO WEDŁUG KATEGORII *IMAGO DEI*

Streszczenie

Prezentowany artykuł jest owocem refleksji teologicznych nad tematyką życia. Fenomen życia jawi się na wielu płaszczyznach, często jednak do końca nie można go zdefiniować, gdyż jest tajemnicą. Autorka artykułu, opierając się na prawdzie, że człowiek jest jednością biologiczno-psychiczno-duchową, interpretuje te sfery. Podąża za myślą św. Bonawentury i określa je mianem *vestigium*, *umbra* oraz *imago Dei*. Szczegółowej analizie poddaje zagadnienie życia duchowego w kategorii *Imago Dei*, przez co korzystając z dziedzin pozateologicznych, próbuje odpowiedzieć na nasuwające się pytania: czy tylko w człowieku istnieje otwartość na transcendencję, co znaczy być obrazem Boga i w jaki sposób osiągnąć pełnię życia. Sfera *bios*, *psyche* i *zoe* w osobie ludzkiej wzajemnie się przenikają, lecz to życie duchowe przewyższa poprzednie dwie płaszczyzny, przez co odróżnia człowieka od innych stworzeń oraz nadaje mu wyjątkowy charakter. Bóg w swej dobroci i wolności udziela człowiekowi życia, stwarza go jako istotę wolną i na swój obraz. Jednakże doskonałym Obrazem Ojca jest Jezus Chrystus. We wcieleniu ukazał nam pełnię człowieczeństwa i dzięki naśladowaniu i zjednoczeniu z Chrystusem człowiek może upodabniać się do obrazu Boga, by ostatecznie uzyskać pełnię udziału we wspólnocie z Bogiem Trójjedynym.

Słowa kluczowe: życie duchowe, obraz Boży, Stwórca, stworzenie, naśladowanie Chrystusa, człowiek

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THE FACE OF CHRISTIAN HOPE IN THE RENEWED FUNERAL RITES

The Second Vatican Council brought a new look at the ultimate reality of man. It has definitely contributed to the deepening of the understanding of the Christian faith and allowed to adapt its message to the needs of modern times. It was from its inspiration that, a few years after the promulgation of the Constitution *Sacrosanctum concilium*, the *Ordo Exsequiarum* was reformed, which made it possible to introduce the changes postulated by the Council's fathers into the funeral liturgy. In accordance with their provisions, the funeral rites were to express more clearly the paschal character of the Christian's death. Thus, the liturgy of the funeral became a special place for proclaiming Christian hope. It therefore seems necessary, on the basis of the texts of the renewed funeral rites, to notice its paschal character.

The proclamation of the Constitution on Sacred Liturgy during the Second Vatican Council on December 4, 1963 took place on the anniversary of the conclusion of the Council of Trent. Exactly four hundred years earlier, in the atmosphere of threatened unity of the Church and the essence of the liturgy being questioned by the reformers, a reform was carried out which was to remove the abuses and introduce uniform liturgical books valid throughout the Church. The Second Vatican Council undertook to continue these reforms under completely different conditions. According to its intentions, it did so while preserving a healthy tradition and at the same time opening the way to legitimate progress.¹

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¹ See: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja o liturgii świętej*, in: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, No. 23.

The liturgical reform program presented in the first Council document, which crowned the strivings of the liturgical movement, gave a definitive shape to what had already been maturing in the faith of the Church. The foundation of the *Sacrosanctum concilium* was laid out in a lecture on liturgy seen from the perspective of the history of salvation, that is, the history of God's eternal plan realized in time.² As the Council teaches, Jesus Christ brought to mankind the fullness of Revelation through the event of His incarnation, especially the passion, death, resurrection and ascension. The reception of the paschal mystery is achieved by faith, confirmed above all in the Sacraments of Baptism and the Eucharist.³ With regard to the funeral liturgy, which seems to be the most important, the Council decided that the rite of the funeral should express more clearly the paschal character of a Christian's death.⁴ Furthermore, it considered it appropriate to revisit the rite of the children's funeral, with the possibility of developing an appropriate mass form.⁵ In the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy, the Council states that "within the cycle of a year, [the Church] unfolds the whole mystery of Christ, from the incarnation and birth until the ascension, the day of Pentecost, and the expectation of blessed hope and of the coming of the Lord."⁶ It is in this way that the Church, making present the salvific acts and merits of her Lord, opens the faithful to the encounter with Christ and the experience of the grace of salvation.⁷

VATICANUM SECUNDUM

Addressing the subject of the reform of funeral rites, inspired by the Second Vatican Council, it seems indispensable to pose a question about interpretation. The key to a proper understanding of the Council's provisions and their implementation is its proper hermeneutics. This was pointed out by Benedict XVI at the very beginning of his pontificate, when, in his address to the Roman Curia, he decisively rejected and considered incorrect the so-called hermeneutics of discontinuity and break with the past, clearly advocating the hermeneutics of

² See: *ibidem*, No. 5.

³ See: S. Czerwik, *Wprowadzenie do Konstytucji o liturgii świętej*, in: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, p. 28–29.

⁴ See: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja o liturgii świętej*, No. 81.

⁵ See: *ibidem*, No. 82.

⁶ *Ibidem*, No. 102.

⁷ See: *ibidem*.

reform.⁸ According to Benedict XVI, the hermeneutics of discontinuity caused confusion and introduced a risk of division. In the Pope's opinion, such an approach opens the door to free interpretation and, above all, is based on the misunderstood nature of the Council. Explaining the meaning of the hermeneutics of the reform, Benedict XVI referred to the words of one of his predecessors. According to John XXIII, the Council was intended "to transmit pure and uncontaminated Catholic doctrine without softening or distorting it" and sought to "ensure that a reliable and unchanging doctrine, which must be faithfully respected, is deepened and presented in a way that meets the needs of our time."⁹ It is essential that the hermeneutics of reform does not break with the past, but preserves the continuity of the doctrine of the faith, while making the necessary updates.¹⁰

It is obvious that the hermeneutics of reform, which Benedict XVI juxtaposed with the hermeneutics of discontinuity and rupture, means that any renewal can only take place in continuity with Tradition. At the same time, the continuity postulated by the Pope not only does not exclude new elements, but even necessarily contains them.¹¹ A correct interpretation of the conciliar documents is only possible from the perspective of faith. It allows us to see in the Church a common subject that ensures the unity of Tradition. The community of the Church, maintaining the identity of the historical context, develops and matures over the centuries.¹² The Council will become a great power for the constant renewal of the Church on condition that it is read in the light of proper hermeneutics, that is, from the perspective of a living faith that opens the way to the interior of Tradition.¹³

⁸ See: Benedykt XVI, *Spotkanie z kardynałami, biskupami i pracownikami Kurii Rzymskiej*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 280 (2006) 2, p. 15–19.

⁹ Jan XXIII, *Przemówienie w czasie uroczystego otwarcia Soboru Watykańskiego II*, quote after: Kongregacja Nauki Wiary, *Nota zawierająca wskazania duszpasterskie na Rok Wiary*, "L'Osservatore Romano" 341 (2012) 3, p. 53.

¹⁰ See: W. Wołyniec, *Czy można nauczyć się wiary na pamięć? Teologia wiary Soboru Watykańskiego II w świetle hermeneutyki reformy*, in: "Otworzyć podwoje wiary". *Wokół listu apostołskiego Ojca Świętego Benedykta XVI "Porta fidei"*, ed. D. Ostrowski, Świdnica 2012, p. 69.

¹¹ See: S. Zatwardnicki, *Hermeneutyka reformy czy zerwania? Benedykta XVI (Josepha Ratzinger) troska o poprawną interpretację Vaticanum Secundum*, "Międzynarodowy Przegląd Teologiczny *Communio*" 200 (2017), 4, p. 126–127.

¹² See: J. Ratzinger, *Formalne zasady chrześcijaństwa. Szkice do teologii fundamentalnej*, transl. W. Szymona, Poznań 2009, p. 132–133.

¹³ See: S. Zatwardnicki, *Hermeneutyka reformy – hermeneutyka wiary*, "Teologia w Polsce" 2 (2016) 10, p. 157–158.

One should never mummify the past, knowing well that fidelity to the spirit can only be realized through assimilation of the past over and over again.¹⁴ The pursuit of a synthesis and a natural and intuitive balance which shunts the extremes is the most characteristic feature of the methodological principles of theology. It certainly expresses a kind of respect for the truth that is being approached and learned through various complementary human efforts.¹⁵ Such an approach to theology, if we want to remain in the circle of Benedict XVI's thought, can be summarized in the concept of the hermeneutics of reform. Such a hermeneutics, careful and well thought-out, is required by statements relating to the ultimate reality of man, which have found expression in the renewed rites of the funeral.

MYSTERIUM PASCHALE

As the Second Vatican Council teaches, Christ through his passion, resurrection and ascension accomplished the work of human redemption and the perfect worship of God.¹⁶ It should be mentioned here that in contemporary theological reflection, for which the point of reference is the Holy Scripture and the writings of the Church Fathers and Christian writers, the concept of the Passover of Jesus includes not only his suffering (*passio*) but also his passage (*transitus*). This approach shows the inseparability of the two most important events, namely death and resurrection.¹⁷ In the light of the *Mysterium Paschale*, death is seen not so much as a punishment, but rather as an invitation to participate in God's life. Through his death, man not only participates in the laying of Christ in the tomb, but also remains in the hope of the resurrection. This truth is expressed in the words of one of the prayers accompanying the funeral rites: "Almighty God, you have overcome our death by the death of your Son, Jesus Christ, and by His glorious resurrection you have restored immortal life to us."¹⁸

Funeral rites are an expression of faith that human death is in fact a transition from mortal life to eternity. The sign of this transition is the processional transfer

¹⁴ See: J. Ratzinger, *O nauczaniu II Soboru Watykańskiego. Formułowanie – przekaz – Interpretacja*, ed. K. Gózdź, M. Górecka, transl. E. Grzesiuk, Lublin 2016, p. 646 (*Opera omnia*, vol. VII/2).

¹⁵ See: J. Szymik, *Theologia benedicta*, vol. I, Katowice 2016, p. 75.

¹⁶ See: Sobór Watykański II [Second Vatican Council, Constitution on Sacred Liturgy], *Konstytucja o liturgii świętej*, No 5.

¹⁷ See: R. Cantalamessa, *Pascha naszego zbawienia*, Kraków 1998, p. 175–181.

¹⁸ *Obrzędy pogrzebu dostosowane do zwyczajów diecezji polskich*, Katowice 2010², p. 78.

of the body of the deceased to the grave.¹⁹ The liturgy of the funeral uses here an image of a procession of angels and saints who receive the deceased and lead him before God himself.²⁰ The inexhaustible source of paschal hope is the Christ's resurrection, who was the first to pass from death to life. His symbol is the Paschal candle, present in the liturgy of the funeral. The flame of this candle, which is the light of the risen Christ, is to disperse the darkness of human hearts and minds.²¹ In the liturgy of the funeral it becomes in particular a symbol of hope for union with Christ in glory when the day of resurrection comes.²²

SACRAMENTA PASCHALIA

The essence of the paschal experience is man's participation in the event of Jesus Christ. What becomes present in the mystery of worship gives an opportunity to obtain the fruit of salvation. Thanks to it, man, exceeding time and space, enters the sacramental reality. Obtaining the gifts of salvation is realized in connection with the celebration of the *sacramenta paschalia*, that is, the sacraments of Baptism, Confirmation and Eucharist. All the mentioned Christian mysteries must always be understood in the context of the Passover which took place in the life of Jesus Christ. Thanks to it, the newborn Christians pass through death to a new life, receive its fullness in the mystery of the Holy Spirit, and can nourish themselves with the food of the new life, that is, the Body and Blood of the Lord. This passage, expressed in sacramental signs, becomes the participation of both neophytes and all the faithful.

Christians, celebrating the commemoration of the Passover of Jesus, through the action of the Holy Spirit, can share in the death and resurrection of Christ. The celebration of the most important mysteries of the Christian faith allows the faithful to truly pass from the world of sin and death to a supernatural life which begins here on earth and will one day reach its eschatological fullness.²³ The Sacraments of Christian initiation, that is, Baptism, Confirmation and the Eucharist, lead towards the fullness of life with Christ. This means that man's participation in the Paschal event takes place already at the moment of Baptism,

¹⁹ See: D. Brzeziński, *Procesje w liturgii chrześcijańskiej. Geneza, teologia, duszpasterstwo*, "Anamnesis" 48 (2007), p. 65–66.

²⁰ See: *Obrzęd pogrzebu...*, p. 63–65.

²¹ See: *Mszal rzymski dla diecezji polskich*, Poznań 2010, p. 153.

²² See: K. Konecki, *Tajemnica paschalna w eucharystii, czytaniach biblijnych oraz w symbolach odnowionej liturgii pogrzebu*, "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" 20 (1982), p. 206–207.

²³ See: W. Pałęcki, *Paschalny charakter nadziei chrześcijańskiej w liturgii pogrzebowej*, in: *Jest nadzieja, bo jest życie wieczne*, ed. B. Kulik, W. Pałęcki, Lublin 2018, p. 34.

which is immersion in Christ's death. A description of this event can be found in the sixth chapter of the Letter to the Romans, in which the essence of baptismal liturgy is shown (v. 3). According to Paul the Apostle, death is being conformed to Jesus, which occurs in a real way.²⁴ During the last farewell, this truth is expressed in words of prayer: "God, Creator of heaven and earth, by baptism you gave new life to a man who fell into the slavery of death, you sent our Lord Jesus Christ to conquer the power of death and rise again for the salvation of believers, you give a share in His resurrection to all who belong to Him."²⁵ During the funeral liturgy there is also the custom of sprinkling the coffin with holy water. This sign is accompanied by words: "Almighty God has reborn you from water and the Holy Spirit for eternal life, so let him complete the work he began at baptism."²⁶ Man's death should be seen as the completion of Baptism, that is, the fulfilment of Christian initiation and ultimate immersion in Christ.²⁷ Thus, a Christian funeral should be understood as a celebration of the Paschal Mystery, in which man was already included in the sacrament of Baptism and Confirmation, and which has found its fulfilment in his death.²⁸

The sacrament of the Eucharist is a special place of making the paschal mystery present. As the Church teaches, it is a sign of Christ's love, a nourishment on the path to eternity and the deposit of eternal life.²⁹ The joy of participating in eternal life is rooted in the paschal Sacrifice, which is the passage from death to light and peace. The Eucharist is both an announcement of the feast of the saved in heaven and a participation in it. Hence, during the last farewell, there is a unique prayer imploring for the deceased, who "during the course of his life fed on the Body of Christ, now to be called to the feast of the children of God in heaven and, together with the Saints, to become heir to the promised eternal reward."³⁰ The liturgy shows eternal life as the fulfillment of the hope which the deceased placed in God. Through the Eucharist this hope is fulfilled through a special union with Christ, which is its fruit.³¹

²⁴ See *ibidem*, p. 35.

²⁵ *Obrzędy pogrzebu...*, p. 67.

²⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 65.

²⁷ See: B. Nadolski, *Liturgika. Sakramenty, sakramentalia, błogosławieństwa*, vol. 3, Poznań 1992, p. 49.

²⁸ See: E. Mateja, *Teologia nadziei w posoborowych obrzędach pogrzebowych*, in: "Chlubimy się nadzieją chwały Bożej" (Rz 5,2) *Księga dedykowana ks. prof. dr. hab. Janowi Decykowi*, ed. K. Filipowicz, Warszawa 2016, p. 166–168.

²⁹ See: J. Decyk, *Pascha jako szczyt roku liturgicznego*, "Studia Theologica Varsaviensia" 24 (2011), p. 112–118.

³⁰ *Obrzędy pogrzebu...*, p. 61.

³¹ See: J. Decyk, *Ludzki i Boży wymiar śmierci w świetle kultu zmarłych*, Warszawa 2000, p. 140–143.

SPE SALVI FACTI SUMUS

Faith in the mystery of Christ, His death, resurrection and ascension, is for Christians the basis of an unfailing hope that opens beyond the limits of earthly life. The basis of this hope is constituted by the risen Christ, and it has its source in His saving mission.³² The relationship between Christ's resurrection and the hope of the future resurrection is very clearly expressed in the funeral rites. The Church expresses in words of prayer the trust that the dead "together with all those who have died with Christ, will share in His resurrection."³³ Likewise, the placing in the tomb is preceded by words: "Christ is the first to rise from the dead and to renew our mortal bodies in the likeness of His glorified body."³⁴ The mourning liturgy is a testimony that the risen Christ can give people a guarantee of full and ultimate hope.

But hope can never be reduced to the conviction of certainty of universal salvation. Such a position would be based on the omission of the truth about human freedom. Man can make a negative choice by rejecting God's love and forgiveness, and thus become disconnected from communion with Christ and His Church. But this does not contradict the fact that God remains faithful to the covenant made with all mankind and desires the salvation of all the people He has created, whom He himself has destined for eternal life.³⁵ The Church has offered her help to the deceased, who after death need purification of their sins, from the first centuries of Christianity, especially through persevering prayer.³⁶ As the Church notes, this prayer contains a profession of faith in the existence of a state of purification.³⁷ The conviction, present for centuries, that love can reach as far as the other world for centuries remains a comforting experience even today.³⁸ As it was aptly expressed in the introduction to the funeral rites: "Thanks to the communion of all the members of the Church, what brings spiri-

³² See: Międzynarodowa Komisja Teologiczna, *Aktualne problemy eschatologii*, in: *Od wiary do teologii. Dokumenty Międzynarodowej Komisji Teologicznej 1969–1996*, ed. J. Królikowski, Kraków 2000, No 1.

³³ *Obrzędy pogrzebu...*, p. 66.

³⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 80.

³⁵ See: M. Pyc, *Czy mamy prawo do nadziei na powszechne zbawienie? Refleksja nad zbawczym uniwersalizmem w myśli Jana Pawła II i Benedykta XVI*, "Teologia w Polsce" 3 (2009), p. 126–131.

³⁶ See: [Second Vatican Council, Dogmatic Constitution on the Church] Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucja dogmatyczna o Kościele*, in: Sobór Watykański II, *Konstytucje. Dekrety. Deklaracje*, Poznań 2002, No 50.

³⁷ See: Międzynarodowa Komisja Teologiczna, *Aktualne problemy eschatologii...*, No 8.

³⁸ See: Benedict XVI, Encyclical *Spe salvi*, No 48.

tual help to the deceased, to others gives comfort stemming from hope.”³⁹ In one of the prayers, the Church similarly implores for the deceased the forgiveness of sins committed because of human imperfection.⁴⁰ In another one, she asks for the liberation from all sins, so that the deceased may rejoice in God without end, together with the saints.⁴¹ Finally, the Eucharistic sacrifice for the deceased on the day of his funeral is accompanied by the intention that God should cleanse him/her of all guilt and allow him/her to join the community of saints.⁴²

The truly Christian hope of a union with Christ is especially true at the funeral of a child. The Church expresses her conviction that a deceased child who has been baptized already has a share in eternal life, which is also emphasized by the use of white liturgical robes during the funeral.⁴³ In prayer for the deceased child, the Church confesses the faith that God has accepted it into His kingdom.⁴⁴ This faith has its foundation in the sacrament of Baptism, “through which the gates of Eden were opened before him/her.”⁴⁵ The prayers accompanying the last farewell of the baptized child are a testimony to the faith that its body, laid to the tomb on the day of its funeral, “will one day be resurrected and covered with the radiance of eternal life.”⁴⁶ Its tomb, like that of Jesus Christ, is a special sign of hope, as expressed directly in the funeral rites.⁴⁷ And during the funeral of a child who has died before being baptized, the Church recommends to God especially the faithful who grieve for its loss.⁴⁸ The confession of faith in the atoning death of Jesus on the cross should strengthen their confidence in God’s mercy,⁴⁹ and the intercession of Mary, who stood beneath the cross of her Son, is to ask for them the consolation flowing out of faith.⁵⁰ Although the prayers accompanying the funeral of an unbaptized child are characterized by great caution, the liturgy of the Church makes it possible to cherish hope that children who die without baptism will be saved and enjoy seeing God.⁵¹

³⁹ *Wprowadzenie teologiczne i pastoralne*, in: *Obrzędy pogrzebu...*, No. 1.

⁴⁰ See: *Obrzędy pogrzebu...*, p. 67.

⁴¹ See: *ibidem*, p. 73–74.

⁴² See: *ibidem*, p. 57.

⁴³ See: *ibidem*, p. 136.

⁴⁴ See: *ibidem*, p. 139.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 150.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 147.

⁴⁷ See: *ibidem*, p. 155.

⁴⁸ See: *ibidem*, p. 139.

⁴⁹ See: *ibidem*, p. 137.

⁵⁰ See: *ibidem*, 140.

⁵¹ See: Międzynarodowa Komisja Teologiczna, *Nadzieja zbawienia dla dzieci, które umierają bez chrztu* (19.01.2007), No 100–103.

* * *

The Second Vatican Council, seen from the perspective of the hermeneutic of the reform, proved to be an impulse to renew the life of the Church and her mission. Beginning its work with a debate on the liturgy, it postulated, among other things, the renewal of the rite of the funeral, which from then on was to better express the paschal character of the Christian's death. The Paschal Mystery, which found its expression both in the texts of prayers and in liturgical signs and symbols, shed new light on man's ultimate destiny. Thus the liturgy of the funeral has become a special place for the preaching of Christian hope.

The renewed funeral rituals strongly emphasize Christian hope, whose source and fulfilment is Jesus Christ. He overcame the power of death through His Passover and He rose for the salvation of believers. Therefore, the salvific mission of Christ is the foundation of this hope. The essence of the paschal experience is the Christian's participation in the *Mysterium Paschale*. It is accomplished through the *sacramenta paschalia*, which give rise to Christian life of faith and develop it. They allow one to accept the gift of salvation and also raise hope for eternal life. The sacrament of the Eucharist, the centre of celebration of funeral rites, at the same time makes present and announces the feast of the saved, to which the Christian living in Christ is called. To make this truth clearer, the funeral rites also reach for the sign of sprinkling with holy water, which is a reminder of baptism. The Paschal Candle used in the funeral liturgy remains a meaningful symbol of the Risen Christ, and through the funeral procession the Church professes the faith that death in its essence is a transition to a true life with God.

Prayer for the deceased is a place to live out Christian hope and at the same time – to learn it. It is a kind of confession of faith in the possibility of their purification. The prayers accompanying a child's funeral are a special testimony of unfailing hope. The Church expresses very clearly her faith in the salvation of those children who received the sacrament of Baptism. The Paschal Mystery also becomes a source of hope for those who suffer from the death of a child who died before being baptized.

The funeral rites renewed after the Second Vatican Council open the participants of the funeral liturgy to the experience of Christian hope. Its source and fulfillment is Jesus Christ, whose resurrection opens one to the hope of new life. Both the texts of prayers for the dead and the liturgical signs and symbols accompanying them, referring to Christ the whole final reality of man, reveal the paschal dimension of this hope. Through renewed funeral rites, it is experienced by the faithful as an existing reality, giving meaning to the whole Christian life.

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Keywords: hope, eschatology, liturgy, Second Vatican Council

OBLICZE CHRZEŚCIJAŃSKIEJ NADZIEI W ODNOWIONYCH OBRZĘDACH POGRZEBU

Streszczenie

Sobór Watykański II przyniósł nowe spojrzenie na ostateczną rzeczywistość człowieka. Zdecydowanie przyczynił się on do pogłębienia rozumienia chrześcijańskiej wiary i pozwolił dostosować jej przekaz do potrzeb współczesności. To właśnie z jego inspiracji, w kilka lat po ogłoszeniu Konstytucji o liturgii świętej *Sacrosanctum concilium*, dokonano reformy Ordo Exsequiarum, co pozwoliło na wprowadzenie do liturgii żałobnej zmian postulowanych przez ojców Soboru. Zgodnie z ich postanowieniami obrzędy pogrzebu miały odtąd przede wszystkim jaśniej wyrażać paschalny charakter śmierci chrześcijanina. Tym samym liturgia pogrzebu stała się szczególnym miejscem przepowiadania chrześcijańskiej nadziei. Konieczne wydaje się zatem, opierając się na tekstach odnowionych obrzędów pogrzebu, dostrzeżenie jej paschalnego charakteru.

Słowa kluczowe: nadzieja, eschatologia, liturgia, Sobór Watykański II

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THE PROBLEMS OF NOTIONS IN ESCHATOLOGY

The present article deals with the use and understanding of eschatological terminology. The concepts used and the starting point of the consideration affect its orientation and the distribution of aspects. If we take the “final events” as a starting point, we obtain an anthropological picture of man’s fate and his destiny to eternity. When starting with the mystery of God and His plan, one must pay attention to the Person of Christ the Coming One and this makes eschatology a treatise on the Triune God that completes His work.

This study also draws attention to the semantic nuances of some notions relating to eternal life, such as novelty, kingdom, Father’s house, heaven, glory or eternal happiness. These and other expressions contain a wealth of meaning rooted in Revelation and the Church’s tradition. Their thoughtful and conscious use serves the purpose of a deep and creative and at the same time precise reflection.

INTRODUCTION

The deposit of revelation is complete and unchanging. Nevertheless, how deep we will be able to penetrate the truth we explore depends on the way we address the subject or model, as the outstanding American theologian Avery Dulles would have it. Concepts developed over the centuries and rooted in Scripture are the keys

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to the treasury of revelation. This concerns in particular those realities that escape temporal perception. A number of expressions that can be qualified as eschatological, seem to confirm this principle. We adopt the intuitive term “the other world” to indicate that we are not talking about what is close and tactile. The expressions create starting points in the construction of reflection. For example, the phrase “afterlife” indicates the death threshold as a starting point and implies questions about what can survive death in man. The terms “eternal life,” “fullness,” “eternity” as “*tota simul perfecta vitae possessio*” put life at the centre of attention. Finally, “eternal life in God” makes the fundamental theme of eschatology what God is like and who He is, what is this “participation” of which Christ speaks to Peter before the last supper (Jn 13:8). Beginning with different starting points, we come to the same truth through different questions. We create different proportions of issues. The formulation “final things/events” suggests a focus on putting the facts in order, although in this case the very concept of “thing” (*res*) is more a “reality” than an object, as in the Polish expression “*Rzeczpospolita*” (*respublica*). The theological sense always remains in some kind of reference to the colloquial one, sometimes is intertwined with it. Extra-theological intuitions influence associations and the course of thinking. For example, the Russian definition of the last judgment “*strashnyj sud*” (Страшный суд) does not immediately turn thoughts towards the mercy of God.

It is impossible to close the list of expressions related to eschatology. Which one should be put in the first place? These include terms such as: life/eternal life, death/the second death, parousia/the day of the Lord, the resurrection/the participation in Christ’s death and resurrection, condemnation/hell/the resurrection of condemnation/the eternal fire, the kingdom/the reign of Christ, New Jerusalem/City/the new creature. We will examine some of them. The eschatological terminology also includes: God’s rest (entering this rest), or terms that speak of fullness (*pleroma*)/fulfillment. It is impossible to omit the vocabulary of happiness/joy, glory, or the day of eternity. It is also worth recalling here the hermeneutics of eschatological expressions presented by Christian Schütz.¹

The purpose of this article is not to fully explain all the terms of eschatology, but to elucidate some of them with the teaching of the Church in mind. It is more about discovering concepts, drawing attention to certain difficulties connected with them. In addressing these theological and lexical issues, it should be noted that eschatology is a particular field in which it would be inappropriate to use terminology in an authoritarian way. We have at our disposal a certain “factual

¹ Cf. Ch. Schütz, *Die Völlendung der Heilsgeschichte*, in: *Mysterium salutis. Grundriss heilsgeschichtlicher Dogmatik*, ed. J. Feiner, M. Löhler, t. V: *Zwischenzeit und Völlendung der Heilsgeschichte*, Zürich–Einsiedeln–Köln 1976, p. 626–649.

state,” a resource of notions, which the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith² appeals to be reasonably respected. Are they unambiguous? Precise? “Technical” or intuitive? When they are used, we are bound by a universal directive of meaningfulness; words that do not belong to common language should be possible to be defined in it.³ This is a touchstone of knowledge, reason and linguistic competence. It enables conscious and meaningful utterances.

We can ask questions: what do we have at our disposal? What tool can we use to organize knowledge in this field? And so: What creates the scheme – the “scaffolding” of eschatological thinking? And from this, it follows how we talk and what we talk about, so, consequently, how we understand what we talk about. The starting point should be the very concept of “eschatology.”

NEW OR THE LAST ONE

ESCHATOLOGY AND THE ESCHATA

The concept of “eschatology” was supposedly used for the first time by a seventeenth century Lutheran theologian A. Calov.⁴ However, the etymological source of this term is much older, biblical. In Revelation, Christ himself appears as the First and the Last (Revelation 1:17 – ο πρῶτος και ο εσχάτος). “Eschata” therefore describes what is “last,” “final.” The adjective “eschatological”, derived from this stem, is in common use. Precise use distinguishes “eschatological” from “eschat-ic.” Eschatological is what refers to eschatology as science, like “eschatological truths.”⁵ And eschatic is “what concerns eternal life.” The eschatology of the Church is the Magisterium’s teaching about eternity; the Church’s eschaticism is a feature of the community of the baptized. Eschatological hope is connected with the message about eternal life, the knowledge of the calling to eternity evokes an eschatological aspiration, which can be described within eschatology. The aspiration, hope, and eschatic events, on the other hand, are not so much the domain of science as of the end times.

² Cf. Holy Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *Letter on Certain Questions Regarding Eschatology*, Rome 1979, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19790517_escatologia_pl.html [access: 1.05.2020].

³ Cf. M. Tkaczyk, *Zagadnienie sensownego języka teologii w ujęciu Józefa M. Bocheńskiego*, “Lignum vitae” 2 (2001), p. 102.

⁴ Cf. J. Finkenzeller, *Eschatologia*, in: *Podręcznik teologii dogmatycznej*, vol. XI, ed. W. Beinert, transl. W. Szymona, Kraków 1999, p. 13.

⁵ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi i Bogu w Chrystusie*, vol. II, Lublin 1974, p. 416.

Are we not already living the final days? The “final future” in St. Paul’s theology is closely related to soteriology; it is already close in Christ.⁶ The author of the *Letter to the Hebrews* says that the last stage of revelation (eschatos) took place “in these days,” that is, in the apostolic times (cf. Heb 1:1–2).⁷ The expressions eschatological/eschatic are often used interchangeably. For example, W. Granat says that *eschatology* is not something future-oriented, but is anticipated at present.⁸

So perhaps what is last/final is therefore not times, but things – realities (eschatata)? This approach allows us to see the topic of eschatology not only in the future, but everywhere where what is final is already present. After all, a thing is a Latin *res*, so rather a certain reality than a material object. The expression “*res sacra miser*” says that a poor person is a sacred reality, not a “thing.” Perhaps, in order to avoid associations with what is material, it would be better to talk about realities than final things? Yet, this reality is just one eschaton, and the plural would be a misunderstanding. Maybe it would be better to say “final subjects”? The expression “final things” is criticized because eschatology is not about “something,” but about life, the completion of the fate of people and the future of creation.⁹ It is not only the reification itself that encounters objections, but also the division into heaven, purgatory, hell, God’s judgment separate from the personalistic aspect of eschatology. This division, handy for didactic reasons, was commemorated by poetry and art as a “Dantean” model of eschatology, based on the Ptolemaic image of the universe.

What has been described as eschatos is final, that is to say, is a destination, but is not “last” in a series of subsequent events or matters that take place on earth. It is different in relation to them; it is new and brings renewal.

NOVELTY AND RENEWAL

“Here I make all things new.” (Rev 21:5) is announced by God in the Book of Revelation. In the eschatic completion everything becomes new (*kainos*). This does not mean another creation *ex nihilo*. The Second Vatican Council explains that eschaton, or “new heaven and new earth,” is the world after an eschatological renewal (cf. LG 48). It is not so much the material perfection of this world that comes first, but its righteousness. The eschaton is the world of the saved, because justice concerns persons. The renewal of persons is an essential element of eschatic novelty.

⁶ Cf. Z. Niemirski, *Biblijna koncepcja przyszłości*, STV 31 (1993) 1, p. 22–35.

⁷ Cf. J. Szłaga, *Eschatologia Listu do Hebrajczyków*, in: *Biblia o przyszłości. Materiały pomocnicze do wykładów z biblistyki*, ed. L. Stachowiak, R. Rubinkiewicz, Lublin 1987, p. 94.

⁸ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, vol. II, p. 472.

⁹ Cf. F.J. Nocke, *Eschatologie*, in: *Handbuch der Dogmatik*, ed. T. Schneider, Düsseldorf 1992, p. 378n.

This novelty differs from what is only temporarily new (*neos*) in the temporal world because all this undergoes various degradation. When any work is new, it has the qualities that its creator gave it. It is in accordance with His intention. When it gets older, it is subject to destruction, so it loses the qualities given to it by the author, loses its beauty, becomes less and less perfect. The eschatic novelty is not subject to degradation. The new creature remains perfectly in line with the Creator's plan. It does not move away from His hand. It is not only sustained in existence, as it occurs in the present eon. It is not subject to any influence that could bring disorder. It does not distance itself from God's plan, which is equivalent to realization.

Palingenesis

Palingenesis (renewal) is a concept that can be confusing for those who know it from outside theology. In the language of sciences it means the revival of something that used to exist once, something old, e.g. the return of features that have disappeared. An example of this can be hoatzin, a bird whose young ones have claws appearing on their wings to climb the branches.

Palingenesis has a completely different meaning in the language of theology. The rebirth mentioned by the Gospel of St. Matthew is not a return to what has passed away. The evangelist quotes the Lord Jesus' assurance that at the rebirth the Apostolic Church, that is, those who followed him, will share in His royal dignity of the Son of God (cf. Matt 19:28n). The good to which they have contributed on earth will be increased in heaven according to the proportion of the new creation. K. Schelkle recalls in this context that old and new creation cannot be combined (cf. Mk 2:21). Rebirth is not a return to the past, but a new birth, as the goal of creation.¹⁰ Probably that is why M. Wolniewicz interprets the word palingenesis as "new existence."¹¹

The new creation is already initiated by the resurrection of Christ and is present in the "mystery." In this way what we do with Christ already creates a good that, after the renewal of all things, will find its place in eternity (cf. KDK 39).

Apocatastasis

Apocatastasis is a theory of a "radical renewal" to which not only everything, but also everyone, would ultimately be subject. Its proponents refer to an excerpt

¹⁰ Cf. K.H. Schelkle, *Neutestamentliche Eschatologie*, in: *Mysterium salutis...*, p. 750.

¹¹ Cf. *Pismo Święte Nowego Testamentu*, ed. M. Wolniewicz, Poznań 1984, p. 43.

from Acts of the Apostles in which St. Peter says that the “time of renewal of everything” will come. (Acts 3: 21 – “*χρονων αποκαταστασεως*”). The Apostle’s words indicate that he means time (*chronos*), the fulfillment of time, and the goal towards which history is heading, namely, *parousia*. The *Letter to the Colossians* speaks of the reconciliation of everything through Christ, that is, the mystery of redemption. The proponents of a theory contrary to the Church’s teaching infer from this that condemnation is temporary. Origen is considered the father of such views. In the announcement of everything being surrendered to Christ (cf. 1 Cor 15:25–28) he saw the suggestion of every human being returning to Him, but denied the devil’s redemption.¹² In the second half of the nineteenth century, S. G. Mivart tried to combine the theory of apocatastasis with evolutionism, which was then fashionable. His statement that the punishment of the condemned will gradually decrease until it finally stops was rejected by decree of the Holy Office on July 19, 1890.¹³

Does the rejection of apocatastasis not contradict the image of a merciful God? Condemnation is the departure from God forever caused by a decision expressed in deeds. The freedom that determines decision making is the good of the person. God does not destroy freedom, because that would mean destroying His best work – a person whose freedom is so great that he/she can accept or reject the truth about himself/herself, he/she can want the good. But does not someone who rejects the good also deny their freedom, which was created for the good? Yes, such person rejects himself in the sense that he denies the truth about himself, about his vocation, but he does it himself; he makes decisions because he exists. There is no opposition between God’s mercy and freedom, because the freedom that enables an undetermined choice of the good is derived from God’s goodness. It is the good God who wants persons to exist as free.

And what about the hypothesis that man, unlike Satan, could be given the opportunity to “end” the punishment of condemnation? We have no reason to believe that man is someone privileged over the angels. After all, God loves them too, and He did not want any of them to leave. Finally, what Christ himself says is important; it is hard to think that the words about “eternal fire” (cf. Matt 25:41) would only have the meaning of didactic rhetoric, and not of declaring reality.

However, the hypothesis of the “hope of salvation for all” does not contradict the Church’s teaching, because it cannot be ruled out that there will be no one who does not convert even in the last moment of life, elusive for those around.

¹² Cf. J. Finkenzeller, *Eschatologia...*, p. 206.

¹³ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, vol. II, p. 609.

ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND SOCIAL CONCEPTS

IMMORTAL SOUL AND RESURRECTION

Pius V in the bull “Ex omnibus afflictionibus” states that the immortality of the first people is a gift of grace that perfects nature, and not an integral part of human nature, which is formed by soul and body.¹⁴ The immortality of the soul, which continues despite sin and death, should be distinguished from it.¹⁵

A man has no life out of himself. Always, even in eternity, he receives it from God, who has life and is its Source. This drawing from the Source of Life is presented in a beautiful image of the river of Revelation flowing out of the throne of God. The trees on its banks, which never lose their greenery, are a sign of the stability and abundance of imparting life (cf. Rev 22:1nn). Primordial immortality, before original sin, is something different from eternal life. Sin invades between God and man, separating from the Creator and so does the derivative of sin – death, an attempt to radically separate from God, the Giver of life. The gift of immortality is not completely taken away by death. Traditionally counted among “final things,” death has no last word, it is the penultimate chord in human history. The immortality of the soul is a gift placed in it from the beginning in view of what is ultimate.

Should not the “immortality of the soul” be replaced in today’s theology with an expression that better reflects the fact that man is a psychophysical unity? The Church’s teaching warns against rejecting traditional concepts that are understandable and appropriate for expressing the truths of the faith. This includes “the soul.”¹⁶ Although this concept is reminiscent of Greek dualism, it is not unfamiliar to the Bible. Saint Paul even speaks of the threefold structure of humanity – spirit, soul and body (cf. 1 Thess 5:23). Notions of particular value are those which are not merely “technical,” but those which are generally understood, accepted and intuitively comprehended, which, of course, not only does not exclude their meaning as academic terms, but also strengthens them. Concepts that do not require definition or longer explanation do not lose their precision because of that. Therefore, one should not be afraid that talking about the soul will make it difficult to understand man as a psychophysical unity. The immortal soul is an essential element of a person’s identity and a guarantee of his or her integrity despite death.

¹⁴ Cf. *Breviarium fidei*, ed. by St. Głowa, I. Bieda, Poznań 1989, VII, p. 112.

¹⁵ Cf. J. Warzeszak, *Człowiek w obliczu Boga i pośród stworzenia*, Warszawa 2005, p. 140n.

¹⁶ Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *Letter on Certain Questions Regarding Eschatology*, Rome 1979, https://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19790517_escatologia_pl.html.

It is the carrier of this spiritual and material unity which makes sense in the perspective of the resurrection.

The gift of immortality, deposited in mankind, is not yet the goal. It is explained in the mystery of the Passover of Christ, who went to preach salvation to spirits “locked in prison” (cf. 1 Pet 3:19). Without the Lord Jesus’ resurrection, death would remain a situation without an exit even for the righteous. Christ died to bring us to God so that we could be in close proximity to the Father (cf. 1 Pet 3:18). Saint Peter speaks of Christ being “revived” by the Holy Spirit. The Son of God has life in himself. The Holy Spirit takes part in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, he is the transmitter of God’s life to humanity; he creates Christ’s humanity, no longer subject to death. The risen Christ leads to the Father, to life, to the fullness of humanity in the resurrection. Without Him, man alone cannot achieve this filial bond with God. He receives it through the Saviour, through union with Him, through the passage of His way from death to life.

Christ’s Resurrection, His presence on the right hand side is a rescue, an “ark” in which man can take refuge despite death (cf. 1 Pet 3:21). Saint John Paul II calls human existence in time “the penultimate reality” (cf. EV 2). This concerns in particular the present eon, after the Redemption. In an anthropological aspect, regardless of location in salvific history, human existence is a process that will be fully realized in eternity. St. Paul writes about the transformation for which man was created (cf. 2 Cor 5:5–6). The Holy Spirit, who took part in the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, brings the dead to life. Under His influence, the humanity is preserved, saved and absorbed by life inaccessible to death. That is why God gives the Reviving Spirit as the pledge of future transformation. What is mortal in man is not rejected, but is endowed with life, the same that is the property of the Holy Spirit. What is immortal – the soul – is open to the action of the Holy Spirit. God, who has destined man for immortality, has shaped the immortal in him so that man, the only creature on earth, is susceptible to the transformation performed by the Holy Spirit, i.e., to become “spiritual.” Beyond man, the old world disappears “to the voice of the last trumpet” – along with the last chord of temporal human history.

What will the ultimate, resurrected humanity be like? Do we know anything about its material aspect? Theologians talk about the “impassibility of the body” after the resurrection. This seems logical because it is difficult to imagine a combination of opposites, suffering and happiness. On Easter evening, Christ showed His disciples a truly human body. He let himself be touched, He ate. Should we deduce from this some extraordinary physical resistance after the resurrection? The pain we can experience now is a sign that the limit of endurance is being exceeded, a warning against destruction or damage. If there is no more evil and destruction, there will be no point in warning.

The baptized man already carries within him the pledge of eternity, the mark of the Holy Spirit. The community of the baptized, the Church is already undergoing a final transformation, also in its cosmic dimension. This takes place in the liturgy, which anticipates what is its fulfillment, i.e., the parousia and worship of God in eternity.¹⁷

KINGDOM

“...it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.” (Lk 12:32) – these words of Christ speak of the content of the eternal reward. The promised “kingdom” is the reign and splendour of the Son of Man; it is His own domain. He who has received the “kingdom” participates in what belongs to the Son, and therefore in His relation to other beings.

The kingdom is a gift of the Father’s liking, of His goodness and generosity. It is not made up of goods external to that goodness, but concerns the very “pleasure of the Father” who fills us with life in Christ (cf. Rom 1:7). It consists in what is personal, in encountering God in love.¹⁸ K. Schelkle points out that the “kingdom” is above all an undeserved gift. It is given to children, that is, that is to those who have not even had the opportunity to deserve a reward.¹⁹

It is fundamentally different from earthly kingdoms with their historical and political equivalents. Of all the widely discussed biblical uses of the term, let us note the image given in the Revelation of the cosmic reign of Christ, who “holds the seven stars” (cf. Rev 1:16). He is the Lord of everything – He is not dependent on anything in the created universe, let alone on the supposed cosmic powers which, in ancient imaginations, were supposed to rule over man and history. It is Him, God, the Man Kyrios, who is the Lord of time and all things.²⁰ The coming kingdom is inseparable from the person of the Lord Jesus.²¹ In any case, the very word “basileia” (kingdom) means both the position, the fact of being king and his domain of reign. The Revelation points to this reality from the perspective of ultimate fulfillment in which the salvation and power of God ultimately embraces all creation (“kosmos”).²² Christ himself represents the Kingdom of

¹⁷ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Eschatologia – śmierć i życie wieczne*, in: *Opera omnia*, vol. X: *Zmartwychwstanie i życie wieczne*, transl. J. Kobienia, Lublin 2014, p. 193.

¹⁸ Cf. J. McDermott, *Królestwo Boże w Nowym Testamencie*, “Communio” 32 (1986) 18, p. 27.

¹⁹ Cf. K.H. Schelkle, *Neutestamentliche...*, p. 726.

²⁰ Cf. M. Karrer, *Himmel, Millenium und neuer Himmel in der Apokalypse*, “Jahrbuch für Biblischer Theologie” 10 (2005), p. 229.

²¹ Cf. K.H. Schelkle, *Neutestamentliche...*, p. 726.

²² Cf. A. Kiejza, *Królestwo i królowanie według Księgi Apokalipsy*, RTK KUL, XLVIII (2001) 1, p. 146–152.

God.²³ Even more, He is the Eschaton, not just the “personalization of eternity,”²⁴ but a real gateway to it and its essence to the saved. Eternal life is not about getting a place “somewhere” in the space subject to Him, but about reigning together with Him, thanks to passing with Him through death to life. It is therefore a share in His own inheritance (cf. 2 Tim 2:11).

The presence of the Kingdom already in our midst (cf. Lk 17:20), that is, in Christ standing among the people,²⁵ raises the question: Do we have the right to include this concept in eschatology? Yes, because it is Christ who is the personal Eschaton – the eternal life of the saved. After His resurrection, we live in an era of eschatological “already and not yet.” Christ’s reign is already present in history because there has been an absolute and irrevocable victory over Satan. At the same time, this reign continues in a dynamic way in every individual victory of God in human conscience and deeds.²⁶ The Bible experts point out that the kingdom of God is an original term introduced by the Lord Jesus, which does not have its origin in Judaism.²⁷ It is a novelty that He brought to earth. To attribute eschatological meaning to the term “*basileia*” is therefore most appropriate; even if it does not refer in a given context to the final fulfilment, it speaks of salvation being realized, or, in pre-paschal pericopes, of its approaching.²⁸ At the same time, it is discernible in the history of the Church and develops in it.²⁹

THE THOUSAND YEAR KINGDOM

The longing for peace and wellbeing in the temporal world gave rise to theories about the earthly concretization of Christ’s kingdom. At the basis of these theories were the words of the Book of Revelation: “The rest of the dead did not come to life until the thousand years were ended. This is the first resurrection. Blessed and holy is he who shares in the first resurrection! Over such the second death has no power, but they shall be priests of God and of Christ, and they shall reign with him a thousand years.” (Revelation 20:5–6). According to Justin’s ancient interpreta-

²³ Cf. F. Mußner, *Das Reich Christi, Bemerkungen zur Eschatologie des Corpus Paulinum*, in: *Im Gespräch mit dreieinem Gott. Elemente einer trinitarischen Theologie*, ed. M. Böhnke, H. Heinz, Düsseldorf 1985, p. 141.

²⁴ Cf. Ch. Schütz, *Die Vollendung...*, p. 659.

²⁵ Cf. J. Ratzinger, *Eschatologie – Tod und ewiges Leben*, Regensburg 1978, p. 40n.

²⁶ Cf. A. Kiejza, *Królestwo...*, p. 153.

²⁷ Cf. J. Kudasiewicz, *Historia i eschaton w idei Królestwa Boga głoszonego przez Jezusa*, in: *Biblia o przyszłości. Materiały pomocnicze do wykładów z biblistyki*, ed. L. Stachowiak, R. Rubinkiewicz, Lublin 1987, p. 59n.

²⁸ Cf. W. Rakocy, *Królestwo Boże „w was” czy „pośród was”*, *Coll theol* 71 (2001), p. 34.

²⁹ Cf. S. Stasiak, *Eschatologia w listach pasterskich*, Legnica 1999, p. 35.

tion, there would literally be a “first resurrection,” different for saints and sinners; the latter would receive destructible bodies like they had during their lifetime on earth.³⁰ However, Revelation does not speak here of “the first death,” but of “the first resurrection.” It must therefore be understood not as a resurrection from the dead, but as rising from the death of sin, as a spiritual enrichment of life even before physical death.³¹ Christian life is already a participation in Christ’s triumph, although universal resurrection has not yet happened.³² Such interpretation finds its justification in the words of Saint Paul, who calls baptism burial and resurrection in Christ (cf. Col 2:12). For the recipient of this sacrament receives the grace of sharing in the Saviour’s atoning death and together with it a new life in union with Him. This new Christian existence is a sharing in Christ’s relationship with the Father. It already, on earth, anticipates eternity and the pledge of a future rising from the dead to live with the Saviour. The term “first resurrection” presents well the essence of this baptismal being grafted in Christ: for it is His Passover, not the immortality of the soul, that enables participation in God’s eternity, access to the life of the Trinity.

Another, not distant from the previous one, interpretation is that the first resurrection is not only a spiritual rebirth but also the glory of the saved in heaven.³³ The kingdom of a thousand years is the stage of happiness that the souls of the righteous will experience immediately after death, when they are safe under Christ’s rule.³⁴ This approach can be combined with the previous one: the thousand-year kingdom lasts from Christ’s resurrection to the end of the world. Satan’s imprisonment was accomplished through the Saviour’s paschal victory, and it is confirmed in every intervention of God for the faithful. The thousand year kingdom covers both the temporal and extraterrestrial sphere of the Church.³⁵

The historical and political interpretation of this kingdom is known as millenarism (Latin *mille anni* – thousand years, gr. chiliasm), which sees in the words of the Revelation the prophecies of earthly happiness and the golden age of peace. However, this is not justified either in the Book of Revelation itself, which speaks of the hardships and adversities that believers will face, or in theology.³⁶ Millenarism also speaks of a second trial which could be made available after the first resurrection; the result of the particular judgment would then not be

³⁰ Cf. B. Daley, *The Hope of the early Church. A handbook of the patristic eschatology*, Cambridge 1991, p. 21.

³¹ Cf. R. Rubinkiewicz, *Eschatologia Księgi Apokalipsy*, in: *Biblia o przyszłości. Materiały pomocnicze do wykładów z biblistyki*, ed. L. Stachowiak, R. Rubinkiewicz, Lublin 1987, p. 149.

³² Cf. J. Luzarraga, *Życie wieczne w pismach św. Jana*, “Communio” 1 (1992) 67, p. 25.

³³ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, p. 642.

³⁴ Cf. M. Karrer, *Himmel...*, p. 245.

³⁵ Cf. R. Rubinkiewicz, *Eschatologia...*, p. 148.

³⁶ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, p. 643.

final.³⁷ Officially rejected by the Magisterium (cf. CCC 676), Chiliastic theories return in the form of various political and religious utopias. The second half of the twentieth century saw them within the so-called liberation theology, according to which in each epoch there is a new parousia, a new unveiling of the mystery of Christ, this time as a Liberator, also in economic aspect.³⁸ This theory also received official criticism in a document of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith.³⁹

JUDGMENT AND THAT DAY

THE DAY OF CHRIST

The terms “that day,” “the day of the Lord,” indicate the dynamism of Christ’s action. It is He who closes the history and arrives, that is to say, becomes fully present on the day of the parousia. The future age, literally: “the age to come” (cf. Lk 18:30) does not come by itself, but thanks to the coming of Christ.

The word “day” here is full of meanings. Saint Paul writes that the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly, like a thief at night (cf. 1 Thess 5:2). The contrast in this phrase is striking: behold, the day, the brightness of the Lord bringing righteousness surprises the night, breaks the darkness on earth. The “reign of darkness” of which the Lord Jesus spoke during His capture is finished (cf. Lk 22:53). It is finally dispersed by the light of His victory. “Peace and security”, treated here with irony, is the false conviction of those who are accustomed to darkness, and so the coming of the day comes as an unpleasant surprise to them; as a thief takes away from them an illusory sense of self-confidence and conditions of existence based on a lie. In contrast to this the Apostle urges the faithful not to sleep, i.e., not to submit to the laws of the night. The parousia will occur unexpectedly, and no matter how far the world would move away from Christ, for the day cannot be stopped.

Parousia is an arrival that makes the mystery of the Holy Trinity present, bringing it closer. The experience of the Trinitarian mystery is already the pledge of parousia; that day is already in some way present in the experience of the Holy Spirit. By faith or by its rejection, temporality becomes the beginning of judgment, the future separation according to the measure of Christ, i.e., according to the conformity of life with His teaching.⁴⁰ Just as the “hour of Christ” was the

³⁷ Cf. ibidem, p. 515.

³⁸ Cf. L. Boff, *Salut en Jesus Christ et processus de libération*, “Concilium” 96 (1974), p. 73nn.

³⁹ Cf. Congregation for the Doctrine of Faith, *Instruction on Christian Freedom and Liberation*, Rome 1986, http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19860322_freedom-liberation_pl.html.

⁴⁰ Cf. F.J. Nocke, *Eschatologie*, in: *Handbuch...*, p. 387–389.

fulfillment of the Father's will, so the day which the Father knows (cf. Mk 13:32) is the final fulfillment of the Father's plan, the blessing of the seventh day of creation.⁴¹ It is the submission of everything to the Father by the Son according to the order of Trinitarian love. Likewise, the prayer in the Garden of Gethsemane, "not my will but yours" (cf. Lk 22:42) – did not express a discord between the Son and the Father, but the order of the relationship of the Divine Persons. The end of history, when this order has affected creation in an unprecedented way, so that the life of the Trinity may be shared by human beings, is precisely the "day" which the Father knows, determined in His creative thought.

The expression "the day of the Lord" indicates the special role of Christ in completing the history of the world and man. The day of the Son of Man, proclaimed by the prophets (cf. Is 27:12n), connects His "hour," the time of the salvific Passover – a moment in history – with the final completion and revelation of the Saviour (cf. Lk 17:30). This is not only the end of history, but the fullness of salvation accomplished. This is why the texts speaking of heaven are both soteriological and Christological.⁴²

That day brings good. The conclusion of the fate of creation and the history of mankind is above all good despite the seemingly catastrophic scenery. It was already the Old Testament prophet who foretold that all that are scattered will be gathered and the lost will be found then (cf. Is 27:12n). Everyone, because everyone is important. Congregating the saved means reversing the wrongs, eliminating the evil that the dispersion meant. On the day of the Son of Man what is ostensible ceases to matter. The temporal foundations of existence turn out to be impermanent and obsolete (cf. Lk 17:31). Cleverness loses its meaning, and calculations and foresight aimed at taking a safe place do not determine survival and do not bring salvation (cf. Lk 17:34). On this "day" "the heavens will pass away with a loud noise" (cf. 2 P 3:10); the noise that accompanies the rapid movement highlights the immediacy of transformation. However, this transformation does not lead to annihilation. The day of the Lord is the beginning of the "day of eternity" (cf. 2 P 3,18). Christ comes to give His life to the saved in one moment.

UNIVERSAL RESURRECTION

The universal resurrection is a consequence of the plan of God, who created man for immortality (cf. Wisdom 2:23), understood not as immortality of the

⁴¹ Cf. A. Popovič, *The seventh day of creation – Genesis 2:1–3. An exegetical – theological analysis of the seventh day of creation (Gen 1: 1–23)*, "Antonianum" LXXXI (2006), p. 644.

⁴² Cf. J. Frey, "Himmels – Botschaft". *Kerygma und Metaphorizität der neutestamentalischen Rede vom "Himmel"*, "Jahrbuch für Biblische Theologie" 10 (2005), p. 205.

spiritual element alone, but as the fullness of humanity. The resurrection of the dead reflects the logic of the God of life, the God who is communion or personal exchange of love, and calls to life in His image.

The dynamism of God's action destroys death radically (cf. Is 25:8); once and for all and completely, i.e. in relation to every human being. The Old Testament prophet preached the truth about God who does not accept death and does not allow it to last forever. The revelation of the New Testament speaks directly of the resurrection through Christ and shows it in a Trinitarian perspective.

Such content can be read from Saint Paul's First Letter to the Corinthians (cf. 1 Cor 15:35–49). Apostle writes in it that in the Resurrection he will ultimately receive such a body, such a shape of his humanity as God has foreseen for him (1 Cor 15:38). This body will be "glorious" (verse 43, *en doxe*), and thus transformed by the glory which signifies the space of God's existence, His closeness (cf. Matt 16:27); "spiritual" (v. 44, *pneumatikon*) – submitted to the Holy Spirit; "strong" (v. 43, *en dynamei*) – in the power of acting God. Body received at the universal resurrection is indestructible (v. 50), not endangered in its vitality. It bears the reflection of God's eternity, the fullness of that immortality which God has planned for man in the work of creation.

The humanity of the saved is enriched by the characteristics of the risen Lord (cf. 1 Cor 15:47). St Paul speaks of a resurrection modelled on Christ through union with Him (cf. Rom 6:5nn). The human race deserves to experience death – the consequence of sin. The Son of God accepted this consequence, but at the same time it was impossible for death to rule over Him, not only because He was sinless, but above all because He possessed a Divine nature that was completely foreign to death. Christ died as someone stronger than death. From now on, whoever dies in union with Him will not ultimately be defeated by death.

Christ has the power to regain life on His own. His resurrection from the dead is first and unique. It is He Himself who is the Life and Condition of the Resurrection. We will not rise from the dead by our own power, but thanks to Christ, "just like Him" (cf. Rom 6:5). Thanks to Him, those who are resurrected and endowed with His life become immune to death.

A JUST JUDGMENT

The concept of "judgment" in the common sense implies terms close in meaning, such as: justice, or at least its assumption, sentence – making a decision, or judge – someone who gives a verdict. In what sense does it apply to an eschatic judgment?

The Old Testament Book of Wisdom teaches that the future judgment is not about counting sins. It is a public act of a just God who sees the emptiness and evil that the ungodly have left behind and rewards the faithful.⁴³ The Lord Jesus reveals the Trinitarian perspective of judgment: already now the Holy Spirit teaches about justice, i.e. that the Lord Jesus has done the Father's will and that the Father accepts Him in glory. Justice is shown as an attribute of God. At the end of the time Christ comes to bring justice, i.e. to give what belongs to God himself.

The judgment shall be done in accordance with that justice. The evangelical theologian Hans Kammler explains the word "krisis" used in the gospel of St. John as, above all, "the court of punishment" (Strafgericht).⁴⁴ This interpretation is in line with the message of St James' Letter talking about the relentless judgement (literally "without mercy" – James 2:13) to those who have lacked mercy, that is, to those who have not shown themselves to be like the merciful God, have not done His works. Conformity to Christ, following Him, cooperating with Him are the measure of judgment. The literal meaning of the Greek "krisis" is the "separation" that creates two poles according to this measure. On one of them there is "doom," "misery" and perdition, the other – a wreath of reward, indestructibility and immortality.⁴⁵

"Krisis" is also a decision;⁴⁶ one that evaluates the decision of the person being tried. The separation is made on the basis of the response to the call to life in Christ. In this sense, faith or rejection of faith is not only the basis of judgment, but also self-judgment, now and in the future.⁴⁷ The question arises: what about those who objectively could not afford to respond with faith, e.g. children who died without baptism, or people who did not develop full awareness and responsibility. After all, they are also people, and it is difficult to imagine that they would be deprived of this essential element of their personal existence, which is freedom. We also know that God wants the salvation of all. From these two premises we can presume that everyone, in a way known to God, is given the opportunity to make this most important decision, thanks to which he can freely accept the salvation offered to him or her.

Who performs the judgment? Christ, Kyrios, Lord of the universe. He who is righteous, who can be a representative of God's justice and has the power to

⁴³ Cf. K. Romaniuk, *Eschatologia Księgi Mądrości*, Coll theol 38 (1968), p. 90–96.

⁴⁴ Cf. H. Kammler, *Christologie und Eschatologie. J 5, 17– 30 als Schlüsseltext johanneischer Theologie*, Tübingen 2000, p. 90n.

⁴⁵ Cf. S. Stasiak, *Eschatologia...*, p. 150–152.

⁴⁶ Cf. J. Blank, *Krisis. Untersuchungen zur johanneischen Christologie und Eschatologie*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1964, p. 42.

⁴⁷ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 306.

separate. The words of the Gospel saying that the Son revives those whom He wills (cf. Jn 5:22) assure of the full power of the Son of God. The Lord Jesus has the power to judge.⁴⁸ Saint Paul speaks of the cooperation of the saints; they will be judges of this world because they share in the reign of Christ (cf. 1 Cor 6:2). Their moral righteousness is a clear criterion for division. The wrongs suffered on earth in the name of fidelity to Christ reveal the iniquity of those who, by inflicting suffering on others, have shown their hostility to the kingdom of God's justice (cf. 1 Cor 6:9).

A JUDGMENT OVER THE INHABITANTS OF THE EARTH

The eschatic judgment separates the heirs of heaven from the "inhabitants of the earth." Who are the latter? They are the ones for whom being settled on earth means being attached to sin. Therefore they do not want a world other than the one in which sin is possible. The Revelation calls them "inhabitants of the earth" (cf. Rev 11:10). They do not accept the call to eternal life to such an extent that they send each other gifts because of the death of the gospel prophets. They rejoice at the crime and at suppressing the truth. They worship the Beast; they surrender to Satan and to those who blaspheme God (cf. Rev 13:12). They yield to the deceptive charm of the Beast; they accept lying (cf. Rev 13:14). They let themselves be deceived because the lie suits them. Similarly, they let themselves be made "drunk by the great harlot," that is, they willingly commit sin and, as a result, do not accept salvation (cf. Rev 17:1.8).

Hell and "the second death" are the synonyms of rejection of salvation (cf. Rev 2:11) – irreversible departure from the Living God. The Book of Wisdom speaks of the irrevocability of hell (cf. Wis 3:18). The condemned are punished according to their intentions (cf. Wis 3:10). Because they have despised justice and abandoned the Lord, they will be separated from Him and from the community of the saved. They did not believe in the possibility of overcoming death, so death will remain for them, according to their faith (cf. Wis 2:1). Therefore condemnation is "the second death." In addition to this "cold" logic, Scripture conveys an evocative image of hell based on the symbolism of destructive fire (cf. Matt 25:41). Eternal fire is the opposite of God's creative action; it destroys, yet cannot completely annihilate being. Therefore it does not burn out, but lasts indefinitely (cf. Mk 9:43). Hell is an enduring and irrevocable obliteration, and at the same time an impermanence – a disintegration in which one's own existence is constantly subject to non-acceptance. It is an endless negation of God's work,

⁴⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 122, 159.

and therefore of what one is and who one is of His will. It means remaining in anti-creative “no and never.” Is such an existence possible?

The Catechism of the Catholic Church confirms the irrevocability of the penalty of hell (cf. CCC 1035). How can condemnation coexist with a universal resurrection, including those who “wake up to shame?” (cf. Dn 12:2)? The resurrection of condemnation, literally “the resurrection of judgment” (cf. J 5:29, *αναστασιν κρισεως*) does not last only at the “moment” of the judgment. The resurrection means life, the rejection of death, it is the total breaking away from its power. We understand this well in relation to the saved, who accept the eternal life offered to them. The condemned rejects Christ, who is life, remains in a permanent rejection of the gift of life in God.

God who calls to eternity does not change His mind. He does not cancel the call to life and love. In the case of someone who rejects God, this call remains without a positive answer. God “keeps faith because he cannot deny himself” (2 Tim 2:13). Christ offers Himself to man as Life. He does not offer just some thing, but himself as a Life in God. Whoever rejects Him does not choose anything, because there is no life outside Him. The gift of life remains unaccepted. An evil spirit is not creative and cannot offer anything as an alternative. In the present time, he proposed God’s works as his own, now he no longer has access to creation.

The final separation does not annihilate the person, for there is no power to cancel the creative “let us create man.” But it radically cuts one off from the “new creation” because it is all dedicated to God. The Revelation shows the image of the defeat of rebellious angels for whom there is no longer a “place in heaven” (cf. Rev 12:8nn). The devil who was cast down could harm “the earth and the sea.” His activity is limited to what is transient. Neither evil spirits nor the condemned have access to “new heaven and new earth” (cf. Rev 21:1). “Nothing unclean will come into it” (Rev 21:27). “The inhabitants of the earth” remain homeless forever.

HOME AND HERITAGE

The concept of the Father’s house refers to the Trinitarian relationship between the Father and the Son. It points to the essential feature of eternal life, which is union with Christ and participation in His filial relationship with the Father.

THE HOUSE OF THE FATHER

“The dwellers of heaven” (cf. Rev 12:12) differ from the “inhabitants of the earth” not only in that Scripture uses a different expression to define these two groups. The former, already during their earthly pilgrimage, found refuge, sal-

vation in heaven. As a result, they are saved. Their “home” (Jn 14:2 – *oikos*; 2 Cor 5:1 – “hut”, *skene*) is a “house of the Father”, space not built by human effort, regardless of the expression used. It is Christ who can introduce into his Father’s house, and therefore entering it depends on union with Christ.⁴⁹ It is He who prepares dwellings for those who follow Him (cf. Jn 14:2).

In the Old Testament, the temple was called “the house of the Lord”, because thanks to the temple God resided among the people (cf. 2 Krn 31:10). It was there that one could meet Him – offer a sacrifice, pray. But the walls of the temple did not exhaust the meaning of the “house of the Lord.” To live in this house “for ever,” as the psalmist says (cf. Ps 23:6), is to live in His goodness and grace. The image of the feast for the righteous, contained in the previous verse of the Psalm, directs the thought towards eternity. The author of Psalm 68 announces the house which God “will prepare for the desolate” (cf. Ps 68:7). Even when it comes to earthly prosperity and security, the words: “Our God is the God who liberates” and “to God, the Lord, belong deliverances from death” (Psalm 68:21) in the light of the fullness of Revelation can be interpreted as an announcement of the salvific work. In the words of Isaiah, God promises to His faithful: “I will give in my house and within my walls a monument and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name which shall not be cut off” (Is 56,5). The closeness of God, the admission to His worship is associated with indestructibility. It anticipates it.

A house “not made by human hand” (cf. 2 Cor 5:1) is not only a safe haven, but the Father’s own house, God’s way of existence, the intimate interior of Trinitarian communion. Being resurrected with Christ by the Father allows one to be close to Him (cf. 2 Cor 4:14).⁵⁰ It is no longer just about living in the world He created, but in His presence. A house is not made by the human hand, for although merits and good deeds make it possible to enter it, it is created and opened by God; it is He who invites to his communion of life. What does that mean?

When Christ says He goes to prepare a place, He announces that there will be a place in the life of the invisible God for the created humanity. This is His own place, the place of God-man. This does not mean that each saved person will become somebody additional, the “fourth” among the Trinity. Nothing will change in Trinitarian relations either. The change concerns the status of humanity; the saved person participates in Christ’s love for the Father, responding to it in the Holy Spirit through union with the Saviour. This participation is communal, involving not each one individually, but the entire community of heaven dwellers.

⁴⁹ Cf. J. Frey, *Himmels...*, p. 217–220.

⁵⁰ Cf. J. Plevnik, *The destination of the Apostle and the faithful: second Corinthians 4, 13b–14 and 1 Tes 4, 14*, “The Catholic Biblical Quarterly” 62 (2000), p. 92.

GOD'S REST

The letter to the Hebrews speaks of the promise of entering the “rest of God” (cf. Heb 4:1). The object of eschatological hope is therefore to participate not only in God’s action but also in His very existence, in the possession of life. The concept of “rest” also brings to mind the joy of God and His affirmation of creation (cf. Gen 2:2).

After the completion of creation, God placed man in paradise. Paradise has become synonymous with happiness, yet with the primordial, not final one. Although the Lord Jesus announced to the repenting convict that he would be “in paradise” with Him (cf. Lk 23:43), in His public teaching he does not promise a “garden” but “home.” The Gospel also speaks of “heaven,” which is the space belonging to God, the symbol of His transcendent existence. The Revelation, on the other hand, puts before our eyes not the garden, but the image of the city (cf. Rev 21:2), a formed community.

“God’s rest” (*katapausis*, Heb 4:1nn) expresses His joy related to creating, giving existence and life. Contrary to the suggestion contained in the word itself, it is not a “break” in the Creator’s work. There was no “break.” God also acted after the completion of creation. The rest leads us to notice not just God’s works, but God Himself, in His creative joy, which is a model and source of happiness for creatures. “God’s rest” makes us see that everything in the world has not come from a soulless mechanism, but is the result of the act of Someone who acts out of love and therefore “rejoices in his works” (cf. Ps 104:31). Thus “entering into God’s rest” means sharing in His creative joy, in the love which rejoices because it creates and gives. In God, Love and joy are personal; they are attributed to the Person of the Holy Spirit. Entering the rest is, therefore, taking love and joy from the Source, from the Holy Spirit – according to His nature, and thus forever and ever.

HEAVEN

Heaven is the key concept of eschatology. It probably enjoys more popularity than the “Father’s house.” It expresses above all the transcendence of God’s existence. In the language of Judaism it was a synecdoche of the unspeakable name of God. In the New Covenant, the inaccessibility of God’s being is crossed over by the Son of God who descended from heaven (cf. Jn 3:13.31) in order to open it to people. Thanks to His salvific sacrifice, heaven can become a place of human presence. Saint Paul links this concept to a house in heaven (cf. 2 Cor 5:1), that is, where God resides. He also calls it homeland (cf. Phil 3:20), and this is repeat-

ed after the Apostle by the teaching of the Church (cf. *Lumen Gentium* 49). We belong to the reality in which there is Christ. The hope of His coming determines our identity (cf. Col 4:1; 2 Thess 1:7).

Although “heaven” speaks of the transcendence of God, of His way of living, different from creatures (cf. Mk 16:19), it also points to the communal aspect of eschaton. Its inhabitants are saints (cf. Revelation 13:6; LG 50:51), but also angels (cf. Mk 13:32; Matt 18:10; 22:30). This concept emphasizes the communal joy of the saved and their mutual affirmation and participation in the joy of God and in His work. This is expressed, for example, by the joy in heaven of the converted sinner, of which we read in Saint Luke (cf. Lk 15:7). The image of heaven as a community of persons with God who rejoice with Him describes not only “the future age.” It underlines the “vertical unity” of the Church in the present eon. That is why the Second Vatican Council, avoiding the “eschatological schism,” does not speak of “the three Churches” (the one making a pilgrimage, undergoing purification, and triumphant), but one whose members are at different stages of the journey (cf. CCC 48:49).

In the present eon, heaven is the reference point of eschatological hope. “Temple in heaven” (cf. Rev 11:19; 14:17) is the reality in which God receives worship. There He not only *Exists* in its inaccessible transcendence, but He is also accessible to prayers. He surrounds people on earth with His care. In this image we perceive not only the accessibility but also the expression of God’s fatherhood and concern for the completion of salvation. The openness of Heaven (cf. Rev 19:11) and “the armies of Heaven” have a similar meaning (cf. Rev 19:14), as does the “fire from heaven” (cf. Rev 20:9). All this speaks of the vigilance of God’s justice, about the ordering of the universe and history. Despite the apparent successes of evil in the temporal world, there remains a faithful Source of an indestructible order which does not turn away from human history, and after its conclusion everything will be submitted to God’s reign.

From heaven comes down the New Jerusalem, the dwelling of God with men (cf. Rev 21:2.10). From the Trinitarian order comes the eschatological harmony of creation, justice, salvation. The “new heaven and earth” is, by analogy with the “heaven and earth” of Genesis (cf. Gen 1, 1), the expression of the new creation and thus of the whole of the renewed universe. The emphasis on the newness of heaven and earth (cf. 2 Pt 3:13) points out that the whole cosmos is subject to an eschatic transformation, that there is no confusion of what is new and what has passed away (cf. Rev 21:1). This transformation is referred to in the Constitution *Gaudium et spes*, which speaks of “a new dwelling place and a new earth” (“novam habitationem novamque terram” – GeS 39). The Council notes that eschatic justice concerns the entire habitat of the saved; the personal eschaton enjoys creation “unchained from vanity.”

The concept of heaven therefore corresponds more to the presentation of God's transcendence and at the same time to the communion of God with the saints and with the angels now, while "dwelling place" and "home" speak of the kind and quality of the eternal reward from God.

HERITAGE

Hope for heaven is connected with the "treasure" awaiting there. (cf. Mk 10:21). What is "in heaven" belongs to the heavenly Father. *The Letter of Saint Peter* speaks of the heritage preserved in heaven (cf. 1 Peter 1:4). The Son has a right to the Father's property, and the value which the Father passes on to the Son in the heart of the Trinity is His love. Eternal goods are the object of "heritage" (*kleronomos*). They can be given to those who find themselves in the rights of the Son. Christians become "heirs" of a place in Trinitarian communion by baptism, and reach the fullness of their inheritance at parousia.⁵¹

The final granting of the reward to the "blessed of the Father" is an event between the Son and the Father (cf. Matt 25:34–46). The Son thus fulfils the Father's will. Accepting the saints to share in His filial dignity is an expression of love for the Father and at the same time a gift of love of the Father and the Son for people. Christ – the King allows us to share in His royal power, but the Kingdom is not divided into parts. He accepts into His existence, which for this reason does not suffer any diminution or division. He accepts the saved to be with Him, where He is, in His eternal sonship.

This heritage has been prepared "since the founding of the world," because that is what the world, including man, was created for. From the beginning – it was for eternity and eternal life in God. What is Christ's property, is for man. The eternal heritage has no end, because it comes from the eternal life of God. It is a gift of His Fatherly love, which is eternal, not in the sense that it gains the mark of eternity. On the contrary, from this love comes eternity for created persons; their continuous abiding in eternal God. For this reason the inheritance received by virtue of an assumed sonship is eternal and indestructible (cf. 1 Cor 5; 1Pet 1:3n).⁵²

Through the eternal Spirit, the Son offered himself to God as an immaculate sacrifice (cf. Heb 9:14). Redemption, therefore, is the work of three Divine Persons remaining in an eternal communion of love. Christ has merited an eternal heritage. He entered heaven itself – the glory of the inner life of the Trinity with his humanity, that is, He brought humanity into a place which is an eternal inheri-

⁵¹ Cf. S. Stasiak, *Eschatologia...*, p. 167.

⁵² Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, vol. II, p. 559.

tance (cf. Heb 9:15–24). The author of the *Letter to the Hebrews* says that He did it “once and for all” (cf. Heb 10:19). Irrevocably.

REWARD

The concept of “heritage” concerns goods which are due without merit, by virtue of birth. A “reward” is something one wins, something one has to earn with their own efforts. Eternal inheritance is the filial place of Christ. United with Him, they receive, out of God’s love, a share in what belongs to the Son. The concept of the eternal reward underlines the aspect of the necessary moral effort that leads to this union. The saved receive eternal life for free, because it is not in human power to deserve it. However, they receive it only when they respond with love during the earthly pilgrimage. The concept of reward expresses the truth about the courageous acquisition of eternal life (cf. 1 Tim 6:12).

The “rest in God”, compared to a celebration, safety with Him are the reward of the righteous after their hardship (cf. Wisdom 4:7; 5:15nn). The saved person is the winner (cf. Rev 2:11). It is not a military victory, involving defeating someone else, but rather oneself, one’s own weakness. Therefore it is compared to the success of an athlete who wins through mobilisation and discipline. The metaphor of sporting struggle is matched by the allegory of a wreath as a reward. The wreath awarded to the winner (cf. Rev 2:10) does not evoke associations with the attributes of a despot beating others with brutal force. It testifies to the noble features shown in the struggle. It means dignity, recognition of effort, a distinction which does not give rise to fear or aversion but, on the contrary, the favour and admiration of the community. Those who get the award – the saints affirm each other. The prize is “heritage among the saints” (cf. Eph 1:18).

ETERNAL LIFE IN GLORY

ETERNAL LIFE

Life is the key concept of eschatology. Depending on the accompanying term, it is a starting point and, in a way, a reference point for further thought. If it is an “afterlife,” the point of reference will necessarily be the grave and the question of what and in what sense allows man to survive death. The phrase “eternal life” leads one to reflect on the eschatological fullness, on the full and perfect possession of life as defined by Boetius. However, the paths of such reflection will run along the analogy of life as such, that is, the life we already know. The phrase

“eternal life in God” first poses the question of who God is, what is His creative and salvific action, the purpose of which is to give man the fullness of life in glory. Do different starting points lead to the same conclusions? Probably yes, since we are using the same Revelation, but we can expect more or less complicated ways of getting there and different accents.

Life is a gift, not a thing, writes St John Paul II (cf. EV 2; 22). Reflecting on eternity in opposition or by analogy with time leads to interesting statements about beginning, end, changeability and development, consequences and simultaneity. It thus enriches theology with philosophical questions, but this concerns more “things” (realities) than people. This is a natural consequence of a common understanding of what is “eternal,” i.e. “permanent” and not necessarily “living.” The transfer of the emphasis from “eternal” to “life” makes it necessary to start with God who is “Life” and place the reflection on His Life at the center of eschatology.

Theologians point out that the very adjective “eternal” should be reserved for God, who is eternal in His nature. Only He is without beginning and without end. Therefore, the created beings that have a beginning would, in justified situations, be entitled to the adjective “everlasting/perennial.” For example, we can say that man has an ultimate and everlasting goal.⁵³ Those who are condemned will suffer an everlasting punishment.⁵⁴ But does not such a precise term remain understandable in too narrow a circle? Common Polish language does not distinguish between Latin “aeternus,” “perennis,” “sempiternus.” Hans Urs von Balthasar recommends not using the word “eternal” to refer to evil and death, because “eternal” is an attribute of God.⁵⁵ However, in the Polish version of the *Catechism* we have the phrases “eternity of hell” or “eternal fire” (cf. CCC 1035). The same applies to life. The variety of Greek expressions makes it possible, for example, to contrast in the Gospel of Saint John the spiritual “zoe” with the earthly “psyche”.⁵⁶ If we combine these two words into one “eternal life,” we gain new content. It is not just about duration. It is a life not only endless, not only inexhaustible, but new in essence; it is the fullness of life in God.⁵⁷

ETERNAL LIFE IN GOD

Eternal life in God is participation in the life of the Trinity, according to the Trinitarian order of communion. The saints participate in it by remaining in Christ,

⁵³ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 478n.

⁵⁴ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 482.

⁵⁵ Cf. I. Bokwa, *Trynitarno-chrystologiczna interpretacja eschatologii w ujęciu Hansa Ursa von Balthasara*, Radom 1998, p. 238.

⁵⁶ Cf. J. Finkenzeller, *Eschatologia...*, p. 43.

⁵⁷ Cf. F.J. Nocke, *Eschatologie*, w: *Handbuch...*, p. 474.

in the Holy Spirit. It is communion with the Father in the Son through the Holy Spirit (cf. EV 1). Participation in this communion of love is at the same time a knowledge – an experience of God the Trinity (cf. EV 37). In the final fulfillment, the one saved with Christ gives himself to the Father. He abides in Christ through the Holy Spirit and at the same time experiences His unifying power. The Holy Spirit, who is the Unity of the Trinity, ensures that the saved are not individually separated. He creates their mutual unity of love, like the Trinitarian unity and within it. He is the inner principle of the unity of the community of saints in Christ (cf. MnD 20n).

Therefore, in the earthly life, abiding in Christ is an anticipation of eternal life. The Holy Spirit, who brings about the righteousness that is in Christ, is revealed as the Spirit of eternal life (cf. DeV 48). Already now creation, by submitting everything from the Son in the Holy Spirit to the Father, finds its share in the mystery of God, which becomes the ultimate power of man and the world.⁵⁸ It is communion with God that encompasses and leads earthly existence towards the ultimate destiny (cf. EV 38).

GLORY

In Holy Scripture, the term “glory” (doxa) introduces into the sphere of divine transcendence. It means God’s way of being, His Trinitarian existence. “Glory,” that is, God Himself, but also the “inhabitants of Heaven,” angels, all come closer to people in the person of the Lord Jesus. This is why at key moments of revelation we hear about “glory,” for example, at the Lord’s birth (cf. Lk 2:14), at the transfiguration (cf. Lk 9:28–35), or at the announcement of parousia (cf. Lk 9:26).

God makes available to the saints the space of His being in glory, He gives a share in the Trinitarian communion of love. This is why Saint Paul writes that “the richness of the glory of his inheritance among the saints” is the vocation of Christians (cf. Eph 1:18). We worship the saints, that is, those who abide in union with Christ. The cult of the saints is therefore clearly Christocentric.

In the parousia, Christ arrives in glory, manifesting Himself definitively and directly, as Lord and Saviour; sharing in the glory is the content of eternal reward. This concept therefore belongs to eschatology.

Theologians over the centuries have spoken of different degrees of glory.⁵⁹ The very concept of the degree creates the impression of pure earthly provenance. The detailed sciences often use the measure of degree, e.g. when determining temperature, angle, intensity of storm or earthquake. In these cases it is about values

⁵⁸ Cf. K. Wojtyła, *Znak, któremu sprzeciwić się będą*, Kraków 2005, p. 183.

⁵⁹ Cf. W. Granat, *Ku człowiekowi...*, vol. II, p. 564.

or non-personal phenomena. But is the degree an adequate measure of happiness? By analogy, yes. We can speak metaphorically, that is imprecisely, although comprehensively, about the degree of love, sacrifice, or virtues. In this way we point out, for example, the heroism of the virtues of the candidates for canonization. Language allows for this. But is it still right to measure what is “without measure?” Was the introduction of degrees to eschatology not influenced by the habit of earthly thinking to classify people and evaluate them according to their degree of dignity, their positions, medals received, etc.? Does it therefore correspond to the truth of revelation, especially that of God the Father?

We can find a suggestion about this in the prophecy: “As your own mother comforts you, so I will comfort you” (cf. Is 66, 13). God’s word compares God’s goodness towards the people to parental love. If applied to eschatic consolation, it should be said to be a gift of love that is immeasurable but suitable for everyone, according to the measure of divine infinity and mercy.

VISIO BEATIFICA

The Latin term “visio beatifica” in the Polish theological literature is probably as popular, if not more, than vernacular “beatific vision.” It is actually a synonym for “heaven,” but drawing attention to the cognition/contemplation of God. This expression refers to the phrase in which St. Paul presents the eschatological future through the allegory of seeing: “while we are at home in the body we are away from the Lord, for we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Cor 5:6n). “Vision in Heaven” is therefore different from temporal contemplation and even from the experiences of mystics. It is also different from the cognition available in the context of parousia, when the presence of God becomes something obvious, not requiring verification, self-evidence that includes within itself the criterion of cognition. This is a universal cognition, accessible to all.

Visio beatifica is contemplation available only to the saved. It is an inner contact with the very personal “criterion” of truth. In the temporal world we get to know God through that which is created. In parousia, God’s action is obvious. In the eschatic vision, cognition is combined with the interaction with God in relation to creatures, that is, with the eschatic reign. It is accompanied by creative joy resulting from participation in the dialogue, in the exchange of love of Divine Persons.

The Catechism defines *visio beatifica* as “contemplation of God in glory” (cf. CCC 1028). God is then known as He is. The word “seeing” expresses an intense and direct knowledge of the invisible God, knowledge not only without the mediation of creatures, but also without intermediary signs, without words. The

term “beatific vision”, used interchangeably, (cf. CCC 1045) is a direct translation of Latin “visio.” But Polish “seeing” seems more appropriate because it corresponds to the new ability of the saved to perceive God directly.

Why does *visio beatifica* make one happy? It is a vision that contains the reciprocity of looking: “I will know as I have been known.” God is not contemplated as an interesting object. It is a “face-to-face” vision (cf. 1 Cor 13:12). At first glance we see here the opposite of hiding from God because of sin (cf. Gen 3:8nn). The saint in eternity participates in the inner knowledge of the Persons of the Trinity; thanks to the Holy Spirit, who permeates the depths of God (cf. 1 Cor 2:10n). The Holy Spirit gives a direct insight into these “depths,” that is, how the Son comes to know the Father. He comes to know Him with thanksgiving, just as He gave witness during His earthly activity. The Holy Spirit also gives insight into how God knows man, i.e. what the loving thought, that led him from being created towards eternal life, consists in. This knowledge contains joy, the affirmation that one does not want to be hidden. It is the joy of being in the light of Christ, within the reach of His loving gaze (cf. Rev 21:23).

ETERNAL HAPPINESS

Happiness or joy? In everyday language, or even theological language, one can probably hear more about “happiness.” Joy is associated with a state of feeling, with mood. Władysław Tatarkiewicz wrote about understanding these notions in the secular language.⁶⁰ In the New Testament the word “the happy ones” (*makarioi*) is found, for example, in the text of the eight blessings (cf. Matt 5:3nn), but it is joy (*chara*) that means sharing in God’s happiness (cf. Jn 15:11). The adjective *makarios*, on the other hand, is applied to God (translated as “blessed God” – 1 Tim 1:11).

Happiness in theology is a particularly eschatological term. It is not to be found on earth. It is reached by sharing in Christ’s sufferings and baptismal conforming to His death in the hope of the resurrection (Phil 3:10). For the condition of happiness is the renewal of humanity and liberation from vanity. How do we know this?

By starting his public activity, Christ announces the liberation of man from destructibility (cf. Lk 4:18nn). His miracles – the healings, the resurrections – aroused joy and enthusiasm, an announcement of future joy. It was not only a display of the power of the Messiah, the Saviour, but also an indication of the purpose of His mission, that is, the ultimate guidance of man from the vanity of being. Man gets to know this vanity during his earthly pilgrimage, and he expe-

⁶⁰ Cf. W. Tatarkiewicz, *O szczęściu*, Warszawa 2004, p. 79 – 81.

riences it most intensely in his own death. Through this death and resurrection at the end of the ages, he meets and experiences Christ acting. In his history, he comes to know Christ, who let himself be ravaged in order to bring man out of the vanity of being to a new, secure level of existence. Eternal joy is a consequence of crossing the ontological abyss from being subject to death towards living in God's eternity. It is announced by the earthly joy of good, of sharing the good, following Christ's model, the selfless affirmation of the good that others experience. The very liberation from vanity would only be a certain negative aspect of happiness; it is complemented by the experience of the bond with Christ.

In the parable of the talents the faithful servant receives an invitation to the joy of the Lord (cf. Matt 25:21). In eternity, man has no life out of himself. Nor is he a sovereign of eschatic goods. Yet he participates in impartation of eternal life in Love, through the Spirit of Truth. This truth includes recognizing his dependence on God who is Life and Love. Man participates in the joy of God. This joy is His action and the fact that He loves. The joy of God is the homeland of saints.

In the *Letter to the Philippians* we read that our homeland is in heaven (cf. Phil 3:20n). "Our," or, as the context suggests, of those who want to fulfil their vocation, who do not aspire to "what is mundane," unworthy of man, but have hope in Christ. It is the "homeland," that is, one's most proper place, assigned by God. Moreover, it is a heritage and a community where one is at home, where humanity is realized, where one can enjoy one's own and at the same time common, unique gifting. The "homeland in heaven" indicates being with Christ, where He resides as God-Man with an indestructible, transformed humanity.

The texts of Sacred Scripture which speak of joy in the Holy Spirit (cf. Lk 10:21n) and the Church's own experience justify its attribution to the Paraclete. He is the Personal Happiness of the Trinity. The eternal happiness of the saved is the cooperation with Christ in the creative and unifying joy of the Holy Spirit.

CONCLUSION

The word is important. By God's inspiration, St John writes that the Son of God has the name of the Word. The eternal Word not only reveals the truth of the Trinity, but expresses it. It expresses the fullness of truth about God. There is no truth beyond Him. He – the Word is the Truth. In Him and through Him we know its depth. We hope to endlessly come to know it in this way in eternity. That is why the words we speak about it are important now. They are meant to reflect the brilliance of the Truth.

What do we have in eschatology? The terms listed above obviously do not exhaust the scope of this field of theology. It is also not all we have at our disposal. The present study does not exhaust the fullness included in the eschatological terms. It indicates a certain way of conducting reflection and the meaning of the words used. The expressions chosen here constitute a characteristic fragment of what in Scripture and history serves eschatological reflection. They include those that relate to currents or ideas such as apocatastasis and, above all, biblical ones that are as close as possible to the content of the revelation.

It can be observed that the concepts used, and even the order or hierarchy of their juxtaposition, influence the aspect in which we consider a given reality. For example, “home,” “Father’s home” focuses on the closeness of God, on His caring fatherhood. It also points to the role of the Son of God and evokes the subject of assumed sonship. The concept of “heaven” seems impersonal, yet it is derived from the surrogate name of God (cf. 1 Macc 3:18n). “Heaven” draws attention to the “new heaven and the new earth” and thus to the whole reality of the new creation. As a living space for the saints, it points to the communal aspect of the eschaton, to the fact that the saved together enjoy “homeland in heaven.” “Heaven” is the goal of the earthly pilgrimage. Therefore, it reminds us of the need for effort during the pilgrimage.

The phrases which, speaking of eternity in God, reveal Trinitarian truths, are of particular value. “Home” and “heritage” are definitely Christological. The “House of the Father” is the reality into which one is introduced by the Son. It is an expression that makes us reflect on the participation of the saved in the communion of Divine Persons. The eternal inheritance carries the truth of man’s filiation, that is, of his destined place in the life of God. The “reward” reminds us that we hope to receive eternal life because of the merits of Christ, and our own actions count only when they are done together with Him.

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Abbreviations

CCC – Catechism of the Catholic Church [Polish ed.: Poznań 2002].

LG – *Lumen Gentium* Constitution.

GeS – *Gaudium et spes* Constitution.

DeV – Encyclical *Dominum et vivificantem*.

EV – Encyclical *Evangelium vitae*.

MnD – Letter *Mane nobiscum Domine*.

Keywords: eschatic, eschatological, kingdom, Father’s Home, eternal life, beatific vision

Z PROBLEMATYKI POJĘĆ ESCHATOLOGICZNYCH

Streszczenie

Niniejszy artykuł podejmuje temat stosowania terminologii eschatologicznej i jej rozumienia. Zastosowane pojęcia i punkt wyjścia prowadzonego rozważania wpływają na jego ukierunkowanie i rozłożenie aspektów. Jeśli jako punkt wyjścia przyjmujemy „rze-

czy ostateczne” uzyskamy antropologiczny obraz losów człowieka i jego powołania do wieczności. Wyjście od tajemnicy Boga i Jego planu wymaga zwrócenia uwagi na Osobę Chrystusa Przychodzącego i czyni eschatologię traktatem o Bogu Trójjedynym, dopełniającym swoje dzieło.

Niniejsze studium zwraca też uwagę na niuanse znaczeniowe niektórych pojęć odnoszących się do życia wiecznego, jak np. nowość, królestwo, dom Ojca, niebo, chwała czy szczęście wieczne. Te i inne wyrażenia zawierają, zakorzenione w Objawieniu i tradycji Kościoła, bogactwo znaczeniowe. Ich przemyślane i świadome stosowanie służy pogłębionej i twórczej, a zarazem precyzyjnej refleksji.

Słowa kluczowe: eschatyczny, eschatologiczny, królestwo, dom Ojca, życie wieczne, *visio beatifica*

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CHRISTOLOGICAL HETERODOXY AS A THREAT TO THE KERYGMA IN THE THEOLOGY OF FATHER RANIERO CANTALAMESSA

Any attempt to reduce or disintegrate the Christological dogma is not without an impact on the basic message of the good news, the Kerygma, as well as on its soteriological implications. The theological challenge is to make every effort to proclaim the first message as the announcement of the fullness of the revealed truth, but also to indicate the dangers arising from incomplete or unorthodox proclamation. The article presents negative consequences of heterodox Christological tendencies for the reality of the Kerygma in theology of Father Raniero Cantalamessa. These dogmatic threats and their consequences focus on the person of Jesus Christ and the mysteries of His death and resurrection.

The Apostle of the Nations in the letter to Timothy writing that God “desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth” (παντας ανθρωπους θελει σωθηναι και ει εις επιγνωσιν αληθειας ελθειν)¹ (1 Tim 2:4), has shown the essential link between the salvific aspect and the reality of truth. It is not only about the cognitive aspect in the intellectual sense, since the Gospels reveal that the truth that liberates has a personal dimension, but about the recognition (επιγνωσιν)² of this truth, about its personal acceptance inextricably linked with

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¹ Literal translation: “who wants all people to be saved and to come to the recognition of the truth” cf. *Grecko-polski Nowy Testament. Wydanie interlinearne z kluczem gramatycznym, z kodami Stronga i Popowskiego oraz pełną transliteracją greckiego tekstu*, transl. R. Popowski, M. Wojciechowski, Warszawa 2014, p. 1112.

² Apart from 1 Tm 2:4 the word “επιγνωσιν” also occurs in: Rom 10:2; Col 1:9.10; Col 2:2; Col 3:10; 2 Tim 2:25; 2 Tim 3:7; Tit 1:1; Heb 10:26; 2 Pet 1:8.

the entrance into the perspective of salvation. For this reason, from the very beginning, the Church has been preaching the good news of Jesus Christ the Son of God, who is the Lord and Messiah, who died, rose from the dead and leads to salvation and the knowledge of the truth.

The proclamation of the good news of Jesus remains extremely necessary and always relevant. By reading the signs of the times, the Church encourages us, while taking from the whole treasury of Divine Revelation, to return to the joyful proclamation of the kerygma,³ the first message which, as Pope Francis teaches, is the most beautiful, the most important, as well as larger, more attractive, and at the same time the most necessary.⁴ It should occupy a central place in the activity of evangelization, because there is nothing more solid, profound, certain, meaningful and wise than the kerygma.⁵ It is a Christological message aimed at salvation and at recognizing the truth and entering into a personal relationship with Jesus.

But can a message that aims to know and acknowledge the truth not achieve it? Can the preaching of the good news, and even the very essence of it contained in the kerygma, not lead to an encounter with Jesus Christ? Or, fulfilling the mission of the Friend of the Spouse,⁶ like John the Baptist, can one fail to bear witness to the truth (cf. Jn 1:29–34)? The history of the Church gives a positive answer to all these questions. Numerous views, theories and, above all, Christological heresies have shown that the deformation of the revealed truth is not without its impact on the whole set of the truths of faith, especially soteriology. The Church's positive response to the heterodox trends that have emerged over the centuries has been dogmatic judgments, the teachings of the councils or the development of theology

³ It is worth pointing out such documents as: *Encyclical Fides et ratio* 24, 99; *Encyclical Redemptoris missio* 16, 23; *Apostolic exhortation Catechesi tradendae* 18, 21, 25; *Apostolic exhortation Ecclesia in Africa* 73; *Apostolic exhortation Ecclesia in America* 69, 73; *Apostolic exhortation Ecclesia in Oceania* 20; *Apostolic exhortation Pastores Gregis* 29, 39; *Apostolic exhortation Reconciliatio et paenitentia* 17; *Encyclical Deus caritas est* 25; *Apostolic exhortation Verbum Domini* 2, 105; *Apostolic exhortation Evangelii gaudium* 164, 165, 177; *Apostolic exhortation Amoris laetitia* 58, 207, 290, 324; *Apostolic exhortation Christus vivit* 211, 213, 214, 222; *Apostolic exhortation Querida Amazonia* 64–66.

⁴ Cf. Francis, *Apostolic exhortation Evangelii gaudium*, Kraków 2013 [further on: EG], 35; *Apostolic exhortation Amoris laetitia*, Kraków 2016 [further on: AL], 58.

⁵ Cf. EG 165; AL 58.

⁶ It is about an institution called *shoshbin* in Hebrew, i.e. a person who, on behalf of the Bridegroom or his family, is to prepare the ceremony of the bride and groom's wedding. In the New Covenant, this function gains a spiritual dimension, referring to the relationship and marriage of Jesus the Bridegroom and the Church of His Bride. In the pages of the New Testament, John the Baptist (see Jn 3:29–39) and the Apostle Paul (see 2 Cor 11:2) make reference to this institution. See F. Mickiewicz, *Przyjaciele Oblubieńca. Studium biblijne*, Ząbki 2016; B. Pitre, *Jesus the Bridegroom: The Greatest Love Story Ever Told*, New York 2014.

leading to an ever deeper interpretation and understanding of the revealed truth. It is undeniable, however, that the emergence of dogma does not automatically eliminate views contrary to orthodoxy, and ancient heresies return in different ways and are still present in the living space of the people of God.⁷ This is confirmed, among others, by Pope Francis, who in his exhortation *Gaudete et exsultate* writes about modern gnosticism and pelagianism.⁸

Therefore it should be stressed that even this most basic preaching of the truth about Jesus, who died “for” man and rose “for” man’s justification, may not be devoid of heterodox tendencies. It would therefore be quite an abuse to take approach the reality of the kerygma without reflection on its content, on preparing those who preach it and making the grace of salvation present. The priority, therefore, is to properly discern and name the threats or heterodox tendencies and to effectively eliminate them from the reality of the kerygma and the Church’s teaching. As Napiórkowski states: “bad dogmatics is bad theology and bad teaching; good dogmatics is the basis of good theology and good teaching.”⁹ Thus, one can also state that bad dogmatic foundations are a bad kerygma.

Having this in mind, the purpose of this article is to discuss some of the dogmatic dangers concerning the kerygma¹⁰ which, due to the heterodox formulation of Christological truth, significantly endanger the basic message of the Gospel. These dangers, divided according to the logic and content of the kerygma, will be presented on the basis of the theological-pastoral work of the Italian Capuchin Fr Raniero Cantalamessa.¹¹ The first group will concern Jesus Christ and the second – two Paschal events: death and resurrection.

⁷ See H. Pietras, *Herezje*, Kraków 2019.

⁸ See Pope Francis, *Apostolic exhortation Gaudete et exsultate*, Kraków 2018, p. 35–62. According to the Holy Father, “gnosticism and pelagianism” are two “subtle enemies of holiness.”

⁹ S.C. Napiórkowski, *Jak uprawiać teologię*, Wrocław 1994, p. 72.

¹⁰ The kerygma is by its very nature a dogmatic-pastoral message, so the dangers to its essence are linked to both its dimensions. Dogmatic threats include: christological errors, overemphasis or questioning paschal events, reduction of the pneumatological dimension, a rheistic approach to the first message and attempts to theologize it. The pastoral dangers, on the other hand, are: a wrong relationship to God’s Word, failure to accept God’s wisdom, attempts to smooth out the message for the sake of the recipient and replace it with other forms of help or activity, as well as abandonment of its proclamation..

¹¹ Raniero Cantalamessa (born 1934) – Italian Capuchin, doctor of theology (Freiburg 1962) and classical literature (Milan 1966). Lecturer at the Sacro Cuore University of Milan and member of the International Theological Commission from 1975 to 1981. For twelve years he took part in the Catholic-Pentecostal dialogue. In 1979 he resigned from university work and devoted himself to the service of preaching the Word of God. A year later he was appointed by Pope John Paul II as Preacher of the Pontifical House, a function which he holds to this day. Author of numerous scientific and pastoral books. See A.M. Valli, *Il bambino che portava acqua. Una vita a servizio della Parola*, Milano 2014.

CHRISTOLOGICAL ERRORS

The person of Jesus Christ is in the centre of the kerygma. Its proclamation, in order to be an effective introduction into the personal and salvific relationship, should take into account the data of the Revelation and their proper reading by the Church's Magisterium. As Fr. Raniero states: "During the Councils, the Church has included the essential contents of her faith in Jesus Christ in three statements: Jesus Christ is a true man; Jesus Christ is a true God; Jesus Christ is one person. This is a kind of dogmatic triangle in which deity and humanity are two sides and the person is the apex, which is also true from a historical point of view. First, in the fight against the heresy of gnosticism, the humanity of Christ was defended. Then, in the fourth century, in the fight against Arianism, His deity was defended. Finally, in the course of the Christological controversies of the 5th century, the unity of his person was defended."¹²

The dogmatic triangle Fr. Cantalamessa writes about includes the three basic truths of faith concerning the incarnate Son of God. Their denial or unorthodox attempt at interpretation would have serious consequences for the Christian message. Because of the subject of the paper, the detailed analysis of heresy will be omitted, and the focus will be on showing the consequences of the heterodox Christological approaches to the reality of the kerygma.

NEGATING THE HUMANITY

The truth about the humanity of Jesus Christ, and at the same time about the realism of the incarnation, was already being questioned in the first centuries, among others by docetists and appellites [i.e. followers of Apelles].¹³ The existence of the problem is confirmed by the letter of Saint John, which indicates a clear rule of discernment: "By this you will know the Spirit of God: every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ came in the flesh is of God. And every spirit that does not acknowledge Jesus, is not of God; and this is the spirit of the Antichrist who, as you have heard, is coming and is already in the world." (1Jn 4:2–3). Views that deny the reception of the body or speak of its illusionary and impassible nature are heresies that contest the incarnational event in which the Word truly became flesh (cf. Jn 1:14).¹⁴ Another form of questioning the human nature of Jesus was

¹² R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga*, transl. W. Polczyk, Wrocław 2000, p. 113–114.

¹³ See H. Masson, *Słownik herezji w Kościele katolickim*, transl. B. Sęk, Katowice 1993; R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 37–38.

¹⁴ Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Początki doktryny chrześcijańskiej*, transl. J. Mrukówna, Warszawa 1988, p. 112–113.

the attempt to disintegrate it, proposed by Apollinaris, who claimed that Jesus Christ accepted humanity but without the element of the rational soul (*nous*).¹⁵ Hence the second type of threat to the truth about the humanity of Jesus, that is to say, an approach that accepts human nature, but to a lesser extent. However, any violation of anthropological truth within the person of Jesus will not be without consequences for Christological and soteriological truth.¹⁶

Also noteworthy is the dangerous tendency which, although not denying the humanity of Jesus, loses the perspective related to human nature by unilaterally emphasizing the deity. This tendency and its consequences appeared in the Middle Ages. At a certain time, the excessive concentration in the lecture of the *Creed* on the dogma of the Holy Trinity as well as the presentation of Jesus as God, Saviour, King and Lord, in isolation from his humanity and earthly life, resulted in the need to seek closer intermediaries with God than Jesus Christ himself. In this way, the top-down presentation of Christological truth led to the development of the cult of saints and relics. The idea of mediation of Mary and the saints also appeared at that time and there is nothing fundamentally wrong with this idea. However, the conviction behind it that Christ is too distant, too divine and too holy for the ordinary and sinful man is in obvious contradiction with the truth of the incarnation as well as with the whole message of the Gospel. It also contradicts the concept of the kerygma, which is about bringing Jesus closer to us and introducing us into the experience of salvation. Therefore, wrong accents in the proclamation, even when the incarnational truth or its realism are not denied and neither is Jesus' humanity disintegrated, may make Him seem distant and make it difficult to enter into a personal relationship with Him. As Cantalamessa states: "faith creates a bond between Christ and the believer, opens the way of communication through which the Holy Spirit passes (...) given to him who believes."¹⁷ For the theory of kerygma, this becomes an extremely important premise. The basic Christological truth, this Christological creed, which is proclaimed in an unbalanced or incomplete way, influences religious consciousness, religious practices and the lives of the faithful. Disproportion and misplaced accents in the proclamation of the kerygma can lead to a wrong image of God, to many distortions in the practice of the people of God and of the Church itself.

All heresies, which to some extent cast doubt on the statement that Jesus is a true man, or over-emphasize the deity in relation to humanity, must be interpreted as a threat to the reality of redemption and to human nature's participation in

¹⁵ Cf. L. Bouyer, *Syn Przedwieczny*, transl. P. Rak, W. Dzieża, Kraków 2000, p. 511–513.

¹⁶ See R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 94–96.

¹⁷ Ibidem, p. 81.

salvation,¹⁸ according to the patristic paradigm that “what was not accepted was not redeemed either.”¹⁹ This is of great importance for the kerygma, because undermining Jesus’ humanity makes it impossible to preach the good news of God incarnate, close to man, similar to him in everything except sin (cf. Heb 4:15). It also deprives us of the right to preach Jesus as a mediator between God and men (cf. 1 Tim 2:5). Finally, the kerygma also loses its most important axis, which is the event of salvation accomplished by Jesus, true man and true God. If He is not human or is not fully human, then a doubt arises as to whether people are and can be redeemed and whether and how they can participate in the reality of salvation. On the other hand, the inappropriate distribution of accents one-sidedly emphasizing the deity of Jesus distances Him from man, contradicting the logic of the kerygma. It ceases to be a joyful proclamation of Jesus’ salvific work and its effects, as well as bringing God closer to man, and instead becomes a disturbing question about man’s future, his relationship to God and personal fulfilment. After all, “the hope of eternity is a coping stone of the faith in incarnation.”²⁰

NEGATING THE DIVINITY

From the perspective of the history of Christianity, it is clear that heresies denying the deity of Jesus have been much more frequent than those denying His humanity. Among the most important are Arianism, with the denial of the divinity but also of the pre-existence of Jesus expressed in the phrase “there was a time when there was no Son.” Apart from Arius, views which reduce deity and reduce Christology to ordinary anthropology can be found in Ebionites, who consider Jesus to be a normal man born of Mary and Joseph, as well as in Artemon, Paul of Samosata, Marcellus of Ancyra or Photin.²¹ In addition, all these heresies were also in some way related to adoptionist or modalist theory. In their opinion, Jesus, who is not God, is an exceptional man because at the time of his baptism in the Jordan he was filled with the Holy Spirit and was adopted in a special way by God. This was supposedly expressed in words: “Thou art my beloved son.” (cf. Mk 1:11; Matt 3:17; Lk 3:22). However, the event of Baptism received from

¹⁸ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 39.

¹⁹ Formula: “that which was not accepted was not saved, but that which was joined to God is also redeemed” was written by Gregory of Nazianzus in a letter to presbyter Cledonius. Gregory of Nazianzus, *Listy*, transl. J. Stahr, Poznań 1933, p. 138.

²⁰ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 99.

²¹ Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Początki doktryny chrześcijańskiej...*, p. 110–111; R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 166–171.

John has changed nothing in ontology. Jesus, called the Son of God, continued to be a man, becoming only a chosen one and, through God's adoption, unique among all other people. Modalists, on the other hand, saw in Jesus the *modus*, that is, the way God acted or the form of His revelation. The humanity of Jesus of Nazareth, His life, words and actions are human activities in which God acted and was present in an extraordinary way.

While trying to analyze the consequences of thinking and teaching that denies the deity of Jesus, we should begin, following Fr. Cantalamessa, by saying that "the deity of Jesus is the cornerstone [...] After the rejection of this stone, the whole edifice of the Christian faith crumbles down,"²² and the kerygma is not left intact, too. In the writings of the Italian theologian, three groups of threats to the kerygma can be found, born as the fruit of the reduction of the supernatural dimension of the person of Jesus. These are: the collapse of the existing Christian concept of God, the reductionist system of treating faith and thinking about reality in general, and narrowing Christology and soteriology to an anthropological issue, as well as the search for secular ways of salvation.

The rejection of Jesus' divinity affects the Trinitarian horizon of understanding God and the Christian faith. If Jesus is not God, then neither is God in three persons, so the concept of the Trinity with all its novelty and originality revealed in Christianity collapses. Catholic doctrine states that God is eternally Father in relation to his only Son, who is eternally Son only in relation to his Father.²³ If Jesus is not God, then God is not the Father either – for intra-Trinitarian relations no longer apply. Although it is possible to call God the Father in some broad sense, pointing to Him as the beginning or creator,²⁴ this is only a purely figurative or nominal expression that is not rooted in the inner life of the Trinity and its relationships.

The further consequence will be questioning the essence of God as love. How can one speak of eternal God who is love, when there is no person to show unconditionally His essence and His being for the other? "Who does God love? – asks

²² R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 160.

²³ Cf. CCC 240; K. Gózdź, *Bóg, Ojciec Jezusa Chrystusa*, w: *Bóg – Ojciec wszystkich*, ed. K. Gózdź, J. Lekan, Lublin 1999, p. 110.

²⁴ CCC 238–239: Many religions invoke God as "Father." The deity is often considered the "father of gods and of men." In Israel, God is called "Father" inasmuch as he is Creator of the world (cf. Deut 32:6; Mal 2:10). Even more, God is Father because of the covenant and the gift of the law to Israel, "his first-born son." (Ex 4:22). God is also called the Father of the king of Israel (cf. 2 Sam 7:14). Most especially he is "the Father of the poor," of the orphaned and the widowed, who are under his loving protection (cf. Ps 68:6). By calling God "Father," the language of faith indicates two main things: that God is the first origin of everything and transcendent authority; and that he is at the same time goodness and loving care for all his children.

Cantalamessa. Humanity? The universe? But it has been love for some millions or billions of years, respectively. And before that, what was He if it wasn't about love? Maybe it was about love in the sense that He had predicted and destined his Son Jesus for all eternity, that is, in the sense that he has always loved something that is not yet, but will be? But in such case God is hope, not love! Or would God love his 'mode' of existence with infinite love, if the Son is considered a mode, not a reality or hypostasis? But it would be neither hope nor love, but vanity."²⁵ Questioning the deity of Jesus leads directly to the denial of the Trinity, of God's Fatherhood, and of the fact that God is love (cf. 1 Jn 4:8b). In this perspective, the kerygmatic message seems to be annihilated at its very foundations, becoming a useless message with content that is not true. God who loves and is love does not exist, nor does His work for the salvation of man and the world. To proclaim the kerygma would be to proclaim a lie. It is worth mentioning that just like the denial of the true humanity of Jesus, also the denial of the deity of Jesus leads to a problem connected with the work of salvation. *Cur Deus homo?* – asked St. Anselm, answering that salvation needs the joint action of God and man, which has become a fact in the person of Jesus Christ, thanks to His two natures. If one denies the truth of any of them, it will also undermine the soteriological reality and its effectiveness.

Cantalamessa defines the second group of dangers as a reductionist system of treating the faith. According to him, reductionism as an approach, which, together with secularism, wants to close and explain the whole reality in secular categories, seeps from the academic circles, including specialist literature, into common way of thinking and interpreting the world. It becomes a basic element of mass culture, which accepts it uncritically. This is also the case on the ground of faith, which, when subjected to a reductionist influence, for example rejecting the deity of Jesus, becomes its own caricature. Cantalamessa claims that "the result of such a process is the silent and hypocritical acceptance of two faiths and two kinds of Christianity, which have nothing in common but a name. The first is Christianity with the Creed of the Church, with common ecumenical declarations, in which faith in the Trinity and the full deity of Christ is still professed. The second is the 'real' Christianity of broad sections of society and culture, in which, following some 'fashionable' theologians, the same truths are interpreted quite differently."²⁶ This coexistence of the official teaching of the Church and the orthodox way of believing with the subjective faith resulting from the absolute autonomy of the individual who interprets it in his own way, with its characteristic manifestations in the selectivity of the truths of faith, in denial, especially of the Church's mor-

²⁵ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 162.

²⁶ Ibidem, p. 154.

al teaching, and in the reduction of supernatural elements, is both a threat and a challenge to the kerygma. It is a threat because the first message in its essence is authoritative, interpreting and subordinating the reality to itself, and not the other way round.²⁷ It is also an orthodox message and a call to faith, in line with the Church's teaching, which [in some interpretations] is *a priori* denied and rejected. This can also happen to the kerygma as part of it. But it is also a challenge, because only the kerygma appears to be the right way to move from the faith it has created, which consists in the denial of its many principles, to a true personal faith in God. The proclamation of the kerygma as a fundamental content in the work of the new evangelization is an action that counters the existence of "two faiths and two Christianities."

The last group comprises consequences related to a total reduction of Jesus Christ's person to the human dimension. For it must be stated that denying the deity of Jesus is tantamount to assuming that He is only human, perhaps exceptional, chosen, perhaps a prophet, but still human.²⁸ Such an approach entails a number of dangers for the faith and for the message that takes place in the kerygma. It constitutes a radical narrowing of all Christology and soteriology to anthropological reality, which results in a reduction of Christian novelty and uniqueness. As Cantalamessa states: "What is the difference between Christianity and Islam then, but for ethics, perhaps? The synthesis of Islam is the sentence, 'There is no God except Allah, and Muhammad is his prophet.' The synthesis of such Christianity – denying the deity of Jesus – is: 'There is no God except Yahweh, and Jesus Christ is his prophet'."²⁹ Removing the truth about the divinity of Jesus from the Christian faith leads to a return to the Old Testament level or the level of other religions. In addition, the cult and worship of Jesus, present in Christianity, assuming that He is not God, makes it a mere idolatry, at the center of which stands creation, not God.

If Jesus is only man, then, together with questioning the uniqueness of Christianity, its supernatural character, the uniqueness and efficacy of salvation earned by Him is equally questioned. A question comes to mind: what then is the work that He has done? Is the salvation proclaimed in the Church a reality that is actual, true, supernatural and effective? For the kerygma it will also be extremely important to answer the question whether and how this event is made real during its proclamation.

In addition to questioning these realities, negating the divinity also leads to a specific way or even style of thinking about salvation. The reduction of the divinity of Jesus deprives this reality of its supernatural and universal character,

²⁷ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Tajemnica chrztu*, transl. G. Niedźwiedź, Wrocław 2006, p. 59.

²⁸ Cf. J.N.D. Kelly, *Początki doktryny chrześcijańskiej...*, p. 111.

²⁹ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 162.

embracing all people, all times.³⁰ It can also lead to showing Jesus as an example of striving for and achieving salvation, which, devoid of the transcendent element, becomes a human act. As a consequence, this style of thinking restricts the question of soteriology solely to the sphere of human action and opens it up to the search for secular and materialistic ways of salvation or self-salvation. At their source, apart from extreme individualism and anthropocentrism, there will be a rejection of the deity of Jesus and of God as such. The tendency to think about salvation in secular terms stands in opposition to the message of the kerygma, which shows salvation as a gift from God.

There will be a similar result for the reality of grace. Negating Jesus' divinity will lead to reducing the charitological dimension, where grace will no longer be God's self-giving, an unexpected and undeserved gift, surpassing all expectations. It will also be stripped of the personalist and Christological dimension, in which it is Jesus himself who enters into the salvific relationship, endowing man. Like salvation, "the grace of Christ" will be reduced, as in Pelagianism, to Christ's example.³¹ The meaning of Christ will therefore be limited to [His being] a model and [our] imitation of Him, devoid of inner, and above all divine, endowment. Grace is not a gift of new life, but an example of how to act. The kerygma, proclaiming Jesus only as a human being, is a moral teaching that shows the model that Jesus Christ was. But this proclamation is no longer a channel of grace and the possibility of an authentic transformation of life under its impact. The kerygma then becomes merely an empty preaching of Jesusology.³²

Ultimately, reducing Jesus to just a human dimension leads to the impossibility of making His presence real at the time of the proclamation of the kerygma. "If Jesus is only man, even an eschatological prophet, He cannot penetrate the conscience of every human being, including the one separated from Him by a two-thousand-year period."³³ Nor can he be the acting subject of the kerygma.³⁴ Jesus remains then just a historical person, locked in the past. The negation of the divinity makes it impossible to enter into a personal relationship with Him. When

³⁰ Cf. H. Pietras, *Herezje...*, p. 78.

³¹ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 184.

³² Jesusology or Jesology is a reflection on Jesus rejecting His identity as the Son of God and denying His divinity. Therefore, concepts practising Jesusology do not accept the decisions of Christological Councils or other forms of Church teaching concerning the person of Jesus Christ. Jesusology focuses mainly on the historical figure of Jesus of Nazareth and as such is a teaching about man, not God.

³³ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 187.

³⁴ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Proroctwo i modlitwa*, transl. L. Rodziewicz-Doktor, Kraków 2011, p. 29; cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Tajemnica głoszenia Słowa Bożego*, transl. G. Niedźwiedz, Wrocław 2007, p. 72–73.

the kerygma about Jesus is proclaimed, recalling the words and events of His life, He does not become present and is not a source of salvation or new life for the recipients of such a message.

NEGATING ONE PERSON

Jesus is one divine hypostasis. This last truth of the dogmatic triangle has been clarified by the Council of Chalcedon. The “difference of natures because of unification has never disappeared, but rather the characteristic of each of the two natures remains noticeable and is unified in one person and in one hypostasis.”³⁵ It cannot therefore be divided into two persons, nor can it be differentiated in Him, because there is one and the same Only-Begotten Son, the Word of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. However, this Christological judgment was also challenged in various ways, and unorthodox views were essentially three-fold. Some, such as nestorianism, monophysitism, or monotheletism, focused on the fusion of the two natures in the person of Jesus, without maintaining the differences and properties of the two natures. This fusion was always associated with the diminution or loss of the characteristics of one of them. Another group of heresies concerned the very subject of the person of Jesus. It was emphasized that Jesus is one person, but human, in whom God acts in some way and reveals Himself to the world. The person of Jesus was to be a certain space in which one could discover God’s presence. This direction, once again, reduces the deity of Jesus to some extent, bringing it down to an anthropological dimension only. The last group of theories is the adoption of a direction that completely rejects the category of person in defining Jesus Christ. In light of these views, Jesus is more an action or energy than a person.³⁶

Denying the dogma about the person of Jesus, in one way or another, raises the question of the possibility of knowing Him and entering into a personal relationship with Him. It also entails undermining the earlier understanding of God, faith and the reality of salvation. From now on salvation ceases to be a gift given within the personal relationship of faith between God and man. The object of faith is no longer a personal God, but rather some divine energy or action. Believing in Jesus could be a certain experience of such action. The question remains open whether it would be rational and free, or rather mechanical, and how man could enter into the orbit of its influence. Once again, the denial of a single truth of faith entails the disintegration of the whole system of faith and an inner contradiction between its individual truths.

³⁵ *Breviarium Fidei. Wybór doktrynalnych wypowiedzi Kościoła*, ed. I. Bokwa, Poznań 2007, p. 74.

³⁶ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 156.

Fr. Cantalamessa in his theology absolutely rejects such approach to the problem of the person. He says: “Christianity is not a science, but above all a person, Jesus Christ (...). The proclamation of this person is the most important thing, because at the heart of every relationship is the encounter of persons.”³⁷ Therefore the proclamation of the kerygma is so important in his theology, because he treats it as a space in which salvation is realized and Jesus himself becomes present.³⁸ The proclamation creates an opportunity to encounter Him and favours the decision of man as a personal partner in faith³⁹ to enter into a salvific relationship with the person of Jesus Christ. The emphasis placed on a personal encounter with Jesus is not a sign of subjectivity or sentimentalism, but is the basis of communication with God, with its biblical and dogmatic justification. On the other hand, the meeting of the *keryx* with Jesus, the continual personal communion with Him, is the basis of Christian proclamation and the mystery of its strength. Hence any attempt to deny the dogma of the person of Jesus Christ is also a threat to the kerygma. It removes from it the perspective of a personal entrance into the relationship with Jesus and experiencing salvation, and it also becomes a challenge to the role of the *keryx* as a witness and mystagogue. For “witnessing to God whom one has not encountered becomes for the world witnessing to a God who does not exist.”⁴⁰

Summing up, it can be said, after Pascal, that “the source of all heresies is the exclusion of just some truths.”⁴¹ For the kerygmatic message, undermining, negating or misplacing emphasis, concerning Christological truth and its soteriological consequences is, according to Cantalamessa, the most serious dogmatic threat. The kerygma without the orthodox doctrine of Jesus Christ ceases to be a proclamation of salvation and making God present. The denial of humanity, deity or one person in Jesus Christ undermines the *raison d'être* of the message of the kerygma and the sense of its proclamation. For it loses its effectiveness and spiritual power to transform reality. It is no longer a new-evangelizing appeal full of life, but another empty message of the modern world. For this not to happen, it

³⁷ Ibidem, p. 112–113. In a similar way Pope Benedict XVI writes in the encyclical *Deus caritas est*, stating that: “at the beginning of being a Christian there is no ethical decision or any great idea, but rather an encounter with an event, with a Person who gives life a new perspective and thus a decisive direction.” (Benedict XVI, *Encyclical Deus caritas est*, 1, Wrocław 2006).

³⁸ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 112.

³⁹ Cf. M. Jagodziński, *Communio dzięki komunikacji. Teologiczny wymiar teorii komunikatywnego działania w eklezjologii Medarda Kehla SJ*, Radom 2002, p. 334.

⁴⁰ A. Baron, *Spór o Pawła, spór o człowieka czy spór o Boga: refleksje na marginesie kontrowersji pelagiańskiej*, w: Pelagiusz, *Komentarz do Listu św. Pawła do Rzymian* (Zróżła Myśli Teologicznej 15), Kraków 1999, p. 85.

⁴¹ B. Pascal, *Myśli*, 862, transl. T. Boy-Żeleński, Warszawa 2008, p. 423.

is necessary to care for the integrity of doctrine because, as the Italian theologian stresses, orthodoxy is always “the fruit of a balanced and painful discernment that takes place day and night”,⁴² in order not to lose what is the most important in faith, starting with the kerygma.

HETERODOX PRESENTATIONS OF PASCHAL MYSTERIES

The kerygma is a proclamation of the person and the events constituting the basis for the salvation of man and the world. As the Italian theologian stresses: “the main message of the Gospel is the death and resurrection of Christ. It is known that it is not a synthesis of the entire Gospel, a result of a gradual concentration, but the original seed from which all the rest grows. In the beginning there was a kerygma, as we find in these short formulas, which were incorporated into the apostolic writings.”⁴³ In its most concise form, the kerygma is always made up of two elements as well as their justification or motivation.⁴⁴ It is the proclamation of the history of two paschal events: “the event of the cross – Christ died for our sins and the event of the resurrection – Christ was raised from the dead for our justification.”⁴⁵ The orthodox proclamation of the first message should always include both Christological events as well as show their inner coherence.

So, if the simplest presentation of the content of the kerygma is expressed in the formulas “Jesus died” and “Jesus rose from the dead,” then every “dialectic either-or”⁴⁶ as well as a softer attempt to emphasize one of these events at the expense of the other distorts the inner structure of the kerygma, leading to a distortion of the salvific message. However, it is all the heterodox attempts to question the event of Jesus’ death or resurrection that are a more serious threat, since they ultimately result in deprivation of the sense or the purpose of its proclamation.

⁴² R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 165.

⁴³ R. Cantalamessa, *Życie w Chrystusie. Duchowe przesłanie Listu do Rzymian*, transl. M. Przeczewski, Kraków 2014, p. 82.

⁴⁴ Cf. Ibidem, p. 98; R. Cantalamessa, *Moc krzyża*, transl. M. Przeczewski, Kraków 2013, p. 101. See M. Zborowski, *Jakie poznanie Syna przynoszą kerygmatyczne formuły „za nas” i „dla nas”* (cf. Rz 4,25)?, w: *Imago Dei – Imago Christi. Na Obraz Boży*, red. A. Małek, Ł. Rzepka, Kraków 2018, p. 31–47.

⁴⁵ R. Cantalamessa, *Wysłuchani w Ducha Świętego*, transl. J. Pawalusz, J. Stachurska, M. Rogozińska, I. Ciapara, Kraków 1994, p. 33.

⁴⁶ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Maryja zwierciadłem dla Kościoła*, transl. J. Królikowski, Warszawa 1994, p. 120.

OVER-EMPHASIZING THE PASCHAL EVENTS

Father Cantalamessa repeatedly warns against the danger to the kerygma consisting in overstating one or the other paschal event. He says that “in pastoral work, as a response to human suffering, it is not enough to preach that God suffers too [...]. The weakness of the doctrine of suffering [...] in some authors is that it is based on ‘God crucified.’ They do not deal enough with the resurrection, that is, the victory already achieved over suffering and death.”⁴⁷ By proclaiming the kerygma it is not enough to reveal only part of the good news, that is, the truth about the suffering and death of Jesus Christ, for, left alone, it leads only to the discovery of God’s solidarity with man, without in any way changing his situation. The salvation achieved in Jesus is much more than just solidarity and presence. “The cross can be known better by looking at its effects than at its causes, which often remain mysterious and unexplained to us.”⁴⁸ Therefore, focusing only on the event of passion and death is not the proclamation of the good news and the realization of salvation.

Similarly, the kerygma will also be threatened by one-sided emphasis on the event of the resurrection in isolation from that of Jesus’ death. The proclamation of a message based solely on the Easter joy, the omnipotence of God, victory over Satan and death, and the fact of being freed from the yoke of sin, will lead, on the one hand, to triumphalism and mentality of the gospel of success⁴⁹ and, on the other hand, to its rejection as a reality which does not find its confirmation and is absent, in this form, from the lives of the recipients. Moreover, the pseudo-kerygma built solely on the event of the resurrection will convey a deformed understanding of salvation. It can be horizontally narrowed or reduced, removing the dimension of supernatural transformation, taking the form of an external justification, without touching man in an ontological way, and thus similar to Martin Luther’s Protestant approach. The proclamation of salvation in Jesus, based solely on His victory, can also result in transferring salvation into the reality of eschatology, because in the presented dimension it is not realized during human life. It seems that there may be even more negative effects and their modifications, especially since they are a reproduction of many pre-existing mistakes and heresies. The kerygma, in this sense, will not be an effective message, and any overstatement or disconnection of one event from the history-salvific context will be a threat to the first message, which may additionally contribute to distorting the good news and the faith of its addressees.

⁴⁷ R. Cantalamessa, *Kontemplując Trójcę*, transl. P. Cembrowicz, Kraków 2003, p. 25.

⁴⁸ R. Cantalamessa, *Maryja zwierciadłem dla Kościoła...*, p. 123.

⁴⁹ Cf. *ibidem*, p. 120.

QUESTIONING THE PASCHAL EVENTS

It is also worth noting that much more serious theological consequences result from attempts to question the authenticity or historicity of the events that constitute the core of the kerygma. History knows many hypotheses which approach critically the events of death or resurrection.⁵⁰ And while the fact of Jesus' death is historically confirmed by many sources independent of the Gospel,⁵¹ there have been attempts over the centuries to question the suffering itself or Jesus' participation in His death in body and person.⁵² According to the views of the docetists or appellites, Jesus did not participate personally in the staurological event, because of the illusionary character or astral matter of His body and its impassibility.⁵³ In such case it is impossible to speak of the authenticity of this event. Another attempt to question the event of crucifixion was H. Paulus's hypothesis of

⁵⁰ "In the United States, the published Gospel of Thomas became a best-seller, presented as a gospel 'saving us from crucifixion.' It sees no need for a resurrection and does not command faith in a God called Christ.... People who would never take the trouble to read a serious analysis of the historical traditions on the Passion, death and resurrection of Jesus are fascinated by every new theory that proclaims that He was not crucified, not dead, especially if the story continues with a description of the escape with Mary Magdalene to India (or to France, as the updated version proclaims). These theories show that as far as the Passion of Jesus is concerned, in spite of the folk saying, fantasy surpasses reality and is, unfortunately, more profitable" (R. Cantalamessa, *Wspominając błogosławioną Mękę*, transl. T. Bargiel, Kraków 2007, p. 59).

⁵¹ Fundamental theology divides texts confirming the historicity of the life and death of Jesus into Jewish testimonies, and among these are the *Old History of Israel* by Joseph Flavius, the testimony of Lucian of Samosath, the letter of Mary, son of Serapio, the Babylonian version of the *Talmud* and the rabbinical book *Toledoth Jessuah*, the *Roman Yearbooks* of Tacitus, the *Lives of the Caesars* by Svetonius, the testimony of the court chronicler Tallos Samaritan and the Islamic ones pointing to the Koranic suras talking about Jesus. It should be noted that the credibility of these works, for the most part, is not questioned, as well as the fact that their authors were indifferent or even hostile to Christianity, thus making their records mentioning Jesus authentic. The Jewish, Roman and Islamic testimonies concerning Jesus, independently of the Gospel message, confirm the historical nature of his person – the fact that there was someone like Jesus – and the fact of the end of his life, which was the death of the cross or at least one of these elements. See Cz. Bartnik, *Dogmatyka katolicka*, vol. 1, Lublin 2012, p. 563–569; J. Mastěj, M. Rusecki, *Historyczność Jezusa Chrystusa*, in: *Leksykon teologii fundamentalnej*, ed. M. Rusecki, K. Kaucha, Lublin–Kraków 2002, p. 509–516; M. Rusecki, *Pan zmartwychwstał i żyje. Zarys teologii rezurekcyjnej*, Warszawa 2006, p. 48–57; H. Seweryniak, *Świadectwo i sens*, Płock 2003, p. 164–179; H. Seweryniak, *Teologia fundamentalna*, vol. 1, Warszawa 2010, p. 217–241.

⁵² Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Życie w Chrystusie. Duchowe przesłanie Listu do Rzymian...*, p. 85.

⁵³ Cf. M. Zborowski, *Typologie chrystologiczne, czyli Orygeneses próba odpowiedzi na pytanie: Kim jest Jezus, na podstawie komentarzy i homilii do ewangelii synoptycznych*, "Resovia Sacra" 22 (2015), p. 374–375.

lethargy.⁵⁴ He did not question the reality of the body and the suffering on the cross, but he believed that Jesus survived the event of the cross and woke up from the lethargy in his tomb.⁵⁵ Such a perspective would have obliterated the salvific claims related to Jesus' passion and death and made the preaching of the kerygma unjustified.

The event of resurrection, also crucial for the kerygma, has been the subject of numerous theories and explanations questioning its realism and historicity.⁵⁶ According to Cantalamessa this should not be a surprise, as "one can study Christ's resurrection all life long and write many books on this subject and yet not really comprehend Christ's resurrection."⁵⁷ One of the first attempts, still in the apostolic era, was the theory accusing Christians of deception, suggesting the theft of Jesus' body from the tomb. This fact is even confirmed by the Gospel (cf. Matt 27:62–66; 28:11–15). So if we are to assume, in line with the aforementioned hypothesis of lethargy, that Jesus did not die at all, then Christophanies do not prove the resurrection of Jesus at all, but rather confirm the thesis of surviving the Passion and the Cross. The research on Sacred Scripture based on the methods of historical and literary criticism also generated a concept that separates Jesus of history from the Christ of faith. Bultmann is one of the first⁵⁸ to assume that the original Christianity believed in the resurrection and also preached the kerygma, which does not mean that this event actually took place historically. The Christ of faith has risen in the disciples' consciousness, in the apostolic kerygma, but not necessarily in history. His resurrection written on the pages of the Gospel is rather a projection or an invention of the disciples, so these passages of Scripture must be de-mythologized.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, the role of the resurrection proclaimed by the apos-

⁵⁴ Heinrich Paulus (1761–1851) – a German theologian, who carries out an exegesis that de-mythologizes Scripture. His hypothesis of lethargy is one of the naturalistic attempts to explain the event of the resurrection.

⁵⁵ Cf. M. Rusecki, *Pan zmartwychwstał i żyje...*, p. 94–95.

⁵⁶ Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Życie w Chrystusie. Duchowe przesłanie Listu do Rzymian...*, p. 111.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, p. 124.

⁵⁸ Before R. Bultmann this issue was approached by H.S. Reimarus and D.F. Strauss. But from R. Bultmann and M. Dibelius, it is argued on the basis of the results of the work on Scripture based on the method of historical criticism and redaction criticism.

⁵⁹ "Attempts to re-formulate the truth about Jesus Christ are based, more or less clearly, on the following assumption, taken for granted by Bultmann: the way in which faith was presented in the New Testament and at the time of the ancient councils was conditioned by an ancient mythological mentality [...]. The modern style of thinking, which rejects any mythological categories, forces a new way of presenting the faith [...]. But isn't what remains after demythologization also mythical? What does it mean: "God acted in Christ" or: "Christ is God's highest revelation"? Are these sentences also not, by any chance, a passage from one "semantic plane" to another? (R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 164–173). More on the criticism of Bultmann's de-mythologization of Christianity made by the Italian theologian: see R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 150–192.

ties has had and continues to have an enormous impact on people's lives. Jesus lives in the preaching of the disciples. This theory, also known as the presentational-existential interpretation,⁶⁰ has undergone numerous modifications, and the case of Jesus of Nazareth continued, leading to in-depth theological and biblical research, also on the Polish ground.⁶¹ Also the second salvific event, crucial for the proclamation of the kerygma, was repeatedly questioned and challenged. However, any attempt to deny the historicity or realism of the resurrection should, according to the Italian theologian, be confronted with a fragment of St. Paul's letter to the Corinthians: "Now if Christ is preached as raised from the dead, how can some of you say that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there is no resurrection of the dead, then Christ has not been raised; if Christ has not been raised, then our preaching is in vain and your faith is in vain." (1 Cor 15: 12–14).⁶² If Christ has not been raised, the proclamation of the kerygma loses its meaning, and, as the Apostle of the Nations states, it becomes futile and faith in Jesus and the grace of salvation is rendered vain. Moreover, when "the resurrection is denied as historical, that is, objective and not merely subjective, the birth of faith and of the Church becomes a mystery which is even more difficult to explain than the resurrection itself."⁶³ So questioning the resurrection message of the kerygma becomes not only a threat to it but also negates its essence.

Finally, it is worth looking at the comparison invoked in this context by Fr. Cantalamessa. In the image of the cross, constructed from two beams, he sees the absolute, historic inseparability of both paschal events: death and resurrection. Separating or removing them will destroy the possibility of making their fruit actual, that is – salvation and new life in Christ. The danger of overemphasis will nullify the kerygma by distorting the orthodox faith and salvation, while the negation of authenticity will mean ceasing to proclaim the kerygma as a message deprived of its meaning and d'être. Without passion and death, proclaimed as interrelated and equally important salvation events, the kerygma is not good news, but rather a denial of the logic of the Gospel and God's economy.

In the light of Raniero Cantalamessa's teaching on the subject, it can be pointed out that Christological heterodox approaches to the person of Jesus Christ and the mysteries of his life lead to:

⁶⁰ Cf. M. Rusecki, *Pan zmartwychwstał i żyje...*, p. 122.

⁶¹ See W. Granat, E. Kopeć, *Jezus Chrystus. Historia i tajemnica*, Lublin 1982; J. Kudasiewicz, *Jezus historii a Chrystus wiary*, Lublin 1987; J. Kudasiewicz, H. Witczyk, *Jezus i Ewangelie w ogniu dyskusji*, Kielce 2011; K. Romaniuk, *Jezus historii a Chrystus wiary. Refleksje metodologiczne*, "Roczniki Teologiczno-Kanoniczne" 23 (1976), 1, p. 39–48; M. Rusecki, *Pan zmartwychwstał i żyje. Zarys teologii rezurekcyjnej*, Warszawa 2006.

⁶² Cf. R. Cantalamessa, *Życie w Chrystusie. Duchowe przesłanie Listu do Rzymian...*, p. 127.

⁶³ R. Cantalamessa, *Tajemnica Paschalna u Ojców Kościoła*, w: *Przesłanie Zmartwychwstania*, red. G. Sztok, transl. J. Merecki, Kraków 2007, p. 76.

- negating the humanity of Jesus, and thus to making God distant from man (in the sense of relation, solidarity and above all – ontology);
- reducing Christology and soteriology to anthropology, losing in this way the absolute uniqueness of Christianity;
- reductionism in its approach to supernaturality and to epistemological secularism;
- the abolition of the Christian concept of God – God is not Trinity, God is not love;
- an untrue image of God;
- questioning the role of the only Mediator;
- denying salvific universalism;
- seeking ways of self-salvation;
- questioning the work of redemption and human participation in the salvific reality;
- the impossibility of a real transformation and justification from faith, as well as the loss of certainty of forgiveness of sins;
- reduction of grace to a moral example;
- fideistic dualism, in which, in addition to faith which is declared and taught, there is also another practical and subjective faith;
- questioning the personalistic perspective in theology, as well as all the existential implications that arise from it;
- false faith attitudes (from hopelessness and fear to triumphalism and the gospel of success);
- negating paschal events or preaching facts that did not really happen.

The above mentioned consequences of the impact of various unorthodox currents pose a serious threat to the kerygma and the reality of faith in general. For any reduction, challenge or negation, wrong emphasis or distortion of the truth of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ undermines the content of the preaching of the Gospel, deprives it of salvific effectiveness, not leading to the recognition of personal truth, and thus calls into question the sense of proclaiming it to all creation (cf. Mk 16:15). As Fr. Cantalamessa states: “if the very core of the proclamation becomes precarious and uncertain, that which speaks of the person of Jesus Christ, then the Christian cry – the kerygma – is fractured in its most beautiful place, losing any possibility of penetrating hearts.”⁶⁴ It can therefore be concluded that defining kerygma as a message which is beautiful, solid, profound, certain, meaningful or wise⁶⁵ is true if and only if it is an orthodox message. Hence the conclusion that the kerygma at all times needs the teaching of the Church, dog-

⁶⁴ R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 151.

⁶⁵ Cf. EG 35, 165; AL [58].

mas and theological reflection to give order to its message, to explain it rationally, and to protect it from heterodox approaches and their consequences.⁶⁶

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⁶⁶ Cf. K. Gózdź, *Kościół zbawienia*, Lublin 2010, p. 21; Cantalamessa uses a meaningful comparison in this context: "dogmas are like antibodies in the body of the Church. When an infection affects a healthy organism, and a person overcomes an infectious disease such as smallpox, he remains immune to it forever; for his body has developed effective antibodies, which will come into play as soon as the same disease is about to attack again. In terms of faith, the dogmatic definition fulfils a similar task. It comes into action immediately when the same heresy, in defense of which it was formulated, creeps into the Church anew, even in another robe. There is no need for the Church to condemn it again. Dogma is the judgment of heresy." (R. Cantalamessa, *Jezus Chrystus Święty Boga...*, p. 152).

- Francis, *Apostolic exhortation Gaudete et exsultate*, Kraków 2018.
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Keywords: kerygma, dogma, salvation, Christology, Cantalamessa

HETERODOKSJA CHRYSOLOGICZNA ZAGROŻENIEM DLA KERYGMATU W TEOLOGII O. RANIERO CANTALAMESSY

Streszczenie

Każda próba redukcji lub dezintegracji dogmatu chrystologicznego nie pozostaje bez wpływu na podstawowe orędzie dobrej nowiny, jakim jest kerygmat, a także na jego soteriologiczne implikacje. Teologicznym wyzwaniem jest dołożyć wszelkich starań, aby proklamowanie pierwszego orędzia było zwiastowaniem pełni prawdy objawionej, ale również wskazać niebezpieczeństwa wynikające z przekazu niepełnego lub nieortodoksyjnego. Artykuł stanowi prezentację negatywnych konsekwencji heterodoksyjnych tendencji chrystologicznych dla rzeczywistości kerygmatu w teologii o. Raniero Cantalamessy. Omawiane zagrożenia dogmatyczne i ich skutki koncentrują się na osobie Jezusa Chrystusa oraz na wydarzeniach śmierci i zmartwychwstania.

Słowa kluczowe: kerygmat, dogmat, zbawienie, chrystologia, Cantalamessa

SPRAWOZDANIA

EKUMENICZNE DNI STUDYJNE: „SYNODALNOŚĆ” PADERBORN 17–19.02.2020

(ÖKUMENISCHE STUDIENTAGE DES JOHANN- -ADAM-MÖHLER-INSTITUTS FÜR ÖKUMENIK IN PADERBORN: „SYNODALITÄT”)

Znany na całym świecie w środowisku ekumenicznym Instytut Ekumeniczny im. Johanna Adama Möhlera w Paderborn, jako wiodąca naukowa placówka w zakresie ekumenii na terenie Niemiec, organizuje od 2008 roku, regularnie co dwa lata, Ekumeniczne Dni Studyjne, poświęcone jakiemuś aktualnemu ze względów pastoralnych problemowi ekumenicznemu. Zaprasza się tu głównie osoby odpowiedzialne za kontakty ekumeniczne w diecezjach niemieckich, choć nie brak wśród uczestników także pojedynczych gości z zagranicy. Tym razem było to dwóch przedstawicieli z Polski (Wrocław, Zielona Góra) oraz jeden z Ołomuńca w Republice Czeskiej. W tym roku „gorącym” tematem w życiu Kościoła w Niemczech jest tzw. droga synodalna, stąd temat synodalności w Kościele w sposób naturalny wydawał się tu najbardziej adekwatny. Tak jak w poprzednich edycjach zaprezentowano podjęty problem w czterech ujęciach przez wybitnych teologów różnych wyznań, tak by uzyskać jak najszerszą perspektywę ekumeniczną zagadnienia.

W pierwszym dniu wystąpił prawosławny teolog pochodzenia greckiego, pracujący na Uniwersytecie w Monachium, prof. Athanasios Vletsis z wykładem: „Prymat czy synodalność. Kryzys synodalności w Kościele prawosławnym a jego struktury autokefalii”. Po soborze panprawosławnym na Krecie w 2016 roku nastąpił wyraźny kryzys synodalności w prawosławiu, spowodowany przede wszystkim napięciem wokół sytuacji na Ukrainie, wywołanym uznaniem autokefalii Kościoła ukraińskiego przez Patriarchat w Konstantynopolu (5.01.2019), której to decyzji nie uznał Patriarchat Moskiewski. Od tego czasu mamy do czynienia z pewnym chaosem eklezjologicznym w prawosławiu, który rodzi pytanie o możliwość dalszego funkcjonowania idei soboru panprawosławnego. Sytuację tę ma uzdrowić zwołane na 26 lutego br. w Jordanii spotkanie głów Kościołów prawosławnych.

Czy rzeczywiście winna jest tu autokefalia? Wybitny teolog prawosławny, metropolita Joannis Zizioulas, postawił tezę, że największym niebezpieczeństwem

dla jedności Kościoła prawosławnego jest dzisiaj etnofiletyzm. Etnofiletyzm jest stosowaną w eklezjologii zasadą nacjonalistyczną, w której idea narodu jest ważniejsza niż Kościół. Takim przykładem jest właśnie sytuacja Ukrainy, gdzie zasada narodowości, a nawet suwerenność państwowa jest ważniejsza niż jedność Kościoła. Podobnie w XIX wieku wyglądała sytuacja w Bułgarii. Sobór w Chalcedonie wypracował pewną realistyczną wobec nacisków państwa formułę dopasowania struktur kościelnych do regionów państwa, opartą na systemie pentarchii (Rzym, Konstantynopol, Aleksandria, Antiochia, Jerozolima). Tak więc to nie narodowość, lecz geografia była decydująca. Cezurą historyczną był upadek Konstantynopola jako stolicy Cesarstwa Bizantyjskiego, co spowodowało spadek realnego znaczenia tego Patriarchatu i powstanie Kościołów autokefalicznych, a zwłaszcza usamodzielnienie się Kościoła moskiewskiego w 1593 roku. I tu rodzi się problem, gdyż nie ma jasnych zasad udzielania autokefalii. Było przyjęte, że decyzja należała do Patriarchy Konstantynopola, ale ostatecznie powinna być potwierdzona przez sobór panprawosławny – tak było w przypadku Moskwy, jednak później nie zawsze zachowywano taką praktykę, co przy pewnej instrumentalizacji Kościoła prawosławnego przez różne siły polityczne rodziło napięcia niszczące jego jedność.

Nasuwa się więc tu pytanie o przyszłość prawosławia. Widać, że istnieje potrzeba pewnej zwierzchności dla wszystkich Kościołów lokalnych w celu utrzymania jedności. Powstaje pytanie, czy w tej sytuacji Konstantynopol chce niejako w prawosławiu przejąć rolę Rzymu jako „*primus inter pares*”? Sugerują to niedawne wypowiedzi patriarchy Bartłomieja oraz dążenie do umocnienia roli Konstantynopola wobec autokefalii przez podkreślanie roli synodu (soboru) jako głosu Ducha Świętego (por. Dz 15,28), czyli ostatecznego autorytetu. Wydaje się, że przyszłości należy szukać właśnie we wzajemnej zależności pomiędzy prymatem a synodem. Ten model prof. Vletsis wskazuje też jako przyszłość całego chrześcijaństwa w drodze do jedności. Postuluje, by szukać wspólnoty eucharystycznej, do której zmierzamy, jako wyniku życia synodalnego. Droga synodalna powinna się stać drogą ekumenizmu. Zauważa on, że dzisiaj istnieją techniczne środki, by pogłębiać proces synodalny i włączyć weń więcej reprezentantów, zwłaszcza świeckich, szczególnie w obszarach dyskusji przygotowujących obrady plenarne. Bardzo istotny jest również problem recepcji synodów, gdyż istnieje tu wiele słabych punktów. W dyskusji po wykładzie prelegent jeszcze raz podkreślił, że specyfika prawosławia wymaga równowagi, a nie przeciwstawienia prymatu i synodalności, ale widać już dziś wyraźnie, że ktoś, kto daje jedność, jest konieczny. Wydaje się, że dla utrzymania jedności będzie musiał powstać w prawosławiu jakiś nowy system, bo wiele wskazuje, że będzie tam rosła liczba Kościołów autokefalicznych.

Drugi dzień obrad rozpoczął się od wykładu prof. Thomasa Södinga, wybitnego biblisty z Uniwersytetu w Bochum (w latach 2004–2014 członek Międzynarodowej Komisji Teologicznej): „Synodalność z katolickiego punktu widzenia. W poszukiwaniu nowej dynamiki”. Walorem dodatkowym tej prezentacji było również to, że prof. Söding jest jednym z trzech teologów włączonych przez Centralny Komitet Katolików Niemieckich bezpośrednio we wzбудzające tyle różnorodnych kontrowersji prace nad „drogą synodalną” Kościoła katolickiego w Niemczech. Po Soborze Watykańskim II nastąpił swoisty renesans synodów na różnych poziomach struktur Kościoła katolickiego, od diecezji po kontynenty, co uporządkował od strony prawnej nowy Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego (KPK) z 1983 roku. Trzeba pamiętać, że synod nie jest upoważniony do decyzji – to organ doradczy i dotyczy to także synodów ogólnokościelnych (kan. 343 KPK). Decyzje synodów muszą uzyskać aprobatę władzy kościelnej. Jednak na ogół ciała te są dość mocno skleryalizowane. Odnosząc się do niemieckiej „drogi synodalnej”, prof. Söding stwierdził, że wybór członków jest reprezentatywny, i warto zauważyć, że nie powołano tam wszystkich biskupów. Problemem w obecnym kształcie synodów opisywanym przez KPK jest rola świeckich wobec hierarchiczności Kościoła. W społeczeństwie demokratycznym rośnie oczekiwanie partycypacji. W sensie teologicznym staje więc problem, jak ma się wyrażać hierarchiczna organizacja Kościoła katolickiego, a zwłaszcza biskupie przewodzenie Kościołowi, przy jednoczesnym zaangażowaniu świeckich, którzy są powołani przez Chrystusa do realizacji królewskiego, prorockiego i kapłańskiego urzędu Chrystusa (1 P 2,1–10, por LG 31). W 2018 roku ukazał się dokument Międzynarodowej Komisji Teologicznej „Synodalność w życiu i misji Kościoła”, który obrazuje recepcję w tym względzie nauczania Vaticanum II. Punktem wyjścia tego dokumentu jest teologia *communio* i za *Lumen gentium* postuluje on zwiększony udział wiernych świeckich, jednocześnie przypominając, że rozstrzygnięcia należą do pasterzy. Według Södinga wyczuwa się tu jednak pewien lęk przed koncyliaryzmem i politycznym parlamentaryzmem. Istotne są natomiast dwa punkty: cyrkularność, czyli wymiana pomiędzy biskupami a świeckimi, oraz wzajemne uzupełnianie się kolegalności i synodalności. Niemiecki teolog, porównując ten dokument z wcześniejszym o dwa lata dokumentem na temat synodalności Centralnego Komitetu Katolików, zwraca uwagę w tym drugim tekście na rolę w podejmowaniu decyzji, gdzie jako punkt odniesienia wskazuje się zakony, w których mamy silny udział ciał wybieralnych w podejmowaniu decyzji. Mówiąc o perspektywach rozwoju synodalności, wskazuje on, że oba dokumenty mocno popierają tutaj udział świeckich.

Odnosząc się do niemieckiej „drogi synodalnej” jako jej uczestnik, podkreślił pozytywny w niej parytet poszczególnych grup w Kościele. Istotne jest tu

także zaproszenie jako obserwatorów nuncjusza, przedstawicieli innych wyznań i Kościołów z krajów sąsiednich. Wszelkie postanowienia zasadniczo wymagają dwóch trzecich głosów. Natomiast sceptycznie ocenił podejmowanie tematów wykraczających poza kompetencje synodu lokalnego. Trzeba pamiętać, że mamy tu wiele odniesień do doświadczeń „Synodu Würzburskiego” z lat siedemdziesiątych, ale teraz zdecydowanie większa jest rola świeckich. Według Södinga nie można mylić synodalności z biskupią kolegialnością ani procedurami demokratycznymi, lecz widzieć synodalność jako specyficzne miejsce w życiu Kościoła. Wskazując na rozwiązania w tym względzie zawarte w Kodeksie Kościołów Wschodnich, widzi on tutaj także ekumeniczny most do synodalności w prawosławiu. Natomiast odnosząc się do kan. 129 §2 KPK, pytał, jak rozumieć tutaj kooperację biskupów ze świeckimi – uznał, że jest to określenie za mało precyzyjne, by zapis ten mógł służyć jako podstawa do jakiejś reformy w tym względzie. Uważał natomiast, że bardziej trzeba iść w kierunku rozwijania teologii *communio*, która łączy wszystkich w Kościele. Owszem, biskupi mają kompetencję i władzę do podejmowania decyzji, ale pozostaje pytanie o partycypację świeckich. Obecny Kodeks Prawa Kanonicznego rezerwuje wszystkie istotne decyzje dla biskupów, ale jak tu rozumieć doradztwo Ludu Bożego? Widać napięcie pomiędzy eklezjologią *communio* a prawem kanonicznym, opartym na urzędzie biskupa. Wniosek jest taki, że istnieje potrzeba ustanowienia struktur decyzyjnych, które uwzględniałyby partycypację wiernych.

Popołudniowy wykład przedstawił prof. Marcus Iff z Wyższej Szkoły Teologicznej Związku Wolnych Kościołów Ewangelickich w Ewersbach. Był on poświęcony synodalności z perspektywy wolnych Kościołów. W wolnych Kościołach w Europie mamy w tym względzie wielki pluralizm, który wynika z wielości Kościołów i ich różnej struktury – zasadniczo mamy do czynienia ze strukturą episkopalną albo kongregacjonalistyczną, bądź mieszaną. Obecnie pojawiło się wiele nowych Kościołów o charakterze charyzmatycznym, różniących się od klasycznych Kościołów wolnych, mających swe korzenie w Reformacji. Wykład dotyczył zasadniczo tych klasycznych Kościołów. Punktem wyjścia jest principium eklezjologiczne oparte na relacji: Słowo – Duch – wiara. Kościół tworzy wspólnota wierzących, ale zasadnicza jest rola Ducha w budowaniu wiary. Kościół to wspólnota Jezusa Chrystusa, czyli wspólnota wierzących stworzona przez Słowo Boże i upostaciowiona we wspólnocie życia i służby jako realizacji kapłaństwa wszystkich wierzących. Za Kalwinem podstawowa struktura Kościoła oparta jest na urzędzie prezbitera (struktura prezbiteriańska), lecz łączy się tutaj kolegialność „starszych” i partycypację wiernych, czego wynikiem jest kongregacjonalizm. Zasadnicze decyzje podejmuje się na poziomie lokalnym (w Niemczech tak jest u baptystów, zielonoświątkowców czy mennonitów). Inny

model mają metodyści – koneksjonalizm (ustrój konferencyjny), przejęty z anglikanizmu. Tu funkcjonuje urząd biskupa i konferencja centralna (np. krajowa), a nad nimi jest konferencja generalna (ogólnoświatowa). W konferencjach biorą udział także świeccy. Za Kalwinem podkreśla się potrzebę urzędu i jednocześnie rady, która zarządza gminą. W XIX wieku nastąpiła zmiana na model bardziej parlamentarny. Wcześniej za Kalwinem akcentowano urząd jako reprezentację Chrystusa wobec wspólnoty, a nie jako reprezentanta wspólnoty. Obecnie rodzi się za dokumentami Komisji „Wiara i Ustrój” pytanie o urząd „episkope”. System prezbiterialno-synodalny sprawia, że wszyscy wierzący mają udział w „episkope”. Tu nie jest on rozumiany jako biskup osoba, ale jako urząd gminy sprawowany kolegialnie. System bazujący na podejmowaniu decyzji na poziomie lokalnym ma też swoje ograniczenia, przejawiające się przede wszystkim w indywidualizmie poszczególnych wspólnot, np. w zakresie etyki czy ordynacji kobiet – są wspólnoty, które nie przyjmują na poziomie lokalnym rozwiązań ogólnie przyjętych. Obecnie widać tu szczególnie ostre podziały w sprawie stosunku do homoseksualizmu.

W trzecim dniu wystąpienie pod tytułem „Synodalność (w) Kościele ewangelickiego” zaprezentował dr Friedrich Hauschildt z Celle, który w latach 2000–2015 pełnił urząd prezydenta VELKD (Zjednoczonego Kościoła Ewangelicko-Luterańskiego Niemiec). Na początku zaznaczył, że w dialogu ekumenicznym zagadnienie synodu bardzo długo nie było poruszane, dopiero w ostatnich latach pojawiło się w obrębie tematu urzędu. W obszarze ewangelickim nie mówi się o „synodalności”, lecz o synodach. Pojęcie synodu w Kościele ewangelickim jest inne niż w katolicyzmie – nie zawęża się do biskupów (w znaczeniu synodu biskupów), ale synod rozumiany jest jako organ, który decyduje i wprowadza zmiany. To rodzi problem na płaszczyźnie ekumenicznej, bo mamy tu różne rozumienie tego pojęcia u katolików i ewangelików. W świecie ewangelickim temat synodu jest oczywisty. Jeśli trzeba tu dyskutować, to jedynie nad zakresem udziału świeckich. W perspektywie teologicznej punktem wyjścia jest powołanie wszystkich ludzi do relacji z Bogiem. Istota Kościoła nie leży w strukturze, lecz w odniesieniu do Słowa i sakramentów. Jest to zupełnie inne rozumienie Kościoła od ujęcia katolickiego, gdzie Kościół oparty jest na hierarchii. Tu ewangelicy widzą napięcie pomiędzy synodalnością a naszym rozumieniem urzędu biskupa. Pojęcie kapłaństwa w Nowym Testamencie nie jest związane z urzędem (prezbitera, diakona) – to gmina jako całość jest rozumiana jako *sacerdos*, gdyż wszyscy są kapłanami przed Bogiem (kobiety i mężczyźni) na zasadzie kapłaństwa powszechnego wypływającego z chrztu. Luter uważał, że skoro wszyscy są kapłanami, to istnieje konieczność urzędu dla porządku w Kościele. Rodzi się pytanie, czy tak rozumiany urząd to jedynie

delegacja wspólnoty? Nie, to również powołanie przez Chrystusa potwierdzone przez wspólnotę. Kto zatem kieruje Kościołem? Bóg sam – z jednej strony, a z drugiej jesteśmy ludzką instytucją. Synodalność jest tu rozumiana jako realizacja kapłaństwa powszechnego, wyrażającego się także w kierowaniu Kościołem. Synod jako instytucja nie był w pełni zrealizowany w czasach Lutera, gdyż większość wiernych była niepiśmienna. Dzisiaj w przewodzeniu Kościołem konieczna jest argumentacja, to daje wiernym poczucie partycypacji. Synod jest dla nich znakiem, że cały Kościół jest w drodze. Synod to nie parlament, ale miejsce szukania konsensusu, bo tu nie chodzi o jakąś formę walki z opozycją w Kościele. Synod jest strukturą porządku w Kościele ewangelickim.

Na zakończenie, dla pełnego obrazu relacji, należy zaznaczyć, że po każdym wykładzie prowadzona była bardzo intensywna dyskusja, trwająca każdorazowo do 90 minut, kiedy prelegenci często nie tylko odpowiadali na pytania uczestników, ale prowadzili z nimi ożywioną debatę i wówczas doprecyzowywano wiele kwestii w zakresie ekumenicznego zbliżenia pozycji konfesyjnych, jak również dyskutowano nad aktualną „drogą synodalną” Kościoła katolickiego w Niemczech. Ujawniały się wtedy zróżnicowane stanowiska, pokazujące częstokroć duży realizm w ocenie tego procesu. Trzeba tu także podkreślić cenny wkład profesora Wolfganga Thönissena jako moderatora konferencji ze strony Johann-Adam-Möhler-Institut w Paderborn, który z wielką przenikliwością puentował poszczególne etapy tych Dni Studyjnych. Bez wątpienia było to bardzo inspirujące spotkanie teologiczne i ekumeniczne, osadzone w aktualnej problematyce życia Kościoła.

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RECENZJE

Emery de Gaál, *O Lord, O seek Your Countenance. Explorations and Discoveries in Pope Benedict XVI's Theology*, Emmaus Academic, Steubenville 2018.

Emery de Gaál jest katolickim księdzem należącym do diecezji Eichstätt w Bawarii. Na co dzień pracuje jednak jako wykładowca teologii systematycznej na Uniwersytecie St. Mary of the Lake w Mundelein w Stanach Zjednoczonych. Szlify teologiczne zdobywał m.in. w Chicago, Pittsburghu i Monachium. Jest on cenionym autorem publikacji poświęconych m.in. teologii Josepha Ratzingera/Benedykta XVI. Na kilku stronach niniejszej recenzji zaprezentowana będzie jedna z najnowszych prac tego niemiecko-amerykańskiego autora, zatytułowana *O Lord, O seek Your Countenance. Explorations and Discoveries in Pope Benedict XVI's Theology*. Polscy teologowie, którzy chcą zajmować się myślą Benedykta XVI, powinni sięgać nie tylko po rodzime pozycje, ale także orientować się w światowej teologii. Stąd wziął się pomysł recenzji tej pozycji anglojęzycznej przez polskiego recenzenta.

Omawiana publikacja składa się z ośmiu rozdziałów poświęconych różnym aspektom teologii bawarskiego profesora Josepha Ratzingera/Benedykta XVI. Pierwszy rozdział ukazuje rys chrystologiczny teologii obecnego papieża emeryta (*The Christocentric Shift: An Appreciation of The Theological Achievements of Pope Benedict XVI's Pontificate*) oraz jest wyrazem uznania dla niego (s. 1–23). Według autora dwie osoby są Josephowi Ratzingerowi bliskie życiowo i teologicznie. To duchowe pokrewieństwo dotyczy Johna Henry'ego Newmana oraz Jana Pawła II. Obaj także zostali przez papieża z Bawarii beatyfikowani. Na ponad dwudziestu stronach Emery de Gaál przekonuje, że pontyfikat Benedykta XVI był najbardziej teologicznie płodnym pontyfikatem od czasów Leona Wielkiego i Grzegorza Wielkiego. Wydarzeniami, które zarysowały wyraźnie akcenty teologiczne Benedykta XVI, była według autora książka beatyfikacja Johna Henry'ego Newman (2010 r.), spotkanie z ekumenicznym patriarchą Bartłomiejem w Konstantynopolu (2010 r.) oraz krótka wizyta w augustiańskim klasztorze w Erfurcie, gdzie przebywał Marcin Luter (2011 r.). Ważnym tematem pierwszego rozdziału jest krótkie omówienie trzech papieskich encyklik oraz czterech przemówień, w Regensburgu, Paryżu, Londynie i Berlinie.

Rozdział drugi kreśli obraz teologa Josepha Ratzingera podczas II Soboru Watykańskiego, jego teologicznej roli i wizji (s. 25–63). Niezwykle istotna dla zrozumienia pozycji Josepha Ratzingera na ostatnim soborze jest postać kardynała Josepha Fringsa. Emery de Gaál barwnie na kilku stronach przedstawia oso-

bę kardynała, jego teologiczne zapatrywania oraz pierwsze spotkania z młodym teologiem z uniwersytetu w Bonn. Teolog poszukujący informacji na temat tzw. źródeł Objawienia dowie się z publikacji, że dla Josepha Fringsa oraz Josepha Ratzingera nie może być mowy o dwóch źródłach Objawienia, ale o Bogu, która sam jest *unus fons* – jedynym Źródłem. Drugi rozdział ukazuje także młodego Ratzingera jako tego, który w okresie soborowym nie bał się zmiany języka teologii i duszpasterstwa. Przykładem jest chociażby postulat zmiany terminu „Kościół walczący” na „Kościół pielgrzymujący”.

Trzeci rozdział książki ukazuje wczesny wkład Josepha Ratzingera do teologii fundamentalnej w latach 1955–1961 (s. 65–99). Okres studiów teologicznych braci Ratzingerów przypadał na czasy, w których silny był jeszcze tomizm, a raczej neotomizm. Autor książki uczciwie odnotował, że chociaż Joseph i Georg studiowali w tym duchu, to jednak przynajmniej dla pierwszego z nich bardziej przekonujące podejście reprezentowali tacy myśliciele jak: Augustyn, Bonawentura, Blaise Pascal, John Henry Newman oraz Romano Guardini. Emery de Gaál przekonuje także na kartach swojej książki, że u Josepha Ratzingera cenny jest wynik bliskiej korelacji pomiędzy liturgią, modlitwą, Pismem Świętym a teologią oraz życie. Według autora tę bliskość Ratzinger zawdzięcza m.in. Josephowi Pascherowi, profesorowi liturgii na Uniwersytecie Ludwika Maksymiliana w Monachium. Nie należy w recenzji odbierać czytelnikom książki radości z lektury. W tym miejscu recenzent sygnalizuje jedynie, że w tym rozdziale Emery de Gaál ukazał m.in. całą paletę nazwisk myślicieli, których dorobek Joseph Ratzinger twórczo podejmował w swoich wykładach. Jednym z centralnych tematów jego teologii fundamentalnej było rozróżnienie na „Boga filozofów” i „Boga wiary”.

Kolejny rozdział jest niezwykle krótki (s. 101–111). Na dziesięciu stronach autor powiązał Benedykta XVI z objawieniami fatimskimi oraz przyszłością Kościoła. Rozpoczął jednak nie od Fatimy, lecz od wizyty papieża z Niemiec w maryjnym sanktuarium w Etzelsbach w 2011 roku. Podobnie jak sanktuarium w Fatimie, miejsce to jest przykładem maryjnego orędzia. Wybrzmiewało ono szczególnie wyraziście w czasach panowania nazistów i komunistów, a także dzisiaj jest aktualne wobec wyzwań ateizmu. Gdy omawia się związek Josepha Ratzingera z Fatimą, okazuje się, że wynikał on m.in. z funkcji prefekta Kongregacji Nauki Wiary. Z tym natomiast wiązał się trzeci sekret fatimski, ujawniony w 2000 roku.

Rozdział piąty rozpoczyna się informacją o jedynym kursie z mariologii, który Joseph Ratzinger prowadził w semestrze letnim w 1957 roku (s. 113–135). W tej części recenzowanej książki mariologia uprawiana przez Josepha Ratzingera została powiązana z chrystologią oraz eklezjologią. Wskazuje na takie powiązanie chociażby tytuł mariologiczny *Theotokos*. Przechodząc do konkretnych zagad-

nień z mariologii, Ratzinger analizował nie tylko definicje dogmatyczne, ale także dawniejsze dokumenty, np. bullę Piusa V potępiającą stanowisko Michała Bajusa. Okazuje się, jak pisał de Gaál, że także sformułowanie „współodkupicielka” znalazło się w refleksji teologicznej przyszłego papieża, który wyjaśniał je z pomocą myśli Augustyna.

Szósta część książki poświęcona jest chrystologii Benedykta XVI, zawartej w pierwszej części trylogii *Jezus z Nazaretu* (s. 137–146). Niezwykle cenna jest uwaga autora skierowana na metodę odczytywania Biblii stosowaną przez Josepha Ratzingera. Hermeneutyka następcy Piotra chce łączyć ze sobą wiarę, rozum i duchowe czytanie Pisma. Nie jest to zatem zimna metoda historyczno-krytyczna, która może zgubić z horyzontu Boga i Jego natchnienie. Amerykański teolog niemieckiego pochodzenia wskazał na interdyscyplinarność chrystologii Benedykta XVI, gdy przywołał rozważania Ratzingera o gwieździe prowadzącej magów z wykorzystaniem badań Johanna Keplera.

Kolejny rozdział poświęcony jest Objawieniu (s. 147–202). Ten długi tekst został pierwotnie opublikowany w polskim czasopiśmie naukowym „Poznańskie Studia Teologiczne”, a o czym autor informuje w przypisie. Czytelnik otwierający ten fragment książki zostanie zapoznany z tekstami Ratzingera, które poruszają problem teologii historii u Bonawentury. Kolejno wskazany został wkład młodego teologa w rozumienie Objawienia na II Soborze Watykańskim. Następne strony to Ratzinger „posoborowy”, a więc prezentacja teologii Objawienia, ale kreślonej po ostatnim soborze. Wreszcie ostatni fragment stanowi analizę myśli już samego Benedykta XVI.

Ósmy rozdział książki (oryginalny tytuł: *Theology as Lived Christian Discipleship*) Emery de Gaál poświęcił teologii jako żyjącemu chrześcijaństwu (s. 203–238). W tym miejscu recenzent przywołał tylko kilka powiązań, które można odnaleźć w książce: prawda i wolność, Pismo i Tradycja, Kościół i liturgia, ojcowie Kościoła i historia. Dzięki takiej rozpiętości tematów została zaprezentowana cała gama problemów podejmowanych w teologii przez Josepha Ratzingera.

Zakończenie książki do dwie recenzje książek, których autorami są Maximilian Heinrich Heim (s. 239–242) i Thomas Rießinger (s. 243–245). Dość wspomnieć, że pierwsza z nich zawiera słowo wstępne pióra Josepha Ratzingera.

Mogłoby się wydawać, że na temat teologii emerytowanego papieża pisali już wszyscy i napisano wszystko. Okazuje się jednak, że zdarzają się takie prace, które nie tylko recenzują i prezentują dorobek „Mozarta teologii”, ale osadzają ją także w aktualnym kontekście życia Kościoła i świata. Do takich prac należy książka, której autorem jest Emery de Gaál. O renomie tego teologia świadczy to, że wysokie noty tej książki wystawiła Tracey Rowland, znana australijska profe-

sor teologii i znawcy teologii papieża emeryta. Jej słowa znajdują się na okładce publikacji. Emery de Gaál to teolog, który nie boi się prezentować wyników swoich badań także za granicą, m.in. w Polsce. Recenzowana książka skierowana jest bez wątpienia w pierwszej kolejności do teologów i znawców myśli Josepha Ratzingera. Jednakże jest to lektura godna polecenia również tym, którzy być może rozpoczynają swoje wprowadzenie w chrześcijaństwo i jego teologię. Nie mogli wybrać lepszego przewodnika niż Benedykt XVI. Warto dodać, że język angielski jest współczesną *lingua franca* także na gruncie teologii, a więc dostęp do tej pracy mają nie tylko ci, dla których jest on językiem ojczystym. Jest to uwaga ważna, ponieważ także Polska teologia powinna być na bieżąco ze światową debatą teologiczną. Życzyć należy tylko, aby wartościowe książki z zagranicy – a do takich bez wątpienia należy recenzowana publikacja – znajdowały czytelników i tłumaczy także nad Wisłą.

Paweł Beyga

Anna Maliszewska, *W stronę antropologii inkluzywnej: głęboka niepełnosprawność intelektualna a człowieczeństwo. Studium z zakresu katolickiej teologii niepełnosprawności*, Katowice: Wydawnictwo UŚ 2019, 332 s.

Żyjemy w świecie, który chce poznać wszystko lepiej i dokładniej. Obok pozytywnych cech tego zjawiska widać jego negatywne skutki. Jednym z nich jest fragmentaryzacja wiedzy, a w konsekwencji fragmentaryzacja prawdy. Prawdy o świecie, a przede wszystkim o człowieku. W świetle wiedzy (prawdy) częściowej próbuje się dokonywać oceny całości. Człowiek nie tylko zatracza obiektywną prawdę o naturze świata, ale przede wszystkim o sobie samym: kim jest i dokąd zmierza. Wyzwaniem dla współczesnej nauki staje się konieczność konfrontacji bardzo specjalistycznych dziedzin nauki z dziedzinami, które szukają odpowiedzi całościowej – filozofią i teologią.

Teologia mówi o Bogu, który jest doskonały i jest źródłem wszelkiej doskonałości. Mając przed sobą recenzowaną książkę, możemy więc zapytać: Czy teolog, zajmując się relacją głębokiej intelektualnej niepełnosprawności człowieka i Bogiem, nie chce jakoś Boga usprawiedliwiać? Bynajmniej. Autorka w sposób przekonujący pokazuje, że prawda o Bogu i prawda o człowieku nie stoją nigdy w żadnej sprzeczności. Można by tytuł książki odwrócić i powiedzieć, że Autorka

pokazuje nam, jak prawda o niepełnosprawności człowieka pomaga zrozumieć inkluzyjny obraz Boga. Prawda o Wcieleniu mówi nam, że Bóg stał się człowiekiem, że przyjął naturę ludzką taką jak my. Brak w Jezusie grzechu nie znaczy, że przyjął naszą naturę bez skutków grzechu. On sam tym skutkom podlegał, biorąc na siebie cierpienie i śmierć. Czy w tej Jego naturze ludzkiej nie był jakiś sposób obecny każdy człowiek? Bo przecież Jezus, wcielając się, przyjął na siebie wszystkich ludzi. Ojcowie Kościoła już od początku nie mieli co do tego wątpliwości. Tradycja Kościoła zawsze utrzymywała, że we wcieleniu Jezus Chrystus zjednoczył się tajemniczo, ale nie mniej realnie z każdym człowiekiem. Więcej, w Chrystusie przez Wcielenie ludzka natura została wywyższona (por. *Gaudium et spes* 22). To wywyższenie nie zachodzi tylko w Nim, ale we wszystkich osobach wszystkich czasów i miejsc. Syn Boży bowiem nigdy nie odciął się od swego człowieczeństwa. Tak więc każdy, nawet najbardziej oddalony od Boga człowiek jest złączony z Nim przez to, że jest człowiekiem. Jest wprowadzony w krąg oddziaływania Bożej łaski wywyższającej ludzką naturę.

Mając przed oczami tę prawdę, widzimy, że to jest właśnie rodzaj antropologii inkluzywnej *par excellence*. Ponadto: jeśli każde życie pochodzi od Boga, a od Niego pochodzi tylko dobro, to czy można podawać w wątpliwość prawdziwą godność każdego bez wyjątku człowieka?

Co mówi nam sama struktura recenzowanej monografii? Pokazuje, że praca ta jest owocem badań o jasno sprecyzowanym celu i zakresie. Całość została podzielona na dwie części. Pierwsza dotyczy mało znanej w polskim środowisku naukowym tzw. teologii niepełnosprawności i ma duży walor metodologiczny. Pozwala najpierw zrozumieć ten rodzaj teologii kontekstualnej i wypracowaną przez nią koncepcję niepełnosprawności (rozdz. 1: *Źródła, cele i możliwości teologii niepełnosprawności*). Szczególnie dużo miejsca poświęca Autorka stosowanej tam metodzie, co stanie się punktem wyjścia do jej krytyki i zaproponowania własnej metody, którą przyjmuje w tej monografii. Następnie zostaje uzasadnione, dlaczego teologię niepełnosprawności zaliczono do teologii wyzwolenia, ukazując – bez popadania w błąd historycyzmu – historyczne formy dyskryminacji ludzi z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Ważne miejsce w tym rozdziale zajmuje kwestia wizji niepełnosprawności w Piśmie Świętym, ukazana i uzasadniona w sposób „apologetyczny” (rozdz. 2: *Historia opresji? Współczesne spojrzenie w przeszłość*). Kolejną kwestią podjętą w tej monografii jest syntetyczne ukazanie dorobku czołowych przedstawicieli tzw. teologii niepełnosprawności, co ma charakter poznawczy: zapoznaje czytelnika z najważniejszymi trendami opisaniami tego problemu. Walor poznawczy ma również druga część tego rozdziału, ukazująca współczesne nauczanie Kościoła katolickiego o osobach z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną. Maliszewska dokonuje pewnej systematyzacji nauki Kościoła

na ten temat, ujmując ją w trzech tendencjach: tendencja równościowa, tendencja gloryfikująca i tendencja pomniejszająca. Warto zwrócić uwagę na krytyczny walor tej prezentacji, co nie tylko wybrzmiewa w ukazaniu niespójności argumentów Magisterium broniącego człowieczeństwa osób z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną, ale jednocześnie odkrywa słabość rozwiązań antropologicznych stojących u podstaw rozumowania Urzędu Nauczycielskiego Kościoła (rozdz. 3: *Teologiczne próby rozwiązania problemu człowieczeństwa osób z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną*).

Tak zbudowana część pierwsza rozprawy stanowi dobry punkt wyjścia do szerokiego podjęcia kwestii antropologii inkluzywnej, co wydaje się największą nowością tej pracy. Autorka opisuje to zagadnienie w czterech rozdziałach, budowanych na zasadzie prezentacji przyjmowanych stanowisk, a następnie przedstawienia własne propozycje. Najpierw ukazuje dwa podstawowe przymioty człowieka: rozumność i wolność, dokonując ich reinterpretacji w tych punktach, które są szczególnie problematyczne w odniesieniu do osób z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną (rozdz. 4: *Rozumność i wolność: Człowiek z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną jako podmiot rozumny i wolny*). Potem przechodzi do odkrywania stwórczego zamysłu Boga w odniesieniu do człowieka, w tym przypadku z intelektualną niepełnosprawnością. Z teologicznego punktu widzenia szczególnie ciekawa jest tu kwestia człowieka rozpatrywanego jako *imago Dei* (rozdz. 5: *Imago Dei: Człowiek z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną jako imago Dei*). Kolejne dwa rozdziały, podsumowujące autorską argumentację Anny Maliszewskiej, przechodzą od obrony prawdziwości człowieczeństwa osób z głęboką niesprawnością intelektualną do ukazania ich jako koniecznego punktu odniesienia dla uzyskania pełnej prawdy o człowieku (rozdz. 6: *Człowiek z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną objawicielem człowieczeństwa*), jak i eklezjalnego wymiaru życia człowieka, z jego przynależnością do Kościoła i w rozwoju życia duchowego (rozdz. 7: *Człowiek z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną w pełni członkiem Kościoła*). Ten ostatni rozdział zawiera w sobie najbardziej praktyczne wnioski, do jakich Autorka doszła w swoich badaniach naukowych nad tym obranym tematem.

Niepełnosprawności Autorka nie traktuje jako tematu modnego, na którym można samemu wypłynąć. Udowadnia, że jej studium nie jest pójściem na skróty czy prześlizgnięciem się po chwytliwym temacie. Mamy przed sobą studium dogłębne, bardzo dobrze skonstruowane metodologicznie i konsekwentnie zrealizowane. Podstawowa teza badawcza zawiera się w postawionym na początku zamiarze: „Chcę zatem odpowiedzieć na pytanie, które stawia dziś przed nami świat: «czy osoby z głęboką niepełnosprawnością intelektualną są ludźmi? Czy

są w pełni osobami ludzkimi? Czy są ludźmi dokładnie tak samo i takimi samymi jak my – tzw. pełnosprawni intelektualnie czytelnicy tej książki i jej autorka?» (Wstęp, s. 14). Odpowiedź na to pytanie jest niezwykle ważna. Nie tylko ze względu na zaspokojenie ciekawości badawczej. O wiele bardziej jest ona potrzebna dla wszystkich, którzy stanowią i współtworzą współczesne społeczeństwo i współczesne państwo z jego organami i sposobem zarządzania. Tu bowiem potrzebna jest odpowiedź: czy osoby z taką niepełnosprawnością traktować tak samo jak wszystkich innych, zapewniając im godne warunki życia, czy też ograniczyć opiekę nad nimi, a może wręcz wytworzyć takie prawo (jeśli to możliwe), aby się w ogóle nie rodziły?

Nowatorstwo tej publikacji przejawia się również w podjęciu zagadnienia z obszaru, który jest w nauce kierunkiem bardzo młodym, bo powstałym zaledwie mniej więcej trzydzieści lat temu. Oznacza to nie tylko mniejszy do dyspozycji zasób źródeł, ale również poruszanie się po terenie, gdzie brak jest wypracowanych jednoznacznych kryteriów dla teorii i praktyki. Największym wyzwaniem, z jakim Autorka musiała się zmierzyć, to brak spójnej wizji antropologicznej będącej gwarancją postrzegania osób z tą niepełnosprawnością jako pełnoprawnych, „kompletnych” osób ludzkich.

Anna Maliszewska podjęła więc odważnie próbę stworzenia w miarę kompletnej podstawy do twierdzenia, iż osoby z niepełnosprawnością intelektualną to w pełni osoby ludzkie. To zaś oznaczało pójście krok dalej niż teologowie niepełnosprawności, w których argumentacji teza ta wydaje się słabo uzasadniona. Wymagało to dostarczenia takich argumentów, które pozwoliłyby powszechnie przyjąć, że osoby z głębokim upośledzeniem umysłowym nie tylko są osobami ludzkimi, ale posiadają wszystkie wynikające z tego prawa, gdyż w ich człowieczeństwie nie brak niczego, co należy do jego fundamentów. Ukazania, że ograniczenia, które posiadają, tego fundamentu nie naruszają.

Kolejnym walorem tej monografii, pisanej przecież z punktu widzenia teologa, jest uwzględnienie całego dotychczasowego nauczania Kościoła dotyczącego podjętej kwestii. Czytając tę książkę, możemy stwierdzić, iż Autorka przyjęła i zrealizowała ważną zasadę metodologiczną, a mianowicie pierwszeństwo nauczania Magisterium Kościoła nad pozostałymi źródłami, teologicznymi i pozateologicznymi. Jednocześnie trzeba też zauważyć szeroki zasób źródeł pomocniczych, pozateologicznych, zwłaszcza studia historyczne i prace z zakresu studiów kulturowych, tzw. *disability studies*. Zapewnia to bardziej całościowe podejście do zagadnienia, a jednocześnie wnioski wyprowadzone z analizy tych wszystkich źródeł dają odpowiedź akceptowalną nie tylko z punktu widzenia wiary katolickiej. A ponieważ w polskiej teologii brakuje takich opracowań, to monografia ta staje się otwarciem nowego rozdziału, nowego pola badań naukowych dla teolo-

gii. Teraz już nie można powiedzieć, że teologia niepełnosprawności jest absolutnie nieobecna w polskiej przestrzeni naukowej.

Monografia ta wpisuje się również w szeroko rozumiany personalizm chrześcijański, będący jednym z kierunków, który czyni najstarszy lubelski uniwersytet, Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II, rozpoznawalnym w środowisku naukowym polskim i międzynarodowym. Tacy naukowcy, jak ks. prof. Wincenty Granat, kard. prof. Karol Wojtyła czy ks. prof. Czesław S. Bartnik, wypracowali systemowe podstawy do utworzenia tzw. szkoły personalizmu lubelskiego, rozwijanego w perspektywie filozoficznej i teologicznej. Kierunek, który traktuje o wszelkiej rzeczywistości, wychodząc z fenomenu osoby jako danego każdemu człowiekowi rozumnemu bezpośrednio, empirycznie i w sposób pewny. Monografia Anny Maliszewskiej włącza się więc twórczo w wysiłek podejmowany przez Katolicki Uniwersytet Lubelski Jana Pawła II promowania prawdy o nie-naruszalnej godności każdego bez wyjątku człowieka. Dodaje ona jeszcze jeden element, nowatorski i pogłębiony poprzez swoje badania i wnioski z nich płynące, do głoszenia pełnej, obiektywnej prawdy o człowieku. A przecież od koncepcji człowieka zależy dzisiejsza wizja życia i świata.

Świat zaś dzisiaj coraz bardziej dzieli ludzi, stygmatyzuje, każąc im określać się w coraz mniejszych grupach. Ideologia *gender* staje się tu sztandarowym przykładem. Antropologia inkluzywna to odpowiedź na te prądy zmierzająca nie do podziału, lecz do budowania świadomości (tożsamości) wspólnego mianownika: jestem człowiekiem.

Recenzowana monografia jest bardzo ważnym głosem w odpowiedzi na następujące pytanie: Czy możemy skonstruować taką „definicję” człowieczeństwa, która swym zasięgiem obejmie wszystkie istoty ludzkie? Jest to próba odpowiedzi czyniona z perspektywy katolickiej. Z jednej strony czyni tę odpowiedź łatwiejszą, bo przecież Kościół stoi twardo na stanowisku broniącym prawa do życia osób z upośledzeniem umysłowym, szczególnie w kontekście toczących się nieustannie debat na temat dopuszczalności zarówno aborcji eugenicznej, jak i eutanazji. Działanie takie wydaje się równoznaczne z obroną ich w pełni ludzkiej kondycji i godności. Z drugiej strony kościelna narracja przepełniona jest wątkami mówiącymi o człowieku jako podmiocie rozumnym i wolnym, równocześnie posługując się kategorią osób pozbawionych „używania rozumu”, do której zalicza małe dzieci i osoby niepełnosprawne intelektualnie.

Jak widać, Autorka nie prezentuje odpowiedzi zamkniętej, lecz zachęca do dalszego namysłu i dyskusji na kwestię, czy osoby upośledzone intelektualnie w stopniu głębokim są osobami ludzkimi dokładnie tak samo, jak wszyscy inni przedstawiciele gatunku zwanego *homo sapiens*. Z jednej strony dotyczyć to będzie obszaru eklezjalnego, gdzie nie tylko chodzi o sam fakt włączenia osób

niepełnosprawnych do Kościoła, lecz o świadomość, że ich obecność pozwala Kościołowi w pełnym zakresie wypełniać swoją misję wobec świata: dawać świadectwo, że Bóg bez wyjątku miłuje wszystkie swoje dzieci. Otwartymi pozostają pytania o zakres włączenie tych osób w życie, zwłaszcza sakramentalne, Kościoła. Z drugiej strony, w wymiarze ogólnoludzkim, prowadzić to będzie to przeformułowania pojęcia „poznania”, które nie może być utożsamione z oświeceniowym rozumem czy IQ. Z pewnością niezbędna jest dalsza, bardziej pogłębiona refleksja na tym polu, aby ukazać, że prawdziwie ludzkie „poznanie” nie ogranicza się do tego, co obserwowalne i mierzalne, podobnie jak nie możemy ograniczyć samego człowieczeństwa do tego, co weryfikowalne empirycznie.

Podsumowując, należy stwierdzić, że monografia Anny Maliszewskiej przynosi bardzo ważny głos w debacie na temat „miary” człowieczeństwa. Daje szeroki horyzont widzenia człowieczeństwa i zachęca do odniesienia do niego różnych wycinkowych wizji czy refleksji. Ponadto zaprasza do spojrzenia na człowieczeństwo przez pryzmat kruchości i zależności istoty ludzkiej, niepowtarzalności każdego człowieka. To sprawia, że osoby niepełnosprawne intelektualnie nie są postrzegane jako niepełne osoby ludzkie, ale jako takie osoby, które w szczególnie dobitny sposób ukazują prawdę o człowieczeństwie, przynajmniej w niektórych jego wymiarach. Antropologia zbudowana wokół wspomnianych aspektów człowieczeństwa jest więc nie tylko niewykluczająca wobec tych osób, ale powoduje, że osoby upośledzone intelektualnie wydają się wręcz reprezentatywnymi jednostkami gatunku ludzkiego.

ks. Janusz Lekan