

The Monarchy of the Father and Trinitarian Freedom: Ecclesiological and Anthropological Implications within the Horizon of Eschatological Ontology

The presentation addresses the theological question that John D. Zizioulas places at the foundation of his entire theological reflection, and which lies – in his words – at the “limits of ontology”: the cause of both uncreated and created being. This is the doctrine of the monarchy of the Father, with the Father presented as the foundation and cause of being as alterity, and of alterity as ontological freedom, which finds in Trinitarian life its original and fundamental sphere of reference and its eternal actualization.

The presentation first situates the elaboration of this doctrine within Zizioulas’s intellectual trajectory, bringing to light its existential and vital significance for the human being and its vital significance for creation. It then examines its principal foundations, namely the patristic reading undertaken by Zizioulas and the theological development he gave to it.

The presentation subsequently turns to the implications of this doctrine for ecclesiology and anthropology. With regard to ecclesiology, it considers the elaboration of the Church-subject – the local Church – as caused and causing ontological freedom, modeled on the Three and by virtue of her relation to the Father, through the Son, in the Spirit, actualized in herself and in relation to creation, at the local, regional, and universal levels, and on both the synchronic and diachronic planes.

With regard to anthropology, the Christian is presented as a free-filial existence, an “ecclesial hypostasis” and “priest of creation,” a unique and unrepeatable embodied existence that already today remembers, and in a certain manner and degree experiences, its incorruptible and corporative mode of existence, which it will receive at the general resurrection.

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