

PASTORAL THEOLOGY FROM ANDRIĆ TO BEZIĆ

Review of Croatian textbooks of pastoral theology
of the 19th and 20th centuries

SUMMARY

This book analyzes the manuals of pastoral theology in Croatian language by which they taught priesthood candidates and formed pastoral workers at Croatian theological institutes for about 150 years, from 1845 to the end of the 20th century. These are the following textbooks: Jerolim Andrić, *Bogoslovje pastirsko* (1845/1862, reprinted 2004.), Martin Štiglić, *Katoličko pastirsko bogoslovje* (vol. I. 1886, vol. II. 1887), translation of Austrian theologians: Ignaz Schüch – Amand Polz, *Pastirsko bogoslovje*, (1917), Dragutin Kniewald, *Pastirsko bogoslovje. Dušobrižnikova ličnost I djelatnost*, vol. I., 1930; *Pastirsko bogoslovje. Svećenička služba*, vol. II., 1938; *Pastirsko bogoslovje. Dušobrižnik*, vol. I., 1943 I *Pastirsko bogoslovje. Izpovjednik*, vol. II., 1943; Ivan Škreblić, *Dušobrižnikova orijentacija*, 1956; Živan Bezić, *Pastoralni radnik* (1969, 1983), *Pastoralni rad* (1970, 1982) and *Pastoralna služba* (1971, 1985).

The period of the Croatian pastoral manualist was at the time when the various regimes took turns, from those more favorable to Christianity and the Church to the communist-oppressive regime, which excluded religion from the public square and imposed atheism as a state quasireligion. It is the pre-modern age, the age of modernism and secularization, emancipation and Promethean faith in man, and the religious and ethical failure of Christians in the cataclysms of the two world wars, as well as the state atheist control of society.

This is also the time of the Church's anti-modernism (anti liberalism), exclusivity and antagonism towards the world and modern culture, as well as the time of liturgical, biblical and kerygmatic renewal, Catholic action, Christian parties and associations; the time of searching for the religious and theological answers to the ever greater distancing from the

Church, to social problems, as well as the time of dialogue and the opening of the Council to the world.

The analyzed textbooks belong to the classical period of pastoral theology, the period of manualism, as projected by the father of pastoral theology, F. S. Rautenstrauch (1774) in his draft for pastoral theology, and how these were especially the pastoral theologians disregarding biblical-theological and ecologic foundations of pastoral theology and pastoral work in general.

All these textbooks are based on Jesus' three pastoral ministries: teacher / prophet, priest and king, and when, with Kniewald, there is a change in the concept of pastoral manuals by separating catechism, homiletics and liturgical from the body of pastoral-theological disciplines; and when pastoral theology and pastoralism are mostly directed at the third pastoral service (especially in Škreblin), the leadership of the faithful, the so-called hodogetics (pastoral care).

All of the textbooks, explicitly (especially Škreblin) lay the foundations for pastoral and pastoral theology in the Bible, the New Testament and the Gospel, in the image of Jesus Christ as the Good Shepherd and the Apostle Paul as the most abiding apostle and the leader of Christian communities.

These textbooks are written mainly in normative and some in the legal language (except Škreblin), as well as Bezić in the first and third volume); because they wanted to mediate clear church rules for the pastors' (parish priest's) work. All of them are relatively extensive, which indicates the workmanship, thoroughness and feeling of the details by their authors. They are written in a comprehensible and clear language, which Andrić and somewhat Štiglić composed in a grammatically non-standardized idiom.

The authors of the textbooks are widely educated. They have a good knowledge of classical rhetoric / homiletics, pedagogy and contemporary sociology and psychology. They are well grounded in the Scriptures, Church rules, the history of the liturgy (some in ecclesiastical art), and the current trends, especially the German literature of pastoral theology. Contrary to the overarching and sometimes discouraging attitudes towards

the period of manualism (and neoscholastics), it should be noted that the authors of these textbooks point to the irreversible and timeless importance of general and theological education. Their textbooks are written in the spirit of (josephinistic) enlightenment and philanthropy, in the spirit of neoscholastic, where knowledge is respected, and where it is important to adopt the educational materials and then apply it to practice, so these manuals have a distinctly enlightening-educational note.

It also seems important to point out that some of these pastoral theologians were also engaged in pastoral care. They were parishioners or served at a parish, and in their textbooks there are practical instructions and tips for shepherds to arrange their own lives, especially how to deal with people and various types of believers. What is meaningful is the fact that they all emphasize not only the upbringing in faith (and humanity) of their parishioners, but insist on the self-preservation of the shepherd. That is why in their textbooks a special place occupies moral questions and ascetics.

The shepherd, all authors agree, should be a moral model for their faithful. Faith is confirmed in moral action. Therefore, in the upbringing of children and young people in the faith (catechesis), it is always a matter of upbringing. The textbooks reflect their authors as very hard working, morally strict and irresistible not only to others, but to themselves, just and pious. The result is precisely the belief that pastoral work is not without the high moral and ascetic life of the shepherd.

By analyzing the textbook, it can be seen that the orientation and emphasis within the pastoral theology is shifted from the pastor to shepherd (though often synonymous), that is, to the whole of pastoral work, involving catechesis and liturgies, according to the hodogetics, the spiritual guidance of the faithful and the parish community. The reason for this is certainly in the aforementioned separation of some of the practical disciplines of pastoral theology (homiletics, catechetics, liturgical, canonical law). The reason is also in the growing industrialization and urbanization, the technicalization and the scientific view of the world, as well as the state-imposed secularism of the socialist system. All this excluded faith, personal belief, and then God from the public space, and increasingly

pushed them into privacy, in the area of personal decision, that is, in the area of an individual pastoral (emphasis on family and individuals) or small groups or pastoral care of masses (pilgrimage to shrines, jubilees, etc.).

One more reason it is essential to shift the emphasis from the shepherd to the pastor. It lies in the fact that modern times, with the diminishing of traditional and mass Christianity, and in our country and communist regimes, required more pastoral work with individuals and smaller groups. Namely, Christianity from the time of the Enlightenment is no longer a self-sufficient integrating factor of society, nor is religion the main dimension and criterion that by which an individual and community regulate life and relationships. Our authors write their textbooks in the time of the long quest for the Church to position itself in modern society, which is also associated with the mentality of closure and defensiveness, with wandering and clashes, as well as a historically unique move at the Council. We could say: the process is reversed. An individual is no longer religiously socialized in an already existing Christian culture and church institution, but pastoral theology has the task of educating a man to be mature and witness giving Christian so that he can evangelize his daily life and to christianize his society.

For the most part, all authors insist on pastoral meetings within families and the good knowledge of all their faithful (parishioners). It is a pastoral work whose basic feature is the closeness to people, the concern for the people they know, even when it seems that the focus is on the untouchable authority of the shepherd. If they use the term soul taker (pastor), and the goal of the pastors is the salvation of souls, they do not fall into the Platonic Christianity of the type of contemporary spiritual groups but remain “on earth” to care for the whole of man. Some textbooks (Andrić, and especially Škrebliin and Bezić) seek pastoral (evangelical and conciliar) openness and sensitivity, self-criticism and readiness to dialogue, and those who are weak believers, those who are distanced from the faith and the Church (intellectuals, workers) as well as equal care and responsibility for atheists and opponents.

Textbooks, especially those up to the middle of the 20th century, that is, to the communist regime, who speak more openly about the relationship

between religion and politics, the Church and the authorities, seek that shepherds (pastors) guard their believers from dangerous modern ideas and seductive ideologies (especially liberalism and Bolshevism, “class struggles” and anti-Catholic media) as well as all those flows that are against the Catholic Church. They always emphasize the ultimate disadvantage of political shepherding of the shepherd, that is, their membership in a particular party or representation of the standpoint of a political opinion. They only support Catholic activity and associations (fraternities) directly related to the Church hierarchy. In relation to the public and politics, these pastoral theologians seek the principle of cooperation, dialogue and prudence for the good of the faithful. They do not, however, speak specifically of the sociability of their time to which it specifically relates and how to do it practically, although some of them very critically reflect on the harmful Constantinian model of the Church and government.

Pastoral theology, as most of our authors call this practical theological discipline, is centered on the shepherd, the clergyman. This theology is a subject of many years of theological study in which a student / theologian (a future shepherd / teacher) learns and acquires the necessary knowledge that will help him to celebrate God’s work and the exemplary life of the spiritual leader of the community, to teach people a new understanding of faith (homiletics), contributing to the encounter with Jesus Christ (especially the catechesis), contributes to the prayer and spiritual development (especially the sacraments, among them mostly confession) and common worship (especially the liturgy of Mass and Blessings) and to encourage them in common, family and individual meetings for divine life by faith.

Today’s pastoral theology has almost abandoned the manual model, as well as the shepherd-oriented pastoral work, often referred to rigidly as the reductiveist clericalist principle in pastoral work. The disadvantage of these textbooks is in the lack of the ecclesiological foundation of pastoral theology which would include the lay faithful, as was done in their pastoral writings, for example, the theological classics, contemporaries of our authors, such as Sailer, Graf, Arnold, Rahner, Liege, and Klostermann. Nevertheless, it should be noted that these pastoral theologians constantly insist on selfless service and the care of the shepherds - the

most responsible pastoral subjects - for their faithful, and point out sharp criticisms to those shepherds who would care only for themselves and be the “hired” of their flock.

In any case, the pastoral “principle of the pastor” does not exclude the “principle of the ecclesiastical community,” unless in one or the other case, it does not forget the gospel principle of service, otherwise the shepherd or the church community begin to center around itself, seek only to serve itself. The pastoral theologians in the textbooks presented are critics of both clerical and ecclesial self-sufficiency as well as of those believers of harmful personal or ecclesiastical-institutional autoreferences. They are therefore a living tradition that must be re-reflected in order not to repeat old mistakes and not to live in a libelous enlightenment myth as we, the contemporary pastoral theologians and pastors, have reached the culmination of the realization of their pastoral calling and mission.

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