

THE 203 FUNDAMENTAL PASTORAL THEOLOGY

TEACHING MANUAL FOR STUDENTS OF THE SECOND YEAR OF THEOLOGY AT THE JORDAN UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

Fr. Dr. Jacek Gorka OFM

I. INTRODUCTION

A pastoral action or praxis is the mystery.

Within the field of Christian revelation, the *mystery* makes a crucial part of the divine plan of salvation and reconciliation everything in Christ. We learn from the Bible that such “divine plan” has been hidden for centuries and eventually revealed and brought up to the light at the “fullness of times” (*Gal 4, 4*) through the life, death and resurrection of Christ. (*Rm 16: 25-27; 1Cor 2: 7-10; 4: 1; Ef 3: 5, 9; Col 1: 26-28; 2: 2-3; 4: 3*)

The “saving action” of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit that goes through history of a man and acts in every human heart is a *mystery*

A *mystery* therefore might be defined as every form of human action which, by divine design and by human readiness and availability become a collaboration with the act of the Lord, the Spirit and the Father.

In the narrowed reference to the *parish leaders*, a pastoral ministry should be understood today as a *multiform action of the ecclesial community*, animated by the Holy Spirit, for the implementation – within proper time and adapted to the real-life situation – the project salvation of God on human being and his history.

Pastoral theology is both theology and science

The pastoral theology is a theological-critical reflection, carried out with the specifically theological method, which motivates, interprets, finalizes, and checks out the historical processes that lead to

- To live concretely the faith in Jesus
- To implement all the conditions that facilitate the growth of this faith
- To gather and unite all believers to form a community which is the Church.

The goal of pastoral theology has changed significantly since the Second Vatican Council.

Before the time of the Council, the term pastoral was closely related to beliefs associated with Christian-centered religious philosophy, the essence of which were principles of self-reflection, self-watchfulness, self-discipline,

moral awareness, recall of previous sins, wrongs or transgressions and ethical self-development. Previously, there had been general consensus that only a priest (especially the parish priest) was religiously trained and believed to be the only theologically, religiously trained cleric to organize and lead every pastoral action.

The Post-Conciliar modern period modified this practice of what was before spiritual support offered and relegated to the priest, in such way that, in effect, it became the practice of all members of the Church; in other words, the lay Christians had also been called to be pastoral theologians (by virtue of calling, not proficiency) and to therefore also participate actively in the life of the Church.

II. SCIENTIFIC STRUCTURE

The Objectives of Pastoral Theology

Material object of Pastoral Theology:

Religious Practice:

Within the Church

Outside the Church

Christian faith in a pluralistic, multi-religious world.

Formal object of Pastoral Theology

The prospective within which the material object is studied – has two levels: *first*, tension between the current state of religious practice and how it should or could become; and *second*, research-driven practice to identify problems and tensions and to understand, explain and solve them.

Pastoral theology's main goal is to ensure a constant renovation and updating of lines of action.

Method

PT engages the complex interplay of theory and practice in a focal way. Theory and practice imply and shape each other. Practice gives rise to theory, while theory often has practical implications. Trying to understand and explain human action and thought requires complex theoretical frameworks. Theoretical frameworks, in turn, arise out of reflection upon actions and practices.

Methods in PT often bear witness to the complexity of the theory-practice relationship. Often practical theologians will use a spatial metaphor to describe this complexity.

Generally, we may agree that there is no straight line from theory to practice.

Below there are some exemplary methods used in PT.

- Richard Osmer – infinite loop or spiral of the interplay between elements of practical theology functions
- Don Browning – a base in practice, moves toward theoretical reflection, and return to practice
- Joseph Cardijn – see, judge and then act
- Robert Zerfas - proposed a hermeneutical model, which has exerted a major influence on subsequent theories. He showed in this study how PT starts from the description of a concrete, and usually unsatisfactory praxis. Something must be done!

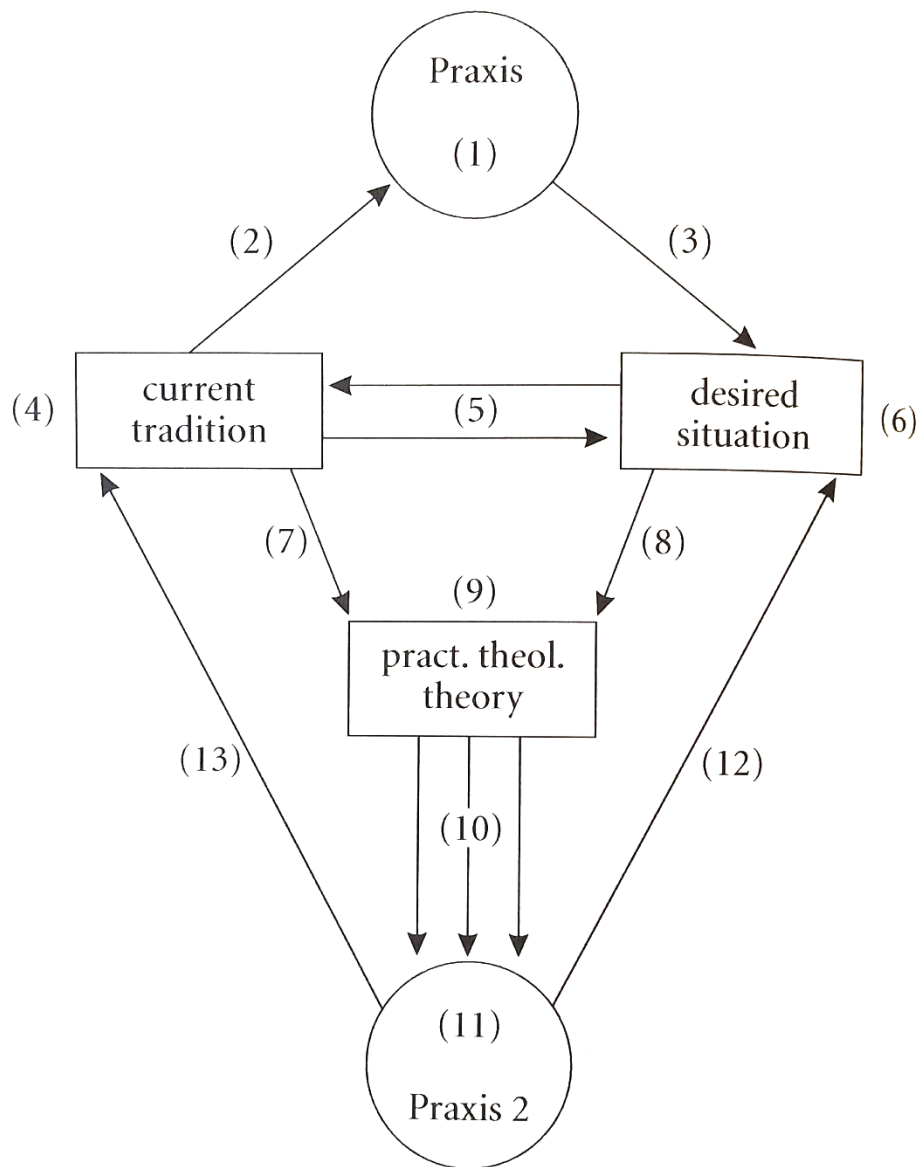


Figure 4: R. Zerfass (1974, 167)

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Reflecting on this situation solely on the basis of church tradition does not lead to any real improvement. Praxis must first be examined with the use of a series of instruments from the social sciences. As a result, tension become visible, leading to the emergence of impulses to act, with a view to renewal and improvement of existing praxis. Practical Theology has the task to lead in this process of change in a way that is responsible from the perspective of both theology and social sciences.

Empirical-Critical Method in the Field of Pastoral Theology

It is divided into Three Phases:

1. *Kairological Phase* (An opportunity - A propitious moment for decision or action)

- An evaluative analysis of the situation
- The principal question: Which are the main challenges that impact an announcement the Word of God in today's world?

2. *Planning (Projection) Phase* – Choosing the required praxis in terms of general and sectoral objectives.

What kind of expectation we have in regard to a model of the Proclamation of the World of God?

3. *Strategic Phase* – the planning stage of the transition from the current practice towards the new one in terms of tools, resources, etc.

- Which are the concrete choices and the necessities' resources in order to renew or transform the current situation into the desired one?

Each Phase comprises various sub-phases, mutually implicated between themselves

- Phenomenological-Descriptive Phase: (An empirical phase based on experience) Be careful! Watch out!
- Critical Phase: (An intellectual phase of understanding) Be Intelligent! Be Smart!
- Hermeneutical-Critical Phase: (A rational evaluation) Be reasonable!
- Hermeneutical-Critical Phase: (A decision-making responsibility) Be responsible!

There is theological, empirical, critical and planning method used contemporaneously.

- Empirical within three phases, because it detects, directs the praxis
- Critical within three phases, because help to see it in a critical way
- Theological within three phases, because does it by appealing to the criteria of faith

An implementation of the method involves the choice of interdisciplinarity.

Kairological Phase	Planning Phase	Strategic Phase
Phenomenologica- Descriptive Phase	Phenomenologica- Descriptive Phase	Phenomenologica- Descriptive Phase
Critical Phase	Critical Phase	Critical Phase
Hermeneutical-Critical Phase	Hermeneutical-Critical Phase	Hermeneutical-Critical Phase
Hermeneutical-Critical Phase	Hermeneutical-Critical Phase	Hermeneutical-Critical Phase
A prophetic discernment of the present period ↓ CHALLENGES →	A prophetic discernment of the future ↓ OBJECTIVES / GOALS →	A prophetic discernment of the action ↓ DIRECTION / COURSE

Practical Theology isn't a technic that one can be learned and applied.

The starting point of pastoral theology is traditionally attributed to knowing and understanding the realities of life as impacting and affecting all of God's human beings, offering both its benefits and disadvantages. Pastoral theology does not limit itself to a simple observation in order to understand new challenges, but rather directs its search toward answering fundamental questions: How? In what way? Pastoral theology begins its reflection from the experience of History, and later, in the light of Philosophic Theology, Doctrine and Social Teaching analyses proposed to explore further the what? That comprises a most adequate and challenging project for future undertaking. In other words, pastoral theology may be called a Science of Action, so to speak, whereas action serves to adapt theological knowledge to the concrete situation of the people.

Understood in this way, pastoral theology represents both theology and science. Theology, because it is a theological reflection, over an actual, pastoral situation analyzed in the light of theological resources and at the end searching for concrete action. Science, because "it is a scientific reflection of the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; of the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the world, as sacraments and as the service of charity. (...) Among these principles and criteria, one that is especially important is that of evangelical discernment of socio-cultural situation ... (in)

which a particular pastoral (approach or) action (is called for and) has to be carried out.”

In summary, pastoral theology – unlike its relatives: Dogmatic Theology, Biblical Theology or Spiritual Theology – does not interpret a text but a praxis of real life as it is. For that reason pastoral theology is manifested through self-realization, self-actualization and self-management of the Church.

—> ‘The systematic theologian asks critical questions about the way faith expresses itself in language’.

—> ‘The practical theologian asks critical questions about the way faith expresses itself in practice’.

Pastoral theology is a scientific reflection on the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; on the Church as the *universal sacrament of salvation*, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the world, the sacraments and the service of charity. (*Pastors dabo vobis*, Post-Synodal Apostolic Exhortation to the Bishops, Clergy and Faithful on the Formation of Priests in the Circumstances of the Present Day, 25 March, 1992).

“Pastoral Theology” or “Practical Theology”

Within the Catholic field there are some theologians that preferred to keep the terminology: “*pastoral theology*”, underlying the theological reflection over ministry or service taken by the priests and leaders in large context, that of the “action” of whole the Church.

Others maintain the traditional title of *pastoral theology*, understanding it as a theological science directed and attentive to the ecclesial practice of both past and present.

A significant number of pastoral theologian, mostly from the German speaking zone, left almost completely the traditional nomenclature, replacing it by the *practical theology*, within which addresses the problems related to the ministry done by priests and to their offices.

Within the Protestant field, there is a common use of the *pastoral theology*, as a proper terminology

Within our course of Pastoral Theology, we will be opting towards the use of practical theology.

Practical theology in its direct and specific form, deals with the vast field and complex field of the religious-Christian-ecclesial’s praxis.

III. GENERAL IMPLICATIONS

General Practical Theology

A fundamental or general theological-practical reflection, which is based on all the particular disciplines, like: *catechetics, rhetoric/homiletic, liturgy, youth ministry, religious pedagogy*, etc.

It is a theological reflection pertaining the whole Christian-ecclesiastical religious practice, able to predict and inform the knowledge concerning individual sectors, which make up this practice.

Pastoral theology has as its focus a more practical life-based dimension. Practical theology's material object, which perceives and understand religious practice as an objective resource (along with the Bible, Church history and Doctrine) uses analysis within a paradigm of a three-dimensional framework: narrow – such as Church-based faith, religious practice of and within the Church; broad – religion and religiosity in and outside the Church, Christianity, as opposed to Catholic Church-based Christianity; and context – the Christian faith in a pluralistic multi-religious modern world, differences between religion practiced by believing individuals, the religion maintained by religious institutions, and religion as it exists in overall society.

In this sense, the praxis of the Church becomes at the same time a praxis of individuals and of the entire community in question.

The practical theology according to this view derives its origin in the unfolding of history. There are histories of small local communities that build up the history of the Church and upon this base practical theology does not limit itself to a simple fact of learning history in and of itself.

Rather, practical theology by its action builds and generates history, and consequently directs the present as it prepares itself for the future.

From this perspective paradigmatic model, we can easily see that practical theology it is not a technique, which could be just learned and applied; rather, its theory originates and digests through human praxis and is realized within a particular method.

Practical theological activity is in itself transformative as a process for those who undertake it.

The attempt to understand and respond to contemporary human issues from theological perspective is likely to affect people's views to themselves and the world, however infinitesimally.

PT is concerned with action, issues, and events that are of human significance in the contemporary world.

We then discussed the ways in which practical theology can be seen both genuinely practical and authentically theological.

Pastoral /practical theology is a place where religious belief, tradition and practice meets contemporary experiences, questions and conducts a dialogue that is mutually enriching, intellectually critical, and practically transforming
(S. Pattison – J. Woodward)

The Church:

Historical self-understanding of the Church

Distinct ways of understanding the Church:

Models of the Church

- The *Perfect Society Model*
- The *Great Institution Model*
- The *Doctrinal Kerigmatic Model* (proclamation and listening to the Word)
- The *Misteric Ritual Model* (religious practice, and especially its liturgical and sacramental aspect)
- The *Communicative Participative Model* (intra-ecclesial and extra-ecclesial communion and participation)
- The *Open Dialogic Model* (the dialogue with the contemporary world)
- The *Diaconal Activistic Model* (evangelical service especially to the last once)

Its essence, mission, action “*ad intra*” and “*ad extra*”, day-by-day realization in dioceses, parish, religious associations, family and its attitude to the world.

All this might be considered as a solid fundament into reflection on the forms of saving action of the Church.

Pastoral Theology known also as Practical theology assist the Church in his mission that is continued and undertaken in always changing condition that, in fact, get more difficult.

PT, deals with everyday realization of the Church’s mission in the within the multidirectional changes in the world and in front of historical transformation within the Church itself. It is continuously done by creating and adapting adequate methods.

An important step forward in the development of PT was observed during the II Vatican Council. The Council's teaching of the Church and the People of God within the Church and in the modern world, made great impact on the formation of a new ecclesial cognizance. This, in consequence, influenced the theological-pastoral reflection and initiated the revitalization of pastoral activity.

PT develops itself constantly, hence historical concepts are often not sufficient and has to be redefined in the light of the saving mission of the Church in specific place and time.

Modern PT is a theological discipline with its own subject of study, namely the saving action of the Church as a community of God's People. PT develops scientific reflection over the action, through which the Church realizes itself in specific historical-social situation. PT as a science, has its own subject of study and methods.

IV. DIVISION OF PT

Pastoral Theology may be divided into

In wider sense:

- Pastoral Didactics,
- Catechetics,
- Homiletics,
- Liturgy

In Narrow sense:

Pastoral Theology

- its subject of study: Activity of the Church as the People of God in the World.

There are various aspects of this activity:

- ecclesiological
- community
- praxiological
- socio-political

There are many definitions of PT

Ecclesiological: K. Rahner argued that PT is a theological science, that based on theological reflection over the current situation of the Church, contemplates the self-realization of the Church.

Similarly, to F. Klostermann, for which PT is a scientific reflection about the self-realization of the Church as a community in the contemporary/modern world.

According to N. Greinacher, PT is a critical theory of the Church's practice within a society.

R. Zerfass argued that PT is as a science that analyses the practical activity of the Church.

Other scientists that support the socio-political aspect of the Church, they define PT as a science that analyses the salvific action of the Church in the historical praxis of liberation.

There are as well other definitions that were formulated by scientists, within the field of sociology of religion, e.g. F Houtart and J.Laloux.

W. Piwowarski defines PT as a science that with supports of Theologico-Sociological analysis of the concrete and current situation of the Church, generates up-to-date theological models (together with principles and programs of action), according to which the modern Church in specific condition and location, realizes its mission of saving mediation.

John Paul II defined *pastoral theology* as science that represents both *theology* and *science*. *Theology*, because it is a theological reflection, over an actual, pastoral situation analyzed in the light of theological resources and at the end searching for concrete action. *Science*, because "it is a scientific reflection of the Church as she is built up daily, by the power of the Spirit, in history; of the Church as the universal sacrament of salvation, as a living sign and instrument of the salvation wrought by Christ through the world, as sacraments and as the service of charity. (...) Among these principles and criteria, one that is especially important is that of *evangelical discernment of socio-cultural situation* ... (in) which a particular pastoral (approach or) action (is called for and) has to be carried out." (PDV 57)

In summary, *pastoral theology* – unlike its *relatives*: Dogmatic Theology, Biblical Theology or Spiritual Theology – does not interpret a *text* but a *praxis* of real life as it is. For that reason *pastoral theology* is manifested through self-realization, self-actualization and self-management of the Church. *Pastoral theology*'s main goal is to ensure a constant renovation and updating of lines of action.

Similarly, PT analyses current situation of the Church, within which the Church realizes its mission. This analysis has its theological-sociological and/or theological-psychological character. For that analysis of the situation of the Church is called theological analysis although it is based on data developed by non-theological disciplines.

Theological and Practical Character of Practical Theology

The word *theology* derived from Greek words: “*logo*” (word, concept, science) I “*Theos*” (God). Then, indeed, theology bears the meaning of the science of God. The subject of theology is God and His creations in relation to God as theirs purpose and cause.

From the interest of the *material subject*, theology divides itself into many theological disciplines but with one common *formal subject*, that is God’s Revelation.

There are different ways of systematizing theology. Commonly, it is divided into:

Historical theology – Biblical history and theology; History of the Church; Patristic; History of dogmas and theology.

Systematic Theology – put in order, explain and justify all that is included in the content of the Divine Revelation. It teaches the developed already fundamentals of the faith and formulates new truth of faith as deriving from the Divine Revelation. It is divided into Fundamental, Dogmatic and Moral Theology;

Practical Theology – as a part of theology, it is a theological science, with its own material object that differ from other theological sciences. It places its scientific reflection over the saving activity of the Church, through which the Church is embodied in a particular historical-social reality. PT draws the principles and pastoral guidelines from two sources: the Divine Revelation and the experience of people and religious communities.

PT learns first about the requirements that the Divine Revelation and Magisterium place upon the realization of the saving mission of the Church, in the light of the revealed truths and principles within all kinds of pastoral activity.

Effective ecclesial activity implies knowledge of social, psychological, religious-pastoral and historical aspect, that is, understanding and awareness of peoples and social groups that are affected by the Church presence and activity.

PT justifies all developed requests and conclusions on the base of the Divine Revelation and human experiences.

V. EARLY HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PT

The Origin and first terminological development.

- Form the beginning the of Church (See Act of Apostoles)
- *S. Peter Canisius* (May 8, 1521-December 21, 1597) the Pioneer of the terminology: Pastoral Theology. Jesuit Catholic Priest, who supported the Catholic faith during the Protestant Reformation in Germany, Austria, Bohemia, Moravia and Switzerland. The restoration of Catholic Church in

Germany after the Protestant Reformation is largely attributed to the work there of the Society of Jesus, which he led. He is venerated in the Church as a Saint and as a Doctor of the Church.

- 1585: J. Molanus (1533-1585) published *Theologiae Practicae Compendium*. Theologian of Louvain was the first to use the term: Practical Theology, to describe the main subject of a book. His work: *Theologiae Practicae Compendium* was published at least four times; for the first time in 1585. Molanus doesn't provide reflections on what *theologia practica* means and why he is using the term. The meaning of the term has to be deduced from the book's contents. Molanus' work is divided into five parts, which deal with penitence and censure, the Decalogue, virtues and sins, the Sacraments and the Christian's State. So here practical theology includes ethics, the ecclesiological practice of how to deal with sinners, ecclesiastical ritual, and politics. The moral point of view is predominant. It is interesting to note that Molanus considers this book to convey the contents of his teaching at the Royal College. Molanus serves as the first director of this college instituted in 1579 for the education of those who prepared for pastoral work. Apparently he considered what he taught there to be "practical theology". (Jordan J. Ballor, David Sytsma, Jason Zuidema, (eds.), *Church and School in Early Modern Protestantism: Studies in Honor of Richard A. Muller on Maturation of a Theological Tradition*, Brill, 2013).

- 1591: Pietro Binsfeld, (1540-1598/1603) Auxiliary Bishop of Trier (Trevi) published *Enchiridion Theologiae Pastoralis*. (Enchiridion – A book containing essential information on a subject; Also a book to which you can refer for authoritative facts.) German Bishop and Theologian. He became an important personality in the anti-Protestant Catholic activities of the late 16th Century.

- The Council of Trento; (1545-1563); the first reflection about the Pastoral Activity: Renewing the Church by renewing priests (pastors). 1. Teach; 2. Govern; and 3. Sanctify. Establishing the special teaching for Sacraments.

- Johan Opstraet (1651-1720): Pastor Bonus;

- Maria Teresa, Empress from Vienna. She wanted the Pastoral Theology to be taught as an academic science. Through it she wished to form good Christians and honest citizens. (educative and social field – not only Christian aspect).

- We have to be aware of laying salvation into the central point of our work. Otherwise, we become a social workers. (M. J. Sailer (1751-1832)– was a German Jesuit professor of theology and Bishop of Ratisbon)

- Franz Xavier Arnold (1898-1969); Tübingen, Described Pastoral Theology as a theological doctrine about forms of action of the Church or a theology of Ecclesial's actions

Salvation's processand  mediation of salvation



Takes place between God
and the human person



our role in the process
(the Church)

- Soteriology (soterion: salvation; soter: savior) (logos: word, matter, thing). In Christian systematic theology it is used to refer to the study of the Biblical Doctrine of Salvation. The recapitulation view was advanced by St. Ireneus the Bishop of Lyon, 120-200; In this view Christ sums up all humanity in Himself in that he went through all the stages of human life, without succumbing to temptation in any way, died and then rose from the dead.

- We as pastors cannot save no one. We cannot give them salvation. There is God who saves.

- We are indispensable, needful but at the same time useless! Why? Because God wanted it like that. The Bible teaches us that God want our mediation in the process of salvation.

VI. DEVELOPMENT OF PASTORAL THEOLOGY UNTIL THE YEAR 1777

During the period preceding 1777, pastoral theology made an integral part of the theology as whole and was passing through the same development phases.

In the early Christian periods, pastoral thought was taken from writings of the Fathers of the Church (Didache, Letters of st. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp,) and from Greek and Latin apologists (eg. Tertulian, St. Cyprian). In that time there was not present scientific development of the theological system.

Theology will find its beginning as a science in catechetical schools: Alexandrian and Antiochene, where methods taken from Greek Philosophy had been used into theological disputes.

They tried to explain truth of the faith, basing on the Holy Scripture, and to confront them with schisms and errors that were very common at that time. (eg.

Catechesis and homilies of Cyril of Jerusalem, St. Ambrose, St. Augustin, St. Chrysostom, St. Gregory of Nazianzus, and in special way St. Gregory the Great).

In Middle Ages, theology split from philosophy. It began to be an independent scientific discipline thought at universities. During that time, they focused on speculative considerations and the theology as whole: practical and theoretical. They also started to develop scientific reflection over the impact of theology on forming moral and religious life of contemporary Christians. This aspect gave beginning to such branches of theology like e.g. ascetic, mystical, liturgical and pastoral (St. Bernard from Clairvaux, St. Thomas Aquinas, Rabanus Maurus, St. Bonaventure, John Gerson). At the end of the Middle Ages there were already produced some books for pastoral theology. (*Manuale curatorum* of John Surgant; *Manipulus curatorum* of Manroch; and *Directorum suratorum* of John von Auerbach. But the most famous book related to pastoral theology was the one of St. Gregory the Great, *Liber regulae pastoralis*.

In modern times, another transformation took places, driven by inductive-experimental sciences followed by profound changes in the moral culture of societies. Consequently, the Middle Ages' theocentrism had been changed for anthropocentric ideologies that eventually brought into the end the Church-State unity, and ignited the inner division of the Church.

At that time, the Church had to undertake double "fight": first, with secular education, that headed into elimination of the divine element from science, and the second, with Protestantism that wanted for remove and destroy Church Tradition and elimination of the Church's authority from the daily life.

Outstanding role was played by religious orders, especially theologians of the Jesuits.

Also during that time Catholic thinkers deepen their scientific reflection over Biblical Stuuues, Patristic, History of the Church, History of Dogmas and Hagiography. In the same tune, there was increased interest in pastoral theology, although it hadn't yet a status of individual scientific discipline.

St. Peter Canisius used for the first time the term "pastoral theology", to describe practical activity of priests. There was a big group of other famous members of the Church that developed ideas related to PT: St. Charles Boromeo, St. Alphonsus Liguori, Peter Binsfeld and Tobias Lohner. Some of them got inspired by many resolution from the Council of Trident that had its practical character.

VII. PT AS AN INDEPENDENT SCIENTIFIC DISCIPLINE

It was in the second part of the 18 century when the systematic theology's development found itself in a big crisis, influenced by philosophical and religious streams (naturalism, rationalism, deism, Jansenism – flatten the divine character in theology; split between scholastics and modern methods of study; impact of modern philosophy directed by Descartes, Kant, Hegel and Schelling) and overall interference of the State into all fields of culture and science, including theology.

Similarly it took place in the austro-hungarian monarchy where in 1767 at the University of Vienna, the Canon Law was moved from the Theological Department into the Department of Secular Law. Since 1769, students of theology were obliged to attend political, commercial and financial studies. Such decision was influenced as well by the suppression of the Jesuit Order by the Pope Clement XIV, whose members were in charge of theological studies in Austria.

A need for new curriculum was raised it was Benedictin abbot Francis Stephan von Rautenstrauch that suggested to prolong theological studies from 2 to 5 years. Following the request from the emperor, he placed accent on practical theology diminishing by the same the dogmatic theology. It was the very first time when practical theology appears an independent subject within the curriculum.

Year 1777 in the date of introduction of pastoral theology in the field of theological studies at all universities of the Austro-Hungarian monarchy.

It was really positive aspect for the development of PT but we can't minimize the negative aspect, where a candidate for priestly ordination was prepared for the subordination to the state power. There was bigger accent placed on morality, ethics and live experience of the priest than on Revelation, that in matter of facts, is the fundament of theology as whole, including PT.

Within years 1777-1797 there were printed 11 books for teaching PT, with authors like F. Giftschütz, F. Pitroff, J. Fingerlosa, K. Schwarzel and A. Reichenberger. They understood PT and set of guides and rules of conduct of a priest with parishioners.

The second part of 18 century brought up a new stream into the PT that might be called as the Biblical-Theological one. It represented reaction on naturalism and rationalism that entered in the early model of PT.

The new stream had its beginning in the University of Tübingen and its theologians, among whom there was Johann Michael Sailer that was considered as the founder of the biblical-theological stream in PT.

He was the very first theologian (Jesuit) that insisted and protected the theological character of PT and basing it on ecclesiastical principles and the

Sacred Scripture, from where he brought up the exemplary figure of the priest as a good shepherd, and counteract the previously promoted figure of a priest as a civil servant or a state official. Sailer based his teaching on the will of Christ, the ideal God Shepherd and recalled the Bible and Church Tradition as basic source to learn the Christ will from.

Maurus von Schenkl (Benedictine theologian), continue to develop this stream by stressing the figure of priest (subject) and his pastoral activity (object).

A. Shramm and P. Conrad developed theological justification and indicated theological perspectives of PT. These authors referred mostly to the teaching of Christ.

All these authors of the biblical-theological stream in PT overcome the anthropocentric domination but by the same time they strengthen the anthropocentric activity of the whole Church

PT in the understanding of Anton Graf (1814-1867)

A Graf undertook an effort to create original concept of the PT, that he called as Practical Theology. His concept laid on deepen understanding of the Church, developed already by Graf's predecessors at the University of Tübingen (J.A. Mohler, J.S. Drey, J.B. Hirsher and J. Kuhn).

According to Graf, the Church is considered as subject of theology in triple aspects: the historical process of "becoming" of the Church; Its unchanged character and essence, and; its building for future that realizes in the present.

These three ecclesial realities are divided into three theological branches: historical, systematic and practical.

In this understanding, pastoral theology is an reflection over self-construction and self-development of the Church, where foundation for such understanding of the Church are provided by both systematic and historical theology.

For Graf, there were crucial means of actions that realized themselves in three functions: announcing of the word of God, cult and ecclesiastical discipline.

Graf disagree as well with the recognition of clergy as the only active subject of the Church. For him the hierarchy was one among many factors that build the Church.

He differentiated the two kinds of activities known as (Kirchenregimen) Church management and (Kirchendienst) Church service. According to Graf, PT sets the rules for both of these activities.

Church management is directed into the Church as whole and indirectly into the small communities within the Church. The Church service directly refers to individual communities, and indirectly serves to the whole Church.

Graf didn't precise the role of priest and believers, what was considered as an incompleteness of his understanding of PT. But even so, his ideas pushed forward the development of PT.

An effort to systematize Graf's factors of self-development of the Church was partially done later on by H. Schuster. He divided these factors into three groups:

First, Transcendent Factors (God, God's Grace, God's Revelation, Christian customs, the fate of all communities and countries); Second, Institutional Factors (Feasts and Periods of Feasts, Works of Sacred Arts, Objects of religious worship, e.g. confessional, ambo, baptismal font, bells, stations of the Way of the Cross, etc); Third, socio-personal factors, that include Christian upbringing in the family and in the parish, Common prayer, Life of ecclesial communities, etc.

VIII. MIDDLE TERM TEST

IX. A PERIOD OF THE CLERICAL PASTORAL THEOLOGY

Unfortunately, since around 1850, there was a strong return into the clerically oriented PT. Even authors like J. Amberger, F. Pohl, or the very influential J.A Möhler, that developed the idea of the Church as Mystical Body of Christ, there was a strong movement that placed PT within the time preceding A. Graf.

Although in the 19th century there was an increased interest in PT, we could indicate some regress in the development of PT. Great theologians like C. Passaglia, K. Schröder, J. Peronne, J.B. Franzelina and M.J. Scheebena followed resolutions of the First Vatican C.

There was a significant development of PT's literature especially in years 1850-1915. PT once again opted towards a collection of practical indications for life and activity of priests.

Once again the concept of "pastor" dominated every kind of reflection over the essence, task and issues of PT.

During this period there were in use different methods like, Mystical-Practical (J. Amberger, F. Pohl); Scholastic-Practical (M. Benger, J. Reninger); Practical (I. Schüch, A. Gasner, E. Rucker, A. Kerschbaumer.

There were some “revolutionary” ideas like for example the one developed by Amberger, for whom the Church wasn’t a concrete, historical-social and self-developed reality, but anonymous and transcendental reality that exists between God and the faithful. He understood the Church as a “being” , that through priests (leaders), directs its activity towards the faithful that were seen rather as passive, remaining not more than a subject of impact of the Church.

M. Benger for example argued that PT should prepare priest for playing their role as officials at their offices.

A theologian of this period that played one of the most influential role, was C. Krieg, according to whom, PT is a scientific theory, concerning the pastoral function of the Church, and/or a study of caring for the soul that is based on principles resulting from the Revelation.

PT then, as theoretic-practical science should fulfil these two functions: First, to indicate the most important principles of the pastoral activity of the Church, and Second, to visualize the possibility of applying these principles in a practical activity.

Krieg divided PT into three parts: Pastoral Didactic, Liturgy and Study of a special care for souls.

PT in the between-wars period

In that period, PT was connected with the science about the Church as a Mystical Body of Christ. As a fruit of a tendency, the whole concept of PT was directed into this theory of the Church with its great propagator C. Noppel. He tried to link the previous clerical concept of PT based on the model: “shepherd-flock” with idea of the Mystical Body of Christ. Noppel based his thought on achievements of the school in Tübingen (A.J. Möhler, A. Graf, J.M. Scheeben), but at the end, he wasn’t able to rebuild the whole concept of PT.

According to Noppel, PT is a science that deals with Pastoral Office of the Church (hodegetyka: *hodós*, way, guidance). In its original christological/soteriological form, it traces back to Old and New Testament motif of the guide – especially in Jeremiah and John – Christ. Hodegon-Christ as “the Way.” In Catholic PT, *hodegetics* denotes theory of pastoral care in the sense of the principle and rules for guiding faithful by Church institutions.)

Homiletics and Liturgy are, according to Noppel, auxiliary sciences of PT. Other sciences like missiology, about the realization of Christian mercy and that about the Catholic Action, were considered as “sister” sciences and that served the PT in developing the as the Mystical Body of Christ. Although Noppel declared necessity of collaboration with Lay christens, in reality wasn’t able to propose more that their active cooperation with Church hierarchy. Noppel’s understanding of Lay’s activity was often narrowed into assistance

towards a parish priest (organist, sacristan, gravedigger, sisters working in parish, etc). In his vision, a lay could only help or assist the official representative of the Church in a parish. In this sense, a priest function is understood not as serving but as ruling done hierarchically and individually.

Other significant theologians that influenced the PT were: F. Schubert, L. Bopp and V. Lithard.

For Schubert, PT is a science about the activity of guide of souls.

L. Bopp saw PT as a science dedicated to a spiritual care over the faithful by sharing the fruits of salvation by Christ. Similarly to Noppel, appreciated the role of Lay but only in form of assisting the hierarchy.

For V. Lithard, the material object of PT is within the pastoral activity of the Church, while the formal object lays in effective use of the Church teaching that should be thought in details during the years of studies in seminary.

Common drawback of these concepts is seen in the significant lack of reflection over the PT and pastoral activity, and continuation of the clerical vision of the Church. Lay faithful were continuously seen as a subject of the pastoral influence dominated by the hierarchy.

X. PRACTICAL THEOLOGY IN GERMANY

Barth's theology, which dominated Protestant theology until the 1960s, left little room for an inductive development of practical theology. The most conspicuous proponent of this approach to "theologizing" is R. Bohren, who defines PT as "the science of the present gathering and sending of the church." "God's becoming practical", understood in the aesthetic sense of "God's becoming beautiful", is central. This "making God practical" by human beings is, however, a form of a religion in the Barthian sense of the word. Daiber, maintains that Bohren reduces PT to practical dogmatic or practical pneumatology. Bohren uses as his hermeneutical principle that of "theonomic reciprocity" – a concept borrowed from van Ruler.

Barth, according to H.D. Bastian contributed to the decline of PT. His "theology of questions" (1969) signal his resistance against theology that immediately knows all the answers and answers and loses sight of the questions faith evokes, and that fails to do justice to humans as questioning beings. He tries to find bridges to various non-theological disciplines. Just as the historical-critical method lead to demythologizing of the biblical text, an empirical approach will lead to demythologizing of praxis. One could for example, defend the thesis that preaching is the proclamation of God's Word and therefore must be beneficial, but how can this be harmonized with the reality of a poor communicative praxis, which, according to empirical research, makes many sermons utterly ineffective?

He sees a threefold task for PT: (1) a critical task with regards to tradition, (2) an empirical task with regards to the way the church acts in the present, and (3) a prospective task with regard to planning for the future.

The Pastoral Manual prepared under the leadership of F.X. Arnold, H. Schuster, and K. Rahner is a breakthrough in the Catholic camp: from PT to Practical Theology. It has an ecclesiological design, opting in the wake of the II Vatican Council for a dynamic view of the church: the church as the people of God (priests and laity) en route. Practical Theology is defined as “the scientific-theological discipline that deals with the self-realization of the church”. In contrast to other disciplines, the focus is here in the church today.

To celebrate the 200th anniversary for the establishment of the first chair for the PT, a collection of essays appeared entitled *Practische theologie heute* (PT today), edited by F. Klostermann and R. Zerfass (1974). The joint project of Catholic and Protestants practical theologians shows growing consensus regarding the view of PT as a *theory of action*.

R. Zerfass proposed a hermeneutical model, which has exerted a major influence on subsequent theories. He showed in this study how PT starts from the description of a concrete, and usually unsatisfactory praxis. Something must be done! Reflecting on this situation solely on the basis of church tradition does not lead to any real improvement. Praxis must first be examined with the use of a series of instruments from the social sciences. As a result, tension become visible, leading to the emergence of impulses to act, with a view to renewal and improvement of existing praxis. Practical Theology has the task to lead in this process of change in a way that is responsible from the perspective of both theology and social sciences.

XI. HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF PASTORAL/PRACTICAL THEOLOGY OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Any Doctrine has a historical character

To take into consideration a human condition of the particular period of time and place.

A mission of the Church in the history

Central words of the Second Vatican Council

- Aggiornamento (updating)
- Dialog
- Rinnovamento (renovation, regeneration or modernization)
- A field of the pastoral reflection in the context situated within a real and actual (particular) situation.

A type of the Theological-Pastoral's reflection given/developed by the Second Vatican Council.

- If I believe in the one and unique God, there are some consequences of it. Among them there are the pastoral consequences too. Second Vatican Council talks about the pastoral quality!

- We don't use any more any kind of Theological Application! A theory might be applicable for a machine, robot, computer... A human person is not to be applicable by my theory! People are not serving as subjects of theology. There are objects of theology!

A social, cultural and political dimension of theology.

- To analyze the present kind and type of life through the eyes of faith.
- Pastoral theology must be verified in the pastoral quality!
- A historical context is per excellence the theological field. People create their history, and wherever there are people, there is also a place for pastoral/practical theology.

XI. POST-COUNCILAR DEVELOPMENT OF PT

Priest-centered perspective:

- Priests' action/praxis but located within the Church-World relation
- Predominant aspect of the Church's document

Church-centered perspective:

- Material object: an action/praxis of the whole ecclesial community and its relation to the world
- The point of interest: relation between the Church and the World
- Influence of some North American pastoralists (F. Klostermann, P. A. Liégé, G. Ceriani)

Anthropological or and Soteriological prospective:

- A field of the Pastoral Theology: Religious praxis, and also the extra-Ecclesial one
- The point of interest: a relation between Religion, Church and Society
- Influence of G. Otto, R. Zerfass, D. Rössler, A. Grösinger, N. Mette, P.M. Zulehner and other mostly North-American pastoralist.

Distinct concepts of "praxis"

- Marxist and post-Marxist prospective: Praxis understood as a productive labor and direct act dedicated to some radical changes within a society.

- Prospective related to Aristotle's thought: a practical action reaching out to an ideal one, guided by an inner disposition, which is the ability of conscious and prudent decision.

- C. Boff: praxis is a set of actions that tend to transform a society or outcome of a history.

Evolution of the concept of praxis / religious interaction

- Praxis or religious interaction considered at the level of human subjects or of human action in general: perception, knowledge, emotions and affects, attitudes, motivations, and religious behaviors of singles and of groups in a given situation

- It is a *Theandric* praxis: human praxis which includes the Divine Praxis (relating to, or existing by, union of divine and human operation in Christ, or the joint agency of divine and human nature)

- Praxis or religious interaction considered under the dialogical or communicative dimension of human action, interaction between people and members of the group

- It is a praxis which includes critical reflection, intercultural and interreligious dialog

- Praxis or religious interaction considered under the aspect of a progress and a transformation of human action: types of development related to proper conditions (both interior and exterior), within different aspects listed above and especially in its character of the communicative praxis

- It is a transformative and liberating praxis.

The concrete issue

- Variety of some proposals which are difficult to be categorized: K. Rahner, G. Otto, G. Rössler, R. Zerfass, N. Mette, P.M. Zulehner, J. Fowler, J.P. Bagot

- Lack of classical schemes to frame the whole praxis / religious, Christian and Ecclesial action

- Three pastoral functions based on the triple role of Christ: priest, prophet and king

- Four ecclesial actions: kerigma (marturía), leiturgía, koinonía and diakonía

- Special influence of: K. Rahner, Y. Congar and G. Otto

Community: Church of the future according to F. Klostermann
Ferdinand Klostermann (1907-1983) Vienna

Great contribution to theological and pastoral reflection, developed between the 1960's and 1980's. He deepened the understanding of Christological and ecclesiological perspectives with reference to Community Principle.

There was a "cry" in 1970's for social and ecclesial change within the pastoral praxis. He stressed the study of structural and institutional aspects of the Church. These very aspects had become the source of discomfort and the object of protest.

Klostermann offered his own critical and innovative contribution:

1. There are several pastoral and theological disciplines that can be differentiated according to the way each developed historically.
2. But all of them inform and unify the multiple activities of the Church community
3. He adopts it as the dominant motive of Pastoral Theology

Community principle according to F. Klostermann

It is an interpretative instrument in the reality of Church

It is a heuristic framework within pastoral reflection (a commonsense rule intended to increase the probability of solving the same problem). He proposed the Community of Jesus as normative for every successive configuration of the Christian Community.

Consequently, the first task of Pastoral Theology is the critical review of biblical data. Jesus' community was characterized by an eschatological tension and by the essential community dimension. It builds itself up in function of the Reign of God present within it but pushing beyond it. It grows to the extent that it fosters the intrinsic relationship between individuals and the community

Klostermann recalls the foundational act of the historical Jesus. The understanding that the post-paschal community had of itself as being founded by Jesus and poised toward the future, marked by the departed of Risen Christ and His final return

The Christian Community keeps attuned to the fact that it builds through personal adherence (faithful support) to Jesus, expressed in conversion (metanoia), which although is a personal gesture, however, always and only takes place within a community context.

The Christological reference to the community's Lord is fundamental. For the institutional dimension of the Church, must be evaluated in terms of its rootedness in the word of Christ and expressed in service (diakonía)

Constitutive elements of Jesus' Community

Its reference to the Spirit that gives origin to and constructs the community;

The reception of the word of the Lord and the celebration of the cult of the Lord, through which it builds itself up as a community. Brotherly and sisterly love in Christ, who makes this the crowning and perfecting aspect of the community's existence.

Structural elements of the Community.

The fundamental quality owed to the fullness of Spirit and the love of Christ; The inequality given by the presence of offices and charisms that are both distinct and interconnected;

The historical traits that are connected, on the one hand, with the distribution of tasks and roles in function of the social image of the Church. The need for the continual review of community structures to the New Testament community linked with the social structures of the times.

Liégé's concept of Pastoral Theology

The Dominican Pierre-André Liégé (1921-1979), professor of pastoral theology at the Catholic Institute of Paris, offered his own valuable contribution to the recent development of pastoral theology, especially in French-speaking environments. His thought is spread through numerous studies in which he responds to the following issues raised concerning ecclesial life during the 1950s through the 1980s:

- the urgency raised by "joint pastoral care";
- the demand for an ecclesiological foundation for pastoral theology and a scientific configuration for this discipline;
- the reception of the renewal promoted by Vatican II;
- comparing his own approach with positions of pastoral theologians and contemporary proponents of the human sciences;
- the urgency of offering a theological and pastoral reflection on many topics often classed as special pastoral theology

Liégé refers to the Pastoral Praxis. It should help to avoid:

Wild Ministry along the lines of uncontrolled experimentation or spontaneity
Technocratic Ministry, where committed ministers are almost consumed by organisational and bureaucratic demand

Pastoral Views on how to adapt to cultural environment that non-critically embraces the current trends of the social and cultural environment;

the Ministry of Conservation, secure in its attachment to a uniform and respective ecclesial praxis that, in its immobility, becomes sterile

Liégé criticises acquisitions of recent theology that found an authoritative echo in some documents of Vatican II:

- the rediscovery of a pastoral magisterium
- restoration of a biblical vision of truth
- the abandoning of an intellectualization of scripture and a new understanding of Revelation as Event and Word
- the redefinition of the figure of the pastor within the framework of the common priesthood and of the charism and ministries of the people of God
- the new relationship between the Church and the world

Liégé criticised those ideas that reduce pastoral theology to “pastoral corollaries of dogmatic and moral theology or to “a theology of pastoral work: a theology far removed from ways proper to the Church, which is provided with its theological principles and controlled as far as its orthodoxy”

Corollary - a proposition that follows from (and is often appended to) one already proved.

Ecclesiological orientation and the Church’s lived experience

Church is the object of that reflection made by pastoral theology.

The Church is the place where salvation comes true and there is an encounter with God and Christ. This is the reality studied by theology.

What polarized pastoral reflection is the ecclesial reality taken in its organic totality and in the historic dynamics in which it happens, that is, the ecclesial lived experience.

Organic totally: includes pastors and faithful

pastoral: indicated a reflection that is not limited to the office of the pastors but broadens to include the action of the entire ecclesial body, understood as a people in mission in its dynamics: highlights the facts that pastoral reflection centres on the Church’s commitment to live, to reach its own identity, and to work for its own growth as it marches towards the fulfilment under the guidance of the Holy Spirit

Ecclesial action: is understood as the synthesis of being, willing and thinking
Liégé’s pastoral theology focuses on today’s ecclesial experience, Christian lived-experience inasmuch as it is embodied within the Church’s contemporary situation

Pastoral theology is a praxeology, that is a science of praxis

PT understood in this way presupposes a definite ecclesiological conception:

- every pastoral action implies at least a rudimentary dogmatic theology, and pastoral theology receives principles from dogmatic theology

At the basic of every theological and pastoral discussion, there lies a thematic treatment of the relationship between:

- the eternal Church, and
- the historical Church

The first is the eschatological community, which expresses everyone's fellowship with God. The second is the anticipation and beginning of the eschatological community

Liégé articulates the practical fiction of PT in three functional areas:

- the criteriological area
- the retrospective area, and
- the prospective or projectual area

XII. PT'S RELATIONSHIP WITH OTHER SCIENCES

Practical, theological and scientific quality

Pastoral or Practical Connotation

Past period

- PT was too theoretical and little practical
- Criticism of the idealistic setting of PT

Modern period

- PT too practical and little theoretical
 - Complex of instructions, techniques, manuals and aids of various kinds
- Criticism of F. Schlemiel and A. Graf.

Scientific Self-Awareness

Critical and Prophetic process of praxis

- Praxis represent the material field of PT, which become the Religious-Cristian-Ecclesial practice and it is its formal object
- PT is the scientific self-awareness or reflection of this practice, within all its aspects and phases.

THEOLOGICAL SCIENCE	PASTORAL/PRACTICAL TH. ANTHROPOLOGICAL SCIENCE	HINGE SCIENCES
Biblical Science	Pastoral Ministry and Biblical Catechesis	Philosophy of Education and of Religion
History of Christianity	History of PT and Ethics	History of Education and of Pedagogy
Fundamental Theology	General (Fundamental) Pastoral Theology	Philosophical and Cultural Anthropology
Systematic and Evolutive	Theological Criteriology	General and Evolutive Psychology
God, Christ, Church	Christology, Ecclesiology	Social Personality, Religion
Theological Anthropology	Anthropology, Catechetics	General Sociology, Education
Moral Theology	Moral Education of the Youth	Youth, Family, Religion
Liturgical Theology	Pastoral and Liturgical Catechesis	General Methodological Theology
Spiritual Theology	Youth Ministry	Familiar and Evolutive Vocational
Fundamental Catechetics	General Education	
Canon Law	Legislative Catechetics	Scholastic Legislation
Theology of Communication	Pastoral Communication	Sciences of Communication

XIII. CURRENT DEVELOPMENT OF PT

Scientific Character of PT

In the history there was a request for a concept of PT, which might be applicable to a concrete life situation (person, place, time)

Inadequate Scholastic Method

Science is a Knowledge consistent between per misses or principles and conclusions obtained in a form of the syllogism (deductive reasoning in which a conclusion is derived from two premises)

For the past model of PT, the “missionary mandate” (Mt 28) is considered as the most important one. It was practice between three ministries:

- Proclamation (announcement)
- Liturgy
- Leadership of the community

Limits:

Science is reduced to a logical consistency. It is a knowledge that cannot reach a singular (particular) situation of live. This model was slowly abandoned within the modern PT

Post-Vatican Pastoral Theology

Distinction between the theoretical PT and the technical (practical) one. Both of them meet on the field of Pastoral Art

Use of modern concept of science

- Science is a rigorously controlled knowledge, verifiable and falsifiable because only that it may follow the human reality as it directs the historical choices.

Double verification:

-Logical: in the form of a logical consistency

-Empirical: mutual matching of theological statement with the religious-Christian-Ecclesial praxis

Need for Truth and Meaning

Fides et Ratio (nn. 80-81; 94-96)

Truth and meaning need:

- Analytic methods and interpretative knowledge
- Use of methodological empirical-critical discourse

Relationship with other sciences:

- Theology
- Philosophy
- Anthropology

(Fides et Ratio n. 77)

Model of modern Pastoral Theology: it has to insist on vivid verifications, valuations and constant improvement. It is not enough to say: “We have to change something...”

Instead we have to work on the aspect of “How? In which way? Through which methodology? How to put some changes in practice?”

Pastoral Praxis has to be based on the faith lived by a community. Not on an abstractive faith!

Pastoral Theology is a science based on action, likewise psychology,
Example: why a person looks, search... The basic question is the one: Why?
Sociology for instance investigates a behavior in its social dynamics.

For PT the starting point is always the Reality of Life

TP is strictly connected with a self-management. TP keeps moving the Church and community. A community of believers that not find itself in constant movement dies!

TP is the pioneer of one of the Vatican II's innovation of Dialogue.

If a member of the Church or whole Christian community does not want to dialogue denies the meaning of communication

XIV. EMPIRICAL RESEARCH IN PASTORAL THEOLOGY

1. Use Quantitative Method in PT
2. Use Qualitative Method in PT

Example of a pastoral circle starting from life experience and leading towards principles of PT

Practical Cycle

To fail to plan is to plan to fail. Good beginning begets success. Success begets happiness.

It involves common targets and the means to actualize them. Best in the local situation. To give the best possible service to the kingdom of God. Gives a feeling of confidence and security.

Rigidity to change from the side of the pastoral agents. Psychological nature

- Priest
- Prophet
- King

- Liturgia
- Martyria
- Koinonia
- Diakonia

Etymologically means public service or service of the people. Service of the people of God in worship. Praising and celebrating our communion with God and our brothers and sisters. Source and summit of the life of the Church

- Leads to activism
- Mere social workers

Entails that the gospel must be *proclaimed by witness*:

In the name; The teaching; The life; The promises; The kingdom and; The mystery of Jesus of Nazareth, Son of God.

Through private conversations; Through Newsletters; Discussions; Television; Radio; All means of modern communication

It is the bed rock for community building. All aspects of life and growth of the community lies in this dimension.

Planning pastoral action for the people without consulting them half-baked information to the Christian community concerned. A pyramidal model of the Church (with particular reference to egoism among priests in the parishes)

The eager to be more expeditious and efficient

Dialogue; Common research of the will of God; Sharing of different points of view; Acknowledging legitimate differences; Sensitivities among the co-workers

The word *deacon* means service. Service here entails Church's service to the human community

Educating to justice; Self-empowerment; Self-help groups among Christian communities

It must be communitarian; Integration of global vision with particular needs of the local situation; Human power is needed; It must be tangible or practical (concrete); Periodical evaluation is needed; Adjustments and corrections should be encouraged from pastoral experience

What is the issue involved?

When are we going to do?

Where is it going to happen?

Who is/are the target group? Who is going to do it?

How are we going to do it?

Why are we going to do it?

Psychology; Sociology

Not deductive but inductive, based on concrete life situation not bible or doctrine or Church document. Life first then theology as a life reflection on it. Theology is a reflection on human life in the light of the word of God. Bible should be seen as a light to our path that also enlightens us:

See – judge – act

Circle - human experience main concern

Cycle - on-going process; not closed

Insertion into a human situation; Analysis of that situation; Theological reflection; Pastoral planning or a call for praxis

Hindrances on pastoral planning are:

One pastor planning instead of communitarian planning; Enthusiasm than a realistic methodology; Relying on human whims than God's providence; Independent commissions in the parishes

We need an existential approach to people's situations. Life situation is the hallmark of pastoral planning; Intellectual expertise could worsen pastoral planning. It is a communitarian act; It strengthens and energizes parishes; It is a lifelong affair.

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