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Duszpasterstwo w Kościele Zachodnim w VI wieku. Zarys problematyki

Church Pastoral Work of the sixth century-Historical Outline

Summary

In the western catholic church of the sixth century we can observe some crucial changes in attitude to the pastoral care of the previous centuries. The Catechumenal way of Christian formation practically disappeared. A ritual catechumenate as a direct preparation for baptism emerged instead. Mainly children were baptized in the 6th century. The preaching became a general catechesis directed towards the formal teaching of frequently half-converted Christians as exemplified by Cesarius of Arles or the admonitions Gregory the Great. The local church was dependent upon the social support of the German sovereigns. Gregory the Great developed St. Augustines thesis of social classes and created specific class division, ie. preacher (suzerain), friar and spouses (laity). On this basis the established early feudal structure consisted of preachers (ruling), friars and spouses (laity). In the 6th century parishes depended on local secular authorities. The Concordat of Worms in 1222 brought to an end this political intrusion upon local parishes. Peasant farmers (colons) and „servi glebae” made up the larger part of parish worshippers in the 6th century. The pastoral care was concentrated on a liturgical celebration and the preaching of a moralizing catechesis. During this time the veneration of local saints became widely established. The plague of alcoholism and those still existing local pagan cults also constituted important tasks. From this time up to the Vaticanum Secundum, there disappeared the holding sacred of all the baptized by the power of the confessed faith and the baptism. It seems that in the 6th century the sacramental, dogmatic and pastoral essence of the Church slowly faded. Only the second half of the 20th century finally brought the solution to this long-lasting crisis.