

Tamás Székely: Anselm's Prayers, Meditations and Correspondence – The Lessons of a Pastoral and Theological Program from the 11th Century

Main thesis: In order to get a more precise understanding of the pastoral and theological program of Anselm of Canterbury, a comprehensive comparison of his works and an understanding of his cultural background are necessary.

T1. The theological basis of Anselm's pastoral program is his soteriology, which integrates the teachings of the satisfaction theory of atonement and the necessity of merits.

T2. The subjects of Anselm's pastoral care were determined by his theory of friendship.

T3. Anselm's pastoral motivation is determined by his eschatology.

T4. As a spiritual leader, Anselm followed ascetic role models.

T5. Anselm's pastoral attitude was determined by the salvation hierarchy model presented in the chapter on soteriology and the friendship hierarchy model of the theory of friendship. At the same time, his eschatological view also had a serious impact on his missionary program.

Summary

The main goal of my dissertation is to examine the pastoral activity of Anselm of Canterbury and outline his pastoral program. I believe that reading his theoretical and spiritual writings together has a double benefit. On the one hand, his theological views may be understood more thoroughly through an investigation based on this kind of a broader context, and on the other hand, the person characterized as a scientist and a politician may also be presented as a pastor. The sketching of this pastoral portrait is made possible by two circumstances. One of the circumstances can be found in the cultural background of Anselm's texts: we know that Anselm and not only his contemporaries, but also the pastors and abbots before him, liked to write prayers and excerpts from the Book of Psalms for the richer citizens and nobles living near the monasteries, who in return supported these monasteries. So, we know that Anselm himself practised this kind of indirect pastoral care. Indirect, since the pastor and the person seeking his help were far away from each other. On the other hand, in my dissertation, I refer to the pastoral relationship that develops between the abbots and the monks who live with them as direct pastoral care. Anselm practised both forms of spiritual leadership as the abbot of Bec, as well as the archbishop of Canterbury, since the Roman Catholic Church in medieval England was based on a monastic church organization, so the archbishop of Canterbury was also the abbot of the monastic community living in Canterbury. At the same time, there is another circumstance that arises through studying the textual sources. Anselm himself began to compile his collection of letters, and this work was completed after his death by his students and his episcopal secretary, Eadmer. 475 letters survived, which may be grouped according to their addressees and stylistic characteristics. In terms of stylistic characteristics, if we pay attention to the intimacy of the chosen tone, we can notice that the levels of intimacy consistently correlate with the way of life of the addressee. He writes in the most intimate tone to his fellow monks, and in a slightly cooler tone to members of the clergy, Christians, and laypeople seeking the faith, in that order. It can also be demonstrated from his letters, that he links salvation to the stability of a deep relationship with Christ, and this stability largely depends on how well one can live a concentrated life of faith. It is clear that monks can live the most concentrated life of faith. Consequently, monks are the most likely to receive salvation, and the chances decrease as we go down the list above. It is as if we could arrange people on the lines of concentric circles, the common centre of which is Jesus himself, and the closer a person is to the centre, the higher the chance of salvation. The clear goal of mission is to invite those in the outer circles into the inner circle. Why is this important? Because whoever is not saved, faces eternal suffering and damnation. And as an archbishop, Anselm had the opportunity to get to know people who did not have faith, and he felt a sense of responsibility towards these people as well, which is indicated by the rational thought process of his work *Cur Deus Homo*. The awareness of his missionary responsibility allowed this introspective

man to fully open up to those to whom God sent him to. A number of important examples of this opening up are documented by more than 300 items in the archbishop's archives.