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**„Might we become God?” Some methodological remarks
on *theosis***

„Czy możemy stać się Bogiem?” Kilka uwag metodologicznych na temat *theosis*

Yearning for God has been an inherent part of the human heart since the beginning of its existence, both on an individual and communitarian level of the whole mankind. The man wants God, His gifts, necessary to live, and God Himself to build strong bonds. Only God seems to provide the permanence of such bonds where there is no place for disappointment or exploitation. To yearn for God is to yearn for the good and happiness in the face of the evil and misery that are revealed despite tireless efforts and actions taken to avoid them; this is yearning for something which is stable despite changeability and the bulk of events taking place every day. Yearning for God provides the feeling of safety, peace, stability and sense in senseless actions or against all set conventions and expectations. This yearning is not influenced by finding God. It anticipates this finding very strongly. At first the man wants God, he craves for knowing God and living with God, and later on he finds God. The more he finds, the more he satisfies this incredible desire. God is not the objective of the human actions: it is not the man who seeks God, it is God who allows the man to perceive.

God gives Himself to the man as far as possible. Hence, searching for God requires time and it emerges in the human life as a ceaseless process in which God speaks to the man in a way to be understood so that he accepts divine revelation. The priority of God should be emphasized out of necessity: this is God who goes to the man and attracts him. Being with God means not only natural fulfillment but supernatural as well. Eternal communion with God is the gift of grace where nothing that the man achieves results from what he/she is entitled to on account of his/her being. God gives Himself as the first one, gradually. This way He might want the man to get used to Him. If the sin described in Genesis means breaking off relations with the good and separation from the good, the return requires time not to kill the man with this lost and regained goodness.

The process of returning to God has to be based on humility out of necessity. If humbleness is commonly defined as remaining in the truth, it means that only in view of God it reveals its power. Remaining in the truth takes place in the face of the Truth itself. None of my personal and genuine truths matters any more. The only one that does, is the Truth that comes surprising, explaining, opening and enriching all my truths. Additionally, understanding seems essential here. The truth is built by means of the intellect based on logical principles. To prove on the grounds of premises and to predict consequences on the grounds of reasons is the easiest and the most reliable way to deem something true. Everything that disturbs this order causes anxiety and leads to uncertainty. If something is illogical, it cannot be true. God, revealing Himself as the truth, does not disturb this order not only because He *explicite* adopts Himself to the man. It is also due to the fact that in the moments when the revealed truth is not understood in all its depth, He allows to accept it on account of His authority. As the highest truth, God reveals the truth and watches it to be accepted by the man in a proper way. Even if the truth goes beyond this time, the ability to study it guarantees its ultimate proper interpretation.

In this context one should put the statement written down in the New Testament and referring to the mystery of the Word that became flesh, that was born, grew up, suffered, died and was buried, resurrected and was elevated to the Father's right. These are not human truths although expressed in a human way. One should find reality in what is logical and coherent. This is the reality of God Himself which is defined and expressed by individual words in a true although incomplete way. Therefore, these words are valuable: they all belong to God and they all depend on Him. Another reality reveals in them, the reality which in the human reality is similar to the grain thrown into the soil. It must ripen until it bears fruit and although the harvest time seems close, it cannot be accelerated in any way. Every rush might destroy anything that has already been grown. Thus, what one needs is patience to give the strength hidden in the grain the right power and let it "naturally" reveal what is covered inside. The way to God is placed in the perspective of *already and not yet*, which is such a perspective when He is already experienced by the man, all these experiences, however, are just a deposit and foretaste of the height. It should be strongly emphasized: it is not about the quantity but the quality itself. Even this deposit in its essence remains the height.

I am going to the Father (John 14:12), says Jesus in the fourth Gospel. These words seem to direct all His actions and reveal the sense of existence. It is not about coming anywhere after all. It is about returning to the Father from whom one has gone. The beginning answers the ending, although the similarity does not necessarily mean identity. Jesus goes to the Father and comes to the world to redeem. He returns to the Father, not the same though. He does not have the virtual act of creation in Himself but the real one. He comes back to the Father car-

rying this creation and recapitulating it in Himself as the Head. The statement: *No one can come to the Father except through me* (John 14:6) seems to reflect the way of returning. Coming to the Father is possible only *with* and *through* Christ.

The present article does not aim at showing the possibilities of deification. There is wide and rich literature on the subject both in the Latin and Orthodox traditions. The study aims at highlighting some essential points without which all the theology of deification may seem just a mythologization of Christianity or such a generalization which not only simplifies but even distorts it.¹ The fundamental difficulty lies in understanding what even the Catechism of the Catholic Church quotes as an absolute end of the human life, *For the Son of God became man so that we might become God*.² How is such a transformation possible? How far can it concern and bind God and the man?

The answer to the first question refers to the will of God Himself and we will come back to it later on. At present the answer to the next question should be considered and criteria of speaking about deification should be defined. Three elements: Christological, anthropological and ecclesial need special attention and they should be looked into as key elements for the whole issue.

I. CHRIST AS AN EXAMPLE

If we can say anything about God, we do not know about Him more than we do. This sentence of the Lateran council is a statement which may be referred to the apophatic theology, so close to the eastern Christianity. The western Church did not, however, avoid the question about God at all: despite all human limitations it was trying to treat theology as a field of science that gives positive re-

¹ As an example the statement from one of the websites. The author, asked what deification is, answers, *It is simply the transformation of sinners into God's own perfect and glorified likeness and image*. What does it mean? Is it just regaining what was originally in the man? Therefore, what was the death of God Himself for? Wasn't there any other way to correct the future? The simple transformation of sinners – i.e. who? The sinners who rejected the bonds with God consciously should be put in one row with children who died without the possibility to receive the sacrament of Christian initiation. If only sinners – what should be said about the One who had neither original sin nor any other? Quoted after: <http://holyname.cc/wpcontent/uploads/2011/09/Divinizatin-of-Man.pdf> [31 October 2012].

² *Catechism of the Catholic Church*, Poznań 1994, No 460. This number can be found in the part devoted to the motives of incarnation. The Catechism asking why God became man shows four motives: soteriological (No 457), cognitive (we recognize God's love; No 458), model (the example of holiness; No 459) and eschatological (No 460). The last motive concerns the participation in the divine nature, the article itself, however, except for the first sentence is a compilation of quotations from the works by Irenaeus of Lyon, Athanasius and St. Thomas Aquinas.

sults. *Theo-logy* says something about God, for example that the word itself expresses reality which is impossible to describe. The word which is the man's word, represents the reality totally different from him and incomparable with anything, i.e. divine. This word written down even negatively, presents a positive reality. If the council mentioned above says that it is somehow impossible to get to know God, it does not emphasize this impossibility itself but reminds of the limitations of human recognition. Human words refer to the truth but because this truth is different than human, one must be cautious and aware of the fact that it cannot be closed in one definition or another. God is always greater and He exceeds all human statements. It is not only the result of the human limitation but also the proof of God's excellence.

What can we say about God in a human way? The sentence that saint John treated as a statement in the fight with heterodox trends: Logos was made flesh. Not some word and not some flesh are taken into consideration but the second person of the Holy Trinity and the true human body. God became the man. He wanted and let express himself in a human way. The ocean of being in this one moment of incarnation limited itself and accepted the nature of creation as its own. Since then we can talk about God in a human way and represent Him in a human way as well. We neither take anything from God nor add anything to Him. This great mystery of incarnation does not change God's nature. He is perfect in all His existence, not since a definite moment of His life but forever. God is everything for Himself and He does not need anything. If the incarnation causes any change, it must refer to the humanity as it is connected with divinity. God does not need the man; this is the man who needs God and not because he is imperfect himself but because thanks to God the man achieves something that he is capable of and he would not be able to achieve on his own.

Deification should not be considered on the plane of nature. It does not belong to the nature. If it is an ultimate gift of God, it is because He elevates human skills and abilities above what is given to Him as the Creation. Thus, it is necessary to consider this gift on the supernatural level in the category of grace.³

This is the ultimate, constant and incomparable with anything way of giving the Creator Himself to the creation. God gives himself to the man keeping this

³ A strong tension between two Christian traditions appears in the problem of deification as well. If the eastern tradition develops the motive of *theosis* till the 14th century (the example of Gregory Palamas), the western tradition will be directed to the theology of grace. The definition of sanctifying grace, given to the man by God, is closer to the people from the West than talking about divine "energies" falling down on the man and emphasized by the people from the East. It should be recalled here that the following thesis by M. Baius is considered incorrect, *The sublimation and exaltation of human nature in participation with the divine nature has been due to the integrity of the first condition, and hence must be called natural, and not supernatural*, Pius V, Bulla *Ex omnibus afflictionibus*, after: <http://denzinger.patristica.net/#n1000> [5 November 2012].

way all promises. If the man imagines this gift this way or another, it should be remembered that He collects all the imaginations himself and simultaneously, exceeds all of them. God gives Himself differently, more and better.⁴

Two principles show the perspective of searching: Christ as the embodied Word and grace as an absolute and eschatological gift from God. Now one should ask about the action of this grace in Christ Himself, as the result of this action is recognized as deification.

The Word became flesh (John 1:14). This statement from the prologue of the fourth Gospel, already mentioned above, shows the Word which has its nature and which in some specific moment of the human history takes on another nature – human nature. If this eternal, divine Word is eternally constituted by divinity, It exists perfectly and in the infinite way due to Its divinity. The Word exists as God and becoming the man It takes on human nature in Its individual divine existence as one of the Persons in the Holy Trinity. The Word that became flesh is still God and simultaneously, It takes on something that It has not possessed before – humanity. The mystery of incarnation is a mystery of a new way of the Word form existence.

Uniting two natures in one form of the Word is not a natural fact. If nature is identified with the substance, i.e. the existence of a definite thing in a strictly implemented way, this nature becomes a significant indicator of the existence itself. If the man has a human nature, he may exist as an individual, specific man only, different from other people. And similarly God, possessing the divine nature exists in it in the implemented way. The pure divine nature does not exist and it does not become the person. It exists when it is the nature of a specific divine person. If in the embodied Word, in Christ, the unification *in natura* appeared, the subject of existence and activity would be one nature combining divine and human elements. Something new would appear, some resultant of two components in which the existence of Christ would be implemented. It – as mentioned above – is not possible and is not in accordance with the faith of the Church that in Christ recognizes unquestionably both God and man.

How can one explain the combination of two natures in Christ? Is it possible? Yes, it is. The answer is included in the term of the personal unification. After incarnation the Logos does not lose what (who) It was before. And It was a divine person. The person is an individual being in which a rational nature is implemented.⁵ The being that really exists is first of all a definite object that gains

⁴ Hence this Paul's calling, *What no eye has seen and no ear has heard, what the mind of man cannot visualise; all that God has prepared for those who love him* (1 Corinthians 2:9).

⁵ A classical definition of Boetius which was introduced to the theology gradually. It is used to define divine persons in the Holy Trinity, the man in the Christian anthropology as well as the Church and its personality. The last issue may become the subject of wide ecclesiological research.

dignity naturally in intellectual and volitional functions. The man existing as a man is not only someone individual, distinguished from the people by his implemented humanity but he also deserves dignity. He does not gain it in his lifetime – he is born with it. In the following stages of his life the man shows who he is by the way he acts. Similarly, the divine person: existing individually he differs from other Persons of the Holy Trinity as a result of the implemented divine nature. Existing without the time sequence but in eternal now he has dignity incomparable with dignity of a created being. The other (and any other) Person of the Holy Trinity loves Himself with the perfect love and possesses constant and nonvested knowledge. Both love and cognition are eternal in Him.

When we talk about Christ and His two natures combined in one, we state that in Him – and in Him only – divinity and humanity are combined not only *in una persona* but *in una persona tantum*. Two natures are combined in one person in such a way that they remain unconfused between each other, although they are permanently united.⁶ The eternal person of the divine Logos recognizes the human nature as his own one and it may be said that the same eternal person of the divine Logos dies on the cross because He was earlier born from the Virgin Mary. In his human existence this person becomes individual and complete and He allows to be distinguished from other people and to be identified in a human way.

The hypostatic union understood this way shatters the attempt to consider Christ as “the effect” of unifying divinity and humanity in either substance (there is no substance) or disease (the unity is severed) sense. It is necessary to acknowledge that this connection is something indirect: the separation of factors at one subject – the carrier – is kept. There are two natures completely different but just one person – the divine one. Therefore, the indirect unification is the unification according to the substance: divinity and humanity exist in the same subject as belonging to him and revealing him according to their own properties. Divinity and humanity belong to the Word and the Word exists as one in the divine and human natures.

Christ, genuine God and a genuine man sets the borderline of reaching God. It is a non-extendable, constant and eternal borderline. All *theosis* must refer to the mystery of the embodied Word out of necessity.

⁶ The most important sentence of *Tomus ad Flavianum* is: *So the proper character of both natures was maintained and came together in a single person. Lowliness was taken up by majesty, weakness by strength, mortality by eternity*. It means that each nature maintains its properties both before and after the Logos incarnation. These both natures – which is emphasized by the statement of the council in Chalcedon – coexisting in one person do not lose anything: they both are perfect and complete. However, the way of this coexistence was defined negatively by the council: unconfusedly, unchangeably, indivisibly, inseparably (everywhere there is Greek *a* as a negation: *a-syngchytos*, *a-treptos*, *a-diairetos*, *a-choristos*), after http://patristica.net/451_tomus&e&e&en [31 October 2012].

II. THE MAN AS THE SUBJECT

The man was created in the image and the likeness of God (compare Genesis 1:16a). It was the man who was given such a great gift that puts him higher than anything that exists. In this gift all human dignity is revealed as well as the openness of God to what exists beyond Him. If everything that exists is different from God out of necessity, the man created in the image and likeness of God is called to search God and find his fulfillment in Him only. The man searches God, God, however, lets him find Himself. Searching and finding God is possible *in* and *through* Christ only.

What does it mean? First, that no one can reach God except for man. Even an angel cannot achieve what is done as a result of deification. Pure spirits get to know and love God with all their existence as the result of a single decision of their will. Getting to know who God is, they love Him and cannot change that.⁷ Thus, salvation does not concern them, just like they are not subject to the effects of death of the Just for the unjust. Christ dies for sinners and this way he rectifies the sin renewing for the man the lost justice before God. God, however, dies, God who not only changes what the man destroyed but gives something more as well. Through Christ's death on the cross the sin is expiated. Along with this gift of mercy, however, the gift of God's infancy appears. Since then the man may address God *Abba, Father* (compare Mark 14:36), which is the same as neither Adam nor Eve would be able to call even if they did not sin. This gift of being sons in the Son is undeserved and it concerns man only. Pure spirits do not take advantage of it as they do not need a redemptive sacrifice.⁸ Those who did not sin, have no obstacles to stand in front of God; those who failed, however, are not and will never be entitled to come back invoking services of the Son of God's death.⁹

The state of pure spirits' innocence has the nature of deification. It is about God Himself. Angels meet Him and love Him, and through this activity they grow in the divine life according to the level of salvation history. The man reaches

⁷ The fall of angels results from the fact of meeting God. Their choice is ultimate and constant. There is no possibility of salvation for them. Compare: Synod in Constantinople (543), *Anatemy przeciwko orygenistom* No 7 and 9, in: *Breviarium fidei*, drawn up by I. Bokwa, T. Gacia, Poznań 2007.

⁸ It does not mean that Christ's death is completely indifferent for them. It brings them growth in glory and growth in the grace of eternal life.

⁹ The problem of apokatastase and a potential possibility of devil's salvation should be omitted here out of necessity. The Church saw in this opinion some theological view only and not za dogma. A discussion can and probably will proceed. In principle it, however, concerns the question about the freedom of return: in His omnipotence God can force to come back even the devil. But is He then served in freedom or out of compulsion? In the other case more important becomes the following question: how much is slave's love worth?

this growth according to the order of holiness. The more he chooses the way that leads to God in his earthly existence, the more he grows in his services in God which means that he multiplies the gift of his holiness. The end of this growth will be meeting God *face to face* (compare 1 Corinthians 13:12) and the participation in His own life (compare 2 Paul 1:3-4).

Deification is not and cannot be the change of the human nature. For whom would eternity be at that time and for whom the payment? The man deserves and the man receives the reward. Nobody else and in no other way than the human one. The gift of *theosis* is strange for the human nature, although it concerns this nature itself. It does not disturb anything that is constitutive in this nature for being the human, in his individuality and rationality, and simultaneously it makes the same subject receive something new – a new way of existence. If the existence results from the essence of being, deification is not any human disease, something that at some stage of his life he may receive through his personal effort or as a gift. It is more a free gift which keeping the former state, brings one more essential element modifying nothing at all. The mystery of Christ is summarized in the sentence *aliud et aliud*, one but another: one person in two various natures. The man redeemed should take over something from this mystery: remain one person in the human nature with new ontological properties.¹⁰

The ontological change is the gift of grace.¹¹ God, letting the man share the eternity with Him, allows the man to become immortal and constant. The man cannot achieve eternity since it is typical of the Creator's existence only. Everything that exists beyond Him, becomes temporary. The participation in God's life does not change this fact and does not make eternal what cannot be eternal. The new life in God is the participation in eternity through infinite existence.¹²

¹⁰ The subtleness of this problem depicts condemning sentences that can seem incorrect a bit or just incorrect at all to many theologians: *We are transformed entirely in God, and we are changed into Him; in a similar manner as in the sacrament the bread is changed into the body of Christ; so I am changed into Him because He Himself makes me to be one with Him, not like (to Him); through the living God it is true that there is no distinction there. Whatever God the Father gave to His only begotten Son in human nature, all this He has given to me; here I except nothing, neither union, nor sanctity, but He has given all to me as to Himself. Whatever Sacred Scripture says about Christ, all this also is verified with respect to every good and divine man. Whatever is proper to divine nature, all this is proper to the just and divine man; because of this that man operates whatever God operates, and together with God he created heaven and earth, and he is the generator of the eternal Word, and God without such a man does not know how to do anything.* John XXIII, *In agro dominico*, after: <http://denzinger.patristica.net/#n500> [5 November 2012].

¹¹ This statement is the foundation of all sacramental theology, especially understanding the sacrament of baptism. Its grace does not make the man capable of doing good but transforms him indeed implanting in Christ and making permanently new, not strange, however, towards himself.

¹² It is about a difference between *aeternitas* of God and *perpetuitas* or *sempiternitas* of the man. Classical theology also distinguished these two ways of existence and was not wrong refer-

The end of all deifying activity of God reveals the most in Mary's life. Mary, saved from the original and personal sin, filled with grace in the moment of conception, and then reinforced with the Holy Spirit, reflects all the process of reaching God and cooperating with His grace. Faithful to Her God all the life She receives resurrection after death. The One that She gave birth to, did not let her rest in the grave. The One that created Her, gave Her life and gifts meant for the man. Mary is God's child and the first human in whom this infancy is revealed with all its power. The worship of Mary is Her deification. It does not disturb Her humanity but makes it perfect, showing the complete beauty of God's calling. It is Mary who shows what *theosis* is: beauty of the man finding the image and likeness of God in himself, and simultaneously, the enormity of God's love who reflects Himself – in a limited but real way – in the man.

III. EQUALITY IN DIGNITY

If *theosis* is based on what is significant for the man and may disturb the integrity of his existence, how should it be expressed? If everything that constitutes humanity is to be kept and not lost, what reference allows to understand who the man is and lets him Get closer to God leaving him alive?

It should be remembered once again what has already been said before. Deification as the end of human aspiration is eternal life. This life is not, however, some marvelous description of divine reality that makes the man happy. This happiness exists but only because eternal life is someone: God is eternal life. It means that deification out of necessity includes the reference to God, i.e. three Persons of one Holy Trinity. Eschatological fulfillment is entering the community with these Persons, and *theosis* determines a relation between the man and God. It is about establishing a relation among persons, a personal relation in which I become someone new keeping my former identity.

The relation expresses and explains the difference between two subjects, even very diverse ones.¹³ They can differ in many traits but finally they have at least one common feature – existence. If they exist, they are similar to each other, although in their properties they are more or less perfectly and eternally different. If the relation meant unification, everywhere where one subject refers to another one, the outcome, i.e. the third person or thing would appear. This third one would not already be what its substrates were and yet it would not be totally new

ring: *tempus* – to the man living earthly life and *aevum* – to the life of angels and human souls separated from the body as *aeternus* – reserved for expressing the existence of God.

¹³ Read more on this subject in the paper by B. Lonergan included in: *La Trinité*, Perpignan 2009, p. 689-720.

as it carried inside what it came from. At the same time the relation assumes some difference and some similarity. Relations between people are based on what each of them have in common and individual, typical only of themselves. All exist in a human way but this existence is fulfilled in a unique and individual way in every person. It means that the relation is just between beings belonging to the same order and it expresses the difference inside the same order. Two relation subjects differ from each other in substances as each of them fulfils their essence in a different way. If they are to remain in this relation between each other, their mutual attitude must be their disease existence. The relation does not influence the substance formation; at first this substance exists with all the attributes and as existing in a complete way, it establishes relations with others. Other existing beings are another complete substance and at the same time, they are the end of some definite attitude towards them. The difference in the subject existence results from the substance difference of these subjects which establish separate relations as others.

The difference necessary in the relation does not determine the substance difference that results from the contradiction through which one being excludes the other one. If something refers to one thing, it excludes the use of the same definition towards the other one. The use of one term that defines what is significant and domineering in respect to two beings is out of the question, although it may show some similarity. When in this individual existence one being is shown, the other one is excluded.

Two beings are in the relation not only because they differ in substances but also due to the contradiction (exclusion) between them. Moreover, it may happen that the beings will be similar to each other and despite that they will also differ and interact. The basis for this difference will be a person then.¹⁴

Deification, not changing the subject, i.e. the person, does not destroy anything and does not lose anything. The person is long-lasting and existing once cannot stop existing. This explains the mystery of the Logos incarnation to a larger extent. He takes on the human nature and makes it his own. This appropriation means that the humanity belongs to the Word. In the world of people this relation does never lead to the personal existence as the existence of the person is identified with the human nature. No man, no human person can say that he exists beyond or irrespective of the human nature. In the case of the Logos this

¹⁴ The best example is here the relation between the father and the son. They both differ from each other and this difference is a contradiction here. One cannot be the son and the father of one's own father. Simultaneously however, they do not differ in the substance as both the father and the son are human beings and they have a human nature. Thus, the difference concerns the person and only the person lets them establish the relation and say: paternity is characterized by this father's attitude to the son and filiation is the relation of this son to this father.

statement is not true any more: the person (divine) was, is and will be different from the nature (human) that he takes on; the nature is maintained in this person and through this person. It is undoubtedly a real relation since the subject really exists and can be distinguished from the other ones with the human nature. However, this is not the relation which is the reason for existing the human nature: it exists depending on the divine activity. *For this is how God loved the world: he gave His only son* (John 3:16). The Son became the man extolling the human nature to His personal dignity.¹⁵ This extolling is the right of the human nature reality which exists as long as it belongs to the Word. Without this affiliation it would stop existing.

Eternity is a relation between the man and God which is the new approach of various persons towards each other. This approach is based on love as it is love which constitutes the essence of God Himself. God is love (compare 1 John 4:8): He creates the man out of love, redeems him and invites to the communion with Him. Love is the key to the history of salvation, its beginnings and ending. It lasts eternally, neither changing God's intention nor shattering the man's freedom. The relation resulting from love, is built in love and equality. God letting the man participate in His life, elevates him to His own way of being not only through the change in nature but through equality in dignity as well. Thanks to love God elevates the man to Himself, but he does not want the man to become God!¹⁶ He allows some difference as in this difference God can truly truth, good, happiness, all kinds of reference and ultimate fulfillment. Not for the chosen ones but for everyone. Every man with no exception is called to participate in God's life and everyone may receive the gift of deification as well.

In this context the question asked in the introduction may be finally answered. How is the transformation which is called *theosis* possible? Its reality results from the will of God Himself. It is He who gives gifts freely to whom He wants to and how He wants to. Sometimes He just does it for a while, and sometimes forever. Sometimes these gifts are transitive and sometimes given forever.

¹⁵ *I shall no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know the master's business; I call you friends, because I have made known to you everything I have learnt from my Father* (John 15: 14-15). Isn't calling the man God's friend fascinating itself? Due to this friendship the man can get to know God, expect some help from Him, be convinced about His constant care, shortly speaking, live well and safely.

¹⁶ Pius XII writes: *But let all agree uncompromisingly on this, if they would not err from truth and from the orthodox teaching of the Church: to reject every kind of mystic union by which the faithful of Christ should in any way pass beyond the sphere of creatures and wrongly enter the divine, were it only to the extent of appropriating to themselves as their own but one single attribute of the eternal Godhead. And, moreover, let all hold this as certain truth, that all these activities are common to the most Blessed Trinity, insofar as they have God as supreme efficient cause, Mystici Corporis Christi* No 78 after: http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/pius_xii/encyclicals/documents/hf_p-xii_enc_29061943_mystici-corporis-christi_en.html [5 November 2012].

Deification is such a gift which is disposed by God in any way He wants to. And it is not given to the chosen ones but to all the people. Every man may have it for himself if he just wants to receive it now, cooperate with it and develop effectively.

Finally, deification can be defined as such a personal relation between God and the man which unites maintaining differences, similarly to both natures in Christ that are united in one person. The key to and ending of all *theosis* remains Christ, the Word embodied, true God and the true man.

STRESZCZENIE

Chrześcijańska wizja człowieka ukazuje go jako nieustannego wędrowca do Boga. To bycie z Bogiem ukazuje się człowiekowi jako przedmiot najgłębszych nadziei i pragnień, które stopniowo realizują się aż do pełni w życiu wiecznym. Eschatologiczne wejście człowieka we wspólnotę z Osobami Trójcy Świętej określa się tradycyjnie słowem przeobóstwienie. Co jednak oznacza? Jaką rzeczywistość określa dosłownie, a nie przenośnie? Niniejszy artykuł wskazuje na kilka istotnych elementów koniecznych do rozpatrywania *theosis* człowieka. Nie chodzi tylko o wskazanie możliwości przeobóstwienia jako takiego, tylko o pewną metodologię mówienia o nim. Kluczowe jest bowiem pytanie, jak daleko *theosis* niweluje dystans między człowiekiem a Bogiem.

Słowa klucze

przeobóstwienie, Chrystus, Trójca Święta, człowiek, łaska, *theosis*