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The contribution of ecumenical theology to education in religious diversity Thessaloniki – 8 November 2022

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Suggestions



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From the Holy Gospel according to John (20, 1-2.11-18)

On the first day of the week, Mary of Magdala went to the tomb in the morning, when it was still dark, and saw that the stone had been removed from the tomb. Then she ran and went to Simon Peter and the other disciple, the one Jesus loved, and said to them: "They have taken the Lord away from the tomb and we do not know where they have placed him!".

Mary was outside, near the tomb, and wept. While she was crying, she bent down towards the tomb and saw two angels in white robes, seated one at the head and the other at the feet, where the body of Jesus had been placed. And they said to her: "Woman, why are you weeping?" ? "

He replied to them: "They took my Lord away and I don't know where they put him." Having said this, he turned around and saw Jesus standing; but she did not know that it was Jesus.

Jesus said to her: «Woman, why are you weeping? Who are you looking for?". She, thinking that he was the keeper of the garden, said to him: "Lord, if you took it away, tell me where you put it and I will go and get it." Jesus said to her: «Maria!». She turned and said to him in

Hebrew: "Rabbi!" - which means: «Master!». Jesus said to her: «Do not hold me back, because I have not yet ascended to the Father; but go to my brothers and tell them: "I go up to my Father and your Father, my God and your God" ". Mary of Magdala went to announce to the disciples: "I have seen the Lord!" and what he had told her.

Mary does not recognize the Risen One



God remains beyond everything, therefore also in a certain way "beyond the event Jesus", and in this sense God is first and last horizon; God almost transcends Jesus himself with his life, death and resurrection: God is "beyond" Jesus of Nazareth.

Is it possible to have a single version of Jesus' mission, of his memory in today's churches?

The Church has always known that Jesus can only have many faces. We have in fact four Gospels.



The understanding of what Jesus reveals through his person and his activity remains always incomplete.

At best, it remains open.

Gisbert Greshake is right when, speaking of the Trinity, he affirms that "the about of the allusion is more pertinent to the state of things than speaking with extreme precision".



Starting from the first verses of the Letter to the Hebrews, where we read that God manifested himself in different ways to the fathers, we can ask ourselves if these "different ways" cannot be precisely the different religious traditions and cultures...



On the one hand, God wants the salvation of all humanity: Jn 3, «God so loved the world that he gave the only Son; God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but so that the world may be saved through him». His will is therefore clear. On the other hand, it remains clear that the universal Savior is Jesus himself and no one else but him.

The knot is Christology, says Jacques Dupuis, which needs to be renewed: «The fact that Jesus Christ is - and remains - the universal Savior is not the same as saying that other religious traditions cannot perform the function of paths of salvation for their followers. Here are again the two dimensions to keep together».

- Jesus Christ unique and universal

The will of God is that this salvation is really for everyone.

It is therefore necessary in some way to try to overcome the conviction of a monolithic declaration of the truth of which only Christ is a witness and of which only Christians are the custodians.

The Logos has always incarnated, not only in the first century.

It is necessary to speak of a "theological incarnation": God has always been the one who comes to humanity, the one who therefore incarnates himself in the language and history of all men and women.



- Many and different ways of salvation

God continues to seek humanity through the history of humanity itself; starting from Genesis 3, after sin, when God asks his creature "Where are you?".

The creator of salvation is God himself: "For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this does not come from you, but it is a gift from God; nor does it come from works, so that no one can boast of it "(Eph 2: 8s.).

Ultimately it is Luther's "sola gratia".



For Dupuis this has become the foundation of the theology of religions: in Jesus Christ, God's saving power embraces all humanity.

Vatican II says: "with the Incarnation the Son of God united himself in a certain way to every man" (Gaudium et Spes 22).

Then we can really speak of the presence of the mystery of Jesus in other religious traditions, beyond the "borders" of Christianity itself.



So why the church?

The answer is intuited in Lumen Gentium 1:

"The church is like a sacrament, that is, a sign and instrument of intimate union with God and of the unity of the whole human race".

The church is to be considered as an instrument, as a sacrament of God.

The various religious traditions in the world are the many ways in which God - in advance of the coming of his Son - has disclosed himself to the nations and in which he continues to operate today.



The Kingdom of God already present in history
is the mystery of salvation realized in Jesus
and universally operative among men and women.

This task does not end only in proclamation, but includes,
as integral parts of evangelization,
interreligious dialogue and the commitment
to justice and the liberation of mankind.

In short, in the church what God is carrying out
in the whole world is visibly manifested: his Kingdom.

To say that the church is like "the (universal) sacrament of
salvation" (LG 48) means to underline how it cannot be a
sign of itself, but of the salvation that comes from God.

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- Towards a church that is a credible sign of the Kingdom

While Christ is in the glory of God,
the church continues its path in kenosis.

"The center of the church's evangelization mission is the construction of the Kingdom of God and the building of the church to be at the service of the kingdom of God. The Kingdom is therefore wider than the church" (Federation of Asian Bishops' Conferences).

The church is called to be servant and poor.