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CHRIST'S KENOSIS AND ECCLESIOLOGY

Polýphonós ge ho sotér kai polýtropos eis anthrópon soterían.

(Clement of Alexandria. *Protreptikos* I, 8, 3)

Ecumenical efforts of the last years have brought some rejoycing results and events. One can only be grateful to the Lord of the Church for these new signs of hope. But many things are still limited to the sphere of declarative words, without practical consequences. The reception of many agreed statements in bilateral and multilateral dialogues remains still insatisfactory. Some dialogues experience serious difficulties and do not proceed. Many ecumenically-minded people have become tired and discouraged. The majority of the Christians, especially in Eastern Europe, simply lack interest in ecumenism. This can indeed lead to resignation and discouragement. However, are not the Christians those who have to learn to hope “against hope” (Rm 4:18)?

What we experience today is mostly labour and hope, *labor et spes*. Ecumenical *gaudium and spes*, joy and hope (to allude to the first words of the well known constitution of the II. Vatican Council) happen from time to time, but the enormous task of reconciliation remains still to be accomplished. The very fact of different dialogues going on is a blessed and joyful event. The dialogue gives joy and raises hope. Still we cannot see many decisive results. For this reason I prefer to speak about an ecumenical labour and hope.

The Christians quarrel among themselves, while faith and hope die out in human hearts, both in the West and in the East. Christianity is devastated above all by a heresy of life, i.e. by a heresy of mistrust, lack of mutual respect and understanding for the others and their otherness. This is surely a part of the legacy of the past. Our Churches declare their readiness to do everything possible for the work of reconciliation and unity, but very often they rather hesitate and lack courage. The confessional identity continues to be in higher esteem than the Christian one. An old temptation to live complacently within confessional boundaries has not yet been overcome. The newly born brotherhood of the Churches is still fragile and exposed to the danger of breaking down at any moment of conflict and controversy. After many years of ecumenical dialogues there is the clear need to discuss ecumenical method and ecumenical doctrine of our Churches, to overcome the tendency to compare agreed statements to the defined teaching of the past.

We need today a paschal christianology based on the central truths of the Christian faith. Our Christianity has to become more paschal. The paschal mystery of Christ is the very core of the Christian message of hope. The drama of the Cross is a drama of human freedom. The freedom of people crucified Jesus. God respected that freedom, but has manifested Himself victorious. The greatest crisis in the world's history has found its divine and unexpected solution. The history of human freedom is dramatic. In spite of this God has proved to be stronger than all the forces of evil. For this reason Christianity will always be drawing strength and inspiration from its eschatological hope whose ultimate source is Christ's resurrection.

Are we able to discern some main features of a more paschal Christianity? How to understand its paschal dimension in relation to the unity of the Church? In the following reflections I will try to outline a vision of the Church more sensitive to the kenotic and paschal ethos of Christianity.

I. IN SEARCH OF A PASCHAL PARADIGM

Christian Churches undergo today a serious crisis as they face, on one side, a growing secularization of society and, on the other, the new types of religiosity and spirituality inspired often by non-Christian traditions. There also appear strong doubts about the institutional dimension of the faith, and at the same time about institutional religiosity as such.

Modern critics of religion have involuntarily contributed to the purification of the Christian faith. Today we perhaps better realize the necessity of a deeper interpretation of Christianity and of its universalism. Friedrich Nietzsche reproached the Christians that on their faces one could hardly see the joy and the new quality of being redeemed: "*Erlöster müssten mir seine Jünger aussehen!*"¹ He proclaimed the "death of God", thus provocatively naming a deep experience of many people living in modern times. It is an experience of God's silence, of His absence, a kind of experience of Good Friday and Holy Saturday.

It is precisely here that mystics can offer a valuable hermeneutic key which allows to understand the challenge of contemporary experience of God's silence. Mystics speak about "the dark nights" of the spirit on the road towards God. It is a very powerful symbol which could be applied not only to an individual human life, but also to the history of the divided Church. There are indeed periods of time when God seems to absent Himself, to recede from human perception and to keep silence in face of various historical dramas and tragedies. This experience can be understood as a collective night of the spirit. It comes close to the description of the time which in Nietzsche's terminology was an epoch of the death of God, an era of nihilism.

It is easier for us to understand the basic intuition hidden in this kind of interpretation. The 20th century had brought an unusual amount of destruction and suffering. But at the same time it was also a time of human solidarity and better understanding of the unity of humankind, a time of ecumenism of the heart. Many of those who were plunged into the darkness of the night and the struggle with the feeling of nothingness have experienced also a sort of inner liberation, a transfiguration of their whole existence. Some have lost their faith passing through the torments of that historical Good Friday

But there are in fact two successive days of the paschal drama. To the excruciating experiences of our century belongs not only the agony of Good Friday but also the silence of Holy Saturday. This is the day of Christ's descent into hell. It is there that He has overcome the power of death and destruction. It is the beginning of His resurrection – God's answer to the cry of the Forsaken Son. The silence of Holy Saturday on the surface of the earth covers the event of Christ's encounter with the fallen humanity – His

¹ F. Nietzsche. *Also sprach Zarathustra*. II: *Von den Priestern*. In: *idem. Werke*. Kritische Gesamtausgabe. Hrsg. von G. Colli und M. Montinari. Berlin–New York 1967 ff.

presence in the anthropological depth of human hearts. This is the lowest point, if one may say so, of the divine *kénosis*: God in the hell created by human sins, trying to attract and to transform sick human freedom. The divine *kénosis* is no annihilation, but transformation, the beginning of Christ's resurrection, of His *anástasis*.

The silence of Holy Saturday may serve as a paradigmatic symbol for every situation of human hopelessness. However, the lesson of the mystics should not be forgotten. In spite of the state of forsakenness they remain confident that God speaks also in the darkness, in all personal and historical situations of crisis. God's silence constitutes an integral part of His divine pedagogy. God himself accompanies people through difficult experience of hopelessness, division and disunity. He gives a chance to grow, to purify our concepts, images and representations of Him. He remains close to every human being. Both personal and historical dark nights of His silence may become a difficult lesson of inner freedom and courageous confidence in His unfailing love.

All this could also be applied to the life of the divided Church of Christ struggling for reconciliation and unity. My long studies in Christian paschal theology make me to believe that through painful lessons of disunity, through the experience of labour and of the cross, God leads us to the joy of the resurrection, to better days of the reconciled diversity among Christians.

II. THE DIVINE KENOSIS AND HUMAN FREEDOM

God does not order. He invites to a relationship of reciprocity. To leave the space of freedom, He limits His own omnipotence. In a sense, not ceasing to be all-powerful, He can become all-powerless. This is the biblical theme of Christ's *kénosis*. God in Christ "emptied Himself to assume the condition of a slave" (Phil 2:7). This is an unusual intuition which evokes God not in a language of perfection and fullness, but preferring the category of emptiness. Here the words of St. Clement of Alexandria chosen as motto of this paper come true: "The Saviour is polyphonic and acting in many ways for the salvation of people"² *Polýphonós ge [...] kai polýtropos!*

² C l e m e n t o f A l e x a n d r i a. *Protrepitkos* I, 8, 3. SCh 70 p. 110.

There is a clear mystic touch in this approach. The fullness implies richness, abundance and power. Emptiness and void express the mystery of love. God transcends Himself towards humanity in an inversed movement. He becomes, so to speak, the humble and self-effacing God. This is not God in all His fullness and might who would crush and overwhelm a human being, but God who "emptied Himself" and thus is able to expect our free answer. The truly paschal God! Remaining incomprehensible, He leaves thus a free space for human freedom. His silence has a very profound meaning.

The work of redemption was carried out by Jesus in humility, weakness, love and dedication. The liberating love of God is a self-emptying love. The salvific *kénosis* of Jesus implies a negation of self-centeredness and self-interestedness. It means the disinterested dedication to the salvation of all.

Christ's *kénosis* has a permanent significance for the whole Christian existence, for particular Churches, individuals and for the work of reconciliation as such. *Kénosis* understood as disinterestedness, self-limitation and confidence judges our Churches, our separation, our ecclesiastical egoisms, our self-centeredness and self-satisfaction. The entire kenotic and paschal logic has been revealed in Christ's words: "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless a grain of wheat falls into the earth and dies, it remains alone; but if it dies, it bears much fruit" (John 12:24). Christ himself was first this "grain of wheat" This is a paradox of Christian identity and Christian life.

Ecumenism educates all of us to discover an open, fuller and wiser identity. We are still victims of historical conflicts, confessionalism and other forms of ecclesiastical competition. The confessional issue: "who am I" does not take into account the christological component "To WHOM I belong" To remember who WE are, is not enough. One has to ask above all: "WHOSE are we?" Both christology and soteriology teach us that we belong to Christ, the Suffering Servant who "emptied himself" (*heautón ekénosen*). The salvation and transfiguration of the world can be achieved at this price. What God dares is amazing. The figure of the kenotic Servant has a deep ecclesiological significance. Christ's *kénosis* is an imperative for his Church.

A special duty of theologians is to ask what their own Church can and should do, to renounce all that diminishes her credibility, ecumenical honesty and the possibility of reconciliation. The most difficult task is to convert the Churches to one another in compassion and forgiveness. A real breakthrough is needed – a kenotic act of renouncing everything which does not serve the work of reconciliation.

III. A SENSE OF URGENCY: RETURN TO KENOSIS

The conversion of the Churches to Christ and mutually to one another includes also the readiness to correct one's own self-understanding, to give up everything which diminishes the willingness to be reconciled. Christ's *kénosis* is the model, criterion and example of such an attitude. The biblical concept of *kénosis* should have concrete ecclesiological implications.

Metropolitan Stylianós (Harkianakis) of Australia spoke some time ago about an inclination of the Roman Catholic Church to the pride of power (*Hochmut der Macht*) and of the Orthodox Church to the pride of the truth (*Hochmut der Wahrheit*)³ The distinction between these two temptations has been made not without reason. It helps to understand that this dangerous inclination has to be constantly overcome in the Church. If Christ emptied and humbled himself to save the human beings, this fact has to determine the kenotic foundations of ecclesiology and the whole style of the life of the Church. The kenotic soteriology opposes to the haughtiness of power and truth – the humility of service and searching for truth. Any kind of domination is alien to the spirit of the Gospel.

During his last official visit to the Vatican, ecumenical patriarch Bartholomaios I. delivered a homily in the basilica of St. Peter on June 29, 1995. The Eucharist was presided by John Paul II. In his presence the Patriarch was speaking also about the primacy. He stressed the need for humility and repentance which are able to make us wiser and to save our fidelity to Christ, who “emptied Himself” for the salvation of the world. And the Patriarch ended his homily with these thought provoking words:

[...] it is only when the priority of the kenotic ethos prevails convincingly in the historical Church, that we will not only re-establish then easily [!] the so much desired unity in the faith, but at the same time we will become worthy to experience what the divine revelation has promised to those who love the Lord, i.e. “a new heaven and a new earth”⁴

³ Metr. S t y l i a n o s (Harkianakis). *Der offizielle Dialog zwischen der römisch-katholischen und der orthodoxen Kirche*. In: *Am Beginn des theologischen Dialogs. Dokumentation des römischen, des Wiener, des Salzburger Ökumenismus*. Festschrift Th. Piffl-Perčević. Innsbruck–Wien 1987 pp. 350-364, here 361 f.

⁴ *Visite officielle du Patriarche œcuménique à l'Eglise de Rome* [...]. “Episkepsis” No. 520, 31.7.1995 p. 15: “[...] c'est seulement quand le primat de l'*ethos kénotique* prévaudra d'une manière convaincante dans l'Eglise historique, que non seulement nous rétabliront alors facilement l'*unité* tant désirée dans la foi, mais que nous nous rendrons dans le même temps

In his address to the Roman curia Bartholomaios I. also evoked the same idea in connexion with the ancient Church of the Apostles. This Church, he said, knew very well that "through the mystery of *kénosis* of the cross, Christ, our Lord, had submitted the human nature to God His Father, becoming thus 'the best model for all of us' [...]"⁵

One has to read very attentively such texts to see the importance of the kenotic ethos in ecclesiological thinking of the Patriarch. They show the necessity of this ethos for the re-establishment of Christian unity.

We have to learn from and with each other. *Kénosis* is required on all sides for true unity to come about. Theological dialogue should continue, in order to clarify the issues of primacy, synodality, authority and relations between local Churches. The question of prestige, jurisdiction and authority constanly undermines the communion of the Churches. In the light of the Gospel it is indeed a scandalous question:

A dispute also arose between them, which should be reckoned the greatest, but he said to them which of them was to be regarded as the greatest. And he said to them: 'The kings of the Gentiles exercise lordship over them; and those in authority over them are called benefactors. But not so with you; rather let the greatest among you become as the youngest, and the leader as one who serves. [...] But I am among you as one whos serves, *hós ho diakonón* (Lk 22:24-27).

The evil spirit of this early dispute among the disciples of Christ, presented by the Evangelist in the context of the Last Supper and the institution of the Eucharist, has not disappeared in the Church. The drama of authority continues. Reconciliation and communion will never happen without the evangelical event of return to *kénosis*, to the true conversion of the Churches to each other.

Reformulation of the doctrine and change of structures can be retarded or thwarted indefinitely. A realistic hope for unity evokes a sense of urgency and responsibility. Former archbishop of San Francisco, John R. Quinn, wrote not long ago the following words which portray a sincere passion for truth, honesty and concern for Christian unity:

dignes d'éprouver ce que la révélation de Dieu a promis à ceux qui aiment le Seigneur, à savoir 'une terre nouvelle et un ciel nouveau'"

⁵ *Ibid.* p. 10.

We cannot hold unity hostage until there is a perfect pope in a perfect Church. Christian unity will require sacrifice. But it cannot mean that all the sacrifices must be made by those who want full communion with the Catholic Church while the Catholic Church herself makes no significant sacrifices. Of the individual Christian the Scripture says, 'You have been bought at a price' (1 Cor 6:20). Similarly, we all have to face the fact that unity among Christians will be bought at a price. All will have to sacrifice. If we are serious about the goal of unity, we must be serious about the cost of unity⁶

In these words the kenotic attitude or kenotic ethos of thinking has found a clear expression. Readiness for self-limitation and courage have to go together. *Kénosis* requires *parresía*. Without courageous vision, a kenotic ecclesiology will only remain a purely declarative phraseology.

IV IN THE CAPTIVITY OF DOCTRINES

Let me recall the very beginnings of the official theological dialogue between the Orthodox Church and the Roman-Catholic Church. It was on May 29, 1980 at the Patriarchal Monastery of Saint John the Theologian at Patmos. In his inaugural address, metropolitan Meliton of Chalcedon described our ecclesiological situation as follows:

According to tradition, John the Apostle and Evangelist came to Patmos by order of emperor Dometian, as exile and prisoner. It was under those conditions that he came. Apparently, and according to secular criteria, we have come to Patmos under different conditions; free and not enchained. Yet, in essence, we too have come as exiles and prisoners.

Let me make myself clear: We also have come as exiles, not because of the ruler of this world, but banished by the lost peace between the Churches of the East and of the West, and as prisoners not of the emperor, but of our own errors. [...] We too have come together as brethren alienated from one another, not in a geographical sense nor by imperial order but alienated in spirit and by human errors [...]⁷

Those were very courageous and sincere words. In fact, we are all, till now, prisoners our own errors, alienated from one another in spirit. I would

⁶ J. R. Quinn. *The Exercise of the Primacy: Facing the Cost of Christian Unity*. "Commonweal" 123:1996 No. 13 pp. 11-20, here 19.

⁷ The text of this address was distributed to all the members of the Joint International Commission for Theological Dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Orthodox Church.

be inclined to say even more: we are above all prisoners of our doctrines, denominational differences and divergences. It means that there exists a sort of ecclesiological captivity of doctrine.

I do not hesitate to think, that during the past centuries Christianity was becoming more and more doctrinaire. The care for integrity, coherence and identity of doctrine overshadowed so often its appropriateness and the most vital purpose of religion as such. Unending conflicts and controversies over salvation and truth, appropriated exclusively by the Churches are the most dramatic evidence of this.

In my own country, a bishop of the Evangelical-Reformed Church, Zdzisław Tranda, has put forward a very challenging interpretation of the parable of the good Samaritan (Lk 10:30-37). Usually one sees in it just a warning against the lack of sensitivity to the situation of a human being in need. Bishop Tranda draws attention to the Old Testament regulations which forbade the priests to approach the dead body, for fear of a ritual impurity: "none of them shall defile himself for the dead among his people" (Lv 21:1; cf. Nb 5:2-3), "they shall not defile themselves by going near to a dead person [...]; after he is defiled, he shall count for himself seven days, and then he shall be clean" (Ez 44:25-26). Only a ritually clean man could enter the temple and perform his duties there. Let us suppose that the priest and the levite mentioned in the parable were going to the temple in Jerusalem. A wounded man lying by the roadside could seem to be already dead. To approach him meant to be defiled and not to be able to perform respective functions in the temple. A ritual purification should then last for seven days.

One can reasonably assume that when the priest and the levite were passing by and saw the wounded man, they were not motivated by callousness, soullessness or sheer fear. They could experience a profound conflict of conscience. According to the Mosaic Law they were not allowed to approach the man and to help him. Could they easily risk the act of mercy? What about their duties in the temple then?

For this reason it is not so much the priest and the levite who should be blamed but rather the religious system which has exposed them to the dilemma whether not to help and be able to serve, or to help and not to be ready for the temple service. They were connected with this religious system, with its doctrine and regulations. Because of this they took such a decision and not the other one. They were, so to speak, prisoners and slaves of this system. Mercy was shown by the good Samaritan, a schismatic and heretic.

The meaning of Jesus' parable is therefore more profound than it could seem at first sight. It shows His opposition to the captivity of doctrine and numerous regulations. This way we touch a very delicate and important issue. It is not enough to repeat doctrinal formulations and in this way to justify one's behaviour towards people, especially those in need, "the least of these" (Mt 25:40.45), who have their own difficulties and anxieties. A rigid sticking to the doctrine and its regulations can overshadow things much more important in religion. We stand face to face then with a certain form of captivity.

The conclusion of Bishop Tranda deserves special consideration:

And today, at the end of the 20th century, the world is not free of the captivity of doctrine. On the contrary, one can have the impression, that it is even more enslaved. One could give many various examples of people or of the whole social groups who live in the captivity not only of a religious doctrine, but also in the captivity of their own party, politics and society. It is worthwhile to ask a question: Am I, in my own life, free from the captivity of doctrine and regulations which limit in an unwise way the possibility to act for the good of others?⁸

There is no need, I think, to comment on these words. Their relevance for the present-day ecumenical situation is clear. I would rather like to say in this context a few words about Daniel Oswald Rufeisen (1922-1998), a Jewish Carmelite who lived in Haifa. During the nazi occupation in Poland, as a young Jew he managed to survive, thanks to the help of courageous Catholic nuns. He decided to become a Christian, in 1952 was ordained priest and seven years later emigrated to Israel. There he began his long-term work of discovering the roots of the primitive Hebrew Church of Apostle James. His basic idea was that Christianity had lost its semitic background and become too intellectual within the Greek-Latin world. Our task today is to restore what has been lost in the universal Church, which during the past centuries was undergoing a process of "dehebraization", hellenization and latinization.

Fr. Daniel criticized doctrinal type of Christianity in which the faith had been submitted to the logic of doctrines⁹ He appealed for another type of religiosity and another model of Christianity. Without Israel there is no true

⁸ Bishop Z. Tranda. *W niewoli doktryny [In the Captivity of Doctrine]*. "Gazeta Wyborcza" January 4-5, 1997 p. 17.

⁹ Cf. K. Strzelecka OSU. *B'erit – Przymierze [B'erit – Covenant]*. Warszawa 1995 p. 117-136 (interview with Fr. Daniel); D. Corbacc. *Daniel – der Mann aus der Löwengrube. Aus dem Leben von Daniel Oswald Rufeisen*. Köln 1993; J. Turnau. *Daniel od Jakuba. Ojciec Oswald Daniel Rufeisen (1922-1998)*. "Więź" 42:1999 No. 7 pp. 60-65.

catholicity of the Church. The faith should be understood above all as confidence in God, always faithful (*emet*) to His promises. Man has to cling to Him (*lada' at et Elohim*) and in this way to know Him. The early judeo-christian Church of James offers some new possibilities also for ecumenism. Instead of stressing unceasingly the importance of dogmatic statements we should devote more attention to the biblical concept of faith and truth, which allows for more pluralism of interpretation.

The early Jerusalem Church was able to distinguish between essential elements of the Christian religion and the secondary ones, which should not be imposed on all believers (cf. Acts 15). Apostle Paul cared very much about unity with the Jerusalem community of Judeo-Christians. "The collection made for the saints", an "offering to Jerusalem" (1 Cor 16;1-2) is a remarkable expression of this bond of unity. The mother Church of Jerusalem cannot be forgotten. The drama of division of the Church should make us more sensitive to this dimension of our ecclesiological thinking.

The risen Christ ordered his disciples "to stay in the city" of Jerusalem (cf. Lk 24:49). These words could be understood, in a certain sense, as a commandment given to them not to move away from the Jewish roots. Our search for deeper foundations of unity among Christians has to take into consideration the very origins of Christendom and its semitic background, prior to the first division between Jews and Christians. The Hebrew Bible, as Gabriel Josipovici stressed some time ago, is characterized by its open character, richness of views, often contradictory ones. The reader himself has to reconcile them or simply to live with them¹⁰ This openness and variety of religious perspectives is one of the main features of judaism.

V THE NEED FOR DOCTRINAL RECTIFICATIONS

As I said earlier, Christianity has become too doctrinaire. It has run away from the doxological understanding of dogma in the ancient Church. Ecclesiastical doctrines need significant corrections. On the threshold of the new millennium one speaks willingly, especially in the Roman Catholic Church, about the necessity to confess guilts concerning wrong attitudes of the past, contradicting the Gospel of Christ. Pope John Paul II writes regrettingly in

¹⁰ G. J o s i p o v i c i. *The Book of God: A Response to the Bible*. New Haven-London 1988.

his apostolic letter *Tertio Millennio Adveniente* (1994) about those “painful chapters of history” to which the Church must return with a spirit of repentance. One such chapter was “the acquiescence given, specially in certain centuries, to intolerance and even the use of violence in the service of truth” (No. 35).

One should not forget that those wrong attitudes were based on theological doctrines and principles. They have to be examined more deeply in order to correct our attitude towards other Churches, faiths, different cultures, women and the rights of all peoples to freedom and human dignity. Many traditional interpretations were claiming a monopoly of the truth and of being the unique, necessary and only means of salvation. We need today to rethink profoundly the prevailing theologies used by the Church to justify even the right to invade, conquer other peoples and destroy their “pagan” religions. Thus for many centuries Christian theology was a powerful ideological support for the Western colonialism. It understood the mission of the Church as the salvation of the “infidels” by converting them to the Church even with the help of the colonial conquerors. During the penitential liturgy in the Basilica of St. Peter in Rome (March 12, 2000), John Paul II and other representatives of the Roman Catholic Church asked for forgiveness of such faults of the past.

Raising such issues is an expression of faith and loyalty to the Church. They must be answered, clearly and quietly. All the present-day efforts related to a necessary “purification” and conversion of the Church remain till now on the level of ethics. They do not touch ecclesiastical doctrine as such. It is clear that an ethically orientated self-criticism is a very important step, but for ecumenism it is not sufficient. Ecclesiastical doctrines also need correction and rectification. This belongs to the ecumenical *desiderata* and remains an important task of ecumenical hermeneutics. As long as self-criticism and self-purification are limited only to ethical area, they will remain partial and insufficient, without decisive influence on ecumenism. The debate about the ministry of Peter and the primacy of the pope has already shown it quite clearly. There exists a constant tension between the normative beginnings and all what is today taught by the Church, very often far away from the real “hierarchy of the truths”, proclaimed by the Second Vatican Council (*Decree on Ecumenism* No. 11). The very idea of the ‘hierarchy of truths’ is one of the most challenging concepts for ecumenism.

The Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches published in 1990 an important study document

entitled: *The Notion of 'Hierarchy of Truths': An Ecumenical Interpretation*¹¹ It touches also the question of the hierarchy of the councils:

One sees several kinds of 'hierarchies' in relation to the authority of the church councils and to their contents. Most Christian traditions give special priority to the seven ecumenical councils of the early church. Some see also a 'hierarchy' among these seven councils, inasmuch as those which have formulated the doctrine of the mystery of Christ and of the Spirit within the communion of the Holy Trinity should as such hold a pre-eminent position in comparison with the other councils (No. 12).

This is a very cautious statement which leaves open the whole question of the "ecumenicity" of Western councils of the second millennium. What value do they have? What is their rank in comparison with the seven councils of the first millennium?

The problem is not a new one. It comes more and more often under consideration among theologians of different denominations. It may become one of the most decisive ones for the future of ecumenism. The first step was made already by pope Paul VI. In his letter to cardinal J. Willebrands (October 5, 1974) he termed the second council of Lyons as "the sixth of general synods held in the West"¹², avoiding thus to call it "ecumenical" It was a very significant precedent. One can see in it a clear sign for ecumenism.

The distinction introduced by Paul VI urges to further ecumenical investigations. The reconciliation of the Churches requires such an ecumenical re-lecture of what they have done in the situation of separation. An essential part of such a re-lecture would certainly be to distinguish clearly the general synods held both in the West and in the East after the schism of 1054, from the ecumenical councils received unanimously by the East and the West.

It is not easy to justify the fact, that the Western Church recognized for more than two hundred years the so-called Photian Synod (879-880) as an ecumenical council. It was a "successful council of union" and reconciliation between patriarch Photius and pope John VIII¹³ Only after the schism this

¹¹ *The Notion of 'Hierarchy of Truths': An Ecumenical Interpretation. The Church: Local and Universal.* Two Studies Commissioned and Received by the Joint Working Group between the Roman Catholic Church and the World Council of Churches. Faith and Order Paper 150. Geneva 1990 pp. 16-24.

¹² AAS 66:1974 pp. 620-625.

¹³ Cf. J. A. M e i j e r. *A Successful Council of Union: A Theological Analysis of the Photian Synod of 879-880.* Thessaloniki 1975; A. van B u n n e n. *Le Concile de Constantinople de 879-880.* "Contacts" 33:1981 pp. 6-40, 211-234; 34:1982 pp. 47-61; W H r y n i e-

recognition was withdrawn for the benefit of the Ignatian Synod (869-870) which until today is considered in the Catholic Church as an ecumenical council. It would be a great encouragement for ecumenism, especially for the Catholic-Orthodox dialogue, if the Photian Synod were recognized anew, through a common ecumenical effort, as the eighth ecumenical council. The problem of the *Filioque* dealt with successfully during that synod could also be solved in a better atmosphere.

An important feature in the Orthodox-Roman Catholic dialogue in the 1980-ties was an admission that the unity of the basic faith can exist in a diversity of traditions, customs and practices. The principle of a sound pluralism was found precisely in the decisions of the Photian Synod. It determined that each See would retain the ancient usages of its tradition¹⁴ Many unhappy events and controversies would have been spared, had the Churches followed that rule in subsequent ages. True unity does not mean uniformity. Rather, it requires respect for a legitimate diversity.

This challenge is a vital part of the kenotic vision of a more paschal ecclesiology. The fear of losing prestige and authority continues to paralyse unduly our ecclesiological thinking. Christ's *kénosis* becomes at present perhaps the greatest challenge to all of us.

VI. KENOTIC ETHOS AND THE QUESTION OF UNIVERSAL PRIMACY

In his reflections on how to "unblock" ecumenism, to come out of the unending discussions and to accelerate the process of restoring the Christian unity, metropolitan George (Khodr) of Mount-Lebanon has briefly outlined not long ago a kenotic way of dealing with this painful issue. He writes:

There exists a doctrinal hypertrophy to which the West has set out in a solitary or unilateral way. I see no other way to reduce it, than to draw the line between the seven ecumenical councils and the councils which succeeded them here and there. During the second millennium the Church has not been reunited. Let it be reunited now on the basis of the ancient unique foundation. The unity resides in the encoun-

w i c z. *Focjański Synod*. In: *Encyklopedia Katolicka*. Vol. 5. Lublin 1989 col. 353-356.

¹⁴ See the agreed statements in the document of Bari (1987, No. 53) and of Uusi Valamo (1988, No. 52).

ter and the communion of the Churches among them, and not in the fusion which annihilates a part [...]¹⁵

The issue of ecumenical councils in the life of the Church awaits a thorough examination. The Church does not have all the answers ready-made. She must continuously search for truth, as the primitive Church struggled during the first Jerusalem council (Act 15) over the burning doctrinal and disciplinary issue of the Mosaic Law. It is worth recalling that the Council of Constance (1414-1418) decreed during its 39th session that there should be regularly scheduled councils every ten years. Had that decree been observed, the history of the Reformation would have been perhaps different.

Ecumenism requires new forms of exercising the papal primacy, open to the new situation, more credible and more acceptable. Those new forms in which the Petrine ministry can be exercised have the chance to be found only then, when the past and current forms are evaluated in a real dialogue as inadequate and in need of a thorough reform. This requires vision, courage and, above all, self-limitation. When the early Church was able to abandon the requirements of the Mosaic Law in relation to the gentiles, this demanded surely an admirable amount of courage. Trusting in the Holy Spirit, the Apostles ventured that historical decision, in spite of the intense opposition to it.

Our situation today as regards the primacy seems to be comparable to the situation in the primitive Church. Will the Roman Catholic Church find enough courage and vision to face a major change? I personally hope that it will be the case, but nobody knows when. Such a decision must demand much care, effort, attention and, let me repeat it – self-determination and self-denial. Such is the cost of Christian unity. Precisely here one has to speak in biblical terms about the true *kénosis*, self-limitation and self-renouement.

Kénosis means here concretely the structural reform of the papacy. The lesson of history should not be forgotten. A purely moral reform would not be sufficient to bring about a real change. Since the Middle Ages the situation of the Latin Church cried out for this sort of change. Yet a general wish for reform turned out to be ineffective. Many reform-minded people were not able to change the structures themselves. In a way they were prisoners of the doctrine, of the system and of their own inadequate vision. The moments of

¹⁵ Métropolitte G e o r g e s (Khodr). *Vers Rome ou avec Rome?* "Service Orthodoxe de Presse" No. 193 (décembre 1994) pp. 30-32, here 32.

good will passed, the historical *kairós* was squandered, the drama of division became even more acute and disastrous.

A really strange legacy of the historical period since 1054 is the fact that the Latin Church has become, as Yves Congar put it, "a Roman patriarchate extended throughout the world" (*un patriarcat de Rome étendu dans l'ensemble du monde*)¹⁶ Many papal actions and decisions apparently primatial belong in fact to the power of the pope as Latin patriarch, and concern only those within his patriarchal jurisdiction. Theoretically speaking, the West could surely have developed more patriarchates. In that case the ecclesiastical picture would be more balanced in relation to the East. The East has its own patriarchs. I am fully aware of the difficulties of other Christians, when the pope is regarded as a supreme head and immediate pastor. The West developed through the centuries according to the logic of ecclesiastical centralism and has remained the one huge Western patriarchate.

To consider the pope as the patriarch of the West seems until today "a too much neglected reality"¹⁷ One could however imagine a new structure of the reconciled Church in the form of a concrete collegiality of patriarchates both already existing (Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch, Jerusalem, Moscow, Belgrade, Bucarest, Sophia), and those which should still be established, e.g. Canterbury, in Africa, North and Latin America, Australia, Asia or some more. Is this only a utopian vision? It is surely not when one thinks in the light of ecclesiology of the ancient Church.

Perhaps in the future the Roman Catholic Church will find enough courage to begin a structural reform which requires a new logic of thinking. It means that it should respect autonomy of local and regional Churches, give up the claim for the supreme immediate jurisdiction over those Churches and understand the primacy as a real *diakonía* for the unity of the Sister Churches. For the time being it rather seems to be only a dream or a song of the future. Nothing indicates that it could be realized before long.

On the threshold of the third millennium such thoughts are nevertheless justifiable. A kenotic type of ecclesiology requires courage and theological imagination. Have we enough of both of them? Be that as it may, we have already now the possibility to restore patiently theological balance to eccle-

¹⁶ Y C o n g a r. *Diversités et communion. Dossier historique et conclusion théologique*. Paris 1982 p. 9.

¹⁷ I d e m. *Le pape comme patriarche d'Occident. Approche d'une réalité trop négligée*. "Istina" 28:1983 pp. 374-390.

siology, through dialogue and sincere desire to learn from and with each other in the atmosphere of mutual respect and confidence. New insights are possible. An example of this can be a recent document *The Gift of Authority* agreed upon by the Second Anglican-Roman Catholic International Commission.

A common exploration of the way in which the ancient Church managed to maintain her unity can bring some encouraging insights and new impulses. On the other hand, however, this should not be considered as panacea able to solve all our problems. One has to be realistic. We live today in different circumstances. Ancient structures cannot simply be automatically re-created as such. Faithfulness to the past must take into account the present situation. One can only hope that growing patiently in ecumenical *koinonía* the Churches will be able to discover the appropriate new structures of primacy and collegiality.

There must exist something like principle of ecumenical subsidiarity. The very word 'subsidiarity' derives from the Latin word *subsidium* which means support or help. So far other Christians do not believe that synodality, collegiality and subsidiarity are being practiced in the Catholic Church in a sufficient and effective way. In his encyclical letter *Ut Unum Sint* (No. 87), pope John Paul II has himself declared unambiguously: "We must take every care to meet the legitimate desires and expectations of our Christian brethren, coming to know their way of thinking and their sensibilities"

VII. HOW TO OVERCOME THE HERMENEUTICS OF SUSPICION?

The meagre reception of the documents agreed upon in dialogue tells us how difficult it is to overcome mistrust, fears and negative memories of the past. Reception requires an experience of a true encounter, a new thinking and a new mentality. A true encounter influences the very way of thinking and understanding, broadens horizons and becomes a learning process. In this way the process of reception launched by dialogue may contribute to a new shape of ecumenical spirituality which takes into account the whole of Christian experience. It is a spirituality of the whole (*kat'hólon*), frequently demanding a correction of our confessional way of thinking.

The dialogue between the Roman Catholic Church and the Evangelical Lutheran Churches has contributed in the last years significantly to broaden the very understanding of the expression "Sister Churches", used so far only

in relation to the Orthodox Church. In mutual relationships between Catholics and Lutherans this expression has become almost a self-explanatory concept.

The clarification and reinterpretation of doctrines is surely necessary, but it cannot be done hastily on the way of pure relativism and liberalism. The first step would be to cease to suspect that the others live in the state of permanent errors and distortions of the Christian faith. One can only support those who stress today the urgent need to develop a positive hermeneutics of confidence and trust which paves the way for a mutual recognition. Who acknowledges the others in their otherness stands on the side of a personalistic conception of the truth which is to be found above all in Christ and in the Holy Spirit. Ecumenism is a matter of confidence. Christ and the Holy Spirit are present and active in other Churches. Hermeneutics of suspicion is easily inclined to judge that the others do not live in truth. It leads to the doctrinal fundamentalism and exclusivism in understanding truth and salvation. Hermeneutics of confidence on the contrary: it dares to affirm that other Churches are Sister Churches, inspite of various differences¹⁸

The division in the Church has something tragic in it, especially when it causes mutual alienation, distrust, conflict, hostility and hatred. But it remains only at the surface of church life, and is concerned primarily with the canonical and institutional dimensions of Christian existence without reaching the inner ontological depths of mystery of the Church. The divided Church still remains the only Church of the risen Lord in the history of humanity. Human sins have no power to destroy reality which comes from God Himself and which He sustains unceasingly. As God's gift, the unity of the Church is stronger than any divisions. The risen Christ and the Holy Spirit remain on both sides of each division in the Church. Doctrinal errors ascribed to the others do not prevent Christ from being present and acting in their Churches. God is no prisoner of doctrines and liturgical rites. Christ and his "sovereign Spirit" (*Pneuma hegemonikón*) will never be at our command.

The late Fr. Jerzy Klinger († 1976), a Polish Orthodox theologian, often pointed to an extra-discursive and non-intellectual character of our personal

¹⁸ About the ecumenical situation after the declaration *Dominus Iesus* and the *Note on the Notion of Sister Churches* issued by the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith (2000) see W H r y n i e w i c z. *Kościół mniej siostrzane? Wokół dokumentów Kongregacji Nauki Wiary* [*Less Sisterly Churches? Around the Documents of the Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith*]. "Więź" 44:2001 nr 2 pp. 46-60.

contact with the truth of Christ. In his study devoted to the problem of intercommunion he asked:

But are the ideas of the members of the Orthodox Church always sufficiently informed? How much ignorance can hide in the individual consciousness of every man! But this will not prevent him from having access to the sacraments, because the Church makes up for the deficiencies of an individual conscience. Could not the Church, understood in a broader sense, make up for the deficiencies of entire communities [...]?¹⁹

According to this, the entire Church can make up for the insufficiencies and defects of our communities. Personally I would rather say that it is Christ himself who does it in his divine freedom and goodness. In the same study Fr. Klinger referred also to the Holy Spirit and to the miracle of unity that already exists:

If we honour the Holy Spirit [...], the eucharistic *epiklesis* should bring us out of the narrow limits of the static language of our liturgy, show us the real presence of Christ wherever He is to be found [...] Then, in the fire of the real presence of Christ all excommunications between the Churches melt away, wherever they still exist²⁰

There is one possible benefit of the present ecumenical crisis: it forces us to reconsider seriously the very foundations of the dialogue. If it is to be a meaningful dialogue, it should reconsider the ecclesiological roots of the crisis and rediscover the living sense of the Holy Spirit acting in all Sister Churches. With this sort of approach it would be much easier to overcome the separation of the existing denominational Churches without willing to suppress them. The only realistic way to visible unity of the Churches leads through the mutual recognition of Sister Churches.

This concerns also the issues of evangelization. Ecumenism and evangelization are closely linked. They cannot be treated as alternatives. A competitive kind of evangelization which has no real concern for reconciliation among Christians is simply dishonest and false. With our proclamation of the Gospel we are not allowed to export our division and rivalries. Evangelization should serve all God's people, who are not simply property of the Church. A true

¹⁹ J. K l i n g e r. *Le problème de l'intercommunion: point de vue d'un orthodoxe*. In: *Vers l'intercommunion*. Paris 1970 pp. 69-118, here 92-93.

²⁰ *Ibid.* p. 111, 114 (see above note 2).

evangelization brings hope and gives courage to overcome fear. As St. Clement of Alexandria said long ago, “the whole of religion is protreptic” (*protreptiké gar he pása theosébeia*), i.e. it gives confidence and encouragement²¹ One has to give up an exaggerated tendency towards church-making. Evangelization should be understood within a broader perspective, that of the Kingdom of God. His Kingdom is the ultimate horizon of evangelization. Such an approach can help to overcome the mentality of proselytism and competition.

VIII. ECUMENICAL APORETICS AND PASCHAL SPIRITUALITY OF HOPE

Difficult situations are a constant feature of human existence. They determine the dramatic or even tragic character of human life. In this context one has to speak about Christian “aporetics”, expressed in a dialectical way by St. Paul in two words difficult to translate: *aporoúmenoi all’ouk exaporoúmenoi* (2 Cor 4:8). Their meaning is clear: we are perplexed, but not driven to despair; we see no answer to our problems, but never despair. To put it more descriptively: we do not know what to do, situation seems to be desperate, we worry, there is no solution to our difficulties (literally: no way out), but nevertheless we do not give up. In a nutshell: we are helpless, but not desperate; full of doubts but not plunged in grief.

The Apostle characterizes in this way his own missionary situation. He does not think it is only short and transitional one (cf. 2 Cor 4:8). His words show an essential element of Christian existence as such, a dialectical coexistence of helplessness and courage to hold on, which could be applied to ecumenism as well.

Ancient stoics used to see *aporía* in all questions. For this reason they were called aporetics. *Aporía* means an apparently insurmountable difficulty or contradiction. The Apostle did not hesitate to apply this term to himself (*aporoúmenoi*). Christians everywhere know difficult situations from their own experience. In this sense they really are *aporoúmenoi*. On the other hand they trust in God, believe in the power of Christ and His Spirit. They know that Christendom is not only religion of the Cross, but also religion of the

²¹ C l e m e n t o f A l e x a n d r i a . *Paidagogos* I, 1, 3. SCh 70 p. 110.

Resurrection, hope, courage and joy. The experience of difficulties and dark sides of existence may lead to pessimistic feelings. Ecumenism is no exception in this respect. Christians know that there will be here on earth no total victory over helplessness. This consciousness bewares them of a naive and false optimism which overshadows all bitter realities of life. Ecumenical aporetics is an integral part of the kenotic dimension of ecclesiology

Only God can solve the final aporetics of our existence. For this reason pessimism has to cede to a difficult paschal optimism. Paschal spirituality is a spirituality of hope. It looks not only at the crucified Jesus, but also at the risen Christ who is the only source of our hope and confidence.

The difficult ecumenical process of reconciliation and mutual forgiveness cannot be accomplished without an ethos of compassion. We are too severe in our judgements. We think too readily of differences in our understating of the one faith. Of course, one should not underestimate the importance of doctrinal dialogues. But far more difficult to handle are centuries of living out of communion, very often marked by the spirit of intransigence, harshness and lack of compassion. Out of our controversies and disputes we have built institutionalized divisions and have acquiesced in those divisions. This approach, deprived of the sense of solidarity and compassion, has proved itself unable to discover the essential content of the faith in another Church.

Today we are more aware that the ecumenism of the mind is not enough. We need also the ecumenism of the heart, and that is not possible without compassion. The papyrus of Oxyrhencos quotes a little known saying of Jesus (his *logion*) in reference to Mc 9:40, which was not assumed to the canonical Gospel: "Who is now far away from you, tomorrow will be near" Nobody is lost for God and his Kingdom. A truly paschal hope does not forget about the tomorrow of God's Reign which has no limits.

Who reads the witness of mystics, will find in it the negation of all fundamentalism and spiritual parochialism. He will discover their mercy and compassion embracing everyone and everything. Mystics can descend into the tragic depths of human nature but do not abandon a hope that "all shall be well", as Julian of Norwich wrote in the 14th century²² That is why hope

²² J u l i a n of N o r w i c h. *Showings*. Transl. from the critical text with an introduction by E. College, OSA and J. Wals, SJ. Mahwah, New Jersey 1978 p. 149 (The Short Text, Chapter XIII).

for the salvation of all is so close and dear to them. Thanks to this they are the best allies of genuine universalism²³

The universalism of hope is a cure for all temptation to appropriate the gift of salvation for the benefit of one's own religious community. Such a hope is on the side of ecumenism. The duty of expecting salvation for all may then become an eschatological motive of love and concern. It is not only a passive hope that some day God will be able to reconcile all the creation and gather it in the harmony of the new world. The hope of universal salvation relates also to the present day. Already today it requires a new attitude towards all people whom we will meet beyond this life. It is a universal hope, free from the limitations of any ecclesiastical particularisms.

The soteriological universalism of hope requires a new mentality and a new pedagogy. Christendom contains in itself a vast and creative potential which has so far not been fully discovered and appreciated. It does not matter that our roads towards the Infinite are different. He himself remains the greatest hope for every one. This awareness is the great liberation for ecumenism and universalism. Christianity of the future will find more eschatological optimism in understanding the final destiny of humanity. It will become a more paschal Christianity of hope – of a truly universal hope which brings joy and confidence.

*

In our Churches there is still too much tactic and diplomacy which overshadow the kenotic ethos of Christianity. This tactic manifests itself in paralysing caution, in passing things in silence, in waiting and delaying. Perhaps it is motivated, behind all appearances, by fear that one has to recognize the fundamental identity of the faith and life of other Churches. Who understands his or her own identity in opposition to the others, will always hesitate to acknowledge and to accept their full Christian identity.

I am no pessimist. One century of ecumenism cannot heal what many centuries of mutual alienation have separated. I believe that it is possible to overcome at least the greater historical schisms among the Churches. The controversial differences can be dealt with, through a patient and persistent dialogue, in such a way that they lose their dividing character. The example

²³ Cf. W H r y n i e w i c z. *Dramat nadziei zbawienia* [*The Drama of the Hope of Salvation*]. Warszawa 1996 p. 149-170.

of the common Catholic-Lutheran declaration on the doctrine of justification signed in Augsburg (October 31, 1999) is an encouraging sign of hope. God himself will not cease to urge us to be more courageous. *Polýphonós ge kai polýtropos ho Sotér!*

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KENOZA CHRYSYTA A EKLEZJOLOGIA

S t r e s z c z e n i e

Pomimo widocznego kryzysu, jaki przeżywa dzisiaj podzielony Kościół, chrześcijanie wierzą, że Bóg jest większy od ludzkich słabości. Najpełniej tę moc pokazał dramat Krzyża zakończony Zmartwychwstaniem. Czy chrześcijaństwo umie jednak z tego wydarzenia czerpać siłę i nadzieję dla przezwyciężenia wszelkich trudności? W swoim artykule prof. Wacław Hryniewicz OMI proponuje wizję Kościoła bardziej uwrażliwionego na kenotyczny i paschalny wymiar chrześcijaństwa, pokazuje także, jakie znaczenie taka wrażliwość może mieć dla jedności chrześcijan i przezwyciężenia kryzysu ekumenicznego. Wśród proponowanych postulatów Autor akcentuje przede wszystkim zmianę sposobu myślenia, dla którego może być pomocne głębsze przeżycie i uwzględnienie paschalnego paradygmatu przezwyciężania trudności poprzez rezygnację z dominacji. Rozważania koncentrują się wokół następujących tematów:

I. W POSZUKIWANIU PASCHALNEGO PARADYGMATU. Cisza Wielkiej Soboty może służyć jako wzorcowy symbol każdej ludzkiej beznadziejności. Jest to trudna lekcja zdobywania wewnętrznej wolności przez uświadomienie, że pod milczeniem Wielkiej Soboty kryje się wydarzenie zstąpienia do piekieł Chrystusa, próbującego przyciągnąć i przemienić chorą ludzką wolność. Niewidzialny i pozornie nieobecny Bóg działa i uczy poprzez ciemności kryzysów. Można to również zastosować do życia podzielonych Kościołów, dążących do zgody i jedności.

II. BOSKA KENOZA I LUDZKA WOLNOŚĆ. Autor zwraca uwagę na sposób, jaki Bóg wybiera, aby dotrzeć do człowieka. Nie ma to nic wspólnego z jakimkolwiek naciskiem, siłą czy nakazem. Bóg zostawia przestrzeń dla ludzkiej wolności, zapraszając do odpowiedzi i współpracy. Autor wskazuje na fakt, że zbawienie dokonało się w poniżeniu, słabości, miłości i oddaniu. Wyzwalająca miłość Boga jest miłością samo-ogółacającą się. W przeniesieniu na problemy ekumeniczne – kenoza rozumiana jako bezinteresowność, samoograniczenie i zaufanie jest osądem konfesyjnych egoizmów i koncentracji na sobie. Wszyscy należymy do Chrystusa, który umniejszył samego siebie; stąd kenoza jest imperatywem dla Jego Kościoła.

III. POWRÓT DO KENOZY – TO NAGŁĄÇA POTRZEBA. Każdy rodzaj dominacji jest obcy duchowi Ewangelii. Teza, że w naszych Kościołach ciągle żyje duch sporu uczniów, który jest większy między nimi, nie potrzebuje poparcia. Wystarczy przypomnieć o wadze, jaką mają w dialogach ekumenicznych takie zagadnienia jak prymat, autorytet, struktury synodalne czy relacje między Kościołami. Chociaż są to kwestie, które trudno ominąć, Autor zwraca uwagę, że inne sformułowanie doktryny lub zmiana struktur mogą być opóźniane w nieskończoność. Nadzieja budzi uczucie odpowiedzialności i potrzeby ponaglenia procesu wzajemnego nawrócenia Kościołów. Jedność kosztuje i każda strona musi być gotowa do poświęcenia. Lubelski ekumenista podkreśla, że gotowość do samoograniczenia musi iść w parze z odwagą. Bez odważnej wizji kenotyczna eklezjologia pozostanie tylko słowną deklaracją.

IV W WIĘZACH DOKTRYN. Nawrócenie się Kościołów ku sobie jest tym trudniejsze, że istnieje pewien rodzaj eklezjologicznej niewoli doktryny. Jesteśmy więźniami naszych dogmatów, teologii, konfesyjnych różnic i rozbieżności. Autor przywołuje ciekawą interpretację przypowieści o dobrym Samarytaninie, dokonaną przez bpa Z. Trandę. Przechodzący kapłan i lewita minęli potrzebującego nie tyle z niewrażliwości na cierpienie, ale stawiali, być może, wobec dylematu sumienia – pomóc znaczyło stać się nieczystym i niezdolnym do służby świątynnej. Takie spojrzenie pokazuje opozycję Chrystusa wobec więzów doktryny i reguł. Prof. Hryniewicz w tej sytuacji postuluje za Danielem Osfaldem Rufeisenem odnalezienie i powrót do hebrajskich korzeni religii, gdzie wiara jest przede wszystkim zaufaniem Bogu, przyłgnięciem do Niego. Judeo-chrześcijański Kościół św. Jakuba proponuje nowe możliwości dla ekumenizmu. Zamiast akcentować ważność doktryny więcej uwagi należałoby poświęcić biblijnej koncepcji wiary i prawdy, jaka pozwala na pluralizm interpretacji.

V POTRZEBA DOKTRYNALNEGO OCZYSZCZENIA. Chrześcijaństwo odeszło od doksologicznego rozumienia dogmatu starożytnego Kościoła i stało się zbyt doktrynerskie, co niejednokrotnie prowadziło do błędnych postaw opartych na teologicznej doktrynie. Proces oczyszczenia i nawrócenia, któremu Kościół rzymskokatolicki tak chętnie się obecnie poddaje, pozostaje na razie tylko na poziomie etyki. Chociaż należy dostrzec wartość tego kroku, jednakże dla ekumenizmu to za mało. Potrzebna jest samokrytyka i oczyszczenie także na poziomie doktryny, w czym nieocenioną rolę może mieć idea hierarchii prawd. Autor dotyka także kwestii hierarchii soborów i orzeczeń soborowych, a w tym problemu Synodu Focjańskiego, który przez przeszło dwa stulecia uznawany był za sobór ekumeniczny. Jego uznanie nie tylko pomogłoby rozwiązać problem *Filioque* w lepszej atmosferze, ale przypomniałoby cenne intuicje, jakie znajdują się w orzeczeniach tego synodu dotyczących różnic w tradycji, zwyczajach i praktyce Kościołów.

VI. ETOS KENOZY I PROBLEM POWSZECHNEGO PRYMATU. Jednym z często obecnie padających postulatów jest budowanie jedności przez odwołanie się do dorobku pierwszych siedmiu soborów powszechnych. Powrót do tradycji Pierwszego Tysiąclecia nie jest jednak panaceum zdolnym rozwiązać wszystkie problemy. Ekumenizm potrzebuje nowych form sprawowania prymatu papieża, a szansa ich znalezienia pojawi się wtedy, gdy dawne i obecne formy zostaną ocenione jako nieadekwatne. Kenoza oznacza tu reformę strukturalną papieżstwa. Prof. Hryniewicz jako jedno z możliwych rozwiązań proponuje rozwinięcie struktury patriarchatów, gdzie przy znacznej autonomii Kościołów lokalnych, prymat byłby rozumiany jako diakonia dla jedności Kościołów.

VII. JAK PRZEZWYCIĘŻYĆ HERMENEUTYKĘ PODEJRZLIWOŚCI? Pierwszy krok na drodze do przewyciężania podziałów – to przestać podejrzewać innych o ciągłe błędzenie

i wypaczanie doktryny chrześcijańskiej. Nagłaça staje się potrzeba rozwinięcia hermeneutyki zaufania. Ekumenizm jest sprawą pewności co do tego, że Chrystus i Duch Święty działają również w innych Kościołach. Podział pozostaje tylko na powierzchni życia Kościoła, nie sięga wewnętrznej, ontologicznej głębi jego tajemnicy. Uznanie innych Kościołów za siostrzane jest również niezbędne w ewangelizacji – blisko z ekumenizmem związanej. Ewangelizacja nie rozumiana w szerszej perspektywie Królestwa Bożego i prowadzona w atmosferze współzawodnictwa jest nieuczciwością.

VIII. EKUMENICZNA APORETYKA I PASCHALNA DUCHOWOŚĆ NADZIEI. Aporia to sytuacja bez wyjścia, ale nie beznadziejna. W życiu chrześcijan, szczególnie zaangażowanych ekumenicznie, poczucie bezsilności jest codziennym doświadczeniem. Z drugiej strony zostaje ufność Bogu i wiara w moc Chrystusa i Jego Ducha. Autor proponuje trudny paschalny optymizm, etos współodczuwania i solidarności, jak również ekumenizm serca, którego najlepszymi nauczycielami są mistycy.

Prof. W Hryniewicz kończy swoje refleksje nadzieją, że pomimo taktyki i dyplomacji, których w naszych Kościołach ciągle jest zbyt wiele, przynajmniej największe podziały zostaną w końcu przewyciężone.

Streściła Alicja Chrin

Słowa kluczowe: kenoza Chrystusa, eklezjologia, doktryny chrześcijańskie, ekumeniczna aporetyka, kwestia powszechnego prymatu.

Key words: Christ's *kénosis*, ecclesiology, Christian doctrines, ecumenical aporetics, universal primacy.