

**«Kenosis» in God?
Hans Urs Von Balthasar's Reflection Underlying
«Theodramatik», the Second Part of his Trilogy**

Summary

In numerous ways did Hans Urs von Balthasar attempt to portray the infinite mystery of the Trinitarian God, the mystery beyond human comprehension. Among others, the issue is addressed in *«Theodramatik»*, constituting the second part of his imposing trilogy. While reflecting upon the *«kenosis»* of the Trinitarian God, Balthasar detects an exceptional opportunity of approaching the mystery of the life of the One and Triune God and all that takes place within Him. At the outset of Christo-drama he goes so far as to mention a specifically-conceived *«kenosis»* of the Trinitarian God. If Balthasar embarks on this type of reflection, however, he does so in accordance with the principle of analogy, with reference to the infinite alterity of the mystery of God regarding all things created. In Balthasar's opinion, it is necessary to categorically exclude in God any experience of kenosis seen as lowliness and suffering, self-emptying and emaciation in earthly terms. The author develops his reflection in four perspectives. Starting with the mystery of the Son being begotten of the Father (p. 1), Balthasar explores the mystery of creation (p. 2) and then focuses on making a covenant with the created man while making allowance for human sin (p. 3) only to venture to discuss the «third kenosis» of God by way of incarnation until His death on the cross (p. 4).

Key words: “Theo-drama”; the first kenosis of the Trinitarian God; the Son being begotten of the Father; the second kenosis; the freedom of creatures and a covenant with the created and sinful man; God's third kenosis: the incarnation until the death on the cross.

**The Need for Transformation of the Spiritual Conduct of Priests
as a Response to Contemporary Challenges**

Summary

This article pursues the analysis of the forms of priesthood as confronted with contemporary challenges. First, the author reflects on the present-day reality in order to identify the tendencies therein, which may well be rephrased as challenges. These include secularism, the subjectification of faith and of moral values as well as extreme individualism and the reification of the human being. The study has led the author to demonstrate the attitudes of priests in response to these issues. The optimal approach on the part of the priests to each of the challenges involves a more profound clinging to Christ, an increased zeal in preaching Christ's redemptive message as well as expressing solidarity with every single human being seen as offering him / her support in his / her every need.

Key words: taking up the challenge; priesthood; priestly spirituality; spiritual transformation.

The Significance of the Twofold Dimension of the Eucharistic Epiclesis

Summary

The twofold dimension of the Eucharistic epiclesis creates space for deeper reflection on the mystery of the Eucharist. The epiclesis is closely connected with every celebration thus constituting a dynamic element of each sacramental event. It also pervades a congregation in a singular way preparing the faithful for the reception of the Holy gifts. In the Church, the epiclesis is always awarded its rightful place during liturgical celebrations, which strengthens the faith in the authenticity of the twofold nature of sanctification. It is solely through a humble profession of the powerful workings of the Holy Spirit accompanying the bringing of the gifts to God that we are rendered worthy of participating in the mystery of the Church.

Key words: The Epiclesis; the Eucharist; the Holy Spirit; communion; transformation.

***NOVA ET VETERA.* On the Exploration of the Shape of Christian Ethics by Polish Thinkers as Inspired by the 100th Anniversary of Poland Regaining Independence**

Summary

The article emphasizes the tension existing in ethics between what is old and classic, on the one hand, and all that is new and original although not yet sanctioned by tradition, on the other. The text explores both classic ethical writings coupled with established moral beliefs and the latest approaches to moral issues. The author reflects on how to reconcile the “old” constituting to some extent the very identity of the ethics with the “new” stemming from contemporary challenges. The article is an attempt at addressing the issues concerning Christian ethics faced with *nova et vetera*. The author ponders over how to preserve one’s identity through referring to the respectable writings of the past while opening up at the same time to new ethical perspectives as well as to the challenges that arise as the civilisation advances. These questions are examined with regard to Polish Christian ethics spanning the last hundred years in terms of a synthetic analysis of what is original and scientifically relevant. Indeed, the recently celebrated centenary of Polish independence provides an excellent opportunity for the above considerations.

Key words: Christian ethics, tradition, change, identity.

Ut mens nostra concordet voci nostrae
**The origins of the phrase and its primary theological
and spiritual meaning**

Summary

St. Benedict included an important principle concerning prayer in his Rule: “That our mind may be in harmony with our voice”. Although the precept refers directly to the prayer of the monastic clergy, it can also be applied to all spoken prayers. Deriving from the biblical tradition (the psalms in particular), it emphasises the necessity of the coherent connection between what is external (words, voice) with the internal (soul, heart) since it is only this kind of prayer that is worthy of God. For the adequate understanding of the principle, it is necessary to trace its origins and fundamental meaning, specified by the Church Fathers and the primary monastic rules. Having grown up amid this ancient experience, St. Benedict laid down a successful codification of his Rule drawing on the ‘*Ut mens nostra concordet voci nostrae* precept’. This article explores the origins and the primary meaning of the above guideline. Over the centuries, the accuracy and the message of the recommendation has become a benchmark for its application in the new spiritual and cultural circumstances.

Key words: St. Benedict, principle, prayer, breviary, singing, heart, thought.

**Mary: an Antidote for a Culture of the Temporary
in the Life of Faith**

Summary

We are faced with the crisis of values which until recently were considered inalienable. Among others, we have fallen victim to a culture of the temporary. “We live [...] in the so-called culture of fragmentation, of the temporary”. Within a Christian way of life, many people succumb to whatever is temporary and immediate. In order not to lose our Christian identity, we look to Mary. She is a “textbook of values”, a “letter”, in which God said what man should be, or rather what man should become. Consequently, for Christians, Mary is a repository of values - as well as faithfulness and consistency in the life of faith. This article explores three major points. The first one casts light on the main sources of the modern culture of the temporary like practical relativism, superiority of economical principles over the moral ones, earthly logic, increasingly numerous anti-testimonies, which make it more difficult to preserve one’s faith and vocation. Then, the author goes on to present the main dimensions of Mary’s faithfulness: 1) the search: conscious faith in pursuit of comprehension 2) acceptance: trust in and obedience to God; 3) consistence: obeying God’s will on a daily basis; 4) perseverance: lifelong fidelity. The third chapter portrays Mary as a teacher of fidelity and perseverance. She teaches us how to make right and final choices in our lives. She persuades us not to be afraid of lifelong commitments. Ultimately, what is essential is being strong in faith, steadfast in hope and persistent in love.

Key words: Mary, a culture of the temporary, life of faith, perseverance, faithfulness.

The Mystery of Man in the Light of the Holy Trinity According to Kallistos Ware

Summary

Without doubt, Metropolitan Kallistos Ware ranks as one of the most important contemporary Orthodox theologians. His personal path of faith, knowledge of the treasures of Christian Eastern and Western thought and pastoral experience make him an outstanding and interesting witness of the presence of the Orthodox Church in the modern world. Among the various themes undertaken in his books, articles or spiritual conferences, the mystery of man figures most prominently. The texts mentioned bear profound testimony to biblical and patristic Christian anthropology. We are faced with a vision of man created in the image of God - God, who is not a loner, but, who constitutes a community of people loving one another. He is the communion of people who, rather than existing for their own sake, interpenetrate one another in love. Man as a person can only realize himself in a similar way: through love seen as dedication, ecstatic reaching out to others as well as something sacrificial and kenotic. Being loved and loving one's God and neighbour in this way means inheriting eternal life (cf. Luke 10: 25-28).

Key words: Kallistos Ware, the Holy Trinity, theological anthropology.

The Protology of Homeric Centos – in Search of The Nature of Original Guilt

Summary

The article is an attempt at answering the question about the nature and consequences of original guilt as portrayed in Homeric centos. It consists of two parts. First, the author explores an understanding of the original guilt and its impact on pre-Christian Greek literature with reference to the Bible. The second part analyses the above mentioned notions in Homeric centos i.e. poetic works drawing abundantly on both Christian tradition and mythological motives in "The Iliad" and "The Odyssey". Homeric centos exemplify a poetic theology that focuses on the grace of redemption rather than on human sin.

Key words: Homeric centos, original condition, original guilt, Homeric poems.

Cardinal Robert Sarah's Interpretation of the Liturgical Reform

Summary

The article takes up the analysis the ever relevant question of liturgy and of the liturgical reform implemented after the Second Vatican Council. The point of departure for the author's considerations is Martin Luther's stance. Luther came to believe that the doctrine of the justification by faith could most easily reach the masses by means of liturgy in accordance with the principle, *lex orandi – lex credendi*. Consequently, he rejected the Catholic understanding of the sacraments and produced his own liturgical texts to be later termed "German Mass". Already prior to his papacy, Benedict XVI would often refer to Martin Luther's and other Reformation leaders' views, contesting them and explaining the significance and relevance of the renounced rites and truths of faith. Joseph Ratzinger/Benedict XVI perceived Protestant beliefs as an apt counterpoint to the Catholic theology of the Holy Mass. It is to this end that he devoted the bulk of his writings. Following the Second Vatican Council, Ratzinger would frequently deplore the distortions in administering the sacraments, particularly the Eucharist and encouraged towards a proper interpretation of the intentions of the Council Fathers. It is Cardinal Robert Sarah, the Prefect of the Congregation for Divine Worship and the Discipline of the Sacraments since 2014 that has taken up on Benedict XVI's concern with maintaining the beauty and truth of the liturgy. Like the Pope emeritus, the Cardinal from Guinea holds the view that we are still in need of appropriate understanding and implementation of the assumptions of the liturgical reform as outlined in Sacrosanctum Concilium, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. He believes that the Mass of St. Paul VI and the Tridentine Mass should merge into one form combining the finest elements of both rites.

Key words: liturgy, Cardinal Robert Sarah, Joseph Ratzinger, Benedict XVI, Sacrosanctum Concilium, Summorum Pontificum.

The Power and the Mission as Important Elements of the Sacrament of Holy Orders in the Context of Catholic-Anglican Dialogue

Summary

The sacraments instituted by Christ are the signs of His grace whereby people are enabled to enter the reality of salvation. The Eucharist and priesthood are the two closely related sacraments and this has always been stressed as crucial for understanding the essence of the sacramental ordo. This perception underwent a slight theological modification following the Second Vatican Council in that reference in now being made to the choosing and sending of Christ Himself, who is the highest priest. Each priest is consecrated and sent to proclaim the word of God and to ensure that we receive God's grace. The article reviews both traditions in order to identify a possible platform for dialogue with the Anglican community as far as the interpretation of the sacrament of Holy Orders is concerned.

Key words: sacraments, Holy Orders, the Church, spiritual power, mission, the Anglicans.

A Contribution to the History of the Carmelites of the *Strict Observance* at Markowice in the 18th century

Summary

The article presents rosters of monks fulfilling some of the functions at the Carmelite Monastery in Markowice during its affiliation to the Greater Poland Province of the Carmelites of the strict observance in the 18th century. The source database consists of two manuscripts from the collection of the acts of chapters and definitorium (the Archive of Carmelite Friars in Cracow *Decretale provinciae strictioris observantiae*, ref. 168/397 as well as the National Archive in Bydgoszcz, *Acta Capituli Provincialis Provinciae Maioris Poloniae(!) Sanctissimi Sacramenti...*, ref. 6/430/59). Principally, the rosters include the names of the superiors – priors and subpriors as well as other monks performing the most important functions – preachers, fraternity promoters, and the so-called *socii* of the Provincial Chapters. Drawing on the information provided by the above mentioned rosters the author offers a brief description of the monks. The article is accompanied by official rosters of convent members imposed by the respective chapters in the years 1721-1799.

Key words: Markowice, monastery, the Carmelites, the Greater Poland's Province of the Carmelites, *strictior observantia* – the strict observance.

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The Life and Writings of Bede the Venerable

Summary

Albeit relatively little known in his own country, Bede the Venerable is a scholar whose merits in the development of Latin-based Western Civilisation are indisputable. The Benedictine monk devoted all his life to scholarly works at the Monastery of Jarrow. His remarkably extensive literary output includes computistical and chronological writings, didactics, exegesis, historical works, as well as poems, homilies and letters. Having made his name as the author of the *Ecclesiastical History of the English People*, he came to be known as “the Father of English historiography”. Depicted in art both as a monk and a scholar, he is also represented in iconography, which is mentioned in the article.

Key words: Bede the Venerable, England, scholar, scholarly works, iconography.

Blessed are the Merciful –
Mt 5-7 as Interpreted by St. Thomas Aquinas

Summary

In the Introduction the author sets out to dispel some erroneous albeit widespread beliefs concerning St. Thomas Aquinas' university work. Contrary to popular belief, he never lectured on his *Summa Theologiae*. What he taught was the Holy Scriptures since in his days a theology professor, called magister in Sacra Pagina, dealt with the exegesis of the Holy Scriptures. The article portrays St. Thomas as an exegete of the Holy Scriptures with the emphasis on his commentary on the Gospel according to St. Matthew, on the acclaimed *Catena Aurea* and on the Psalms. The text under scrutiny is divided into four points: 1 – the Sermon on the Mountain; 2 – What is a beatitude?; 3 – Mt. 5-7 seen in context with regard to Lk. 6-36; 4 – Mt. 5-7 in the commentary on the Psalms and on *Corpus Paulinum*. In his commentaries on the Holy Scriptures St. Thomas analyses the particular words and presents the teaching concerning the given word, e.g. justice, mercy and then the virtues and the corresponding vices. Consequently, the commentaries are cross-thematic in various interpretations. St. Thomas' commentaries are confronted with the contemporary biblical commentaries, which enables us to discern the differences in the approach to the holy texts. It raises awareness of the wealth of the theological, biblical and spiritual thought of the Angelic Doctor. His thought is still topical and allows us to hold on to the teaching, morality and spirituality of the Catholic Church.

Key words: the Holy Scriptures, exegesis, beatitude, justice, mercy, virtues, salvation.

**The camp correspondence as the “unique” source portraying
the camp reality**

Summary

The letters written by the prisoners of the concentration camps during the Second World War constitute a singular historical source depicting their “everyday” life. The letters were subjected to official and strict rules imposed by the camp authorities. The regulations concerning the correspondence clearly determined its form and frequency. For the prisoners, letter writing was the only way of communication with their families and friends as well as the direct proof of their existence. The inmates could also take heart and build up their strength from the letters, which would equip them with renewed energy needed for survival. The rigorous rules regarding the correspondence and the harsh punishments administered for any breach of the regulations did not, however, discourage the prisoners from trying to write the truth. Many letters included cryptic messages to be interpreted by the addressees. The contemporary reader, aware of the camp reality and reading between the lines, can not only understand the direct content of the letters but also closely acquaint himself / herself with the camp reality as illustrated by the plight of the camp martyrs.

Key words: letters, a prisoner; a concentration camp; martyrdom; a historical source.