

PUBLICATIONS OF LUTHER-AGRICOLA SOCIETY B 16

MIKKELI 1986



The Seventh Theological Conversations between
the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland
and the Russian Orthodox Church
Mikkeli, June 3rd—11th 1986

Photo:
Matti Hamalainen

Edited by

HANNU T. KAMPPURI

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HELSINKI 1986

FOREWORD

In June 1986 theological discussions were held in Mikkeli, Finland, between the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Russian Orthodox Church. These were the seventh theological discussions to be held between the churches in question. The first conference was held in 1970. The subjects under discussion at the Mikkeli meeting were two in number; both were closely related to the issues dealt with in the previous discussions. In general there have been two themes at the discussions — one dogmatic and the other socioethical. Since 1974 the central theme for dogmatic study has been soteriology. The dogmatic theme at the Mikkeli meeting — holiness — has arisen out of the discussions at previous meetings. The issue of peace has in all the discussions, in one way or another, been considered from a socio-ethical viewpoint. On this occasion questions relating to peace were studied in the light of the ethic of the Sermon on the Mount.

Although the time for evaluating the Mikkeli meeting still lies in the future, we can nevertheless state now that it was the meeting of friends. The word 'friend' refers in this context both to the churches and to their representatives. Relations between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Finnish Evangelical Lutheran Church can nowadays be described as friendly. Of the representatives of these churches present at the discussions at Mikkeli many had been participants in all the discussions from the very beginning. On this occasion, however, the discussions were preceded by sad tidings. Only a few days before the meeting we received the sorrowful news of the death of Antony, Metropolitan of Leningrad. He was due to act as head of the Russian delegation. His place was taken, however, by Metropolitan Philaret, who had been head of the Russian delegation at the first discussions.

It is not the purpose of this book to evaluate the results of the Mikkeli meetings. Rather it offers the material from the Mikkeli meeting to as wide an ecumenical readership as possible, to provide a basis for evaluating its results. This book comprises all the papers delivered at the Mikkeli meeting, together with the final documents. Bearing in mind the

ISBN 951-9047-21-2

ISSN 037-3095

Vammala 1987 Vammalan Kirjapaino Oy

possible readership the book is published in English. Although English was not used at all in the meeting itself, it was nevertheless agreed beforehand that the parties would arrange for English translations to be made of their papers. The heads of the delegations had agreed on this matter at their previous meeting in Leningrad in 1983. By this practice we wish to promote the wider ecumenical reception of this dialogue between the two churches.

Espoo, Finland, All Saints' Day, 1986

Hannu T. Kamppuri

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COMMUNIQUE

on the seventh theological discussions between the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church.

The seventh theological discussions between delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland and the Russian Orthodox Church took place in Mikkeli, at the Varsavuori Hotel on June 3—11, 1986.

The first discussions were held at Sinappi, Turku in 1970, the second in Zagorsk in 1971, the third at Järvenpää in 1974, the fourth in Kiev in 1977, the fifth in Turku in 1980, and the sixth in Leningrad in 1983.

The members of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church were as follows: Metropolitan Philaret of Minsk and White Russian, Hon. D.D. (Halle-Wittenberg), Director of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate (Head of the delegation); Archbishop Mikhail of Vologda and Veliky Ustyug, Hon. D.D. (Åbo Akademi), Professor at the Leningrad Theological Academy; Archimandrite Yannuary (Ivlev), Docent of the Leningrad Theological Academy, Secretary of the Council of the Theological Academy; Dean Bogdan Solko, Superintendent of the congregations of the Moscow Patriarchate in Finland, Vice-Rector of the Holy Trinity Cathedral of Alexander Nevsky Lavra in Leningrad, Lecturer at the Leningrad Theological Academy; Dean Vladimir Mustafin, Professor at the Leningrad Theological Academy; Professor Alexei Osipov, from the Moscow Theological Academy; Professor Konstantin Skurat, from the Moscow Theological Academy; Grigory Skobei, B.D., Member of the Department of External Church Relations of the Moscow Patriarchate, and Sergei Raskazovsky, B.D., Lecturer at the Leningrad Theological Seminary.

Pastors Viktor Lytik and Gennady Bartov, scholarship-holders at the Faculty of Theology of the University of Helsinki, and Zinoviy Krivich, a student at the Leningrad Theological Academy, acted as secretaries to the delegation.

The members of the delegation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland were as follows: The Most Revd. John Vikström, Archbishop of Turku and Finland, Hon. D.D. of the Leningrad Theological Aca-

demy (Head of the delegation); The Right Revd. Kalevi Toivainen, Bishop of Mikkeli; The Right Revd. Samuel Lehtonen, Bishop of Helsinki; Dr. Kaarlo Pirinen, Professor Emeritus of the University of Helsinki; Professor Jukka Thuren of Åbo Academy; Professor Eino Murtomäki of the University of Helsinki; Revd. Maunu Simenmäki, General Secretary of the Church Office for Foreign Affairs; Docent Juha Pihkala, Director of the Church Training Centre; Docent Hans-Olof Krivist, Assistant Professor at Åbo Academy; Docent Eeva Martikainen, Researcher of the Finnish Academy.

Acting Professor Fredric Cleve of Åbo Academy and Dean Kosti Laihtinen of the Deanery of Hamina acted as observers.

The secretaries of the delegation were Docent Risto Cancell, secretary to the Archbishop, the Revd. Lorenz Grönvik, D.D., Director of the Theological Division of the Church Office for Foreign Affairs, the Revd. Hannu T. Kumpulainen, Licentiate in Theology, Perpetual Curate of Olari Church, the Revd. Simo S. Salo, Licentiate in Theology, General Secretary of the Diocese of Mikkeli, the Revd. Reino Tiliäinen, Licentiate in Theology, Vicar of St. John's Church, Helsinki, the Revd. Jaakko Kuusela, Chaplain of St. Mary's Hospital, Matti Kotiranta, a student of theology, Minna Vahliho Secretary at the Church Office for Foreign Affairs, and Kaija Tolvanen, Secretary to the Bishop of Mikkeli.

Ms. Helena Pavinsky, Dean Arvi Karpov and Pastor Matiaslav Mogiliansky acted as interpreters. The Russian texts were typewritten by Ms. Marina Latschinoff, B.Sc. (Eng.).

The information service of the Church of Finland was represented by Ms. Anneli Janhonen, B.D., Head of the Press Department of the Church Information Office.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland invited the following persons to participate in the meeting as observers: from the Orthodox Church of Finland, Bishop Tikhon of Joensuu and Pastor Veikko Purmonen, lecturer at the Finnish Orthodox Theological Seminary; as representatives of the Finnish Ecumenical Council, Bishop Paul Verschuren of the Roman Catholic Church in Finland, and Erkki Verkko, Mission Director of the Finnish Free Church. Professor Nils-Hoell of the Church of Norway also participated in the meeting as an observer.

During the discussions the delegates constantly turned to the Triune God in prayer. A Lutheran communion service was held on Wednesday,

June 4th in Mikkeli Cathedral. Bishop Kalevi Toivainen officiated, assisted by the clergy, and Bishop Samuel Lehtonen preached the sermon. An Orthodox liturgy was held on Saturday, June 7th in Mikkeli Orthodox Church. It was conducted by Metropolitan John of Helsinki, Archbishop Mikhail and Bishop Tikhon, assisted by the clergy. During the liturgy Metropolitan John preached the sermon. On Sunday, June 8th both delegations were present at a service in Mikkeli Cathedral, where Bishop Kalevi officiated, assisted by the clergy, and Archbishop Mikhail preached the sermon. During the discussions morning and evening devotions were held following the traditions of both churches.

The governor of Mikkeli province, Uki Vuolainen, arranged a reception in honour of the delegations on Wednesday, June 4th. On Thursday, June 5th the town of Mikkeli arranged a reception for the delegations in the town hall. The delegations visited Bishop Kalevi Toivainen's home on Saturday, June 7th. On Sunday, June 8th the delegations visited the farm of municipal councillor Esko Pekonen. On the same evening the delegations were present at a church evening in Lähemäki Church, where Dean Voitto Huotari gave a talk on the Finnish revival movements, and Metropolitan Philaret gave a greeting to the congregation. Afterwards the delegations visited the home of Simo S. Salo, General Secretary of the diocese of Mikkeli. On Monday, June 9th the delegations were invited to a supper offered by the cathedral chapter of Mikkeli and the Russian delegation at the Terri manor house. On Tuesday, June 10th the delegations took part in a trip to Ristiina, Savonlinna and Kerimäki, arranged by Gustav Björkstrand, Minister of Culture and Science.

When he opened the meeting Archbishop John Vikström welcomed the participants with the following words: »As we now for the seventh time begin serious theological discussion there are two important themes before us: firstly 'Holiness, sanctification and the saints' and secondly 'The Sermon on the Mount and the churches' work for peace'. In our discussions we shall examine in the manner already established the central questions of our faith, and on this occasion in particular the problem of holiness, sanctification and holy people, and in second place the important question of peace. These two subjects are closely connected. The holy will of God is that peace should reign on earth. The saints also take part in the work for peace. On the basis of the general priesthood all

Christians are called to work as peacemakers in their own surroundings.» In his speech Archbishop Vikström exhorted the participants in the meeting to honour the memory of Metropolitan Antony of Leningrad and Novgorod, who died recently. Metropolitan Antony had taken an active part in the preparations for these discussions. Archbishop Mikhail replied to Archbishop Vikström's speech on behalf of the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church.

Archbishop Mikhail read to the participants in the meeting a letter sent by His Holiness Pimen, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia. In it the Patriarch greeted the meeting and drew attention to the fact that what the Orthodox and Lutheran parties had in common in the theological question to be considered was an awareness of the fact that holiness is a gift of the Holy Spirit.» His Holiness expressed his conviction that this meeting was likely to strengthen the common service of our churches in building peace.»

The meeting sent a telegram of greeting to the President of Finland, Mauno Koivisto. The meeting also sent a telegram of greeting to His Holiness Patriarch Pimen of Moscow and All Russia. In the telegram congratulations were sent to the Patriarch on the fifteenth anniversary of his institution consecration as patriarch. The meeting also sent a telegram to the head of the Finnish Orthodox Church, Archbishop Paul of Karelia and All Finland.

On the agenda of the meeting were two themes:

1. Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints
2. The Sermon on the Mount and the Work of the churches for Peace in Today's World.

Bishop Kalevi Toivainen and Professor Jukka Thuren from the delegation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland read papers on the theme of 'Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints'. Bishop Toivainen's subject was »Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints, with special reference to the General Priesthood (the Priesthood of all Believers)«, and Professor Thuren's title was »Sanctification according to the New Testament«. The lecturers from the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church were Archbishop Mikhail, on the subject »Holiness, Sanctifica-

tion and the Saints», and Professor Konstantin Skurat, on the subject »Holy Preachers in North-West Russia and Eastern Finland».

Assistant Professor Hans-Olof Kvist from the delegation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland delivered a paper on the theme »The Sermon on the Mount and the Work of the Churches for Peace in Today's World«. Professor Alexei Osipov from the delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church delivered a paper on the subject »Peacemaking as the Fulfilment of the Will of God in our Time, in the Light of the Sermon on the Mount».

The papers stimulated lively discussion both in the plenary sessions and in the working groups.

The results of the discussions are included in the two summaries appended to this communiqué. These deal with the two themes in question.

Both parties stated with gratitude that the doctrinal discussions between the churches formed a complete and continuous unity. On this occasion also it was possible to build upon the achievements of previous meetings.

The delegation of the Russian Orthodox Church drew the attention of the participants in the discussions to the fact that in 1988 one thousand years will have passed since by God's grace the Russian people accepted holy baptism. In the discussions the common wish was expressed that through this forthcoming celebration the rich spiritual treasures of the Russian church should become better known throughout Christendom.

The discussions were held in a spirit of sincere love, mutual respect and open trust. The participants in dialogue are convinced that theological discussions serve the cause of friendship between our peoples. While remaining faithful to their own religious heritage, our churches have been able by their contacts to promote peace and mutual understanding between nations.

The parties are of the unanimous opinion that theological discussions should continue.

The parties in the discussions concluded their work with gratitude to

Almighty God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit, and together expressed their faith in the influence and guidance of the Holy Spirit in these meetings.

Mikkeli, June 11th, 1986

Philaret
Metropolitan of
Minsk and White Russia

John Vikström
Archbishop of Turku
and Finland

SUMMARY on the theme of

Holiness, Sanctification and the Saints

1) Holiness is one of the basic concepts of religious and spiritual life.
2) Holiness is the holiness of God. God is holy, because He is God. His holiness makes man tremble and at the same time attracts him (mysterium tremendum at fascinosum).

3) Holiness in its absolute fullness is characteristic of God and only of Him. Any holiness in His creatures is relative and limited. Although it cannot be compared to the holiness of God, it has its origin in Him. Because holiness is characteristic of God, it cannot be defined, any less than God can. However, it is revealed and given in God's revelation in all its forms.

5) The holiness of God can be considered as the fullness of his characteristics, passing human understanding, only part of which is known to us from God's revelation.

6) God created man holy, when He created him in His own image. This image was corrupted by the Fall, whereby man lost his holiness. The Fall of man is reflected in the whole cosmos (Rom. 8:20—22). In Christ, the New Adam, the Christian becomes a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). This foreshadows the renewal of the whole of creation.

7) Everything that God has created belongs to Him. God chose one people from among the nations to be His own and consecrated it (Ex. 19:5—6). The Church, the new people of God, is holy (1 Pet. 2:9), because it is the Body of Christ.

8) The believing members of the Church are also holy, because they partake of God's holiness. At the same time, however, they are sinners, because their faith and love are imperfect (1 Jn. 1:8).

9) Holiness in the world of man is not the same as sinlessness; rather liberation from sin is to be regarded as a fruit of sanctification. How-

ever, every sin violates the Christian's holiness, as illness breaks a person's health.

10) Sanctification is participation in the holiness of God. Sanctification is life in fellowship with God and Christ and the Holy Spirit living in man. »As thou didst send me into the world, so I have sent them into the world. And for their sake I consecrate myself, that they also may be consecrated in truth» (Jn. 17:18—19). »The glory which thou hast given me I have given to them, that they may be one even as we are one, I in them and thou in me, that they may become perfectly one, so that the world may know that thou hast sent me and hast loved them even as thou hast loved me» (Jn. 17:22—23).

11) People have a share in sanctification when in the sacrament of baptism they are joined through faith to the mystical body of Christ. They become members of the Church of Christ. Then the holiness received creates the necessary requirements for salvation, in other words it has a decisive soteriological significance.

12) Sanctification takes place in the Church, where the Holy Spirit works in the Word of God and in the holy sacraments. Christians must constantly return in repentance and penitence to the holiness of God received in baptism. In the Church the Holy Spirit gives us forgiveness of sins, life and salvation. Sanctification is continuous growth in the knowledge of God's grace and of Christ, but at the same time in the knowledge of one's own sinfulness.

13) All the members of the body of Christ are his representatives in the world. God's people are a holy priesthood (1 Pet. 2:5, 9), who offer thankofferings to God, proclaiming His good works and serving their neighbour in love (Phil. 2:17; Rom. 12:1; Heb. 13:15—16).

14) Without a Spirit-inspired effort to carry out God's commandments no sanctification takes place in man (Mt. 7:21; Phil. 2:12—13). Sanctification also includes good works, which are a fruit of faith produced by the Holy Spirit.

15) Christians whose faith has produced rich fruits in this life and who are held in high regard because of their good works should be remembered in the Church. They should be regarded with respect and love, and their example should be a source of instruction.

16) The holy men and women who have reached the goal are an example to the members of the Church militant. The saints give us an

example, because they followed Christ by faith (1 Cor. 11:1; Heb. 13:7). The Church militant unites with the Church triumphant in praise and prayer. The Orthodox party is convinced that salvation is furthered by turning to the highly-venerated saints as intercessors on our behalf, just as we, as members of the Church on earth, constantly turn to one another with prayer requests, and as we carry out those requests; likewise the saints accept our requests and carry them out in love.

17) The source of all holiness is God. The ultimate object of sanctification is man, but this process of sanctification also uses material reality as a channel. The requirements for sanctification are prayer and the Word of God received by faith. Without these there is no sanctification.

18) The world, where the sense of holiness is becoming obscured, needs more than ever the example of the saints, both those here on earth and those in heaven. »... that you may be blameless and innocent, children of God without blemish in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you shine as lights in the world, holding fast the word of life» (Phil. 2:15—16).

SUMMARY on the theme of

The Sermon on the Mount and the Work of the Churches for Peace in Today's World

1) The Sermon on the Mount expresses the law of God, the content of which is love. Christ, the Prince of peace, has fulfilled the law (Mt. 5:17).

2) By faith the Christian participates in Christ's fulfilment of the law, that is, love. In spite of sin and various temptations, Christians are called, according to the words of the Saviour (Mt. 5:9), to do good deeds aimed at making peace, and in every way to promote and serve peace in the world.

3) The Sermon on the Mount assures the Christian that God's care for him is unchanging. The love proclaimed in the Sermon on the Mount is not only directed towards friends, but also towards enemies (Mt. 5:43—48). The Sermon on the Mount is thus at all times a powerful stimulus to the work of Christians for peace.

4) The existence of the churches promotes the cause of peace in a fruitful way. Thus the churches have a great responsibility for the work of peace. They must systematically train their members in a spirit of peace.

5) The social work of the Church is called to serve justice and peace. Lasting peace is not possible, however, without a relationship of trust between nations. On the one hand, this presupposes that all peoples and states respect generally-recognized human rights and freedom. States should be responsible for meeting the essential, basic needs of men. On the other hand, relations between states are based on the principle that the abuse of rights and liberties is unacceptable.

6) The improvement of international law, alongside national legal systems, is of special importance. In this work the Christian has a great responsibility.

7) Christians should serve peace in different social positions and tasks. Their calling also includes taking part in the debate on justice and peace, and in the effort to solve current problems in this area.

8) Christians work for the strengthening of peace by praying, fasting and giving offerings, by participating in the work of the ecumenical movement, and by co-operating with all those engaged in the work for peace. Christians must support such political, diplomatic and other feasible peacemaking initiatives as are in harmony with justice and peace.

9) The churches participating in the discussions emphasize that in the present situation it has proved essential to develop international organizations to supervise the implementation of agreements on the limitation of nuclear armaments and the peaceful use of nuclear power. The churches reemphasize their earlier opinion on the necessity for general nuclear disarmament and the ending of the continuing arms race. They support the creation of a nuclear-free zone in Northern Europe. The churches oppose the development of existing weapons of mass destruction and the planning of new ones.

The churches consider their special task as being to maintain faith in the meaningfulness of and opportunities for working for peace as this millennium draws to an end, and hope that our world will be prepared to celebrate the 2000th anniversary of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ as a festival of reconciliation and peace.

HOLINESS, SANCTIFICATION AND THE SAINTS ESPECIALLY FROM THE STANDPOINT OF THE UNIVERSAL PRIESTHOOD

KALEVI TOIVAINEN

The official discussions between the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland have hitherto dealt with ecclesiological and soteriological subjects. In these discussions it has been recognised that although the religious life and the associated doctrinal and liturgical traditions of the two churches approach these issues from different standpoints, knowledge of the other tradition often opens up common perspectives in an unexpected way. At the same time each tradition comes to a clearer understanding of its own faith.

In the discussions, the questions which have had to be faced have been common to both sides, even when different emphases have been apparent in the answers. Thus in the consideration of God's saving work, it has been observed that the teaching of the two churches has the same end in view: the clarification of the nature of the perfect salvation which is the ultimate goal of God's saving work.

God's work in the church and the individual encounters an existential reality which is sinful, but which has been called to share in the perfect grace which has been freely given by God himself. What takes place in man in this encounter? How is God's sovereign work related to man's sinful reality? These questions move in the realms of both soteriology and anthropology.

But God is active in the church. Its members have different natural talents and gifts. They also have different tasks, and in these tasks live out their faith in different ways.

Holiness as God's Sphere of Power

The Lutheran Confessions do not contain any particular doctrine of

holiness. This may well be due to the fact that »the holy» is a basic religious concept, although to some extent it has different shades of meaning in the history of religions, philosophy of religion, the Bible and Christian theology.

In the history of religions, »the holy» generally means everything which man honours and worships. Holiness is divine force or power, which is more powerful than man and above him. This concept expresses the otherness of God and all that belongs to him, his »beyond-ness» or transcendence, over against the »thisworldliness» or immanence of man's world. The famous scientist of religion, Rudolf Otto described »the holy» as essentially a mystery which acts on man in two opposite ways. It is a frightening mystery, which terrifies and repels (for a Biblical example compare Isaiah's call-vision, Isa 6:1—5) and which Otto called *mysterium tremendum*. But »the holy» also fascinates and attracts. Otto called this aspect *mysterium fascinosum*.¹ In Isaiah's call-vision, the latter aspect is realised in the fact that the young prophet, in spite of his alarm, does not ultimately flee, but says: »Here I am; send me.» (Isa 6:8 NEB).

In the Bible, »the holy» is properly God, the source of all holiness. In Isaiah's call-vision, YHWH Sebaot, the Lord of Hosts, is three times called holy (*trishagion*; Isa 6:3). God is »the Holy One of Israel» (Isa 1:4). What has been set apart for God's use, in the cult, is holy. So the following were taken out of worldly life and set apart for God: the Tent of the Presence (Ex 29:44), the Temple (1 Kings 9:3), the altar and other cultic utensils and offerings (Ex 29:37, 28:38) and certain feast days which were called holy days (Ex 35:2). Cultic purity is regulated in the Old Testament in the special »Holiness Code» (Lev 17—26).

The message of the New Testament is built on the foundation of the Old Testament concept of holiness. The *trishagion* heard by Isaiah is repeated in the heavenly divine worship (Rev 4:8). In prayer it is asked that the holiness of God himself, or his »name» will be made apparent: »Thy name be hallowed» (Matt 6:9 NEB). Jesus Christ is holy (Mark 1:24, Luke 1:35), as is the Holy Spirit who fills the people consecrated to God, that is, the church, with holiness (Acts 2:4, 4:31).

In the Old Testament, holiness and the ethical demand bound up with holiness still did not always necessarily go together. But even here there

¹ Rudolf Otto, *Das Heilige*, 1917, 26. (28. Aufl. 1948).

are passages in which the connexion between them is seen: »Who may go up the mountain of the Lord? And who may stand in his holy place? He who has clean hands and a pure heart, who has not set his mind on falsehood, and has not committed perjury.» (Ps 24:3–4 NEB). This realisation that God's holiness places demands on man's ethical conduct was taken up by the prophets as the incentive for their critique of the religious practice of their time. The object of their criticism was not directly the cult, but unholy performing of its rites, and the officers performing the rites who did not remember God's holiness: »Spare me the sound of your songs; I cannot endure the music of your lutes. Let justice roll on like a river, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.» (Amos 5:23–24 NEB).

The holiness of God described in the Bible is an active, combative holiness, so that it has for this reason primarily the nature of an event. This can be seen in the fact that even in the revelation of the Old Testament, God's holiness is his activity in history in bringing about salvation and healing. He chooses Israel to be »a people holy to the Lord» their God (Deut 7:6, 14:2), and this very fact is the basis of the demand for holiness which is brought to the members of this nation: »Be holy, for I am holy» (Lev 11:44 RSV). In the New Testament there are three words for »holy» (*ἁγίος*, *ἅγιος*, *ἁγιος*), and so each has its own nuances of meaning. *ἁγίος* means the divine power or what has been consecrated to it, e.g. shrine, offering or priest. *ἅγιος* contains an ethical component: it emphasises the obligation to honour »the holy». *ἁγιος*, however, includes the idea of divine guidance and counsel, but also the idea of man's obligation and way of life. It is characteristic that the New Testament uses most often the word *ἅγιος* and its derivatives.²

Because the Reformation takes up the tradition of the Bible in this respect and does not attempt to give the concept of holiness any other content than the content it generally possessed, there were no particular disagreements between the Catholic Church in the West and the Reformers on this point. For this reason, the Lutheran Confessions cannot be shown to be using the word »holiness» (*sanctitas*, *Heiligkeit*) in any other than the generally accepted way.

² H. Seebass, *Heilig*. Theologisches Begriffslexikon zum Neuen Testament 1, ed. Lothar Coenen, Erich Beyreuther und Hans Bietenhard, 2. Aufl. Wuppertal 1979, 645–655.

According to the Lutheran understanding of faith, holiness is above all God's holiness. Thus participation in holiness means coming close to God. This takes place where the Word of God can work in man. »For the Word of God is the sanctuary above all sanctuaries, yea, the only one which we Christians know and have. For though we had the bones of all the saints or all holy and consecrated garments upon a heap, still that would help us nothing; for all that is a dead thing which can sanctify nobody. But God's Word is the treasure which sanctifies everything and by which even all the saints themselves were sanctified.» So Luther writes in his exposition of the Third Commandment* in the Large Catechism.¹

What belongs to the sphere of power of God's holiness is also holy. So according to the Augsburg Confession, »(our churches) teach that one, holy church is to continue forever».² With these words the Augsburg Confession takes up the words of the Apostles' Creed, »(I believe in) one holy Catholic Church». The church which is to continue forever is the universal Christian Church.³

As it belongs to God's sphere of power, the holiness of the church is »foreign» holiness, because it originates with God. The question of whether the church, and not only its members, can nevertheless be described as at the same time sinful, has been answered in various ways in the history of theology and Church history. Since Augustine the distinction has been drawn between the church as the Body of Christ and the church as comprising different kinds of people (*Domini corpus verum atque permixtum*), and the Church Constitution of the Vatican II Council »Lumen gentium» has raised once again the question of outer (*corpore*) and inner (*corde*) membership of the church. Then the question

* Translator's Note: The numbering of the Commandments follows throughout the Lutheran numbering.

¹ Die Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche (= BSELK). Berlin 1930, 583, 91. (English Translation in Triglott Concordia. The Symbolical Books of the Ev. Lutheran Church, German — Latin — English. Published as a Memorial of the Quadricentenary Jubilee of the Reformation anno domini 1917 by resolution of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Missouri, Ohio and Other States, St. Louis, Mo. 1921, p. 607).

² Augsburg Confession (= AC) 7, BSELK, 59–60, 1. (Triglott, 47).

³ H. Meyer — H. Schulte, Die Auffassung von Kirche im Augsburgischen Bekenntnis. Confessio Augustana — Bekenntnis des einen Glaubens. Paderborn — Frankfurt am Main 1980, 172–173.

arises of whether the «church of sinners» can also be a «sinful church».⁶ In considering this question from the Lutheran point of view, it is important to note that according to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, the holy Christian Church will always remain in effect. In this Article, the church is based on God's work in Word and Sacraments. The church is thus sinless in that which is constitutive of the church.

But the church is made up of people, and so it always needs reforming and renewing. The cleansing from sin which is begun by the influence of the Holy Spirit does not change the basic fact that sin remains even in a person who is justified by grace. Thus the life of a Christian up until his death is life in the forgiveness of sins. The holiness of the church is also «foreign» or bestowed holiness, and at the same time collective: holiness belongs to the whole church. Individual members of the church participate in holiness only as participants in the grace bestowed by the Word and Sacraments, of which the church is the guardian. The whole history of the church right back as far as the Old Testament men and women of faith shows that its «heroes of faith» have been sinning and sinful people.

Holiness is More Profound Knowledge of Grace

The expectation is already present in the Old Testament that the people of the One who makes holy must become a holy (sanctified) people. This expectation is based on God's activity: the Holy One of Israel is also the One who sanctifies. In the New Testament, Jesus Christ is the example and foundation of the holiness of Christians. «The One who called you is holy; like him, be holy in all your behaviour» (1 Peter 1:15 NEB). In the letter to the Hebrews he is the one who effects all sanctification (Heb 9) and also the Holy Spirit brings about sanctification in believers (Rom 15:16).

This is why the Large Catechism says: «For as the Father is called

Creator, the Son Redeemer, so the Holy Ghost, from his work, must be called Sanctifier, or One that makes holy».⁷

Lutheranism in no sense denies sanctification. Nor would this be possible, because the baptised are exhorted in the New Testament: «Aim at . . . a holy life, for without that no one will see the Lord.» (Heb 12:14 NEB). The exhortation to live a new life includes the prohibition against independent determining of one's own life, and for this reason baptism actually signifies this: «the old Adam in us should, by daily contrition and repentance, be drowned and die with all its sins and evil lusts, and, again, a new man daily come forth and arise, who shall live before God in righteousness and purity forever.»⁸ This is how the sacrament of Baptism is explained in the Small Catechism. Here reference is made to Rom 6:3, a crucial passage for the New Testament anthropology of Baptism. Behind this passage, as is well-known, lies the Lord's path of suffering, death and resurrection. The Christian is called to tread the same path and to identify with Christ who is our example (*exemplum*) (Phil 2:5–8).

But Lutheranism emphasises that sin remains in the believer. He is not in himself pure in this life, but he has to ask for purity continually. When Christ sends his Spirit into the hearts of believers, he is directing an internal, spiritual process (Augsburg Confession Article III). The Holy Spirit creates a new relationship with God: a person is born again to righteousness and thus the image of God in him is renewed, and as such he «becomes partaker of the divine nature» (2 Peter 1:4 RSV). But this does not mean a natural state of unlimited duration, but the presence of Christ: the renewal brought about by Word and Sacraments and taking place in faith and by faith. Thus faith comprises both a basic attitude and the concrete event and becoming apparent of faith. The person does not, however, achieve a state in which he would be able to avoid sinning (*posse non peccare*), but throughout his life he is in danger of falling into sin (*posse peccare*); he is even, in respect of his sinful man, constantly aware of temptation to sin (*non posse non peccare*). Furthermore we read in the Smalcald Articles (Of Repentance) as follows: «And in Christians

⁶ See Martin Schwonek, *Die Kirche der Sünder. Eine kontroversialtheologische Untersuchung von Kirche und Sünde. Theologische Arbeiten 28*, Berlin 1969. — It is noteworthy that the Church Constitution of the Vatican II Council states that the church is at once holy and constantly in need of purification (*sancta simul et semper purificanda*, *Lumen gentium*, 8).

⁷ BSELK, 654, 37 (Triglou, 687).

⁸ Small Catechism 11. BSELK, 516, 35 (Triglou, 551).

this repentance continues until death».⁹ »Daily repentance» thus has significant effects, and without it no-one can become a recipient of the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Just as Lutheranism emphasises the radical sinfulness of man also when speaking of new life, in the same way it associates this new life with justification by faith. Sanctification is not prior to justification, and is not the basis of justification; instead, the sinful, or ungodly, are justified: »(our churches) teach that men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith, when they believe that they are received into favor, and that their sins are forgiven for Christ's sake...»¹⁰

This faith cannot fail to have effects: »Also they teach that this faith is bound to bring forth good fruits, and that it is necessary to do good works commanded by God, because of God's will, but that we should not rely on those works to merit justification before God.»¹¹ In the Lutheran faith, the promise and obligation of the Gospel belong together, and what is more, the former is the basis of the latter. God does not demand anything from the believer which he has not already given to him. So striving, sanctification and new life are really nothing other than remaining in the promise of the Gospel: sanctification is a growing consciousness of sin and grace. Justification by faith is not merely formal; rather, faith is a living power. The gift bestowed by Christ does not remain unused. It is in motion and the stronger faith in Christ becomes, the stronger its influence becomes. So holiness is not what a person has achieved, but what he has received in the forgiveness of sins: »... men cannot be justified before God by their own strength, merits, or works, but are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith...».¹²

In its teaching on sanctification, in addition to a realistic understanding of man and justification by faith, the Lutheran church stresses a third point: although sanctification is one aspect of God's work of grace, which is founded on and grows out of the forgiveness of sins, sanctification does not take place in individualistic isolation, but rather sanctification

is a process taking place in the church. In his exposition of the third article

of the Creed, Luther writes that he gives his exposition the heading of »sanctification» because »through the same the Holy Ghost, with his office, is declared and depicted, namely, that He makes holy». In answer to the question of how sanctification takes place, Luther says that the Holy Spirit »effects our sanctification by the following parts, namely, by the communion of the saints or the Christian Church, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting; that is, He first leads us into His holy congregation, and places us in the bosom of the Church, whereby He preaches to us and brings us to Christ.»¹³ The state of grace is not only »for me», instead, my brother is also directly involved: sanctification is being committed to the Gospel and the church and participation in them, it is not separation and isolation. In the same way as participation in the Gospel is possible because it is preached in the church, so the work of the Holy Spirit also goes on in the closest possible association with the church, through whose »Word and Sacraments, as through instruments, the Holy Ghost is given, who works faith, where and when it pleases God, in them that hear the Gospel.»¹⁴

It is also clear that sanctification is not understood in these words as a higher degree of religious life, which would justify a Christian being distinguished from his brothers in the faith. Sanctification is God's care for the believer, the life of faith which God creates, deepens and makes grow by means of Word and Sacraments.

Seen from this point of view, sanctification achieves the same result as justification: man is »received into favor» and »sins are forgiven», the words used in Article IV of the Augsburg Confession to describe what happens when men »are freely justified for Christ's sake, through faith.»¹⁵ Understood in this way, justification is sanctification, and sanctification is man believing, and living a life liberated by Christ, and this life is brought about by the Holy Spirit using the vehicle of Word and Sacraments. But the Confessions also consider the same idea from a different standpoint, the standpoint of faith and good works. They state

⁹ Formula concordiae/Solida declaratio III, 40. BSELK, 927, 40 (Triglöt 893, 895).

¹⁰ AC 4, BSELK, 55, 1 (Triglöt, 45).

¹¹ AC 6, BSELK, 58—59, 1 (Triglöt, 45).

¹² AC 4, BSELK, 55, 1—2 (Triglöt, 45).

¹³ Large Catechism, BSELK, 654, 37 (Triglöt, 687).

¹⁴ AC 5, BSELK, 57—58, 2 (Triglöt, 45).

¹⁵ »...homines non possunt iustificari coram Deo propriis virtutibus, meritis aut operibus, sed gratis iustificentur propter Christum per fidem...» AC 4, BSELK, 55, 1 (Triglöt, 45).

that the fruit of good works follows renewal and sanctification. Seen from this more restricted point of view, sanctification is the good works which come about as a consequence of the faith of the justified person.¹⁶ But these, too, are entirely the work of the Holy Spirit.

In the life of faith, what is involved is the working out of the event of salvation in the church and its members. Thus sanctification is integrated into this whole in the same way as the Holy Spirit is integrated into the Trinity. The third person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, is both union (*unio*) and communion (*communio*) and in this sense the «social» form of the love of the Father and the Son. It is as if Christology is the introduction to Pneumatology, whereas Pneumatology is the decisive «covering letter» accompanying Christology. Christ can be confessed and received only when the Holy Spirit is at work. Christology is only possible if it is also open to Pneumatology, and Pneumatology only makes sense when it looks back to Christology. The most important question of Christology, who is Christ, only makes sense if Jesus Christ lives, that is, if faith is based on the pneumatic presence of Christ.

This unity of Christology and Pneumatology has implications for the interpretation of faith. Lutheranism emphasises that what has happened in Jesus Christ has happened once and for all. It has happened independently of us and outside us (*extra nos*). But on the other hand through this a process has begun which continues without ceasing. The aim of what has happened outside us is that something should happen in us (*in nobis*).

Thus the Lutheran interpretation of faith has both a Christological and a Pneumatological aspect. Faith is living by grace, and grace cannot be separated from Christ. But Christ becomes present in the Holy Spirit, in whom Christ is united with the believer and the believer with Christ. For this reason, when the Large Catechism speaks of the working out of sanctification, the essential nature of sanctification is that it «brings us to Christ». Then union (*unio*) with Christ occurs and communion (*communio*) with God is born. God is encountered and this is lived out in the fellowship of believers, which is upheld by the Word and Sacraments and called the church. As members of the church, believers are partakers of

Christ. Then their path becomes like the path trod by Christ, and the content of their life is that Christ should be formed in them (Gal 4:19 RSV). All of this is brought about by the Holy Spirit, who causes man to bend to the will of God, his Creator, from whom he has been separated by sin. The Holy Spirit works in love which is like the love of Christ, and so in his life of faith man is all the time the recipient of the Holy Spirit's guidance, consolation and strengthening. Thus the Holy Spirit ensures that justification and faith are the sovereign work of God: the Holy Spirit works faith «where and when it pleases God».

Article III of the Augsburg Confession sets out what the Reformation wished to teach concerning the Son of God. It is significant that the Article also mentions the work of the Holy Spirit and thus unites Christology and Pneumatology.¹⁷ Similarly, the passage from Article V quoted above concerning faith coming about by means of Word and Sacraments states that through them the Holy Spirit is bestowed. So by the agency of the preaching of the Word and the administration of the Sacraments the Holy Spirit brings about justifying faith, and this is why the church's ministry is «the ministry of the Spirit» (*ministerium spiritus*), which is a term employed in the Apology of the Augsburg Confession.¹⁸

By this activity the Holy Spirit safeguards the sovereignty of God's work, without which justification would be in danger of becoming based on man's activity. In the same way as the Incarnation and associated events are the work of the Holy Spirit, in which God became man and sent his Son, so the work of the Holy Spirit in the sanctification of man takes place in communion with God the Father and God the Son.¹⁹

The Church as the Communion of Saints

The New Testament calls church members «saints» (e.g. Acts 9:13), Rom 1:7). Christians were set apart to God from the world, and prayed during the Eucharistic celebration: «Let His Grace draw near, and let

¹⁶ FC/SD III, 40–41, BSELK 927, 40–41. See *Hans-Olof Krivi*, *Der Heilige Geist in den Bekenntnisschriften der evangelisch-lutherischen Kirche*. Kerygma und Dogma 1985, 210.

¹⁷ AC 3, BSELK 54–55, 4–5.

¹⁸ Apol 24, BSELK 366, 58–59 (Triglott, 405).

¹⁹ See further *Hans-Olof Krivi*, op. cit. Kerygma und Dogma 1985, 208.

this present world pass away. Hosanna to the God of David. Whosoever is holy, let him approach. Whoso is not, let him repent.²⁰

The concept of *communio sanctorum* or its equivalent *congregatio sanctorum* is one of the definitions used by the Augsburg Confession for the church. It has long had both a neuter (*sancta*) and a personal (*sancti*) sense, in other words, it has meant both holy objects and substances (sacraments) and people (holy people). The Augsburg brings these two together, in that Christ, who is present in Word and Sacraments, gathers around him a flock (*congregatio*) which hears his voice. It is important to realise, however, that the church is not, according to this, merely an association of like-minded people based on their personal holiness. According to Article VII of the Augsburg Confession, the church is 'the congregation of saints, in which the Gospel is rightly taught and the Sacraments are rightly administered' (*in qua evangelium pure docetur et recte administrantur sacramenta*).

This definition in the Augsburg Confession has two implications in the present context. Firstly, according to this, the church is a union between persons, created by the Lord who is present in Word and Sacraments and upheld by him by means of the Word and Sacraments. Thus the Augsburg Confession brings out the vertical communion (*communio*) and sharing in God's saving gifts, i.e. the dimension of the church as the Body of Christ and God's new creation.

Secondly, the church is a community of people: the people of God, the assembly of believers (*populus fidelis*), and it is by the power of Word and Sacraments the creation of God, the Bride of Christ, the Body of Christ.²¹ Seen from this point of view it is the assembly of people who hear the voice of the Good Shepherd.

These two perspectives are united in the Divine Service, in which the church is the assembly of people gathered around the Word and Sacraments who hear God's Word. So in Lutheranism the concept of 'communio of saints' (*communio sanctorum*) can include both a 'neuter' and a personal interpretation. Thus the holiness of the church and its members is God's work in Christ: the church and its members participate

in holiness by virtue of participation in the presence of God and the gifts of God, distributed in Word and Sacraments.

But the Lutheran Reformation, too, understood the church to be a united Whole; those who have reached the goal are also members, in company with those who continue to strive here on earth. So it is stated in the Augsburg Confession: 'Of the Worship of Saints (our churches) teach that the memory of saints may be set before us, that we may follow their faith and good works, according to our calling.'²² In other words, the Confession assumes as its starting-point the existence of a right honouring of the saints, even if it goes on to criticise those expressions of this which it regards as wrong. One of these, in its view, is the invocation of saints, and this position is based on the view that Christ is the only mediator and advocate. In opposing such practices, the Augsburg Confession rejects the custom which belonged to popular devotion in the Middle Ages of asking for the intercessions of various saints in times of particular need. On the other hand, the Augsburg Confession does not deny that the whole church is a praying community in which the prayers of those who have arrived are not without significance.

The Augsburg Confession views the saints as examples for the church militant on earth in the sense that in following their life and faith the church militant can in a way receive in advance its future with God. They are to be followed because they in their turn followed Christ in faith. The saints and the church on earth together make up the church at prayer. It was these features which the early church also valued in the saints.²³

In guiding each one of us to follow their faith in our own vocations, the saints point the way to a practical 'walk in holiness', or in theological language 'good works', in which faith is worked out in practice. The saints are people who in their faith do good works because they believe.

But the Lutheran church is certainly well aware that the language of 'the communion of saints' (*sanctorum communio, congregatio sanctorum*) does not apply specially to saints on earth. It is linked with the Biblical vocabulary, as when the Bible speaks of 'a cloud of witnesses' (Heb 12:1) immediately after remembering the heroes of faith in the Old

²⁰ Deliache 10:6 (English Translation in Early Christian Writings. The Apostolic Fathers, Translated by Maxwell Stanforth, London 1968).

²¹ Apol 7:5; 7:10. BSELK 235, 236.

²² AC 21. BSELK 81, 1 (Triglott, 57).

²³ Georg Kretschmar, Das christliche Leben und die Mission in der frühen Kirche. Kirchengeschichte als Missionsgeschichte I, ed. H. Frohnes und U. W. Knoch, München 1974, 97–98.

Testament, and when it refers to »the assembly of the first-born enrolled in heaven» (Heb 12:23 RSV) or mentions elders, who represent the church of the perfected and worship in company with heavenly powers (Rev 4:10, 5:11, 19:4). The Finnish Lutheran Church remembers them on numerous feast days for Biblical saints: the feast of the Blessed Virgin Mary, the feast of the Apostles (Fifth Sunday after Trinity), the feast of St. John the Baptist at Midsummer, the feast of St. Michael and All Angels (the Archangel Michael, from whom my home town of Mikkeli takes its name) and All Saints' Day. They are also referred to in the Eucharistic Service in the sung three-fold »Holy, Holy, Holy» (*Sanctus*), which is connected with the praise of the seraphs (Isa 6:3), and also in the preceding prayer: »For this unspeakable gift, in company with the host of heaven and all the saints, we praise and glorify your name». After the distribution of the Eucharist, the congregation prays, among other things: »Make us partakers with all your chosen saints of the Great Eucharist in Heaven». Our hymnbook also contains a number of hymns which take as their theme or mention the saints of God. Thus the Ecclesiastical Year, the Divine Service and its Celebration of the Eucharist, and also the hymns sung at it, all give abundant opportunities to remember the saints.

The Common (Universal) Priesthood is Following the Call

When the church is described in the New Testament, it is characterised as a temple, which is filled with and by the Holy Spirit. It has its own temple priesthood which offers spiritual sacrifices. So Christians are exhorted: »Like living stones be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ» (1 Peter 2:5 RSV). This call received by all Christians is termed the common or universal priesthood. The latter term is unfortunate in one respect, because not all people in general have the priesthood, but only the called, i.e. the church. The following Bible passages also refer to this: 1 Peter 2:9—10, 1 Cor 3:16—17, 2 Cor 6:16 and Eph 2:19—22.

The Reformation proclaimed the priesthood of all believers. Luther had developed this idea in his treatise addressed to the Christian nobility

of the German people (An der christlichen Adel deutscher Nation, 1520), and it appears in the Confessions²⁴ in the use of the term »ministry» (*ministerium*; the corresponding New Testament term is *diakonia*: Rom 11:13, 12:7, 2 Cor 4:1, 5:18, 6:3, Col 4:17) for the church office, whereas the word »priest» (*sacerdos*) was reserved for use of all the people of God in common. In doing this the Reformation did not intend to belittle the church's office, but saw it as existing for the establishment of faith²⁵ and claimed that the Evangelical churches had a higher view of it than their opponents.²⁶

The meaning of the common priesthood for the church's office can be seen in the church of today in the fact that only those possessing the former can be called to the latter. Every ordinance must be baptised and known for this Christian devotion. Those possessing the common priesthood present the call to the church's office, as no-one can be ordained unless he has a corresponding ministry which he will actually begin to exercise.

Through the mediation of the common priesthood, the church is present in the world. It was not the intention of the Reformation to secularise human life in the sense that it should thereby lose the standpoint of eternity, which would only belong to the religious sphere. On the contrary, by means of the idea of vocation the Reformation emphasised that man is in the place where God wants him to be when he is in his earthly task, and in this way his work takes on the character of divine service. But just as the common priesthood does not invalidate the church's office, so in the same way an earthly task does not make the church's Divine Service unnecessary.

In this way the common priesthood is the answer to the question which has occupied the church for centuries: what is genuine following of Christ? Jesus said to his own disciples: »For even the Son of Man did not come to be served but to serve, and to give up his life as a ransom for many» (Mark 10:45 NEB). So Jesus made himself an example (*exemplum*) of faith unfolding in love. Then God's holiness in all its seriousness and gravity means man being at the disposal of that love. A person receives a call to this at his baptism, which makes him a member of God's people

²⁴ Tractatus de potestate papae. BSELK 491—492, 69—70.

²⁵ AC 5, BSELK 57, 1.

²⁶ Apol 4, BSELK 175, 74.

of the New Covenant. With this he also receives a call to the universal priesthood which is the instrument of divine love for the whole of creation. This is a continuation of the Old Testament priesthood, as the Bible urges: «Be yourselves built into a spiritual house, to be a holy priesthood, to offer spiritual sacrifices...» (1 Peter 2:5). This offering of sacrifices is twofold: it is directed to God as a sacrifice of praise and to one's neighbour as a sacrifice of love, i.e. service. The task of a priest, true priesthood (*sacerdotium*) is sacrifice. This culminates in Christ's serving and self-sacrificing priesthood and continues in his own people, who are called in the above manner to be partakers of priesthood. In its explanation of the nature of this sacrifice the Apology of the Augsburg Confession states that Christ's death is the only atoning sacrifice, whereas the sacrifices of those who are redeemed by Christ, i.e. the saints, are «the good works of the saints», sacrifices of praise and service.²⁷

Besides their faith, another aspect of the saints which is important for the church militant, according to the Augsburg Confession, is the guiding of Christians to work out their faith in Christ in their own vocations. The word vocation (*Beruf, vocatio*) comes from the divine call, which gradually came to be understood in the Middle Ages as only a technical term for monkhood. In the early church, however, other vocations of saints were recognised, and it was even characteristic of the saints honoured in the early church that they held a variety of tasks and offices, both lay and ecclesiastical. The Reformation wished to restore the early faith in this respect, too, and taught that a Christian's vocation is to serve in the place where God has put him, whether in the church's office or in his activity as prince, father of a family or in his profession: this is the task to which God has called him. The saints provide a noble example of how the Christian must exercise his vocation in the place where he is.²⁸

In speaking of the vocation (*Beruf, vocatio*) of those possessing the common priesthood, the Reformation gave its own answer to the question of how the saints of the church militant on earth are to carry out

²⁷ Apol. 24, BSELK 356, 25.

²⁸ In conformity with Middle Ages tradition, Luther spoke of three estates: the priestly office, the estate of marriage and the temporal authorities. This lies behind the passage from the Augsburg Confession cited below. See H. Maurer, *Historischer Kommentar zur Confessio Augustana* I, Gütersloh 1976, 100–104.

the task of the saints (*missio*). Although the example given is not perhaps satisfactory in itself, the intention of the Augsburg Confession in this respect nevertheless becomes apparent when the Confession answers the question of how in its view we should learn to follow the faith and works of the saints: «... as the Emperor may follow the example of David in making war to drive away the Turk from his country. For both are kings.»²⁹ The Augsburg Confession uses this example to show that God has created «orders» in the world, and by being active in these the Christian finds a place to carry out the task of the saints.³⁰

The Saints are Born in Justification by Faith

This review of the concepts «holiness», «sanctification» and the «saints» has shown that especially when considered from the standpoint of the common priesthood of believers, according to the Lutheran faith, holiness is God's holiness, which leaves its imprint on all that belongs to his sphere of control. So it is «foreign» holiness from man's point of view, not possessed by man, but belonging collectively to the church.

²⁹ AC 21, BSELK, 81, 1 (Triglöt, 57).

³⁰ The status of the saints as an example to be followed, or paradigm, is one of the chief themes of Luther's hagiology. See *Jahani Forberg*, Das Abrahambild in der Theologie Luthers: Pater fidei sanctissimus. Stuttgart 1984. In Forberg's view, Luther's aim was to show that the saints were also sinners. Op. cit. 152–172, especially 153, 157, 163. However, the saints also appear as intermediaries, op. cit. 165–167. On the other hand, *Lennart Pinnau* (Die Heiligen bei Luther. Schriften der Luther-Agenda-Gesellschaft A 16, Helsinki 1977, especially p. 77–79) sees Luther as basically polemical in relation to the honouring of the saints. Pinnau thinks that in Luther's view believing in the intercessions of the saints has only caused confusion. On Luther's attitude to the saints in heaven see *Vilmos Vajta*, Die Kirche als geistlich-sakramentale communio mit Christus und seinen Heiligen bei Luther. Luther-Jahrbuch 1984, 41–64. Vajta stresses Luther's unwillingness to use the term «dead saints». Op. cit. p. 44–46. *Peter Mann* comments ironically on Luther's tortuous and contradictory theology of saints. *Peter Mann*, Luther und die Heiligen. Reformation ecclesiae. Festgabe für Erwin Iserloh, ed. *Remigius Bäumer*, Paderborn — München — Wien — Zürich 1980, 535–580, especially 541, 542, 554. Luther's tendency to demystify his opponents led to extreme and one-sided statements. The creation of such a vast literary production, a significant part of which consists of ad hoc and polemical writings cannot be accomplished without it being possible to point to contradictions. See *Friedrich Mildenburger*, Theologie der lutherischen Bekenntnisschriften. Stuttgart — Berlin — Köln — Mainz 1983, 119–120.

From man's point of view it is bestowed on man, »borrowed» holiness which is not his own. In the same way, righteousness is »foreign», obtained for man by Christ with his suffering and death, not man's own righteousness.

But this righteousness bestowed by Christ presents to man a call to holiness. The righteousness of faith and its reception do not only involve a declaration, but also action, in which communion with Christ, »beholding the glory of the Lord», is much more than a call. It also involves man being born again in righteousness, and thus receiving for himself Christ's righteousness and holiness, i.e. living communion with God. The grace bestowed by Christ fashions a person in the likeness of the image he beholds in faith (2 Cor 3:18). The Orthodox and Lutheran interpretations of faith use different concepts to describe this process of change. The Orthodox call it deification (*Θεωσις*), whereas Lutherans speak of justification (*iustificatio*). Although these are different ways of describing God's way of salvation, they belong inherently together and refer to the same event of salvation. This was recognised in the joint statement of the delegations of the Russian Orthodox Church and the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Finland in Kiev in the spring of 1977.³¹

Lutheranism considers growth in faith to be important and stresses the necessity of such growth. Where there is faith in Christ, there is no longer sin, because faith puts to death and buries sin. But in accordance with its realistic understanding of man, Lutheranism nevertheless recognises that sin remains »in the flesh», because »this disease, or vice of origin» (Augsburg Confession Article II) is truly characteristic of human beings. But in conformity with its principle of justification by faith, it regards growing in faith as a call addressed to all Christians. For this reason it presupposes the community of faith, the church, in which God bestows on the believer all that is necessary for faith and a holy life. Growing in faith, or sanctification, does not mean that it would be possible for people to assign each other to different stages. It is a dynamic process, which involves a struggle between faith and doubt, sin and holiness. But everything in this process serves God's ordained purposes, even sin, which prevents man from falling into self-righteousness and pride.

³¹ Kiovan neuvottelujen asiakirjat (The Official Report on the Kiev Discussions), Teologinen Aikakauskirja (Finnish Journal of Theology) 1977, 560–561.

Although Lutheranism is reluctant to place the saints at different degrees of sainthood, it does not prevent their being honoured and remembered. The church is made up of those who have reached the goal and those who are still striving towards it here on earth. The former are remembered in the Divine Service, in prayers and in hymns. On the other hand, the example of the saints striving here on earth — whether contemporary or past — encourages us to examine how they have fulfilled their vocation in the place in life in which God has put them.

A Common Tradition as a Call to a Common Witness to Holiness

In this way the common priesthood is the central standpoint from which Lutheranism considers the saints. They are not only ordained priests, but members of God's people, in fact any who possess the common priesthood. This standpoint is not, however, alien to the history of the church, because throughout the centuries representatives of the common priesthood have presented to the church a necessary and welcome and, after some discussion, accepted witness and model of a Christian's role and authentic Christian witness. This was the case in the early centuries of the church, when there was a threat of increasing worldliness, and monkhood represented the ideals of Christian discipleship which were being forgotten. Of course it is clear that this protest and concomitant proposals for reform contained much exaggeration, which was justifiably criticised by priests and bishops, and the way of life it recommends did not become, and could not have become, the model for the witness of the vast majority of Christians. In the Western Catholic Church in the High Middle Ages, on the other hand, mendicant orders were the church's answer to the question of how Christian witness could find its way into the new world of urban culture. Many tensions were naturally present in this discussion, and it resulted in the form of Christian witness which isolates itself from the world beginning to be regarded as a higher perfection than the witness presented in ordinary everyday life.³² But at

³² It is this trend which the Augsburg Confession criticises, AC 27, BSELK, 110–119. See B. Lohse — K. S. Frank — J. Halckenbauer — F. Wulff, *Monachum, H. Meyer — H. Schütte* (ed.), *Confessio Augustana — Bekenntnis des einen Glaubens*, Frankfurt am Main — Paderborn 1980, 281–318.

its highest, the relationship between the common priesthood and the church's office has through the centuries become a dynamic tension, in which both these ideas have corrected and supported each other and thus edified the church.

The tradition of the common priesthood has also, as far as I can see, been important to the Russian Orthodox Church. The Russian Orthodox Church knows a centuries-long chain of witnesses, including ascetics and *»sistars»*, first mentioned in the Middle Ages.³¹ The fact that *»the church as a whole can be described as a priesthood»*, as the Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry-document of the World Council of Churches Faith and Order Commission affirms³², is also gaining importance in ecumenical discussion. Lutherans have reason to rejoice over this emphasis, which belongs, expressed and worked out in varying ways, to the tradition of faith of most churches.

In the common witness of the church, the common priesthood, the church's life in holiness received as a gift, its struggle for sanctification and its saints, all have just as important a place as has the fact that the church is a united whole. So the witness to the common priesthood is not only the result of centuries of development, but has been an inseparable part of the church's witness from the beginning. It is wrong even to ask whether only priests, bishops or lay people represent this witness. In the New Testament, the church and its witness are already seen to be composed of different groups, in that at the Apostolic Council of Jerusalem, different groups were present. These are called by the names *»congregation»*, *»apostles»* and *»elders»* (Acts 15:1–29). It may be too bold in terms of history to interpret these references as meaning that *»lay people, bishops and priests»* were present, but it can hardly be denied that we have here a group of people active in earthly tasks and groups of people devoting themselves to the special task of proclaiming the Gospel. But all were under obligation by virtue of the fact that as members of the

church they were called *»saints»* (Acts 9:13, Rom 1:17) and thus the exhortation was addressed to them: *»let... the righteous still do right and the holy still be holy.»* (Rev 22:11)

³¹ Ernst Benz (ed.), *Russische Heiligenlegenden*, Zürich 1953, contains, among other stories, the legend of Holy Sergei of Radonezh, op. cit. 295–362; on the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries see *Fairy von Lilienfeld*, Nis Sorskyj und seine Schriften, Die Krise der Tradition im Russland Iwas III, Berlin 1963; on the later time, see *Igor Smolitsch*, *Leben und Lehre der Starzen*, 2. Aufl. Köln — Olten 1952.

³² Baptism, Eucharist and Ministry, Ministry, 17. Faith and Order Paper No. 111, Geneva 1982, 23.

SANCTIFICATION ACCORDING TO THE NEW TESTAMENT

JUKKA THURÉN

I. Introduction

In his paper Bishop Kalevi Toivainen has given a comprehensive survey of the concept of holiness from the point of view of the science of religion and of the different theological disciplines. My own purpose is to examine more closely those passages of the New Testament that speak of making holy and becoming holy i.e. sanctifying and being sanctified. I shall therefore concentrate on those texts where there appear the verb *ἁγιάζω* or the noun *ἁγιασμός*.

In our previous consultations a study was made of texts where justification and sanctification are mentioned as related events. The Apostle Paul writes: »You are sanctified, you are justified in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God» (1 Cor. 6:11). In Paul's language the word »j u s t i f i c a t i o n» means the restoring of the relationship between God and those who are in covenant with Him. The standpoint is l e g a l, for in the view of Paul's opponents justification takes place »by the works of the law», i.e. on the basis of man's fulfilling the demands of the law.

Also, man's s a n c t i f i c a t i o n is a question of being received into relationship with God. The viewpoint is now c u l t i c. God in His holiness is separate from the world, inviolable. If man approaches Him, he must first be cleansed of all impurity and dedicated to God. The relationship with God is described in terms of the structure of the Temple, Temple worship and its requirements. Thus mention is made of Old Testament types of sanctification, such as ritual washings, priesthood, sacrifice and entry to the Holy of Holies in the Temple.

II. The Hallowing (sanctification) of God's Name and the Consecration (sanctification) of the Son of God

The object of sanctification is almost without exception man. Nevertheless, there is good reason to examine the exceptions first of all, because they help us to understand what is meant by sanctification.

1. »Hallowed (sanctified) be thy Name»

Jesus taught his followers to begin their prayers somewhat in the manner in which they had previously begun the Aramaic Kaddish (Qaddiṣ) prayer: »May His Name be praised and sanctified in the world, which He has created according to His will. His kingdom come ...» It was necessary to pray for sanctification, because God's holy Name was not acknowledged as holy in the right way, but people dared to use it in a manner that was insulting.

The prophet Isaiah, in the vision in which he received his call, found that the heavenly beings proclaimed the holiness of God's Name; undoubtedly in the worship of Israel God was proclaimed holy. Nevertheless, Isaiah came to see that members of God's own people »have despised the Holy One of Israel» (Is. 1:4). The prophet preached conversion: »The Lord of hosts, him you shall regard as holy; let him be your fear, and let him be your dread» (8:13). Is. 29:23 expects a change at the time of salvation: »When his children see the work of my hands, in their midst, they will sanctify my name; they will sanctify the Holy One of Jacob, and will stand in awe of the God of Israel.»

Ezek. 36 speaks of how the exiles even though unwillingly profaned the Name of God when the Gentiles said, »These are the people of the Lord, and yet they had to go out of his land» (36:20). Therefore the Lord is jealous for His holy Name and decides to save Israel: »I will sanctify my great name ... and the nations will know that I am the Lord, when I show my holiness in you before their eyes» (v.23). This happens when God gives His own Spirit within the hearts of the Israelites (vv.26f.).

Thus God's Name is hallowed or sanctified when members of both His own people and of other peoples experience in an indisputable manner God's fearful and saving power and g i v e g l o r y to God because

of it. (The Name of God is sanctified when on the one hand man learns to fear and dread Him, and on the other hand to turn to Him for help.

Those disciples of Jesus who very early translated the Lord's Prayer into Greek chose the aorist form ($\alpha\gamma\omega\sigma\theta\eta\tau\omega$). It means that the Church does not pray for God's Name to be kept holy in general, but for a great change to take place, when God Himself would teach (passivum divinum) His own people and other peoples to acknowledge the holiness of God's Name. Hallowing or sanctifying God's Name, the coming of His Kingdom and the doing of His will are one and the same event.

2. *The Father has consecrated (sanctified) His Son*

John 10:36 says that the Father has consecrated or sanctified His Son and sent him into the world. Sanctification means here *separate* for the carrying out of a God-given task. John 17:19: «I consecrate (sanctify) myself for their sake» means Jesus' death, which lay immediately ahead. Consecration for the sake of the disciples i.e. on behalf of or instead of ($\epsilon\upsilon\epsilon\lambda\epsilon\gamma\epsilon$) means *separate* for their benefit. The two passages we have mentioned belong together; the Father has consecrated the Son, so that he would consecrate i.e. sacrifice himself for the benefit of others, so that they in turn, as a consequence of his sacrifice, should consecrate themselves to God.

III. All Christians are already sanctified

Christian believers are often called holy of sanctified; they form a holy people, temple and priesthood. Their holiness is not always substantiated in the same way.

1. *Sanctification is based on the death of Christ*

According to Heb. 2:11 the high priest is really a «sanctifier», and the members of the people are «those to be sanctified», the sanctifier and those to be sanctified must be from the same people, «brothers». According to Heb. 10:29 Jesus has sanctified Christians with his blood, which in this context is called «the blood of the covenant». As Israel in

entering into the covenant at Sinai became a holy people (Ex. 24:8; 19:6), so the people of the New Covenant is also holy: «the blood of the covenant» means the death of the sacrificial victim to ratify the covenant.

The words of institution of the eucharist appear in the NT in differing forms, but common to them is the fact that the communion wine and the blood of Jesus shed to establish the covenant belong together. Thus Jesus himself explained the significance of his death by comparing it to the death of animals sacrificed to ratify the Sinai covenant.

Heb. 9:13ff compares the effect of the sacrifices of the Old Covenant with the effect of the blood of Christ. The sin offerings of the Old Covenant sanctified «for the purification of the flesh», so that the sanctified had the right to take part in the earthly worship of the Temple; the blood of Christ «shall purify our consciences from dead works to serve the living God» (9:14). Our worship is now already a participation in the true worship of the heavenly Holy of Holies, of which, according to the OT, the worship of the Temple was a reflection.

2. *Sanctification was connected with God's call*

The Apostle Paul sometimes addresses the members of his churches using the phrase $\alpha\lambda\eta\theta\iota\delta\epsilon\gamma\iota\omega\iota$ (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2). Heb. 3:1 contains a slightly more expanded form of address: «Holy brethren, who share in a heavenly call.» The heavenly call means on the one hand a call from heaven, and on the other hand a call to heaven, to God. Because only what is holy is fit to be in relationship with God, receiving a call means sanctification. 2 Tim. 1:9: God has «called with a holy calling»; the call is itself holy, because it is God's call, but it also sanctifies the person whom it sets apart for God.

3. *Sanctification has taken place in baptism*

In Heb. 9 sanctification and cleansing are synonyms. The form of Christian baptism is washing; its manner of administration pictures its effect. Heb. 10:22 exhorts us, «Let us draw near ... with our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.» The sanctifying effect of baptism is based on the death of Jesus,

Eph. 5:25f: »Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.» The sanctifying effect of baptism means a separation from the impure vices of paganism, 1 Cor. 6:11: ». . . but you were washed, you were sanctified, you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and in the Spirit of our God.»

The latter quotation shows that the significance of baptism as sanctification is not tied solely to the picture of baptism as a bath. The baptized person is sanctified by receiving the Holy Spirit. Reference was made above to Ezek. 36, where God promises to sanctify His Name by a) cleansing His people from their sins with pure water, b) giving its members a new heart and His own Spirit within them, so that the people begin to do God's will (Ezek. 36:23–27). Elsewhere the giving of the Holy Spirit is called »outpouring», e.g. Joel 2:28 (3:1), which is quoted in the Pentecost narrative of the Acts of the Apostles (2:17f). According to certain scholars Christian baptism was originally administered in such a way that it contained a bath as a symbol of cleansing, and pouring as a symbol of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. In any case it is evident that the sanctification which takes place in baptism involves purification from sin on the one hand and the reception of the Holy Spirit on the other.

IV. It is necessary to maintain holiness and grow in it

In 1 Cor. 6:11 the Apostle reminds Christians that they have been sanctified; therefore it is not fitting for them to surrender once again to impurity. There are other similar warnings. 1 Thess. 4:3–7 gives specific examples; holiness means avoiding unchastity, greed and economic exploitation. A reason is given for the warning: »For God has not called us to uncleanness, but to holiness.» 1 Tim. 2:15 mentions three things which must be maintained: faith, love and holiness.

Rom. 6:19f compares two types of service:

- the slavery of sin lawlessness death
- the service of God shame eternal life

The service of sin leads to a shameful existence in this life and ends

in eternal death, but the result of serving God, or its »fruit,» is holiness and its goal is eternal life. Here holiness appears to mean at least the opposite of a shameful life style, in other words a life of which one does not need to be ashamed.

The goal of sanctification is stated in Heb. 12:14: »Strive for peace with all men, and for the holiness (= sanctification) without which no one will see the Lord.» The example of immoral and unholy Esau, who lost his birthright, is given as a warning.

The fact that sanctification is mentioned as a condition for seeing God and the exalted Christ is to be understood in the same way as the saying of the Sermon on the Mount: »Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God» (Mt. 5:8). In the Temple only those who had purified themselves according to the directions of the law of Moses were allowed to come before the face of God; of Christians total purity is demanded, for they are to see God in all His glory, either after they die or when Christ comes again. In Hebrews continuous sanctification is, on the one hand, passive; God uses discipline to enable His children to share in His holiness (Heb. 12:10). On the other hand it demands that the child of God consents to being trained and also makes an active effort towards that end; the verb *διώκει* 'to pursue' is used here to describe enthusiastic effort, using all one's energy.

In many of the aforementioned passages the exhortation to holiness is primarily a warning against defilement. 1 Pet. 1:15 draws attention in particular to the positive goal: »But as He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves in all your conduct; since it is written, »You shall be holy, for I am holy«. The same obligation is applicable to the people of the New Covenant as applied to Israel in Leviticus. What is new is the emphasis on Christians being God's own children. They can call God their Father (v. 17), and therefore they should first of all live as obedient children (v. 14), but then also more and more resemble their heavenly Father.

The latter emphasis seems to be an echo of Jesus' teachings. Mt. 5:48 »You, therefore, must be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect». The word 'perfect' used by Matthew should not be interpreted in accordance with the ideal of perfection of Greek philosophy. In its context the word means impartial love; the disciple of Jesus must be good to all, as the heavenly Father is good even to evil men.

Another passage in 1 Peter speaks of the sanctification of Christ: »Reverence (sanctify) Christ in your hearts» (3:15). The clause reminds us of the LXX translation of Is. 8:13: *κῆρυξ δυνάμεως ἀγιαστέ*. Christians revered the Holy One of Israel by sanctifying Christ in their hearts i.e. by consenting in their hearts to the lordship of Christ, to be ruled by him.

The word »to sanctify» is also used of sacrifices. Rom. 15:16 uses the language of the sacrificial cult. Paul compares his apostolic ministry to the performing of sacrifices by a priest; Paul must take care »that the offering of the Gentiles may be acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit». This verse returns to the exhortation of 12:1 to present one's body »as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God». The whole person is a living sacrifice, including his everyday activities, when he lives according to God's will. The epithet »holy» in 12:1 is defined more precisely in 15:16: »sanctified by the Holy Spirit». Every Christian who has the Holy Spirit is holy, but when the same word appears in an exhortation, the aim is that the Spirit of God should begin to exercise ever-increasing control over a person's body, the whole of his earthly life (cf. 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Pet. 1:4).

P e t e r holiness is spoken of in only a couple of passages. 1 Thess. 5:23 expresses a wish: »May the God of peace Himself sanctify you wholly; and may your spirit and soul and body be kept sound and blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.» After this it speaks of the assurance of God's faithfulness. The protection of the Thessalonian Christians and their progress in holiness (4:1—8) and their blamelessness on the day of Christ (3:13) do not depend upon themselves but upon God, who »will do it» (5:24).

The other passage, 2 Cor. 6:14—7:1, is problematic. It appears to refer to the readers' separation from »the children of darkness». »Come out from them, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch nothing unclean; then I will welcome you, and I will be a father to you, and you shall be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty. Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, and make holiness perfect in the fear of God.» The text appears to mean that perfect holiness is attainable if one separates himself from unbelievers (6:14—16). The language resembles that of the Qumran texts; for instance, only here does the NT use the

name Beliar for the Devil. Is it possible that when the letters of Paul were published there was added here a passage from a text by another writer of the early Church, one who had been influenced by the Essenes of Qumran?

Elsewhere in the NT sanctification certainly means liberation and separation from uncleanness, but it does not necessarily mean separation from unholy people. Just as, according to John 17, the heavenly Father consecrated His Son and sent him among men, so also the Son sends and consecrates his disciples (Jn. 17:18). They are in the world, but they have been sanctified, and they are still being sanctified »in the truth», which is the Word of God (vv. 17, 19). Their task is, therefore, to live as children of God, embodying His holiness, in the midst of the evil world. Protection from evil means in this connection that they do not conform to this world, but more and more to the Word of God living in them. They do not need to be separated to become children of God, because God has already taken them to be His children and thus sanctified them.

Another important passage, if somewhat difficult to understand, is 1 Cor. 7:12—14. Here Paul says that even a spouse who remains a pagan is »sanctified through his wife/husband». This time sanctification cannot mean becoming a child of God, because it is not certain that even a permanent marriage helps to save the spouse i.e. to help him or her to faith and eternal life (v. 16). I consider it possible that Ezra 9—10 is the background to this passage. When Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, he found that »the holy seed» had in mixed marriages become contaminated through contact with the impure peoples of the land. In order to correct the matter wives taken from the Gentiles and the children born to them were to be sent away. Paul by contrast does not demand the dissolution of mixed marriages; he assumes that the Corinthians too recognize the children as belonging to the church if one or other of the parents is a Christian. This also presupposes that the unbelieving spouse does not make the family unclean in the sense intended by Ezra and the law of Moses. The holiness given by Christ is thus of greater effect than the holiness of the people of the Old Covenant. — This passage cannot be used as evidence that the children of the Corinthian Christians were regarded, even when unbaptized, as holy in the full sense of the word, for here, exceptionally, »sanctified» does not mean the same as »saved».

It would seem natural that both an initially unconverted spouse and children born to Christians were sanctified in baptism as children of God. — In any case this and certain other passages (e.g. 1 Cor. 5:9) demonstrate that neither did Paul consider separation from the world to be sanctification or a precondition for it.

Paul says that the whole church should be blameless, pure and spotless children of God, who like stars shine in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation (Phil. 2:15). Whence does this light come? The beginning of v. 16 can be translated in two different ways. The present Finnish Church Bible translates as follows: »offering the word of life», but e.g. the most recent Luther Bible (1984) gives the following translation: »dadurch dass ihr festhaltet am Wort des Lebens», which may be the more correct interpretation. God sanctifies believers by His Word; when believers hold fast to the Word, then they are spotless i.e. holy. The saying of the prophet and apostle, »The name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of you» (Rom. 2:24) originally meant the Jews, but it can also apply to Christians. When Peter calls Christians a holy priesthood and people (1 Pet. 2:5,9), he at the same time exhorts them to offer holy sacrifices; to proclaim God's great deeds and to live blamelessly by faith among depraved people. The aim is that those who now malign Christians and Christ shall also come to learn to praise i.e. sanctify God.

True Christian sanctification derives from faith that the death of Christ, baptism and the call of God have made us who are unworthy into children of God, who must now in this world lead a life worthy of God, who calls us into His kingdom and glory (1 Thess. 2:12). Our holiness is the holiness of Christ and the Holy Spirit, and we must not undervalue it.

According to the letters of the Apostle Paul separation from the sinners of this world is not sufficient to achieve perfect holiness, for every person remains a sinner, even as a Christian, for as long as he possesses this body corrupted by sin. Rom. 7:14—25 describes the inner struggle which takes place even in the believer. It is true that the majority of present-day exegetes reject this explanation, which has been accepted in the Lutheran church and has its origin in the early church. But at least 1 Cor. 15:57 demonstrates that Paul does not consider perfect sinlessness possible, for as long as man possesses this body of flesh and blood.

The law gives sin the power to produce death; only when Christ comes will the power of death be overcome, a power deriving from the law and sin. This body is mortal, because it is corrupted by sin; therefore our bodies must be transformed so that they are beyond reach of sin and death, entirely pure and holy.

V. The sanctified Church as the sanctifier of God's holy Name

The Old Covenant was based on God's liberation of His people from slavery in Egypt. The saved people were given the promise: »Now therefore, if you will obey my voice and keep my covenant, you shall be my own possession among all peoples; for all the earth is mine, and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation» (Ex. 19:5—6).

The holy people of the New Covenant is gathered from all the peoples of the world. The New Covenant is based on the miracle of the new Passover, the death and resurrection of Jesus. It is this miracle which has led to the sanctification of God's Name among all peoples.

In the NT the above quotation from the Word of God is interpreted as meaning that the disciples of Jesus are both a holy priesthood and a royal house (1 Pet 2:5, 9; Rev. 1:6, 5:10, 20:6).

As a priest hood the holy people praise the great acts of God in words and deeds. This should happen both within the church, especially in its services of worship, and also in an outward direction in mission. Heb. 10:19—25 describes the meeting of a Christian congregation as a Temple service in which all the participants have the right, like the high priest, to enter the holy of holies; whereas Phil. 2:17 calls missionary work among the Gentiles a sacrifice, which the sending congregation pays for, but where the one who is sent — Paul — might sacrifice his life to complete the sacrificial offering, as a libation. At the same time we learn from this that the new holy priesthood had different tasks, as had different members of the OT priesthood. The priesthood of all believers does not mean the consecrating of all for the same tasks, but the »priesthood» is to act as an organized collective.

Dan. 2 and 7 promise that the »kingdom» shall one day be given to the »people of saints». The NT does not only say that those who belong

to Jesus shall enter the kingdom of God, but also that they shall possess the kingdom (e.g. Heb. 12:28). Even now they participate in the kingdom of Christ, but though liable to suffering they serve as Christ served while he lived here.

Yet another, a third, holy task which appears in the OT applies to Christians. Most clearly the prophets foreshadowed the New Covenant. Jeremiah says that he was consecrated for his task even before he was born (Jer. 1:5); cf. Paul (Gal. 1:15). The promises of Ezekiel and Joel that they Holy Spirit would be outpoured meant that the entire people would in some sense be given a prophetic task, and it is thus that the miracle of Pentecost is to be understood (Acts 2:14ff). The whole Church is consecrated for the prophetic task; it must proclaim God's will to all men. But God can also give specific messages to any member of the church (e.g. 1 Cor. 11 and 14). Because, however, the other Christians have a share in the prophetic Spirit, they have the right to evaluate the words of the person who claims to be a prophet.

As the holy people of the New Covenant the Church is the body of Christ and its members of the body of Christ, as we stated in our previous discussions. The most important tasks of the Old Covenant, the royal, priestly and prophetic tasks, belong to the Church as a whole, but it must guide all its believing members, so that they can find their own particular task within the whole. Under no circumstances may it prevent its members from carrying out the particular tasks which the Spirit of God has shown them. It cannot, however, be a question of genuine revelation and calling by the Spirit if the alleged message or task is in conflict with the Word of God in the Bible.

VI The Relation to the cultic laws of the Old Testament

All that the NT says about sanctification is based on the OT; many words are direct quotations. However, great differences between the testaments are discernible.

In the OT sanctification means separation for the possession of God alone and to be available for use in worship; e.g. priests, sacrifices, the Temple, the Sabbath and the firstborn are mentioned as objects of sanctification. In the New Covenant there is neither temple worship nor temple

sacrifices, and therefore there is no temple priesthood. The meaning of the sacrificial cult is well known, but Jesus does not emphasize it, even though the lived in the time of the Old Covenant. Mt. 23:17—19 is an example which is used to teach something quite different. Although Paul, according to the Acts of the Apostles, consents to the purification and sacrificial rites of the Temple, as in Rom. 9:4 he seems to regard the worship of the Jerusalem Temple as still valid, as the special privilege of the Jews; at any rate the Gentile church did not have the right to take part in them nor copy the consecration ceremonies of the law of Moses in their own worship. The Jewish concept of holiness included ritual forms of purity and purification, which in Jesus' teaching were set aside in a manner which offended the Pharisees. Nor did Paul — as distinct from Peter and the majority of the church at Antioch — accept different practices of outward sanctification as a barrier to fellowship at meals between Jewish and Gentile Christians (Gal. 2). The apostolic decree (Acts 15:23ff) was a temporary compromise to bring calm to the situation. In Jesus' teaching keeping the Sabbath holy already differs from Jewish demands; Col. 2:16 declares it and other holy feast days a mere shadow of future reality. Fulfilment is found in Christ and his Church. How?

Rom. 3:25 contains and old tradition, which Heb. develops. The only high priest and indeed the only priest is God's Son, Jesus, who alone has by his unique sacrifice sanctified the people once-for-all on the great Day of Atonement, that is, the day of his death. The Christian Church as the body of Christ is the temple which Christ raised up on the third day, in which God lives. All those who take part in its worship enter the Holy of holies to offer thanksgiving and prayer before the seat of grace. The purification ceremonies are replaced by a once-for-all baptism and daily cleansing of the conscience through the forgiveness of sins. The Christian's entire life, and in particular acts of love and confessing and praising God are sacrifices of thanksgiving pleasing to God. Already in NT times the Gentile church appears to have replaced the Sabbath with Sunday services of worship. There is one example of the consecration of the first fruits; the first family in Achaia to be converted devoted themselves with especial dedication to the service of the church (1 Cor. 16:15f).

In what way, then, is the new better than the old? The Pharisee's idea of holiness is criticized at least for relying on oral tradition and human

adaptations, which pay more attention to outward cleanliness than to purity of heart. But according to Heb. OT law was inadequate in that it could not cleanse the conscience for true worship. Only the holy and sinless Son of God was able to offer an effective sacrifice of sanctification.

VII In what sense does the NT speak of sanctification?

Rev. 22:11 contains an enigmatic clause: *ὁ ἅγιος ἁγιασθήτω ἑαυτόν*.

Translations vary. Luther translated as follows: »Wer heilig ist, der sey immerhin heilig.« The most recent exegetical work of reference, *Exegetisches Wörterbuch zum Neuen Testament*, follows the same lines: »Wer heilig ist, halte sich weiterhin heilig« (I, Sp. 41). The Finnish Church Bible translates in such a way that it is a question of progress in holiness: »he who is holy, let him become holier and holier«; similarly the new Swedish translation, NT-81, gives: »den helige (skall fortsätta) att helga sig«.

In any case it is a question of some kind of summary of early Christian parenthesis in two parts: motivation and exhortation.

The exhortation is addressed to people who are already holy. Holiness is thus a prerequisite for receiving exhortation and for following it. We have seen above what the NT regards as being involved in this already existing holiness.

God has consecrated His Son and sent him into the world. Jesus has consecrated himself as a sacrifice, and by his blood consecrated the people of the New Covenant. Through the apostles whom he has consecrated he has then consecrated people from all nations by sending them a heavenly call, by cleansing them from impurity in baptism, and by giving them the Holy Spirit.

Thus sanctified believers are exhorted to maintain their holiness and progress in it. Because holiness is participation in God's holiness through the Word of God and the holy sacraments, the Holy Spirit uses the same means when preserving and increasing the believer's holiness — or restoring it, if meanwhile holiness has been lost. A holy person obeys exhortation and himself aims at holiness, while the unclean become more unclean (Rev. 22:11). Just as Christ and the apostles were sanctified, so all

Christians have been sanctified to live in the midst of an unclean world, but differing from it inwardly and in their behaviour. Thus the Christian sanctifies God's Name among men and prays that God Himself will eventually sanctify His Name, that is, demonstrate His fearful and saving power and glory in a final, unchallengeable manner. Then the holiness of the Christian believer will become perfect, when sin, the accusing power of the law, and the polluting domination of death are thwarted.

The New Testament thus speaks of the sanctification of Christians in two closely related senses. Firstly, we are reminded of the incomprehensible miracle that an unclean, sinful person, when cleansed by the blood of Jesus, can approach a holy God in safety. Secondly, we are warned not to waste this gift and exhorted to progress towards the perfect holiness which is attained after this life.

But the background to each of these, the final goal of world history, is the hallowing of God's Name in the salvation of the new Israel.

Translator's note

Biblical quotations are taken in general from the Revised Standard Version substantially from the RSV text, I have provided either a modified quotation from the RSV or my own literal translation of the Finnish.

HOLINESS, SANCTIFICATION, SAINTS

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Holiness is a concept which organically pertains to any religious thinking whatever. Being ascribed to objects — to those of religious worship in the first place — holiness appears as a self-evident and universally acknowledged elementary truth. In fact, however, the concept, and especially, the essential meaning of holiness are no easy thing for a rational formulation, which probably is the reason why for an ordinary layman with some, but not much knowledge of it, an emotional reaction comes first.

All religions — from the most primitive ones, like animism and totemism, to the contemporary developed or so-called living faiths — always made an ontological difference, which is that of principle, between those confessing a faith, and the objects they worship — one god or many gods as the case may be. For primitive and pagan religions in general, these objects of adoration and worship include material objects and natural phenomena, while for Judaism, Christianity and Islam it has always been One True God the Creator, the Divine Providence.

It is the dimension of holiness in the objects of adoration and worship that makes all the difference between them and worshippers as such. The object of worship is usually ascribed a certain superiority, a greater degree of perfection, greater capacities as against the worshipper, and this lofty, out-standing — because of superiority — quality finds its expression in the concept of holiness (*Sacrum Sanctum*).

Holiness, in the understanding of the subjects of worship or worshippers, also spreads over to people or objects which while not worshipped themselves, i.e. void of holiness as such, are more or less close to the bearers of holiness. In this case, holiness spreading over to them brings them out of the number of their own kind with no such closeness to the bearers of holiness. Thus, the holiness of God spreads to the Altar which serves to worship him, and further — to the offering brought to

the Altar (Mt. 23, 17—19); thus, the holiness of pagan gods is thought to be imparted to the priests serving them, because in this their capacity they are closer to gods than ordinary people whose communion with gods occurs only through the mediation of priests (*profani, seculares*). Holiness implies a «tabu», i.e. the inviolability of people and objects which are under its sanctifying power, which makes them holy or sanctified. Thus, sanctification is a communication of passing over of holiness from its Source to people or objects through which they become sanctified or holy (1 Cor. 1, 2, 30). A sanctified thing or person in their turn can become a means or tool of consecration (Mt. 23, 17—19) for other objects. For example, different pagan nations used hills as sanctuaries to make sacrifices at, and treated temples, or special rooms inside them (sanctuary, altar), or priests and their robes as holy and inviolable. The Judaism of the OT period also presents a great deal of examples of this kind untouchable sanctity.

You may take a notice of the fact that the first prohibiting commandment was made in the manner of a tabu (Gen. 2, 17): it was forbidden not only to eat of the fruit of the tree of knowledge, but to touch it too. (Gen. 3, 3)

Likewise untouchable was the bush which was burning yet not consumed on the Horeb mountain, and even the access to it required a reverend manner (Ex. 3, 5). Mount Sinai became unapproachable when it was chosen as a place of teaching Revelation to Moses; though the people were consecrated, none was allowed to trespass the bounds about the mountain set by their leader Moses (Ex. 19, 10—12; 21—24), except himself who «drew near to the thick darkness where God was» (Ex. 20, 21).

The people of Israel had been consecrated since the time God taught them the Law and concluded a covenant with them, declaring: «you shall be my own possession among all peoples... you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation» (Ex. 19, 5—6).

Deliberate disregard for the altar cost the sons of the priest Eli their lives (1 Sam. 12—17), while Uzzah lost his for an unintentional neglect of God. (11 Sam. 6, 6—7)

In the monotheistic religions, both of the OT period and later — in Christianity all the numerous illusory sources of holiness, inherent in polytheism were replaced by one Source, One God, the Only Holy One in

the loftiest and absolute sense of the word. Any object, whether animated or not can derive holiness from the Only Origin — God.

If pagans when practising their feigned religions, which are but a fruit of a perverted and false-oriented religious search, were often confronted by a tabu on their way, prohibiting them to come close to a holy object or place which made them tremble with awe, should we, the happy confessors of the true faith, not be stopped by the very thought of God whose essence surpasses immeasurably any human intention, should we not give up any attempt of coming to know God, labeling it once and for all as an insane, defiant or even sacrilegious intent? For, speaking or thinking about God, we do not approach a mountain which is real and wrapped in fire... or come close to the thick darkness and storm (Ex. 19, 10—25; 20, 1—19)... but come close »... to Mount Zion and to the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and innumerable angels in festal gathering, and to the assembly of the first-born who are enrolled in heaven, and to a judge who is God of all» (Heb. 12, 22—23). If for the people of Israel standing at the foot of Mount Sinai »so terrifying was the sight that Moses said, »I tremble with fear» (Heb. 12, 21), should we not refrain from our reflections about Him whose name is wonderful, whom »no man has ever seen» (Jn. 1, 18; 1 Jn. 4, 12) or »can see» for he »dwells in unapproachable light» (1 Tim. 6, 16)? This cardinal question of every theology is answered by Jesus Christ himself like this: »This is eternal life, that they know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou has sent» (Jn. 17, 3)

Following from these words, one can assert that the knowledge of God is for us the eternal life, as the alternative to the eternal death, and therefore, is essential. The possibility of it is ensured by our God-likeness and by the ubiquitous dimension of Revelation which can become open to us on different levels of our learning — from our perceiving Nature (Rom. 1, 19—20) to the coming of the Son of God to the world, whose God-Manhood nature is the highest revelation, a means to know God. (Jn. 1, 18)

Therefore, Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite was right when he said that »divine laws, on the one hand, forbid an excessive curiosity about things beyond our understanding because we can never comprehend them,

while on the other — they assign us with the task of learning and compel us to encourage this intent in others»¹

Of course, the God-learning process is fundamentally different from an ordinary intellectual learning which is capable of encompassing material objects and entire material world. The nature of divinity is unfathomable; no man can »see» God either with his physical or spiritual eyes, on his own initiative, or in the result of his own efforts, like he usually does with regard to material things. The most sincere and deep aspirations for the knowledge of God on the part of the prophets, who were chosen by God, and who stood very high in their spiritual development, were never satisfied in full; at best, the prophets received the news that the unfathomable God knows them and cares for them. »Show me now thy ways, that I may know thee» (Ex. 33, 13) — thus prayed Moses to be favoured only partially with the sight of the glory of God, for he heard the voice of God saying: »Man shall not see me» (v. 20)

The knowledge of God is possible only within Revelation and only with the involvement of all our spiritual and intellectual faculties — i.e. our mind, senses and will — through which our God-likeness is being realized.

Even in the pagan religions, the attitude towards the object of worship which is isolated from the secular environment and placed above it because of the qualities attributed to it, or because of its holiness, as we concluded above — though in this case obviously feigned — usually implies an intensified acuteness of vision, a greater depth of emotions and their greater stimulative power. In religious terms, this complex of emotions is called *revelation*. The zeal of revelation is highest in monotheistic religions, and particularly, in Christianity where the religious zeal of a person is not dispersed about multiple objects of worship but wholly is dedicated to One God, as the highest bearer of holiness, as the One Who surpasses all human reason, »the King of kings and the Lord of lords» (1 Tim. 6, 15), the Creator, the Almighty.

The veneration here includes both such elements, as fear (Ps. 34, 9), trembling joy (Ps. 2, 11; Ex. 20, 18—21; Mk. 9, 6), faithfulness (Ex. 6,

¹ Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, »The Divine Names», Transl. by Eklavich. Buenos Aires, 1957, p. 39.

8; Deut. 6, 13), and, above all — awareness of one's own unworthiness and lowliness vis-à-vis the greatness and powerfulness of the only Bearer of holiness (Lk. 5, 8; Ex. 6, 5; Heb. 12, 18—24)

It is precisely with people addressing their whole *«selves»* to God that the following prophecy holds true: *«And no longer shall each man teach his neighbour and each his brother, saying 'Know the Lord', for they shall all know me, says the Lord»* (Jer. 31, 34) for *«I will put my law within them, and I will write it upon their hearts»* (Jer. 32, 33). Therefore, we can comply with the call of the Apostle: *«Let us then with confidence draw near to the throne of grace»* (Heb. 4, 16), with sincere heart and in full faith. And the other way round: without such an awesome openness to God any attempt to come to know God, like, for example, an attempt at revealing the church understanding of the holiness of God, would be equally useless and blasphemous, and therefore — fatal (Ex. 3, 5—6; Num. 16, 4—35; Ex. 33, 20; II Sam. 6, 6—8; I Cor. 11, 27—30).

So, the knowledge of God is possible for a NT man not through a ratio-speculative thinking, but through a total openness to God the Father by the power of the Holy Spirit through the Son of God. Who has united us with Him, in other words — by the way of love towards the Triune God, infinitely caring for us: *«... he who abides in love abides in God, and God, in him...»*, *«we love because he first loved us»* (I Jn. 4, 16, 19)

Coming back to the concept of God's holiness, one can justify the question, whether everything said about the knowledge of God refers also to the dimension of his holiness. Should we reflect upon it? Should we speak about it? Should we know about it at all?

The Word of God is unambiguous about it: yes, we should, and even must. *«Consecrate yourselves therefore, and be holy, for I am holy»* (Lev. 11, 44; cf. Mt. 5, 48) — this is the commandment of God to the OT man. But addressing himself to the people of the NT *«chosen and destined by God the Father»* (I Pet. 1, 2), a NT expert in the OT law in his letter to the Hebrews first emphasises the unity of man's holiness with the holiness of God (Heb. 12, 10), then insists on the necessity for everyone who wants to *«see God»* (Heb. 12, 14) to be holy. Referring again to the letters of St. Peter, we can see that he understands holiness as the lot not only of every Christian, as an individual, but also of the Church as a whole.

since it represents *«a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people»* (I Pet. 2, 9, 10)²

So, the holiness of God is to be an object of realization and experience of every Christian, and the more so — for the Christian theology, for, according to the will of God, his holiness is to be spread about the spiritual created world, people, in the first place.³

Just as Revelation offers us a possibility for a knowledge of God and of his being which is superior to any other being, so as the only name to his is the one which he gave himself: *«I AM WHAT I AM»* (Ex. 3, 14), so, too, Revelation encourages our thinking about his holiness, though without describing it.

The holiness of God both in the Old and New Testaments, not only is proclaimed from Sinai Mount, when He himself spoke about it — Ex. 19, 2, 20, 26 (*«I am holy»*) says God to the people of Israel, and names himself as *«holy one»*, addressing to the church in Philadelphia — Rev. 3, 7), but also becomes a fully-realized truth to all his reasonable creation, to everyone with a calling to glorify him. Prophet Isaiah heard seraphims around his throne exclaiming: *«Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts (Sabaoth) (Is. 6, 3; cf. Hos. 11, 9). Opening the New Testament with her inspiring song the Most Holy Virgin Mary exclaimed: «Holy is his name»* (Lk. 1, 49). The holiness of God is also being proclaimed by the Church in numerous exclamations and prayers, like this: *«For holy art thou O, our God»*⁴; *«holy art thou and all-holy thou; and majestic is thy glory»*⁵; *«holy art thou, of a truth, and all-holy, and there are no bounds to the majesty of thy holiness»*⁶; *«O holy God»*.⁷

Moreover, the Word of God, together with the holy fathers' and liturgical tradition, convinces a devoted contemplator, thinker, and fellow-

² It is remarkable, that here too Apostle Peter uses the words of the OT covenant, namely, *«you shall be my own possession among all peoples; and you shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation»* (Ex. 19, 5—6) while addressing them to new Jerusalem, i.e. the Christian Church.

³ This consecrating process, as witnessed by the Word of God, encompasses the bodiless (incorporeal) angels (Mt. 25, 31; Mk. 8, 38; Lk. 9, 26).

⁴ Exclamations of the Liturgy and the Politeley of the Melin.

⁵ From the Anaphora of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

⁶ From the Anaphora of the Liturgy of St. Basil the Great.

⁷ The beginning of the liturgical Three-holy.

in-prayer, of that infinite depth and versatility in which the holiness of God is being revealed to him and to the whole Church.

For all that, however, Revelation has no definition of God's holiness to offer. God-inspired authors seem to have realized that to «formulate» what God's holiness is is as impossible, as to «identify» God himself, since any concept of finiteness is foreign to the very vision of him. (Is. 1, 5, 8–9; Is. 1, 16; cf. Job 36, 22, 26; Dan. 6, 26). As far as God's holiness is concerned, Revelation presents it — as seen from the above-mentioned texts — as something which is as self-evident, as God's being, and also as something incomparable with the holiness of man or even that of the angels, due to the finiteness and poorness of any other kind of holiness, for even «his angels he charges with error» (Job 4, 18; cf. 1 Pet. 1, 24; Is. 11, 6–8); «Who is like thee, majestic in holiness?», exclaimed people of Israel after being saved in the Red Sea. (Ex. 15, 11). «There is none holy like the Lord», said Hannah in her zealous thanksgiving prayer. (1 Sam. 2, 2) God, unlike creation, is holy of his own accord, receiving or deriving holiness from no one but himself, the Source of holiness for the entire created world. All said above about the distinctness, prominence and eminence as characteristics features of holiness is in full measure applicable to God's holiness. Just because this is the holiness of God, it comes above any other kind of holiness belonging to a subject of the created world.⁸

Human holiness, no matter how high a level it may reach, is immeasurably and ineluctably so much lower than the holiness of God, that, for all its linguistic similarity with the latter, it is difficult to describe it as something essentially and qualitatively analogous to the holiness of God. That is why the ancient liturgical texts constantly acknowledge: «Thou alone art holy»; (cf. Rev. 15, 4)⁹ «One only is Holy, One only is the Lord, Jesus Christ, in the glory of God the Father»;¹⁰ «For the Lord alone is holy»;¹¹ «For thou alone art holy»;¹² One can present many such examples of liturgical glorification of God.

⁸ It is this all-round perfection and absolute infinite fullness of God's holiness that lead to the use of the prefix «pre» (most, all) in the Slavonic liturgical language, e.g. «Most Holy Trinity have mercy on us», «holy art thou and all-holy...».

⁹ Great doxology of the Matins.

¹⁰ From the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

¹¹ «Imos »Strengthen me O God» from the Canon of St. Andrew of Crete.

¹² From the Secret prayer during the Cherubic Song, the Liturgy of Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom).

The fact that the Church is conscious of the immeasurable holiness of God which surpasses all creation's holiness, as belonging to one «who alone has immortality and dwells in unapproachable light» (1 Tim. 6, 16) is most vividly and clearly expressed in the exclamation of Sunday's Matins: «Holy is the Lord, our God». To the humanly logic and natural question — «Why is God holy?» — the immediate answer: «For holy is the Lord», seemingly contains no additional information, and precisely because of that, is an exhaustive answer. This answer, while closing the mouth of the inquirer, points out, that God with all his qualities, both which are within and beyond our comprehension, is the Cause in Himself, and therefore, nothing of him can be compared with what is outside him, in particular, with what is human, for, «above all people is our God!»

Sinlessness is generally considered to be a most characteristic feature of holiness; the fewer sins commits a given subject, the more holy he is. Later, we shall return to the question of how justifiable this criterion is with regard to people, but with regard to God it is absolutely irrelevant, and all the liturgical expressions on this point should be recognized not so much for their theological but rather poetical value.¹³ Sinlessness is irrelevant as a reference to God, for sin, as such, is nothing else but transgression against the will of God; therefore, just as unthinkable is God's breaking his own will, so, also, the notion «sinlessness» carries no meaning if referred to him. Sin, as is known, takes its origin in the created world; the assumption, that God's holiness is related to his sinlessness would call for the recognition of the fact that his holiness is conditional upon a phenomenon of the created world, a phenomenon which could never come into being there. In other words, if sinlessness is assumed as a characteristic feature of God's holiness, then God could never be holy if there were no sin in the angels' and human worlds. The absurdity and blasphemy of this idea is quite obvious.

There are, of course, testimonies to be found in NT texts witnessing to the sinlessness of Christ, but all of them, however, (Jn. 8, 16; 1 Pet. 2, 22; Heb. 7, 26) refer to his human nature and can serve as a biblical foundation for the well-known dogmatic thesis that Christ, as the per-

¹³ «For thou alone art without sins» — from the Litany of the Panikhida service.

fect man, has become like people around him in all respects except their sinfulness (see also II Cor. 5, 21; Heb. 4, 15).

With regard to the holiness of God, one is tempted to think about it as an attribute of God, along with many others, mentioned in the Catechism: absolute knowledge, ubiquity, wisdom, omnipotence, etc.¹⁴ It must be acknowledged, however, that such understanding of the holiness of God would be a serious mistake, and this is probably why holiness is not mentioned among other God's attributes in the Catechism. Revelation about the catechetical attributes can be conceived, because man as the image of God, is imparted with a grain, or to be more precise, with a gleam of his perfection. According to the well-known comparison of a holy father, just like a small drop of water reflects the shining of the Sun, so too, the human soul reflects divine attributes — human mind is a reflection of divine wisdom and absolute knowledge; the immortality of soul is a reflection of God's eternity, and so on... The holiness of God, however, has no corresponding attribute in human spirituality, for man is not born holy, but holiness is for him an object of his aspirations, and therefore, a thing to be sought after and to be attained as a gift of God.

One can consider the holiness of God as a combination of all known and unknown divine attributes, including those the existence of which we can, in principle, presume, but which are not revealed to us, and therefore remain unknown.

»No one comprehends the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God» (I Cor. 2, 11), »for the Spirit searches everything, even the depths of God (I Cor. 2, 10). This apostle's wording encompasses the entire apophatic theology of Dionysius the Pseudo-Areopagite, of St. Gregory of Nyssa, of St. Maximus the Confessor, and also the ineffable being of God which most probably, implies many an attribute which are beyond our competence or even comprehension. »Thou art God ineffable, incomprehensible, invisible, inconceivable»¹⁵

Thus, the Holy Scripture, like the tradition of the holy fathers, does not attempt at revealing God's holiness essentially, but mainly refers to it in an apophatic manner, pointing to its absolute incompatibility with

¹⁴ Catechism of the Greek-Orthodox Catholic Church, Part One, Chapter on the First Article of the Symbol of the Faith.

¹⁵ From the Anaphora of the Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

either human or angelic holiness. Due to this fact, one is allowed to describe God's holiness not only as a combination of his qualities, but also as his »above-worldness», as him limitless superiority over everything which is not God, as his incomprehensibility, i.e. as his being beyond any comprehension or perception.

Among the most widely-used doxological metaphors is the description of God as the Sun: 'We bow to You, O the Sun of the Truth', the church sing in the Christmas troparion; or, 'O Light Who is the highest among lights... O the Sun of the Truth, enlighten me, O the Holy Light, shed your brightness on me', prays the Orthodox Christian in the words of one of the oldest akathistoses. Such a comparison, though conditional as is any comparison between a creature and the Creator or between the finite and relative and the eternal and absolute, is quite justifiable not only because the Sun is greater and more powerful than any other source of power within its system, but also because the Sun with its reserve of nuclear power independent of outer influences is the only source of power for all the processes taking place within its system, while all other sources are more agents which draw their energy from the Sun either for a relatively short period of time (plants, animals) or for a longer period (coal, oil).

The Sun is the primary source of power available for the Earth and other planets.

In the same way God who is absolutely independent of whatever there is and is the Cause in Himself appears to us as the cause of everything which is not God, the Creator of all things 'visible and invisible'.¹⁶ Whatever there is in the spiritual and material world is a result of the power emanating from Him.¹⁷ Human beings in particular can describe themselves in the terms used by St. Paul: 'For in him we live, and move,

¹⁶ Nicene Constantinopolitan Creed.

¹⁷ The notion of 'energy' or 'energies of God' through which He makes His impact on the world is elaborated in the works of St. Gregory Palamas. See his *Capita philosophica et theologica moralia et practica*. St. Basil the Great makes a clear distinction between divine energies and divine essence: 'We affirm that we do not intend (do not promise) to reach His very essence. For if His energies come down reaching us then His essence remains unreachable' Letter 234 (to Amphiloctus). Cf. also *Contra Eunomium*, II, 32.

and have our being' (Acts XVII, 28), for he 'gives to all life, and breath, and all things' (verse 25; see also Ps. XXXII, 6, 9; CXL, 5).

The holiness of God understood, as was said above, as something untraceable and ineffable and unconceivably superior to all being and every being and a totality of all revealed and hidden divine qualities emanates without, into the created world and is the cause and source of all angelic and human holiness just as the will of God for the universe's being is the cause and source of the being of the visible and invisible world. Just as the creation, the act of God, through *Logos* (Jn. I, 3), so the sanctification i.e. the communication of holiness to the created objects from the only Source of holiness — God, is accomplished through the power and work of the Holy Spirit.

This sanctification was accomplished most dramatically indeed in the inspiration of the Most Immaculate Virgin Mary for her to give birth to the Son of God, 'the holy thing to be born' (Lk. I, 35). Judging by Archangel Gabriel's response to Mary's confusion, the descending of the Holy Spirit was to be the cause of both the birth and the holiness of he who was born as the Son of God.

Elsewhere in the first chapters of the Gospel according to St. Luke we find a number of cases showing the sanctifying action of the Holy Spirit, namely, the inspiration of John the Baptist with the Holy Spirit 'even from his mother's womb' was foretold to his father Zacharias (Lk. I, 15) who, as soon as John was born, began to make prophecies about his son inspired again with the Holy Spirit (Lk. I, 67); the Holy Spirit was upon Simeon, which is attributed in the text to his righteousness, devoutness and messianic expectations (Lk. II, 25). The 'grace of God' was upon Infant God (verse 40), which is synonymous to the action of the Holy Spirit. It is evident from this verse that his being under grace was not identical to his 'growing, waxing strong in spirit and being filled with wisdom', which can be understood as the assessment of his natural development with age. Finally, as 'Jesus, having been baptized, was praying' at the Jordan river, 'the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him' (Lk. III, 21—23). At this point the sanctification of Christ's human nature was accomplished with the simultaneous proclamation of his divine nature in unity with the Father and the Holy Spirit, after which 'Jesus being full of the Holy Spirit returned from Jordan,

and was led by the Spirit into the wilderness' to be tempted of the devil (Lk. IV, 1—2).

The holiness of Jesus Christ as the Son of God was mysteriously combined with his holiness as a person enlightened by and imbued with the Holy Spirit. This divinehuman holiness was fully marked with that exceptional and elevated detachment which as was noted, is an integral sign of holiness.

It is this holiness which is above all other created holiness that affected so fearfully and painfully the devils who, through the mouths of those possessed by them, cried out as soon as Jesus Christ approached them: 'Let us alone; what have we to do with you, you Jesus of Nazareth? have you come to destroy us?' (in Matthew — 'have you come to torment us before the time?') I know who you are, the Holy One of God' (Mk. I, 24; cf. Mt. VIII, 29; Mk. V, 7; Lk. VIII, 28). The holiness of Jesus Christ provoked instinctive disgust and hatred among those who indulged in vices, especially in Pharisaical hypocrisy, arrogance, pride, and love of power (Lk. VI, 11). It puzzled and confused, for instance, those many disciples 'who went back and walked no more with him' (Jn. VI, 66), those brethren who did not believe in him (Jn. VII, 5; Mk. VI, 2—5), or Pilate who asked in perplexity: 'Whence are you?' (Jn. XIX, 9). Here the Saviour's words came true that 'everyone that does evil hates the light, neither come to the light' (Jn. III, 20) and he goes on to say, 'but he that does truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest' (verse 21). In fact, what holy and pure there was in human hearts responded to Christ's appeal and reached out for him. But here again their first reaction was their awareness of the exceptional nature of God-Man and of his superiority over all those around him, over even those things about which the best of the best dreamt i.e. those who 'were waiting for the consolation of Israel' (Lk. II, 25). In other words, they felt his holiness. 'Never man spoke like this man' (Jn. VII, 46), was the witness of those officers who did not wish to take his life as was ordered by the chief priests and Pharisees. Only few people's awareness turned into consciousness, like that of the centurion from Capernaum (Mt. VIII, 5—13; Lk. VII, 1—10), or Nathanael (Jn. I, 49) or St. Paul (Mt. XVI, 16) and, finally, St. Thomas who was the first to confess Christ as the Lord God (Jn. XX, 28).

The sanctification of Christ's disciples was accomplished in the pro-

ness of their communion with him during the last years of his earthly life: 'Now you are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you' (Jn. XV, 3), but the sanctification that they communicated to all those who 'at one with them' i.e. the sanctification of members of the Church of Christ (Acts II, 1—12), was accomplished only at Pentecost. According to St. Paul, they had since become 'sanctified by God the Father', 'in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of God' (Jud. I; I Cor. VI, II). Through baptism with the Holy Spirit and with fire' (Mt. III, II) God formed them into the Holy Church with the Head — the Lord Jesus from whom, as members of his Body, they received holiness, i.e. were sanctified.

This holiness affects all those who join the Church through Holy Baptism. This gives St. Paul as well as other apostles (Acts IX, 13, 32, 41; XXVI, 10) occasion to describe community members — addressees of his letters — no less than saints. It is to them that he sends his greetings (Rom. XVI, 15; Heb. XIII, 24); for them that he collects and persuades to collect donations (I Cor. XVI, 1; 2 Cor. IX, 12; Eth. I, 15); to them that he forbids to settle conflicts by no other means than the judgement of the same saints as they are (I Cor. VI, I).

The Church's confidence in the holiness of her members has found a vivid expression in ancient liturgical manuscripts. For instance, in the Liturgies of St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom the priest exclaims at the Little Entrance: 'Blessed is the entrance of your holy ones'; then after the Eucharistic Canon: 'Having called to remembrance all the saints...'; finally, at the elevation of the Holy Lamb he says: 'Holy things unto the Holy', to which the choir responds: 'One only is holy,¹⁸ one only is the Lord, Jesus Christ, in the glory of God the Father',¹⁹ thus affirming the holiness of God as the only source of every kind of created holiness.

Holiness or sanctification belongs not only to the Church as a whole and to her every member, but also to every Local Church as a group which is a constituent part of the Universal Church and which, at the same time, possesses the fullness of holiness inherent in the Church as a whole. This is one of the most essential qualities of the Church — her catholicity.

¹⁸ Liturgies of St. Basil the Great and St. John Chrysostom.

¹⁹ Ibid.

which implies, by the way, the independence of any of her communities. As is known, Christ addressed his followers as 'little flock' (Lk. XII, 32) and promised to be co-present where even two or three are gathered together in his Name (Mt. XVII, 20). The fact that the Church as a holy body stands out against the 'world' around her can be traced throughout the New Testament writings. It is especially vivid in what Christ himself said in his parting discourse: 'If you were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hates you' (Jn. XV, 19); and in his prayer of the chief priest: 'I have given them your word; and the world has hated them; because they are not of the world, even as I am not of the world' (Jn. XVII, 14). Describing the holiness of church members in elevated terms, St. Paul calls their totality i.e. the Church a 'holy nation, the people of God, a peculiar people, a royal priesthood' (I Pet. II, 9—10). He used the same terms as were used in the Old Testament to establish the sanctification of the chosen people, their standing out against the rest of the nations, against entire humanity (Ex. XIX, 5—6; Deut. IX, 29). It is evident from the same words of the Apostle that this kind of holiness given through one's birth 'from above... from water and the Spirit' (Jn. III, 35) i.e. through belief in Christ and Baptism, is identical with universal priesthood to which the Word of God refers (Rev. I, 6; XX, 6; I Pet. II, 9; Eth. IV, 12) and which, along with the hierarchical priesthood, is integral to the Orthodox Church.

As we have seen, the reception of this holiness, in other words, the beneficial sanctification is accomplished in the Mystery of Holy Baptism; it is sealed in the Mystery of Anointing with Oil; it is continuously renewed and restored (or regenerated in a way) in the Mystery of the Eucharist.²⁰ In many cases the reception of sanctification can be accomplished and is accomplished in a passive way, 'through the faith of the whole church', as they say. This happens for instance when infants or people dying unconscious are baptized or given communion.²¹ But in principle the beneficial reception of Holy Baptism and the Holy Eucharist requires one's

²⁰ Sanctification is sometimes understood as the giving of divine grace, which is probably right if it is taken into account that such conception of grace ('good gift') is much broader than the notion of sanctification.

²¹ According to St. Paul, even the birth of a child in a Christian family makes it holy (I Cor. VII, 14).

conscious faith, conscious desire and appropriate outer and inner preparation (1 Cor. XI, 27; Acts II, 38, 46; VIII, 15—17; 26—39; XVI, 30—33).

Putting the problem in the teleological perspective, one must admit that the only purpose of sanctification just as the only purpose of the existence of the Church through which this sanctification is accomplished is salvation of those sanctified.²² In fact, the ultimate act of sanctification — the sanctification of human nature by the action of the Son of God whereby he first assumed it and then harmonized it with God in his ascension and sitting on the right hand of the Father — had as its only goal the salvation of the human race. 'For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believes in him should not perish, but have eternal life' (Jn. III, 16).

In the Word of God we find only indirect indications as to the purpose of the Church's creation and existence. But Providence's sanctifying care of her (Eth. IV, 11—16), Christ's love of her (Eth. V, 25—26), the guidance given to her by her Head (verse 24) and Saviour (Verse 25) lead us to assume that she is an instrument of people's salvation and involvement into the purposeful and vital glorification of God, in other words, into blessed participation in His Glory and, ultimately, into deification (Jn. X, 35; Ps. IXI, 4; Mt. XII, 29; Mt. XIII, 43; Rom. XIII, 17, 30; 1 Cor. VI, 20; 2 Thes. I, 10—12). Thus through the Church of Christ God sanctifies people, giving them to partake of his eternal Kingdom, giving them salvation, that is, eternal life.²³

While speaking about holiness as about the result of the sanctification proceeding from God, we noted the apportionment from the environment and superiority over it as signs and qualities of holiness. But both these are for the most part of an outer character and could be attributed to the secular objects as well for there is no claim for holiness with them. They speak for the relations of the object with the environment rather than for the holiness of an object by essence.

Speaking about the objects of sanctification, we may say without doubt

²² See the author's article on 'Grace in the Church and through the Church', JMP, 1979, No. 7, p. 49; and *Stimme der Orthodoxie*, 1979, No. 3, p. 33.

²³ Ibid.

that there is something ontological inherent in holiness which is the reason for inevitable distinction of the consecrated object from everything which is non-consecrated, «secular», «profanum». The ontological point is the reason for both noted qualities. Ontology should be sought in its origin, in the holiness of God who is the source of any sanctification of created objects, the holiness of which is always secondary to the Divine holiness and is always borrowed from it.

It is the link between the holiness of any object with its Source — the holiness of God which should be seen as a reason of the sublime feelings up to ecstasy and exaltation arising in people who come into continuity with a holy thing or who are exposed to its influence. Here we have a ground for an exclusively existential rather than psychological influence of a holy thing on the spiritual and material nature, for the spiritual conversion and rising (Acts 9), healings and other manifestations of spiritual powers conditioned by sanctification.

So, the ontological distinctive feature of such secondary holiness is in communication of an object with the holiness of God. Consecration is nothing else but a process of communication, resulting in receiving by an object, and first of all by man (or angel), the grace to participate in the Divine holiness and thus to participate in the glory of God. It is not difficult to see that such a consecration was given to man already in the act of creation. Created in the image and after the likeness of God, he possessed the grace of communion with God who sanctified him without any impediment or resistance on his part. However, sin, or in other words, opposition of human will to the good will — the will of God which guides to the blissfulness, moved a man away from God and put a barrier between God and man, and therefore the salvation was needed and was performed by the Son of God in order to break down the dividing wall (Eph. 2:11—19) and to provide an opportunity for a new gracious sanctification for anyone who comes with the belief in the Creator of the world. One may even assert that all creatures were sanctified in the process of creation: they were introduced of the holiness of God through the creative influence of the Holy Spirit (Gen. 1:2).

Here we come close to the problem of the inanimate, or so-called «dead» matter.

Indeed, the sanctification of infants through their baptism at the unconscious age tells decisively on their further spiritual life and determines

their sonship to God for ever. But what really is the meaning of sanctification of the inanimate objects which is widely used in the practice of the catholic Churches?

Here we have an outward sign of sanctification — apportionment of this particular object from all other objects analogous, similar or identical to it by their outer characteristics: weight, proportions, configuration, and others. But the basis of this apportionment is the mystical association of the sanctified object with the gracious sources of sanctification, and in the ultimate — with God who, through the power of the Holy Spirit, bears upon all created objects communicating the quality of grace to them.

Let us take some Biblical examples of such sanctification. Not only the burning, but not consumed bush was sanctified, but also the ap-proaches to it: »Put off your shoes from your feet, — was said to Moses, — for the place on which you are standing is holy ground» (Ex. 3:5).

Mount Sinai was also a holy place, and only Moses, the chosen one by God, had access to it, while the whole people of Israel, despite their being consecrated, did not dare to touch the line made by Moses according to the order from God (Ex. 19:10—15). In both cases God himself was the direct source of consecration. However, the tent of meeting and the altar, the garments of Aaron and his sons were consecrated by Moses through anointment, as well as Aaron himself and his sons received priesthood through anointment.

The spirituality of the New Testament with the abolition of ritual and social statutes of the Moses law which lost their salutary efficacy, has not abolished regularity of the process of consecration both of people and material objects. Enough was said above about the consecration of Israel of the New Testament: the Christian Church and her members. Yet the reality of consecration of some inanimate objects finds a new confirmation in the New Testament. One should regard as the most authoritative saying to that matter the words of Christ himself who showed the sequence of consecration emanating from God and passing to the temple, to the gold which decorates it, to the altar and to the gift that is on the altar (Mt. 23:16—22). From the Acts of the Apostles we learn about the miraculous qualities of handkerchiefs and aprons of St. Paul (Acts 19:22). The same gracious effect was borne by the shadow of St. Peter (Acts 5:15).

Aware of the grace of God to »bless and sanctify all things»,²⁴ the Orthodox Church blesses the churches, the houses, the bells, the church utensils, the icons, the garments and even secular-social things.²⁵ A particular place among the acts of blessings belongs to the blessing of waters which is performed often and in some cases (at the Feast of the Holy Epiphany of the Lord) with particular solemnity. As is known, the blessing of waters is performed by the immersion of the cross therein, the sanctifying effect of which is conditioned by the inseparability — awareness of which is implanted into Christian consciousness — between the sign of the cross and the fact of Crucifixion of the Saviour of the world on the Cross. One may believe that the life-giving, sanctifying grace is given by God to the sign of the cross with the purpose to sustain and strengthen our lasting memory of the Sacrifice on the Calvary offered for our salvation. The holy (sanctified — to be more precise) water is used for consecration of any objects. The use of water as an instrument of sanctification may be explained not only by its convenience for immersion, sprinkling and drinking, but mainly by its use for baptism which was indicated by Christ himself (Jn. 3:5; Mt. 28:19; Mk. 16:16).

The sanctification of material objects kept in the New Testament does not mean, though, the Old Testament accents on sanctification remained inviolable. The ritual, outwards aspect of sanctification is largely put off to the background, and Man, his spirituality, his attitude to God and people are placed in the forefront.

Love is regarded as of paramount importance (Mt. 22:36—40; Jn. 13:34). The state of love shows most clearly the ontological God-likeness of man (1 Jn. 4:16, 19). It is the source and heart of the sanctification and holiness, for »God is love» (1 Jn. 4:8, 16), and whatever is done out of love sanctifies man.

As a result many outward things which were compulsory for sanctification for an Old Testament man fell away or got quite a new sense. Dropped off were physical circumcision (Gal. 5:16), offerings for sin (Heb. 10:18), the sacral significance of the Jerusalem temple (1 Jn. 4:21—24). The notion of temple is extended and animated: »God does not live in shrines made by man» (Acts 17:24), — preached St. Paul in

²⁴ Prayer for the blessing of bread, wine and oil at Great Vespers.

²⁵ The Book of Needs.

Athens; any Christian may be a place of God's special dwelling (1 Cor. 3:16, 6:19), and the whole Church is called a temple (Eph. 2:21; 2 Thess. 2:4). It is very remarkable that there would be no temple at all in the holy city of Jerusalem in the age to come, »for its temple is the Lord God the Almighty« (Rev. 21:22). Thus, from the eschatological perspective, the notion of temple goes into the Divine infinity.

The Old Testament notions should be preserved to the extent to which they do not contradict spiritual and even physical needs of man. The sabbath rest should be kept unless it does not prevent man from meeting his needs (Mk. 3:4; Lk. 6:9), any acts disturbing rest are permitted if hunger compels (Mk. 2:23—28), and the principle is proclaimed: »The sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath« (Mk. 2:27).

As is known, sanctification has an antipode — defilement, desecration. These notions were also drastically changed in the New Testament. An outward defilement, an outer dirtiness loss their sinful meaning to a large extent or completely. It is not essential whether food is eaten with washed or unwashed hands (Mk. 7:1—3), and the meaning of the previously ritual character of the washing of vessels does not matter any more (Mk. 7:4; Lk. 11:38—41). The centre of gravity is transferred to the heart, in other words, — to the spiritual state of man, for not food and drink which go into mouth defile a man, but the evil which proceeds from the heart and also out of the mouth in all its forms and manifestations defiles a man (Mt. 15:10—20; Mk. 7:18—23).

The essence of such drastic re-orientation lies in the truth that »God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth« (Jn. 4:24).

Any consecration has God as its source, and man — as its final object. When the Father seeks for those who worship him (Jn. 4:23), then the consecration of them can be performed according to His holy will through visible material mediation. It can also be direct, according to the words of the Prophet: »I will pour out my spirit on all flesh... and all who call upon the name of the Lord shall be delivered« (Joel 2:28, 32; Acts 2:17, 21).

A thief on the cross was exposed to such direct effect of grace: he was not consecrated by the baptism with water, he did not receive an absolution of sins by a priest through the sacrament of confession, he never participated in the Eucharist. All this was replaced by the sancti-

fying words of the Saviour: »Today you will be with me in Paradise« (Lk. 23:43). The words addressed by Christ to His disciples may be fully applied to the thief: »You are already made clean by the word which I have spoken to you« (Jn. 15:3). There was everything in this promise: the spiritual birth, the full deliverance of sins and the co-participation in the eucharistic sacrifice which itself was performed for the first time at that very moment not on the altar of the church, but on the Calvary cross where the Son of God was hanging near him.

It should be noted that »the sabbath was made for man, not man for the sabbath«. Any consecration of the material objects has the sanctification of man as its ultimate goal, for which they serve only as instruments, like the clay served as an instrument, for giving back sight to a blind man (Jn. 2:6—7; Mk. 8:22—23).

It should be mentioned that the Epiclesis in the Russian Orthodox Church includes a special invocation of the Holy Spirit repeated for three times in the everyday circle. »Thou wilt send thy Holy Spirit...« The grace of the Holy Spirit is invoked not on the holy gifts what would be quite natural due to the coming sacrament of transubstantiation, but on the servants of this sacrament (in other words, on the whole community of worshippers, and first of all on the ministers).

In between the repetitions of the prayer the words from Psalm 51 (verses 12—12) are read in which those who pray ask for the purification of their hearts by the action of the Holy Spirit.

In Epiclesis itself which is the single whole with the Anaphora, the first place is occupied by the supplication to bestow the Holy Spirit »upon us«, i.e. upon the ministers of the sacrament, and only then »upon these Gifts here spread forth«.²⁶

It was already in the II and III centuries of the Christian era that the church life, and specially the liturgical life included the elements of the worshipping of some members of the church who departed into eternity and were well-known for their exemplary Christian life or death. The latter was more often the case, for originally such a reverence (first sponta-

²⁶ The Service Book, The Liturgy of St. John Chrysostom.

neous-popular) was honored to the martyrs who suffered at the time of the persecution. The inscriptions in the catacombs testify to it.

We read in the source of the II century: »We worship Christ, for He is the Son of God. We duly love martyrs as disciples and followers of Christ for their unsurpassed striving for the Lord and Teacher».⁷⁷

We may find references to the worshipping of the memory and relics of the martyrs in the works of the authors of the IV century, such as St. John Chrysostom, Eusebius, St. Basil the Great, and others.

Later, canonized as worshipped saints were bishops who enjoyed reverence and were well-known, and hermits and abbots of the monasteries after their coming into being.

The initiative of worshipping came from below, from the wide masses of Christians, who parted with the paganism only recently and who for the most part were still unbaptized: the baptism was received at the time more often by adults and sometimes even by people at the advanced age. They psychologically needed the living examples of the Christian way of life. The more the life of the grown Church which continued to grow rapidly was polluted by the pagan ways, customs and defects, the more respect and reverence was attributed to some individuals who left the world in order to preserve and strengthen their personal spiritual communion with God (desert fathers), or those who struggled for spreading and strengthening of Christian ideals among popular masses (illuminaries). Their authority which was recognized during their lifetime, grew immeasurably after their demise. The worshipping of the saints found an outward expression in the commemoration of the days of their demise, in the decoration and consecration of their tombs, including the erection of churches and chapels above them with appropriate names.

A custom of putting relics (or their parts) under the sanctuaries of the altars appeared very early and later has become common with firm roots in the church practice.

The Lives of the Saints have gradually become a cherished reading of pious Christians.

Finally, the confidence that the saints are in the state of blissfulness — a preliminary at present, but perpetual after the Last Judgement —

⁷⁷ »Martyrium Polycarpi», 156. Quot. from M. Schmaus, *Katholische Dogmatik*, III, 1, 598. Trans. by the author.

and that prayerful communion with them is possible has found its expression in the practice of canonization which was established in the West in the X century, but has no certain order and canonical norms in the East even now.

The reasons for canonization are the miraculous manifestations of the gracious power of the glorified person (mostly it is the healing of the sick), the imperishable relics and the apparitions. But all these manifestations of the holiness, especially the imperishable relics, were not considered as strictly necessary and compulsory. The decisive moment has always been the common church — or one may even say — the church-social belief in the high moral stand and outstanding piety of the glorified person and his deeds in life. Such belief, inherent in wide masses of the faithful, is expressed by the words of the blind man from the Gospel: »We know that God does not listen to sinners, but if any one is worshipper of God and does his will, God listens to him» (Jn. 10:31).

The calling on the saints in prayers is a particular and the most vivid kind of their worshipping which has been developing from the II—III centuries.

It is known that calling on the saints in prayers aroused serious doubts in many Christians and even objections. There were even attempts of the theological rejection of it in the epoch of the Iconoclasm and the Reformation. Yet the Church, being guided not only by the popular tradition, but also by the New Testament eschatology, accepted and adopted the worshipping of the saints not spontaneously, but on theological grounds. As we know, these grounds have not been systematically exposed, and we may undertake to briefly remind of their basic provisions.

The Church canonizes its departed members in whose salvation it is sure. Therefore it does not pray for their »rest» (eternal salvation), but, *vica versa*, it asks for their prayerful assistance and intercessions. There are reasons for it.

The first is the admissibility and desirability and, to a certain extent, the necessity of the members of the earthly Church to pray for one another. We are called to these prayers by mutual love and the Word of God: »Pray for one another», calls St. James (Jas. 5:16). St. Paul asked to pray for him (Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:25) and said that he prays for those who call on him (2 Cor. 9:14; 13:9; Col. 1:3, 9; 2 Thess. 1:11). Christ Himself prayed for His disciples (Lk. 22:32; Jn. 17:9, 15, 20). Mutual

intercessions (die Fürbitten) has been firmly rooted in the practice of all churches, including the Protestant churches and is now an integral part of any divine service, both private and public.

The second reason for our need in the intercessions of the departed and for our hope in the effectiveness of their prayers is the confidence in the reality of their existence in person in the other world. «He is not in the reality of the dead but of the living» (Mt. 22:32), said Christ. In the parable of the rich man and Lazarus He slightly opened the curtain which conceals personal eschatological realities. Moses's and Elijah's presence on the Mount Tabor at the moment of Transfiguration may serve as an indisputable testimony to the reality of the future life of people, and in particular of the God's chosen people, like both Prophets. Therefore, the Russian Orthodox Church (as well as the Roman Catholic Church) repudiates any attempts made by certain trends in the modernist theology to deny the conscious existence of the souls of the departed in the time between their death and the resurrection of all. The Orthodoxy, which unlike the Catholicism, does not have a developed teaching on the Purgatory, anyway teaches about the reality of life beyond the grave and asks her members to pray for the dead. The Church hopes for the intercessions of those in whose salvation she is sure and whose worshipping she legitimizes by the act of canonization. The Church not only believes in the «fellowship of the Saints», which was referred to in the Apostolicum, but she also practises it.

Holiness, recognized by the Church in the canonized saints, does not contradict and cannot be opposed to the general holiness granted through Baptism and Chrismation. The canonized saints, as well as all departed Christians who got salvation (only a few are canonized among them) were able, being influenced by the justifying and sanctifying grace of God to preserve and realize — till the end of their earthly life — the holiness which is inherent in all members of the Church, without which no one will see the Lord» (Heb. 12:14). The Lord willed to glorify them not only in the triumphant Church, but also in the wandering earthly Church in order that their life may serve a good example, an encouragement and pattern for the future generations. Common prayers of the members of the visible and invisible Church provide the fullness of the communion with God, the unity of the Church and realize in the ideal its holiness and catholicity.

Always remembering the fact expressed in the glorification of God in the Old Testament: 'Marvelous is God in his saints', the Church, while worshipping the saints, realizes her catholicity, stimulates the holiness of her members (Heb. 12:10) and persuades them in the closeness of God, in an opportunity to receive His sanctifying grace for all, even to a greater extent which has become a lot of the glorified saints.

The unity of the saints — through the Lord Jesus Christ — with God, among themselves and with the members of the Church who are still wandering in their earthly pilgrimage and only seeking the future city (Heb. 12:14) is the realization of the unity commanded by Jesus Christ to His disciples (Jn. 17:21). Its full achievement is barred by the wall of division between Christians of different confessions, the destruction of which is the common, indeed the universal task of the Christian world.

THE HOLY PREACHERS OF THE GOSPEL IN NORTH-WEST RUSSIA AND EASTERN FINLAND*

KONSTANTIN E. SKURAT

The today's generation of Russian Orthodox faithful live in a happy time, since they are witnesses and participants of the celebration of the millennial anniversary of Christianity in Russia. In 988 St. Prince Vladimir whom the pious people called «the red sun» and who married the byzantine Princess Anne, received the baptism and then baptized the whole population of Kiev. The importance of this event, introducing Russia into the common family of christian nations, was as great and crucial for Russia as for the whole world the declaration of Christendom a legitimate religion by the St. Roman emperor Constantine the Great in the IV-th century.

During the last millennium the Russian Orthodox Church has covered a great historical way with many glorious pages in the chronicle of great and bright events. In this report we analyse only a small part of this chronicle devoted to the holy preachers of the Gospel in north-west Russia and eastern Finland.

The memory of the workers who gave the light of Christ's faith to our northern territories with the help of the Divine Grace, is dear and sacred to the Russian Orthodox faithful. In the history of the Russian holiness and in its religious phenomenology the analysis of the deeds of these workers of Christ is very important, since in them the Russian orthodox people not only venerate their heavenly patrons, but also see a Revelation for their spiritual way. These ascetics include first of all the saint monks spiritually linked with the Transfiguration monastery in Valaam: St. Sergius and St. German of Valaam (+ ca 1353), St. Arsenius of Konev (+ 1447), St. Alexander of Svir (+ 1533) and St. Athanasius of Sandeba (+ ca. 1580).¹

* The summary of this report is enclosed.

¹ This list does not include the famous ascetic St. Sabbatius (†1435) who later

According to the local tradition preserved by the Orthodox Church in Finland, the Valaam monastery, named by the today's Primate of the Orthodox Church of Finland Archbishop Paul «the cradle of Orthodoxy in Karelia», was founded in 960.²

St. Sergius and German, who came to an island of the Ladoga lake in the beginning of the XIV-th century, were the organizers of the monastic life on the Valaam hills. In the Novgorod scroll of the late XVI-th century it is said: «In 6837 (= 1329) the starlets Sergius came to Valaam».³ The ascetics worked zealously communicating the christian faith to the local population. They were to protect Orthodoxy from the activity of swedish catholics who tried to implant «latinism» among Karelians with sword and fire under the leadership of their king Magnus. The violence of the catholics provoked a backward reaction: the population began to follow again paganism and to ask the old gods for help.

With a meek word and their example of christian love St. Sergius and German have revitalized the Orthodoxy.

During the following centuries the Valaam monastery situated near the border between the swedish and novgorod territories, was destroyed many times. But the Grace of God has not left it, helping its restoration and the vocation of new saints who spread out and confirmed faith and piety with an apostolic zeal. In order to organize here the monastic life Metropolitan Gabriel of St. Petersburg (XVIII-th century) transferred from the Sarov hermitage to Valaam and experienced starets Nazarius and made him abbot (1782—1801). The Valaam monks led by this bearer of the Sarov monastic tradition, were very successful in any kind of asceticism in Sarov and in Valaam: in the cenobitic life, as hermits and ana-

left Valaam and went to the Solovki islands, and monk Gennadius, who worked at the same time in Valaam and became later the well-known Archbishop of Novgorod. Their deeds should be studied separately, and the narration would go beyond the limits of this report. For the same reason we shall not analyse the ministry of the Solovki monastery which was the «crossroad of the Moscow South and the Novgorod West» (hierom. I. Kologriyov, Essays on history of the Russian holiness, Brussels, 1961, p. 133). See the list of the St. Fathers of the Karelian land in the «Journal of the Moscow Patriarchate»/JMP, 1974, no 12, pp. 20—21. (article by V. Russak).

² The visit to the Trinity-St. Sergius Laura (Monastery), JMP, 1958, no 6, p. 41.

³ Quoted from F. A. Ch., Russian Saints, venerated by the whole church and locally, Chertigov, 1863, p. 128 (June). Cf. Prof. E. Golubinsky, History of the canonization of saints in the Russian Church, Sergiev Possad, 1894, p. 104.

chorists.⁴ Even the monks of the Holy Mount Athos, who heard about the orthodox asceticism of Valaam, came here to learn, as well as St. Sabatius (later of Solovki), monk of the monastery of St. Cyril on the lake Beloye, who came here when he learned that the monks of the Valaam monastery conduct an ascetic life, day and night doing things pleasant to God, and receiving food from the work of their hands.⁵

The monks of the Valaam monastery spoke in the following way about the spirit of the monastic brotherhood: »In the old times the leaders of the Valaam monastery Sergius and German established a community in Valaam, and they gave to each linen cloths and foot-wear». The cenobitic statutes required a common prayer, common works, common meal, the same clothes for everybody, etc. The new-comer to the monastery was handed over to a starets who led his spiritual life (a life with counselling). Prayers and a constant reading of the Psalter with a commemoration of those living and dead were an absolute duty of all the monks. Those able to work physically were also to deal with different handicrafts providing the necessary food. Besides this from 1859 meteorological and hydrological analyses took place everyday in Valaam. »All these scientific analyses and studies took place constantly and free of charge through the sacrificial works of the brotherhood of the monastery and continued till December 20, 1939, i.e. till the evacuation of the whole brotherhood of the Valaam monastery».⁶

The Valaam monastery, organized in this way, was, in the person of its monks, a strong spiritual centre with an important influence for the whole north-west Russia.

In the XIV-th century St. Arsenius of Konev worked a certain time in the Valaam monastery. He became monk in one of the monasteries of Novgorod. From here he went to Athos, where the monks of Athos loved him very much because he made for them tinware free of charge. The abbot from Athos John Zidon saw in Arsenius a good monastic inclination and before his departure gave him the icon of our Lady, ceno-

⁴ See »Instructions of the starets abbot Nazarius» in: »The Valaam monastery», SPbG, 1864, pp. 103—132; 169—181.

⁵ The Valaam hieromonk. The Valaam word about the Valaam monastery, SPbG, 1875, p. 11.

⁶ Quoted from F. A. Ch., *ibidem*, p. 129 (June).

⁷ From the letter of the Valaam monk Juvian from May 18, 1949 to Metropolit Gregory of Leningrad and Novgorod.

bic statutes and commanded to found a monastery in the North. After coming back St. Arsenius settled in Valaam where he accepted the brotherly monastic spirit of the North. Striving for continuing the deeds and carrying out the commandment of the abbot from Athos, St. Arsenius took the icon from Athos and went in a boat through the lake of Ladoga since he was sure that the Lord Himself would show him the proper place for the monastery. And indeed the wind brought his boat to the island of Konevets. St. Arsenius received this as an indication from above, came out to the shore and put a cross — the sign of the beginning of the preaching. According to a Novgorod document (a scroll of the XVI-th century) and an inscription on the icon of Athos (of Konev), this took place in 1393.⁸ The population of the island venerated a stone and sacrificed horses to it (the name of the island comes from russian »kon», which means »horse»). It was not easy for the pagans to accept the light of the faith of Christ. But with the help of God, after many years of prayers, patience and works the saint through his words and his example »transformed the island of ministry to the life into a dwelling of holiness and truth».⁹ A church of the Nativity of our Lady was built on the island and a cenobitic monastery was organized here.

A century later, in the 2d part of the XV-th century, St. Alexander of Svir came to Valaam when he was young. Here he began his monastic life and spent 13 years as a very strict ascetic. In the day he brought water, wood from the forest, worked in the bakery, served everybody zealously and in the night he prayed vigilantly. Once when he prayed he heard a voice, calling him to come out of this place and to go to another place »prepared» for him.¹⁰ St. Alexander went to the river Svir, connecting the Ladoga and Onega lakes, where he settled in a forest. In very poor conditions of hermitage he spent seven years, and people heard about him and began to gather around him. Later when he became abbot of the monastery of the Holy Trinity, founded by him, St. Alexander continued to follow the strict asceticism: he went for praying the first, he worked, ate little, slept sitting or on a board, and seemed to be the last in the monastery. In his spiritual testament the saint wrote: »I order to

⁸ See F. A. Ch., *ibidem*, p. 128; 66 (June).

⁹ *ibidem*, pp. 66—67 (June).

¹⁰ I. I. Rudometov, The founders of Russian monasteries (short essays on life and activity), Moscow, 1962, p. 78 (typed).

my brotherhood to live in love of Christ and not to keep in the monastery any intoxicating drinks, not to be hostile to each other and not to possess anything...¹⁰ The high spiritual life of the saint attracted many people and contributed to the spreading out and affirmation of christian piety.

St. Athanasius of Sandeba was a zealous disciple and a good helper of St. Alexander when he was in the Valaam monastery and later, on the shores of the river Svir. After the death of the saint and with his blessing St. Athanasius went to the Karelian forests and built a house on the hill between the two lakes of Sandeba and Roschino (in 25 km from the centre of the district Olonets and in 168 km from the regional centre Petrozavodsk), thus founding the Assumption monastery of Sandeba.¹¹ The last years of his life St. Athanasius spent in a complete solitude in one of the islands of the Sandeba lake; later this island was called «holys». St. Athanasius died «in his hermitage and was buried on one of the capes of the Roschino lake, where later (in 1720; K.S.) a church of St. Cyril and Athanasius of Alexandria was founded».¹²

Unfortunately the Swedish and Lithuanian invasions of the XVII-th century destroyed the written testimonies of the works of the saint. There are only some notes. Thus in the historical description of the Assumption monastery in Sandeba the attention is paid to two great christian virtues of St. Athanasius: the humility and the obedience. It is said that these virtues brought St. Athanasius closer to St. Alexander and made him the beloved disciple of the saint of Svir and a witness of the graceful apparition of our Lady to his teacher.¹³ In this case those virtues have involved the whole essence of the saint and, therefore, are fulfilled in perfection. One should note there also, that the saint who was the instructor of the whole brotherhood, «for his own learning had frequent spiritual talks with St. Hadrian of Andrusova (or Ondrusova), a schema-

monk from Valaam».¹⁴ The conclusion is quite clear: the saint lived and taught to live others as it was in Valaam, where he began his monastic life. It is interesting in the description of the Sandeba hermitage that the saint put crosses from the shores of the Ladoga lake and up to his places of residence.¹⁵ Usually crosses were put in the places where missionaries brought the seeds of the word of God. One should note also the following important moment: a church of the St. Cyril and Athanasius was built over the grave of the saint. In Russia, — and I think, in other places also, — churches built over the graves, were devoted not to some saints, occasionally found, but to those saints whose spiritual features were especially close to those of the dead. In this the unity of the church organism as well as the historical succession of its spirituality were manifested...

St. Tryphon of Pechenga (+ 1583) preached the word of God in the far North, on the shores of the Cold sea (now the Barents sea) among the lopars (saamis).¹⁶ He was born in the Novgorod land. In his youth his features were piety, prayer, striving to consecrate all his life to the ministry to God, — and the Providence of God called him to the Pechenga river. The inhabitants of this region venerated the mountains, rocks, animals. First of all the saint established with them trade links and then spoke to them about the God glorified in Trinity. The sincere and humble word of the saint touched the hearts of the pagans, and many of them believed in God. But the pagan priests (the kebuns) were on the way of the preaching of the Gospel. «But they could not withstand the wisdom and the Spirit with which» the saint spoke (Act. 6, 10), and therefore they blamed him, beat him and even threatened to kill him. St. Tryphon, «full of grace and power» (Act. 6, 8) did not fear the difficulties and continued to visit the houses of the lopars spread out in low, swampy places divided by rocks and mountains. He tried as far as it was possible, to facilitate the life of the lopars: several times he visited Novgorod to ask for help for them, because they suffered from frequent crop failures, asked the Moscow authorities for protection. He spread out

¹⁰ Quoted from F. A. Ch., *Ibidem*, p. 143 (August).

¹¹ Sandeba, or Sandema (a), or Sandoma (a); see JMP, 1978, no 8, p. 76; L. I. Denisov, *Orthodox monasteries of the Russian empire*, Moscow, 1908, p. 621; see also *Enisiklopedichesky slovar'*, ed. F. A. Brokgauz and I. A. Yefron, v. XXXII, SPb., 1901, p. 411 (sub voce «Sandebysky»).

¹² See The Assumption monastery of Sandema. Notes on history and statistics, Moscow, 1960, p. 6.

¹³ *Ibidem*, p. 7.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, p. 4.

¹⁵ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

¹⁶ *Ibidem*, p. 5.

¹⁷ He had connections with the Valaam monastery through the monastery of Solovki. In Valaam worked St. Sabbatius of Solovki, and the Solovki monk Theodorite of Kola worked in the North with St. Tryphon.

among them the achievements of the culture: he organized fishing, hunting, introduced collecting of oysters, built big boats to travel through the sea. From the enlightened people the saint received nothing for himself. If there were some offerings, he handed them over to the construction of the monastery of the Trinity, founded by him where he worked himself. He said: »It is better to have a stone on the neck than to tempt the brother with idleness.«¹⁹ In doing this the saint gave an example not only of laboriousness, but also of a greatest humility. The last was quite clear when he refused to be the leader of his new monastery and appointed his disciple as abbot for the brothers. He loved the Lord from his youth and in his humble acceptance of his unworthiness St. Tryphon was afraid to »be unfaithful to Him when he was old, and continued to work for Him till his death.«²⁰ It is about such ascetic that St. John Chrysostom speaks: »He fights against demons for piety and ministry to God, or trying to take cities and towns out of errors.«²¹

One should note that St. Tryphon after 5 years of ascetic deeds in the North, met with hierodeacon Theodorite who helped very much the missionary ministry because he translated some prayers into the Iopaki language. Before this Theodorite spent 15 years in the Solovki monastery. Both monks visited each other — Tryphon visited the city of Kola, and Theodorite visited Pechenga — and the »mutual relations were established.«²²

After many years of the works of the holy preacher²³ many Ioparians were baptized. They felt the sincere love of the holy preacher to them his patience, self-offering. They saw the superiority of Christendom over paganism. »He teaches us the good, -they said, -let us listen to him.«²⁴

The information about the deeds of the holy preachers of the Gospel in north-west Russia is rather poor, but with this information it is possible to determine clearly their spiritual characteristics, to find what raised

¹⁹ F. A. Ch., Russian Saints, venerated by the whole church and locally, Chet-nigov, 1865, p. 561 (December).

²⁰ F. A. Ch., ibidem, p. 561 (December).

²¹ St. John Chrysostom, Works, v. 1, no. 1, SPbG, 1895, p. 124.

²² V. Kluchevsky, The ancient Russian lives of the saints as a historical source, Moscow, 1871, p. 340.

²³ St. Tryphon lived in Pechenga almost 20 years. See F. A. Ch., ibidem, p. 562 (December).

²⁴ I. I. Rudometov, ibidem, p. 147.

them over the others, provoked astonishment and veneration and what made them saints. But before we undertake this analysis, in order to understand their deeds, one should at least briefly speak about the *action of the love of God* towards man and about the *participation of the man* in these actions.

Christ became the New Adam and restored the fallen image becoming in this way the source of the new creation (2 Cor. 5, 17). Into the Body of the New Adam — the Church (Col. 1, 24) — the faithful comes through the Baptism. Through this and other sacraments he receives by the mercy of God the salutary grace of God (Eph. 2, 8), becomes co-citizen of the saints, member of the household of God (Eph. 2, 19), and the kingdom of God dwells in his heart (Lk. 17, 21). But on the other hand the Saviour said himself: »The kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and men of violence take it by force« (Mth. 11, 12). In the same Letter and in the chapter where the developed the teaching about the action of the grace of God, St. Paul teaches us: »For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them« (Eph. 2, 10). How should we understand this manifoldness of commandments? This is the manifoldness of one and the same action. All those who joined and join the Church of Christ should receive the same graceful gifts, the same seeds of the Holy Spirit. But we need a good soil so that the seeds may grow and give fruits »hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty« (Mth. 13, 8); in other words, those who received the gifts, should take care of the life conditions. The salvation should be received by each person separately, since our Lord suffered death, »so that we may not do henceforth the deeds of the death«, according to St. Athanasius the Great; our Lord gave His life, so that »we may protect our own life from the intrigues of the evil.«²⁵ In order to be revived through the grace of God, man should do his best to contribute to his rebirth. We receive much from above, but something we should acquire ourselves. »With the graceful gift from God our will should also do some efforts and not to be weak.«²⁶ Having received the grace of God and being born from above, the man is in the situation which is like the situation of the first men before the fall. Because of their spiri-

²⁵ St. Athanasius the Great, Works, part III, Trinity — St. Sergius Laura, 1903, p. 433.

²⁶ St. Athanasius the Great, Works, part III, ibidem, p. 414.

tual freedom they were equally able to follow the God's Law of Good as well as the moral lawlessness of evil, in the same way any man purified by God from his sins, for the same reason remains equally able to do good and to admit evil, to do sins again. The last is especially possible because the thoughts of the heart of man are evil from the very youth (cf. Gen. 8, 21), and »your adversary the devil prowls around« in the world »seeking some one to devour« (1 Pet. 5, 8). If we are inactive not only the world given to us can perish, but, — and this is especially dangerous for us, — the »unclean spirit«, finding us »empty, swept«, can dwell in us, »as it happened with those named in the Gospel (cf. Mth. 12, 43, sqq): the unclean spirit left him, and going through places deprived of water, took seven other spirits, more evil than himself; then he came back and found his house empty; he stayed here, and the last was worse for men than the first, since the alienation from virtue opens the way to the unclean spirit«.²⁷ This is why St. Paul teaches us not to »quench the Spirit« (1 Thes. 5, 19), to »put on the armour of light« (Rom. 13, 12), to stand firm »with the weapon of righteousness for the right hand and for the left« (2 Cor. 6, 7). The same apostle says: »Working together with him... we entreat you not to accept the Grace of God in vain« (2 Cor. 6, 1). Of course when the apostle of pagans persistently calls us to join the light, the truth, he means not a simple accumulation of virtues (even a non-believer can collect a sum of good and nice actions), but a gradual internal transfiguration, a change of the whole substance of the man not only in his actions, but also in his thoughts, desires, aspirations according to Christ. With the help of God's grace the apostle obtained such a change, and he appeals Christians to undertake the same change: »Be imitators of me, as I am of Christ« (1 Cor. 11, 1). »His Grace toward me was not in vain«, but »I worked harder than any of them« (1 Cor. 15, 10; cf. 1 Cor. 6, 20; 2 Cor. 7, 1 sqq). Therefore in the spiritual growth of a Christian, on his way towards holiness, in the kingdom of God the love of God and the will of a man act together (synergism). If there is a vocation (the objective aspect), there should be an implementation (subjective aspect).²⁸ Those who do differently in this respect, — says St. Athanasius the Great, — accuse the Grace and...

²⁷ St. Athanasius the Great, Works, part III, *ibidem*, p. 414.

²⁸ See Prof. A. Ossipov, The saints as a sign of the fulfilment of God's promise to the man, JMF, 1980, no II, p. 60.

do not serve the Lord... who carried out the redemption».²⁹ Here we should remember the words of starets Nazarius, the good instructor of the Valaam monks: »If you want to foretaste the Heavenly Kingdom, enforce yourself to love, incline your neck under the yoke of the works of Christ; create the Heavenly Kingdom in yourself through self-offering, patients, preservation of feelings, works and deeds in favour of virtue, fasting, vigil, obedience, silence, spiritual reading and singing, prayers, tears, useful handicrafts and any patience. If you want to live with Christ, you should suffer, as Christ has suffered; if you want to be obedient to Christ, take His cross and follow Him in order to crucify your passions in Him and to suffer in everything».³⁰

The holy preachers of the Gospel have taken voluntarily this cross (Mth. 8, 34) and with the help of the Divine Grace, they have suffered all the difficulties of the preaching of the Gospel... They taught through word and deed... The preachers of the Christian faith were ascetics, and the ascetic deed is manifold.³¹

²⁹ St. Athanasius the Great, Works, part III, *ibidem*, p. 433. See the complete explanation of the teaching of St. Athanasius the Great about the ascetic deed in the 24 part of the master thesis of K. E. Skurat »Soteriology of St. Athanasius the Great«, ch. X, »The reception of salvation by separate human beings: the salvation and the deed« (part II, Academy, 1970, pp. 161—193; typed). The objective aspect of our salvation is revealed in the first nine chapters of the same part.

³⁰ The instruction of the starets Father Nazarius, abbot of Valaam, with a short description of his life and deeds, Moscow, 1855, p. 66.

³¹ Priest V. Platonov writes: »It is very difficult and may be impossible to show visibly and consistently the growth of positive virtues of a man who seeks holiness, since here we should find the natural individuality of each human being. Although we find among the ascetics the schemas of interrelatedness of virtues, we cannot say that they had the same structure, in spite of the similarity of the names of virtues (see, e.g. Anthony, v. I, 29; v. 3, Maxim Conf., 158, 222, 248—249; v. 5, Philimon, 201; Gregory Sin., 254)«. Priest V. Platonov, On holiness, Kharkov, 1911, p. 16.

Bishop Theophan indicates to any Christian, taking the path of salvation, the following grades of perfection: »To begin with repentance and conversion to God, and then to enter the field of purity through the fight against passions«. The graceful help contributing to the rejection of evil and the creation of good, is always ready to those who already repented from the bottom of their hearts and began to fight against passions. The fighter should »put on the whole armour of God« (Eph. 6, 11) — the fast, the hermitage, the vigil, the restraint of feelings, the bows, the church going, the reading of the God's word and writings of the Fathers, the universal obedience, the sobriety, the attention to himself, the prayer, the faith. Bishop Theophan (Govorov), On repentance, Holy Communion and correction of life. Sermon for Lent and preparatory weeks, Moscow, 1909, p. 149, 157.

All our preachers-ascetics were strict *fasters*. They ate very little, especially in the spring and in the autumn. Sometimes they ate nothing during the whole day. Their food was bread, salt, vegetables without oil. The Saviour began His ministry with the fast, when He appeared to the world on the river Jordan. He fasted in the desert »forty days and forty nights» (Mth. 4, 2). St. Isaak of Syria says: »In the same way all those following the Saviour upon this foundation confirm the beginning of their ministry».³²

The life style of the ascetics corresponded to the strict fasting observed by them. They lived in mud-huts, small houses and patiently survived the northern cold. Their clothes were the most simple. Thus St. Alexander of Swir spent seven years in a small house near the river Swir. When he met here the boyard Andrey Zavalishin, the boyard thought that he saw a ghost. At the request of Zavalishin the saint told him about his life, but asked not to speak about this. »I live here seven years and I see nobody, — he said, — I never ate bread and ate only grass...» »It was difficult for you to live in this way?» — asked the astonished boyard. — »In the beginning it was difficult», — answered the saint.³³ Indeed only a saint could conduct such a life, or maybe a man who firmly followed the way of holiness.³⁴

The fast gave victory over passions and the reconciliation of the spirit, the domination of the spirit over the flesh. »As the satisfaction of the stomach and the weakening through sleeping, warming up the lascivious lust in the beginning of all evil, — says St. Isaak of Syria, — the fast is the holy way of God and the foundation of all virtues».³⁵ Those able to fight against hunger, manifest their will and may achieve their aim with hope on God.

32 Cf. M. V. Ladyzhenskij, *Superconsciousness and ways to achieve it*, SPbg. 1912, pp. 258—273.

33 St. Isaak of Syria, *Works*, Sergiev Possed, 1911, p. 90.

34 F. A. Ch., *ibidem*, p. 138 (August).

35 The meeting with the saint and his story have so much influenced Zavalishin that he thought about his vain life, so on became monk (in schema: Hadrian) in the Valaam monastery, and then on the shore of the Ladoga lake founded the monastery of St. Nicholas (the St. Nicholas Andrusa, or Ondrusa monastery). See L. I. Denissova, *ibidem*, pp. 620—621; E. V. Barsov, *Andrey Zavalishin and his monastery*, A historical essay, »CHOIDR», 1885, v. 4, p. 2.

36 St. Isaak of Syria, *ibidem*, p. 89.

The Russian just saints loved the work and worked much. Although their material needs were very limited, they should work much in order to survive in a deep forest, to survive a long northern winter: to build a house, to collect firing, to find water, to clean the land for a kitchen-garden and a field, to fish, to collect berries and mushrooms, to care of clothes. The dream of each missionary was to build a church and thus increased preoccupations and works. One should remember that the preachers of the Gospel had nothing besides icons and books. It was more difficult to work without instruments. With works they began their deeds and finished their earthly days working inspie of the presence of many disciples in the monasteries which they built and where they were abbots. They never complained of their life (In their Lives there is no hint of it), because in their perfection they forgot hunger and cold. Strong in the spirit they overcome enormous difficulties.

They were the most *unselfish* people. Refusing all sinful joys and relaxations, they never collected treasures on earth (Mth. 5, 19—21). Their unique treasure were books and icons (e.g. St. Arsenius of Konev had always with him the icon of Our Lady brought from Athos). Those coming from rich families, distributed all their property when they leaved the world. When they became famous and their pious followers handed over to them different gifts the ascetics used them to help the poor, the hungry, those in need; they helped building monasteries and decorating churches. They spent little for themselves and their relatives... Where there is unselfishness, there we find mercy, and the merciful are blessed, for they shall obtain mercy from God (Mth. 5, 7).

The inner life of our saints is manifested in the most complete way in the *prayer*. Bishop Theophan (Govorov), who translated in Russian many authors of Philocalia and who edited all this collection, expressed the view-point of the ascetics on praying as the main function of a christian in the following clear words: »I remember the wise custom of the ancient holy Fathers: when they met each other, they exchanged greetings and asked not about health or something else, but about prayer: how it is with the prayer?, or how acts the prayer? The action of the prayer was for them the sign of spiritual life, and they called it the »breath of the spirit». If there is a breath in the body, it is living; if there is no breath, there is no life. The same concerns the spirit. If there is prayer,

the spirit is living. If there is no prayer, there is no life in the spirit.³⁶ This is why our ascetics spent whole nights in prayer, forgetting their own personality, as if they were merging with the Divine. For them God was not simply a high principle of the absolute Good with whom one should harmonize his life, and not simply a Lord or Judge whom one should venerate with fear and obedience — for them God was the very life. They loved Him with all their soul, their mind, their strength, as they could. They trusted Him with a clear feeling of His real being, with a deep understanding of the relation between their »Ego» and Him which provided them the greatest wisdom, moved them towards perfection and made them pray constantly. They prayed zealously God to grant them strength to fight against their failures. They zealously prayed for wisdom and correction of others, for the protection of the weak and the restraint of the powerful, for the implementation of the truth of God on earth. The more they felt evil, the more zealous were their prayers to God for the triumph of the Good. For our ascetics the aims they strived for were clear, and there was no doubt that only with the help of the Heavenly power they may achieve these aims.

Humility, and the feeling of its necessity and salutary character was a special feature of the heart of our just saints. »There is no more glorious than the most humble and the worse in Christ, — says the Valaam abbot Nazarius, — There is no more favourable way to the heaven into the eternal life, than humility... Where there is no light, the darkness covers everything; where there is no humility, all your actions are evil before God... God dwells in those who are humble.»³⁷ Father Nazarius explains what is humility: »Humility is the true understanding of one's nonentity and the disdain of oneself, when one knows his own weakness, sinfulness and impurity and does not boast of his own wisdom, but considers himself the worst, the most sinful and the last among others, trodden under foot by others. If a humble has a virtue, he attributes this not to his own strength, but to the help of God»;³⁸ thus he does not

look his own glory, but only the glory of God. The last idea is expressed in the most clear way by St. Diadochus, who says: »As the selfish looks for his own glory, the God-loving looks and loves the glory of his Creator. It is proper to the soul loving God and filled with God's feelings to look only for the glory of God and to enjoy its own humility. Since glory is proper to God for His sublimity as well as humility is proper to man.»³⁹

Our saints were very persistent in their striving for self-sacrifice, for an absolute perfection. They considered their deeds as something usual, necessary and natural in the life. They considered the results of their deeds as something unimportant, even insignificant, unworthy of human attention. In this way they understood themselves and their activity till their death; they were consistent till the end. They were never proud of the victory of the spirit over the flesh, they never spoke about the difficulties of their fight against weaknesses. Of course St. Alexander of Svir spoke to Zavalishin about his deeds, but in this message (as well as in others) there is no pride, and the boyard promised never to speak about this conversation. The true ascetics kept silent what about their deeds. This silence was based upon the dissatisfaction of themselves, their constant wish to be better, which is a feature of great, spiritually rich people. Humility is modest and silent.

The saint ascetics knew that humility keeps the workers in the height and »does not permit them to fall down»,⁴⁰ and the pride makes them loose all the achieved results. Thus St. John the Faster, who possessed even the gift of thaumaturgy, was able to commit terrible degradations when he became conceited, and St. Thais who was a great sinner, entered the dwellings of the Heavenly Father after one night of penitential prayer.⁴¹ What a humility, what an understanding of one's unworthiness and at the same time what a faith and love towards God were present in this prayer: We read in the instructions of the starets Nazarius: »If somebody did numerous good things and carried out virtues, but at the same time becomes conceited, he is the poorest and the most damned

³⁶ »Bishop Theophan», Four words about prayer, Moscow, 1912, p. 4; cf. St. John Chrysostom: »If you do not pray, you do the same as if you take fish from water, since for the fish life is water, and for you life is prayer», Works, v. 11, no 2, SPbG, 1896, p. 839.

³⁷ Instruction of the starets Father Nazarius, abbot of Valaam, ibidem, p. 70.

³⁸ Ibidem, pp. 69—70.

³⁹ St. Diadochus, Bishop of Photica, The ascetic sermon, ch. 12, Philocalia, v. 111, Moscow, 1900, p. 13.

⁴⁰ St. John the Climacus, Climax, Sermon XXV, ch. 37, Trinity-St. Sergius Laura, 1901, p. 169.

⁴¹ See N. Golubovskaya, Workers of Christendom; »Christian Thoughts» »Khristianskaya Mysl'», Sept.—Oct., 1917, pp. 45—46.

among all. Pride is hostile to Christ, but humility is pleasant to Him».⁴²

The holy Russian preachers of the Gospel cared of the good of their neighbours, unselfishly served them, guided them on the way of salvation. They shared the spiritual riches accumulated by them with all the population of the North, especially with those, who listened to them, who looked for their instruction and counsel. The saints visited the houses of aborigines and besides this had constant contacts with those coming to the monasteries. Since they taught not only through word, but also practically — »through their sacrificial and highly moral example of life in Christ»,⁴³ i.e. with meekness, love, without violence, with a sincere Christian care of the salvation of the neighbours, — their seeds fell down on a good soil and gave good fruits. The monasteries founded by those saints, remained after their death centres of spirituality, schools of faith and piety for our forerunners.⁴⁴

While confirming the Christian faith, the holy preachers fought against evil, tried to eliminate vices existing in the Christian society. When St. Alexander of Svir consecrated the Trinity church, people offered their money and their own things for the church. One of them, Gregory, wanted also to offer something, but the saint did not accept his gift. Three times he wanted to put his gift on the chasuble of the saint, but the saint pushed aside his hand and finally said to him: »Your hand stinks, — you have beaten your mother with this hand and through this you brought the wrath of God on yourself». »What should I do?», asked Gregory in despair. »Go, beg pardon to your mother and never insult her henceforth».⁴⁵

The just saints not only prayed for the implementation of the truth of God on earth, but, as far as it was possible, helped the oppressed and insulted, tried to influence spiritually the oppressors and insulters. One should not forget that the ascetics possessed a great spiritual authority, and, therefore, the disobedience to them was a sin involving the wrath of God. The fear of the punishment of God made many people think

and repent... The saints believed in the triumph of the Good and helped this triumph as far as they could.

The saints loved very much their Motherland and introduced the spirit of *patriotism* into flesh and blood of Russians. Even an inexperienced witness may see that in the difficult times of our history the population of the regions where the northern ascetics worked manifested a greater patriotism. During the national catastrophes the saint monks left their hermitages or monasteries and only through their ascetic appearance poured the healing balsam into the suffering hearts.

To liberate the man from a »sinful sleeping», to help him to feel the spiritual danger in his situation, to provoke his »decisiveness to leave sin and to devote himself to actions pleasant to God»,⁴⁶ to provoke his »zeal for the best and to sacrifice all the worst to this zeal»,⁴⁷ to teach him to believe in the one personal God, full of love towards people and to love Him with all his heart — those were the aims of the ministry of the holy preachers of the Gospel in favour of their neighbours, and they did their best to carry out this ministry.

Finally one should not forget that the holy preachers of the Word of God in north-west Russia through their preaching spread out and confirmed Christendom among people who lived in a frontier land and, therefore, had contacts with foreign territories. Through their works they introduced there one Christian culture, and presented spiritual values to the East and to the West. And those common values are a good foundation for the *brotherhoods and friendship* with neighbours. Remembering this the children of the Russian Orthodox Church in a festive mood will celebrate their *glorious anniversary*, and in the bottom of their hearts they keep good hopes for entering peacefully into the second millennium in order to live in it under a peaceful sky. They pray for peace in the whole world and they will contribute as far as it is possible to this universal cause.

The apostles of the North are people of clear mind and meek responsive heart; this is the salt of our land introducing necessary components into our organism, those are the best sons of our nation who proclaimed

⁴² Instructions of the starets Father Nazarius, abbot of Valaam, *ibidem*, p. 70.
⁴³ The asceticism of the Russian monks and its importance for the Russian people, Kiew, 1909, p. 7.

⁴⁴ See hierom. Vassily, The substance of the Russian Orthodox mission, Peking, 1906, pp. 19, 26—29, etc.

⁴⁵ F. A. Ch., *ibidem*, p. 142 (August).

⁴⁶ Bishop Theophan, The path towards salvation, Moscow, 1908, p. 80.
⁴⁷ St. John Cassian, On the fight of flesh and spirit, § 10, Philocalia, v. 11, Moscow, 1913, p. 13.

the words of the eternal life with self-sacrifice. They were not attracted by glory, or praise, or comfort, or everything that may lie and flatter. They remembered the God's vocation, their sacred duty and worked zealously in order to enlighten the people, they thought not about their own earthly profits, but about the glory of God, about the implementation of the Kingdom of God on the earth. However, preaching the word of God, they did not elaborate a moral theory. For them the God's commandments were not an order, but their own striving for a holy life. Christ was all the substance of their life in every moment (Phil. 1, 21). They loved God with all their hearts and were the most happy people. In this love they found a firm consolation. A life without God was equal for them to a desert, a death.

In carrying out the Kingdom of God on earth, the Russian ascetics were regulating the human things in the earthly kingdom. They never denied the earthly world, but strived only for its transformations. Even the most mystically inclined were not indifferent to the destinies of the world and the man. The holy Russian apostles of the North were ascetics, instructors, leaders, patriots. According to the precise expression of Metropolitan Alexy of Tallinn and Estonia, «the deep activeness of those who contributed to the salvation of the world through the power of the Holy Spirit is a challenge to all Christians».⁴⁸

While stressing the highest manifestations of the Spirit of the holy preachers, the author does not try to absolutize in them the Truth and the Holiness, since he knows and remembers that «for all Christians there is only one eternal and absolute criterion protecting from falling down and granting constant foundations for checking all new ways of the Christian truth and Christian holiness. This criterion is the life and words of our Lord Jesus Christ, received in their interconnection and understood not literally, but in spirit and truth».⁴⁹ This report does not pretend to reveal completely, who were the holy preachers of northwest Russia, how they were in close union with God from their very youth and till the end of their life and how the led the sinful mankind to the fel-

⁴⁸ Metropolitan Alexy. In the power of the Holy Spirit — the ministry for the world, JMP, 1980, no 1, p. 62.

⁴⁹ Askoldov, The saints as the expression of Christendom; «The living life» («Zhivaya Zhizn»), 1908, no 1, p. 30.

lowship with the Heavenly World.⁵⁰ May all that is lacking be completed through following the advice of Father Nazarius, the starets who worked much and successfully in the Valaam monastery — the cradle of Christian missionaries of the North: «About the other numerous virtues, — he teaches, — read yourself the holy books and listen to the instructions in order to become wise and inherit the eternal good in our Lord Jesus Christ».⁵¹

⁵⁰ «It is impossible to depict the face of the saint and to explain his life, — says V. I. Ilyin, — as it is impossible to depict in general the person, receiving in holiness a special height and values». V. I. Ilyin, St. Seraphim of Sarov, N.Y., 1971, p. 181.

⁵¹ Instructions of the starets Father Nazarius, abbot of Valaam, *ibidem*, p. 73.

Summary

1. On the eve of the celebration of the millennial anniversary of Christianity in Russia we reveal a small part of the large chronicle of the Russian Orthodox Church devoted to the holy preachers of the Gospel in north-west Russia and eastern Finland.

2. The holy preachers of the word of God in the North include: St. Sergius and German of Valaam († ca. 1353), St. Arsenius of Konev († 1447), St. Alexander of Svir († 1533), St. Athanasius of Sandeba (or Sandema) († ca. 1580), and St. Tryphon of Pechenga († 1583). Their lives are missionary deeds, the testimony of their actions is self-sacrificial works of the grace of God.

3. Christ became the New Adam and, therefore, the origin of the new creation. The faithful enters His body — the Church — through the baptism (Cel. 1, 24). All those who join the Church of Christ, receive the same graceful gifts, the seeds of the Holy Spirit. But one needs to perform a deed, to stand firm «with the weapon of righteousness for the right hand and for the left» (2 Cor. 6, 7), to transform internally the whole human substance according to the image of Christ (1 Cor. 11, 1), to follow Christ with the cross (Mth. 8, 34), so that the seeds may grow and give fruits. The holy preachers of the Gospel voluntarily bear this cross. They taught with word and life.

4. All our preachers were strict fasters. The fast gave them victory over passions and the reconciliation of the spirit — the domination of

the spirit over the flesh. Their life style corresponded to the strickness of the fasting.

5. The Russian saints loved the work and worked much, although their material needs were very limited. Powerful in spirit, they overcome enormous difficulties in the North. They were the most unselfish people.

6. The inner life of our saints was manifested in prayer in the most complete way. For them God was their very life. They loved Him with all their soul, and this love kept them in a constant prayer.

7. Humility, the understanding of its necessity and salutary feature was the main characteristics of the heart of our saints. »Where there is no humility, — said the abbot of Valaam stares Nazarius, — all actions are malicious before God... God dwells in those who are humble».

8. The holy Russian preachers cared of the good of their neighbours, unselfishly served them, led them on the way of salvation. They persistently preached the word of God, eliminated vices, helped the oppressed and insulted, tried to influence spiritually the oppressors and insulters.

9. The saints loved deeply their Motherland and introduced the spirit of patriotism into blood and flesh of the Russian man.

10. Through their works the holy preachers of the North gave enormous spiritual riches to the East and to the West. And the common riches are a good foundation for brotherhood and friendship between neighbours.

THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT AND THE CHURCHES' WORK FOR PEACE

HANS-OLOF KVIST

This paper will discuss the role of the Sermon on the Mount in connexion with the theological basis of peace work, with particular reference to the official positions of Lutheran Churches and the Roman Catholic Church. As background material a short survey of the most fundamentally significant contributions to the history of the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount is included.

1. The History of the Interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount

1.1. *The History of Interpretation before Thomas Aquinas*

Difficulties in the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount have principally concerned the radically formulated demands or commandments it contains. The Didache provides clear evidence that the Sermon on the Mount has already become problematical. In the Didache's Doctrine of the Two Ways (Did. 1—5), the Way of Life (Did. 1—4) — the other way is the Way of Death (Did. 5) — is explained with the help of sayings from the Sermon on the Mount, reference being made to Matt. 5:26, 28, 39—44, 47 (Did. 1). The problematic nature of these sayings is implied in the sixth chapter of the book in the words: »If you can shoulder the Lord's yoke in its entirety, then you will be perfect; but if that is too much for you, do as much as you can» (Did. 6:2).¹ This passage shows that the »Lord's yoke» can be perfectly kept only by some members of the church, not by all. In this situation, the question naturally

¹ Cited according to »Early Christian Writings. The Apostolic Fathers. Translated by Maxwell Stanforth.» (London 1968).

arises of the »Christian» status of those who are considered to be only partially capable of fulfilling what is laid down in the radical directives of the Sermon on the Mount. This passage cited from the Didache can be seen as foreshadowing the later distinctions between perfect and non-perfect (ordinary) Christians.

In contrast to the situation in the Didache, in Justin Martyr can be found the conviction that it is possible to live in conformity with the Sermon on the Mount. Those whose actions do not conform to the demands of the Sermon on the Mount cannot be called Christians (I, apol. 16:4, 8). Origen (princ. III, 1, 6.) and John Chrysostom, in his homily on Matthew, also with Justin represent the view that it is possible to fulfil the demands of the Sermon on the Mount. These demands can be fulfilled, according to Chrysostom (hom. 16, 8; 17, 1, 7; 18, 3D), if the Christian truly desires this and keeps before his eyes the love of God shown in the Incarnation. This holds good for all Christians (hom. 15, 1). In Chrysostom's view, humility is Jesus' first »law». Humility contrasts with the pride that caused Adam to fall. Jesus fulfils the law in three ways: 1) he breaks no commandments; 2) he fulfils the law for us, too, so that we fulfil in a new way what the law demands; and 3) he has confirmed the law through a more profound interpretation, not abolished it, but fulfilled it. Unlike the Jewish scribes, however, Jesus does not add anything to the law.²

According to Jerome († 420), love for one's enemy (Matt. 5:44) is possible. Any interpretation based on the view that the exhortation to love one's enemies makes impossible demands on human nature must be rejected. Jesus' interpretation of the law consists partly of additions and partly of changes. As God and Lord he is entitled to interpret the law in this way.³

The mendicant orders of the Middle Ages found in the contents of the Sermon on the Mount the justification for a protest against the increasing worldliness of the Church. Much of the life and teaching of Francis of Assisi was motivated by the spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, by the renunciation of property and rights, by mercy and humility, by

love for one's enemies, by peacemaking and by not judging others or being anxious.

At the end of the eleventh century, among the Waldensians and the Humiliati, who were allied with them, the Sermon on the Mount was understood as *Lex Christi*. Itinerant preachers stressed the prohibition of oaths and rejected military service and arbitrary vengeance. In spite of the Waldensians' emphasis on the radical demands of the Sermon on the Mount, within the movement the distinction was drawn between »amici/credentes» and »perfecti», with only the latter making a vow of poverty, chastity and obedience and becoming itinerant preachers.

1.2. Thomas Aquinas' Understanding of the Law as a Framework for the Interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount

In Thomas Aquinas' view, the concept of »law» is a general concept covering all human obligations (towards one's fellow-men and towards God). He represents the Gospel as »new law»; this »new law» consists of all that man must do in the new covenant to win eternal salvation. When this new law is dutifully fulfilled, this in Thomas' view merits eternal salvation.⁴ Defined more closely (S. Th. 1, II, 108), the Gospel as new law involves above all the grace of the Holy Spirit manifesting itself in faith through active love. The grace flowing from the Incarnate Word is carried to men by external, sensible realities, and similarly certain external, sensible works are brought forth by this inner grace, by which the flesh is subjected to the Spirit.

The external works are bound up with grace in two ways. They are either works (»opera») which lead up to grace, i.e. sacramental acts instituted in the new law (»quae in nova lege sunt instituta»), such as Baptism, the Eucharist etc., or works brought forth at the instigation of grace (S. Th. 1, II, 108, 1). The new law is a »lex libertatis»: it entails the performing or avoiding of actions which are either necessary for salvation or contrary to salvation respectively, and therefore fall under the precepts or the prohibitions of the law (S. Th. 1, II, 108, 1 ad 2).

² E. Fascher, *Art. Bergpredigt II. Auslegungsgeschichtlich*, RGG 1^o, cols. 1050–1051.

³ Fascher, *op. cit.* col. 1051.

⁴ Ragnar Holte, *Kristendomen och moralfrågorna (= Christianity and Moral Questions)*. — Ragnar Holte et al., *Ettiska Problem (= Ethical Problems)*, Stockholm 1970, p. 114.

In Thomas' view, the new law as »lex libertatis» also includes certain »counsels». The precepts (»praecepta») of the new law are given as what is necessary to achieve eternal salvation. The »counsels of the Gospel» (»consilia Evangelii») are concerned with better and more expeditious ways by which man can achieve this end. Such counsels are poverty, chastity and obedience (S. Th. I, II, 108, 4).

This distinction which Thomas draws between precepts (praecepta) and counsels (consilia), in conjunction with the distinction between ethics valid for all men and more efficacious, freely chosen ethical conduct¹, laid down the lines for theological discussion of the Sermon on the Mount during the Middle Ages.

1.3. *The Bohemian Brethren and the Mennonites as Interpreters*

The Bohemian Brethren also understood the Sermon on the Mount as »lex Christi». For them, the demands of the Sermon on the Mount were binding on every member of the church, and accordingly were also thought of as being capable of realisation in the church. This particularly applied to the six »lesser commandments» (Matt. 5: 21—48): not to become angry, not to look at anyone lustfully, not to be divorced, not to swear oaths, not to resist evil and to love one's enemy.

Mennon Simons exhorted his followers not to swear oaths and not to resist evil. Among the Mennonites who bear his name, their interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount makes itself felt in the prohibition of oath-taking, military service and holding government office. However, at different times and in different parts of the world Mennonites have taken different attitudes to participation in war. Thus Dutch Mennonites took part in the Napoleonic Wars of 1796—1815 and German Mennonites in the First World War. In North America, Mennonites have continued to refuse to do military service.² It is characteristic of the Anabap-

¹ Gerhard Barth, Art. Bergpredigt I, Im Neuen Testament, TRE V, p. 612; Rudolf Johannesson, Person och gemenskap enligt romersk-katolsk och luthersk grundskildring (= Person and Community in the Basic Positions of the Roman Catholic and Lutheran Churches) (Biss.), Stockholm 1947, p. 180.

² See Kalevi Toivonen, Asestakelaitymien ekumenisessa keskustelussa (= Conscientious Objection to Weapon-bearing in the Ecumenical Discussion), Kirkon tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisusarja (= Church Research Institute Publications) 4, Helsinki 1972, pp. 37—40.

tists of Reformation times that on the basis of the Sermon on the Mount they renounce the use of violence.³

1.4. *The Sermon on the Mount in Martin Luther's Exposition*

Luther's standpoint in the question of the demands of the Sermon on the Mount (see also below for what Luther says in the context of the Greater Catechism) is determined partly by opposition to the Anabaptists' »enthusiastic» interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount and partly by opposition to the Scholastic doctrine of »praecepta» and »consilia evangelica». These conceptions which Luther opposes lead in his view to »work-holiness». The Sermon on the Mount is not concerned with the way someone becomes righteous before God, but with the »fruits» or results of faith working in the justified Christian (WA XXXII, 541, 14). It deals with the fruit which the Christian as an individual person or »Christperson» offers to God by faith, not the way in which a »Welt-person» behaves in his work or »office». Only by distinguishing between the spiritual and the temporal »regiments», between »Christperson» and »Weltperson», can the Sermon on the Mount be rightly understood (WA XXXII, 441, 2). As an individual person, the Christian is completely subject to the demands of the Sermon on the Mount: he should not resist evil and should turn the other cheek. However, if the Christian holds a temporal office (e.g. as the father of a family or as a judge), it is incumbent on him to stand up for what has been entrusted to him and resist evil.

A few words about Luther's concept of »person» may be inserted at this point. According to Herbert Olsson, who has investigated passages in Luther's literary production dealing with this matter, »Person» in the thought of the reformer expresses what man is as a whole (totus homo). A man is a person by virtue of his standing in a relationship both with God and with his fellow-men. Moreover, when a man is considered in relation to God, the word »Person» marks a rejection of the view that his relationship with God is determined by his own works. In this sense Luther says in his disputations: »Opus non facit personam». The same

³ Clarence Bauman, Gewaltlosigkeit im Taufertum. Eine Untersuchung zur theologischen Ethik des oberdeutschen Taufertums der Reformationszeit, Studies in the History of Christian Thought 3, Leiden 1968, pp. 151, 155.

element in the concept of person is involved when Luther says that *God does not make any distinction between persons*.

The latter relationship in the concept of person throws into relief man in his relationship with other men in the framework of the natural orders (state, family etc.). Here his place in human society is determined by the office (*»Amt«*) in which he serves. Used in this context, the concept of person includes the idea of a distinction between persons: man is ruler, official, teacher, pupil, father, mother, master, mistress, man-servant, maidservant and so on. Man is here thought of as *»antworts-person«* or *»weltperson«*. In his relation to God, he is nevertheless *»einzele person«*. According to the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount in WA XXXII, every man can be considered both as *»einzele person«* and as *»weltperson«*, that is, in respect of his relationship with God and in respect of his relationship with his fellow-men.

There is an inner connexion between man's behaviour as *»einzele person«* and *»weltperson«*, viz. the connexion between an individual man as a believing, religious being and as a holder of a particular office in human society, between man in his religious belief and man in his ethical conduct.

In his relation to God, man can be either a Christian or a natural man. As the Christian man's relationship to God is determined by faith, in this relation the Christian can be called *»christliche person«*. As *»christliche person«*, the Christian suffers everything without resisting, in accordance with the demands of the Sermon on the Mount, and as *»christliche person«* he does not judge anyone. But the Christian is at the same time a *»weltperson«*, and in this capacity can, for example, wage or participate in warfare. His relationship with his neighbour is determined by his relationship with God. In any event as a *»weltperson«* he is determined by the fact that at the same time in relation to God he is a *»christliche person«*. Assured of the love of God, he can renounce everything and in this way willingly serve his neighbour. He submits to the authorities, for he knows that the authorities exist for the good of their subjects.⁸

⁸ On this see Herbert Olsson, *Grundproblemet i Luthers socialetik* (= The Basic Problem of Luther's Social Ethics) (Diss.), Lund 1934, pp. 202–211.

1.5. *Interpretations within the Reformed Tradition*

Calvin rejects the distinction between *»praecepta«* and *»consilia«*. His solution to the problems involved in interpreting the Sermon on the Mount seeks on the one hand to take into account the context and setting of Jesus' words and to bring out the universally applicable kernel of the commandments, and on the other hand to understand Jesus' directives as an exposition of the Old Testament law, especially the Decalogue. In Calvin's view, this law does not differ from the universal, natural moral law. In Calvin's presentation this fundamental approach applied to the prohibition of oaths in Matt. 5:34 leads to the interpretation that this does not mean a universal prohibition of all swearing of oaths, but only a prohibition of the frivolous use of oaths. According to Calvin, Jesus' words in Matt. 5:38–42 do not forbid all resistance to evil in general, but only self-defence (taking the law into one's own hands) and arbitrary retaliation. Thus the command to love is applied in different ways depending on whose rights are involved, one's own or one's neighbour's. In the context of the idea of the kingdom of Christ, the Sermon on the Mount is assimilated in Calvin's theology with the civil moral order and incorporated particularly in vocation-related ethical thinking.

For Karl Barth, the Sermon on the Mount is a proclamation of the Kingdom which has drawn near in Jesus and further a selfproclamation by Jesus. The Sermon on the Mount is in this way at the same time a proclamation of the new man whom its addressee is permitted to be in Christ, and also a proclamation of the new man whose attitude the Sermon on the Mount depicts. This also provides the relationship to the addressee and his actions. In line with this interpretation the radical demands of the Sermon on the Mount appear as *»Beispiele«*, as examples which will make clear that the grace of Jesus Christ claims the whole man. These demands point to *»ausserordentliche Möglichkeiten«* (extraordinary possibilities) arising from the fact that Jesus has fulfilled the law. (Die kirchliche Dogmatik II, 2, 777).

1.6. *The Quakers*

It was characteristic of the first Quakers that they sought to put the directives of the Sermon on the Mount into practice in an unpretentious

way of life and unconditional truthfulness as well as in the prohibition of oaths and military service. Later in North America their understanding of the Sermon on the Mount caused them to retreat from bearing responsibility for government and public affairs in order to live in less contact with society. However, besides this tendency, evidence can also be found of political involvement among Quakers.⁹

1.7. *A Brief History of Modern Interpretation*

One interpretation which has long exercised an influence in Lutheran Christianity is the understanding of the Sermon on the Mount as a mirror of human sin, or as an example of how law exposes sin (uses *elenchismus*). The radical demands of the Sermon on the Mount in this interpretation serve to awaken in man his need for salvation (Tholuck).

Johannes Weiss and Albert Schweitzer represent an interpretation which takes as its starting-point an eschatological understanding of the Sermon on the Mount and sees it as eschatological exceptional ethics (Weiss) or as interim ethics (Schweitzer). According to this interpretation, Jesus was convinced he could hasten the arrival of the impending Kingdom of God by a special movement of repentance. The directives of the Sermon on the Mount serve this movement and only apply to this eschatological exceptional situation. After the expectation of Jesus' imminent coming in the near future has lost its power, it is mistaken to seek in the Sermon on the Mount directives for Christians' life in the world. Here the solution to the problems arising from the radical demands of the Sermon on the Mount is sought in a temporal restriction of its application: it only applies to the supposed eschatological exceptional situation of that time.

1.8. *Tolstoy's Interpretation*

Tolstoy expounds the Sermon on the Mount in his book *Hvari min* (= *On the Quakers and the Church of Brethren*) see also Toivola 1972, 38–41.

⁹ This introductory survey of the history of the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount has taken as its starting-point Gerhard Barth's presentation in TRE, but has also taken into account other material as specified. See Gerhard Barth, pp. 611–618.

tro består (= *What My Faith Consists In*) (1887). He finds the key to Jesus' teaching in his words in Matt. 5:38–39, where Jesus says among other things *»do not resist one who is evil»* (Gk. *τὴν πονηρίαν*; cf. Swedish Bible Committee Version 1981 *»do not resist evil»*). This principle of not resisting evil is the basis for Tolstoy's anarchism and nihilism and in his view justifies not only radical pacifism but also a rejection of military and police power, which is based on violent resistance to evil. The idea of justice as coercion is for Tolstoy something abhorrent which should be destroyed.

In Tolstoy's view Jesus' words in Matt. 5:33–37 *»do not swear at all»* (cf. Swedish Bible Committee Version 1981 *»you shall swear no oath»*) imply a prohibition against making binding commitments to worldly authorities. They apply both to oaths in court before a judge and to oaths in government service. Tolstoy cannot agree with committing oneself to obey an authority when the moral content of its actions either arouses suspicion or cannot be foreseen. For Tolstoy there is a contradiction between claiming to want to obey God's will in accordance with Jesus' teaching on the one hand, and binding oneself with an oath to obey the will of one or more human beings on the other hand. It is of course perfectly possible that God's will does not accord with man's. In Tolstoy's view this is the meaning of Jesus' words about not swearing by one's own head, for not only the head but every single hair is in God's power.

The commandment *»Love your enemies»* (Matt. 5:44) involves for Tolstoy loving *»foreigners»*, men of a different nationality, race or religion. Tolstoy bases his position on the use of the word *»neighbour»* in the Old Testament in the sense of *»fellow-citizen»*; thus *»enemies»* are *»foreigners»*. This interpretation lies at the foundation of Tolstoy's religious internationalism. Tolstoy sees nationalism as puffed-up folly, an intellectual and moral abomination.¹¹

¹¹ Leo Tolstoy, *Hvari min tro består. Översättning af Walborg Hedberg* (= *What My Faith Consists In*. Translated by Walborg Hedberg, Stockholm 1887, pp. 8–19, 44, 51–53, 92–97, 99–109. This account also makes use of Georg Henrik von Wright, *Tanke och förkunnelse* (= *Thought and Propagation*), Lund 1964, pp. 239–241, 244–247. See also K. S. Laurila, *Tolstoi ja Luther Vuorisäärän selittäjä* (= *Tolstoy and Luther as Interpreters of the Sermon on the Mount*), Helsinki 1944, pp. 17–72. — For information about Tolstoyism in Finland, see Arno Nokkala, *Tolstolaisuus Suomessa. Aatehistoriallinen tutkimus* (= *Tolstoyism in Finland. A Study in the History of Ideas*), *Finnska kyrkohistoriska sällskapet handlingar* (= *Proceedings of the Finnish Church History Society*) 59, Helsinki 1958.

2. The Place of the Sermon on the Mount in the Theology of Peace in Catholic and Lutheran Tradition

2.1. The Roman Catholic Position

2.2.1. The Sermon on the Mount as a Basis for Peace in »Gaudium et spes«

In part two chapter five of »Gaudium et spes«, which deals with the maintenance of peace and the building of an international community, there is a reference right at the start (77 § paragraph one) to Matt. 5:9 (»Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called sons of God«).

By itself this reference naturally provides no precise information about the theology behind it, but if the reference is studied in its context, the situation is different.

The passage as a whole deals with the decisive moment which the whole human family has reached in its process of maturation. In a warring world, the human family has gradually become aware of its unity, and also of how much remains to be done in this respect. The building of a truly human world cannot be accomplished unless all men with renewed mind are converted to true peace. In this perspective the message of the Gospel shines out with new clarity for our time, in particular when it proclaims in the words of the Sermon on the Mount that all who make peace shall be called the sons of God.¹²

In order to understand the way in which this passage from the Sermon on the Mount is integrated in the overall theological context, the brief observation also found in the first part of the same paragraph that the message of the Gospel accords with the noblest aspirations and desires of humanity (»evangelicum nuntium, cum altioribus generis humani studiis atque optatis congruens«) is of the greatest importance. The content of this statement should be seen, in my opinion, against the background of the Classical Catholic Aristotelian-Thomist value-orientated moral theology, according to which man's obligations, whether they concern the common good (commune bonum), i.e. obligations towards one's fellow-men, or the universal good (universale bonum), i.e. obligations towards God, must ultimately be exercised with a view to God and salva-

tion in him.¹³ The fulfilment of these obligations promotes man's self-realisation, his own perfection of himself as a reasonable being.¹⁴ The function of the Gospel is to help men onwards towards his ultimate end, God and salvation, and so promote his own perfection.

In this all-embracing theological perspective, a Gospel saying like Matt 5:9 becomes a form of law, which is integrated into a basic scheme of values. The Gospel serves the fulfilment of human obligations, it is integrated into an anthropological framework, it comes to have significance for man's meritorious behaviour. A Lutheran Christian would perhaps say: in such a setting the Gospel has lost its meaning as precisely a proclamation of God's grace to the frightened conscience, it has once more become law, a law man cannot fulfil.

Bearing in mind the Lutheran Confessions' critique of Thomas Aquinas' consilia-teaching, it is necessary at this point to go beyond the discussion in the introductory chapter of this paper and say more about this distinction and especially about the »counsels of the Gospel«. Thomas declares (S. Th. 1, II, 107, 2) that Jesus fulfilled (»adimplevit«) the precepts of the law by adding certain »counsels« concerning perfection. Thomas points to Matt. 19:21 (Mark 10:21; Luke 18:22), where the young man who claims to have kept all the commandments in the old covenant is told by Jesus: »If you would be perfect, go, sell what you possess etc.« According to Thomas, the difference between precept and counsel is as follows: the precept compels obedience, but the counsel is left to the choice of the one who receives it. When a man gives alms to a poor man, he is acting in accordance with the counsel of poverty. When he lives in sexual abstinence for a certain time in order to devote himself to prayer instead, he is following the counsel of chastity. Further, when a man in a permitted matter refrains from pushing through his own will, he is paying heed to the counsel of obedience. The same happens when he does good to his enemies without being obliged to, or when he forgives an injustice for which he could with justification demand recompense (S. Th. 1, II, 108, 4). Thomas teaches that the counsels in themselves are beneficial for all.

However, for people who lack the proper inner disposition, the situa-

¹² Holte 1970, pp. 112–114.

¹³ Hans Hof, »Moralfilosofiska problemställningar (= Types of Problem-setting in Moral Philosophy)«, — Ragnar Holte et al., *Ethiska Problem (= Ethical Problems)*, Stockholm 1970, pp. 65–66.

tion is different. Christ as Lord nevertheless takes into account each individual's capacity to act in accordance with the counsels of the Gospel (S. Th. 1, II, 108, 4 ad 1). Elsewhere in *Summa Theologiae* Thomas teaches that perfection »essentially« (essentially) consists in the love which is commanded, but »instrumentally« (instrumentally) in the counsels. They are certain ways of achieving perfection, and remove obstacles to higher degrees of love. A precept is not, however, broken by someone who only fulfils its lowest degree. It is sufficient if he fulfils it in some way (S. Th. 2, II, 184, 3 ad 2).

As stated above, the Sermon on the Mount was interpreted during the Middle Ages in terms of the schema »praeecepta-consilia«. Such an interpretation is rejected in the Lutheran Confessions. This familiar schema of Thomas' can also be found in today's Roman Catholic theology, and the following will seek to bring out the discussion of peace in Roman Catholic theology of the present day from the standpoint of the Sermon on the Mount. However, it does not appear to be feasible to understand the Sermon on the Mount in its entirety under the rubric »counsel of the Gospel«; the counsels of the Gospel are limited, according to »lumen gentium«, to chastity, poverty and obedience.¹¹

In »Gaudium et spes« § 78, paragraph five, is found what is essentially an exposition of the saying from the Sermon on the Mount about not resisting evil (Matt. 5:39). Here praise is given to those people »who in the defence of their rights renounce the use of violence and instead have recourse to other means of defence, which are available even to the weakest, if only this can be done without infringing the rights or obligations of others or of the whole community«.¹²

2.1.2. *The Sermon on the Mount in the German Bishops' Conference Statement on Peace*

A fuller picture of the theological position of the Sermon on the Mount

¹¹ Cf. e.g. *Lumen Gentium*, 42–43 §§, LThK¹, Ergbd. 1.

¹² LThK¹, Ergbd. III. This translation, which is my own, differs from the one found in the Swedish text published through the offices of the Catholic Information Service. In the latter, the train of thought in the text is obscured by the translation »som för att skydda människornas rättigheter« (= who in order to protect human rights). The Latin text reads as follows: »Eodem spiritu moti, non possumus non laudare eos, qui in iustus vindicandis actioni violentiae renuntiantes, ad media

in the Roman Catholic Church's work for peace is provided by a study of the German Bishops' Conference Statement on Peace »Gerechtigkeit schafft Frieden« (= GSF).¹⁷

There is a whole series of references to the Sermon on the Mount in GSF. Section 2.4. with its rubric »Wenn eure Gerechtigkeit nicht weit grösser ist...« (Mt. 5, 20) begins like the chapter on peace in »Gaudium et spes« with a reference to Matt 5:9. According to GSF, Jesus' directives in the Sermon on the Mount must be brought into relation with the general idea of a righteousness exceeding all other human righteousness (»überflüssende Gerechtigkeit«), a righteousness which determines the Christian's whole life. In this connexion Matt. 5:20 is cited. No believer may evade this righteousness with the excuse that it demands too much. Jesus has promised his Spirit's encouragement and assistance to him who keeps his commandments.¹⁸

According to GSF, confidence in God's favour shown to man in Jesus Christ fosters a »spirit of brotherliness« (»Geist der Brüderlichkeit«) which finds expression in, for example, love for one's enemies and renouncing violence. Reference is made to Matt. 5:39f (»... do not resist one who is evil. But if any one strikes you on the right cheek, turn to him the other also, and if any one would sue you and take your coat, let him have your cloak as well«), Matt. 5:43–45 (»You have heard that it was said: 'you shall love your neighbour and hate your enemy'. But I say to you: love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, so that you may be sons of your Father who is in heaven«) and Matt. 6:25–34 (v. 33–34a: »Seek first his kingdom and his righteousness, and all these things shall be yours as well. Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow«).

It is stated in GSF that Jesus' promises and directives in the Sermon on the Mount apply to the whole church, not only to individual disciples. The church must show that the message of the Sermon on the Mount does not have in view unreal, ideal conditions in a distant future, but that it can begin to influence life in the present. This German document

defensionis recurrent quae ceteroquin etiam debilitioribus praesto sunt, dummodo hoc... sine laesione iurium et obligationum aliorum vel communitatis fieri possit».

¹⁷ Sekretariat der Deutschen Bischofskonferenz (Hrsg.), *Gerechtigkeit schafft Frieden*, 18. April 1983, Die Deutschen Bischöfe 34, Bonn 1983.

¹⁸ GSF, p. 16.

is not averse to the idea of applying the Sermon on the Mount to social communities, whole peoples and states. Christians as different levels in society are to allow the distinctive spirit of the Sermon on the Mount, the spirit of brotherliness, to find expression in political contexts as well.¹⁹

The application of the Sermon on the Mount on the socio-political plane involves Christian people allowing certain *basic attitudes* to govern their political behaviour. The antitheses in the Sermon on the Mount are there in order to overcome a situation in which man seeks to shirk his responsibility to God and his fellowmen by appealing to a written law. Conversely, it also holds true that the Sermon on the Mount does not supply definite laws, and that Jesus' words about not resisting evil (Matt. 5:39), for example, do not necessarily imply that individuals or states must under all circumstances renounce the use of violence.²⁰

2.1.3. *The Link with Classical Catholic Ethics*

There are many links between »Gaudium et spes» and classical Catholic ethics, both Augustinian and Thomist. The basic theological approach is anthropocentric. What God does as Creator and Redeemer, and also the mission of the church, are bound up with the idea of the worth of a human person and the ultimate end in God which man, precisely by virtue of his human dignity, can freely decide to seek. In an Augustinian way, man's free will cooperates with God's grace. The natural law is conceived of as a moral law anchored in human nature, in man's conscience, in the manner of classical antiquity, the early Church, Augustine and Thomas, although the latter's distinction between »synderesis» and »conscientia»²¹ does not appear in a clear form. The natural law, which man finds in the depth of his conscience, is thought of as a participation in God's reason. »Plus naturel» is according to Thomas ontologically related to »lex divina» in that the light of reason (»lumen rationis»), which belongs to the natural law and by means of which man can distinguish between good and evil, is thought to be an

impression in him of the divine light (»impressio luminis divini»). Thomas accordingly presents the natural law as a participation in the eternal law (»lex aeterna») on the part of that part of God's creation which is equipped with reason.²²

2.1.4. *The Sermon on the Mount — One Basis for Peace Among Others*

When the essential nature of peace is described in the second part of the Pastoral Constitution, the *lex aeterna* appears expressly as a basis for peace.²³ It is equally important to the Pastoral Constitution to refer to the Prince of Peace, who has by his Cross reconciled all men to God and restored the unity of all in one single people and one single body. Peace on earth is understood as both a symbol for (»figura») and an effect of (»effectus») the love of Christ. Thus the Gospel is here brought into this basic approach, which is marked by the idea of the dignity of a human person. It is important to notice here that the Gospel as a concept comprehends everything to do with Christ and his message in the new covenant. For the *Christian*, the Gospel is the primary norm for peace. The Church must proclaim Christ's peace to the world. In this connexion, the Pastoral Constitution takes up the idea of the church as heaven in human society and the Augustinian idea of the mutual interpenetration of heavenly society and earthly society. Christ's peace also serves man's ultimate self-realisation.²⁴ It is thus something which is offered to human persons and which they can freely choose on the path towards their ultimate end in God.²⁵

2.2. *The Evangelical-Lutheran Position*

2.2.1. *The State of the Discussion*

A fundamental explanation of the position of the Sermon on the Mount in the work for peace of the Evangelical-Lutheran Church of Fin-

¹⁹ S. Th. I, II, 91, 1–3. See also H. R. Schlette, Art. *Naturrechte*, Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe II, München 1963, p. 226; Albrecht Peters, Art. *Bild Gottes IV. Dogmatisch*, TRE VI, p. 508.

²⁰ LThK¹, Ergbd. III, pp. 544–546.

²¹ The idea of man's self-realisation is of Aristotelian origin. Cf. e.g. Hof 1970, 65–66.

²² See also Hof 1970, 52; Johannesson 1947, 113–145.

¹⁹ GSE, pp. 18, 40–41.

²⁰ GSE, pp. 18–19.

²¹ S. Th. I, 79, 12–13; De ver. q. 16, 1–3; 17, 1. See also Friedhelm Krüger, Art. *Gewissen III. Mittelalter und Reformationszeit*, TRE XIII, pp. 220–221; Ernst Wolf, Art. *Gewissen*, RGG II, col. 1552.

land, for example, must naturally be based primarily on the Lutheran Confessions. One official document which refers to Jesus' Golden Rule (Matt. 7:12) as a point of departure for the church's work for peace is »Fred, utveckling, mänskliga rättigheter... Rekommendationer godkända av biskopsmötet» (= Peace, Development, Human Rights... *Recommendations of the Bishops' Conference*).²⁶ The Church's Committee on Social Questions has published a booklet called »Kristillinen rauhankasvatus. Perussävelstö» (= Christian Peace Education. Basic Material),²⁷ which contains an article by Bishop Aimo T. Nikola in connection with the presentation of Jesus as the Founder of Peace, Nikola in here refers to two passages from the Sermon on the Mount, Matt. 5:21–22 (»You have heard that it was said to the men of old: 'You shall not kill; and whoever kills shall be liable to judgement'. But I say to you that every one who is angry with his brother shall be liable to the council, and whoever says: 'You fool!' shall be liable to the hell of fire») and Matt. 5:9 (»Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God»). In his comments on the former passage, Nikola in states that it appears to concern personal relationships only, but that is implications concern all human life in community. On the latter passage, he asserts that Jesus with these words commissions his disciples throughout all ages, i.e. the whole Christian Church, with the task of reconciling conflicts, and also binds his followers to strengthen friendship between peoples and their life together in brotherhood.²⁸ This may be compared with the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount in the Statement on Peace by the German Catholic Bishops.²⁹

One common interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount in Finland, which has not, however, been officially sanctioned by the Church, is based on the distinction between »Person» and »Amt», which was discussed in the historical survey of interpretations in connection with Luther, and

²⁶ Fred, Utveckling, Mänskliga rättigheter. Riktlinjer för Finlands ev. luth. kyrkas internationella ansvar. Rekommendationer godkända av biskopsmötet 10. 2. 1982 (= Peace, Development, Human Rights. Guidelines on the International responsibility of the Finnish Evangelical-Lutheran Church. Recommendations accepted by the Bishop's Conference 10. 2. 1982), p. 9.

²⁷ Vammala 1974.

²⁸ Kristillinen rauhankasvatus (= Christian Peace Education) 1974, p. 8.

²⁹ Cf. OSF pp. 6–7.

to which the Swedish theologian Olsson drew attention again and in a special way in the nineteen-thirties. In Sweden, Rudolf Johannesson in his book »Krisendomens grundtankar» (= Basic Ideas of Christianity) employed this distinction in his interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount. Johannesson explains that the Sermon on the Mount in its abrogation of selfishness comes into conflict with a rationally limited attention to our fellow-men, and that this conflict is found in its most acute form in the life of the state. The use of force by the authorities seems to conflict with the demands of the Sermon on the Mount to forgive and suffer everything. The solution to this conflict lies in the fact that in his *office*, man acts on God's behalf, while as a *person* he acts on his own behalf. When for example, a judge delivers sentence on a guilty man, it is God himself who condemns him. By means of the various offices, God executes his law in such a way that he restrains man and compels him to serve his fellow-man. The words of the Sermon on the Mount, however, concern the Christian as a person, and here he is obliged to forgive (Matt. 6:14) and endure (Matt. 5:38–41). He himself lives by forgiveness, and so he must forgive his fellow-men. As a person he cannot exercise power over his fellow-men as he does in his office. If, for example, he is unjustly persecuted by the authorities, he must *suffer* and *endure* this in accordance with Jesus' words — but not, however, *obey* a perverted office (Acts 5:29).³⁰

In his book »Maallinen vanhurskaus ja työehtoisuus» (= Civil Righteousness and the Working Community) the Finnish theologian Lauri Haikola presents a view of the Sermon on the Mount which agrees with Johannesson's view. In company with the latter, who maintains that the encounter with God's love in Christ creates in man a new life (the life described in the Sermon on the Mount), a life characterised by love for one's enemies and love without limits, Haikola also emphasises that Christians compelled by the love of Christ love *over* and *above* the demands of civil righteousness. Christians suffer unjustly and give up their rights.³¹

³⁰ Rudolf Johannesson, *Krisendomens grundtankar*. 1 kortfattad systematisk framställning (= Basic Ideas of Christianity. A Concise Systematic Presentation) Stockholm 1953, pp. 137–152.

³¹ Lauri Haikola, *Maallinen vanhurskaus ja työehtoisuus* (= Civil Righteousness and the Working Community), Pekkämäki 1958, pp. 25–29.

The distinction between »person» and »office» essentially lies in the background when Luther in his tract »Ob Kriegesleue auch in seligen Stande sein können» (1526) relates the exercise of a soldier's office to the demands of the Sermon on the Mount not to defend oneself against evil and to turn the other cheek. In a short book entitled »Krig och fred i kristet tänkande» (= War and Peace in Christian Thinking), John Vikström gives an account of Luther's solution, which is that the Christian soldier as a private person — not as holder of an office — must in accordance with the Sermon on the Mount suffer patiently and not take revenge.³²

A report entitled »Rättfärdigörelse och socialt ansvar» (= Justification and Social Responsibility) was prepared at the request of the Bishops' Conference by a committee under the chairmanship of John Vikström. In the question of the interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount, this report embraces in principle the lines of thought earlier expressed by Johansson and Haikola. The Christian for his own part goes beyond the demands of social righteousness. His actions express a »better righteousness».³³

Neither the booklet »Christian Peace Education» nor the report »Justification and Social Responsibility» represent official statements of the Church's position.

In an article dealing with the Sermon on the Mount and other matters, Fredric Cleve asserts that: 1) the Sermon on the Mount is basic to Luther's interpretation of God's law; 2) Luther does not accept the medieval division into precepts and counsels; 3) the Sermon on the Mount is God's commandment for all men and Jesus is the proper interpreter of God's law, which is a law which all men already recognise to some extent in their reason and conscience; and 4) Luther's exposition of the Ten Commandments found in the Greater Catechism employs the Sermon on the Mount and Jesus' other ethical pronouncements, but parents

and persons with power over others are exempted from this rule of interpretation, on the basis of the fourth* commandment.³⁴

»Personal ethics», as distinct from »office ethics» (the distinction already made by Johannesson), refers to the righteousness which is the concern of the Sermon on the Mount, that is, the righteousness which exceeds that of the Scribes and Pharisees and which consists in, not a feigned »Christian» love, but a realisation in practice by faith of Christian love (the law and the prophets, Matt. 5:17, which accords with the command to love in Matt. 7:12).³⁵ Also, in the context of ethics of faith, the believer's good works remain nevertheless *deferve*. Both in carrying out his »office-ethical» tasks and in carrying out his »person-ethical» tasks, he behaves as a believer under conditions determined by original sin. The strength to perform good works, which are not, however, untarnished, is mediated by a faith which consoles the conscience but which is nevertheless an eschatologically-orientated faith, a faith characterised by hope. It is not a faith transformed into sight, expressing itself in pure love, which is precisely what the radicalisations in the application of the law in the Sermon on the Mount in *sensu proprio* seek to express.

The Lutheran ethical outlook involves: 1) in the fulfilment of his ethical tasks, both in his office and as an individual person, the believer draws strength from the Gospel, which consoles the frightened conscience, and 2) these ethical tasks are carried out in a reality conditioned by original sin. It is important to observe that the carrying-out of »office-ethical» tasks does not necessarily require faith; the idea of »vocational» implies that certain tasks must be carried out in service of one's neighbour, and these can also be carried out by other people than believing Christians. This is also the basis of work for peace on the level of natural law, in company with other reasonable people.

* Translator's Note: for practical reasons the numbering of the Commandments here and below follows the Lutheran numbering.

³² Fredric Cleve, *Lag och evangelium som den teologiska grunden för kyrkans arbete för freden* (= Law and Gospel as the Theological Basis of the Churches' Work for Peace) Teologinen Akakauskirja - Teologisk Tidskrift (= Finnish Journal of Theology) 85 (1980), pp. 469—503, especially 478—479. See also e.g. Barth, *op. cit.* p. 613.

³³ Cf. Barth, *op. cit.* pp. 604—605.

2.2.2. *The Sermon on the Mount and the Problem of Peace in the Lutheran Confessions*

2.2.2.1. *The Polemic against the Interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount according to the distinction »praecepta-consilia«*

The Lutheran Confessions reject the »praecepta-consilia« distinction: »consilia« are regarded as human regulations, with which work-holiness, the sale of indulgences and hypocrisy are closely associated. They can be justified neither from the Lutheran view of the Gospel and man's justification, vocation and perfection, nor by the use of the Sermon on the Mount interpreted as comprising counsels of the Gospel.³⁶ In the Lutheran view, the Sermon on the Mount is an appropriate tool for expounding the law; in itself the Sermon on the Mount is not Gospel. Accordingly, the prohibition of arbitrary vengeance (Matt. 5:39) is not to be understood as a counsel of the Gospel, but as a precept (Apol. XVI, 4–5, 7). The Beatitudes, e.g. Matt. 5:9 (»Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God«), which are not the subject of any particular treatment in the Lutheran Confessions, are interpreted in Lutheran tradition also from the standpoint of the Gospel and the faith aroused by it (see also Apol. IV, 198–201, 254–257; SD XI, 30).

Thus according to the Lutheran Confessions, the instructions of the Sermon on the Mount, such as, not to resist evil (Matt. 5:39), are to be taken as directives applying to all men as individual persons.

The above statement is of fundamental significance for the attitude of some Lutheran churches, including Finland's, to the question of the significance of the Sermon on the Mount as a theological basis for work for peace. As the Sermon on the Mount is to be viewed as an exposition of *what the law really demands*, it cannot be treated as if it contained counsels of the Gospel and used to support the abandonment of civic duties. Christian perfection (»evangelica perfectio«) consists in the heart's eternal righteousness, in fear of God and faith (CA XVI, 4; Apol. XVI, 9), and outwardly in conscientiously performing good works and fulfilling one's vocation (CA XXVII, 49; Apol. XXVII, 50). Moreover, by clearly stating that the Gospel concerns eternal righteousness of heart, in other

words, by freeing the Gospel from false bonds, Melancthon in the Apology makes the Gospel stand out as a vocation-confirming message, or as a vocation-promoting factor in the different human vocations involved in life in society (Apol. XVI, 2–5).

The Apology (XVI, 1, 7, 13; XXVII, 41, 50) is concerned to maintain two things: that consilia — the exhortation of the Sermon on the Mount not to defend oneself against evil (Matt. 5:39) was taken by the Roman Catholic Church as a counsel of the Gospel (Thomas Aquinas, see above; see also Apol. XVI, 4, 7) — should not be made into Gospel, and that the law should not usurp the Gospel, as is the case when people seek to win righteousness before God by works of the law. The intention is on the one hand to stand up for the law as God's law and with this for vocation and work, and on the other hand to guard against an understanding of the Gospel which really involves a falsely conceived law, i.e. a law that justifies.

At this point the question arises of what the words of the Sermon on the Mount about not defending oneself against evil in the view of the Lutheran Confessions really are, when they are understood as a counsel of the Gospel. The answer is clear, namely, hypocrisy, cant and sham holiness, because the same applies, according to the Lutheran Confessions, to the repudiation of private property, understood as a counsel of the Gospel (Apol. XVI, 9–10, 13; XXVII, 43–44; GC I 197–198).

2.2.2.2. *The Imperfect Observance of the Commands of the Sermon on the Mount*

How can a right observance of the commands of the Sermon on the Mount be distinguished from a wrong observance? If keeping the law — and the commands of the Sermon on the Mount — is to consist not only of outwardly honourable works (CA XVIII, 4–5), which in themselves can serve one's neighbour, but also of good works in the specific sense of works resulting from God's act of justification, it necessarily presupposes faith (CA XX, 29–30).

Any perfect keeping of the law is out of the question. Man is weak, and in this life the *only possibility is to begin to seek more and more to carry out works of the law* (e.g. Apol. IV, 123–124, 136, 146, 151–152). The elect are described in Formula Concordiae (SD XI, 30)

³⁶ CA XXVII, 12, 54, 61; Apol. XVI, 4; XXVII, 11, 16–17, 21, 24–27, 30, 34–35, 37, 39, 40–44, 45, 47, 51; GC I, 197.

as people who hear the Gospel, believe in Christ, pray and praise, become sanctified in love, have hope, steadfastness and consolation at the foot of the cross (Rom. 8:24–26), and who, *despite all their weakness, hunger and thirst after righteousness* (Matt. 5:6). Thus an observance of the law and the Sermon on the Mount which comes up to God's standards can *in our weakness* only be *by faith* (see also SD IV, 7–8).

In the *Solida Declaratio* it is stated that »the good works of believers satisfy and please God, although as long as we are in the flesh they are in themselves unclean and imperfect«. The reason for this is that »the person is for the sake of the Lord Christ pleasing to God through faith«. A worthless tree cannot bear good fruit, Matt. 7:18 (SD IV, 7–8; see also Apol XVII, 6).

2.2.2.3. *The Sermon on the Mount and Peace in the Greater Catechism*

The fifth commandment as a basis for maintaining peace

The fifth commandment concerns our relationship with our neighbour. As in the following commandments, what is involved is an *injunction to love* (GC I, 105), *not an injunction to love combined with respect* as in the fourth commandment. Love for brothers, sisters and neighbours in general is commanded (GC I, 105), but the love to be shown in these cases is love in the behaviour of individual persons towards one another (»nein gegen dem andern«; »privatis personis«; GC I, 181), not towards the authorities, as the authorities must also be respected. The authorities are thus exempted from the fifth commandment, even if in their legislation regarding individual persons' relationships with one another they cannot disregard its content.

Thus if the fourth commandment entails a recognition that *the authorities maintain peace, for example, by upholding the civil order*, and even war can thereby be allowed in fulfilment of this aim, the fifth commandment also exhorts all men to *uphold peace on the level of individual relationships with one another*. Further, when the sayings from the Sermon on the Mount are used in the Greater Catechism to expound the fifth commandment, it is also presumed that these sayings concern the relationships of individual people with one another. Matt. 5: 20–26 should be seen in this light, and also Matt. 5: 46–47. For the sake of

clarity, it is necessary to point out that according to the Greater Catechism, it is *not only these sayings from the Sermon on the Mount* that are to be understood in this way, but also *the commandment itself*, which these sayings seek to expound, and in fact not only the fifth commandment, but all the commandments in the second table of the law, with the exception of the fourth. They apply to the actions of individual persons and not to actions in the capacity of an office.

The exposition of the fifth commandment with the aid of the Sermon on the Mount

Let us consider in more detail what is involved in the exposition of the fifth commandment with the aid of the Sermon on the Mount. The commandment »you shall not kill« is understood in the radicalised form of the Sermon on the Mount: you shall not kill, whether with hand, heart, mouth, sign or gesture, or assist or conspire to kill. Even being angry with one's brother is interpreted as killing (GC I, 182). Where killing is forbidden, also forbidden is everything which can be a reason for or cause of murder (GC I, 186–187), for example, vindictiveness (GC I, 184, 196; as far as can be judged, with allusion to Matt. 5: 39). The radicalisation goes so far that enmity of heart, or even an evil wish against someone (GC I, 187–188) becomes an expression of killing. Even neglecting to do good to someone when there would have been an opportunity to do good, is interpreted as breaking the commandment (also adduced is Matt. 25: 42–43). What the fifth commandment *really* demands — that is, when an application of the law which is bound up with hypocrisy is rejected — is brought out with particular emphasis by the fact that it includes the idea — so Luther in the Greater Catechism — that we should actively seek to love even our enemies (Matt. 5: 46–47). So it is ultimately a question of nothing other than giving the law — the law of love (Matt. 5: 17, 20; Matt. 7: 12) — an *adequate* application (GC I, 195, 285).

2.2.2.4. *The significance of the Sermon on the Mount for the Basis of Work for Peace*

Love for one's enemies shown by all men to one another would

certainly promote peace to some extent. But are we blessed like those who make peace (Matt. 5: 9)? Do we possess that righteousness of heart which the law demands of us (Apol. II, 15–20; IV, 8, 34–35) and the Gospel proclaims for us (CA XVI, 4; XX, 29; Apol. IV, 45)? On the basis of the reality of original sin, we must answer these questions in the negative, even if we become righteous through faith (CA IV and V). What function do the commandments have for us, whether they be interpreted by means of the Sermon on the Mount or not? The law accuses and frightens the conscience all the time (Apol. IV, 38). An exposition of the law by means of the Sermon on the Mount has the same purpose. Even if ASm III, 2, 4 (p. 436) teaches a second use of the law without directly linking this use with an interpretation of the law in the light of the Sermon on the Mount, the Confessions are not averse to linking this kind of use of the law with Christ's interpretation of the law. This is made clear in the following passage from Epitome V, 5; see also SD V, 10):

»As far as the revelation of sin is concerned, Christ had to take the law in hand and expound it spiritually, Matt. 5, Rom. 7, because Moses' veil hangs over the eyes of all men as long as they only hear preaching of the law, but nothing about Christ, and therefore through the law do not rightly become aware of their sin, but become presumptuous hypocrites like the Pharisees or despairing like Judas. And 'therefore God's wrath was revealed from heaven' over all sinners, so that they can see how great it is. Through this they are pointed into the law, and only then do they rightly become aware of their sin through it. But such a awareness of sin could never have been compelled in them by Moses». When Christ himself expounds the law, he is ultimately preaching it through his cross, which is a preaching of law and Gospel (Epitome V, 9–10; SD V, 10–17).

By means of its radicalisations, the Sermon on the Mount *emphasises* — it would be wrong to say it *shows* — that man under the influence of original sin cannot fulfil the law. The Sermon on the Mount is addressed to all, but none but Christ can fulfil it.

3. Conclusion

The Lutheran interpretation of the Sermon on the Mount is for-

mulated in the Confessions in opposition to the Roman Catholic teaching of *consilia evangelica*. The Sermon on the Mount must be understood as an exposition of *law*, an exposition which makes us aware what true love for one's neighbours really is. Only Christ has fulfilled the law. By *faith* the Christian comes to share in Christ's love, which confers on his own performing of ethical tasks the distinctive elements of a love without limits, of sacrifice, forgiveness, forbearance, sympathy, mercy and renunciation of his own rights, that is, the distinctive elements of Christ's love.

In what does the significance of the Sermon on the Mount as a basis of work for peace ultimately consist? No other answer can be given than that its significance as a basis for peace is the same as the significance of the law when it is applied to interpersonal relations — through the radicalisations of the Sermon on the Mount we have only been made more attentive to what love for our neighbour in these kinds of situations in life really means. Because good works proceed from faith, they presuppose a consoled conscience as their driving force (CA XX, 15–23, 27–32, 35–37). When the commandments of the law and the commands of the Sermon on the Mount seem to overwhelm us, the Gospel consoles our consciences, soothes our minds and so gives us strength to perform admittedly not untarnished good works.³⁷

³⁷ For further study of these problems and supplementary material from outside the Confessions, reference may be made to e.g. the following writings of Luther: Von weltlicher Oberkeit (1523), WA 11, 245–281; Wochenpredigten über Matth. 5–7 (1530/2), WA XXXII, 299–544.

PEACEMAKING AS FULFILLING OF GOD'S WILL IN OUR TIME IN THE LIGHT OF THE SERMON OF THE MOUNT

A. I. OSIPOV

The Sermon on the mount of Christ the Saviour, as it has been transferred by the Evangelists Matthew (5,1—48; 6,1—34; 7,1—29) and Luke (6,12—49), is a teaching from which it is not always easy to come to definite conclusions on various practical questions of life. The clearest example that confirms it is a treatment of the peace problem by different confessions and concrete denominations of Christians under conditions of unstable relations between separate persons as well as between nations in general. Violence, or a threat of violence, or nonviolence, even in extreme situations, are estimated by Christians of various denominations in very different ways which are sometimes incompatible. Thus, as to methods of realisation, the peacemaking as fulfilling of God's will in our time may appear for different Christians in their dialogue with each other and important theological problem, although the necessity of peacemaking is an undebated axiom of the Christian world outlook without referring to its confessional interpretations: »Blessed are the peacemakers; for they shall be called the children of God» (Mt 5,9).

But why is peace necessary?

Let us imagine for a while a sceptic, putting this question that seems to be naive at first glance. But before trying to answer, we shall ask him to comment his idea. We'll have a dialogue.

Sceptic. There are several aspects of this question which have a specifically Christian foundation and demand therefore a theological answer. First of all, if we refer to motives that move the bulk of people to peace, they do not, as a rule, extend the exclusively earthly interests.

But the Christians have other aims of life. The Sermon on the mount proclaims:

»Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed?

(For after all these things do the Gentiles seek;) for your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all these things.

But seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.

Take therefore no thought for the morrow . . . » (Mt 6,31—34).

Does not seem strange at least the participation of Christians in the struggle for peace in the light of these Gospel sentences?

Christian. The expressed perplexity derives from ignorance or incomprehension of the main reason of the Christian peacemaking activity. Of course, the Christian consciousness is far from the fight for peace that is received only like a condition for an endless development and satisfaction of human passions, lusts and perversions, i.e. for a life according to the motto: »Eat, drink and rejoice, for tomorrow we shall die» . . . Such a trivial understanding of the meaning of life and of peace, securing it, does not correspond not only to a Christian consciousness, but to convictions and hopes of many non-Christians too.

The peace, for which a Christian stands, is understood as one of necessary conditions, thank to which the nations, societies and individuals have the foremost possibilities of a moral and spiritual development and hence, naturally, of a healthy material prosperity. Of course, peace is not the only condition for such a development. Also in the time of peace, individuals as well as whole nations are able to degrade morally, when other conditions are absent. But the absence of peace, the war, is an especially fruitful soil for a wide development of all kinds of evil. Hence, it is evident that the Christian aspiration for peace is just a walking to seek the kingdom of God and His truth, and not for the things sought by the Gentiles.

Spirit or flesh

Sceptic. The Christian interest in peace as *condition sine qua non* of the achievement of true and high spiritual values by the human society

is clear. But do not begin just at this moment principal differences between Christians and other people in their understanding of the necessity of peace? I shall try to explain it. Christians seek peace as conditions of the development of spirit, but the secular humanity seeks it as conditions of material well-being. In other words: the Christian conception of peace is completely spiritual; consequently, the Christendom does not fight for the same peace that is desired by the majority of mankind.

Christian. It is only a great pity that such a wrong image of the Christendom is shared by so many people. If we try to express «a geographical» situation of the Christendom on a map of *weltanschauung*, it has the mean place between two extremes: from one side, it is a vulgar materialism, denying everlasting values of spirit, and from another side, it is a pure spiritualism which does not take into consideration the reality of body and its demands. The essence of Christianity is expressed in one word, in one name — Christ, who is God-Man and who showed by his incarnation with the greatest power and fullness that a man is neither a spirit nor a body in their separate state, but he is both together; that is why the good to which the mankind is called, is good not only for the spirit but for the flesh as well. In the prayer that the hearers of the Sermon on the mount learnt we find the following words: «Give us this day our daily bread» (Mt 6,11). According to the general Christian understanding, this request before the Heavenly Father means that our human prayer about our daily material needs is in full correspondence with God's will. Also the Lord Jesus Christ himself paid a great attention to the bodily needs of the people who surrounded him! Christianity does not deny the body, it denies a hegemony of body over the spirit, a priority of a biological principle in it and the triumph of bodily needs over the needs of the soul. But denying a sort of the heathen cult of lust, Christianity denies even more a one-sided spiritualism of some heathen religions, that exclude completely the body from a conception of the ideal human well-being. The Christian ideal is a final Godmanhood with the harmony of the human spirit and body in their divised state. But the achievement of this state is impossible without a correct life both of spirit and body. That is why the Christian care about peace among people and nations demands not only the well-being of the soul, but the satisfaction of all the natural and normal requirements of the body. The Church prays always for these requirements (it would be enough to listen the contents

of any Divine service): there are special prayers for many of them: some of them have, so to say, the highest hierarchy and are called sacraments (according to the Orthodox doctrine, such sacraments are Eucharist, Marriage, Confirmation).

Armageddon

Septic. The above considerations might be logical. Nevertheless there is a but, and if it does not get an answer, it would bring them all to a zero. The thing is that according to the Christian doctrine there will be inevitably the end of the world, as it is prophesied in the Gospels and especially clearly described in the Revelation of John the Theologian. It is not senseless and not against the will of God the Christian fighting for peace, i.e. for preventing of the end of the world, which is the final destiny of mankind, predestined by God? By the way, this idea is present by some Christian preachers and even by some very known ones.

Christian. Not only the old Christian Revelation but also the modern science says that the earth will become once uninhabitable, and the life on it will come to an end. But is this a ground to let the powers of evil to annihilate life already now? Nothing of the kind. And from the Christian point of view, the are special principal considerations about this question.

Christianity is not a religion of fanaticism; it does not consider predictions of the Revelation about future destinies of mankind as a inevitable predestiny of God. It is especially obvious if we learn the doctrine of the Orthodox theology about the Divine Providence. Shortly, it can be explained as follows. The Divine Providence is such a continuous action of God on every man, society and the whole mankind as a whole, which not only corresponds a given spiritual state of man, society etc. but creates optimal conditions for their spiritual progress at any moment. The Providence of God puts the conscience in such conditions where it feels in the most sharp way the state of choice between good and evil, God and sin, truth and lie. As F. Dostoyevsky wrote: «The devil fights against God, and the battle field is the hearts of men».

Thus, during a life, there is a free formation of a human personality to one side or another. The free choice of a man in each concrete case

(which is realised at any hour and nearly at any minute) conditions his further interior and exterior life in a certain degree. For God forms, in his great wisdom and love, the earthly destiny of man according to his spiritual state, and not independently from this man, not to God's own arbitrariness. And since God's love to man is unalterable, it appears to be that the man finally predestines his earthly life and his final destiny. The same law works towards any fellowship of individuals: society, nation, state, mankind.

Such understanding of God's Providence gives the possibility of a corresponding comprehension of many predictions of the Revelation. It would be enough to remember God's predictions about Nineveh. They were quite definite and doubtless. But the inhabitants of Nineveh repented, altered their life, and the prophecy of God was not realised to the great astonishment of the prophet Jonah. The Lord Jesus Christ, answering his disciples to their question about the Galileans, »whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices«, said: »Suppose ye that these Galileans were sinners above all the Galileans, because they suffered such things?

I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

Or those eighteen, upon whom, the tower of Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem?

I tell you, Nay; but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish» (Lk 13, 1—5).

Except ye repent» — this is just the true key for understanding those warning predictions of God, which we find in the Divine Revelation. Repentance, in its straight sense of the Greek word *METANOIA* is changing of the way of thinking, and consequently, of mood, of will direction and of evaluation criteria, i.e. changing of the spiritual state itself. This interior changing of man is followed by the corresponding changing of action of the providential, loving will of God towards the man. In this case, the well-known classical motto is quite justified: »The spirit creates the forms for itself».

Hence, it is evident why the Revelation is for Christians in no way a hindrance in their peacemaking activity: just the opposite, it is one additional stimulus to it. The more so, that the peacemaking is a direct fulfillment of the will of God (Mt 5,9). It demands repentance from

Christians, it is one of the issues of moral rebirth of men, of changing their relations to each other, of beating the swords of evil, which are present in the human hearts, into the plowshares of an interior heroism that binds all the passions.

It is not without a deep reason that the Lord refused to answer the question of his disciples about the day and hour of his second advent (Mt 24; 3, 36), since it is evident that this day and this hour are in the hands of the human freedom. The Armageddon can arrive soon, if the mankind doesn't prevent the tyranny of evil, if many and especially strong nations and states will not close the gate of their »city« to a new terrible »Trojan horse« —, fighting against the freedom of the propaganda of all possible kinds of amorality, against the hate to other nations, the cult of vulgar force, the war etc. But Armageddon can also be put off endlessly and practically become the second Nineveh, if the mankind and especially the Christians, as those who know the will and the Revelation of the Living God, will change positively and undertake all possible practical steps for establishing excellent friendly relations among all the nations and states of our world, independent of their social and political order.

Peace or Damocle's sword

Sceptic. There are many important questions that have a straight relation to the topic of our meeting, for instance, the problems of peace and justice, peace and moral, peace and laws of development of civilisations etc. But they demand other special meetings. And now we should like to touch the last point of your answer and to clarify what can the modern Christians practically offer or approve in order to solve such an important question for the whole mankind as the question of preservation and consolidation of peace on our planet.

Christian. Without touching the religious and moral aspect of this problem, that was touched in our talk, we shall show, from our point of view, the most important political actions, helping it solution.

The main problem of our time is a real threat of a disastrous annihilating war. Though we fully understand the justified words of F. M. Dostoyevsky that »the mystery of the human life is not the life itself

but the aim of life», but when we face the possibility of a possible annihilation of life on earth as a whole, the ideas of life and sense of life become nearly the same thing, and the defence of life becomes the highest criterion of humanity. There is no doubt about it now.

Speaking about the necessary steps now for a solution of this task, it is naturally to proceed from the main dangers threatening the life on earth. The most evident and terrible is of course nuclear arms, which is now accumulated and perfected in full speed. And the quantity of nuclear powers will increase unavoidably by this state of things. In this situation the most decisive measures are necessary. But up to now, there is only one concrete developed programme, viewing in degrees a complete liquidation of nuclear arms in the whole world up to the year 2000; this is the complex of peace initiatives, set up in the Declaration of the leader of the Soviet Union on the 15th of January 1986. It is well known that these far-reaching initiatives were supported by an action of extraordinary importance — the unilateral moratorium for any nuclear explosions. This moratorium of the Soviet Union, that began on the 6th of August 1985, was prolonged, again unilaterally, for three months of this year, up to the 31st of March, and was prolonged again up to the first explosion in the USA. If the USA, and then the other nuclear powers, followed this important initiative, the way to perfection of nuclear arms would be closed and we could speak about the beginning of a reverse process — to the world without nuclear bombs.

A very important action in this direction could be a complete liberation of Europe from nuclear arms both of mean distance and from tactical ones. On this way, a useful step would be creation of denuclearized zones in various regions of the continent, and namely, in Northern Europe, as well as creation of a denuclearized corridor along the line, dividing the countries of the NATO and the Warsaw Treaty in Central Europe.

A natural and legitimate postulate of the liquidation of nuclear arms must be a prohibition of proliferation of strike arms in the space. Without such a prohibition, the talks about shortening of nuclear armaments on our planet lose any sense. That is why just the so called «Strategic defense initiative», which is in fact a strategy of proliferation of strike arms in the space, brings to nought all the efforts, aiming at nuclear disarmament. The peaceful space, and not a preparation for «star wars», is the only way to make nuclear armaments unnecessary.

An important step would be also the complete annihilation of all the stock of chemical weapons and liquidation of the very industrial base of their production, as well as the prohibition of creation of non-nuclear arms, founded on new physical principles which approach the mass annihilation arms in their striking abilities.

It is natural that all these measures, under condition of mutual understanding, have in view a secure control, as well as an international control, in which all sides are interested. The principle position of the USSR is expressed by a well known laconic formula: the Soviet Union does not pretend to a greater security, but it will not agree with a lesser one.

So, it is necessary to emphasize the growing necessity to solve the task — to outlaw nuclear arms, to liquidate completely the means of mass annihilation of people in Europe as well as in the whole world.

Two words about arms race. Now it has led to an extremely high level of balance of nuclear and other potentials. Up to now, each of confronting sides has only an equal danger at this level. Continuation of the arms race is only able to intensify this equal danger and to lead it to such an extent when the parity stops to be a factor of deterrence. Consequently, it is necessary first of all to lower the level of the military confrontation considerably, to guarantee an equal security by a very low level of the strategical balance. It is especially important to achieve it now, when the administration of such a power as the USA counts openly on a military superiority over the USSR, escalating the arms race without stopping and proliferating middle-ranged missiles in some countries of Western Europe.

If we try to evaluate the rational proposals, which take place at this moment on problems of peace and security, they could be formulated in a short way as follows:

Of a sense is a strictly controlled lowering of levels of the military potentials of the states;

a refuse of nuclear powers from a war against each other or against third states, giving up a nuclear as well as a conventional war;

prohibition of an arms race in the space;

stopping all the tests of nuclear arms and their complete liquidation;

prohibition and annihilation of chemical arms;

giving up a creation of other means of mass annihilation;

disbandment of military alliances with a foregoing refuse from their widening and creation of new ones;

proportional and equal shortage of military budgets.

It goes without saying, that these proposals are only a first minimum on a complicated but joyful way to a lasting peace. And Christians of various Churches and countries could contribute to this great cause. Their contribution is their prayer for peace, their contribution is creation of trust among nations and countries, especially with different social and political systems, their contribution is an active support by possible for every Church means of political actions of its government and of governments of other countries, which objectively stimulate the annihilation of nuclear, chemical and other arms on our earth, and stimulate the cause of peace in the whole world.

The Soviet-American summit meeting in Geneva created premises for a transmission from the confrontation of today to a normalisation of relations between the USSR and the USA, to a sanitation of the international situation. But premises are not actions yet.

But by mutual energetic and steady actions of governments and nations, of Christians and people of other faiths and weltanschauung, of all forces, which think realistically, it is possible to make sure a turn to a better situation in European and world actions, to a rebirth of the policy of détente and constructive cooperation. The International Year of Peace, declared by the UN, is a stimulus for achieving of these aims, quite real with a unity and activity of all men of good will.

THE VENERATION OF SAINTS IN THE RUSSIAN ORTHODOX CHURCH*

From the history of the Russian-Scandinavian church links

Archimandrite Avgustin (Nikitin)

»As He who called you is holy, be holy yourselves
on all your conduct; since it is written: You shall
be holy, for I am holy» (1 Pet. 1, 15—16).

Western saints and ancient Russia:

The veneration of saints was practiced in Russia from the most ancient times — from the time when Russia accepted Christianity from Byzantine almost a millennium ago. The Russian Christians piously venerated the memory of the first Christian martyrs, the saint Fathers of the Church who protected the purity of Orthodoxy, the missionaries who enlightened pagan nations with the light of the Christian teaching. The saints, famous for their Christian piety, appeared also later in the Russian Orthodox Church; they were canonized after their death. The majority of them were Russians, but some of them came from the West. Thus already in the ancient Russian collections of church manuscripts there are prayers with names of at least three Scandinavian and two Anglo-saxon saints.¹

This information is confirmed by the data of the ancient western manuscripts. Thus in the story about the traveller Torvald Kodransson Vidforle, an Icelander who lived in the second part of the X-th century took an active part in the Christianization of Iceland. It is said here also that

* This paper was an extra lecture send to Mikkel's discussions

¹ A. Sobolevskij, *Materiali i issledovanija v oblasti slavjanskoi filologii i arheologii — izvestija otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti* 88: 3, Spb. 1910, 36—47; E. A. *Rudninskaja*, *Legenda o knaze Vladimir v sago ob Olafu Trygvassone* — *Trudi otdela drevnerusskoj literatury* 2, M.-L., 1935, 9.

Torvald before his death visited Jerusalem and then Greece where he was received with great honours by the emperor and the Byzantine clergy because of his famous piety. It is said also that the Byzantine emperor sent him to Russia where Torvald founded a monastery near the church of St. John the Baptist, granted to it an estate and finished here his life. This monastery is near the hill called Drofn.²

In another saga there is an additional information about the pilgrimage of Torvald to Jerusalem and Miklagard (= Constantinople) and then to Kiev (Kaenugard) then he went to the western shore of the river Dnieper and died in Russia (Ruzia) near the city of Polotsk (Palteskja). According to the saga he is buried there on a hill near the church of St. John the Baptist and «he is called saint». This is confirmed by the verse of the skald Brand the Traveller, who visited the place where «St. (Torvald) is buried on the hill Drofn near the church of St. John».³

The person of the Norwegian king Olaf Haraldson is also very interesting. Olaf Haraldson, king of Norway, was baptized in Rouen in 1013—1015; in 1028 he was to leave Norway and after a short stay on the island Gotland he came to Novgorod in 1029. This story can be found in many works of the ancient Scandinavian literature, devoted to Olaf: the sagas, chronicles, biographies. In 1030 Olaf came back to Norway in order to continue his fight for the throne, but was killed in the battle at Stiklastadiin. Soon after his death he was canonized as one of the first Christian kings who was especially zealous in missionary activity.⁴ In a year after his death, in 1031 the body of Olaf was transferred into the cathedral of Nidaros (now the city of Trondheim), and he was declared saint by Archbishop Grinikel. At the end of the XII-th century Pope Alexander III approved the canonization of local Scandinavian saints so that later the Curia carried out such canonizations.

In the Icelandic annals of the XIII—XIV-th centuries already under the year of 1031 the name of Olaf is accompanied by the term «saint»: »Translatio sancti Olavi regis», »Hælgj Olafs konungs» »Olafur hin helgi», which was never used in his respect before his baptism. Olaf Haraldson was the first Scandinavian saint, and many churches in Scan-

dinavia bear his name.⁵ In 1164 St. Olaf was declared patron of Norway and even the eternal king of Norway («perpetuus rex Norvegiae»).

The famous religious hymnologist Einar Skulason wrote a long spiritual poem »Olafs-drápa», devoted to St. Olaf; this poem was read in the church in Nidaros. Here the merits of St. Olaf in spreading out Christendom and especially miracles performed after his death are praised. In one of the sagas it is said that the »church was filled with fragrance when the poem was read, and this testifies that the saint liked this poem».⁶

St. Olaf was venerated also in Russia. This is witnessed by the existence in Novgorod in the XI-th century of a church consecrated to St. Olaf. This is testified by a runic inscription of the late XI-th century. The church (mentioned in the first Novgorod chronicle under the year of 1152, although the saint is not named⁷) was founded in the second part of the XI-th century.⁸ The building of a »Varangian» church in Novgorod means that here was a permanent (or permanently renewed) number of Scandinavians, first of all merchants who needed not only a market and a place of residence, but also a church to worship. The Varangian church in Novgorod played an important role in the process of spiritual enlightenment in northern Russia, since in the second part of the XI-th century the process of christianization was not yet finished in the Novgorod land. Even in the famous »Prayer of Cyrillus (Kirik)» of the second part of the XII-th century we find Russian christians who »bring their children to the Varangian priest for prayer».⁹

It is not occasionally that Novgorod has a church devoted to St. Olaf, although the Scandinavian churches in Smolensk and Constantinople were devoted to Our Lady: his presence in Novgorod before his death seems to have played here an important role. St. Olaf was venerated in Novgorod: this is testified by the prayer to the Trinity of the XI-th century

² F. V. Gorn, *Quoted from storija skandinavskoi literatury*, M. 1894, 33.

³ Novgorodskaja pervaja letopis, 29, M. 1950, 215.

⁴ E. A. Mel'nikova, *Svedenija o Drevnei Rusi v dvuh skandinavskikh runičeskikh napisjah* — *Istorija SSR* 1974: 6, 177.

⁵ Russkaja istoričeskaja biblioteka 6, Spb. 1908, 60; A. I. Nikitskij, *Istorija ekonomičeskogo bicia Novgoroda* Belkago, M. 1893, 54; E. A. Mel'nikova, *Svedenija o skandinavskikh runičeskikh napisjah XI—XII v. v. o narodah Vostočnoj Evropy* — *Skandinavskij sbornik* 20, Tallin 1975, 163.

which was rather well-known in Russia: there are many versions of this prayer in the manuscripts of the XIV—XVI-th centuries. This is a western prayer: it has a list of saints of Western Europe, including St. Olaf of Norway and St. Knut of Denmark.¹⁰

In one of the Norwegian collections of sermons we find also an information of the visit of St. Olaf to Novgorod. «Once it happened in the Gards (the Scandinavian name of the ancient Russia; A.A.) in the East, — wrote the ancient author, — that the trade city called Holmgard (= Novgorod; A.A.) caught fire and it seemed that the whole city would burn. And all people ran in fear to a priest, named Stephen. He celebrated in the church of St. Olaf, and the people (i.e. the population of the city) wanted to receive in this trial the help and the power of the king (konung) Olaf in order to check in this way the words of other people. When the priest heard about their wish and their request, he took the image of the good king (the saint) and turned it towards the fire. And the fire did not spread beyond the place where it has begun. In this way the greater part of the city was saved».¹¹

The Scandinavians who lost their lives far from their Motherland, were buried in the church of St. Olaf in Novgorod. Thus in the runic inscription mentioned above (second part of the XI-th century) it is said that the Swedish merchant and warrior Spjabud «died in Holmgard (and was buried; A.A.) in the church of (St.) Olaf».¹² A long time the church of St. Olaf existed in Novgorod. The last time it is mentioned in a chronicle under the year of 1311.

Western christians and Russian saints.

History has preserved documents witnessing that some western christians had a possibility to maintain personal contacts with Russian zealots of faith and piety who were canonized after their death. First of

all we should mention St. Anthony and Theodosius, the thaumaturges of the Kiev-Cave monastery. As it is said in the Kiev-Cave Paterikon, during the internecine wars from Sweden to Kiev Russia came Shimon, the son of the «Varangian Prince Africanus». He found refuge in the Cave monastery, came here to the «great and saint Anthony for prayers and blessing».¹³

Shimon worked in this monastery and did his best to decorate it. St. Anthony «praised God for this and said to the Varangian: My child, henceforth your name will be not Shimon, but Simon». Simon had spiritual fellowship with other monks of the Kiev-Cave monastery, e.g. St. Theodosius: «Simon accepted the prayer and the blessing from the saint as a precious pearl and a gift... He was taught by our Father St. Theodosius, left the Latin vanity and believed indeed in our Lord Jesus Christ with all his house of almost 3,000 people and his priests, which was a miracle of St. Anthony and Theodosius».¹⁴

Now we shall speak about the saint orthodox and great Prince Alexander Nevsky (1220—1263) who as the Prince of Novgorod protected the Russian land from invasions from the West and the East. His incorruptible relics, found in 1380, were solemnly transferred to St. Petersburg in 1724 and are now in the monastery consecrated to him: this is the Laura of St. Alexander Nevsky.

As it is known, in 1251 Prince Alexander Nevsky organized a mission to Norway. «In this winter when konung Hakon was in Thronheim, ambassadors came from the East from Gardarika (i.e. the land of the Gards, Russia; A.A.). The ambassadors of Alexander, konung of Holmgard (+ Novgorod; A.A.) were led by Mikjal (= Michael; A.A.), who was a knight», — says an ancient Scandinavian chronicle.¹⁵ In the spring of the same year the king of Norway sent his ambassadors to Novgorod: «And they went to the East, to Holmgard together with the ambassadors of konung Alexander; they were led by Vigleik, son of a priest, and Borgar. They went first to Bjorgyn (= Bergen; A.A.) and then to

¹⁰ A. Sobolevskij, *Materiali i issledovanija v oblasti slavjanskoi filologii i arheologii*. — *Izveščija Otdelenija russkogo jazyka i slovesnosti* 88; 3, Spb 1910, 46—47.

¹¹ *Code AM 619 quarto*. Quoted from E. A. Rüdgerskaja, *Drevnaja Rus' i Skandinavija IX—XIV v. v.*, M. 1978, 88; E. A. Mel'nikova *Svedenija o Drevnej Rusi*, 178.

¹² Quoted from E. A. Mel'nikova, *Skandinavskie runičeskie nadpisi*, M. 1977, 113 (inscription: Sjusa, Up, 687).

¹³ Quoted from *Paterik Kievo-Petereckogo monastira*, Spb. 1911, 8.

¹⁴ *Ibidem*, 5.

¹⁵ Quoted from E. A. Rüdgerskaja, *Svedenija po istorii Rusi XX XIII v. v. sago o koroie Hakone*. — *Istoričeskie svjazi Skandinavii i Rossii*, L. 1970, 325—326; *I. Sazko'vskij*, *Posol'stvo Aleksandra Nevskago v Norvegiu*. — *Voprosy istorii* 1945; L. 112—116.

the East. They came to Holmgard in summer, and the konung received them well».¹⁶

We should present also another Russian zealot — St. Tryphon of Pechenga, of Kola (+ 1583). Born in Torzhok, at that time belonging to Novgorod, St. Tryphon devoted his life to the preaching of the Gospel among pagans of the Kola peninsula. As it is known, in the early XVI-th century the Russian missionaries began to christianize the local population of Lapland and Fimmarken. This mission was performed by the Russian monks: the anachoret Theodorite baptized the Lopars of Kola and St. Tryphon converted into Orthodoxy the Lopars living along the Pechenga river.

The monastery of Pechenga founded in 1530—40s played a special role in the development of Russian-Norwegian church links. It was situated in the Varanger-fjord, precisely on the river Pechenga near its mouth in Varanger-fjord. The monastery was situated near the Norwegian border and was engaged in commerce with the Norwegian city of Vard on the other side of the Varanger-fjord. According to the information of the dutch merchant Simon Salingen, »when Eric Munk was there (i.e. in Vard) the »vogt«, the monks, as for instance Tryphon (Trifaen), who built some years ago a monastery in Monckefort (dan.: the monk's fjord), came here to sell their fish».¹⁷ This is the information of Salingen from about 1560s.

Simon van Salingen had the chance to meet Tryphon himself, the founder of the monastery of Pechenga. Tryphon told the dutch merchant how he began to build the monastery and what inspired him. According to Simon van Salingen, Tryphon, after giving the monastic vows, »in one place above Monckefort built a small cell and took there his icons to pray God before them; there he spent a long time and saw no people... The rumour about his holy life spread out in other places, and many people visited him after hearing about his cell built in a desert place. Since they asked him to build here a church in order to have a place to worship, he built a chapel and invited a »black priest« (i.e. hieromonk; A.A.) who celebrated the liturgy etc., and at the same time he put on a capouch. When the chapel was built, even more people visited him. In general

fishermen came to the chapel and offered fish to the chapel. Thanks to such gifts a big monastery was built on the river one mile lower. The fishermen came also in order to become monks when they were ill. However in 1565 there were almost 20 monks and almost 30 servants and workers of the monastery.¹⁸

Those are some data of the activity of the saints of God, who contributed to the development of relations between the Orthodox Russia and the western countries. But when St. Tryphon of Pechenga enlightened the population of the Kola peninsula, the Reformation gradually was established in northern Germany and then in Scandinavian countries. At that time the first theological discussions between the Orthodox and Lutherans on the veneration of saints took place in Russia.

Theological discussions on the veneration of saints (XVI—XVIII centuries)

During different audiences for the representatives of Protestant states the Russian czar John (Ivan) the Terrible often had with them theological conversations.

In 1578—9 a danish mission led by Jacob Ulfeldt came to Russia. This mission included Rev. Andreas Fronikus, pastor of Jacob Ulfeldt.¹⁹ During their stay in Novgorod the Danish pastor had a discussion with the orthodox people of that city who accompanied the mission. In their conversation they discussed different theological issues, including the veneration of saints.

Rev. Andreas as a Lutheran rejected the necessity to venerate the saints and the saint images. It is interesting to present his argumentation, since it gives a general idea about the Protestant argumentation, typical in this respect for the XVI-th century. About his theological conversations with the Russian Orthodox christians Rev. Andreas said the following: »I have spoken many times with their priests and boyards about faith and rites and tried to prove that there is no need to pray to the saints in any form, quoting the Holy Scriptures and indicating many testimonies, e.g. from

¹⁶ *Ridzeshkaja* 1970, 326.

¹⁷ Quoted from A. M. Filippov, *Russkie v Laplandii v XVI veke*. — *Literaturnij vestnik* 1901: 1-3, 297.

¹⁸ *Ibidem*, 299.

¹⁹ *Knud Razmusen*, *O knige Jakova Ulfeldta, Hodeoporticon Ruthensium*, Frankfurt 1603. — *Skandinavskij sbornik* 23, Tallin 1978, 62.

Ex. 20, and Deut. 5: »you shall not make for yourself a graven image... you shall not bow down to them or serve them (5, 8, 9); from Is. 44, where the prophet blames strongly those doing images, from Bar. 5, from Ps. 116 and, finally, from the Letters of St. Paul to the Corinthians: 'Don't accept idols'. I thought that this argumentation would convince them, and they would believe me; but this was successful; they only answered that they would venerate the images as their ancestors have done it previously. At the same time they said that many thaumaturgies take place, and therefore it is necessary to preserve the veneration of icons».²⁰

It is not the task of this essay to analyse and criticize these arguments of the Lutheran pastor of the XVI-th century. Any graduate of the Orthodox seminary can answer theologically to his theses. But at those remote times the Orthodox partners of Rev. Andreas, inexperienced in theological issues, could not find the necessary argumentation from the Holy Scriptures. Nevertheless each partner preserved his own view-point, as it is evident from the further narration of the Danish pastor.²¹

Another conversation took place in 1602 when another mission came from Denmark to Russia. This time the Danish king Christian IV sent to Russia his brother Hans, Duke of Sleswig-Holstein as a bridegroom of Princess Xenia Borisovna. The numerous suite of the Duke included Axel Gyldenstjerne, the senior ambassador, who left us the description of this mission.²² According to the author, soon after coming to Moscow Duke Hans fell ill, and Czar Boris ordered to pray in all the churches for Prince Hans; then he visited him when he was already dying.

When Czar Boris visited Prince Hans, he had a theological conversation with Axel Gyldenstjerne. According to the Danish ambassador, the Czar asked him, whether St. Nicholas is venerated in Denmark. As a Lutheran Axel Gyldenstjerne answered: »As other saints we neither venerate, nor disgrace him; we do neither good, nor bad». Reacting to these words Czar Boris »raised his eyes upwards, shook his head and said that he (i.e. St. Nicholas) is a great saint who performed many power-

ful and great miracles, since in his biography it is possible to read that he raised from the dead three days after the death and that he stayed, like Jonas, three days in the whale and then was liberated. The Czar spoke about many other great miracles performed by him, and that in his biography it is possible to read that he healed many people from very serious illnesses».²³ It is evident that Axel Gyldenstjerne was not so hold to object the Russian Czar in such a sorrow moment, and no more discussion took place.²⁴

In 1643 another mission was sent from Denmark to Russia. This mission included a Lutheran pastor Rev. Matthew Filgöber. The mission stayed in Moscow a long time since they conducted negotiations on the marriage of the Danish Prince Valdemar with Princess Irene, the daughter of the Russian Czar Mikhail (Michael) Fedorovich. From June 3 to 7, 1645 members of the Moscow orthodox clergy led by Patriarch Joseph took part in theological discussions with Rev. Filgöber. One should note that after the discussions in the evening Rev. Filgöber continued theological discussions with Rev. John (Ioann) Nassedka in the house of the Russian resident in Sweden, Forensbach, a former Lutheran converted to Orthodoxy.

Although on some issues Rev. Filgöber presented his argumentation in such a reconciliatory form that even today it has not lost its value for the ecumenical discussion, there was no agreement on the veneration of saints. This is witnessed by the content of the final document created by the Orthodox partners of the discussion. They said the following to Rev. Filgöber: »You (i.e. the Lutherans; A.A.) do not venerate Our Lady and the saints, faithful to God. You do not venerate the relics of the saints. Your churches are not holy, since they do not have communion clothes ('antimens') with the relics of the martyrs».²⁵ This was the result of this discussion. In general this dialogue had no clear perspective, since considerations of politics and dynasty influenced negatively the discussions. The discussion was not continued till the departure of the Danish mission from Russia in 1645.

²⁰ Ibidem, 34.

²¹ The same night Duke Hans died and soon November 25, on the feast of St. Catherine ... was buried in the Sloboda, in half a mile from Moscow in a German church». Ibidem, 48.

²² Quoted from *I. Sokolov, Otkrovenie protestantizma k Rossi v XVI i XVII godah*, M. 1880, 117.

²³ Quoted from *Putesestvie v Rossiju datskogo posolannika Jakova Ul'fel'da v 1575 godu. — Ctenija v Obščestve istorii i drevnosti rossijskikh* 1883: 2:3, 20.

²⁴ Ibidem, 20—21.

²⁵ *Ju. N. Šerbočev (ed.), Turestestvie ego knazetvovi cvedlosti gercoga Gansa Slevig-Gołstinskogo v Rossiju b 1602 godu. — COIDR 1911: 3—2.*

The Swedish Lutheran Henrik Sederberg, who lived in Russia from 1709 to 1718 paid much attention to the tradition of venerating the saints in Russia. In his work devoted to Russia, one chapter (Ch. 7 »On the Russian faith») has an important information on this ancient christian custom. According to the author, »while venerating the Holy Trinity», the Russian Christians ask also the saints for help, they honour much their images, they appeal to Our Lady as an intermediary of the salvation who reconciled us with God... Russians venerate not only the apostles and pray and prostrate before their relics, but also the prophets, the Fathers of the Church, the martyrs and other saints in order to receive help through their intermediary function... The first grade (of holiness) belongs to Jesus, then to our Lady, and finally to the heavenly powers with all the saints since each of them in his own way influences the salvation of the human soul and helps the human beings... They venerate especially St. Nicholas of Bari almost divinizing him: they have chosen him patron and protector of the Russian land and they have built for this reason churches in his honour and venerate very much his miracles.²⁵

The work of Henrik Sederberg contains echos of the theological discussions which took place in Russia between the Orthodox and the Lutherans on the veneration of saints. According to the author when the Protestants quoted Mth. 4, 10 »You shall worship the Lord your God and him only shall you serve», the Russians answered that this was said to Satan and that it is also written that God is glorified through his saints when one asks them for help.²⁷

At the end of Ch. 7 of his work Henrik Sederberg presented 23 theses of the Christian teaching where, according to him, there are essential coincidences between the Orthodox and the Lutheran doctrines.²⁸ It is interesting that in this list there is a question on the veneration of saints (n° 17) which the author explained, — inconsistently, — in the following way: »No prayer, no saint can provide the mercy of Christ; nevertheless they (i.e. Russian Christians; A.A.) apply to the saints». ²⁹ Nevertheless the

remaining 22 questions of the christian teaching stressed by Henrik Sederberg, are an important document with a special theological significance for our times when there are bilateral Orthodox-Lutheran conversations and the Panorthodox-Lutheran dialogue has officially started.

Lutheran authors of the XVII—XVIII-th centuries on the veneration of saints in Russia

The famous Swedish historian Peter Petri (sw. Peer Persson, lat. Petrus Petrejus; 1570—1622) paid a special attention to the religious aspect of the life of the Russian people. In 1602 he came from Sweden to Russia and spent here 4 years. Then he went back to his Motherland and came again to Russia with a mission of the Swedish government; he stayed in Russia from 1608 to 1611 and 1612—1613. After coming back to Sweden he published in 1615 in Stockholm his work »Regni Muschovitici Scio-graphia», and in 1620 the German version of his work »Historien und Bericht von dem Grossfürstenthumb Muschkow» was published in Leipzig.

Speaking about the initial period of the Christianization of Russia, Petrus Petrejus mentions the Russian saints: St. Princess Olga and St. Prince Vladimir, equal-to-the-apostles. He writes that Princess »Olga went to Constantinople, was baptized there according to the Greek rite and received the name of Helen... She was the first Russian princess who received the baptism and loved so much the Greek faith that persuaded many people of both sexes to accept this faith and to baptize».³⁰

Following the Russian chronicles Petrus Petrejus gives an information on the baptism of Russia. He says that Prince Vladimir was baptized in Chersonese (Korsum), and after coming back to Russia the Prince »ordered to hack, to break down, to burn all the idols in his land (of Kiev) and persuaded all his people to accept the greek faith which Russians follow till now and profess in all its articles and rites».³¹

The description of the Trinity-St. Sergius monastery (now the Trinity-St. Sergius Laura), founded by St. Sergius of Radonezh in 1337, is

²⁵ *Gerolt Sederberg. Zametki o religii i pravah russkogo naroda vo vremja prebyvanija ego v Rossii s 1709 po 1718 g. g.* COIDK 1873: 2-4, 14.

²⁷ *Ibidem*, 14.

²⁸ *Ibidem*, 36.

²⁹ *Ibidem*, 36.

³⁰ *Petr Petri, Istoria o velikoj knjazestve Moskovskom. — Čtenia v Obščestve istorii i drevnosti Rossijskikh* 1866: 1-4, 96.

³¹ *Ibidem*, 101.

especially interesting in the work of Petrus Petrejus. According to the author, «in 12 miles³² from Moscow there is beautiful and glorious monastery for men, built of bricks and called «the Trinity»; it is very rich and can feed annually 400 monks with their servants and workers. Twice a year the Great Prince with his court goes to this monastery to pray: it is for the Trinity Sunday and for the feast of St. Michael. Half a mile from the monastery he leaves his carriage and goes on foot with his court to the monastery, thinking that through this he carries out a great ministry to St. Sergius so that he may more willingly and better protect him in all his needs, preserve him from any evil and danger, help him to reign happily and give him a long life.³³»

«From this Sergius, — notes the author, — the monastery received his name, although people continued to call it the monastery of the Holy Trinity because the Great Prince must come here each year to pray for the Trinity Sunday». ³⁴ As a Lutheran Petrus Petrejus was interested in the ancient christian custom to venerate the saints; this tradition was abolished in Scandinavian countries during the Reformation. According to Petrejus, «the Russians say that this Sergius had performed many miracles and many signs, that he is preserved fresh and incorrupted as if he died yesterday or the day before yesterday, that he had healed many lame and blind who visited him and touched his body. This is why big crowds come here from the whole country, as it was in Jerusalem in the ancient times». ³⁵

«All those who pass by the monastery, rich or poor, give offerings according to their possibilities», ³⁶ — continues Petrejus. Then the author describes in details the events of the Troubled times, ³⁷ and besides this mentions some Russian cities, e.g. Kaluga, whose people «work for the monks of the Trinity monastery in 36 miles from Moscow, where St. Sergius is buried», ³⁸ Petrus Petrejus speaks also about Mozhaysk

³² In Denmark and other Scandinavian countries before the acceptance of the metrical system distances were measured in miles; 1 Russian mile = 7, 532 km.

³³ *Petr Petri*. — Ibidem 1865: 4:4, 7.

³⁴ Ibidem, 8.

³⁵ Ibidem, 8.

³⁶ Ibidem, 8.

³⁷ Ibidem, 8—23; Ibidem 1866: 2:4, 185—280.

³⁸ Ibidem 1865: 4:4, 33.

«with a fortress where is the image of St. Nicholas which is in a great honour and is decorated with precious stones, pearls and gold», ³⁹

The veneration of St. Sergius of Radonezh was so great in Russia that other Lutheran authors were obliged to mention this great Russian saint. The Swedish Lutheran Henrik Sederberg, mentioned above also spoke about St. Sergius and the monastery founded by him. He wrote about «the monastery of St. Sergius, the Russian hermit who died there as abbot of the monastery and was canonized... St. Sergius was so holy, that a whole book could not include all his titles, granted to him by the Russians». ⁴⁰

But St. Sergius of Radonezh was not the unique saint to whom Russian Christians applied in their prayers. Henrik Sederberg notes also that Russians «go to pray in many other monasteries as well, and since in Russia there are many such saints canonized for the miracles performed by them, the people visits annually the monasteries and churches in processions thinking that such visits may heal illnesses». ⁴¹

Finally we can present also the testimony of H. Sederberg about the tradition to venerate saints by Russians in their every day life. «After getting up and before leaving their house they pray to the saints, — writes the author, — and entering the house they never greet anybody, even, for instance, the most noble prince, before greeting the saints and praying to them; if they do not notice the image, the hosts will show them with a deep respect, and the new-comer will bow with a great reverence, pray and make the sign of the cross on his breast and face». ⁴²

The Swedish author Petrus Petrejus visited Russia in the beginning of the XVII-th century when the Russian orthodox clergy and faithful in their majority remained confessionally isolated. In that time the possibility for a Lutheran guest to visit an Orthodox church and to see the relics of saints piously kept there, could not even be discussed. What about Henrik Sederberg, he lived in Russia in the times of Peter the Great (1696—1725) which was characterized by a broad approach to heterodoxy. (Czar Peter was quite tolerance to heterodoxy; this is confirmed by the following: on a page which Peter brought always with himself, he noticed

³⁹ Ibidem, 34.

⁴⁰ *G. Sederberg* 1873, 15.

⁴¹ Ibidem, 15.

⁴² Ibidem, 14.

the dates of birth and death of Martin Luther⁴³). But since H. Sederberg lived in Russia as a prisoner of war, caught by the Russian troops at Poltava, he had also no possibility to visit Orthodox churches. In that times only guests with official missions and a high position had such a possibility, if they were heterodox Christians.

This is why the notes of the Danish Lutheran Just Juel, whom the Danish king sent to Peter I as his ambassador, are so interesting. When he stayed in Novgorod in December 1709, Just Juel could see himself that the Russian Christians piously keep the relics of saints and venerate their memory.⁴⁴ They showed to me the body of St. Nicetas remaining incorrupted, as they say, already 450 years, — writes the Danish ambassador, — this is why the church is consecrated to St. Nicetas (Niketa-Kirke). They showed to me also St. John in a beautiful shrine. John was Bishop of Novgorod in the past. They say that his relics remain incorrupted already 600 years. His face is covered with a black embroidered shawl.⁴⁵

Then Just Juel visited the monastery of St. Anthony the Roman, thumaturge of Novgorod (1067—1147) where he met the abbot of the monastery.⁴⁶ The bishop came out to meet me in a capouch and a long veil, with all his bishop's decorations and a pastoral staff; he made the sign of the cross and led me in the church,⁴⁷ — says the author. Then he explained to his Danish readers the tradition concerning the arrival of St. Anthony from Italy to Novgorod in 1106, and said: »The bishop showed to me also the relics of St. Anthony. Before approaching the copper coffin where they were, and before opening the cover, the abbot bowed several times. He wanted that I bow and make the sign of the cross before the relics. But the monk who accompanied me, said that he may open the relics without requiring me to bow or other signs of veneration. They did not show to me the face of the saint, but instead of this they showed to me many of his clothes, his mitra and chasubles; one of them was embroidered and covered with true pearls.⁴⁸ Before leaving the monastery the Danish guest visited the cave where St. Anthony

prayed in solitude. Then the abbot and Just Juel took leave of one another, and the abbot gave to the guest the icon of St. Anthony and a biography of this saint in Russian.⁴⁹

While being in Moscow in March 1711, Just Juel had also a possibility to see Orthodox holy places. He visited the Assumption cathedral in the Moscow Kremlin and saw the icons of the saints in the iconostasis. He wrote: »The iconostasis separating the altar from the rest of the cathedral and rising up to the dome, is covered with paintings and many icons. What about these images one should note that around the head of the Saviour, the apostles and other saints there is a yellow circle on the ancient catholic images which we may still find in our churches; this circle symbolizes brilliance and radiance coming from their faces. In all Russia instead of such yellow circle the icons have a nimbus of the same dimensions made of copper, gold or silver around the head of the saint. This nimbus is a decoration, replacing the catholic painting. In the Assumption cathedral the nimbuses of the icons are made of gold with many precious stones and pearls. One should note that in Russia we do not find carved images, but only plain, painted». ⁵⁰

And again, as previously in Novgorod the Danish ambassador could see the pious veneration of saints in the Russian Orthodox Church. This time first of all the graves of Moscow hierarchs and St. Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia (+ 1326; his relics were transferred in 1479) were shown to him. »To the right of the altar, — writes the author, — in a small chapel, where you can enter through a small side door, in a copper shrine we find the relics of St. Peter, Metropolitan of Moscow, who is said to have performed many miracles. Near the shrine in a silver chest we saw a golden cross with many precious stones. This cross is said to have been done at the request of the emperor Constantine the Great as a copy of the cross which appeared to him in heaven. I was told that this cross among other things was taken by the enemies in the war with Sweden; but later Russians have bought it back from a Swedish soldier for 50 riksdalers». ⁵¹

Then the clergy who accompanied the Danish guest showed to him the relics of St. Jonas the Thaumaturge, Metropolitan of Moscow and

⁴³ *Ja. K. Grot*, Trudi 4, Spb. 1901, 86.

⁴⁴ *Zapiski Justa Juelya, datskogo poslannika pri Petre Velikom (1709—1711)*, M. 1900, 109.

⁴⁵ *Ibidem*, 110.

⁴⁶ *Ibidem*, 110.

⁴⁷ *Ibidem*, 111.

⁴⁸ *Ibidem*, 288.

⁴⁹ *Ibidem*, 288.

All Russia, who died in 1461 (the relics were discovered in 1472). Just Juel notes: »From a side room I went to another corner of the cathedral on the right hand where I saw the incorrupted relics of St. Jonas, Metropolitan of Moscow, venerated as a saint by the Russians. Between these relics and the opposite corner there are several coffins of patriarchs in a black cloth and behind an iron railing».⁵⁰

Finally Just Juel could see the grave of St. Philip, Metropolitan of Moscow and All Russia (1507—1569; his relics were transferred from the Solovki monastery to Moscow in 1652): »In the left corner, if you come out of the altar, you can see the relics of the Russian metropolitan Philip, venerated as a saint by the Russians».⁵¹ — wrote the Danish guest in his diary. The Danish ambassador saw also other holy places in the Assumption cathedral, and he could understand that Russian Christians piously venerate the memory of the saints as well as their relics.

»They took out for me the head of St. John Chrysostom in a silver chest, — remembered Just Juel, — and the right hand of apostle Andrew in a silver hoop in the place where it was, according to the tradition, bound to the cross. The shrunken fingers of this hand are shriveled, and this allows to say that that they should be in the same position, in which St. Andrew made the sign of the cross when he was going to the execution. I saw the head of Patriarch Gregory »Benedictus« of Constantinople⁵² in a silver chest, the finger of St. Basil the Great, the first thaumaturge, as Russians say, a part of a bone of St. John the Baptist, the lower jaw of St. Vladimir, the first Russian Christian czar who introduced Christianity in Russia, some bones of Metropolitan Alexis,⁵³ a bone of St. Sergius⁵⁴ buried in the Trinity monastery, in 30 miles (russ.: »versiaso«) from Moscow, a bone of the greek martyr Euthymius,⁵⁵ and finally, the

⁵⁰ Ibidem, 289.

⁵¹ Ibidem, 290.

⁵² In the Moscow Assumption cathedral in both chests beads of St. Gregory the Theologian and St. John Chrysostom were kept. A. G. Levin, *Istoricheskoe opisanie Moskovskogo Uspenskogo sobora*, M. 1788, 88.

⁵³ Metropolitan Alexis of Kiev and All Russia (1293—1378); his relics are discovered in 1439 and were kept in the Chudov monastery founded by him. *Slovar istoričeskij o svyazih proslavlenih v Rossijskoj Cerkvi*. Spb. 1836.

⁵⁴ St. Sergius of Radonezh, founder of the Trinity-St. Sergius Laura (monastery) (1315—1391). *Slovar istoričeskij*...

⁵⁵ This is not precise, in the Moscow Assumption cathedral there was the shrine

image of Our Lady decorated with silver, gold and precious stones.⁵⁶ Just Juel visited some Russian monasteries: in March 1711 he visited near Moscow the so-called »Jerusalem or Resurrection monastery built according to the plan of the Jerusalem temple over the grave of our Lord», and made its description for his Danish readers.⁵⁷

In the same summer he with his secretary Rasmus Erebo visited Kiev and the Kiev-Cave monastery. »On June 26, 1711 we came to Kiev, — noted Rasmus Erebo, — and I had an opportunity to see the famous Kiev caves with the graves of saints. Then I bought a printed plan of these caves with a Latin explanation, and the biographies of the main Kiev saints, published in Slavonic, with pictures. I bought both books in Kiev itself».⁵⁸

In concluding this part one should note that in the XVIII-th century the Lutherans of Western Europe and Scandinavian countries could get acquainted with the tradition of venerating the saints not only in Russia, but in the Holy Land and in Sinai. Thus, for instance, in April 1712 Mikael Eneman, Professor of the Uppsala university, visited the ancient Sinai monastery and left his notes about this pilgrimage.⁵⁹ In 1733 the Swedish ambassadors at the Ottoman Porta Carl Fredrik von Hopken and Edvard Carlsson have described their travel to Egypt, Palestine and Sinai.⁶⁰ and this book was many times reedited. In 1772 the Danish scientist Carsten Niebuhr published his work about his visit to the Holy Land where he spoke also about his stay in the ancient Sinai monastery in Autumn 1782.⁶¹

Lutheran authors of the XIX-th century about the Russian saints

We find interesting data about Russian saints in the work of the famous finnish historian H. G. Porthan (1739—1804). His work named with the relics of Martyr Euthymia the Most Praised (her right hand). *Levšina* 1873, 38.

⁵⁶ *Zapiski Justa Julia* 1900, 288—289.

⁵⁷ Ibidem, 298—300.

⁵⁸ Ibidem, 438 (app.).

⁵⁹ *Mikael Eneman*, *Resa i Orienten 1711—1712*, Uppsala 1889, 11.

⁶⁰ *Carl Fredrik von Hopken + Edvard Carlsson*, *Tvorne svenske herrars rese beskriifning ... Stockholm 1768*.

⁶¹ *Carsten Niebuhr*, *Beschreibung von Arabien I—3*, Kopenhagen 1771—1778.

»Grundstreck till Ryska Historien» («Main features of the Russian history») was written as a summary of lectures delivered in the Academy of Abo (now Turku, Finland). In his study H. G. Porthan stressed that the most ancient data of the Russian history were preserved thanks to the activity of church chroniclers: »the most ancient Russian chronicler and annalist was Nestor, monk of the Cave monastery in Kiev; he was born in 1056 and died after 1113», — wrote H. G. Porthan.⁶²

Among the sources on history of the Russian State Porthan noticed church books: »Under this term here one mainly understands the biographies of saints, ... published under different names: »Chety-Minei» (i.e. »Monthly readings of biographies of saints»), »Prologus», »Paterikon», etc., and consisting of many volumes. They are the very source of historical data». Porthan paid attention to a such important event in the history of the Russian nation as the Baptism of Russia. He wrote about Prince Vladimir who »introduced the Christian teaching (in the country) with the Byzantine art and sciences».⁶⁴

Later Porthan analysed again the activity of St. Prince Vladimir equal-to-the-apostles, noting that after coming back from Chersonese »he ordered to destroy all idols and to baptize his people, what was done. With a great generosity he built churches in Kiev and founded some new cities». In his work H. G. Porthan noted the antiquity of the Russian-Scandinavian links and said that Prince Yaroslav »married Ingigerda, the daughter of King Olaf Skotkonung. This Great Prince strengthened the Christian teaching in Russia, ordered to translate into Slavonic many greek books, built monasteries and founded churches».⁶⁶

The Finnish scientist paid also attention to the activity of the saint Orthodox Prince Alexander Nevsky and stressed that in Russia from the ancient times he was venerated as a saint pleasant to God. According to H. G. Porthan, Alexander Nevsky died in 1263 and »became monk» before his death »with the name of Alexis. The monks spoke about many miracles performed by him after his death, and this is the reason for his

canonization. In his honour Emperor Peter I built a beautiful monastery on the river Neva».⁶⁸

In the XIX-th century the Lutheran scientists could continue to get acquainted with the ancient tradition of venerating saints not only in Russia, but also in the Middle East. We can mention such authors as Jakob Bergren, who visited the Holy Land and Sinai in 1821,⁶⁹ Rev. Gustaf Emanuel Beskow (1860),⁷⁰ R. von Kraemer (1864),⁷¹ L. A. Jagerskiöld (1902)⁷² and some others.

According to the expression of a today's Protestant theologian, »a romantic-literary attitude to the Orthodox saints»⁷³ began to appear among the Lutheran authors of that period. The Danish writer Adam Oehlenschläger who wrote in 1810 the tragedy »Hakon Jarl»,⁷⁴ was one of such authors. Using the ancient sages, A. Oehlenschläger in his work speaks about the relations of the Norwegian king Olaf Trygvesson (994—1000; he had the same name as St. Olaf who ruled some time later) and the Great Prince St. Vladimir equal-to-the-apostles (980—1015) who did their best in these remote times in order to »put the cross in the pagan lands».⁷⁵

It is interesting to note that earlier, in 1785, on the eve of the 800-th anniversary of the acceptance of Christendom and the baptism of Russia by St. Prince Vladimir, the Russian poet M. Khrenkov published in Moscow his poem »The revived Vladimir» (Moscow, 1785; later this poem was many times reedited). In this poem he eulogizes the deed of Prince Vladimir and the spiritual treasures, which he accumulated for his people through the baptism.

The poem of the Swedish poet Erik Johan Stagnelius (1793—1823)⁷⁶

⁶² Ibidem, 57.

⁶⁴ Jakob Bergren, *Resor i Europa och Österlandet*, Stockholm 1826—1828.

⁶⁶ Gustaf Emanuel Beskow, *Reseminnen från Egypten, Sinai och Palestina*, Stockholm 1861.

⁶⁸ R. v. Kraemer, *En vinter i Orienten*, Stockholm 1866.

⁶⁹ A. L. Jagerskiöld, *Från Sudan och Sinai*, Stockholm 1904.

⁷⁰ Friedrich Heyer, *Conversation with orthodox Christians about the Lutheran Church* (the booklet is edited in Germany in the late 1940s — early 1950s), 19.

⁷¹ The review in *Vestnik Evrope* 1812: 64: 16, 272—279.

⁷² Ibidem, 274.

⁷³ Son of bishop Magnus Stagnelius of Kalmar (1746—1829), Erik Stagnelius was born in 1793 on the island of Öland, studied in Lund and Uppsala universities and died in Stockholm in 1823, when he was only 29 years old.

named »Vladimir the Great» (Vladimir den Store; 1817) is devoted to the missionary activity of Prince Vladimir. This poem of E. J. Stagnelius was published in Stockholm in 1817, and later it translated in German and Latin.⁷⁶ The author speaks about the activity of the prince of Kiev, the baptism of Russia. This publication was favourably received by the Russian readers; according to the criticism of that time, the religious poet Stagnelius »received his inspiration from Christian virtues».⁷⁷

In 1888 the poem »Vladimir den Store» was published in Russian. This edition appeared on the eve of the 900-th anniversary of the baptism of Russia. While being a Lutheran, E. J. Stagnelius stresses that Prince Vladimir was canonized for his missionary activity, and this idea is expressed by the Byzantine Princess Anne who married the Prince of Kiev in 988. In her prayer she asks Our Lady to grant to Prince Vladimir »the heritage of the saints, and, being a saint, he accepted their incorrupted wreaths». Later the author stresses that »the prayers of Anne are written in gold in the living book of the eternal God our Lord».

Russian authors of the XIX-th and the early XX-th centuries about the saints of the Western Church

It is well-known that following the ancient tradition the Russian Orthodox Christians venerated with piety the memory of the saints of the Western Church. This should explain the fact that during the Northern war (1720) the relics of St. Henrik (XII-th century), the first preacher of Christianity in Finland, were transferred from the cathedral in Abo (= Turku) to St. Petersburg; this was carried out with the help of the count Gustaf Otto Douglas who was appointed governor of Abo.⁷⁸ On the other hand there is a tradition that during the Northern war the Swedes wanted to disturb the relics of saints in the Valaam monastery, but did not dare to do it because of the miracle that they saw.⁷⁹

⁷⁶ E. J. Stagnelius, Vladimir den store, Stockholm 1817. The first German edition was edited in Königsberg in 1828, the second in Leipzig in 1851.

⁷⁷ Parts of the poem in *Galilea* 1829: 44, 226–245.

⁷⁸ Ju. K. Grot, O prebivanii plenih švedov v Rossi pri Petre Velikom. — *Zurnal ministerstva narodnogo prosveteniia* (SMNP) 1853, fevral', 141.

⁷⁹ SMNP 1892, 180.

In the XIX-th century the Russian-Swedish relations significantly improved and some Russian publicists could visit Sweden. One of them Faddey Bulgarin visited this country in 1838. He visited especially the places linked with the activity of famous saints of the Western Church, e.g. St. Bridget, St. Olaf, St. Erik. Thus in a gallery in Stockholm F. Bulgarin saw the icon of Our Lady: »The tradition says that it was transferred to the royal palace from the monastery of St. Bridget in Vadstena, and that St. Bridget herself granted to the monastery the icon, received from Constantinople. The painting is surely Byzantine, on a golden background, but the inscription seemed to be Slavonic, although the characters look rather Greek: »The Virgin» (with a sign of abbreviation called »tillo»), — this is what we read. Maybe this icon was made in Byzantium for Russia and taken by the Swedes in Novgorod. We know that J. G. Delagard (a Swedish general; A.A.) took many precious things in Novgorod (in the early XVII-th century; A.A.), including many Slavonic or Russian manuscripts which are said to be kept now in the castle of this family near the city of Lund».⁸⁰

F. Bulgarin visited also Uppsala, and we have his description of the local cathedral.⁸¹ It is interesting that the Russian publicist began his narration about the interior of the church with the following words: »Near the entrance we see the icon of St. Olaf, King of Norway, killed in a battle with idolaters».⁸² »Near the altar on the left behind the railing there is a silver coffin covered with gold, with the relics of King Erik IX, who confirmed Christianity in Sweden, and on the other side we find the relics of Olaus Petri, the advocate of the Reformation, called the »Swedish Luther», — continues the author.⁸³

In the Old Uppsala ('Gamla Upsala') F. Bulgarin visited an ancient church: »inside, in the middle we see the place where in the Catholic times the incorrupted bodies of St. Erik and the first Swedish Christian preacher were discovered».⁸⁴

Prof. Y. K. Grot from the Helsingfors (= Helsinki) university (1812–1893; Academician from 1858 and Vice-President of the Russian

⁸⁰ F. Bulgarin, Lennja progulka po Finlanti i Šveci v 1838 godu 2, Spb. 1839, 121–122.

⁸¹ Ibidem, 281–286.

⁸² Ibidem, 281.

⁸³ Ibidem, 282.

⁸⁴ Ibidem, 293.

Academy of Sciences from 1889) was also interested in the holy relics of the Western Church. At the celebration of the 400th anniversary of the Uppsala university in 1877 he attended the official ceremony in the ancient cathedral of Uppsala. In his notes Y. K. Grot wrote that «this greatest church in the (Swedish) kingdom was founded in 1260 and soon became famous for the relics of St. Erik, patron of Sweden, which were transferred here and are kept here in a silver shrine. Gustav Vasa... as well as the Swedish reformer, the first Lutheran archbishop Laurentius Petri are also buried here behind the altar».⁸⁵

Y. K. Grot visited also the city of Husby: this place is famous for the activity of Olaf Skotkonung, the first Christian king of Sweden, baptized in ca. 1000. Here Y. K. Grot visited an ancient church founded by Olaf himself in 1001 and later presented a description of his impressions.⁸⁶

The Russian readers could get acquainted with biographies of western saints through literary works. Thus in the magazine «Finskij vestnik» ('The Finnish Messenger') published in Russia from 1845, we find a novel of its founder F. Derschau »Lalli, the Finn of the XII-th century».⁸⁷ This novel is devoted to the martyr death of bishop Henrik (XII-th century), the enlightener of Finland. At the end the author notes that the »ring and the mitra of St. Henrik are till now the emblem of the religious Consistory of Abo».⁸⁸

The writer Y. L. Markov (1835—1903) paid a large attention to the places connected with the activity of western saints. Like his forerunners he visited the city of Uppsala where in the cathedral he saw the grave of St. Erik. We shall quote the description of the Russian publicist since it complements the writings of his forerunners. »The silver shrine of the saint king Erik, behind a golden railing on the other side of the altar is the most venerated holy item in the Uppsala cathedral. — wrote Y. L. Markov. — And in some fathoms from the cathedral there is the well of St. Erik venerated by Swedes from the ancient times; it is an old chapel with a crown on the top. The chapel is above the well. The water comes

from a granite niche and runs down to the river... St. Erik is patron of Sweden. His emblem is included into the national flag of the State of Sweden, and we see the image of the saint king on the banner of the city of Stockholm and the seal of the city. Erik lived in the times of St. Andrew of Bogolubovo. According to an ancient Swedish saga, »three things were close to the heart of this king: to build churches, to keep law and truth in the people, and to fight against enemies of faith and the State».⁸⁹ Y. L. Markov informed the Russian readers about some details of the death of St. Erik, the enlightener of Sweden. »When in 1160 the Danish Prince Magnus suddenly attacked Uppsala, King Erik attended the liturgy in the church of St. Trinity, built by him, — continues Markov, — In spite of the admonition of his court the pious king wanted to stay in the church till the end of the liturgy, but when the liturgy finished, he jumped on his horse and led his troops against the Danes. In a furious fight he was killed by the enemies, and this martyr death has crowned with holiness his virtuous and fruitful life in the eyes of the Swedish people».⁹⁰

But the Russian writer did not confine himself to a trip from Stockholm to Uppsala. He wanted also to visit places famous for the activity of a well-known Swedish nun — St. Bridget. Y. L. Markov visited the city of Vadstena (now Vättersborg), where St. Bridget founded a monastery. We know that St. Bridget carried out pilgrimages to the grave of St. Olaf (Nidaros, now Trondheim; Norway), to the grave of St. Jacob in Compostella (Spain) as well as to Jerusalem.⁹¹ On her way back from the Holy Land to her Motherland she died in Rome in 1373. Her relics were brought to Sweden and put in the Vadstena monastery. In 1391 Bonifacius IX, Pope of Rome, canonized St. Bridget. Y. L. Markov notes that »thanks to St. Bridget the Holy Scriptures were translated into Swedish of that time... The saint woman was so much respected by her countrymen and foreigners among whom she lived during her pious trips, that offerings from everywhere were sent to her monastery. The king of Sweden granted a land to the monastery in Vadstena. The poor, the ill, whoever they might be and from whatever country they might

⁸⁵ *Ja. K. Grot, Vospominaniia o 400-letniiu jubilei Opsal'skogo universiteta. — Trudi 1. Spb. 1898, 644.*

⁸⁶ *Ibidem, 544—546.*

⁸⁷ *Finskij vestnik 1845: 1-3, 1—22.*

⁸⁸ *Ibidem, 22.*

⁸⁹ *E. L. Markov, Poizdka v Dalekariiu. — Vestnik Evrope 1900, 621.*

⁹⁰ *Ibidem, 622.*

⁹¹ *Pravoslavnaia Bogoslavskaia Enciklopediia 2, Spb. 1901, 600.*

have come, found in the saint woman a loving and careful mother»,⁹⁰ Speaking about the condition of the Vadstena monastery at his times, Y. L. Markov noted, in particular, that the relics of St. Bridget were also venerated by Protestants in that time: «From far away you can see the thin spire of the church of St. Bridget who founded the ancient city of Vadstena, — wrote the Russian writer, — The monastery of St. Bridget is closed already for a long time (from 1595; A.A.) when Catholicism disappeared in Sweden. In this historical monastery there is also a house for mentally disabled people, also in the church there are relics of the founder of the monastery, venerated even by Protestants. The name of St. Bridget is well-known to the Christian world as it was in the past; it is one of the most moving names in the stern history of Scandinavians... She was holy and pure from her very childhood».⁹¹

Travelling through the canal of Göta, Markov visited Berg near Motala. Previously there was an ancient monastery of Vreta near Berg, «one of the most curious in Sweden, since it was preserved in its almost original form from the XII-th century».⁹² In the old church of the monastery Markov saw crude stone graves covered with flat slabs; those are the graves of Magnus of Danmark, Ragvald of Sweden (1157) and different other pristine rulers of Sweden».⁹³ There he could also see the practical consequences of the gradual abolition of the veneration of saints in the Lutheran Church. Around these modest royal graves, — continues the author, — numerous wooden statues of kings, angels and saints are along the walls, on the window-sills, chests, trunks and benches; they are big like men, and small like toys; they were painted in the past, but now they are shabby, with broken noses and arms».⁹⁴

Together with Markov we can imagine a pilgrimage to the place where during some centuries were kept the relics of St. Olaf whose memory was kept a long time in Russia. First of all the author suggests to come to the city of Östersund and to visit the town of Pilgrimsstad (near Östersund) hidden «in the woodlands on the hills near the Rävsnä lake».⁹⁵ In the remote catholic times, — writes Markov, — the Swedish faithful

piously walking from Stockholm, Uppsala and Falun towards the grave of St. Olaf under the lancet vault of the Thronheim cathedral which was famous at that time in all Scandinavia, used to stop for rest in the cool grove of Pilgrimsstad, on the shore of its clear lake; this rest on the middle of the way was necessary before the difficult ascent on the mountain ridge. The name of the village is the unique reminder to these ancient events».⁹⁶

Then the pilgrims went to Nidaros (now Trondheim, Norway), where the relics of St. Olaf were kept. As Y. L. Markov notes, «one of the oldest kings of Norway Olaf Trygvesson... received the baptism abroad and built in Thronheim... the first Christian church of St. Clement where later his successor St. Olaf was buried. The famous cathedral was built above the grave of this saint in the XI-th century by the third Olaf, named Kyrr, i.e. Peace-loving».⁹⁷

It is well-known that St. Olaf was killed in 1030 in the battle at Stiklastadir (Stiklestad), and soon the Norwegians transferred his body from the battle-field to Nidaros, since «a persistent rumour spread out about the miracles performed in his name». After this the city of Nidaros began to prosper: «The grave of St. Olaf provided the glory and the riches to the ancient Norwegian capital, — stressed Y. L. Markov, — Enormous crowds of faithful began to come to Nidaros whose position was very convenient in the mouth of one of the most secure fjords of Norway with its abundance of water. Besides the main cathedral of St. Olaf with his grave 5 monasteries and many churches were founded in Nidaros. Kings bequeathed to be buried in this city and in this church where their saint forerunner was buried, kings were enthroned in the church sanctified by the miracles of the saint in order to merit his protection and help».

The Reformation started in the XVI-th century, introduced many changes in all the countries in Northern Europe; the ancient capital of Norway could not avoid this destiny. «Nidaros, named Thronheim only in the XVI-th century, became the official capital and residence of Norwegian kings and an important trade city; at the same time it became the

⁹⁰ E. L. Markov, *To Svedi. — Vestnik Evropy* 1900, 102.

⁹¹ Ibidem, 101.

⁹² Ibidem, 480.

⁹³ Ibidem, 480.

⁹⁴ Ibidem, 481.

⁹⁵ Markov, *Poezdka Dalekartiju*, 611.

⁹⁶ E. L. Markov, *Na rodine Normanov. Gorod sv. Olafa. — Russkij vestnik* 1901, nojabr', 116.

aim and the centre of different internecine wars. The Reformation delivered an irreversible blow to the glory and importance of the holy city of Thronðheim», — notes Y. L. Markov.

The Russian author speaks about the relics of St. Olaf whose destiny interested him as an Orthodox Christian. »The Danes who ruled Norway in those times, in their blind zeal to accept the teaching of Luther, mercilessly destroyed all the sacred images and other allegedly pagan items of Catholicism. The shrine with the relics of St. Olaf (3200 ounces of silver with numerous precious stones) deeply venerated by the whole Norwegian people, — usually on any important occasion brought in a solemn procession through the streets of the city by 60 honourable citizens, — was stolen by the Danes, transferred in an unknown place and never found later. There were no more numerous pilgrimages to Thronðheim from all over Norway and Sweden, and the monasteries and churches gradually disappeared»,⁹⁹ — in this way Y. L. Markov finishes his narration.

This information is confirmed by another Russian author: N. Z. Novinsky who visited Norway in the early XX-th century. According to him, »numerous pilgrims came to Thronðheim to venerate the relics of St. Olaf, and the city prospered. The Reformation finished all this; even the relics were stolen and buried somewhere».¹⁰⁰ The city began gradually to fall into decay and finally became only a small trade township. The city was in such a condition when N. Z. Novinsky visited it. The author speaks about the efforts of the local authorities in order to restore the former glory of Thronðheim: »The local people are not satisfied with this (situation; A.A.): they remember the crowds of pilgrims coming to the relics of St. Olaf, and they want to attract tourists instead of pilgrims».

But whatever sights may be in Thronðheim, one remains clear: the city is linked to the name of St. Olaf once for ever, and this will attract here visitors from different countries. The conclusion of the Russian author is the same: »But the cathedral of Thronðheim remains the main sights, — writes N. Z. Novinsky, — Its building was started in the first part of the XI-th century, when the relics of St. Olaf were transferred to

Thronðheim. Later it was many times rebuilt, but it remained always the most splendid church in Scandinavia».¹⁰¹

Conclusion

Only some aspects of Orthodox-Lutheran relations concerning the veneration of the saints of God, are presented in this essay. Nevertheless it is necessary at least briefly evaluate the given information from an orthodox view-point. In order to be more objective we can use here the Lutheran doctrinal texts, as well as opinions of Lutheran theologians.

As you know, the 21-st article of the Augsburg Confession teaches Lutherans that one should respect the saints, since through this our faith is strengthened because they received the Grace, and the help was granted to them in faith.¹⁰² But you know also that there is no prayerful addresses to the Mother of God and the saints in the Evangelical-Lutheran Church. According to the contemporary Lutheran theologian, »While the Fathers of the Reformation remembered the saints, the growing abalienation from the Catholicism provoked a complete decay of the veneration of saints in the further development of the Lutheran Church. Lutheranism seems to have handed over martyrs and saints to the Catholicism and Orthodoxy and became itself impoverished in this respect. The faith in angels and archangels, accepted in the times of Luther, fell also into decay».¹⁰³

This fact may be explained in a certain degree by the historical events and the situation in which Protestants undertook their first steps in order to abolish some elements, contradicting the teaching of the Gospel, but nevertheless existing in the church practice of the Roman-Catholic Church. Lutherans believed that the Catholic practice by the XVI-th century »transformed the saints into distributors of the Grace of God, so that Christ remained only Judge; this distorted the image of Christ — the image of a merciful and loving Saviour. Besides this the Catholic Church believed that the deeds of the saints and their merits before the Lord belonged to it, and it may use them and pardon the sins of its mem-

⁹⁹ Ibidem, 118.

¹⁰⁰ N. Z. Novinskij, O severniih sosedi, Har'kov 1913, 42.

¹⁰¹ Ibidem, 43.

¹⁰² Das Augsburger Bekenntnis deutsch, Revidierter Text, Göttingen 1978, 37.

¹⁰³ Heyer, 18—19.

bers, i.e. as if this church could «cover» their sins with these treasures. Luther believed that only the redeeming death of Jesus Christ for us is the unique treasure of the church and the source of salvation for the faithful».¹⁰⁴

This seems to be the reason why Philip Melancthon, the author of the Augsburg Confession, who was moderate in other questions, formulated the further content of the 21-st article of the Augsburg Confession in the following way: However the Holy Scriptures does not witness that one should call upon the saints or seek their help.

In this question there is no insurmountable obstacle able to prevent Lutherans from rethinking their attitude towards the principles which are inalienable elements of the Orthodox as well as Catholic church life. In his «Interpretation of the Magnificat» (1521) Martin Luther glorified The Virgin Mary who became the Mother of God through the immaculate conception. Today when the Roman-Catholic Church has restored the attitude to the veneration of saints which existed in the ancient undivided church and was preserved later in the Orthodoxy, it is not excluded that Lutherans may again face the need of restoring the practice of a prayerful fellowship with the saints.

This is confirmed by the words of the contemporary Lutheran theologian: speaking about the possible restoration of the ancient Christian tradition, he wrote that «one can see an essential prerequisite for this in the respect of today's Lutheran educated circles to the starlets and saints of the Russian Church. The Russian literature inspired in these circles the idea that Orthodox saints radiate a special power of the Divine Grace».¹⁰⁵

In conclusion one should note that this article is only a small part of the study «Russian-Scandinavian church links». The author hopes that sometime in the future those materials may be used for the further development of relations between the Russian Orthodox and the Evangelical-Lutheran Churches.

¹⁰⁴ Das Augsburgische Bekenntnis, 37.

¹⁰⁵ Heyer, 19.