



Evangelická teologická fakulta

Posudek oponenta bakalářské práce

Název práce: Ohlédnutí za Svatým rokem milosrdenství prostřednictvím teologie Jona Sobrina

Jméno studenta: Mgr. Radka Vališková

Vedoucí: Mgr. Petr Jandejsek, ThD

Oponent: doc. Tim Noble PhD

Studium: Pastorační a sociální práce

Text posudku:

This is a clearly constructed, well-written Bachelor's work, in which the student compares the understanding of mercy (*milosrdenství*, Spanish: *miser cordia*) in the work of the Jesuit liberation theologian Jon Sobrino and in the writings of Pope Francis, especially, though not only, in relation to the Year of Mercy.

Perhaps the first remark to make is that this should be commended as a good idea, showing already an excellent contextual understanding of why the Pope should put such emphasis on the idea of mercy. In his writings over the past twenty years or so, I think it is fair to say that Jon Sobrino has made the "mercy principle" an absolutely central plank of his theology, and clearly it is important to Pope Francis too, so comparing the two men, both Jesuits, and more or less contemporaries, makes very good sense.

After a brief introduction, the dissertation contains three chapters, and a conclusion. The first chapter deals with mercy in the works of Jon Sobrino, the second with mercy in the writings of Pope Francis, with special attention to those around the Year of Mercy, and the third compares the two men.

The first chapter begins by introducing Sobrino's understanding of liberation theology, and correctly emphasis is placed here on his view of theology as *intellectus amoris*, which ties in well with his mercy principle (here the "cordia" of misericordia is important, and it is worth noting perhaps that in English misericordia can have a sense of "pity" or "compassion"). The second part of the chapter then looks at Sobrino's interpretation of the Parable of the Good Samaritan and in more detail at the mercy principle. What is good in this text is the way in which Sobrino's writings are used, not simply to give an account of each one individually, but in a united way to present an overall picture of his thought. I think that in both this and the subsequent chapter this is one of the great strengths of the work.

The second chapter looks at Pope Francis, and his concept of mercy, which is more characterized, according to the student, by a focus on response to suffering at all levels, including suffering induced by the fact that we are sinful people. Again, the summary is carried out well, and the argument is coherent and well-backed up with reference to different works of Pope Francis, both as Pope and from his time as Archbishop in Buenos Aires.

The third chapter seeks to compare Sobrino and Pope Francis. It finds that they have much in common, and if there are differences, these are found in the slightly different emphases, with Sobrino more interested in the socio-economic dimensions of poverty, and Pope Francis giving a wider definition to poverty, which includes in principle everyone, since all of us are sinners and thus deprived of the fullness of divine life that God has planned for us. The chapter discusses also the demands of each of the two writers for structural change, finding it present in both, though in Francis more in his time as Archbishop than in the material for the Year of Mercy itself.

A conclusion brings together the themes of the work and suggests that there is widespread agreement between Pope Francis and Sobrino. Some questions for further research are also introduced.

I do not have many very critical comments. The work seems to me to be well-written. Occasionally footnotes are either missing, or put in the wrong place (cf. p. 26, where the reference should be after the block quotation, not on the following page). *Quadragesimo anno* was written by Pius XI, not Leo XIII (p. 28). And El Salvador is strictly speaking Central American, not South America (p. 32). But these are minor things. It is probably a shame that *Laudato si'* was not consulted, as that seems to me to be very relevant to many of the questions discussed, especially the link between individual and social behaviour. It is also interesting that there is less about Francis' Argentinean background than there is about the situation in El Salvador, though clearly the military regime in Argentina impacted on Francis' thinking also.

Student práci konzultoval: dostatečně – nepravdělně – vůbec. (uvádí jen vedoucí práce)

Práci doporučuji k obhajobě:

Zdůvodnění, závěr:

The work is more than adequate for a bachelor's work. It has a clear argument, and the sources available in English and Czech have been well used. The work offers a very clear and mature summary of the respective positions. It does not really engage critically with them, and I'm not really sure that the title matches the work, since in fact we have a comparison of Pope Francis and Jon Sobrino's ideas about mercy, rather than a reading of the Year of Mercy through the work of Jon Sobrino. The latter would have critiqued the Year of Mercy, and perhaps have insisted that it should recognise the presence of sinfulness not only in individuals but also in structures. But overall this is a very solid piece of work, and the student is to be congratulated for the way in which she has organised and written her material.

Otázky, podněty k diskusi při obhajobě:

I would have several questions for the defence. The first is to do with the relationship between mercy and justice. Rightly the dissertation says that one does not exclude the other. However, one might argue that it is precisely in the relative weight given to the importance of justice that Francis and Sobrino differ. Because he concentrates on material poverty, (what the student indeed frequently terms "unjust poverty"), Sobrino perhaps has a greater concern for justice, as a means of showing God's mercy to the poor. It might be argued that Pope Francis is less concerned with justice, and indeed this was a critique against him when he was rector of the Jesuit seminary in Argentina. It was said that he was not sufficiently committed to the ideal of social justice. So, the question is, how is justice included in the thinking of Pope Francis as you have read it?

Second, there is a question to do with structures. Liberation theology, and to some extent Pope Francis, would argue for the idea of structural sin. But, can or should structures be shown mercy? And if so, what might that mean?

Third, both the authors come from Latin American backgrounds, and spent significant parts of their adult lives in situations where state violence was present and where poverty is often experienced in an extreme way. To what extent can these experiences be relevant for other situations?

Finally, and only if you have read it, do you think that *Laudato si'* would help you with your argument at all?

Navrhované hodnocení: (A-výtečně, B-velmi dobře, C-dobře, D-uspokojivě, E-dostatečně, F-nedostatečně)

B-velmi dobře

V Praze dne 12.6.2017

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podpis oponentu